Child Rights Information Network

Annual Report 2003 – 2004

Please send letters, comments and suggestions to:

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CRIN at a glance

CRIN Membership by Region 2003–04

Oceania 2%
Europe 29%
Africa 26%
Americas 15%
Asia 28%

Total = 1413 organisations
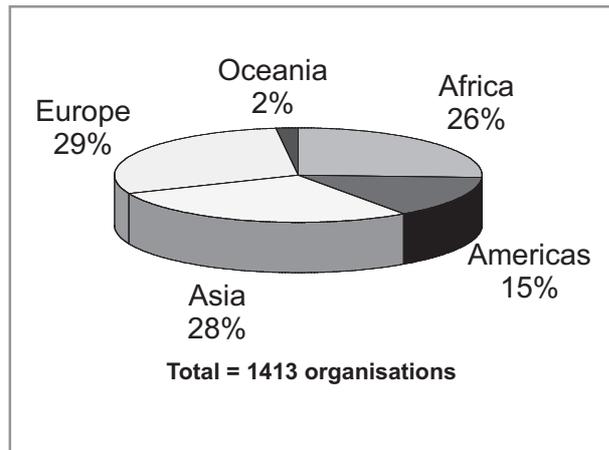
Membership distribution

(Members per Region)

Eastern Africa, Middle Africa, Northern Africa, Southern Africa, Western Africa, Caribbean, Central America, Northern America, South America, Eastern Asia, South-central Asia, South-eastern Asia, Western Asia, Eastern Europe, Northern Europe, Southern Europe, Western Europe, Australia and New Zealand
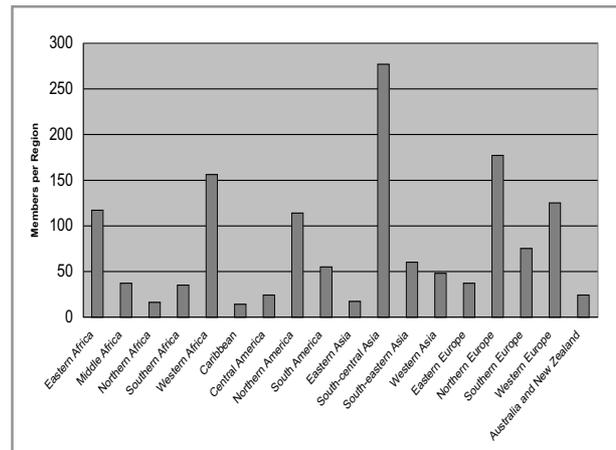
Five countries with most members

United Kingdom, India, United States, Ghana, Bangladesh

Growth in CRIN membership

1995, 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004
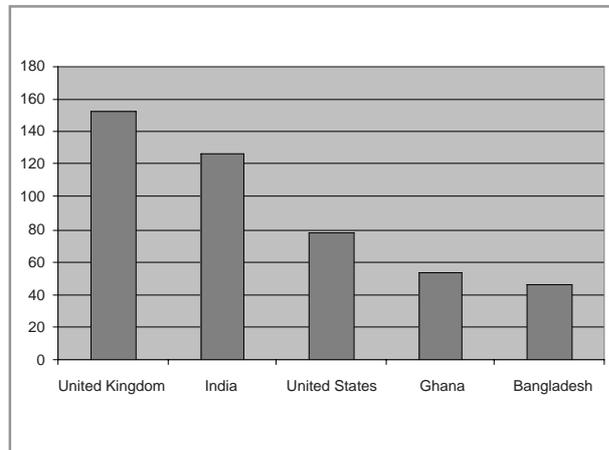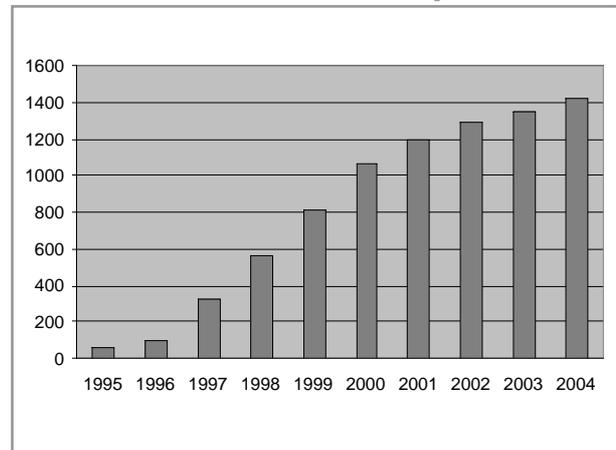
Services to Members

- Thematic newsletters (English, French and Spanish)
- CRINMAILs (twice weekly English, monthly others)
- Directory of Child Rights Organisations
- Annual reports and working papers
- General information support
- Organisation and resource pages on www.crin.org

CRINMAIL Subscribers

English 2869
Special Session 2043
Armed conflict 952
Spanish 325
Rights 201
French 187
Child Rights Caucus 163

The Website contains information on: **Child Rights:** The Convention on the Rights of the Child | NGO Alternative Reports | International Treaties. **Resources:** Publications catalogue | News on child rights | Newsletters | Events | Email lists | CRINMAIL. **Organisations:** Directory of child rights organisations (CRIN Members) | About CRIN section | Website of the NGO Group for the CRC. **Regional Inform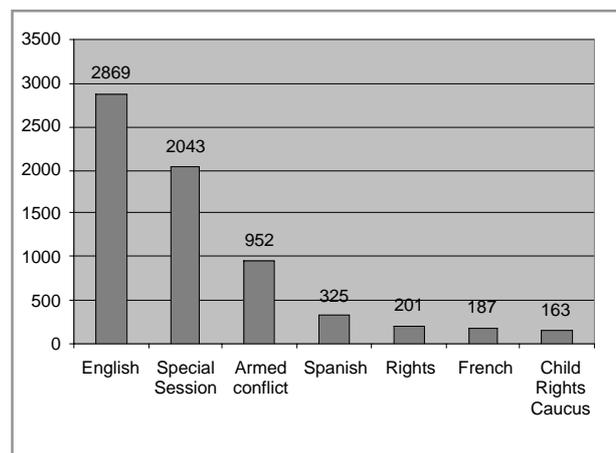ation:** News, events, publications, organisations and international treaties | Divided into 5 regions: Africa, Americas, Asia, Europe and Oceania. **Thematic pages:** About child rights | Armed conflict | Child labour | Disability | Discrimination | Education | Health | HIV/AIDS | Juvenile Justice | Macroeconomics | Media | Sexual exploitation | UN Special Session | Violence against children | Rights–based programming

Introduction

The Child Rights Information Network (CRIN) continues to be one of the largest networks within the global child rights community. Over 1,400 child rights organisations in 137 countries have joined CRIN. About 86 per cent of those organisations are NGOs and 60 per cent are located in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. CRIN services the needs of another 2,200 organisations and individuals who have joined its mailing lists without becoming members.

This annual report provides a narrative and financial report of activities for the year from 1 April 2003 to 31 March 2004. This includes a core programme dating back to 1995 as well as special projects carried out during this year.

Responding to changing information needs

Child rights, and human rights in general, occupy an increasingly important place in the development agenda. In the last few years we have witnessed a growing convergence of thinking and practice between work on human rights, development and humanitarian assistance. The common theme is "*rights*". CRIN plays its part in sharing learning about best practice in promoting child rights, in supporting effective advocacy strategies, and improving practice in such areas as child participation. CRIN is also a major conduit for the exchange of information between members and in tracking and disseminating information from the broader development community.

Entering new areas

The environment of child rights is changing. CRIN is responding to this by taking on specialist areas of work such as: producing a new web resource on rights–based programming; producing annotated readers on emerging issues; and tracking the implications for child rights arising from A World Fit for Children and the Millennium Development Goals.

Strengthening partnerships

CRIN aims to make the most of the elements it has in common with other child rights organisations. It therefore continues to build collaborations with such bodies as the NGO Group for the CRC (and its subgroups), the Global Movement for Children, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Committee on the Rights of the Child.

Sustaining CRIN's core work

The period covered by this report was a time of change for CRIN. For the first few months of the year, first two, and then one member of staff sustained the unit. A new coordinator was appointed in August 2003 and, alongside the high level of activity as detailed in this report, work went on to review the organisation. A detailed organisational review was carried out in November 2003 which resulted in a business plan for the next three years that aimed to match the resources available to CRIN.

Generous support from core funders has enabled CRIN to provide free and valued services to members since 1995. These include Save the Children Sweden, the International Save the Children Alliance, Save the Children UK, UNICEF Office of Public Partnerships and UNICEF Division of Policy and Planning. At the time of writing, Plan International had also pledged support to CRIN. However, funds from these sources are insufficient to cover the range of services CRIN currently provides. Since CRIN was established in 1995 the membership has grown rapidly, yet the funds that are allocated to this work have not grown to the same extent. It is critical that CRIN attract additional resources.

Priorities for the organisation now are:

❏ to increase and diversify CRIN's funding base in order to consolidate its core activities; and

❏ to significantly increase the staff of CRIN within the next twelve months. This will enable CRIN to maintain its core activities as well as to take on new projects. The latter is not possible without securing the former.

CRIN 2004 – 2006

In late 2003, CRIN underwent a review of its core values and of its activities. It involved a range of stakeholders past and present and resulted in a Business Plan for the period 2004 to 2006. The main outcomes of the review are presented here.

CRIN is an independent forum for the exchange of information about child rights. We assist the work of all those people and organisations committed to the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC).

CRIN aims to democratise information on child rights and to encourage information sharing between different parts of the world and different actors in the implementation of the CRC. CRIN seeks to empower the child rights community and to accelerate implementation of the Convention. It does this by providing a central clearinghouse for such information and by making information available in a variety of formats and media.

CRIN strives:

❑ To meet the information needs of organisations and individuals working for children's rights;

❑ To support and promote the implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child;

❑ To support organisations in gathering, handling, producing and disseminating child rights information.

These objectives are expressed in CRIN's core values, namely:

Children have rights as laid down in the Convention on the Rights of the Child. CRIN plays a part in the international effort to implement the CRC

The CRC is the centre of our work as reflected in both the content of our products and in the criteria for membership of CRIN. The implementation of the CRC remains a huge challenge facing governments and civil society, including more specific targets as reflected in A World Fit for Children and, more generally, the Millennium Development Goals.

Information is an important tool for empowering children and the organisations that work directly with children

CRIN acts as a clearinghouse for information on child rights. Improving and increasing global and regional access to good quality, dispassionate and accurate information on child rights is a central concern of CRIN's work.

CRIN is product oriented. The product is information

CRIN has gained its good reputation by getting things done. Maintaining our quality products and services for members and others will ensure our usefulness and continuity.

CRIN has a bias towards meeting the information needs of the resource poor

Whilst CRIN members are spread across the world, we maintain a particular focus on redistributing from the "information rich" to the "information poor". In this sense CRIN democratises information. This focus also puts an onus on CRIN to translate information such that it is useful to the widest possible audience in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

Because of inequalities in access to information media, especially electronic, CRIN uses mixed media and multiple formats

There are still many barriers to access to ITCs, despite a growth in internet use. Slow connection speeds, limited access time, expense and other negative features of the digital divide make it essential to continue to provide a choice of media to our members wherever practicable. Print media is still the preferred alternative to electronic communication.

CRIN is responsive to members' needs but strikes a balance between listening and leading

CRIN is responsive to the expressed needs of members and plans its activities accordingly. CRIN also seeks to take a lead in information provision and sees the translation of information into knowledge and learning as an important role.

CRIN wishes to develop its work in four broad areas:

1. Increase the quality of CRIN's existing services, both its core products and special projects, with the continued use of mixed media, particularly electronic and print. CRIN has become very effective in disseminating information. Knowledge creation requires greater interaction and dialogue.

2. Maintaining CRIN as the leader in information dissemination in child rights. This is through ensuring contributions to global and local debates on child rights and the translation of new research and good practice in the field of child rights.

3. Increasing dialogue between and among members of the child rights community internationally by capturing members' energy. This allows CRIN to extend and enrich the network of organisations involved. The implementation of regional programmes of CRIN is one route to this.

4. Making the organisation more robust through changes to CRIN's management and governance.

CRIN Activities 2003 – 2004

Networking services

Directory of members

There are thousands of organisations around the world committed to promoting child rights and the full implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). The Child Rights Information Network (CRIN) operates as a portal to over 1,400 of these organisations.

CRIN's 2003 Directory of Child Rights Organisations includes contact details on organisations that have joined as members to the network up to September 2003. Each member has agreed a commitment to children's rights, the UNCRC and active information exchange.

CRIN's membership includes non-governmental organisations (NGOs), United Nations agencies, inter-governmental organisations, government agencies, educational institutions and other child rights practitioners.

The Directory enables communication directly from one CRIN member to another. These relations are a critical component of the CRIN network because they allow it to operate effectively without the need to communicate through the central hub in London.

This directory is the most comprehensive resource for those seeking information about child rights organisations internationally. It is available in both electronic format on the CRIN website and in printed form. The first and second editions were published in 1997 and 1998 respectively. The third edition was produced in December 2003. An updated and expanded edition is planned for 2004–05.

Regional distribution of CRIN membership (% share of total in brackets)

The directory is a key resource for organisations wishing to link up with others that are working in the same country or region or that want to make contact with child rights organisations further afield. It is invaluable to those who wish to have immediate access to a huge number of organisations working in child rights. The directory provides a means for child rights organisations to share information, document good practice and to network. Inclusion in the directory helps organisations to position themselves within the child rights community at large.

For more detailed information about members you can consult the on–line Directory of Child Rights Organisations on the website. (www.crin.org/organisations/). This can be searched according to: **Region** in which CRIN members work | **Country** where the office is located and countries in which the organisation works | **Areas of expertise** such as child labour, sexual exploitation, etc. | **Organisational mandate | Contact details** including a "main CRIN Contact" who acts as a reference point.

CRIN membership

Membership of CRIN continues to grow. At the time of writing, mid–2004, 1413 organisations were registered with CRIN. Our current challenges are:

To continue the steady growth in membership to ensure that all key child rights organisations around the world are part of the network. Specific efforts are being focused on those regions where membership needs a special boost, for example in parts of Latin America, in Francophone Africa and in the Middle East.

To promote increased direct participation of members in providing resources, reports and news so it can be shared with other members and the wider child rights community. This includes encouraging members to submit items for CRINMAIL, newsletter articles, reports and events for the CRIN website. It must be remembered that in many cases the only presence that members, most often small NGOs in Asia, Africa and Latin America, have on the worldwide web is their pages on the CRIN website.

Growth in CRIN membership since 1995
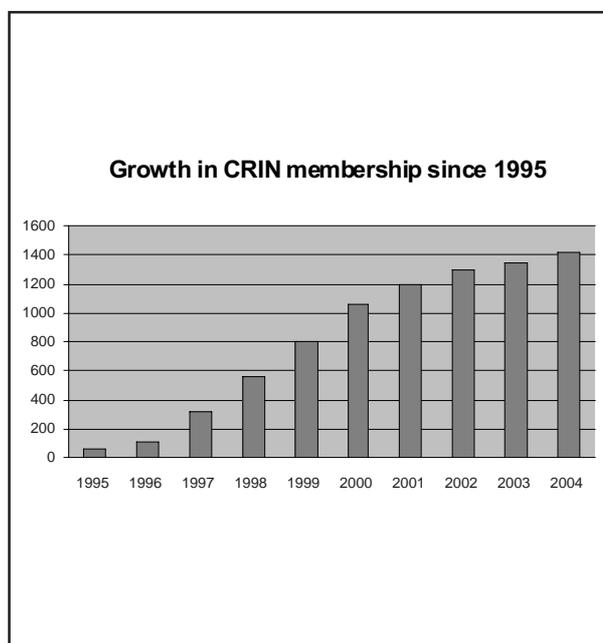
Country Distribution of CRIN Members – 2003–04

Country		Country		Country		Country		Country	
Albania	5	Costa Rica	4	India	143	Mexico	3	Sri Lanka	21
Angola	3	Cote d'Ivoire	12	Indonesia	10	Moldova	2	Sudan	4
Argentina	5	Croatia	5	Iran	2	Morocco	2	Swaziland	1
Australia	16	Cuba	1	Ireland	4	Mozambique	3	Sweden	7
Austria	7	Cyprus	1	Israel	10	Nepal	25	Switzerland	36
Azerbaijan	4	Czech Republic	1	Italy	18	Netherlands	18	Syrian AR	1
Bangladesh	50	Denmark	5	Jamaica	1	New Zealand	8	Taiwan	3
Belarus	1	Djibouti	1	Japan	4	Nicaragua	2	Tanzania	7
Belgium	22	Dominica	2	Jordan	5	Nigeria	16	Thailand	14
Belize	2	Ecuador	3	Kenya	38	Northern Ireland [UK]	3	Togo	7
Benin	7	Egypt	6	Korea, South	1	Norway	5	Tunisia	4
Bhutan	1	Ethiopia	14	Kosovo	1	Pakistan	33	Turkey	4
Bolivia	2	Fiji	3	Kuwait	1	Palestine	8	Tuvalu	1
BosnHerz.	4	Finland	3	Kyrgyzstan	1	Panama	6	Uganda	27
Botswana	2	France	25	Lao PDR	1	Papua New Guinea	1	Ukraine	6
Brazil	11	Gabon	1	Lebanon	8	Paraguay	4	UAE	1
Bulgaria	3	Gambia	15	Lesotho	3	Peru	6	United Kingdom	145
Burkina	5	Georgia	4	Liberia	4	Philippines	17	United States	80
Burundi	6	Germany	16	Lithuania	5	Poland	4	Uruguay	5
Cambodia	9	Ghana	54	Luxembourg	1	Romania	11	Uzbekistan	1
Cameroon	19	Greece	10	Macedonia	3	Russian Federation	6	Venezuela	4
Canada	34	Guatemala	6	Madagascar	2	Senegal	12	Viet Nam	4
Chad	2	Guinea	6	Malawi	3	Serbia and Montenegro	7	Yemen	1
Chile	4	Guinea-Bissau	1	Malaysia	5	Sierra Leone	11	Zambia	5
China	5	Haiti	10	Mali	4	Slovakia	2	Zimbabwe	10
Colombia	11	Honduras	1	Malta	1	Slovenia	2	————	
Congo	2	Hong Kong	4	Mauritania	2	South Africa	26	Total	1413
Congo DR	13	Hungary	1	Mauritius	4	Spain	19		

Publications

Since 2001 when CRIN's current website was launched, details of nearly 3,000 full text and bibliographic materials on child rights have been collected and posted on the website. This includes books, working papers, conference proceedings, journal articles and more, on a range of issues relating to children and their rights. It also covers the latest research on emerging areas.

Details of the latest publications on child rights are added to the CRIN site, announced via CRINMAIL and promoted in the CRIN Newsletter. These resources can be searched for by theme, author, country/region, language, information type and keyword.

Events

As with publications, events are posted on the CRIN website and announced in CRINMAILs. The events calendar provides details of key events in child rights, including conferences, workshops and United Nations meetings such as sessions of the Committee on the Rights of the Child.

Public enquiries

The CRIN Coordinating Unit processes an average of 70 emails per day, as well as enquiries by telephone, post and fax. These are from members, the media, other organisations or individuals working on child rights, and members of the public including a growing number of children and young people. Some emails are specific requests for information and others are submissions of information for wider circulation. Responding to information requests from members and public enquiries is an important, and time consuming, aspect of the work of the CRIN office.

The subject of enquiries includes general information about child rights, specific enquiries about child rights in different countries, membership enquiries, legal assistance for custody issues, complaints about child rights abuses, child abuse, etc, financial assistance, and membership information.

The need for additional staff to attend to membership relations is especially apparent in this area. That callers keep returning is testament to the importance of such services. However, we have had to devise efficient methods to respond in order to cope with the traffic.

Coordinating Unit staff have produced a set of standard responses to common queries. These can be sent as emails or by post and are in three languages (English, French and Spanish). These will be turned into a set of Frequently Asked Questions and posted on the website

Enquirers are often referred to the CRIN website, most frequently to the Directory of Child Rights Organisations, the Publications Catalogue, the thematic areas, and the pages of NGO Alternative Reports to the Committee on the Rights of the Child. Through these methods, all enquiries are dealt with within three to five days.

Owing to an increase in requests on specialised areas, CRIN is continuing to produce specialised readers on aspects of child rights. Previous ones have included A Reader on Child Rights and A Reader on NPAs. In preparation are readers on: Children and Armed Conflict, Children and Violence and Children and HIV/AIDS.

Member services

Newsletter: published in English, French and Spanish, these examine a specific theme in depth as well as summarising news, events, campaigns and publications. It is distributed in hard copy to all members plus another 2200 organisations and individual subscribers. The Newsletter is the most popular download from the website. Due to financial constraints, only one Newsletter was published in the period: Newsletter 17 – Children and the Private Sector.

Website (www.crin.org): updated daily, a leading resource on child rights issues; containing references to hundreds of reports, recent news and upcoming events, as well as an online directory of child rights organisations. The site also includes the NGO alternative reports submitted to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child and expanding coverage of the activities of the subgroups of the NGO Group linked to the CRIN thematic desks.

Website trends 2003-04 (visits and page views in thousands)
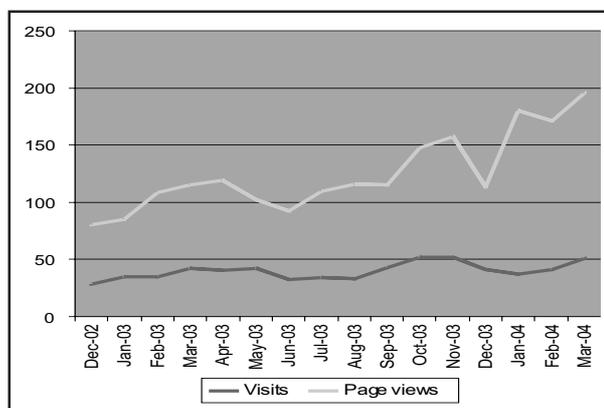
CRINMAIL: a regular e-mail news service, produced in different languages and covering both general and specialised topics. CRINMAILs provide news bulletins about child rights issues, new publications and upcoming events and courses, and job announcements. Anyone can join the mailing list for free from the CRIN website. There are currently over 6500 individual subscriptions to CRINMAIL.

CRINMAIL members and postings

July 2004

Version	Members	Postings	Frequency
English	2869	571	Twice–weekly
French	187	21	Monthly
Spanish	325	22	Monthly
Special Session	2043	50	As needed
Rights	201	2	Monthly
At the CHR	163	8	As needed
Armed conflict	952	73	Monthly
Totals	6740	747	

Thematic activities: CRIN's core products and services are organised with reference to a set of thematic priority areas that also form the basis for specific research or campaign oriented activities. These key themes include: About Child Rights | Armed Conflict | Child Labour | Disability | Discrimination | Education | Health | HIV/AIDS | Juvenile justice | Macroeconomics | Media | Sexual Exploitation | UN Special Session | Violence against children | Rights–based programming.

Special events: In addition to the regular services above, CRIN covers special events both through CRINMAILs and on the website. Recent coverage has included: sessions of the Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC) with CRINMAIL and the posting of alternative reports on the website, these in collaboration with the CRC and the NGO Group in Geneva; coverage of the annual session of the Committee on Human Rights and web hosting for the subgroup on the CHR; active coverage of issues such as the Universal Day of the Child, General Days of Discussion, and other international events.

CRINMAIL details

To contribute to any of the following, write to info@crin.org

CRINMAIL English

Regular news bulletins about child rights issues as well as information about new publications, events, jobs and courses. At least half of the source material for CRINMAIL is provided by members.

To subscribe send an email to crinmail_English–subscribe@domeus.co.uk or visit www.crin.org/email

CRINMAIL French

Covering similar issues as English CRINMAILs but with a focus on Francophone regions.

crinmail_French–subscribe@domeus.fr

CRINMAIL Spanish

Covering similar issues as English CRINMAILs but with a focus on Spanish speaking regions.

crinmail_Spanish–subscribe@domeus.es

CRINMAIL Children and Armed Conflict

Following the International Conference on War-Affected Children held in Winnipeg, Canada in September 2000, this email list examines issues affecting children and armed conflict. This includes issues of child soldiers, landmines, small arms, refugees and internally displaced children, HIV/AIDS, gender, and conflict.

crin_armed_conflict–subscribe@domeus.co.uk

CRINMAIL Child Rights at CHR

The NGO Group for the CRC's subgroup on the Commission on Human Rights brings together NGOs working to promote the rights of the child at the annual UN Commission on Human Rights. This listserv provides daily up-dates during the Commission.

childrightscaucus_chr-subscribe@domeus.co.uk

CRINMAIL Rights Programming

From January 2004, CRIN has developed an area of the website on rights-based approaches to programming. This mailing list is a monthly news source on rights-based programming.

crin_rights_programming-subscribe@domeus.co.uk

CRINMAIL Special Session

This CRINMAIL is activated to provide updates on the follow up to the UNGA Special Session and preparations for the 2007 mid–term review. Meanwhile, see http://www.crin.org/themes/specialsession

crin_specialsession–subscribe@domeus.co.uk

Partnerships and Projects

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child continues to provide the context for CRIN's work. More recently, since the UN Special Session on Children in 2002, A World Fit for Children and the Millennium Development Goals have brought child rights into the mainstream of human rights and development thinking and action.

Partnerships with key NGO networks and UN agencies enable the coordinating unit in London to support the process of mainstreaming child rights. Key partnerships with groups such as the NGO Group for the CRC, national child rights coalitions, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Global Movement for Children have enabled CRIN to assist in information-sharing.

In addition to supporting work on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, this has included information-sharing on such issues as:

❑   UN Commission on Human Rights. Reports from child rights NGOs lobbying to mainstream child rights within the UN and to improve the omnibus resolution on the rights of the child in partnership with the NGO Group for the CRC's subgroup on the Commission on Human Rights and Children's Human Rights Caucus. Nine special CRINMAILs covered the Children's Human Rights Caucus at the 60th Session of the UN Commission on Human Rights 15 March - 23 April 2004;

❑   As part of the continuing partnership between the NGO Group for the CRC, OHCHR and CRIN, all sessions of the Committee on the Rights of the Child continue to be covered in special edition CRINMAILs. These included: CRC Session 35, 12 - 30 January 2004 (19 reports); CRC Session 34, 15 September - 03 October 2003 (25 reports); CRC Session 33, 19 May - 6 June 2003 (4 reports).

Alternative CRC treaty body database

This database on the CRIN website is the joint work of the NGO Group for the CRC and CRIN. It complements the data contained on the website of the OHCHR treaty body database. The official treaty body database includes key information relating to the UNCRC including State Party reports and concluding observations. In contrast to this, CRIN's 'alternative treaty body database' contains original source reports to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child that are not available elsewhere on the internet.

These are:

1. **NGO alternative (or shadow) reports** submitted to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child. In partnership with the NGO Group for the CRC, this includes more than 300 reports. Many of these reports have been compiled by national child rights coalitions,

for which contact details are also made available on the CRIN website.

2. **NGO reports to the General Days of Discussion** submitted to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child by NGOs and specialised agencies of the UN. These reports have been housed on CRIN's website since 1999 in a partnership with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. Reports are available on these topics: The Rights of Indigenous Children (2003), Children and the Private Sector (2002), Violence against Children (2000 and 2001)

Web hosting for NGO groupings

CRIN provides website presence for members of the network, following on from work on the Directory of Child Rights Organisations; for some of CRIN's members this is their only presence on the internet. Thus search engines can often only find mention of some child rights organisations on CRIN's website.

CRIN hosts the website for the NGO Group for the Convention on the Rights of the Child at www.crin.org/ NGOGroupforCRC and its associated subgroups, including armed conflict and displacement, child labour, children and violence, the Commission on Human Rights, education, literacy and media, juvenile justice, national child rights coalitions, and sexual exploitation. This area of the website is being better integrated within the whole site, for example strengthening links to the thematic areas, and further developed so that they are more easily accessible.

Rights–based programming

Along with CRIN's core information and human rights activities, it also carries out specialised projects. In 2003/04 work started on a web resource for human rights–based approaches to programming.

As a relatively new approach to programming, there has been considerable interest in the wider development community in exchanging information on lessons learned in the introduction of such approaches and in the emergence of new directions in this work. This project brings information about rights-based programming together under one roof. To provide not only a unique source of resources but also to create a forum in which evolving ideas can be shared and tested with the community of child rights practitioners. As well as being of interest to the wider development community, this website will also support the mainstreaming of rights-based approaches among the network of agencies and partners involved in different thematic areas of work. Thus the scope of the project is human rights of which child rights is one important area. The website can be accessed through the CRIN website and at www.therightsapproach.org.

Financial information April 2003 to March 2004

Grant Income - Core Activities

Save the Children Sweden	£ 41,249
UNICEF Office of Public Partnerships	£ 23,958
UNICEF Geneva	£ 11,976
International Save the Children Alliance	£ 10,000
Save the Children UK	£ 5,000
Save the Children UK (1)	in kind
Sub-Total	£ 92,183

Grant Income - Restricted to Projects

UNICEF/DFID	
Rights-based Programming (2)	£ 19,441
Sub-Total	£ 19,441
Carry forward from 2002/03 (3)	£ (17,749)
Total income	**£ 93,875**

Expenditure - Core Activities

Salaries	£ 44,744
Temporary agency staff and volunteer expenses	£ 5,989
Travel and subsistence	£ 3,663
Office supplies and equipment	£ 158
Printing of publications	£ 7,011
IT hardware and software purchases	£ 497
Professional fees – Newsletter	£ 788
Translation costs	£ 3,747
Consultants fees	£ 1,238
Management Team Expenses (4)	£ 3,657
Conference and Events Fees	£ 1,356
Payment for services internet service provider	£ 1,587
Sub-Total	
	£ 74,434

Expenditure - Restricted Funds

Salaries	£ 5,832
Web Designers	£2,140
Sub-Total	£ 7,972
Grant carry over to 2004-05 (5)	£ 11,469
Total expenditure	£ 82,406
Cash Surplus / Dedicit	£ (0)

Notes

1. Save the Children UK hosts CRIN Coordinating Unit with office space and facilities, IT and Human Resources support.

2. First payment covering January to April 2004 (project completion end–December 2004)

3. Incurred through detailed coverage of the Special Session on Children in 2002

4. Includes back payments from 2001 and 2002

5. Delays to project start date resulting in later than budgeted payments carrying over to FY 2004/05

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Website: www.crin.org

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CRIN aims to democratise information on child rights and to encourage information sharing between different parts of the world and different actors in the implementation of the UNCRC. CRIN was formally established in 1995 and has a history dating back to 1991.

Information is disseminated to thousands of individuals and organisations around the world, including over 1,400 organisations that have formally joined as members to the Child Rights Information Network.