

# A Global Voice for Child Rights



NGO Group for the Convention on the Rights of the Child

# Working together for children's rights

In 1983, 20 non-governmental organisations (NGOs) formed an Ad Hoc Group for the drafting of the Convention on the Rights of the Child to ensure a comprehensive treaty on child rights. This process led to the first international human rights treaty for children, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), which was adopted in 1989. It was the first time NGOs were credited with having such a significant impact on the final text of an international human rights instrument.

After the adoption of the CRC, the Ad Hoc Group became the **NGO Group for the Convention on the Rights of the Child**. It set up a small secretariat in Geneva to support national and international NGOs, and the Committee on the Rights of the Child to monitor and implement the CRC.

The NGO Group has developed leading expertise in the work of the Committee and the monitoring of the CRC and its two Optional Protocols.

# Who we are



The NGO Group is a global network of 77 national and international NGOs committed to ensuring that all children fully enjoy their rights as defined by the CRC. The NGO Group provides a coordinated platform for NGO action and plays a central role in key child rights developments at the international level.

The NGO Group works through its secretariat and thematic working groups to fulfil its mission **to promote, implement and monitor the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child**. It advocates and raises public awareness of the importance of the CRC. In addition, the NGO Group promotes the full implementation of the CRC through its work with national and international NGOs throughout the world.

It is governed by an Executive Committee which is elected by the members of the network. The Executive Committee provides the strategic direction and supervises the work of the Secretariat and the working groups.

# Our approach

## THE ROLE OF THE SECRETARIAT

**T**he Secretariat carries out the daily work of the network. Since 1993, it has ensured effective interaction between national and international NGOs and the Committee on the Rights of the Child. The main activities focus on supporting national NGOs and coalitions from over 160 countries in reporting on the CRC and its Protocols.

The NGO Group works with independent NGOs and national child rights coalitions in any country that has ratified the CRC and/or the Protocols. To achieve broad coverage and strong consultative processes at national level, the Secretariat also collaborates with member organisations and UNICEF to support national coalitions. In addition, the Secretariat provides training to NGOs during national and regional workshops.

To promote child rights mainstreaming, the Secretariat supports NGOs to provide information on children to other treaty bodies. It also follows the treaty body reform process and engages with the UN Human Rights Council.



## THE ROLE OF THE WORKING GROUPS

To advance child rights within the international human rights system, the NGO Group's members establish working groups on key child rights issues, including:

- **Children and violence**
- **Children without parental care**
- **The Human Rights Council (HRC)**
- **Indigenous children**
- **Sexual exploitation of children**
- **Juvenile justice**
- **Communications mechanism for the CRC**

These working groups are platforms for debate and joint action. They have helped ensure that child rights are on the HRC's agenda; mobilised NGOs for the UN Study on Violence against Children; organised the World Congresses against the Sexual Exploitation of Children; and contributed to General Comments of the Committee.

# What we do

## **SUPPORT THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD**

To ensure that the Committee has a balanced view of the situation of child rights in countries under examination, the NGO Group facilitates the preparation of NGO reports, including by child-led organisations. It also assists these NGOs in effectively presenting their views to the Committee. In addition, the NGO Group ensures NGO participation in the Days of General Discussion, General Comments, elections of Committee members and sub-regional workshops to follow-up concluding observations.

## **DEVELOP LEGAL INSTRUMENTS ON CHILD RIGHTS**

The NGO Group contributes to the drafting of international instruments on child rights. In addition to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, it has helped draft the Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict, the Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography as well as other international and regional standards on child rights.



## **STRENGTHEN CAPACITIES OF NGOS**

The NGO Group provides technical assistance and training to national NGOs on the creation of child rights coalitions, the reporting process, the follow-up to the Committee's recommendations and the use of broader human rights mechanisms.

## **PRODUCE PRACTICAL TOOLS**

The NGO Group develops practical tools for NGOs to monitor and implement child rights and to use the international human rights system. These include guides to reporting and on forming national coalitions; fact sheets on NGO involvement in the work of the Committee; and toolkits on the use of human rights mechanisms.

## **MAINSTREAM CHILD RIGHTS**

The NGO Group ensures the effective engagement of NGOs in the wider human rights system by advocating for child rights at the Human Rights Council; supporting the follow-up to the UN Study on Violence against Children; and ensuring child rights NGOs engage with relevant treaty bodies, Special Procedures and the UPR mechanism.

# Support us

**BECOME A MEMBER:** NGOs can join the NGO Group to contribute to the global discussions on child rights in the UN human rights system and benefit from the Secretariat and members' expertise in the CRC.

**GET INVOLVED:** The NGO Group could not work without the valuable help of interns and volunteers. Contact the Secretariat for internship opportunities.

**DONATE:** The NGO Group depends on donations from its members, partners, governments and individuals to conduct its work on child rights worldwide. Please contact us to find out how you can make a donation to support our work on child rights.

# Contact us

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Curious children in the village of Adav, Ghana.