

Child Helpline International (CHI)

Response and Comments from Child Helpline International (CHI) to WSIS Phase 2 (Prepcom 3 and Tunis summit)

Introduction

In 2003, child (telephone) helplines around the globe received approximately 11 million calls from children and young people in need of assistance for abuse, shelter, protection from exploitation or just someone to share their problems with. This submission for WSIS Phase 2 supports the position of children and young people through telecommunications and gives background information on Child Helpline International, the global body for child helplines.

Child Helpline International (CHI) is a global network of child helplines and currently works with 79 existing child helplines in 69 countries. CHI is also assisting 12 countries to start up child helplines¹. These helplines reach out to children and young people through various means of communication, including telephone, text messaging, emails and confidential internet chat rooms, as well as radio programmes, post cards and letters. CHI attaches great importance to the adaptation of technology and works towards cross-sectoral partnerships to increase access to information and services for marginalised children. It thus recognises and actively supports the role of ICTs in bridging divides that exist in society.

The decisions and actions taken at WSIS Phase 2 can shape the development of global telecommunications, and the role children and young people play in the same. CHI therefore hopes to work with ITU and the WSIS process towards a world where telecommunication allows children to be heard one-by-one and, through their voices and active participation, fulfil their rights and achieve their true potential to shape the world.

The following are CHI's key recommendations:

- To **include children in the telecoms agenda** and to ensure that child helplines can be used as a strategy to reach out to more children and young people.

¹ See Annex 1 for details of countries CHI is working in

- To request member state parties' to issue a **three or four-digit toll-free number** for each respective country's child helpline. This number should be nationally accessible and free of cost for callers, from both landline and mobile phones. This number can be the universal access number earmarked for children and young people, similar to emergency services numbers currently offered in many countries.
- To increase children and young people's **access to ICTs and helplines**
- To encourage the **media to reach out to children and young people**, especially in emergency situations, through television programmes, talk-shows, providing free advertising space and in all relevant places.

Proposed text for the Political chapeau / Tunis Commitment

10. We shall strive unremittingly, therefore, to promote universal, ubiquitous, equitable and affordable access to ICTs for people everywhere, **including access to toll-free child helplines for children and young people**, to ensure that the benefits are more evenly distributed between and within societies, and to bridge the digital divide in order to create digital opportunities for all.

Further commitments,

We hereby undertake further commitments to:

- **Recognise the importance of children and young people, a key group of current and future telecoms users, in the telecoms agenda and ensure that child helplines can be used as a strategy to reach out to more children and young people.**

Resource mobilisation, including human resources,

We commit ourselves to mobilising resources, including human resources, to:

- **Issue a three or four-digit toll-free number for each respective country's child helpline. This number can be the universal access number earmarked for children, similar to emergency services numbers currently offered in many countries and should be accessible and free of cost from both landline and mobile phones.**

Proposed text for Operational Plan – Chapter 1

6e. promoting public policies aimed at making/providing/ensuring affordable accessibility to hardware as well as software to marginalised and disadvantaged populations, **such as the provision of toll-free child helplines for children and young people in need of care and protection**, living in developing regions, in particular in rural areas;

Proposed text for Financial Mechanisms - Chapter 2

33b. Alt 2: [We recognize that there are a number of areas where the current approaches to ICT for development financing have devoted insufficient attention to date.] These include:

- b. Communications access and connectivity for ICT services and applications, **including the installation of public telephones, internet kiosks and HAM/broadband radios in public spaces (especially where children congregate, such as schools, parks and in all relevant places)**, in remote rural areas, Small Island Developing States, Landlocked Developing Countries and other locations presenting unique technological and market challenges;

Recommendation 1: To include children and young people in the telecoms agenda

See proposed modification in 6h:

6h. to ensure that all of the world's population, **including children and young people – a key group of current and future telecoms users, have access to telephones, television, radio services and other ICT applications;**

See proposed addition of last sentence as point 6k:

6k. To recognise the importance of children and young people in the telecoms agenda and to ensure that child helplines can be used as a strategy to reach out to more children and young people.

Recommendation 2: For Member State parties to issue a three or four-digit toll-free number for each respective country's child helpline.

See proposed additional point as point C1,8 as point j:

C1, 8j For Member State parties to issue a three or four-digit toll-free number for each respective country's child helpline. This number can be the universal access number earmarked for children, similar to emergency services numbers currently offered in many countries and should be accessible and free of cost from both landline and mobile phones.

Recommendation 3: To ensure children's access to helplines and ICTs

See proposed additional point in C3,10 as point k:

C3, 10k To ensure children and young people's access to helplines and ICTs

For children and young people to easily access ICTs and helplines, member state parties can support by ensuring the following:

- Installation of public telephones and public internet kiosks in public places (and places where children congregate, for example, schools, parks, institutions and in all relevant places.)
- Installation of HAM/broadband radios

Recommendation 4: To encourage the media to reach out to children

See proposed modification to point C9, 24e

C9, 24e Promote balanced and diverse portrayals of **children**, women and men by the media.

See proposed inclusion of reference to children and media as additional point in C9, 24h

C9, 24h To encourage the media to reach out to children and young people, especially in emergency situations, by providing opportunities through television programmes, talk-shows, advertising space and in all relevant places.

| Annex 1. | | |
|--|------------------------------------|---------------|
| 79 existing child helplines in 69 countries | | |
| Existing national child helplines | | |
| | Country | Region |
| 1 | Botswana | Africa |
| 2 | Namibia | Africa |
| 3 | South Africa | Africa |
| 4 | Zimbabwe | Africa |
| 5 | Argentina | Americas |
| 6 | Antigua and Barbuda | Americas |
| 7 | Aruba | Americas |
| 8 | Canada | Americas |
| 9 | Colombia | Americas |
| 10 | Costa Rica | Americas |
| 11 | Jamaica | Americas |
| 12 | Mexico | Americas |
| 13 | Panama | Americas |
| 14 | Peru | Americas |
| 15 | Trinidad and Tobago | Americas |
| 16 | USA (Covenant House Nineline) | Americas |
| 17 | USA (National Runaway Switchboard) | Americas |
| 18 | Australia | Asia-Pacific |
| 19 | China (Hongkong) | Asia-Pacific |
| 20 | China (Taiwan) | Asia-Pacific |
| 21 | India | Asia-Pacific |
| 22 | Korea | Asia-Pacific |
| 23 | New Zealand (Kidsline) | Asia-Pacific |
| 24 | New Zealand (whats up) | Asia-Pacific |
| 25 | New Zealand (Youthline) | Asia-Pacific |
| 26 | Philippines | Asia-Pacific |
| 27 | Singapore (Tinkle Friend) | Asia-Pacific |
| 28 | Croatia | CEE/CIS |
| 29 | Austria | Europe |
| 30 | Belgium (KJ) | Europe |
| 31 | Belgium (103) | Europe |
| 32 | Belgium (ChildFocus) | Europe |
| 33 | Czech Republic | Europe |
| 34 | Denmark | Europe |
| 35 | Finland | Europe |
| 36 | France | Europe |
| 37 | Germany | Europe |
| 38 | Hungary | Europe |
| 39 | Iceland | Europe |
| 40 | Ireland | Europe |
| 41 | Italy | Europe |
| 42 | Latvia | Europe |
| 43 | Lithuania | Europe |
| 44 | Netherlands | Europe |
| 45 | Norway | Europe |
| 46 | Portugal | Europe |
| 47 | Slovakia | Europe |
| 48 | Slovenia | Europe |
| 49 | Spain | Europe |
| 50 | Sweden | Europe |
| 51 | Switzerland | Europe |
| 52 | United Kingdom (Childline) | Europe |
| 53 | United Kingdom (Get Connected) | Europe |
| 54 | United Kingdom (Muslim Helpline) | Europe |
| 55 | United Kingdom (NSPCC) | Europe |
| 56 | United Kingdom (Runaway Helpline) | Europe |
| 57 | Greece | Europe |
| 58 | Turkey | Europe |

| Existing child helplines with local coverage awaiting to scale up | | |
|---|--------------------|--------------|
| 59 | Nigeria | Africa |
| 60 | Senegal | Africa |
| 61 | Brazil | Americas |
| 62 | Dominican Republic | Americas |
| 63 | Paraguay | Americas |
| 64 | Japan | Asia-Pacific |
| 65 | Mongolia | Asia-Pacific |
| 66 | Nepal | Asia-Pacific |
| 67 | Pakistan | Asia-Pacific |
| 68 | Thailand | Asia-Pacific |
| 69 | Vietnam | Asia-Pacific |
| 70 | Albania | CEE/CIS |
| 71 | Azerbaijan | CEE/CIS |
| 72 | Belarus | CEE/CIS |
| 73 | Macedonia | CEE/CIS |
| 74 | Romania | CEE/CIS |
| 75 | Russia | CEE/CIS |
| 76 | Ukraine | CEE/CIS |
| 77 | Egypt | MENA |
| 78 | Israel | MENA |
| 79 | Yemen | MENA |

| 12 countries CHI is working with to start a helpline | | |
|--|--------------------|--------------|
| | Country | Region |
| 1 | Kenya | Africa |
| 2 | Uganda | Africa |
| 3 | Zambia | Africa |
| 4 | Barbados | Americas |
| 5 | China | Asia-Pacific |
| 6 | Indonesia | Asia-Pacific |
| 7 | Sri Lanka | Asia-Pacific |
| 8 | Bulgaria | CEE/CIS |
| 9 | Serbia/ Montenegro | CEE/CIS |
| 10 | Iran | MENA |
| 11 | Lebanon | MENA |
| 12 | Palestine | MENA |

Child Helpline International (CHI)
 Prinsengracht 468
 1017 KG Amsterdam, The Netherlands
 T: +31 (0) 20 528 96 25
 F: +31 (0) 20 638 76 55
 W: <http://www.childhelplineinternational.org>