

Conference Methodology

Preparation

As was stated in the application form, all participants should arrive to the conference prepared. The conference will address some themes that may be difficult to take in without a good solid base in the different conference themes. The most obvious example is of course the Convention on the Rights of the Child. We assume that all participants have a working knowledge of the convention, the mandate of the Committee on the rights of the child and the role of the state as the primary duty bearer. Likewise, certain terms, such as “effective remedy”, “litigation”, “exhaustion of domestic remedies”, “state parties”, “justiciability” etc. will most likely be used frequently by the speakers and in the working groups without explanation. It might be a good idea to look up some basic legal and development vocabulary before the conference.

For the participants representing national coalitions, we also ask you to liaise with the coalition on issues that are important in your particular country. As the working group will focus on regional issues and how to tackle these by use of the CRC as a legal instrument, it is important that the participants come prepared with a mental list of issues and examples that could form the basis of the working group discussions.

Programme

As you can see, the conference programme (available on page 5) is fairly heavy in terms of workload and content. We took the decision to use the two days at our disposal to the maximum extent possible in order to be able to cover this very large topic. We hope that you’ll agree with this ambition and come prepared to make the most out of the time we have available. As the programme is so heavy, it is very important that we do not suffer any delays. From our part, as organizers, we will attempt to make sure that the speakers stick to the time limits given to them, and that the working group sessions are well moderated and structured. For the participants, we urge you to respect the times on the programme, especially the registration as we will have to start the conference on time to be able to cover all the topics. During each day there will be two 30 min coffee breaks and a longer lunch break.

If you are planning meetings outside the conference, please schedule these outside the programme.

Plenary Sessions

Each panel opens with a plenary session in which experts on the topic will give a series of presentations relevant to the theme of the panel. Each presentation is around 20 minutes long and there will be opportunities for questions from the floor after all presentations. The time for questions will vary, but there will generally be around 10 minutes in each panel. Try to keep the questions short and to the point. As most of the speakers will participate in the working group, there will be plenty of time to ask more specific questions to the experts during this time. Please note that there will be no opportunity to give general statements or presentations of your organization or its work during the plenaries or working groups. If you feel that a presentation would be valuable for the other participants, please ask the

moderator of your working group if there is an opportunity to give it during the working group session. Questions in the plenary should be spontaneous and we do not expect you to prepare questions in advance.

Working Groups

There are four working groups, based on the region of origin of the participants. We have chosen this division as we think that participants from the same region might have more common considerations and normally share languages. Naturally, the regions also have separate regional mechanisms. We are aware that this will somewhat limit interregional experience sharing, but we have decided that this is an acceptable tradeoff.

The working groups will remain the same for the duration of the conference and will consist of the participants from the region, a selection of expert speakers from the panels and a moderator. Each working group session is 90 minutes to 2 hours. The exact working methodology in the working groups will be decided by the moderator, but we envision an open and quite freeform discussion. The organizers will provide the group with a series of general guiding questions for each panel to help steer and focus the discussion. The role of the moderator will be to assure that the discussion stays focused and that everyone gets a chance to speak. The expert speakers will provide background, cases and suggestions for furthering the discussion.

The discussion in the working group should be focused on practical use of the Convention of the Rights of the Child to provide effective remedies in cases of violations and methods for overcoming difficulties and maximizing impact of the use of resources. With the amount of experience and knowledge available among our participants, we expect that the working groups will provide a good selection of recommendations, best practices and guidelines for legal use of the Convention of the Rights of the Child by civil society actors in all regions. Each working group will also be allocated a rapporteur from CRIN to bring the conclusions of the working group into the outcome document and present them to the plenary.

The working group session on day two deserves a specific mentioning. In this session, each working group will be tasked with applying the knowledge gained throughout the conference and use this to design a litigation strategy around a fictive case set in your region. Here, the collective experience of the working group will truly shine in solving not only the legal issues that might present themselves, but also issues of networking to make best use of available resources, the use of media and advocacy and the methods for selecting a suitable case to bring about the strategic impact sought.

Outcome Document

The conference rapporteurs will compile the outcomes of the conference into a publication that will be used in follow-up to the conference. It is our ambition that this document will provide a valuable resource for civil society organizations that are interested in exploring the potential of using the Convention of the Rights of the Child as a legal instrument. This document will be complemented by a collection of relevant materials, reports and case studies that will be provided by the organizers and the participants. Please submit any materials you think would fit in this collection to us as soon as possible. This repository will be hosted by CRIN.