



NANHRI ACEWRC NHRI-FORUM

Theme: Strengthening Institutional Collaboration between National Human Rights Institutions and the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child

Date: 04 October 2024

Concept note

Introduction

The Network of African National Human Rights Institutions (NANHRI) is a regional umbrella body that brings together 47 African National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs). These institutions are established by governments to promote and protect human rights within their respective jurisdictions. NHRIs play a vital role in handling complaints, conducting investigations, and advancing human rights through research, advocacy, and educational programs in line with the Paris Principles. NANHRI's mission is to support and strengthen NHRIs across Africa while facilitating coordination and cooperation among themselves and with other key human rights actors at regional and international levels. NANHRI's vision is to create a continent with effective NHRIs that contribute to an enhanced human rights culture and justice for every African. In pursuit of this vision, NANHRI has undertaken various initiatives, including engaging NHRIs to apply for affiliate status with the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACERWC). This is part of a broader strategy to enhance the involvement of NHRIs in monitoring and protecting child rights in Africa.

During the 44th Ordinary Session of ACERWC, NANHRI will convene the first-ever NHRIs Forum to strengthen institutional collaboration between NHRIs and the ACERWC. This forum builds on previous engagements aimed at sensitizing NHRIs on the importance of securing affiliate status with the Committee. The forum will provide a platform for NHRIs to share best practices, explore avenues for collaboration, and discuss their role in advancing the rights and welfare of children, including critical issues such as sexual and reproductive health rights.

This forum will specifically focus on showcasing best practices of NHRIs in protecting child rights, exploring institutional collaboration between NHRIs and ACERWC, and addressing sexual and reproductive health rights of vulnerable children. These themes will be discussed in presentations by key experts and stakeholders.



Rationale

The ACERWC plays a pivotal role in monitoring the implementation of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC). However, the effective realisation of the rights enshrined in this Charter requires strong collaboration between the Committee and national institutions responsible for human rights protection, particularly NHRIs.

NHRIs, as independent state-established bodies, are well-positioned to monitor child rights at the national level and provide the Committee with critical information regarding the implementation of the ACRWC. In recent years, there has been increasing recognition of the need to formalize and strengthen this collaboration. By securing affiliate status with ACERWC, NHRIs can actively participate in the Committee's work, submit reports, and contribute to discussions on the protection of child rights in Africa.

This first NHRIs Forum, organised by NANHRI, comes at a crucial moment, as it seeks to consolidate efforts to foster collaboration between NHRIs and ACERWC. The forum will provide an opportunity for NHRIs to present their work on child rights, explore synergies with ACERWC, and strategize on how to work together more effectively to advance the rights and welfare of children across the continent. It will also provide a platform to discuss the protection of the sexual and reproductive health rights of vulnerable children.

Objectives

The specific objectives of this forum are to:

1. Strengthen the institutional collaboration between NHRIs and ACERWC by discussing avenues for engagement and cooperation.
2. Showcase best practices of NHRIs in the promotion and protection of child rights across Africa, focusing on successful interventions.
3. Discuss the role of NHRIs in addressing critical issues affecting the sexual and reproductive health rights of vulnerable children.
4. Develop Action Plans for institutional collaborations between NHRIs and the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child
5. Identify opportunities for synergy between ACERWC and NHRIs, particularly in the protection of SRHR of vulnerable children.

Expected Outputs

By the end of the forum, the following outputs are anticipated:

1. Increased awareness among NHRIs of the opportunities and benefits of securing affiliate status with ACERWC.
2. Documented best practices of NHRIs in advancing child rights, which will serve as reference points for future initiatives.



3. A roadmap for enhanced collaboration between NHRIs and ACERWC, including specific areas for synergy and joint action.
4. Commitment from NHRIs and ACERWC to collaborate on addressing the sexual and reproductive health rights of vulnerable children.
5. Action plan for institutional collaboration between the NHRIs and the African Committee
6. 5-Point Plan on Advancing Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights through Collaborative Action between NHRIs and the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child