

Advocacy report

Meeting attended: (place, date, time, name of meeting)

Launch of General Comment 20 on the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), Palais de Nations, 7 February 2017, 13.00-14.30

Presentations by UNICEF, World Vision, Youth Policy Labs, Committee for the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Refers to SDG no #:

#SDGs 3 (health), 4 (education) 5 (gender equality) 8 (decent work and economic growth) and 10 (reduced inequalities)

Relevant treaties/conventions/resolutions:

Convention on the Rights of the Child: [CRC/C/GC/20](#)

The objectives of the present general comment are:

- (a) To provide States with guidance on the legislation, policies and services needed to promote comprehensive adolescent development consistent with the realisation of their rights;
- (b) To raise awareness of the opportunities afforded by and challenges faced during adolescence;
- (c) To enhance understanding of and respect for the evolving capacities of adolescents and the implications for the realisation of their rights;
- (d) To strengthen the case for greater visibility and awareness of adolescents and for investment to enable them to realise their rights throughout the course of their lives.

How this serves GWI members:

a. Explain trends in development in this particular subject.

This General Comment is of note as interest towards this pivotal demographic is shown to be growing. Adolescence is defined by the Committee for the Convention on the Rights of the Child as roughly 10-18, youth 15-25, and young people as 10-25.

b. Explain why these trends and developments are relevant to GWI and NFAs.

This is an opportunity to strengthen the implementation of the CRC, particularly for adolescents. It is relevant to GWI and its NFAs as the adolescent girl is a key advocacy area. With increased globalisation and recognition of the importance of harnessing adolescents' potential, it is necessary to equip them adequately for work and the responsibility of adulthood, as well as the ability to deal

with the social and cultural challenges that arise at this stage of development. This General Comment also emphasises the importance of ensuring adolescents themselves are aware of their rights.

c. Outline what needs to be done at international and national levels.

Raising an awareness of human rights in communities, with families and adolescents, is a step towards realising them. Key action areas interest to GWI and its NFAs might be:

- To advocate around the importance of education to include human-rights literacy.
- To highlight the often contradictory nature of legislation e.g. in some countries the marriage age for girls can be as low as 15 but the law prevents independent health choices before 18. This clearly has an impact on child marriage, and teen pregnancy.
- To facilitate and invest in data collection on progress around this age group of 10-18 to track progress and highlight key areas of concern.
- To advocate for the right of adolescents to participate in policy formation - ‘nothing about me without me’.

Related steps:(what needs to be done)

As members of civil society, in addition to the above specific areas, GWI NFAS can:

1. Advocate for their country to sign/ratify the CRC if they have not already done so.
2. Identify and highlight the contradictions contained within youth legislation – see <http://www.youthpolicy.org/>
3. Disseminate General Comment 20 to stakeholders.

Submitted by Amy Paunila
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