

Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC)

Contribution to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in response to a call for inputs by the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF)

15 March 2019

1. The identification of progress, gaps, areas requiring urgent attention, risks and challenges in achieving the SDGs; and, or in relation to the theme within the area under the purview of your intergovernmental body:

The Committee on the Rights of the Child (henceforth “the Committee”) oversees the implementation of the legal obligations of the [196 States parties](#) that ratified or acceded to the Convention on the Rights of the Child (henceforth “the Convention”). It also oversees the implementation of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the involvement of children in armed conflict (OPAC) ratified or acceded to by [168 State parties](#), the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography (OPSC) ratified or acceded to by [175 States parties](#) and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on a communications procedure (OPIC) ratified or acceded to by [43 States parties](#).

The Committee acknowledges the inextricable linkage between inclusive, equitable and sustainable development and the realisation of children’s rights. Development can constitute an enabler for children’s enjoyment of their rights by providing them with a safe and healthy environment. Integrating a child rights perspective and ensuring the participation of children as active agents of change in decisions relating to development is crucial for achieving inclusive, equitable and sustainable development.

The Convention requires all States parties to respect and ensure the rights set forth therein to each child within their jurisdiction and without discrimination. The Convention applies to all children, defined as anyone under 18 years of age. States parties have a legal obligation to undertake all appropriate legislative, administrative, and other measures for the implementation of the rights under the Convention, regardless of the children’s or their parents’, legal guardians’ or family members’ race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status. Nevertheless, significant gaps remain in the protection and promotion of the rights of the child at the global, regional and national levels, which prevent children from fully enjoying their civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, including the right to development.

The Committee provides its observations below, based on its jurisprudence, on some of the progress, gaps, areas requiring urgent attention, risks and challenges in achieving the SDGs that are under focus in the July 2019 High Level Political Forum (HLPF).

SDG 4 (Quality education)

Despite the fact that the proportion of children in school globally has risen from 63% to 70% since 2010, the Committee is nevertheless concerned that hundreds of millions of children worldwide remain out of school or do not receive quality education. For instance, in respect of the latter, according to the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, less than half of all children and adolescents meet minimum standards in reading and maths. The Committee has identified the following as the main gaps undermining access to quality education by children: poverty; discrimination; armed violence and emergencies; family violence; child labour; hidden costs of education, such as those linked to books and specialized services; inadequate educational facilities, also due to lack of sanitation facilities

in schools; inaccessibility of schools, including for children with disabilities; school segregation that exacerbate existing disparities; inadequate human, technical and financial resources allocated for education; language policies; shortage of qualified teachers; poor curricula content and teaching methods; insufficient incorporation of human rights education in school curricula and the training of education professionals; privatization of education, and insufficient measures to ensure the compliance of private schools with minimum educational standards. It is also concerned that many girls are out of school owing to heavy domestic workloads, child marriages and early pregnancies, and negative societal attitudes towards the importance of educating them.

Equity gaps continue to prevent children in disadvantaged or vulnerable situations from gaining access to quality education, including children with disabilities, children living in poverty, children in street situations, children living in rural or marginalized urban areas, migrant, asylum-seeking and internally displaced children, children from minority groups, children living in alternative care, children living with or affected by HIV/AIDS, and children in conflict with the law. Many children are not equipped to access gainful employment or to enrol themselves for higher education after they have completed their primary and secondary education owing to the low quality of education and the inability of primary and secondary education to adapt to the needs of changing societies and communities.

SDG 8 (Decent work and economic growth)

According to ILO, 152 million children globally are engaged in child labour, with almost half of that number, 73 million, working in hazardous child labour, and 4.3 million children in forced labour. The Committee presented through its concluding observations that children are disproportionately engaged in child labour in low- and medium-income countries, primarily in mining, agriculture, fishing, domestic servitude and sexual exploitation. Particular concern was expressed about reported abuse and torture of working children, including child domestic workers, in some cases leading to the deaths of such children. Whether in low, medium, or high-income countries, children in disadvantaged situations are disproportionately represented in the worst forms of child labour. According to the Special Rapporteur on the implications for human rights of the environmentally sound management and disposal of hazardous substances and wastes, tens of millions of children endure hazardous and slavery-like conditions at work, where they are often exposed to toxic chemicals and exploitation.

The Committee has identified in its constructive dialogues with States some significant gaps in the protection of children working in the formal and informal sectors. They include, but are not limited to, the absence of child-specific provisions in labour legislation recognizing working children's vulnerability in the workplace; lack of minimum wage guarantees for children; insufficient legislation that sets the general minimum age for work at least at 15 years and the minimum age for hazardous work at 18; insufficient awareness of their rights by working children or children who want to work; insufficient programmes and mechanisms to identify and protect child victims working in the formal and informal sectors; insufficient measures to enforce labour legislation, including low rates of investigations, prosecutions and convictions of those responsible; and the inadequate number of sufficiently trained labour inspectors, their vulnerability to corruption and inadequate resources to inspect workplaces.

SDG 10 (Reduced inequalities)

The Committee has expressed its concern to almost all States parties under its review that slow or no progress in reducing the equity gaps in countries continue depriving children from enjoying their rights under the Convention without discrimination. This disproportionately affects children including in disadvantaged or vulnerable situations; with disabilities; in street situations; living in rural or

marginalized urban areas: migrant, asylum-seeking and internally displaced children; from minority groups; living in alternative care; living with or affected by HIV/AIDS; and children in conflict with the law. As a consequence of the insufficient measures that take into account the specific needs of children, children are often left behind.

Although more wealth is being produced than ever before in human history, the accumulation of wealth is increasingly concentrated among a privileged small group, while hundreds of millions of people, in particular children, suffer from lack of access to food, education, health care, social security, adequate housing, water, sanitation and a minimum standard of living. The Committee expressed its concern on many occasions that this is jeopardising progress in children's access to their rights, in particular rights to life, survival and development, health, food, water and sanitation, adequate housing, education, freedom from economic exploitation, and an adequate standard of living; disproportionately affecting children in disadvantaged or vulnerable situations.

SDG 13 (Climate change)

The global climate change disproportionately affects children. They are particularly vulnerable to extreme climate-related events, economic, social and environmental shocks and disasters. Their enjoyment of rights to a healthy and safe environment, life, survival and development, health, food, water and sanitation, social protection, an adequate standard of living, education, and non-discrimination are increasingly hindered by the detrimental effects of climate change, including water scarcity, undernourishment, and significant increase in frequency and intensity of hurricanes and tropical storms, leading to flooding and erosion. According to UNICEF, approximately 175 million children a year will be affected by climate-related disasters over the next decade, that 37.5 to 125 million additional African children will be subjected to water scarcity in the next two decades, and that an estimated 25 million more children will be undernourished as a result of climate change by 2050. Such conditions may in particular obstruct developing countries to fulfil their legal obligations under the Convention.

States should take wide-ranging measures to address the global climate change and its disproportionate and detrimental effects on children's rights, both in the territory of the State party and abroad. The Committee underlines the legal obligations of States parties, and the corporate responsibility of business entities, vis-à-vis children disproportionately affected by climate change and environmental hazards. In its [Day of General Discussion on Children's Rights and Environment \(2016\)](#), the Committee further recommended that policies and action plans to address environmental issues, including extreme climate-related events, economic, social and environmental shocks and disasters, should take into account the special needs of children, including children in disadvantaged or vulnerable situations, when planning disaster risk reduction preparedness, response and recovery programmes. States should identify, including through the collection of disaggregated data, the types of risks children would face in the event of a variety of natural disasters. They should ensure that their views are, in addition to their special vulnerabilities and needs, taken into account in developing policies or programmes addressing the issues of climate change and disaster risk management. They should also seek bilateral, multilateral, regional and international cooperation in the areas of disaster risk reduction, mitigation and adaptation to the effects of climate change.

SDG 16 (Peaceful societies, justice and strong institutions)

States parties to the Convention have a legal obligation to protect children, without discrimination, from all forms of violence. The inclusion of a specific target (SDG 16.2) in the 2030 Agenda to end all forms of violence against children gives a momentum towards the realization of the right of every

child to live free from fear, neglect, maltreatment, exploitation and abuse, including sexual abuse. A large number of States have enacted legislation, adopted national action plans and strategies, and established mechanisms for children's protection from violence. A number of States parties have taken measures to prohibit, prevent, and respond to all forms of violence and to safeguard the rights of child victims. However, the Committee notes with concern that children continue to experience physical, sexual, emotional or multiple types of violence globally, including at home, school, and various other settings, as well as in situations of armed conflicts, street situations, tourism, institutional care, displacement and migration. Statistics and data in this regard show that violence continues to affect children's life worldwide. According to the World Health Organization, one billion children globally experience some form of violence every year; and one child dies as a result of violence every five minutes. Gender, sexual orientation, disability, poverty, national or ethnic origin are some of the factors that expose children to a high risk of violence. Reportedly, more than 200 million girls and women alive today have undergone female genital mutilation and 3 million girls are at risk of undergoing female genital mutilation every year. Children continue to be victims of torture, trafficking, slavery and forced labour. More than 10 million refugee children have migrated across borders, including more than 98,000 unaccompanied and separated children, and that children comprise half of all refugees. Corporal punishment continues to be widely accepted as a means of disciplining children in the home as well as schools and institutions in many countries; there are jurisdictions where it is not explicitly prohibited or sanctioned in legislation.

In light of its [general comment No. 13 \(2000\) on the right of the child to freedom from all forms of violence](#), the Committee recommends in its constructive dialogues with States that they take measures to address the global pandemic of violence against children. This includes global, regional and national long-term programmes addressing the root causes of violence against children; adequate human, technical and financial resources allocated for child protection programmes and strategies; mechanisms that effectively receive and investigate complaints of violence against children in a child-sensitive manner, and that investigate and prosecute cases of violence and abuse against children, and punish adequately those convicted; and effective remedies and necessary support to child victims and their families, including recovery and social reintegration assistance; and public awareness-raising campaigns.

SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals)

The Convention recognizes in its Preamble "the importance of international co-operation for improving the living conditions of children in every country, in particular in the developing countries". A number of substantive provisions of the Convention and its Optional Protocols also emphasise international cooperation. The Committee views that multi-stakeholder partnerships at global, regional and national levels, that involve public and private actors as well as civil society, are key to achieving inclusive, equitable and sustainable development that respects, protects and fulfils the rights of the child. In its constructive dialogues with States parties, the Committee recommends that States seek establishing bilateral and multilateral partnerships, including cooperating with other States parties and with UNICEF. The Committee also notes the crucial role of establishing mechanisms to ensure cooperation, coordination and complementarity among all stakeholders, including among and within government entities.

2. Valuable successful experiences and lessons learned on empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality:

From the Committee's experience, efforts to achieve rights-based, inclusive, equitable and sustainable development advances children's enjoyment of their rights under the Convention and its Optional

Protocols. However, policies, programmes and projects following traditional models of development based predominantly on economic growth not only fail to contribute to the enjoyment of children's rights, but they, in some instances, also lead to violations.

Looking into the successful experiences, the Committee notes that adopting a child-rights approach in the formulation, planning, implementation and monitoring of development policies, programmes and projects is vital for empowering children and ensuring inclusiveness and equality. In this regard, development policies, programmes and projects, in order to effectively contribute to the enjoyment of children's rights, should include:

- i. Awareness of the inextricable linkages between development and children's rights;
- ii. Child-rights approach in the implementation, monitoring and follow-up and review of development policies, programmes and projects;
- iii. Systematic and thorough assessment and determination of best interests of the child in the formulation, planning, implementation and monitoring of policies, programmes and projects;
- iv. Child participation and active consultation in the formulation, planning, implementation and monitoring of policies, programmes and projects;
- v. A holistic approach that prioritizes the rights of children, including the rights to equality and non-discrimination, which addresses the structural causes of discrimination, taking into account that globally, most of the children face discrimination on multiple grounds;
- vi. Accountability mechanisms, involving all stakeholders, at the national, regional and global levels; and
- vii. Cooperation with National Human Rights Institutions in the development and monitoring of related legal and policy frameworks.

3. Emerging issues likely to affect inclusiveness and equality at various levels

The Committee acknowledges a number of emerging or recurrent issues that are likely to affect children's rights negatively by, among other things, hindering inclusiveness and equality. These issues are wide-ranging and include, for example, environmental issues such as global climate change, exposure to environmental chemicals, activities of the business sector that negatively affect children's human rights, corruption, and natural disasters, food insecurity, unstable food and energy prices, escalating armed conflicts, political instabilities, the rise of extremism, economic crises, and increasing global economic inequalities. All of these issues have a serious detrimental effect on the enjoyment of children's rights under the Convention and its Optional Protocols, and they further constitute significant challenges to achieving inclusive, equitable and sustainable development that does not only respect the rights of the child, but also seek to realize them. The Committee hereby provides its elaboration on three of such significant issues, namely environmental issues, armed conflicts, and increasing global economic inequalities.

Environmental issues

All children should have access to a healthy and safe environment without discrimination. However, a number of emerging environmental issues such as the increasing negative impacts of global climate change and certain environmental chemicals expose children to environmental health risks. For instance, according to the World Health Organization, 93% of children live in environments where air pollution exceeds maximum guidelines. Where children cannot enjoy their right to a healthy and safe environment, their various other rights are also negatively affected, including the rights to life, survival

and development, food, water and sanitation, adequate housing, education, freedom from economic exploitation, information, and an adequate standard of living.

Furthermore, exposure to environmental health risks is unequally distributed between countries with a higher burden in low and medium-income countries, as well as within the society, often related to social or economic characteristics such as income, social status, employment and education, gender, age and ethnicity. According to World Health Organization, an estimate 1.7 million children under the age of five die prematurely from modifiable environmental conditions each year, 12 million children in developing countries suffer permanent brain damage due to lead poisoning, and 85 million children are forced to work in hazardous conditions, which includes unhealthy environments. As indicated by the Special Rapporteur on the implications for human rights of the environmentally sound management and disposal of hazardous substances and wastes, tens of millions of children are engaged in hazardous work, including in artisanal and small-scale mines, where they are often exposed to toxic chemicals.

States have an obligation, and businesses a corresponding responsibility, to identify, prevent and mitigate exposure of children to environmental health risks, including negative impacts of global climate change, and exposure to toxics and pollution. The Committee provided guidance on this issue in its [general comment No. 16 \(2013\) on State obligations regarding the impact of the business sector on children's rights](#). One main issue is that States should require a stricter process of due diligence and an effective monitoring system, and large business enterprises should be encouraged and, where appropriate, required to make public their efforts to address child-rights impacts. The Committee further highlighted in its [Day of General Discussion on Children's Rights and the Environment](#) that children's specific vulnerability and social status within society imposes a heightened duty on governments and policy-makers to make sustained efforts to effectively protect children from such harm, strengthen their capacities, take their views and competences into account and provide access to effective and timely remedies.

Changing nature of armed conflicts

Recurrent and escalating violent conflicts continue to result in serious violations of children's rights, including killing and injuring, recruitment, abduction, sexual violence and abuse, denial of access to health and educational services and humanitarian assistance. According to the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, the changing dynamics of the armed conflict, including the intensification of armed clashes, directly affected children in 2017, and the recruitment and use of children doubled or even quadrupled in certain country contexts. Children, particularly those vulnerable to recruitment or use in hostilities, owing to their economic or social status or gender, continue engaging in the conflicts, including being recruited and used by non-State armed groups and by groups designated as terrorist. Children increasingly continue to be victims of attacks, with the use of indiscriminate, disproportionate or unlawful weapons, such as barrel bombs, cluster munitions and toxic chemical agents. The use of siege tactics lead to the millions of children being denied access to food, education, health care, water, sanitation and a minimum standard of living. The use of such tactics in conflicts also lead to high mortality rates of children, due to preventable diseases, such as malnutrition, malaria, respiratory infections and diarrhoea.

Armed conflicts impede children's enjoyment of their rights to life, survival and development, food, water and sanitation, education, adequate housing, freedom from exploitation, information, an adequate standard of living, and other rights. They have a devastating impact on the provision of health and education services, due to the destruction of infrastructure, attacks against facilities and personnel, shortage of qualified personnel, use of hospitals and schools for military or other purposes,

and other factors. Furthermore, armed violence exacerbates the discrimination and exclusion already faced by children, in particular girls and children in disadvantaged or vulnerable situations, including but not limited to, children with disabilities and migrant, refugee and internally displaced children.

Increasing global economic inequalities

Recurrent and deepening economic crises exacerbate persistent inequalities and exclusion faced by children, in particular girls and children in disadvantaged or vulnerable situations, including but not limited to, children with disabilities, in street situations, living in rural or marginalized urban areas, from minority groups, living in alternative care, living with or affected by HIV/AIDS, in conflict with the law, and migrant, refugee and internally displaced children. The Committee provided authoritative guidance in its [general comment No. 19 on public budgeting for the realization of children's rights](#) that in times of economic crisis, regressive measures may only be considered after assessing all other options and ensuring that children are the last to be affected, especially children in vulnerable situations. However, many States continue taking regressive measures in times of economic crises, including implementing austerity measures, which have a negative impact on families, significantly increasing the risk of children being exposed to poverty and affecting the enjoyment of many of the rights protected by the Convention, including the rights to health, education and social protection.

4. An assessment of the situation regarding the principle of “ensuring that no one is left behind” at the global, regional and national levels

By adopting the 2030 Agenda, States pledged to meet the Sustainable Development Goals and targets “for all nations and peoples and for all segments of society”, including children, and to “leave no one behind”. The Committee emphasizes that the effective implementation of the Convention and its Optional Protocols, in particular through the implementation of the principle of “leaving no one behind”, contributes to the achievement of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 targets contained in the 2030 Agenda. By fulfilling their legal obligations to the Convention, States can achieve the vision of the 2030 Agenda of “a world which invests in its children and in which every child grows up free from violence and exploitation”.

The Committee derives its expertise on assessing the situation of the implementation of the principle of “ensuring that no one is left behind” from its experience in supervising, since 1991, the implementation of the nearly universally ratified Convention, and in providing authoritative guidance on the implementation of its provisions. It holds constructive dialogues with the States parties and periodically assesses the legislative and administrative national framework for the realisation of children's rights, and their implementation, considering various factors including qualitative and quantitative data. Such assessment is based on the consideration of many indicators some of which are also outlined in the 2030 Agenda, such as those related to child mortality, children living in poverty, the proportion of children in primary and secondary education or child victims of trafficking and the worst forms of child labour.

The Committee acknowledges the significant progress made globally in reducing poverty and enhancing child survival. It appreciates the striking decrease globally in the under-five mortality rate, the extreme poverty rate, and the number of child marriages, as well as the increase in the proportion of children in school. However, the Committee remains concerned that children remain amongst the ones who are most left behind at the global, regional and national levels. Systematic disparities depriving children from enjoying their rights equally without discrimination persist both between countries as well as within countries. The Committee's assessment of country situations also shows the link between deprivation of children from their civil, political, economic, social and cultural

rights, including the right to development; and social isolation as a result of deeply rooted discrimination endured by groups of children that are most left behind. Children continue to disproportionately suffer from the effects of poverty and social isolation. They are deprived of equal opportunities and access to essential services, in particular girls and children in disadvantaged or vulnerable situations, such as children with disabilities, children in street situations, children living in rural or marginalized urban areas, children from minority groups, children living in alternative care, children living with or affected by HIV/AIDS, children in conflict with the law, migrant, asylum-seeking, refugee and internally displaced children among others.

5. Areas where political guidance by the High-level Political Forum is required:

The Committee is of the view that the political guidance by the High-level Political Forum could promote the realization of children's rights through inclusive, equitable and sustainable development frameworks grounded in the provisions and principles of the Convention and the Optional Protocols. In particular, it could:

- a. ***Promote structural reforms that address deeply rooted inequalities affecting children:*** The political guidance by the High-level Political Forum could encourage structural reforms to address deeply rooted inequalities at the global, regional and national levels with a view to realizing the rights of all children everywhere. It can promote the development and implementation of inclusive, equitable and sustainable development frameworks grounded in the provisions and principles of the Convention and its Optional Protocols.
- b. ***Encourage the mainstreaming of a child-rights approach in all development planning and implementation:*** The High-level Political Forum could further encourage the mainstreaming of a child-rights approach in the formulation, planning, implementation and monitoring of development policies, programmes and projects that respect, protect and fulfil the rights of the child. Equally it could ensure children's meaningful participation as active agents of change and that such processes are guided at all times by the rights to non-discrimination; consideration of the best interests of the child; life, survival and development and respect for the views of the child.
- c. ***Ensure that international cooperation supports States to fulfil their legal obligations under the Convention:*** The 2030 Agenda and its follow-up and review processes, such as the Voluntary National Reviews, could provide a venue and opportunity for global partners to support States and other stakeholders in their efforts to implement SDGs in a manner consistent with their obligations under the Convention.
- d. ***Strengthen accountability for children's rights:*** The HLPF could promote a multi-stakeholder accountability mechanism that encourages States to ensure regular reporting and robust peer review by States. Such a multi-stakeholder accountability mechanism should also include participation by all sectors of government, national and local parliaments, national human rights institutions, academic institutions, the private sector, civil society organizations, and trade unions and ensuring child participation.
- e. ***Encourage exploring synergies in the implementation of the recommendations of the Committee and other human rights mechanisms, and of the 2030 Agenda, including in the Voluntary National Review processes:*** The Committee's substantive expertise on the rights of the child could inform the implementation, follow up and review processes of the 2030

Agenda. The High-level Political Forum could encourage exploring synergies between the recommendations by the Committee and other human rights mechanisms and SDGs, including in the Voluntary National Review processes. For instance, national human rights mechanisms for reporting and follow-up (NMRFs) could contribute to the implementation of the SDGs by strengthening capacities of States in this regard and building synergies at the national level, with due consideration given to the rights and principles of the Convention as well as recommendations of the Committee.

6. Policy recommendations on ways to accelerate progress in empowering people, ensuring inclusiveness and equality, and achieving SDGs:

The Convention is the principal legal framework for assessing States' obligations to ensure the enjoyment of the rights of the child at global, regional and national levels. It provides a holistic framework based on normative standards that are intrinsically linked to the 2030 Agenda, such as those related to food, health, social security, education, housing, non-discrimination, protection from violence and exploitation, participation, and freedoms of expression and assembly. Therefore, a development framework that is grounded in, among others, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and international human rights treaties, must be anchored in the provisions and standards of the Convention, to fully ensure that no child is left behind.

The Committee notes that a child-rights approach in development processes is vital for inclusive, equitable and sustainable development that contribute to the realisation of children's rights, and encourages States to adopt a child-rights approach in the formulation, planning, implementation and monitoring of development policies, programmes and projects related to children's rights. In particular, the States could:

- a. *Recognize children as autonomous rights-holders with evolving capacity to claim and exercise their rights:*** Adopting a child-rights approach requires a paradigm shift: children are recognized as autonomous rights-holders entitled to non-negotiable rights to protection, rather than being perceived and treated as "objects" in need of assistance. The Committee views that empowering children to claim and exercise their rights as rights-holders is a crucial element of adopting a child-rights approach.
- b. *Integrate a child rights perspective in budgeting processes:*** In its [general comment No. 19 \(2016\) on public budgeting for the realization of children's rights](#), the Committee has provided authoritative guidance to States on setting up a budgeting process that includes a child rights perspective, specifies clear allocations to children in all relevant sectors and agencies and includes specific indicators and a tracking system to monitor and evaluate the adequacy, efficacy and equitability of the distribution of resources allocated for the implementation of the Convention. Accordingly, States should ensure transparent and participatory budgeting through public dialogue, especially with children.
- c. *Ensure children's right to be heard and their meaningful participation:*** In the light of [general comment No. 12 \(2009\) on the right of the child to be heard](#), adopting a child-rights approach requires ensuring meaningful participation and active consultation of children in all issues affecting them related to the implementation, monitoring and follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda. The Convention guarantees that children who are capable of forming their own views have the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting them, and that their views shall be being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child. States should raise awareness among children about the 2030 Agenda and the rights of the

child, and facilitate the meaningful participation and active consultation of children, in accordance with the best interests of the child, in all issues affecting them related to the implementation, monitoring and follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda.

- d. *Ensure that all processes are guided by the general principles of the Convention:*** The general principles of the Convention, including non-discrimination; consideration of the best interests of the child; the right to life, survival and development; and respect for the views of the child, should provide the framework for all actions affecting children. The Committee encourages States to adopt a child-rights approach in the formulation, planning, implementation and monitoring of development policies, programmes and projects related to children's rights, guided at all times by the rights to non-discrimination, consideration of the best interests of the child; life, survival and development; and respect for the views of the child, in order to:
- i. Further the realization of the rights of all children as set out in the Convention and its Optional Protocols;
 - ii. Develop the capacity of duty bearers to meet their obligations to respect, protect and fulfil rights; and
 - iii. Develop the capacity of rights holders to claim their rights.

The Committee stipulated in its [general comment No. 13 \(2000\) on the right of the child to freedom from all forms of violence](#) that “respect for the dignity, life, survival, well-being, health, development, participation and non-discrimination of the child as a rights-bearing person should be established and championed as the pre-eminent goal of States parties’ policies concerning children”. A child-rights approach is one that contributes to the realization of children's rights by respecting, protecting and fulfilling all of the rights in the Convention and its Optional Protocols. With a view to ensuring the best interests of the child, a child-rights approach identifies and mitigates the risks of child rights violations that may occur as result of policies, programmes and projects affecting children.

Adopting a child-rights approach seeks to ensure equality and non-discrimination, including on multiple grounds, by:

- i. Identifying and mitigating the risks of discriminatory outcomes of development policies, programmes and projects, that may hinder children from enjoying their rights;
- ii. Addressing the causes of deeply rooted discrimination by ensuring equal access to their civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights.

In light of the above, the Committee invites in its constructive dialogues with States that they provide information on how the planning, implementation and monitoring of measures aimed at achieving the SDGs integrate a child rights-based approach, including on child participation and data collection, and how they promote the realization of children's rights under the Convention and its Optional Protocols. The Committee recommends in its concluding observations that all States parties ensure the realization of children's rights in accordance with the Convention and its Optional Protocols throughout the process of implementing the 2030 Agenda. It also urges the State party to ensure the meaningful participation of children in the design and implementation of policies and programmes aimed at achieving all 17 SDGs as far as they concern children.