**Guidelines for submissions to the DGD**

**“*Protecting and empowering children as human rights defenders*”**

1. **Modalities for children**

A worldwide consultation with children is taking place under the umbrella coordination of Child Rights Connect in order to collect children’s views around the role, protection and empowerment of children human rights defenders. Children are strongly encouraged to engage in face-to-face workshops organised by Child Rights Connect and other stakeholders at local, national and regional levels, and/or to provide inputs through an online survey which is hosted on Child Rights Connect’s [website](http://www.childrightsconnect.org/connect-with-the-un-2/committee-on-the-rights-of-the-child/days-of-general-discussion/). The results of the consultations will be presented in a child-friendly publication which will be submitted by Child Rights Connect and uploaded on the Committee’s webpage. For more information on the national consultations, please visits Child Rights Connect’s [website](http://www.childrightsconnect.org/connect-with-the-un-2/committee-on-the-rights-of-the-child/days-of-general-discussion/).

Children can also send any type of submission (reports, films, studies, photographs and drawings) directly to the UN Committee on the Rights of the child by contacting the CRC Secretariat (crc@ohchr.org). Children are encouraged to prepare their submissions based on the guiding questions in section III of this document. However, they can also send any relevant material (including drawings, videos, etc.) they want to share with the Committee, either in a confidential or public manner. The public submissions will be uploaded on the Committee’s 2018 DGD [Webpage](https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/CRC/Pages/Discussion2018.aspx) in their original language. The deadline for sending submissions is **1 July 2018**.

A child-friendly version of these guidelines will be available on Child Rights Connect’s [website](http://www.childrightsconnect.org/connect-with-the-un-2/committee-on-the-rights-of-the-child/days-of-general-discussion/). For questions on child participation, please contact Child Rights Connect (secretariat@childrightsconnect.org).

1. **Modalities for adults**

All adult stakeholders are encouraged to send written contributions (electronic format exclusively) in English, French or Spanish, the three working languages of the Committee. Videos are also welcome, as long as they are in one of the abovementioned languages. The public submissions will be uploaded on the Committee’s [Webpage](https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/CRC/Pages/Discussion2018.aspx) in their original language. The submissions for which publication is not authorised will be kept confidential.

The deadline for the submissions is **1 July 2018**. The Committee requests that written contributions be limited to a maximum of 2500 words.

Previously published materials may also be submitted to the Committee and published on its [Webpage](https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/CRC/Pages/Discussion2018.aspx). Where such previously published materials exceed 7 pages in length, participants are required to ensure that these materials are accompanied by an executive summary and table of contents.

The Committee reserves the right to refuse the publication of content that it considers inappropriate or containing abusive language.

**Important note for all**

A few weeks before the DGD, the Committee will publish a DGD background document summarising the main relevant points raised in the public submissions, both by adults and children. However, this will be possible only if the submissions will be in English, French or Spanish.

The Committee will not distribute any printed copies of the submissions. However, participants in the DGD will have the opportunity to share them on specific publications desks.

1. **Content of submissions**

All those interested in preparing a submission or submitting existing materials should make sure that these are relevant to the **specific objectives of the DGD** which are outlined in the concept note. These are:

1. Collect children’s views about their experiences as human rights defenders;
2. Assess legislation, policies and practices aimed at protecting or empowering children human rights defenders, by providing examples of good practices and challenges, including from children’s perspectives;
3. Clarify the States’ obligations applicable to children human rights defenders under the CRC and existing standards on human rights defenders;
4. Identify key elements for an effective implementation of a child rights-based approach to the situation of children who are, or want to become, human rights defenders, including specific recommendations for duty bearers that can inform the Committee’s recommendations to States.

All relevant stakeholders are encouraged to use all or some of the following **guiding questions** for preparing their submissions:

* Who should be recognized as children human rights defenders?
* How children of different ages, gender and backgrounds (like children with disabilities, in poverty, indigenous, minority, etc.) use their capacities, competencies and experiences to act as defenders?
* What’s the role that children play as human rights defenders in society?
* What enables children to act as human rights defenders?
* What barriers children human rights defenders face at all levels (local, national, regional, international)?
* How children want to be empowered and what support they want from adults and authorities?
* How children human rights defenders can empower other children and receive support from them?
* What are the risks faced by children human rights defenders?
* What safeguards are necessary to ensure the protection of children human rights defenders?
* What mechanisms children rights defenders can use to claim their rights if violated?
* How and to what extent do current legislations, policies, programmes and practices related to human rights defenders take into account the rights of children human rights defenders?
* Are the existing protection mechanisms for human rights defenders effective for children[[1]](#footnote-1)? Have they ever been evaluated through a child rights impact assessment?
* What is the precise content of State obligations arising from the CRC and the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders in relation to the empowerment and protection of children human rights defenders?
* What are the international standards relevant to ensuring that children can exercise their rights while acting as human rights defenders? Are these standards clear enough to be effectively domesticated by States?

Authors of submissions are encouraged to highlight different regional contexts and include relevant disaggregated data and statistics as well as key recommendations targeting specific stakeholders, including:

* The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child and other Treaty Bodies;
* The UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders and other Special Procedures;
* States (governments, parliaments, judiciary);
* Children’s Ombudspersons and NHRIs;
* UNICEF and OHCHR;
* Other UN and regional human rights mechanisms;
* Civil society organisations;
* Private sector;
* Parents, teachers and guardians;
* Children.
1. As of February 2018, specific laws on the protection of human rights defenders have been adopted in Belgium, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Colombia, Congo, Cote d’Ivoire, Guatemala, Honduras, Indonesia, Mali, Mexico, Nepal, Philippines. Draft laws exist in Democratic Republic of Congo and Sierra Leone, while Switzerland, Canada the European Union, OSCE, the United States, Norway and Finland have adopted guidelines on the protection of human rights defenders. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)