

Fourth CSO Forum on the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC)



18 - 20 March 2011

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

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ACRONYMS

ACERWC	African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child
ACPF	The African Child Policy Forum
ACHPR	African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights
ACRWC	African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child
ADF	African Development Forum
AIDS	Acquired Immuno - Deficiency Syndrome
AMC	Africa Wide Movement for Children
AU	African Union
CARMMA	The Campaign for the Accelerated Reduction of Maternal Mortality in Africa
CONAFE	Coalition of African NGOs working with Children
CP	Child Protection
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DAC	Day of the African Child
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
ECA	Economic Commission for Africa
ECD	Early Childhood Development
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HIV	Human Immuno Deficiency Virus
HURIDOCS	Human Rights Information and Documentation Systems, International
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IHRDA	Institute for Human Rights and Development in Africa
MC	Management Committee
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
SADR	Saharawi Arab Democratic Republic
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund

Day 1

Opening remarks and welcome from David Mugawe, Executive Director of The African Child Policy Forum

Session 1: Introducing the CSO Forum

Presenter: Edmund Amarkwei Foley, The Institute for Human Rights and Development in Africa

Mr. Foley began his presentation stating that among the factors that have accounted for the successful development of human rights in Africa, has been the coalition of non-governmental institutions and civil society organisations around thematic issues of mutual interest and African Union human rights mechanisms as a springboard for action. Many of the African human rights instruments have actually been born out of concerted and united NGO and CSO action. It is against this background that he presented the 4th Forum on the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child. The CSO Forum has grown to include a myriad of participants with abundant expertise. As such, there has been a shift from terming it the 'CSO Forum' to the 'Forum' to reflect its diversity of actors but still maintaining a focus on the ACRWC.

"Like two hands clasped in unity of purpose, the Forum supports the ACERWC and other AU human rights institutions in the safeguarding of child rights in Africa." - Edmund Foley, The Institute for Human Rights and Development in Africa

What is the Forum?

The Forum is a framework for strategic partnership to improve child rights in Africa. With the increasingly more active and powerful African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, the Forum was born to institutionalise the collaboration and cooperation with the ACERWC in the performance of the latter's mandate.

The Forum is also a blueprint for strategic partnership. It provides a meeting point for child-focused organisations in Africa working on diverse child rights issues to find a common understanding on selected thematic issues. Thus the Forum brings together advocates to work around an overarching theme and one or two sub-themes, develop recommendations and communiqués that are presented to the ACERWC during its Sessions for consideration, adoption and implementation. The Forum also provides an opportunity for capacity building and networking.

The Forum – as a unified voice – continuously speaks to the ACERWC and other AU human rights institutions on key issues affecting children in Africa and urges them to action to yield positive results. As a barometer of progress, the Forum constantly monitors and evaluates the state of implementation of the recommendations and communiqués adopted each year during its meetings. These recommendations and communiqués are the milestones that mark the implementation of the ACRWC.



Objectives of the Forum

- To contribute to the proper implementation of the ACRWC and Call for Accelerated Action for an Africa Fit For Children
- To foster closer collaboration and cooperation among civil society organizations; the African Union Commission, its structures and organs; the ACERWC and other stakeholders, for the promotion and protection of children’s rights and wellbeing in Africa;
- To educate, share and learn from one another in important child rights issues, mechanisms and processes;
- To provide recommendations to the ACERWC on various important child rights topics.

History

From a conception meeting of 13 participants after the 12th ACERWC session, the Forum has grown to over 150 participants. The key achievements of the Forums are:

- Brought together many and diverse child-focused organisations increasing CSO networking and engagement with the ACERWC;
- Made specific recommendations to the ACERWC, some of which have been successfully implemented
- Sustained the active participation of the ACERWC in its deliberations;
- Lobbied and supported the nomination and election of candidates to ACERWC;

**April 2009-
1st Forum (prior to 13th session
of the ACERWC)**

**November 2009-
2nd Forum (prior to 14th
session)**

**March 2010-
3rd Forum (prior to 15th
session)**

**March 2011-
4th Forum (prior to 17th session)**

- Facilitated and supported the submission of complementary reports to the ACERWC, including translation, summaries, and the participation of representatives of child-focused organisations to attend pre-Sessions;
- Enhanced the visibility of the ACRWC and ACERWC;
- Built the capacity and increased the knowledge of civil society on the mechanisms and procedures of the ACERWC.

The 4th Forum will focus on 'Children without Appropriate Care'. The specific objectives of the Forum are:

- To draw attention to the challenges facing children without appropriate care in Africa;
- To design appropriate responses to address these challenges.



This Forum gathered more than **100 people from 23 different countries (19 of which were in Africa)** to discuss and debate children's issues in Africa.

Mr. Foley then thanked the organizers of this Forum: Plan International, Save the Children, CONAFE, IHRDA, Africa-wide Movement for Children and The African Child Policy Forum.

Session 2: Keynote addresses

Presenters: Musa Gassama, Regional Director , East Africa, Office of the High Commission on Human Rights,
 Akila Belembaogo, Head of the UNICEF's Liaison Office, Representative to the AU and ECA;
 Rita Ndeto, AU Department of Political Affairs

Musa Gassama- The Strategic Direction of the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in Africa and how CSOs can collaborate

Mr. Gassama began his presentation explaining that the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) is the global authority on human rights and is responsible for leading the UN human rights programs and for promoting and protecting human rights. More specifically, the OHCHR is mandated to assist Member States and UN human rights machinery in developing human rights standards and monitoring their implementation. This work is done in close collaboration with NGOs, governments and other agencies.

OHCHR engages with CSOs because the Office knows that they are fundamental to bring about change. They are strategically placed to drive national decision-making processes for reforming laws, policies and practices and their access to diverse stakeholders is fundamental in monitoring, reporting and in awareness raising.

OHCHR has identified three broad areas to guide its engagement with civil society:

1. Build the capacity of civil society;
2. Protect the space in which CSOs operate;
3. Promote CSOs participation in all decision-making processes within the UN human rights system.

The OHCHR has various entry points for CSOs to interact and cooperate with the UN human rights mechanisms. There is a Civil Society Section, based in Geneva, which is dedicated to strengthening the cooperation with CSOs. CSOs also have the opportunity to directly engage with the High Commissioner and her Senior Representatives when they are in various countries in Africa. In addition, OHCHR has designated CSO focal points in its regional and country offices that are tasked with the responsibility of ensuring direct cooperation. Mr. Gassama urged participants to interact with these offices directly for collaboration.

The OHCHR provides both technical and financial assistance to the NGO Forum organized before the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights and is looking to support other such initiatives. As such, **the OHCHR would consider supporting this Forum.**

There are also various funding and fellowship opportunities available to CSOs. OHCHR has established four types of fellowship and training programs to help increase the role and participation of CSOs in human rights. For more information about this, please visit <http://www.ohchr.org>

In closing, Mr. Gassama quoted HC Navi Pillay, the High Commissioner for Human Rights who expressed CSOs vital role towards bringing change to communities. Mr. Gassama also handed out a book that provided detailed information on possible funding opportunities for CSOs through the OHCHR.

“... you (CSO actors) have your hands on the pulse of the communities you come from. Your involvement is indispensable to produce results on the ground where it matters the most.” - HC Navi Pillay, the High Commissioner for Human Rights

If you would like to get in touch with OHCHR's regional office in East Africa, please contact the CSO Focal Point: Kinetibeb Arega, KArega@uneca.org.

Akila Belembaogo- Focus on street children: its current trends in Africa and the state of the rights of street children

Ms. Belembaogo began her presentation applauding this Forum but noted that almost all regions of Africa are represented in this Forum except Northern Africa. She urged the Forum to make all possible efforts to ensure representation from that area of Africa.

The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child was adopted in 1990 but entered into force in 1999. When compared to the CRC, which only had 10 months before it entered into force, there was a long regional campaign for its ratification. Through that process, it became clear that without partnership we cannot have success.

Like the CRC, the African Children's Charter is a comprehensive instrument that sets out rights and norms governing the social, cultural, economic and political rights. It stems from the CRC and takes into consideration the economic realities, cultural and social values of Africa. UNICEF Liaison Office to the AU and ECA has promoted the close collaboration between the African Committee of Experts and the UN CRC Committee.

"No child belongs to a street but to a family." - Akila Belembaogo, UNICEF

As all of us know, this year's theme for the Day of African Child is "All together for children on the street". Ms. Belembaogo then proceeded with her technical presentation.

She began her presentation providing the definition of a street child: "A street child means a child who (a) because of abuse, neglect, poverty, community upheaval or any other reason, has left his or her home, family or community and lives, begs or works on the streets; or (b) because of inadequate care, begs or works on the streets but returns home after night" (The Children's Act of 2005, Number 38 of South Africa)

She then went on to explain the categories of children cautioning that categorizing children's programming is not always the most appropriate way to address their rights.

- Children at risk – children of the urban poor
- Children living on the streets – children for whom the street is the main living place
- Children working on the streets – children who come to the streets to work in order to supplement family income

She went through some of the reasons why children are coming to the streets such as poverty; rapid urbanization and industrialization associated with the collapse of rural economy; structures that leave children unprotected; wrong perception that life in a big city would be easy and fun; and other social, economic and political crisis such as epidemics, military and ethnic conflicts, refugee movements etc.

Ms. Belembaogo then went through the upcoming trends in the phenomena of ‘street children’. It is a worldwide problem. Getting accurate statistical data for “street children” is difficult given the hidden and isolated nature of life they lead. The rough estimates are that there are about 100 million “street children” around the world. The figure reaches 150 million in some studies. UNICEF estimated the figure to be in the tens of millions in 2005. Studies estimate that about 32 million children live on the streets in Africa. Ms. Belembaogo then went through some country specific statistics on street children.

The number of “street children” is increasing. Between 1991 and 1994, the number in Zambia doubled from 35,000 to 70,000 and increased from 4,500 to 30,000 in Nairobi, Kenya. The increase in Sub-Saharan cities, in large part, is because of the HIV and AIDS pandemic.

The majority of “street children” are between 10 to 14 years old but there are studies that show the age ranges from a low of 6 years to a high of 17 years. The age at which children start living and working on the streets is decreasing because of the increasing number of orphans and vulnerable children.

There are more “street boys” than girls. A study conducted in Eastern and Southern Africa in 1999 in 65 towns and cities found that 74% were boys and 26% were girls. She then went into some of the reasons for that including the fact that girls are often working as domestic workers, in bars or as sex workers instead of working on the street.

Ms. Belembaogo then went through the effects and implications on children’s rights for this group of children. She outlined all of the different rights of the ACRWC that are in threat for this particular group of children.

She concluded with what needs to be done to support these children. She suggested that all stakeholders should advocate for the ratification, popularization, implementation of and reporting on the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child. That all opportunities are used to advocate and lobby for the children and make their voices heard. All partners and stakeholders that are focusing on children should intentionally target children living and working on the street as participants, beneficiaries and owners of programs and promote cross-sector programs to address the underlying causes. Finally, we should all promote national social protection policies (and the AU social protection framework).

If you would like to get in touch with UNICEF’s Liaison office to the AU, please contact the CSO Focal point: Metasebia Solomon msolomon@unicef.org

You can find a copy of Ms. Belembaogo’s full presentation at www.forum-acerwc.org

Rita Ndeto, AU Political Affairs Department, Division of Humanitarian Affairs- The role of the OAU Refugee Convention and the AU IDP Convention in protecting the rights of children without appropriate care

Ms. Ndeto started her presentation explaining that there is a lot of forced displacement in Africa due to conflicts, natural and man-made disasters. On the continent there are several concluded conflicts (Liberia, Sierra Leone, Angola, South Sudan, Northern Uganda etc.), protracted case loads such as Somalia, DRC, SADR, Chad/Darfur, recurrent cases such as Cote d'Ivoire and new cases (Kenya, Tunisia, Egypt, Libya). Forced displacement is also caused by climate change, drought, floods and urbanization.

In these circumstances, children are at risk of being separated and becoming unaccompanied children and they are at risk of recruitment to military activities. Their lack of basic needs (i.e. shelter, food, clothing, health, psychosocial needs, and education) puts them at risk of child labor, abuse, and can drive them to the streets. In all of these contexts, girls are more vulnerable.

There are 10 million IDPs and 5 million refugees in Africa*.

*This nr may be much higher as these are official stats reported by governments.

The AU IDP Convention

This Convention, adopted on 22 October 2009, in Kampala, Uganda, is the only Convention in the world addressing IDPs specifically. It uses a generalist approach but is conscious of the different categories of persons in the community. It uses rights-based approach and is directly linked to the ACRWC (it refers to Article 1-definition of a child from the Charter – “Child” means every human being below the age of 18 years). The Convention on IDPs defines IDPs as those forced/obliged to leave; as a result of/in order to avoid armed conflicts/situation).

The Convention sets out objectives for prevention, protection, assistance and durable solutions. It provides for the obligations, responsibilities and roles of States Parties, armed groups, non-State actors and other relevant actors, including the African Union, United Nations, NGOs and CSO's in prevention, protection, and assistance.

Some of the key articles in the Convention that relate to children include: Article 9 which looks at the obligation of State Parties relating to Protection and Assistance during displacement and Para 2 (c) refers to separated and unaccompanied children. Article 13 deals with registration and personal documentation (para 2 states that IDPs shall be issued with relevant documents such as passports, IDs, birth certificates) and Para 4 states that women, men as well as unaccompanied children shall have equal rights to obtain such necessary documents.

The Convention is adopted 30 days after the instrument has been deposited but it needs at least 15 Member State ratifications for it to come into force. Thus far, only 3 countries have ratified the IDP Convention (31 have signed it).

To date, only 3 countries have ratified the AU IDP Convention. There is a need for at least 15 ratifications before it comes into force.

What needs to be done?

Ms. Ndeto then outlined that all stakeholders should promote the Convention's speedy signature and ratification. CSOs should also assess the existing normative frameworks and legal and institutional arrangements made or required by ministries to ratify, domesticate and implement the Convention.

Here are some of the other areas Ms. Ndeto thinks we should focus on in our work to protect children without appropriate care.

She then went into describing what needs to be done to make these policies go from rhetoric to action. There is a need to disseminate, popularize and implement the policies and Conventions. There is a need to address root causes and preventive measures including early warning. There is also a need to develop measures for protection and assistance to forcibly displaced children.

To get a copy of Ms. Ndeto's full presentation, please go to www.forum-acerwc.org

Questions and answers for opening session

Many participants expressed their concern with the lack of child participation at the Forum and interacting with the ACERWC. Participants urged the organizers to ensure children's participation in the Forum. **In response, UNICEF expressed its interest in working with the Forum to ensure the participation of children in the next one.** UNICEF also mentioned that it sponsored youth to attend as participants in the African Development Forum and that, perhaps, that could be used as a model for this Forum.

In the same vein, participants talked about the challenges they faced when trying to explain the Day of the African Child theme to children and pleaded that the language of the yearly theme is made simple enough for children to understand. Participants also wanted to explore ways in which children could be involved in identifying the yearly theme of the Day of the African Child.

During the discussion it was also suggested that children should be encouraged to attend both the pre-sessions by NGOs and the State reporting, as members of the delegation, when they come before the ACERWC.

Participants also raised the concern about those countries that are not party to the AU (such as Somaliland) and also the children of those countries which have not ratified the necessary Conventions. In response, Ms. Ndeto of the AU, said that as an employee of the AU, she can interact with anyone on the continent but Morocco, because it is not an AU member state. But, for the Somaliland participants, she is happy to interact under the auspices of Somalia but if they want to interact as the country of Somaliland, it will limit her because Somaliland is not a recognized country of the AU.

Another recurrent concern was that of statistics and data: how can we get accurate data that is disaggregated sufficiently for us to be able to understand and address the problems children face. UNICEF replied that it was particularly difficult to get statistics on street children. Ms. Belemboago expressed the need to bring actors together to agree on indicators so that official statistics that are better informed- otherwise organizations cannot address the problem comprehensively. Another key element is the promotion of birth registration. We cannot have accurate statistics (and consequently appropriate development programs) until all our citizens have birth certificates. Currently statistics often do not include nomads, IDPs, street children etc. Ms Ndeta also raised concern of statistics of IDPs and refugees, as the numbers the AU uses are official statistics and those numbers are very likely much less than the actual numbers.

Participants expressed the need for programs to address social protection and livelihoods as a method to address poverty, a driving force in having children go to the streets. Ms. Belemboago responded that, in the past, poverty was addressed through UNICEF projects rather than programs. The organization is shifting and realizes that it is important to address poverty in its work. The AU Social Protection framework is a good guide for all of us on that.

Ms. Belemboago also pleaded with the Forum to open it up to those beyond civil society to include international organizations, business people and philanthropy organizations.

Mme Cisse, the Secretary of the ACERWC also wanted participants to know that Niger is no longer suspended by the AU and therefore, the ACERWC can finally examine the Niger report.

Specific questions

Q: How does climate change impact children without appropriate care?

A: There has recently been the African Development Forum and the theme was climate change. UNICEF would suggest you use the conclusions of this ADF to help you in lobbying and finding ways to deal with climate change.

Q: How can the OHRCR help the Forum and Committee?

A: Ms Gassama said that all the State reports on human rights must take the African Children's Charter into consideration. Also, to note that civil society are also supposed to develop alternative reports on human rights in general.

Q: After the Day of the African Child is done, it appears as though there is no follow up and no monitoring. How do we address that?

A: UNICEF consolidates a report on the Day of the African Child, which can be shared. This report showcases what has been done, some lessons learned and recommendations for future use. For a copy of that report, please e-mail: Metasebia Solomon msolomon@unicef.org. The Africa Wide Movement for Children is also intending to showcase the different ways countries have celebrated the Day of the African Child on its website www.africawidemovement.org.

Q: Is UNICEF getting best practices from other stakeholders?

A: UNICEF has an annual report on the impact of the programs and in that report, there is an annex on good practices. These good practices are those from government and NGOs. If you would like a copy of the UNICEF annual report, please e-mail Metasebia Solomon msolomon@unicef.org.

Q: The IDP crisis is often a result of poor governance, restrictive democracies or faulty election processes. As such, how do we strengthen the AU Charter on Elections, Governance, Democracy and Human Rights as a way to tackle this problem?

A: AU Charter on Elections, Governance, Democracy and Human Rights was adopted in 2007. To date, it has only 9 ratifications and 38 signatures- so it is not in force. We can help to get this Charter ratified. We need to work to make a paradigm shift and expand the space for good governance, human rights and children's rights. What structures do we have on the ground to address these issues?

Session 3: Progress made by the Africa Wide Movement for Children

Presenter: Professor Rose September, Africa Wide Movement for Children

Professor September started out by sharing some of the statistics of the grave situation for children in Africa. She then went on to explain that in May 2008, more than 150 child and youth focused organisations and concerned child rights advocates came together to form the Africa Wide Movement for Children. They did this for the following reasons:

- African children and youth represent more than half of the population of the continent but they are, in many ways, the most disadvantaged.
- Africa's peace, stability, security, democracy and sustainable development depend on the wellbeing of its children and youth today.
- It is imperative to invest in the potential of African children who represent a formidable force for positive change.
- It is an urgent priority to put children on the public and political agenda through the promotion of supportive advocacy, policies and laws.

The participants at the launch of the AMC recognised that there is a need to go beyond national borders and that the competitive advantage of civil society lies in working together in building strategic partnerships and alliances across national and regional borders. The outcome was to establish an independent movement for child and youth focused civil society organizations, the Africa Wide Movement for Children.

Purpose

The purpose of the AMC is to promote and advocate for the full realization of the rights and wellbeing of all children in Africa. Its key strategies are: knowledge sharing, capacity building, advocacy and alliance building.

Achievements

Prof September outlined some of the achievements of the Movement. The highlights included the completion of documents that provide the constitutional and legal authority of the Movement, the existence of membership guidelines, convening a consultation on inter-country adoption and working with the Secretariat of the ACRWC.

Looking ahead

In the future, the AMC would like to strengthen its institutional capacity and implement its key strategies and programs (especially focusing on capacity building and advocacy).

In conclusion, Prof September invited all participants to become members of the Africa Wide Movement for Children.

For more information about the Africa Wide Movement for Children, please contact Prof September at rseptember@officeaction.co.za or check the website of the Africa-Wide Movement at www.africawidemovement.org

Session 4: The African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child- Update on plans and priorities

Presenter: Mme. Agnes Kabore, Chairperson of the ACERWC



**Mme Kabore,
Chairperson of the
ACERWC**

Mme. Kabore introduced the participants to the workings of the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child. She focused on the establishment and composition of the Committee, its' mandate, work, short-term goals, and its strategies, constraints and challenges.

The ACERWC was created in 2001 (as per Article 32 of the Charter) and its first session was held in 2002. The Committee is comprised of 11 independent experts who are elected by the Assembly of the AU (as per Article 33). Each member is elected for a non-renewable term of five years.

The ACERWC elects its own bureau for a two year period. A minimum of seven Experts must be present in order to hold deliberations at a session.

Current members of the Bureau		
Position	Name	Country
Chairperson	Mme Agnès KABORE	Burkina Faso
1st Vice President	M. Cyprien YANCLO	Benin
2nd Vice President	Dr. Benyam DAWIT	Ethiopia
3rd Vice President	Mme Fatima Zohra Delladj SEBAA	Algeria
Rapporteur	M. Clement MASHAMBA	Tanzania

Mandate

The Mandate of the Committee (according to Article 42) is as follows:

1. To promote and protect the rights enshrined in the Charter including:
 - a. Collect information and documentation
 - b. Conduct inter-disciplinary evaluations and studies on African issues in the area of rights and protection of children
 - c. Hold Committee meetings
2. Encourage national and local institutions regarding the rights and protection of the child, and if necessary, make known its views to governments and develop recommendations
3. Develop and clarify principles and rules aimed at protecting the rights and well-being of children in Africa;
4. Cooperate with other international, regional and African institutions and agencies involved in the promotion and protection of the rights and welfare of the child.
5. Monitor the implementation of rights enshrined in the Charter and ensure their compliance;
6. Interpret the provisions of the Charter at the request of State Parties, the African Union or any other institution recognized by the Committee or a State Party;
7. Perform other duties as may be assigned by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the AU, by the President of the AU Commission or any other body of the AU or the UN;
8. Promote the Day of the African Child and identify its annual theme (The 16 June celebration is intended to draw attention to the obligation of State parties to the rights of the child)

Day of the African Child

As per the AU resolution CM/Res 1290 (XL), the 16th of June has been designated the Day of the African Child. This day was chosen in memory of the Soweto massacre in 1976. The themes of the Day have so far been:

2006 Right to protection: stop violence against children

2007 Fight against trafficking of children

2008 Right to participation: let children be seen and heard

2009 An Africa fit for children: a call for accelerated action for survival

2010 Planning and budgeting for the welfare of the child: a collective responsibility

2011 All together for urgent action for street children

The work

The Committee considers State Party reports on the implementation of the Charter and the situation of children; considers Communications; and conducts investigations into gross violations of children's rights. Three Communications have been received so far. One from the Centre for Human Rights at the University of Pretoria, one from the Institute for Human Rights and Development and a third from Open Society's justice initiative.

State reports examined in the 14th and 15th session :

Burkina Faso, Kenya, Mali, Tanzania and Uganda

Recommendations have been prepared for Burkina Faso and are currently being finalized for Mali, Tanzania and Uganda.

The work of the Committee is governed by internal rules of procedure. The Committee meets twice a year in regular sessions for a duration of a maximum of two weeks. It also holds special sessions on request of Committee members of State Parties to the Charter. There is also the possibility of setting up sub-committees and other ad hoc working groups to address specific issues when necessary. The Committee reports annually to the regular session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the AU to report on its activities. Once the AU Assembly and State Parties have seen the report of the Committee, the reports are made public. States Parties should ensure the Committee's

recommendations are widely available within their own countries with the help of the ACERWC Secretariat.

Objectives

The ACERWC has some specific short-term objectives. These include the development of a concept note which will identify activities that require funding; examination of the working documents of the ACERWC; strengthening the partnership with CSOs to promote the ACRWC; continue lobbying for the ratification of the ACRWC by all African States; continue lobbying State Parties to submit their reports to the Committee; strengthen the partnership with the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child and other similar organizations by establishing a permanent framework for dialogue and joint activities; developing partnerships with other departments of the African Union (such as the Democracy and Human Rights unit in the Department of Political Affairs); updating the website of the ACERWC and continue to lobby for a specific theme on children's rights is chosen as the main theme of an AU Summit. The theme of violence has already been proposed.

Strategies

Some of the following strategies will be used by the ACERWC to achieve its goals: extend the provisions of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child; advocacy; effective collaboration with States Parties; partnership; research and publication; and capacity building.

Constraints

There are several constraints including the lack of knowledge of the ACRWC, the Committee and its activities; the fact that few State Party reports have been examined; insufficient staff (administrative, legal and financial); and insufficient financial resources.

Challenges

In the coming years, the ACERWC will work on implementing the Strategic Plan Objectives 2010 – 2015, relocate the Secretariat of the Committee (in accordance with the decision made in Kampala) and ensure it has sufficient human, financial and material resources); ensure each session runs for two weeks for more effective and efficient examination of reports; do more to ensure the Charter and the ACERWC are known; and ensure that all States Parties present their reports for implementation of the ACRWC in accordance with section 43 (initial implementation within 2 years after the entry into force of the Charter and all other reports should be submitted every three years).

In conclusion, Mme. Kabore remarked that this was an immense task that needed the personal commitment of every one and a need for collaboration between the Committee and CSOs. All of this would have to be supplemented with improved external communication mechanisms so that the Committee and its work are more visible.

To get a copy of President Kabore's full presentation, please go to www.forum-acerwc.org

The ACERWC is waiting for ideas from civil society on how to get children involved in selecting the themes for the Day of the African Child.

Questions, answers and discussion

During the discussion, Mme. Kabore asked CSOs to help organize children to come up with suggestions for the theme of the Day of the African Child.

Some participants raised concern with the term 'street children' as the theme of the Day of the African Child. They expressed a desire to refer more to the circumstances and vulnerabilities that can drive children to the street. Mme. Kabore explained that the French term is less problematic (enfants en situation de rue).

Participants had several suggestions about the Day of the African Child. They urged the Committee to make the language of the Day of the African Child less wordy and technical, so children can easily grasp the concept of the theme. They suggested that the themes could complement one another so that it would be easier to follow up and ensure actions are being taken on the themes. However, Mme Kabore clarified that the themes are selected because they represent current issues facing African children and it would be difficult to make them 'complimentary'. Mme Kabore also urged participants to send their ideas and suggestions for the themes of the Day of the African Child to the ACERWC. Mme Kabore also said that the Committee was waiting for ideas on how to get children involved in suggesting the themes for the Day of the African Child.

Some participants urged the organizers of the Forum to consider inviting members of similar Forums and monitoring bodies from other parts of the globe so that the participants could learn from them.

Participants brought up the concern of child participation again. They want to see children in the Forum but also children interacting with the ACERWC more systematically. They would also like to see the Committee take up the issue systematically with State Parties.

Participants urged the Committee to move beyond the focus on ratification of the ACRWC and its implementation and ensure States are reporting on it. In this regard the Committee's recommendations are so important. The participant pleaded for the Committee to make the recommendations strong and clear.

Specific questions.

Q: Has DRC ratified the ACRWC?

A: 45 African countries have now ratified the Children's Charter. DRC has signed the Charter but has not yet ratified (as has Sao Tome and Principe).

The hiccups

Sudan has submitted its State report to the ACERWC in hard copy. The report has to be provided in **electronic copy** so that it can be translated.

Until that point, the State report cannot be examined.

Q: What is the selection process of the ACERWC?

A: The State Parties (governments) select their nominations and send a note verbale to the AU to nominate a candidate. For more information on the election process, please request a copy of the Fact Sheet from Eleni at csoforumacrwc@gmail.com

Q: Are there any investigation mechanisms to see if State reports really represent what is going on in the country?

A: The Committee always invites NGOs to present their alternative report to the Committee BEFORE the government report. The Committee also has the right to carry out investigation missions to countries to explore presumed child rights violations. Mme Kabore also explained that the ACERWC members are elected to lobby governments and talk to NGOs and other stakeholders but it is the responsibility of the States to implement the Charter. One way to ensure proper government follow-up is to make sure the ACERWC's recommendations to State are shared widely with people.

Q: How is the Day of the African Child monitored to see if changes have happened as a result of the awareness-raising?

A: Governments are supposed to send reports on what they did for the Day of the African Child to the ACERWC. It would be good to consolidate those reports to showcase what was done to celebrate the day. In terms of the theme of the Day of the African Child- we would like to start commissioning research and use the results of that research to inform the themes. The Committee website will be a way where all of this information can be shared.

Session 5: ACRWC as a principle norm-setting instrument for safeguarding the rights of children without appropriate care in Africa

Presenters: Susan Mbugua, Save the Children Sweden and Edmund Foley, The Institute for Human Rights and Development in Africa

Ms. Mbugua started out the session by presenting the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child and explaining some of the mechanisms within it for civil society engagement. Due to time constraints, Ms. Mbugua skipped over some of her presentation. **To find a copy of the full presentation introducing the ACRWC and the ACERWC in its entirety, please find it at www.forum-acerwc.org**

State Party Reports

The preparation and examination of the reports of State Parties allow for a **comprehensive and periodic review of national legislation** and administrative rules, procedures and practices. State Party reports are submitted first after 2 years of ratification and then every 3 years. In order to minimize reporting duty, reporting guidelines provide for a "solution": Article 24 of the Guidelines provides that "[a] state party that has already submitted to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child a report based on the provisions of the CRC may use elements of that report for the report that it submits to the Committee as required by the Children's Charter. The report shall, in particular, highlight the areas of rights that are specific to the Children's Charter."

State Party Reports submitted so far include those from:

Burkina Faso	Cameroon
Egypt	Kenya
Libya	Mali
Niger	Nigeria
Rwanda	Senegal
Tanzania	Togo
Uganda	

State Party reports are public documents and widespread consultation in the preparation of reports is highly encouraged. The Committee also considers reports from civil society as part of this process. Before consideration of a report, the Committee holds a pre-Session Working Group where the Committee identifies issues for discussion with the State Party and highlights areas where information is lacking; invites the State Party to send a delegate to present the report and engage in the constructive dialogue process and appoints a Rapporteur from amongst Committee members.

Communications

Article 44 is the basis for individual complaints/communications. It provides that *“the Committee may receive Communications from any person, group or non-governmental organization recognized by the Organization of African Union, by a member state, or the United Nations relating to any matter covered by this Charter”*.

The Committee developed Guidelines on Communications to supplement Charter provisions (which outlines the criteria for admissibility). As such no Communication will be considered by the Committee if it is anonymous. It is interesting to note that “[a] communication may be presented on behalf of a victim without his agreement on condition that the author is able to prove that his action is taken in the supreme interest of the child” (Ch 2, art 1(I)(4) Guidelines). **The Committee may admit a communication from a State non-signatory to the Charter** in the overall best interest of the child. (Ch 2, art 1(II)(2) Guidelines). Ms. Mbugua then outlined the admissibility requirements for Communications.

The State concerned in a communication is to be given the chance to present an explanation or written statement containing its observations on a communication within six months. When deadline not respected, the Committee may go ahead and consider Communication.

Investigations

Article 45(1) says that the Committee can *“...resort to any appropriate method of investigating any matter failing within the ambit of the present Charter...”* which lays the basis for investigations. The Committee carried out an investigation in Northern Uganda in 2005. The Committee adopted Guidelines on the Conduct of Investigations, which can be initiated either by the Committee or at the invitation of a State Party.

The Guidelines state that Investigation missions should be publicized and the public and all individuals likely to contribute to the mission’s success should be invited. At the end of the mission and before leaving the country that is visited, the mission delegation must prepare a document presenting the preliminary results of its investigation that should be

communicated to the government and the media. Later the mission's final report must be prepared.

The Committee Guideline establishes follow-up mechanisms. State party visited in the mission could be requested to present, within six months after the mission or the adoption of a decision by the Committee, a written reply on any measures taken in light of the recommendations made in the mission report. (Art. 26 of Guidelines)

Observer Status

The ACRWC, the Committee and its Rules of Procedure recognize role of CSOs in the implementation and monitoring of children's rights. Observer status is the main way of formalizing this relationship between CSOs and the Committee. Guidelines on the Granting of Observer Status have been adopted.

Ratification and Harmonization

45 State Parties (already few more on the way) have ratified the Charter. There have been extensive law reform initiatives across the continent. Some good examples are in Tanzania, South Africa, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Botswana, Kenya, and the Gambia. ACPF has a report out on Southern and Eastern Africa and one on West and Central Africa due shortly. These are good documents showing how the ACRWC have been harmonized. To access them, please visit <http://www.africanchildforum.org>.

Edmund Foley then continued the presentation with a focus on the ACRWC as a principal norm-setting instrument to safeguard the rights of children without appropriate care.

Some of the key characteristics of the ACRWC is that it is made to the needs of African children (protection from harmful traditional practices, refugee children, etc), it encompasses all generations of rights (civil, political, economic, social, cultural) emphasising the indivisibility of rights and it includes duties for children.

It also goes into the definition of duty bearer and duties. Art. 1 of ACRWC makes the State Parties the primary duty bearers to ensure children have appropriate care. The primary duty is to recognise the rights of the child and then take legislative and other measures to give effect to the provisions of the ACRWC in accordance with national constitutional processes and standards of the ACRWC. It also recognizes the role of parents – art. 20 and gives them the primary duty of upbringing and development of the child. Art 20 also requires State Parties to support parents to carry out this duty. The ACRWC is, however, replete with other instances where parents and guardians are responsible for fulfilling child rights.

Mr. Foley then describes some of the specific provisions protecting the rights of children without appropriate care including the right to be identified (Art 6(4) – State should ensure that children are not stateless; the right to education especially rights of disadvantaged children (Art 11(3)(e) and continuation of education for pregnant girls (Art 11(6), the right of effective access to education, and training and protection of children with disabilities (Art 13). Other provisions include the right to health and health services (Art 14) – State has a duty to pursue full implementation; the right to protection of the child from economic

exploitation and hazardous work (Art 15), the right to protection from child abuse and torture (Art 16), the right to due process (Art 17), the right to protection of the family (Art 18); and the right to parental care and protection (Art 19). The Charter continues with the protection against harmful social and cultural practices (Art 21), the protection of children from and in armed conflict (Art 22), the protection of the rights of refugee and Internally Displaced Children (Art 23), the special protection and assistance in the event of separation from parents (Art 25), the protection from all forms of sexual exploitation (Art 27), the protection from drug abuse (Art 28), the prevention of sale, trafficking and abduction, particularly the use of children in begging (Art 21) and the protection of children of imprisoned mothers (Art 30).

To get a copy of Ms Mbugua or Mr. Foley's full presentations, please go to www.forum-acerwc.org

Questions and answers:

Q: When girls who are raped on the street fall pregnant, they are supposed to put the mother and father of their child on the birth certificate. Is this really in the best interest of the child?

A: In The Gambia, for example, the best interest of the child is upheld in the Children's Act. So, regardless of whether the father is known or not, the child can get a birth certificate. Those issues should not unduly prevent someone from becoming a citizen.

Q: You mentioned that Communications can be seen only if they are not being addressed by another institution. Many human rights issues touch on so many different areas, does that not cause problems?

A: A Communication should not be presented to different Courts but if one institution finds that there are issues it does not feel comfortable addressing, it can hand the case over to another institution. For example, the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR) has handed over a component of a Communication to the ACERWC to address the children's aspect of it.

Q: DRC did not ratify the ACRWC; can it still put a Communication to the Committee?

A: Nothing stops a CSO or an individual from launching a Communication, even if it is from a country that has not yet ratified the ACRWC.

Q: Where do investigations start from? Who and how are they initiated?

A: They can arise from a Communication or from a State Party report or even an alternative report.

Session 6: Panel discussion on concrete actions at national and regional level to address key challenges affecting children without appropriate care

Presenters: Moussa Harouna, African Movement of Working Children; Beranger Beheroudougou, Plan International and Ibrahim Sesay, UNICEF Ethiopia

Moussa Harouna, African Movement of Working Children

Mr. Harouna started out by describing the work of the African Movement of Working Children. It has 122,547 members, 2,071 grassroots groups, 235 associations and is present in 22 countries. All of the children involved are called 'friends'. The goal of their work is to ensure the children in the movement have success in life, because that is what the children have defined as their highest priority.

In the Movement, it is the children themselves who organize and exchange among each other. The children then form associations and then organize themselves in countries, and then within regions.

"We have to understand that if a child fails, it is not the child's fault but it is actually the adults around that child who have failed him or her."

Moussa Harouna, Africa Movement of Working Children

Child protection is of paramount concern. Working children need to be protected from violence, abuse and disease. Within these grassroots groups, the working children are taught how to protect one another. They are empowered to be able to tackle the problems they face. Children dream of what they consider success and work together to get there. By teaching solidarity and confidence, the first protective foundation is laid.

The Movement believes the role of adults is to accompany children to make their own decisions. They should not decide for them, but create a permissive environment so that the children feel safe to make the decisions that are in his or her best interest.

For a copy of Mr. Harouna's entire presentation, please find it at www.forum-acerwc.org

Protecting Children in Emergencies- R. Bérenger BEREHOUDUGOU, Plan International

Mr. Berehoudougou described the work Plan is doing with children in emergencies. He explained that children are often the most vulnerable and affected group in emergencies. There is an emergence of new risks during an emergency, the exacerbation of existing risks and there is long-term impact on children's lives as a result of the emergency.

He went over the major risks which include abuse (sexual, physical, psychological; multiple forms of gender based violence), exploitation and slavery (including forced recruitment, prostitution and marriage), neglect (separation from parents, abandonment, withdrawal of care, inappropriate detention and institutionalization) and psychological distress.

In order to address these problems, Plan works on the prevention of and response to abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence against children in emergencies. This includes providing psychological support with an emphasis on the particularly vulnerable children.

In order to meet children's protection rights in disaster, Plan uses a cross cutting approach: mainstreaming protection in all possible domains of intervention (from child safe Water & Sanitation facilities to realizing civil rights through birth registration), strengthening the capacity of local actors to establish and rebuild protection systems, including protection in monitoring and evaluation and ensuring children's protection from aid workers through efficient policies and reinforcement mechanisms.

Plan works with many different organizations and individuals because everyone has a role to play. The organization works with psychologists, social workers, security forces, administration, youth and children's organizations, health workers and the NGO community.

Mr. Berehoudougou concluded his presentation by emphasizing the need for constant monitoring including daily monitoring in camp situations, supervision of listening points, confidential reports to authorities, supervision of psychologists, involvement of social workers, holding coordination meetings and ensuring that every child has a confidential file.

For a copy of Mr. Berehoudougou's full presentation, please find it at www.forum-acerwc.org

Strengthening an effective Child Protection System to improve the Rights and Well-being of Children Without Appropriate Care - the Ethiopian case by Ibrahim Sesay, UNICEF

Mr. Sesay introduced participants to the concept of the systems approach. He argued that there is a global shift in development towards the systems approach. The problem, in a nutshell, is the lack of visibility of children in need of protection, poor coordination and human resource capacity and very limited resources allocated to child protection. Programming has been organized in vertical, separate silos- using 'categories' to dictate the programming. This kind of programming makes it difficult to manage data for evidence-

based policy and programming. It is also evident that legal frameworks, regulations and child protection policies and enforcement mechanisms are often weak, there is a lack of sustainability resulting in aid dependence and children and families are not participating in the decision making process as they should.

Strengthening national child protection systems

Where are we coming from.....	Where are we going...
Projects – focus a collection activities	Programs – focus on systems building
Focus on categories of children – vertical approached - rescue-charity and thumb-suck criteria	Focus on all vulnerable children – not just categories – move toward horizontal programming and value based
Short term planning – 1-2 year project cycles	Long term planning – 5 to 10 year vision
Large investment in NGOs, little investment in state structures – poor coordination between actors-fragmented programming	Increased investment in building the Government of Ethiopia’s capacity to fulfill their role as duty bearers

What is a child protection system?

A child protection system is a comprehensive approach to the protection of children from abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence and to the fulfillment of children’s rights to protection.

It is a holistic approach which links and promotes integration with other systems. It increases visibility of child protection within development agenda and as a system in its own right. It improves coordination, performance, efficiency at the national/sub-national and community level between government, partners, and civil society. It promotes sustainable programs that are nationally owned. It encourages a better use of limited resources to ensure universal and equitable protection for all children, especially the most vulnerable and to promote and enforce good practice standards in the care and protection of children and give children reliable access to care and protection when needed.

A child protection system is a series of components (e.g. laws, policies, regulations, and services) organised around the goal of preventing and responding to protection risks.

There is a child protection systems mapping toolkit. It suggests we map what exists, review (assess) the system to see what needs to be improved, identify priority changes that are needed, determine their costs, build consensus around the most important changes needed, find the funding needed to implement change and then implement, monitor and evaluate.

What is UNICEF doing in Ethiopia?

UNICEF is trying to improve system organization and coordination, with clearly defined roles, responsibilities and accountabilities and develop coordination mechanisms across

government with civil society and between sectors at different levels. It is trying to improve data and information for decision-making. This includes developing a national child protection data collection system to ensure regular information on both preventive and noteworthy practices. This requires adequate resource allocation that is well coordinated, and efficiently utilized to support child protection.

Some elements of a child protection system

Functions	Structures	Capacities	Processes
Governance	Ministry/ agencies	Human Resource	Promotion
Financing	NGOs	Infrastructure	Prevention
Rights to care	Communities	Financial	Response
Standards	Social	Services	Follow up care
Legal and policy framework incl. (customary)	Research		Data collection and management
Enforcement			

UNICEF is also developing mechanisms for the training of a skilled and committed social work force. This is a work in progress- to have 8,000 social workers which addresses population ratio in selected woredas. UNICEF is also trying to improve public awareness and engagement to prevent harm to children and respond to protection issues. Finally, it is working to support alternative care services and responses that are effectively regulated, including through accreditation of care providers, and enforcement of minimum standards of care. Finally, UNICEF is supporting and strengthening the role of families and communities in the area of (social welfare and) protection of all vulnerable children.

To get a copy of Mr. Sesay's full presentation, please follow this link www.forum-acerwc.org

Questions and answers

Q: Are other UNICEF offices shifting to a systems approach?

A: Many UNICEF country offices are taking on the systems approach but not all of them have shifted yet.

Q: Can you describe the composition of the African Movement of Working Children and some of the challenges you face? How do you get funding?

A: The African Movement of Working Children is mostly comprised of children less than 18 years old but because the majority of children we work with don't have birth certificates, it is impossible to be completely accurate about this. The role of the older children and young people is to mentor and support the younger ones. We are financed regionally by partners but at the local level the children's groups have their own budgets. The children pay dues or

also get money from people in the community and the local governments. The groups also organize fundraising activities to support their work.

There are many challenges. There are often conflicts between the children and conflicts between the authorities and the children. Many of the children have never gone to school and the kids struggle because they are seen in terms of their status. We have a lot of cases when adults or authorities ignore these groups.

Q: Now that UNICEF is moving towards systems building, how are you managing the transitions from the vertical approach to the systems approach? In the context of countries where local laws do not support a thriving CSO, how does your approach work?

A: Only 2 years ago, the UNICEF office moved towards the systems approach. The transition is difficult. We also had to deal with the challenge of convincing governments. The buy-in was really important as they are supposed to lead this. The systems approach doesn't throw out good work but includes it in a larger, more organized system. In this approach there is room for everyone- it takes traditional systems into consideration and all other stakeholders and finds a place for them to be included.

Q: What are the causes of post traumatic stress syndrome in emergencies? What are the main problems?

A: Plan did a study in five countries of West Africa which faced emergencies. In this study, it was found that 35-65% of children (depending on the country) were at high risk of suicide. Many children have experienced violence or have been themselves the actors of violence. In emergency and post-emergency contexts, if nothing is done to cope with the impact of the post traumatic stress (PTS), the children are likely to reproduce the violence they had gone through. They have seen and experienced violence and are unable to get out of it and will, thus, perpetuate it.

Day 2



Some of the participants of the 4th CSO Forum on the ACRWC

The second day started with a recap of the previous day's proceedings. Some of the participants asked questions of clarification and also shared a few concerns about the way in which the agenda of the Forum was organized.

Session 7, Part 1: Inter-country adoption: trends in Africa

Presenters: Professor Rose September, the Africa Wide Movement for Children and Remember Miamingi, Save the Children UK

Rose September started the session by stating that child protection has been a long-standing concern of civil society. In fact, historically many civil society organizations have been working consistently on the frontline with very limited support from their governments. Families, in all their forms, remain the most effective care and protective place for children – provided that they are supported and able to do this. The appropriateness of alternative care options has been well debated and documented. We also know that many children face abuse and exploitation in their own families. It is therefore apparent that a great deal of care need to go into decision making processes to safe guard children and in understanding the concept of “in their best interest”.

Residential care services are now changing. There are a variety of sizes and programs being offered. For example, family models, cluster homes and still dormitory style big institutions, etc. There is also a multiplicity of differing foster care options emerging. As adoptions provide the desired permanency for children, rather than short or long term institutional care and foster care – it is often viewed as the best option for children who will most likely

not be reunified with their biological parents. However, as Africans with a tradition of “any child is my child” we are largely still coming to terms with the concept of adoptions. There are of course also other concerns such as the economic realities of taking on additional care-giving responsibilities, especially for poor families who are already struggling to take care of their own.

At the same time, facing increasing demands – and maybe the need for adoptive parents, the world is also confronted with the ethics of inter-country adoptions. In 1993, the Hague Convention on Inter Country Adoptions to prevent trafficking and to ensure ethical standards for inter-country adoption, was developed. In 1995 the Convention came into effect. In 2009, there were 78 countries that ratified the Convention but many African countries have not ratified the Hague Convention. This leaves children at risk.

Mr. Miamingi continued by explaining there are 400,000 children exported from African countries without proper protective systems in place. Inter-country adoptions get complicated when there are not proper protection systems in place, when adoptions can be done within a few days and the cost of an adoption is between 20,000 and 25,000USD.

The ACRWC and CRC recognize the family as the core of the harmonious development of the child. This is the first layer of best protection for the child. If, for whatever reason, a child is deprived of that 1st level of care, a response should be in the immediate community or extended family. Then the 3rd option would be an institution within a country. Only then should inter-country adoption be considered. Inter-country adoption should only be considered if there is informed consent of the parents and that an authority agrees it is in the best interest of the child. The State then should make sure there is a monitoring and reporting mechanism in place. The State obligation tends to cease when the child leaves the border.

Many Africans are arguing that financial resources should not be a pre-requisite for determining ‘good parenting’. It is arguing that in - country protection measures and systems should be in place so that children can be properly cared for in their native country.

Regional standards that can provide adequate protection do exist but there is not the will to follow the systems that are in place. There are economic and humanitarian reasons that these standards are ignored.

In 2009, Africa Wide Movement came together to discuss this issue. A report of this meeting is available at www.africawidemovement.org. This conference ended with some specific suggestions. There is a need to lobby for the ratification of the Hague Convention by countries that have not ratified it; put in place mechanisms and structures, including Central Authorities, to ensure effective implementation of the Convention; ensure follow up, monitoring and reporting on inter-country adoptions; ensure the existence of proper data; exploring better alternative care options.

For more information about inter-country adoption, please e-mail r.miamingi@savethechildren.org.uk or rseptember@officeaction.co.za

Questions and answers

The presentation spurred a heated discussion on the topic. Participants agreed that the ratification and implementation of the Hague Convention is key to children's protection. There was a conference about inter-country adoption in 2010 in Burkina Faso. Mme. Kabore, the Chairperson of ACERWC, urged participants to look at the recommendations that came out of that Conference.

One major recommendation was to request the ACERWC to develop a General Comment on Article 24 (addressing adoption) helping to understand what is meant by 'suitable' and appropriate care? This would help guide States in understanding at what stage inter-country adoption should be considered. This could also be the moment for the Committee to really address the informal kinship adoptions so as to make them more legally legitimate.

Another key point that came out of the discussions was the realization that most adoptions in Africa are done informally. There are kinship adoptions and just taking care of the children in the family in need. These, however, are rarely formalized making it difficult for the child to have his or her rights respected. For example, this becomes very problematic in inheritance rights and even in medical care.

To formalize these processes or to do in-country adoptions, in many African countries, is often a lengthy, complicated, expensive and bureaucratic process. The participants urged the Committee to lobby States to put measures in place to make in-country adoptions formal and easier to do.

Participants expressed disappointment in not discussing institutional care in parallel with inter-country adoption. Some felt that the focus should be on how to improve the alternative care models in Africa as a key means in reducing inter-country adoption. There is a need to shift the focus of States from adoption to foster care and other positive care models. It is also important to address the discrimination children who are orphaned or abandoned often face within their communities.

This discussion continued with a participant challenging the group to consider what is in best for the child in order for him or her to be successful? The participant suggested we should not ask about what system is best but instead to ask what is best for individual children. Sometimes it will be best for the children to remain in their communities while in other circumstances, the child will be best served in another community (to avoid stigma) and in other situations, it will be best for the child to be adopted abroad.

"Adoption is about giving a family to a child, not a child to a family." - Mme Kabore, Chairperson of the ACERWC.

Mme Kabore also wanted to clarify a few points on adoption. She reminded participants that the Charter authorizes adoption. She explained that the family is the most important base for the child and this family is created through an adoption. She wanted to ensure participants remember that adoption is about giving a family to a child, not a child to a family. She cautioned participants to remember that there is a big difference between trafficking and inter-country adoption. In her opinion, if a family in a country is not found for a child, it is legitimate to find a family for that child abroad. She also wanted to clarify that when a

child is adopted by a family, s/he becomes that family's child and is then protected by the legal systems in the country in which the child is adopted. Though many participants felt there was a need for much more follow up of children in host countries, Mme. Kabore disagreed.

Other participants also explained the need to determine how much time a child should be left alone before it is determined to be officially 'abandoned'.

Participants challenged the human rights advocates to explore what they thought about a homosexual couples adopting a child in Africa. They suggested that perhaps there needs to be an African Convention on adoption addressing the cultural realities of this continent.

Q: How many States in Africa have ratified the Hague Convention and set up the systems or central authority to manage these?

A: Not more than 11 African countries have ratified the Hague Convention and even fewer have Central Authorities or other systems in place to carefully monitor the adoption process.

Session 7, Part 2: The lives of children with disabilities in Africa: an overview of challenges and opportunities

Presenter: Shimelis Tsegaye, The African Child Policy Forum

Mr. Shimelis gave a presentation on the The African Child Policy Forum's work on disability, including its ideological orientation. He then went on to give some background information about disability in Africa and then went on to explain the challenges and concluded with suggesting some ways forward.

Mr. Shimelis went into some detail describing the different theoretical approaches to disability. These include the environmental approach (disability as a consequence of environmental factors and service arrangements), the human rights approach (disability as a consequence of social organization and relationship of individuals to society) and the post-structural or radical structural paradigm (disability as a cultural and political construct).

Mr. Shimelis then went through some of the statistics relating to children with disabilities. In any one country, at least one person in 10 is disabled with physical, mental or sensory impairment and at least 25% of any population is adversely affected by the presence of disability.

Sadly, most of the major causes of disability are preventable. Poverty and inadequate access to basic health services is the major reason. Armed conflicts are another major cause of disability in Africa. For example, 350-500 people become amputees due to landmines every day.

There are encouraging moves towards the adoption of law and policy frameworks. However, most legislation littered with deficit and biomedical discourses – not in keeping with current standards and laws and policies are seldom concretized through specific strategies and programs. There is also very limited funding for disability. There is currently an attempt to link investment to future economic productivity of children with disabilities or to provide for their needs as cheaply as possible.

Mr. Shimelis continued explaining that negative societal attitudes and belittling languages are still common. There is also the tendency to still hide children with disabilities from public view. As a consequence, for example, more than 79% of children with visual impairments are not registered in Ethiopia. There is also discrimination in the environment-public facilities often exclude persons with disabilities. In addition, most institutions differentiate people with disabilities from everyone else, effectively stigmatizing them.

More alarming, in many countries, people with disabilities are demonized. They are accused of being witches or drug addicts. They are killed or maimed as they are considered to have certain divine powers.

Violence against children with disabilities is still common and courts do not often respect the rights of children with disabilities in the same manner as they do with other children. In some countries, children with disabilities are also forced to beg. Mr. Shimelis then explained the heart-breaking plight of albinos who are hunted to death for their flesh and blood believed to add potency to black magic rituals. He cited a report wherein it was reported that a complete dismembered body, including all limbs, genitals, ears, tongue and nose, sells for up to 75,000USD.

Children with disabilities face many challenges. They have very limited access to health and education services (in Sierra Leone, for instance, 76% of children with disabilities are out of school), many live in severe deprivation with limited access to water and sanitation services. Assistive tools, such as wheelchairs, braille books and hearing aids are often too expensive for most.

Mr. Shimelis presented some examples of programs that are being conducted now and would be good to replicate and scale up. For example, the provision of social assistance in the form of the South African Care Dependency Grant (CDG), a non-contributory monthly cash transfer of approximately 144 USD per month to caregivers of children with disabilities who receive permanent care; exemption from school fees, school feeding programs, awareness creation campaigns and tough legal measures on abusers as seen in some countries.

Mr. Shimelis concluded his presentation with 7 priorities for action.

1. A deep level of political commitment and a fundamental shift in thinking and practice at both the State and individual levels
2. Challenge negative attitudes to disability, through public sensitisation and education programs

3. Put in place appropriate legislation and policy in keeping with current human rights and disability thinking and practice
4. Build the capacity of disability organisations for self-advocacy
5. Ensure adequate funding for:
 - Improving and expanding existing services for children with disabilities and for providing a skilled supply of relevant personnel;
 - Invest in both preventive and curative healthcare programs and nutritional interventions; and attain efficiency through inter-sectoral co-ordination
6. Reduce household poverty, through cash and in-kind transfer programs
7. Put in place proper research, data collection and monitoring systems

To get a copy of Mr. Shimelis's full presentation, please go to www.forum-acerwc.org

Questions and answers

Participants expressed their concern in the outdated and offensive language found in so many of the legal texts when referring to people with disabilities. Even in the ACRWC the text uses the word 'handicapped'. The participants urged that CSOs work with an interested State Party to invoke Article 48 of the Charter permitting the revision of the Charter. This would be done simply to revise the outdated language in the ACRCW.

The discussion continued with participants asking how many of our countries endorse sign language and brail as official languages. And how many organizations translate their materials into brail?

Once again the issue of child participation was brought up with the participants urging the organizers to ensure children with disabilities participate in the Forums.

The participants were celebrating the fact that Tanzania has its first albino parliamentarian, which is a very good first step in raising awareness about that issue.

Specific questions:

Q: Are their IQ tests that are culturally appropriate for Africa? The Western IQ test can be labeling people disabled when they are not because of the Western bias.

A: It has become very controversial to use IQ tests to determine disability. The IQ tests are northern-centric and not applicable to Africa. But it would even be difficult to develop a fair IQ test for a single African country because there are so many cultural variances within the country.

Session 7, Part 3: Narrowing the Gaps to Meet the MDG Goals: An equity-focused approach to child survival and development

Presenter: Akila Belembaogo, UNICEF

Ms. Belembaogo began her presentation defining the equity approach. It is an equal opportunity for all children to survive, develop and reach their full potential. She continued by presenting some of the facts. The global under-five mortality rate has fallen by one third since 1990. This is one of the greatest success stories in international development. However, this is masking the inequality within countries. Two-thirds of the countries that have made strong progress in reducing the under-five mortality rate have shown worsening inequalities since 1990. In short, gaps between better off and worse off have increased.

This suggests that the delivery, financing, and use of essential health services for children favour the better off.

In some regions, children from the richest households are 2-3 times as likely to be registered at birth as those from the poorest households.

When one disaggregates country level data into regions and even municipalities, it is evident that there are pockets within each country in dire situation, even if the country, as a whole, is improving. Some of these pockets often include rural areas and urban slums. The poorest quintile has much less access to birth registration, water, sanitation and health care facilities. Their children also attend school for significantly fewer years than wealthy children in the same country. This issue is

even more exacerbated for girls who are much more likely to face early marriage when they come from poor families. For example, in sub-Saharan Africa, 75% of the richest quintile use improved sanitation facilities while only 15% of the poorest quintile do.

These children are not reached by services and have no information and therefore face multiple deprivations, which compound each other. Some of the obstacles to equity include geographical location, income, racial, ethnic, religious or other cultural affiliation, minority status, disability or gender. All of this is exacerbated by the global financial crisis, climate change, armed conflicts and natural disasters.

The challenge is to reach the poorest 20% of populations in all countries. The reason this group has not been a focus until now is because *Conventional wisdom* is that is too costly and too difficult to go into poor, hard-to-reach communities. However, it is now thought that since the needs are greatest amongst the unreached and new, innovative, efficient strategies and tools exist to reach them, the benefits of concentrating on them might outweigh the additional costs of reaching them.

The goal of the new approach is to accelerate progress, reduce disparities and lower out-of-pocket expenditures for the poor. UNICEF, with partners, will:

- Upgrade facilities (especially. maternal and neonatal), expand maternity services, including ‘waiting homes’.
- Overcome barriers preventing access to available services; expand outreach; eliminate direct user charges; extend cash transfers; use mass communication to boost demand and usage.
- Focus on task-shifting: basic outreach through community health workers. Support enhanced community involvement in promoting health and behaviour change.

UNICEF then went ahead and tested its hypothesis in over 60 countries, with an in-depth study in 15 (of which 10 are in Africa). The UNICEF research team tested the model using a Marginal Budgeting for Bottlenecks (MBB) simulation. Widely applied to international health research, MBB focuses on eliminating the barriers to supply and demand of essential services. The research showed that the equity approach accelerates progress towards the health MDGs faster and more cost-effectively across all country types. It is especially effective in low-income, high-mortality countries: every additional 1 million USD invested can save 60% more lives than the current path.

The equity approach addresses societal factors, services and systems, political and “ideological” issues and transnational issues. Through the approach we must identify the most deprived children and communities, invest in proven, cost-effective interventions, overcome bottlenecks and barriers, partner with communities, and maximize the impact of available resources.

To get a copy of Ms. Belemboago’s full presentation, please go to www.forum-acerwc.org

Questions and answers

There was a need to differentiate equality and equity. Equity is intended to eliminate the lack of access to services but not want that everyone is to remain at the same level in society.

Ms Belemboago went into some detail exploring the equity approach to education. Currently there is a big focus on primary education, to the exclusion of Early Childhood Development (ECD) and secondary education. The equity approach would try to eliminate the barriers to schooling and reduce the disparities by providing scholarship for girls, school meals, no user fees, 9 years of education, ECD, etc. This would be a more holistic approach.

Session 8: Group discussions

Topics: Inter-country adoption, children with disabilities, child participation and street and IDP children.

The larger group split into 4 smaller groups to discuss issues important to them. In the groups, participants shared their experiences and then deliberated on recommendations that they thought civil society should carry out and requests to the ACERWC. After two hours of group work, each group presented its findings to the plenary.

Group 1: Inter-country adoption

This group focused on the recommendations to the ACERWC.

1. State Parties should ratify and domesticate the Hague Convention.
2. State Parties should set up structures and mechanisms to monitor inter-country adoptions.
3. The Committee should give a General Comment on Article 24 of the ACRWC to guide its implementation.
4. Digitization of State Parties information systems for institutional memory.
5. Member States should adopt, implement and fund comprehensive complimentary and coherent legal frameworks that recognize all forms of adoption and related modes of alternative care

Group 2: IDPs and street children

The group found similarities in issues when it comes to street children. There is no coordination and there's conflict of interest. There are issues of poverty, HIV/AIDS, culture, illiteracy. The key issues seem to be the lack of *long term intervention and a lack of consolidated efforts by civil society*.

The group's recommendations to the Forum were:

1. Harmonize data collection
2. Have more space allocated to share experiences rather than more presentation sessions
3. Consolidate the CSOs experiences, share them with the ACERWC members and put them on their websites

The group's recommendations to the ACERWC were:

1. Advocate for State parties to prioritise on a national database which is updated.
2. State Parties should be encouraged to ratify the Kampala Convention of 2009 and lobby them to submit the State Party Reports.
3. To encourage State parties to mainstream disaster management in their development work.
4. AU Member States should be encouraged to focus more on preventing children from getting to the streets, through more equitable policies like education, strong family laws, capacity-building on parental skills, budgetary allocations to support vulnerable families among others.

Group 3: Children with disabilities

The group shared their rich experience in this area and described the following key issues they face: limited awareness on disability issues (among the general public and experts), lack of proper implementation of laws/policies, limited accessibility of service, limited pre and post natal maternal care and diagnostic services and lack of independent monitoring.

They came up with the following recommendations to the Forum:

1. Build the capacity of relevant stakeholders (sensitization, materials and funding support, training etc)
2. Raise awareness on disability issues including on the urgent plight of albinos targeting the parents, the general public, parliamentarians, experts, media etc.

3. Advocate for the ratification of the Disability Convention and revise insensitive terminologies used in the African Charter based on Article 48.
4. Monitoring the implementation of laws and policies that take disability issues into account- putting in place monitoring mechanisms for the States' implementation of laws/policies.
5. Undertake research, collect data on disabled children, and disseminate the findings.

The following are the recommendations they have for the ACERWC:

1. Advocate for the implementation of the laws/policies that take disability issues into account (where ratified)- through strategies and programs, including through the allocation of adequate budget that take into account the special needs of disabled children.
2. Domestication of the Convention
3. Urge States parties to make schools and other service providing institutions accessible to disabled children. Not only infrastructure but also information, materials etc.
4. Call for universal access to early childhood intervention & pre and post natal health care services. Eg. adaptive education/early diagnosis & prevention
5. Advocate for the ratification of the Disability Convention, change in the terminologies.

Group 4: Child Participation

The group had lively discussions and came up with the following as key issues in the area of child participation: inclusiveness, structures and processes and focal point organizations accountable for children's participation (using existing groups of children rather than forming new structures).

Article 7 of the ACRWC Freedom of Expression

Every child who is capable of communicating his or her own views shall be assured the rights to express his opinions freely in all matters and to disseminate his opinions subject to such restrictions as are prescribed by laws.

The group came up with the following recommendations for the Forum:

1. Consultation of children at all levels for the CSO Forum, timely communication of the program and themes to participating CSOs to enhance the participation of children
2. The CSO Forum should identify a lead organisation in each country to facilitate the consultation of children for the CSO Forum (Consultation should consider inclusiveness).
3. The CSO Forum should facilitate the sharing of guidelines, strategies and structures on child participation.
4. The lead agency in each country should coordinate the process of child participation in the 2012 CSO Forum

The following are the recommendations to the ACERWC:

1. Consult children through the CSO Forum or other existing structures for the identification of the Day of the African Child (DAC) theme.

2. Lobby the ACERWC to consider the possibility of involving child participation during presentation and consideration of State Reports
3. The Committee should promote Article 7 of the ACERWC

After these recommendations were presented, the draft Communiqué on children in Libya was also presented to the plenary.

Day 3

Day 3 started with a recap of the second day of the Forum.

Session 9: IHRDA/HURIDOCS Presentation on Case Law Analyser and effective use of online databases for child rights work.

Presenter: Daniel D'Esposito, Human Rights Information and Documentation Systems, International (HURIDOCS)

Mr. D'Esposito presented a website his NGO has recently developed for IHRDA. It is an easy-to use system that can help browsers search and comment on human rights decisions in Africa very easily. It is very easy to find, browse and comment on.

Participants can explore how the website works by clicking on: www.ihrda.org and then clicking on the Case Law Analyser.

Mr. D'Esposito then explained that his organisation would like to develop the website for the ACERWC and the Forum in a similar fashion. **These sites would be built free of charge.** Mr. D'Esposito explained to the participants that both websites should be up and running by the end of April.

Later in the day, participants returned to the question of the website. They wanted to know who would be responsible for managing the website and who is legally responsible for its content. Mr. D'Esposito proposed that WordPress is used for the website making it very easy to add new documents. For now, Eleni who is hired to organize the CSO forum and later the person working for the Liaison Office, could update it. It would take no more than one or two hours a year to do this. Mr. D'Esposito clarified that HIRUDOCS would facilitate the technical side but it is up to the Forum to decide what should be put on the website and it would be that organization, therefore, that would be legally responsible. The Forum website will also make the communication and organization of the Forum much easier. For example, next time people will want to sign up for the Forum, this can be done automatically on the internet.

Mr. D'Esposito then described a free software called Open EvSys that can be downloaded from the HURIDOCS website: www.huridocs.org It is a database software that is excellent for keeping data on individual cases. This enables organizations to track information electronically. HURIDOCS is also currently working on developing a database specifically for litigators.

If you would like to get more information about the new websites or the database software, please contact Daniel D'Esposito, danieldesposito@huridocs.org

Later in the day, the Forum voted in favour of having a website. The idea was officially endorsed.

Questions and answers

During this session, it was clarified that all of these programs and the websites are available in French and English. If you want them to be in Portuguese or Arabic, it is possible but we would need a volunteer to translate the text.

Participants were excited about the possibility of the website and provided several suggestions on what kind of content should be there. For example, information on how to do a Communication and the Save the Children/Plan Guide for Civil Society on the ACRWC should be on the site.

There was a lot of discussion as to whether this website was for the Forum or for the Liaison Unit, which has not yet been decided on. That was a concern, but the participants were enthusiastic with the type of tool the website was. There was also concern raised as to who would update the website and who would be legally responsible for the information uploaded on the site.

Participants were asking about how the database programs can be linked with those of other organisations. Mr. D'Esposito clarified that the database program is for individual organizations and cannot be linked in with others.

Session 10: Previous recommendations of the CSO Forum: How far have we come?

Presenters: Presenters from various countries and/or regions.

Moussa Sidikou- West Africa Coalitions

Mr. Sidikou presented on what the West Africa child rights coalitions did to move forward the recommendations from the last Forum. Many of the countries have already lobbied their States to submit their initial reports to the ACERWC. Guinea and Benin are in the process of developing their report. Having participants from Liberia and Sierra Leone at this

Forum was excellent because they did not know that their governments were behind in reporting and they will now take it up at home.

All of the coalitions were involved in the State reporting, if nothing else, as part of the validation process. Some of the coalitions have been involved in developing the alternative reports.

The coalitions lobbied for the election of the candidates so that the experts were of higher quality. None of the coalitions have yet received the recommendations to use for lobbying but once they are available, they will start.

Many of the coalitions took the Communiqué on Maternal, Child and Infant mortality that was developed in the 3rd CSO Forum and shared it with coalition members and other decision-makers. Some also met with the government delegations that were going to the AU Summit to discuss the mortality rate of children and women.

The Coalitions did not do so much on the Livingstone Agreement or in sharing information about peace and security.

The Coalitions did a lot of work on budgeting. They conducted training of trainers on budgeting and how to follow community-level budgets. With the decentralization, the development plans were done at a local level. Children were trained on budgeting and they were involved in the community budgeting- to have budget lines for specific topics for children. Some countries had budget lines for recreation while others took protection into consideration. In some countries, the coalitions also did budget analysis and found that the money was not used in the areas it was planned to be used.

In terms of child participation, we have a young parliamentarian of Senegal here who will participate in the pre-session. We have also established Child Protection Committees, where children are involved: children report to the Committees when they see their friends having problems. We have also trained children on citizenship and good governance.

We have lobbied our governments and now healthcare is free for 0-5 year olds in many West African countries and in some countries, caesarians are also free. We utilized CARMMA campaign to fight for the reduction or abolition of fees.

Caroline Chebet- Kenya coalition

When the Kenya team returned from the 3rd CSO Forum, they reported back to their colleagues on the outcome of this meeting. In Kenya, a structure has been established which makes it easy to bring the concerned organizations together and share the learning. Prior to the 4th CSO Forum, they held two meetings and filled out the questionnaire as a country rather than as individual organizations or coalitions. This would be their recommendation to all those participating in the Forum.

Before the 3rd CSO Forum, the Kenyan organizations started lobbying for someone to be nominated for the ACERWC. We were successful in nominating a qualified candidate but she was not elected to the Committee (probably because Kenya has had two previous

Committee members). The organizations also did a lot of lobbying using the communiqué on maternal and child health. We organized a Forum and engaged the government. Ministry of Medical Services and Ministry of Public Health and we also reached out to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. We sat together as CSOs and came up with specific recommendations which we shared with the delegation that went to the AU Summit. When the government delegation returned from the Summit, they contacted us and shared the outcomes of the meeting with us.

The celebrations of the Day of the African Child are intensively done as a network. They conducted a study to help explain the budget process in Kenya. This included an explanation of where the lobbying points are and when that lobbying can be done. A score card was developed to see how to keep government accountable for children.

They are also currently in the process of developing guidelines for creating a children's assembly and asking the government to pay for it. As Kenyan organizations, they are lobbying for the 2012 theme of the Day of the African Child to be 'right to play'.

Kenya is supposed to report next year on the ACRWC. In UNCRC, they have 3 reports overdue. As such, the coalitions hope to do the CRC and the ACRWC together. Civil society is helping the government to put out these reports.

The Kenyan coalition did get the recommendations from the ACERWC but have not yet disseminated them. They will be holding discussions soon on how to do that.

Eric Guga- Tanzania

In Tanzania, the Child Law Act has just been passed which is a milestone for the domestication of the ACRWC and CRC. In Tanzania, CSOs came together when they heard this bill was going to be enacted. They did not have any sort of network prior to that and so they formed a task force which led to the Tanzania Child Rights Forum (40 member organizations). Together they lobbied for the Child Law Act and reviewed the post enactment process and the lobbying process.

The key success in 2009/2010 was that the CSOs were able to lobby for the nomination of a candidate for the ACERWC who has since been elected. He is a CSO activist. A second achievement was the law itself. The law has copied and pasted sections that CSO proposed.

Other national policies have also started to include indicators on children. For example, the National Poverty Reduction Plans, the Plan of Action for Vulnerable Children (with a budget attached) and the National Data Management System.

CSOs now sit regularly with government to discuss vulnerable children. A national strategy for child participation has also been formulated. The government is supporting this children's council, which is comprised of two elected members from each district. However, there is a struggle to finance this as there are over 200 districts.

Questions and answers

Several of the participants also shared their experience of working on the CSO recommendations in the last year. This was a new experience for the Sudanese participants. They have established a Child Rights Forum (registered in 2010). They helped to endorse the new Child Act. The group of NGOs worked hard to change some of the discriminatory articles within the act. For example, in the previous act, street children were considered criminals. This has now been changed. They also learned that the State report must be submitted in soft copy and they will work to ensure this happens.

The participants from Angola also shared their experiences. They have created a network for child protection. This network will also be in charge of the reports. Next year they will start our alternative report. The really big challenge is that they speak Portuguese but we struggle with the limitation of the language.

Some other participants shared that there is a huge lack of knowledge on the ACRWC and children's rights in general. This goes for local authorities, magistrates and even NGOs. Very few of the authorities and government representatives know what the ACERWC is or what they do. There is a huge need for capacity building.

Another concern shared was the lack of capacity of NGOs in understanding the political structures and how the budgets work. For example, in the area of protection, we don't know what cases are being reviewed and we don't know who, within the government, is responsible for this and working on this. It is important for civil societies to really understand budgets and understand where the money is going and to work with media and children to make sure they all understand where the money is going.

The issue of how to include children in the Forum, to get their views represented at least and ways to have them interact with the Committee was brought up again. But one participant cautioned that unless children are well prepared and well trained on children's rights, we set them up to fail.

One concrete suggestion was to develop a facebook page for children to interact with one another between countries on issues related to children's rights.

The organizers of the Forum shared their concern on the commitment of the participants. 200 questionnaires were sent out to assess what participants had been doing since the last CSO Forum but less than 20 had been returned.

The Kenyans and West African coalitions had two suggestions. First that the questionnaires should be filled out by each country- that way it would encourage the CSOs to come together before and after the Forums to really follow through. In West Africa, they felt it was better to fill the questionnaires as a regional block. They already have a coalition of all the country coalitions in their region.

The participants of the Forum also pleaded with the organizers to share information as early as possible and to regularly update them. To this end, the organizers asked participants to be more involved throughout the year, not just during the three days. They also reminded

participants that the organization of such a Forum is quite complicated and it is difficult to get information in a timely fashion from the AU in order to organize this Forum since the Forum should precede the ACERWC Session (often the ACERWC session schedule is not determined by the AU until very late)

There was a concrete suggestion that at the next Forum, there is a presentation from CSOs in countries which have received the ACERWC recommendations sharing with the others how they are using the recommendations.

Session 11: CSO Forum Governance and Sustainability

Presenter: Chikezie Anyanwu

Mr. Anyanwu started out by giving a financial report of the 3rd CSO Forum. The 3rd CSO Forum was the first time participants were requested to pay registration fees.

Finances

The total cost of the 3rd CSO Forum was 30,244USD.

3867USD collected from registration fees (47 participants at 70USD and 17 participants paid in birr for a total of 4435 birr)

28USD was spent on bank transfers.

Of the money collected from registration fees, 600USD was used to pay per diems for the ACERWC and the remaining money was used for items such as hall rental, translation, lunches, tea breaks, transportation, etc.

The remaining costs of the Forum were covered as such:

ACPF	1320USD
Save the Children	9527
Save the Children UK	9550
Plan	6000

More money was collected from each of these organizations. The unspent monies were used to help pay for the 4th Forum.

Governance

For those who were not at the previous Forums, background information was provided. There was a feel for the need to institutionalize the Forum, mirroring the NGO Group in Geneva that works with the CRC Committee. This would be the direct link between the Committee and civil society. In the last Forum, 6 people were elected (and their respective organizations) as a Management Committee member to carry out the work of establishing a Liaison Unit (the tasks would be some of the following: maintaining a website, organizing the Forum, mobilizing people to participate in Pre-Sessions, share best practices, etc).

Someone was nominated from each of the regional blocks to carry this forward. There was a teleconference but it did not come up with concrete results. Plan and Save the Children are ready to support the Liaison Office. This would enable us to have information so that we can go further. There was an appeal to hear from this group to know why the issue has not moved forward.

Later in the day, Mr. Mugawe spoke on behalf of the Management Committee. The Committee was mandated to govern the operations of the Forum. There were no parameters to see how this Committee was going to work. For example, it was not given any resources to do this. Some of the challenges included: 1. resources; 2. staff (we need to have a person who deals with the CSO Forum day and night); 3. Challenges to work virtually-how do you act when you don't get response- a committee needs to physically sit together.

The Management Committee of the Forum (elected at the 3rd Forum and reinstated at the 4th)

The African Child Policy Forum (representing the host country and the Coordinator of the MC)

CONAFE- Niger (representing West Africa)

SADC Child Budget Network- Zimbabwe (representing Southern Africa)

Children's Legal Action Network- Kenya (representing East Africa)

Coalition for the Protection of Children in the DRC- DRC (representing Central Africa)

North Africa remains vacant

Despite these challenges, the members of the Management Committee are still committed to make this work. He pleaded with the Forum to give the Committee another year to make this happen. After much discussion and some reservations (please see the question and answer section), the Management Committee was endorsed to continue its work for another year.

The Management Committee's mandate was officially prolonged for a year. There was also a commitment to use some of the unused money from the organization of the 4th Forum (if there is any extra money) to support the Committee to meet in one way or another.

Questions and answers

The participants suggested that this financial information should be sent to the CSO Forum members via e-mail prior to the Forum rather than being presented at the Forum.

It was also clarified that the costs above do not include the costs incurred by supporting organizations for tickets, registration fees, hotels and per diems of all the sponsored participants. This would dramatically increase the total cost of the Forum. Participants suggested that, if possible, those costs should be included and the donors who sponsored the participants to attend should be recognized (for example, UNICEF supported the participation of members from Tanzania and Defense for Children International supported

participants from Ghana, Liberia and Sierra Leone along with Save the Children and Plan who supported many of their partners to attend).

A participant was curious to know why there were six logos (IHRDA, Africa Wide Movement for Children, ACPF, Save the Children, CONAFE, and Plan International) on the banner when it seems that only three have financially contributed. This raised many concerns. The organizers clarified that some of those on the banner did not support financially but did support significantly in technical terms. However it was admitted that two of the organizations had not helped in the organizing of the Forum (neither financially nor technically). A concrete suggestion from the participants was to remove ALL the logos from the banner.

Participants were wondering why UNICEF was not supporting this Forum. The participants were reminded that both UNICEF and OHCHR did express interest in supporting future forums in one way or another. It was also mentioned previously that UNICEF has supported the Forum technically and has supported participants to attend at a country level. It was also clarified that it is the responsibility of the Forum to approach UNICEF and other UN agencies for further support. Other participants wanted to clarify that **any organization that is interested in funding the Forum is welcome to do so.**

Participants expressed an interest in getting involved in developing the agenda. They would like to see expert CSOs from different regions presenting on their work.

Participants were also eager to see the AU as an added event to the Forum. The organizers suggested they extend their stay for a day to stay for the Opening Session of the ACERWC meeting- as that is held at the AU.

Participants were concerned that the number of participants seems to be declining in numbers. They were curious about how the Forum could ensure new faces are attending.

Some participants wanted to know if the Forum could be held in different countries. It was explained that the Forum's location is dependent on where the ACERWC holds their meeting. The Committee itself is also planning on moving its sessions. For example, the November session may be held in Nigeria. If that is the case, the Forum would be organized there.

One participant challenged the Management Committee. He found that the Committee had not responded to e-mails and had not been effectively utilizing Eleni, the person currently hired to manage the day-to-day business of the Forum. The participant stated that ACPF, as the coordinator of the Management Committee, has to be sure that it has the time and capacity to carry out the task, otherwise the Management Committee's composition should change.

Mr. Mugawe responded that ACPF did have capacity issues that affected the efficiency of the work but that it was not at all an indication of disinterest. He then said that ACPF has now officially designated a person to follow the issues of the Forum, Helen Seifu helen.seifu@africanchildforum.org.

Other participants were willing to give the Management Committee another chance but urged that they hold a formal meeting to move things forward, disseminate the Forum report, and figure out how countries will follow up on the commitments we have all made.

Session 12: Presentation and adoption of communiqué, resolution and recommendations

This session was dedicated to reviewing the draft communiqué, recommendations to the ACERWC and recommendations to CSOs. During this session, the participants went through all of the documents and modified them so that they address exactly what they were trying to express during the Forum.

For a copy of the final recommendations to the ACERWC, please go to Annex 1.

For a copy of the final recommendations for civil society, please go to Annex 2.

For a copy of the Communiqué developed on the situation of children in Libya, presented to the ACERWC, please go to Annex 3.

Once the core documents were agreed upon, David Mugawe officially closed the Forum.

This report was prepared by Sophie Joy Mosko
March 2011
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Annex 1

COMMUNIQUE TO THE 17TH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE AFRICAN COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS ON THE RIGHTS AND WELFARE OF THE CHILD

Fourth Civil Society Organisations (CSO) Forum on the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child 18-20 March 2011, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Preamble

Recognizing the child's unique and privileged position in the African society as reiterated in the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (African Children's Charter);

Reaffirming the principles of the rights and welfare of the child contained in the legal and political framework of the African Union (AU), in particular the Call for Accelerated Action for an Africa Fit for Children (2008-2012), as well as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, and other international and regional instruments;

Acknowledging the important work that the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (the Committee) carries out in implementing its mandate;

Urging the Committee to reconsider the recommendations of previous CSO Forums;

Reminding the Committee of previous recommendations made by the CSO Forum

Commending the Committee for the very relevant theme selected for the 2011 Day of the African Child (*All together for urgent action for street children*);

Noting with concern that children without appropriate care are amongst the most marginalised children on the continent;

Taking into consideration that articles 1 and 4 of the African Children's Charter place an obligation on State Parties to recognise the rights of children and take all measures to ensure that their best interests are realised in all matters relating to them;

Noting with concern that in spite of the fact that African States have ratified the African Children's Charter, a level of domestication or harmonisation is still necessary within many States to fully realise the rights and well-being of children as contained in this Charter;

Realising that in harmonising or domesticating the Charter due consideration must be given to budgeting for children, prioritising the needs of vulnerable children, particularly children living and/or working on the streets, children with disabilities, refugee and internally-displaced children, and children in institutional care;

We, the participants of the Fourth Civil Society Organisations (CSO) Forum on the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from 18 to 20 March 2011 **make the following recommendations to the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child in relation to children without appropriate care:**

A) Children living and/or working on the streets and refugee & internally-displaced children

- According to UNICEF, an estimated 32 million children in Africa live or work on the streets. These children are often viewed as a nuisance to society, suffer from violence and abuse, face health problems and malnutrition, have difficulty in accessing health facilities, are vulnerable to substance use, lose the relationship with an adult caregiver and opportunities for growth, find it difficult to attend school and may be at risk of being mistreated by law enforcement bodies. Consequently, we recommend that the Committee:
 - Should strongly consider having a day of general discussion on children living and/or working on the street with the relevant stakeholders, including children, with the goal to establish agreed-upon indicators that would inform policy, programmatic interventions and research.
- Forced displacements due to existing and new conflicts, natural and man-made disasters, climate change and urbanisation have resulted in an alarming rate of refugees and internally-displaced persons, of which women and children are most affected. Consequently, we recommend that the Committee:
 - Should urge State Parties to ratify and domesticate the African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally-Displaced Persons in Africa (Kampala Convention) to grant greater protection to women and children.

B) Alternative care

- While children in Africa are subject to alternative care including inter-country adoption, we acknowledge that there exists a lack of consensus on the issue due to diverse interpretations and understanding of circumstances of children. Compounding this further is the inadequacy and abuse of alternative care systems by various actors. We therefore recommend that the Committee:
 - Should adopt a General Comment on article 24 of the African Children's Charter giving consideration to issues relating to alternative care including inter-country adoptions in the best interest of the child within the African context.

C) The rights of children with disabilities

- Children with disabilities are generally hidden in Africa and therefore their plight is often ignored and disregarded in national policies and legislation. The consequences of these lead to endemic violation of the following rights; amongst others: the rights to education, health and health services, social security, participation, and the right to protection from abuse and neglect. We therefore recommend that the Committee:
 - Adopt a resolution on the rights of children with disabilities.

- Should give an advisory opinion on article 13 of the African Children's Charter, giving due consideration to the language that promotes the dignity of children with disabilities.
- Call upon states to properly implement laws and policies passed and adopted for the rights and well-being of children with disabilities.

D) *Child Participation*

- The meaningful participation of children is important in the realisation of their rights and wellbeing. To this end, we wish to re-emphasize the importance of child participation as a cross-cutting theme in the mandate of the Committee. We recommend that the Committee:
 - Adopt guidelines on how child participation will be realised in the fulfilment of their mandate.
 - Meaningfully engage children in the identification of the theme of the Day of the African Child.

E) *Rights of children in non-member states of the ACRWC*

- The CSO Forum is deeply concerned on the plight of children in the nine countries in Africa that have not ratified the African Children's Charter. These children are at risk of having their basic human rights violated without redress. We therefore recommend that the Committee:
 - The Committee should liaise with the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights and other regional and international human rights mechanisms to ensure the protection of the rights of children in these countries which have ratified this Charter.
 - Strongly urge these nine remaining countries to ratify the African Children's Charter.

Conclusion:

In order to concretize the recommendations mentioned above, we would strongly recommend that the ACERWC endeavours to constitute a special mechanism that holistically examines the issue of children without appropriate care.

With that we reiterate our support as civil society to work with the ACERWC in implementing these recommendations.

Done in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on 20 March 2011.

Annex 2

RECOMMENDATIONS TO CSOs FROM THE 4TH FORUM ON THE AFRICAN CHARTER ON THE RIGHTS AND WELFARE OF THE CHILD

Fourth Civil Society Organisations (CSO) Forum on the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child 18-20 March 2011, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Recommendations for CSOs Based on four Thematic Areas

Theme	Recommendation	Action	Date
Group 2: Street/IDP Children	Harmonisation of data collection in collaboration with Government.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set up information and data collection system; • Indentify task force for harmonisation of data collection; • Train staff or task force on data collection; • Analysis and verify data and share with stakeholders. 	April- May 2011 July 2011 July 2011 July –Nov 2011
	Consolidate the CSOs experiences, share them with the ACERWC Members and put them on CSO and ACERWC websites.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a system for organisations in various countries to share experiences /best practices on IDP children and children living or working on the streets; • Timely invitations to the CSO Forum. 	March 2011
	Share the theme of the Day of African Child with stakeholders in various countries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct planning meetings with child-focused organizations in-country on DAC. 	March-May 2011

Group 3: Children with Disabilities	Build the capacity of relevant stakeholders (sensitization, materials and funding support, training etc).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct training needs assessment; • Develop training manual; • Identify relevant stakeholders; • Conduct training and monitoring. 	July 2011
	Raise awareness on disability issues including the urgent plight of albinos targeting the parents, the general public, parliamentarians, experts, media etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify key messages for awareness raising in consultation with children; • Identify the audience; • Disseminate key messages through media (TV, Radio and news papers). 	August 2011
	Advocate for the ratification of the UN Disability Convention and lobby the Committee to progressively interpret the ACRWC to promote the dignity of children under article 13.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop advocacy plan/tools; • Conduct lobbying meeting with decision makers at country level; • Monitor the implementation of laws and policies that take disability issues into account - putting in place monitoring mechanisms for the States' implementation of laws/policies. 	Nov 20 th , 2011 (CRC day) and disabled day 8 th December 2011 On going
	Undertake research, collect data on disabled children, and disseminate the findings.		
Group 4: Child Participation	Consultation of children at all levels for the CSO Forum, timely communication of the program and themes to participating CSOs to enhance the participation of children.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify existing child-led structures (forum, clubs and movement) at country level which support child participation; • Share information about CSO forum; • Conduct children's consultation meetings to obtain their views. 	April to July 2011

	The CSO Forum should identify a lead organisation in each country to facilitate the consultation of children for the CSO Forum (Consultation should consider inclusiveness and meaningful engagement of children).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct planning meeting for organizations in each country to identify potential lead organization at country level. 	April 2011
	The CSO Forum should facilitate the sharing of guidelines, strategies and structures on child participation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish systems where the child participation guidelines/tools/manuals or standards can be shared and harmonized. 	May 2011
	The lead agency in each country should coordinate the process of child participation in the 2012 CSO Forum, ensuring their presence and participation having due regard to the representation of children from all regions in Africa.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation session with children; • Organize children country wide to identify their representatives. 	November 2011
Group 1: Inter-country Adoption	Develop an understanding on alternative care options. What alternative care options are available, etc.		

- In order to facilitate the implementation of the recommendations captured in the table above, the following areas arising from the recommendations and action points above should be prioritised:

- Recommendations addressing capacity-building.
 - Recommendations addressing identification of lead agencies at country level. Organisations attending the 4th CSO Forum should take the initiative to nominate themselves as the lead agencies.
 - Recommendations addressing data collection and research. These should be linked with experience sharing and best practices.
 - Recommendations addressing meaningful child participation.
 - Recommendation addressing sharing of tools.
 - Identification of persons and organisations responsible for implementing the action points.
 - Addressing issues of time and resource allocation.
-
- CSOs present at the 4th CSO Forum should ensure that they hold consultations with children in their work and report back on the process of child participation.
 - CSOs should receive the Report of the 4th CSO Forum within good time to enable dissemination to children.

Done in Addis Ababa on 19th March, 2011

Annex 3

COMMUNIQUE TO THE 17TH ORDINARY SESSION OF THE AFRICAN COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS ON THE RIGHTS AND WELFARE OF THE CHILD ON THE CONFLICT IN LIBYA

**Fourth Civil Society Organisations (CSO) Forum on the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child,
18-20 March 2011, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**

Preamble

Recognizing the child's unique and privileged position in the African society as reiterated in the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (African Children's Charter);

Reaffirming the principles of the rights and welfare of the child contained in the legal and political framework of the African Union (AU), in particular the Call for Accelerated Action for an Africa Fit for Children (2008-2012), as well as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, and other international and regional instruments;

Acknowledging the important work that the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (the Committee) carries out in implementing its mandate;

Welcoming the communiqué of the 256th meeting of the African Union's Peace and Security Council and the creation of the *Ad-hoc* High-Level Committee on Libya, which has produced a statement regarding the current crisis in Libya;

Taking note of United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1612 and 1973 authorising the responsibility to protect through the use of force in Libya;

Welcoming the commitments made by Egypt and Tunisia to keep their borders open to people seeking refuge from the violence in Libya;

Mindful that the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child will consider the State Party Report of Libya at its 17th Ordinary Session to be held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from the 21st to 25th March 2011;

Noting with grave concern that the situation of children in Libya remains very critical due to the ongoing conflict;

We, the participants of the Fourth Civil Society Organisations (CSO) Forum on the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on 18 to 20 March 2011 **strongly make the following recommendations to the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child:**

1. Should request specific responses from the State delegation of the Libyan Peoples Arab Jamahiriya to the following issues affecting Libyan children caught in the midst of the conflict:

- a. The specific measures undertaken by all parties to the conflict to ensure:
 - i. **The right to free movement** of people and children within Libya without fear of violence, according to international law and the African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally-Displaced Persons in Africa (Kampala Convention);
 - ii. The **protection of children in armed conflict** and to further ensure that civilians, especially children, are not harmed by the ongoing violence, having due regard to United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1612 and 1973;
 - iii. The safe **transit of humanitarian supplies and personnel** into Libya and to allow children and their families to access food and humanitarian assistance, especially the roughly 700,000 children apparently trapped in Tripoli;
 - iv. The **distinction between military and non-military targets**, including hospitals, schools, and areas populated by civilians;

Done in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on 19 March 2011.

Annex 4: List of participants

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Annex 5 Agenda

4th Forum on the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child Children without appropriate care

March 18-20, 2011

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Location: Christian Relief and Development Association building, Kaliti

Day 1

Time	Title of the session	Facilitator	Presenter	Objective of the session
9:00- 9.15	Introducing the CSO Forum	David Mugawe, African Child Policy Forum	Mr. Edmund Foley IHRDA	ACERWC- welcome <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the CSO Forum • Purpose • History • Objectives of this particular CSO Forum
9:15- 11.00	Key note speakers: Overview: The status of children without appropriate care in Africa- challenges and prospects <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The AU Human Rights Strategy on key issues relevant to child rights organisations 2. Focus on street children: its current trends in Africa and the state of the rights of street children 3. The Strategic Direction of 	David Mugawe	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Head of Division, Democracy, Governance, Human Rights and Elections AUC Dept of Political Affairs 2. Head, UNICEF Liaison Office to the AU, UNECA 3. Regional Representative, UNOHCHR, Eastern Africa 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Highlight the key aspects of the AU Human Rights Strategy and how it impacts on child rights; 2. Illustrate the linkages between the AU Human Rights Strategy and other AU human rights instruments. 3. Highlight the current state of the problem of street children in Africa, illustrating the challenges posed to protection of their rights and possible solutions. 4. Participants have a better understanding of the strategic direction of UNOHCHR in Africa and how collaborate to enhance children

	the UNOHCHR in Africa and how CSOs can collaborate			rights and the theme of the 2011 DAC.
11:00-11.15	Tea and coffee break			
11:15-11:45	4. The roles of the OAU Refugee Convention and AU IDP Convention in protecting the rights of children without appropriate care	David Mugawe	5. Head of Division, Humanitarian Affairs, Political Affairs Department AUC	Participants have a better understanding of the linkage between this instrument and child rights as well as discuss the impact of this instrument on safeguarding of the rights of children without appropriate care
11:45-12:30	Questions and answers and discussions	David Mugawe		
12:30-1.00	The Africa Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child – Update on plans and priorities	Edward Ouma	ACERWC	Participants are updated on key activities and challenges faced in 2010 and the Committee's plans for 2011. Overview of the Charter (and difference to CRC). Role of the Committee and its makeup. Description of mechanisms within the Charter (state and alternative reports, communications and investigations). The state of ratification, harmonization and implementation of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child.
1:00- 1.30	Questions & Answers	Edward Ouma		
1:30- 2:00	Lunch			
2:00-2.30	ACRWC as a principal norm-setting instrument for safeguarding the rights of children without appropriate care in Africa	Susan Mbugua	Prof. Julia Sloth Neilson or Edmund Foley/ACERWC	Participants are familiarized with the ACRWC as a key normative framework for safeguarding the rights of children without appropriate care

2:30-3:00	Questions and answers	Susan Mbugua		
3:00-3:15	Nomination of working group to draft a resolution, communiqué and recommendation for the 17 th Session of the ACERWC.	Susan Mbugua		Group of people are nominated to draft a communiqué, resolution and recommendations to the 17 th Session of the ACERWC.
3:15-3:30	Tea and coffee break			
3.30-3.50	The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child and its mechanisms to monitor children's rights: where are we?	Odette International	(Plan Susan Mbugua Save the Children (Sweden)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview of the Charter (and difference to CRC) • Role of the Committee and its make up • Description of mechanisms within the Charter (state and alternative rapports, communications and investigations) • The state of ratification, harmonization and implementation of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child.
3.50 – 4.15	Questions, Answers & Discussion	Odette International	(Plan	
4:15- 4:45	Panel discussion: Concrete actions at national and regional level to address key challenges affecting children without appropriate care.	Odette (Plan)	Moussa Harouna, African Movement of Working Children; Beranger Beheroudougou, Plan International WARO; UNICEF Ethiopia	Participants are acquainted with real field experiences of issues affecting children without appropriate care to facilitate in the drawing of concrete action plans Key action plans identified.
4:45-5:45	Questions, answers and discussion	Odette (Plan)		

Day 2

Time	Title of the session	Facilitator	Presenter	Objective
9:00- 9:30	Recap	Chikezie		
9:30- 10:30	Technical presentations: Part 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Inter-country adoption: trends in Africa ➤ Children in institutional care 	Chikezie	Dr. Benyam Mezmur or Remember Miamingi & Rose September (AWM)	To provide technical input in the key thematic areas with a view to inform group discussions and plans of action
10:30 -11:00	Question and answers	Chikezie		
11:00 – 11:30	Tea Break			
11:30 – 12:30	Technical presentations: Part 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Children with disabilities ➤ UNICEF's shift to equity focus: Reaching the bottom quintile ➤ Street children 	Chikezie	ACPF UNICEF ACERWC	To provide technical input in the key thematic areas with a view to inform group discussions and plans of action
12:30 -1:00	Questions and answers	Chikezie		
1:00 -2:00	Lunch			
2:00 -4:00	Group discussions – four break away groups (Children with disabilities, inter-country adoption, children in institutional care and street children)	To be facilitated by experts in the area		Participants to come up with key recommendations and action plans
4:00 -5:30	Report back to plenary	CONAFE	Group member rapporteurs	

Day 3

Time	Title of the session	Facilitator	Presenter	Objective of the session
9:00-9:30	Recap			
9:30-10:00	Presentation of draft communiqué, resolution and recommendations to the 17 th Session of the ACERWC	Plan	Drafting Committee	To enable the plenary to input into draft communiqué, resolution and recommendations
10:00- 10:30	Questions, answers and discussion on communiqué and recommendations	Plan	Drafting Committee	
10:30- 11:00	Tea break			
11:00- 12:00	Previous recommendations of the CSO Forum: How far we have come? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feedback on questionnaires 	Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Team from Nairobi 		To assess progress made on implementation of CSO recommendation both to the Committee and to itself
12:30- 1:00	CSO Forum governance and sustainability			To fine tune the current management of the CSO Forum
1:00 -2:00	Lunch			
2:00 – 2:20	IHRDA/HURIDOCS Presentation on Case Law Analyser and effective use of online databases for child rights work	Plan	Edmund Foley, IHRDA / Daniel Esposito, Executive Director, HURIDOCS	To demonstrate to participants how to use the African Case Law Analyser and how its benefits can be replicated in developing online databases for child rights work.
2:20 – 2:40	Progress made by the Africa Wide Movement	Plan		To assess the progress of the Africa Wide Movement.
2:40-3:40	Final presentation and adoption of communiqué, resolution and recommendations	Remember Miamingi	Drafting Committee	To enable the plenary to input into final draft communiqué,

				resolution and recommendations
3:40-4:40	Way forward: Draft plan of action on children without appropriate care in Africa	Remember Miamingi		To come up with an action plan to facilitate joint interventions on children without appropriate
4:40 – 5:10	Closing remarks	Remember Miamingi	Commissioner DSA, AUC & Chairperson, ACERWC	