

CHILDREN'S INPUT TO THE LIST OF ISSUES OF THE UNITED NATIONS COMMITTEE ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD REGARDING MOROCCO

August 2025

Overview

1. This input has been developed by children with support from the National Human Rights Council of Morocco (CNDH), a Paris Principles-compliant institution, which hosts the National Child Redress Mechanism. This initiative aims to promote the institutionalized participation of children in the work of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (Committee), including through the drafting of their own contribution to the Committee's List of Issues concerning Morocco.

2. The input was drafted following a bottom-up approach starting with 12 consultations organized from February 2023 to February 2024 in the 12 regions of Morocco supported by the CNDH through its national and local focal points, and ending with a national consultation, organized from 13-14 June 2025 in partnership with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF – Morocco Office). Also, the CNDH sought the support of several stakeholders to ensure the success of these consultations, including the Ministry of Youth, Culture and Communication, regional academies for education and trainings, regional branches of *Entraide Nationale*, and civil society organizations working on children's rights.

3. All these child-led consultations brought together 373 children representing various groups from different regions of Morocco, including children with disabilities, children deprived of family environments, foreign children, children victims of violence and exploitation, orphans or abandoned children, children in conflict with the law, as well as children active in educational clubs and members of the Children's Parliament. Each regional consultation spanned two days. The first day was devoted to a training of trainers who co-facilitated the workshops organized as part of the consultation, while the second day focused on workshops for children on the various provisions of the Convention and the working methods of the Committee.

4. These consultations provided a unique opportunity for children to express their opinions, discuss their respective situations and aspirations. They also reflected the children's keen interest in discussing relevant public policies and laws. Throughout these events, children were able to make recommendations related to the protection and promotion of their rights.

5. Furthermore, at each regional consultation, children elected their representatives at the national consultation, who themselves elected two children, a boy and a girl, who will present the parallel report to the CRC. The children independently organized the election of their representatives during the national consultation, based on a secret ballot system, with due respect to the principles of gender equality and non-discrimination.

6. In addition to the submission regarding the List of Issues at the close of the national consultation, the participating children issued the "Children's Call"[1], outlining their priorities and aspirations at both the national and local levels, focusing on a range of fundamental rights, including the rights to participation, education, health, protection, expression, equality, and rest and leisure.

Children's contribution to the list of issues:

a. General measures for implementation:

7. During the regional consultations, children emphasized the importance of strengthening awareness of their rights. While efforts have already been made to reinforce the institutional, legislative and policy framework for child protection, challenges remain in ensuring that children fully understand the laws and policies designed to protect their rights.

8. Children discussed the role of different actors in promoting this framework, underlining in particular the responsibilities of families and teachers in fostering awareness about children rights. They also emphasized the valuable contribution of the media in helping children to have access to this framework.

9. Children also underlined that some groups of children are not always aware that participation is one of their fundamental rights, notably due to lack of sufficient guidance and encouragement. Therefore, the participating children stressed the need to continue strengthening efforts to ensure more inclusive and equal access to information for all children.

1 Available here : https://cndh.ma/sites/default/files/inline-files/نداء%20الأطفال.pdf

10. Accordingly, children suggested that the Committee raise the following questions with the Moroccan government:

- What mechanisms are in place to monitor the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and to follow up on alleged violations and how is their effectiveness assessed?
- What concrete measures have been adopted to ensure children's meaningful participation in protection mechanisms across all regions of the Kingdom?
- Does the State have a clear strategy to criminalize the online exploitation of children? Are there any cooperation agreements with social media platforms to strengthen the protection of children in digital spaces?

b. General principles:

11. During the consultations, participating children noted that not all children enjoy their rights on equal footing. They observed that discrepancy in terms of conditions and resources result in some children having better opportunities, while others continue to face challenges in realizing their fundamental rights.

12. Accordingly, children recommended that the Committee address the following questions to the Moroccan government for consideration:

- What measures are in place to prevent discrimination against children and ensure their equal access to basic services?
- What measures have been taken to ensure that children in vulnerable situations, children living in rural areas, children with disabilities and those affected by early school dropout, enjoy their rights on equal footing with others?
- What measures are in place to protect the rights of girls to education and address challenges such as poverty, school dropout and early marriage?
- What measures are in place to guarantee non-discrimination in the enjoyment of children rights across all regions of Morocco and how is the State addressing the remaining regional disparities?

- What mechanisms are in place to ensure that children's views are taken into account in divorce cases, especially when decisions are made about custody and place of residence?

c. Violence against children:

13. During the consultations, children recognized that progress has been made in addressing violence against children. They noted, however, that violence still takes place in various environments, including families, schools and public spaces.

14. Children indicated that court units have been established to support women and children who are victims of violence. While they welcomed these efforts, they pointed out that many children were still not aware of such units and called for further efforts to ensure children are aware of where they can seek help.

15. Children also raised concerns about child marriage, which they viewed as a form of violence and a serious violation of their rights, especially girls. They emphasized that early marriage not only deprives girls of their childhood but also limits their access to education, exposes them to greater risks of violence and restricts their opportunities to full participation in society.

16. Based on these discussions, children brought the following questions to the attention of the Committee:

- How are children's complaints of violence received, processed and followed up and what safeguards are in place to ensure confidentiality and protect children's privacy throughout this process?
- What concrete measures has the State taken to strengthen systems for the prevention, identification, reporting, referral and follow-up of cases of violence against children?
- How effective is the existing legal framework in criminalizing all forms of violence against children and what monitoring and enforcement mechanisms are in place to guarantee its proper implementation?
- What comprehensive measures, including legal, social and educational actions, has the State adopted to prevent and eliminate child marriage and support children who are at risk or already affected?

d. Family environment and alternative protection:

17. Children argued that juvenile judges often place children in social care institutions or child protection centers as a first solution, even though relevant international instruments provide that this measure should be a last resort after other measures are exhausted.

18. The situation becomes even more serious when children in vulnerable situations are placed in the same centers as children in conflict with the law, exposing them to potential psychological and social risks.

19. In addition, children noted that these institutions are not equally available in all regions, thus leading to disparities.

20. Accordingly, children hoped that the Committee raise the following questions with the Moroccan government:

- What measures have been adopted to protect and support orphans?
- How is the State ensuring that children living in social care institutions receive equal treatment in the school environment and are protected from discrimination?

e. Children with disabilities:

21. During the consultations, children raised the difficulties faced by children with disabilities in accessing basic services and opportunities. They noted that many encounter barriers to health care and education, while access to employment opportunities later in life also remains limited. Children emphasized that those who rely on sign language for communication face particular challenges, as services and facilities are often not adapted to their needs.

22. In this context, children suggested the following questions for the Committee to ask:

- What actions have been taken by the State to safeguard the rights of children with disabilities and ensure that all relevant services are accessible to all children without discrimination?
- What steps has the State taken to promote the inclusion of children with disabilities and to ensure the full and equal enjoyment of their rights,

including non-discriminatory access to education, health care, community services and public facilities?

f. Healthcare:

23. During the consultations, children acknowledged the efforts made by the State to expand access to health services and recognized the importance of these initiatives in promoting their right to health. Meanwhile, children expressed concern that this right is not equally accessible to all children. They observed that public health services, particularly for children with disabilities and foreign children, remain of lower quality compared to those offered in private facilities. They also noted that access to mental health services is limited and often difficult.

24. Accordingly, children suggested that the Committee raise the following questions with the Moroccan government:

- What measures have been taken to improve the quality of services in public hospitals for children?
- What steps are being taken to strengthen mental health services for children and ensure that these services are accessible, affordable and adapted to their specific needs?
- What actions are being undertaken to address the difficulties children face in rural areas in accessing health care and ensure equal services across all regions?

g. Education, entertainment and cultural activities:

25. During the consultations, children recognized the progress made in ensuring access to education. However, they raised some concerns, in some areas, especially rural ones, as schools are still far from where children live and the quality of education offered by schools in rural areas is not usually as good as the one provided in urban ones. They also raised the issue of school dropout, stressing that many children stop to go to school at an early stage because of poverty, distance, or lack of support.

26. Furthermore, children stressed the need to enhance the role of schools in raising children's awareness of their rights and in expanding access to cultural and recreational activities.

27. Taking these concerns into account, children requested that the Committee address the following questions to the Moroccan government:

- What measures have been taken to improve the geographic spread of schools and bring them closer to children's place of residence?
- What steps are being taken to ensure quality education in rural areas and reduce school dropout?
- What school programs are in place to help children learn about their rights and promote a culture of respect for rights?
- What efforts are being made to provide safer public spaces for children to access cultural, recreational and leisure activities?

h. Special protection measures:

28. During the consultations, children acknowledged efforts made to improve access to services for migrants. However, they noted that many children whose parents are in an irregular migration situation still face barriers in fully enjoying their rights and remain particularly vulnerable.

29. Children also addressed child labor. While recognizing that some children may engage in certain forms of work, they emphasized the need to distinguish between acceptable work and exploitation. They expressed concern that child labor remains commonplace in some areas, where children are exposed to unsafe working conditions and are at a high risk of exploitation.

30. Children welcomed the existence of some initiatives aimed at providing protection of children in a street situation, but they underlined that reintegration strategies remain limited. They also pointed out that opportunities for participation are rare and that many children in a street situation are not adequately informed of their rights.

31. Accordingly, children suggested that the Committee raise the following questions with the Moroccan government:

- What measures have been taken to ensure that children in the context of migration, as well as children whose parents are in irregular migration situation, can fully enjoy their rights on an equal basis with others?
- What steps are being taken to strengthen the protection of children affected by irregular migration?
- In what ways does the State distinguish between forms of work that may be acceptable for children and those that amount to exploitation and what safeguards are in place to protect them?
- What measures have been adopted to reduce child labor, particularly in sectors where children are at a greater risk of exploitation?
- What measures are in place to protect children in a street situation and what strategies are being implemented to support their reintegration into society?
- What consultative mechanisms have been established to enable the participation of children in a street situation and how are they informed of their rights?

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