

**ACERWC Secretariat**

**E-mail:** acerwc-secretariat@africa-union.org

**Tel**: +266 52 01 00 18 **| P.O.Box:** 13460,

**Address:** Nala House, Balfour Road Maseru

Kingdom of Lesotho

**TERMS OF REFERENCE**

**AFRICAN COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS ON THE RIGHTS AND WELFARE**

**OF THE CHILD**

**APPOINTMENT OF EXTERNAL EXPERTS FOR THE WORKING GROUP ON CHILDREN’S RIGHTS AND BUSINESS**

**Appointment Period December 2025- November 2027**

|  |
| --- |
| **External Experts (4)** |
| **Key Task:** Serving in the working group of the ACERWC on Children’s Rights and Business, in the fulfillment of the mandate of the working group.  |
| **Duty station**: Home based with travels to attend meetings of the Working Group, on-site activities of the Working Group and Ordinary Sessions of the Committee.  |
| **Contract type and duration**: Part-time external experts (4), for 2 years |
| **Date of appointment**: December 2025 |

1. **Background**

As trade, manufacturing and investment continue to grow in Africa, business has become one of the evolving thematic areas with significant implications on the rights and welfare of children on the Continent. Children are key members of the communities and environments in which business operates, and key stakeholders of business as consumers, family members of employees, and young workers. Whether small or large, formal or informal, business interacts with and has an effect on the rights and welfare of children both directly and indirectly.

There are various aspects of business that present negative implications on children’s rights and welfare. These include, the lack of employment conditions within business enterprises which assist working parents and caregivers in fulfilling their responsibilities to children in their care; the challenges of economic exploitation and hazardous work conditions for children; lack of functioning labour inspection and enforcement systems in most African States; limited measures taken by States to promote the physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration of children who have experienced various forms of violence, neglect, exploitation, or abuse including economic exploitation; lack of strict process of due diligence and an effective monitoring system; and the difficulties in obtaining remedy for abuses that occur in the context of transnational business operations.

To guarantee protection of the rights of children in the realm of business it is important to ensure that States have adequate legal and institutional frameworks to respect, protect and fulfil children’s rights, and to provide remedies in case of violations in the context of business activities and operations. Moreover, all business have responsibilities in respecting and supporting children’s rights, putting in place appropriate policy commitment and due diligence process to addressing potential and actual impacts on children’s rights and welfare. The responsibilities of States and business actors should be guided by the rights outlined by the African Children’s Charter, and other international instruments, such as the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the International Labour Organization’s Convention No. 138 on Minimum Age, and Convention No. 182 on Worst Forms of Child Labour.

Cognizant of the above-mentioned issues and the need for a child rights -based response to the challenges in business practices, the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child decided to establish a Working Group on Children’s Rights and Business during its 35th Ordinary Session,held virtually from 31 August to 08 September 2020. The Committee established this Working Group pursuant to Article 38(1) of the ACRWC and Rule 58 of its revised Rules of Procedure, which mandates the Committee to establish special mechanisms, including working groups, and assign specific tasks or mandates to either an individual member or group of members concerning the execution of special programs, studies, and projects. The aim of the Working Group is to promotethe integration of child rights-based approach to business practices with a view to addressing business-related child rights challenges in Africa.

Since its establishment, the Working Group on Children’s Rights and Business has carried out a number of activities such as the development of Resolution No. 17/2022 on the promotion and protection of children’s rights in the digital sphere; Resolution No. 20/2024 on the integration of a child rights based approach in the implementation and monitoring of the AfCFTA, Resolution No.21/2024 on the regulation of the informal business sector to ensure enhanced protection of children’s rights; conducting a continental study on children’s rights and business; issuing statements on the World Day against Child Labour; and participating in regional events on children’s rights and business related issues, among other initiatives. These initiatives have emphasized the obligations of States and highlighted the role of various stakeholders in ensuring the promotion and protection of the rights and welfare of children in the context of business.

Despite the legislative framework at regional and international levels, as well as the development of relevant documents that promote and protect the rights and welfare of children in the context of business, the Committee notes that there is a lack of implementation of these instruments, and children’s rights continue to be adversely impacted by the negative implications of business practices on the continent. Being mindful of the situation of children’s rights and business in Africa, the Committee continues to examine ways to strengthen its efforts in promoting and protecting children’s rights in this context.

In this regard, the services of external experts are sought to serve as members of the Working Group on Children’s Rights and Business. The Working Group will undertake its activities guided primarily by the African Children’s Charter, the Resolution establishing the Working Group, and the Standard of Operating Procedures for the establishment of the Working Groups as Special Mechanisms within the ACERWC.

1. **Main duties and responsibilities**

The external experts, together with the other Members of the Working Group, will be tasked with discharging the mandates of the Working Group as contained in the Resolution related to the establishment of the Working Group and reiterated as follows;

1. Disseminate the findings and recommendations of the continental study on children’s rights and business and monitor their implementation by Member States;
2. Develop guidelines to assist Member States and other stakeholders in effectively implementing children’s rights and business standards;
3. Engage with Governments with a view to establish laws, policies and strategies that protect the rights and welfare of children in the context of business;
4. Undertake various activities aimed at raising awareness and galvanizing action on the issue of children’s rights and business among States, Regional Economic Communities, National Human Rights Institutions, Civil Society Organizations, child and youth led organizations, business enterprises, and other relevant stakeholders;
5. Conduct fact-finding and promotional missions in Members States of the African Union on matters affecting the rights and welfare of children in the context of business;
6. Subject to approval by the ACERWC, issue statements, letters of urgent appeals, resolutions, reports, studies or any other communications on children’s rights and business in the continent, or a specific country, region or any condition;
7. Seek, receive, examine and act upon information on children’s rights and business from Member States, National Human Rights Institutions, relevant intergovernmental organisations, business enterprises, international and regional mechanisms, United Nations Agencies, civil society organisations, children and other stakeholders;
8. Take the lead in the development of the ACERWC’s documents concerning children’s rights and business; and
9. Report to the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child on the activities undertaken under the mandate.
10. **Qualifications**
11. Advanced university degree in law, human rights, children’s rights/welfare, or other related disciplines;
12. A minimum of 10 years working experience in the area of children’s rights and business or in general human rights and business, in the African context;
13. National of an African country and residing in Africa;
14. Demonstrated knowledge of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child and the work of the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child;
15. Demonstrated knowledge on trends in business practices affecting children’s rights and welfare;
16. First-hand knowledge and experience of the cultural, social, economic and political context of Africa and its relationship with children’s rights and business;
17. Fluency in English or French is required, knowledge of additional African union working languages is desirable;
18. Work experience in the AU, UN, and other international organizations, especially in treaty body mechanisms is desirable;
19. Excellent analytical skills, using both qualitative and quantitative methods.
20. **Reporting lines**

The external experts will work under the direct supervision and guidance of the ACERWC and the Chairperson of the Working Group on Children’s Rights and Business.

1. **Duration and attendance**

The appointment of successful candidates will commence in November 2025 and end in November 2027. The external experts will be required to attend all the meetings of the Working Group and selected activities of the Working Group. They will also be required to attend relevant Ordinary Sessions of the Committee upon request of the Chairperson of the Working Group.

1. **Location**

The appointment will be home based with the above-mentioned travels to attend meetings as well as travels to various African countries to undertake activities of the Working Group, whenever necessary.

1. **Reimbursement**

The external experts shall not be considered as employees, as such they are not entitled to any form of remuneration. However, the full travel costs of the external experts will be covered and daily subsistence allowance will be given for the duration of travels based on African Union rules and regulations.

1. **Application**

The application documents should consist of the following:

1. A cover letter summarizing the background of the applicant and why the applicant is interested in the position;
2. A Customized Curriculum Vitae not exceeding 3 pages;
3. Evidence of educational background and professional experience;
4. Samples of publications, professional undertakings or related activities which demonstrate the applicants’ expertise on the areas of children’s rights/human rights and business; and
5. Names and contacts of three references.
6. **Application deadline**

The application should be submitted to the Secretariat of the ACERWC no later than 20 October 2025. Applications should be sent to opportunities-acerwc@africanunion.org copying SibandaO@africanunion.org