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COSW launches further consultation on proposed Commonwealth Young Carers Charter – responding to the voices of young carers

Thousands of children and young people around the world help look after a relative with a disability, illness, mental health condition, or drug or alcohol addiction. Some of these are children as young as four or five years old.

Young carers have told us that they may miss out on things that other children and young people get to do. Sometimes they may feel that nobody else understands what they have to do to look after their family

The Commonwealth Organisation for Social Work (COSW), working with staff from the Children's Society and several national associations and organisations, supported by the Noel & Thea Jones Fund, has been supporting young carer programmes for almost 20 years and over the past three years sponsored a consultation with young people in Australia, Canada, England, India, Kenya, New Zealand, Nigeria, Tanzania, Uganda to develop a Commonwealth Charter.

They told us that they want to make sure that more people, including country leaders, all around the world know about young carers and understand what they need and what would help them.

The draft Commonwealth Young Carer Charter is being promoted in the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Kigali, Rwanda 19 – 25 June. There will be a special presentation in the People's Forum in Kigali on 22 June and it will also be raised in the Youth Forum and Women's Forum. It is hoped that the Charter will get formal Commonwealth recognition before the 2024 CHOGM .

'Young carers deserve and demand a voice in the Commonwealth and that their particular needs and circumstances are recognised', said David N Jones, COSW Main Representative to the Commonwealth institutions who has championed the project from the outset. 'Young carers provide an amazing community service, often unseen and at huge personal cost. Heads of Government need to listen and respond!'



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NOTE TO EDITORS

COSW is an organisation for citizens of the Commonwealth who are interested in supporting social work and social development. It is supported by social work associations in the Commonwealth. It aims to promote and support communication and collaboration between social workers and social work associations of Commonwealth countries, and to uphold and promote the code of ethics of the International Federation of Social Workers. This statement can be found on the COSW website

www.cosw.info/news

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