

A TOOLKIT FOR MONITORING AND EVALUATING CHILDREN'S PARTICIPATION

BOOKLET

6

Children and young people's
experiences, advice
and recommendations



Save the Children works in more than 120 countries.
We save children's lives. We fight for their rights.
We help them fulfil their potential.

Acknowledgements

So many children and young people, adults and agencies have made significant contributions to shaping and improving this toolkit. We are sorry not to be able to mention all the individual names, but we really appreciate the crucial inputs that every individual involved has made.

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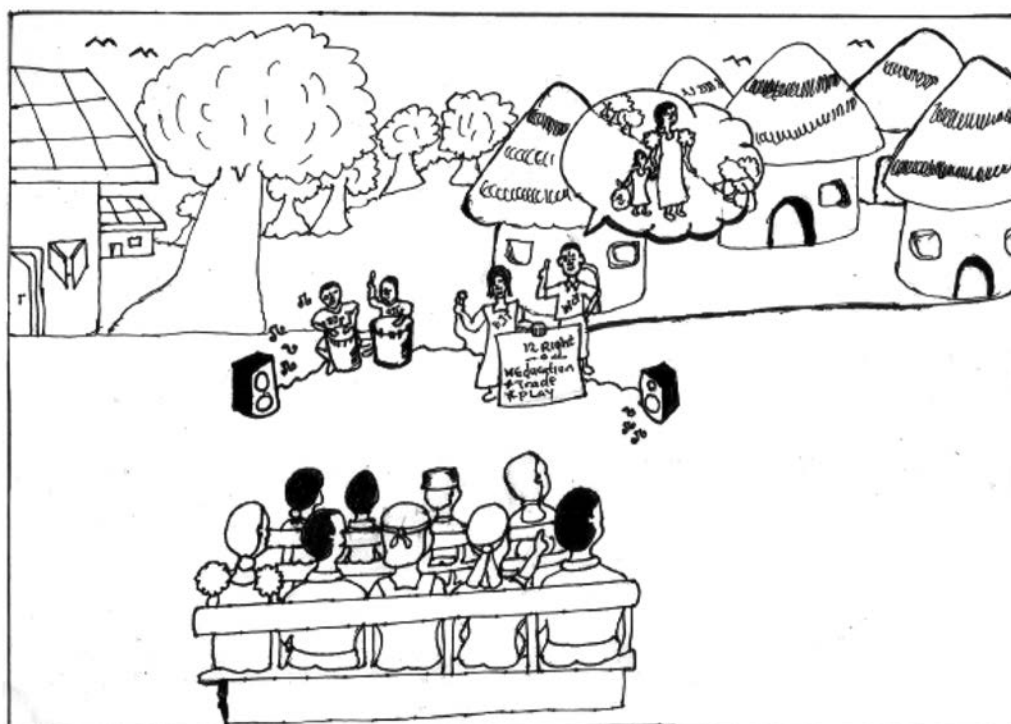
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Cover photo: Members of Child Brigade, an organisation of street and working children in Bangladesh. (Photo: Ken Hermann)

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'Sensitisation on child participation in community development issues.'
Artwork from African Movement of Working Children and Youth Nigeria.

This booklet was compiled by James Boyon from the African Movement of Working Children and Youth (AMWCY) in Nigeria, with inputs from children and young people from the Neighbourhood Community Network (NCN) in India, children's organisations facilitated by The Concerned for Working Children (CWC) in India, Plan Togo, World Vision Ghana, and World Vision Zambia, and with support from Hannah Mehta from Save the Children. Funding was gratefully received from Plan Sweden to support the production of this booklet.

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A children's club in Surkhet district, Nepal.

INTRODUCTION

Each of the organisations mentioned opposite were involved in piloting this toolkit from 2011 to 2013. In order to create this booklet, each of them organised workshops with children and young people who had been involved in the piloting process, and asked them to share the following:

1. Their experiences of using the tools as part of the piloting process
2. Any advice they have for adults about the best ways they can work with children
3. Any advice for other children and young people about what they can expect from adults who work with them

The African Movement of Working Children and Youth in Nigeria compiled all the contributions from children and young people, and turned them into this three-part booklet.

Part 1 – Children and young people’s experiences of piloting the tools

This part is intended as a means for children and young people to share their experiences and views about the tools, and their perspectives of what participatory monitoring and evaluation means to them.

Part 2 – Children and young people’s advice to facilitators of children’s participation

This part is a series of recommendations from children and young people to remind adults about what constitutes good practice in the facilitation of participation activities.

Part 3 – A Guide for Children and Young People: What you should expect from adults when they work with you

This is a child-friendly section for children and young people. It was made to enable young people to present to other young people what they should expect in terms of quality practice from adults who are working with them and facilitating their participation.

Please note: Where possible, direct quotes have been used from children and young people, but sometimes it has been necessary for adult authors to paraphrase or summarise children’s and young people’s views.

A LETTER FROM YOUNG PEOPLE FROM THE NEIGHBOURHOOD COMMUNITY NETWORK IN INDIA

“Dear children of the world,

We child parliamentarians from India greet you. We love you all. We want to share with you a very exciting experience which we enjoyed very much. It is our PME process. That is Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation process.

Certain enjoyable methods or tools were created by people interested in children to help children themselves to evaluate how well we children participate. The tools had some very high sounding names. Like timeline, “H” assessment, circle analysis, transect walk, children in context analysis for change, walking through the program circle, etc. Some had very simple names. Like pots and stones, and body mapping. But they were all very simple and gave us a lot of fun. Almost like having games. They were all in fact learning games, which made us have better insights, better confidence, and better feelings about ourselves.

Above all, we learnt to appreciate our own type of participation better. We knew we had grown because of this type of participation. We also learnt how we children could grow even more through this very special type of participation. That is participation through children's parliaments. We have Neighbourhood Parliaments of Children here. Children from about 30 neighbouring families are members of these children's parliaments. As members of these neighbourhood parliaments, we take charge of the neighbourhood. Or try to see how best to help the children and the people around. We meet regularly every week or so.

And we have child ministers for the neighbourhood. Like Child Prime Minister, Child Minister for Health, Child Minister for Human Rights. Child Minister for Environment, Child Minister for Education, etc. Each minister alerts us regarding things to be attended to. We discuss, make decisions and act. We have very many success stories to share in this regard. We have brought drop-outs and child labourers back to school. We have stopped child marriages. We have brought to the villages new street lights, new bus routes, new facilities at child day care centres, new reading rooms, etc. In one place we even brought a bridge worth \$100,000.

From neighbourhood parliaments we form village parliaments of children and later block parliaments of children, district parliaments of children and state parliaments of children. Our Tamilnadu-Pondicherry State Parliament of Children won the global award for the best child-led organisation for child rights action in 2009.

We went through the PME process using the above tools. We felt very happy about our children's parliaments because of this. We found the value of our children's parliaments even more because of these exercises. Almost every exercise or every tool helped us to know the various ways the children's parliaments helped us to be more effective participants. We also learnt how best we can better our participation. We became very enthusiastic about children's parliaments. We wanted more and more children to have the same benefits.

This way we request to you also to join such parliaments. Children's parliaments give us forums for participation and without forums we would find it difficult to participate. We shall ultimately have a world parliament of children where we will all meet together and try to make this world fit for children. Children of the world unite!”

PART I – CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S EXPERIENCES OF PILOTING THE TOOLS

We, children and young people from across the world, wanted to tell you about our experiences of using the M&E tools. In this section, you can find out:

- Which tools we used and what we thought about them
- What we felt about our involvement in this work
- What we learnt through the process
- Some of the amazing things we were able to do as part of this project
- Some of the exciting and important things that changed in our communities as a result of this work

WHAT TOOLS DID WE USE?

We made use of lots of different tools, including:

- Pots and stones
- Decision-making chart
- Stories of most significant change
- Footsteps
- Body mapping
- Question cards
- Conducting survey to gather information, etc.
- Timeline – to understand our situation, our timeline in our children's organisations, and the problems we are facing in our communities
- Child-led tours/transect walk
- Walking through the programme cycle
- "H" assessment
- Circle analysis to explore patterns of inclusion/exclusion
- Children in context analysis of change
- Subjective scoring on self-confidence (before/after)
- Interviews
- Focus groups
- Problem tree analysis
- Thermometer of change
- Observations

You can read more about these tools in **Booklet 5**.

WHAT DID WE THINK ABOUT THE TOOLS?

Some of us took the time to consider what we thought about the different tools we used. You can read about our experiences and thoughts here...



TIMELINE

"We enjoyed the timeline exercise. It helped us to recollect various stages of our process. We enjoyed listening to the timeline sequence of various parliaments as avidly as listening to a story. It was an opportunity to tell other groups of our successes."

(NCN, India)



CHILD-LED TOURS

"Child-led tours were very interesting; we walked through the villages and proudly noted the results of our achievements, like the children who were brought back to school, the families that received ration cards through our intervention, etc."

(NCN, India)



WALKING THROUGH THE PROGRAMME CYCLE

"We changed this activity by putting the picture of someone we know as leader and guardian in our community, school, and homes and by changing some of the words there to make it easier to understand."

(AMWCY, Nigeria)

"Walking through the programme cycle was equally interesting and at the same time good learning. To assess the various levels of satisfactory participation at the stages of a programme, we had four children carrying a placard with one of the four statements, 'children not involved', 'children consulted', 'collaborative' and 'child-led/managed', and the children were asked to stand near the placards according to what they thought about the participation at the various stages of the programme. Children were happy that it was mostly 'child-led/managed'."

(NCN, India)



TRANSECT WALKS

"In one place, since the children were brought from various villages, we had imaginary transect walks. That is, children from particular villages walked around as if they were walking around in their own villages noting in imagination the results brought about by their activities. This too turned out to be very interesting. We enjoyed listening to the achievements of others. And this challenged us to do likewise in our own villages."

(NCN, India)



USING OUR IMAGINATION

"Imagination: children and young people envisaged what happens in their various homes and communities and how it affects lives of the children."

(AMWCY, Nigeria)



An H assessment activity, Malawi.



A 'Pots and stones' activity, Togo.



H ASSESSMENT

"H assessment had one small modification on one line of the 'H': we had an arrow upward denoting strengths, and on the other line we had an arrow downward to denote weaknesses. Children pointed out many strengths, like federation at various levels, links with UN, unity, and support by local governance bodies."

(AMWCY, Nigeria)



POTS AND STONES

"We had also 'Pots and stones exercise' to see how we scored with regard to the nine requirements for children's participation. 27 stones were the maximum for a total of nine requirements. We were happy that our average in this regard was 27.5 beans."

(NCN, India)

"The pots and stones tool allows us to see progress in the quality of our participation over time if we make repeated use of it. We liked how the number of stones is determined. It is participatory. It is easy to understand how it works. It is easy to carry out, and it is fun."

(Plan Togo)

"It was not easy for us to understand the meaning of the nine basic requirements. To make it easy for us to work with the tool, we recommend that you take enough time to explain the nine standards to us through real-life examples. Words like 'accountable' are not easy to grasp for us!"

"You can help us better understand the standards through games and fun role-plays. You also need to make sure that everybody participates."

(Plan Togo)



CIRCLE ANALYSIS

"We drew on floor the diagram for the circle analysis to explore patterns of inclusion/exclusion. Most of the girls and boys of 12 years of age and below were in the circle meant for those involved most actively and on sustained basis. The majority of the boys above identified themselves within the circle for those 'sometimes involved and active but not always'. They cited various reasons like not being available within the village, being out for studies, job, etc."

(NCN, India)

"Circle analysis to explore patterns of inclusion/exclusion – it was easy for us to use the circle analysis in such a way that we use it after programmes and also after we have used the footsteps tools to identify steps in school, homes and community programmes by evaluating our involvement."

(AMWCY, Nigeria)



SUBJECTIVE SCORING FOR SELF-CONFIDENCE

"We had also subjective scoring for self-confidence (before and after). We became more enthusiastic about our parliaments process on account of this."

(NCN, India)



BODY MAPPING

"We children enjoyed very much the body mapping process. Dividing the body with a vertical line from top to bottom to signify the situation 'before' and 'after' our involvement in children's parliaments, we were able to notice the various improvements in us with regard to our thinking, outlook, listening, communication, health, activities, reach, etc. that occurred on account of children's parliaments."

(NCN, India)



PHOTO: CESESMA

A body-mapping exercise.



CHILDREN IN CONTEXT ANALYSIS OF CHANGE

“What impact did our involvement through children’s parliaments have on the governments at local, national and international levels? What changes did we effect in the family, community, and civil society at local, national and international levels? The tool, children in context analysis of change, helped us to identify this. We had plenty of achievements to quote at family and community levels. We were also creating awareness both at government and civil society levels, nationally and internationally. We had stories of how we interacted with leaders and addressed forums at national and international levels. As for example our State Child Prime Minister addressing various meetings during the 57th Session of the UN Commission on Women at New York.”

(NCN, India)



STORIES OF MOST SIGNIFICANT CHANGE

“It was the Stories of most significant change that made us bring out our creative best. Children acted out their best stories of achievements through children’s parliaments.”

(NCN, India)



FOOTSTEPS

“We have seen this tool as the easiest tools which we have been using to draw out the programme cycle of the activities in our community and explain how we have been involved in decision-making.”

(AMWCY, Nigeria)



DECISION-MAKING CHART

“So too we had decision-making chart where we identified 10 important areas where we would like to have a say in decision-making and those 10 who presently have a say in decision-making. Our discovery: wherever we have children’s parliaments functioning, children have more and more say in decision-making.”

(NCN, India)

“The tool enables us to see which people we need to work with to find solutions to our problems. It shows us who is most influential and who is less. The tool helps us to take the right decisions and to make good things happen. We liked it because it is not too difficult. It teaches you to think before taking a decision. We liked it because it is like a game for us.”

(Plan Togo)

“We also identified things that were not easy for us when working with the decision-making pocket chart... Dear adults ... It is not easy to identify the situations we want to influence. Some decisions do not concern us or we might influence people for a negative purpose.

It takes a good facilitator to identify all relevant persons that influence a process. If an important person is not identified, we might try to influence the wrong person.

The name of the tool is complicated and not easy to remember.”

(Plan Togo)

WHAT DID WE LEARN THROUGH THE PROCESS?

"We have found there are lots of ways in showing and expressing ourselves to our parents, guardians, to government officials, community leaders, even the adults within our communities. We do this by showing them how useful and important our participation is and our involvement in providing solutions to the issues that affect us. We think that interviewing and questioning people by the use of questionnaires was another way of telling them to ensure our involvement in actions and decisions concerning us... through research, resolving of any problems or issues that affect us, and also asking our friends, family and relatives how children are being involved in decision-making in their various houses."

(AMWCY, Nigeria)

"We understood different concepts better, like: democracy, representation, accountability."

(Children's organisations facilitated by CWC, India)

"We learnt how to:

- measure the impact of our work*
- use the information gathered by us to present our issues and situation before authorities and local governments, and seek their response for the solutions to these issues."*

(Children's organisations facilitated by CWC, India)

"When we used the programme cycle analysis, we felt we participated more during the situational analysis process, strategic planning. But when it came to implementation and monitoring and evaluation of projects, we thought we participated less."

(World Vision Zambia)

"We thought that the biggest violations of the nine basic requirements were:

- 1. Participation is respectful – we felt we were not participating in matters affecting us in our communities due to the strong cultural belief that 'children should be seen and not heard'.*
- 2. Participation is inclusive – we felt children with disabilities were not involved."*

(World Vision Zambia)

"We felt our level of engagement was mostly consultative and collaborative. We want to be involved at every stage of the programme cycle. We need to be protected from abuse as we participate in activities because we live in communities where our voice is neither seen nor heard."

(World Vision Zambia)

HOW DO WE FEEL NOW?

"We are proud about our presentations made in all these events and meetings."

(Children's organisations facilitated by CWC, India)

"Some of us are from very remote villages. We had never interacted with strangers. We used to run away when we saw strangers. After participating in this process, we are very confident now. Now we are able to interact with any adult at any stage to negotiate with them about our issues."

(Children's organisations facilitated by CWC, India)

"We found the activity of M& E process was very interesting as we were part of it. We found this was more interesting than our school activities."

(Children's organisations facilitated by CWC, India)

"We learnt to share our ideas and issues more with the adults in the community and in our local government."

(Children's organisations facilitated by CWC, India)

"We enjoyed the process. And felt empowered and enthusiastic regarding our special brand of child participation. That is through Neighbourhood Parliaments of Children (NPCs) www.childrenparliament.in."

(NCN, India)

"We feel empowered with knowledge about our rights. More of us are growing in confidence to speak out on violence."

(World Vision Zambia)

"We are delighted that the tools were packaged in a fun and child-friendly way and communicated to us in a 'language' we best understood."

(World Vision Zambia)

"We need confidentiality on some of the issues we shared with adults, such as stories about our personal struggles/challenges."

(World Vision Zambia)

"We feel sad that most adults in our communities do not trust us enough to make informed decisions in matters that affect us."

(World Vision Zambia)



Girls at a temporary learning centre for displaced children in Peshawar district, Pakistan.

SOME OF THE AMAZING THINGS WE DID AS PART OF THIS PROJECT

Children's organisations facilitated by CWC, India:

- We were able to make local government answerable/accountable to us to some extent and also are able to get solutions for some of our problems in this period.
- We were able to share our experiences in the process, through state TV programmes for children, children's Gram Sabha, and meeting with district administration about our problems with our local government representatives and members of CWC.
- We were able to convince our local governments to call special meetings to discuss about our issues that has been presented by us to them in this period.
- We were able to use red tapes to represent the count of our problems given to local government, by tying them either to a tree or to a pole in front of local government office, to make them aware of our problems every day whenever they see. When they solve our problems, we remove red tape and tie white tape to indicate how many of our issues have been solved by local government. This process will continue in the future also. Now we are able to make our local government more alert towards our issues and problems. Our parents and our community members are also now able to see our efforts in solving our problems through this activity.
- We were able to mobilise other children to join our unions.
- We were able to visit some places during this period.

"Our aim: to get the children themselves to evaluate the participation efficacy of children's parliaments."

(NCN, India)

SOME OF THE EXCITING AND IMPORTANT THINGS THAT CHANGED IN OUR COMMUNITIES AS A RESULT OF THIS WORK

“Children and young people’s participation towards using the tools for monitoring and evaluation in decision-making in their various countries has been seen as a great improvement. It’s a way of advocating for children’s participation in decision-making on all issues that affect them. Children and young people are the major actors in using the toolkits in evaluating and monitoring their participation throughout the projects in the communities, schools, homes and their friendly houses.”

(AMWCY, Nigeria)

“Local governments are comparatively becoming more serious about our problems. They have started to discuss with the adults of the community to find out the solutions for our problems.”

(Children’s organisations facilitated by CWC, India)

“Some of our suggestions like hanging sign boards near dangerous spots in our Gram Panchayats is also helping all people who are going near those dangerous spots. Local governments are following up to put sign boards which have been identified as dangerous spots during rainy season. They are also taking actions such as protective walls, fences around these spots.”

(Children’s organisations facilitated by CWC, India)

“The children’s activities have caught the attention of traditional leaders. They are:

- *growing less tolerant of harmful cultural practices such as child marriage*
- *helping to mobilise community men and women to get involved and support the children by raising awareness of children’s rights.*

In addition to the above, other stakeholders such as the Department of Education, Police Victims Support Unit, and Social Welfare have intensified the work of ensuring that children’s rights are protected and upheld at all times. ”

(World Vision Zambia)

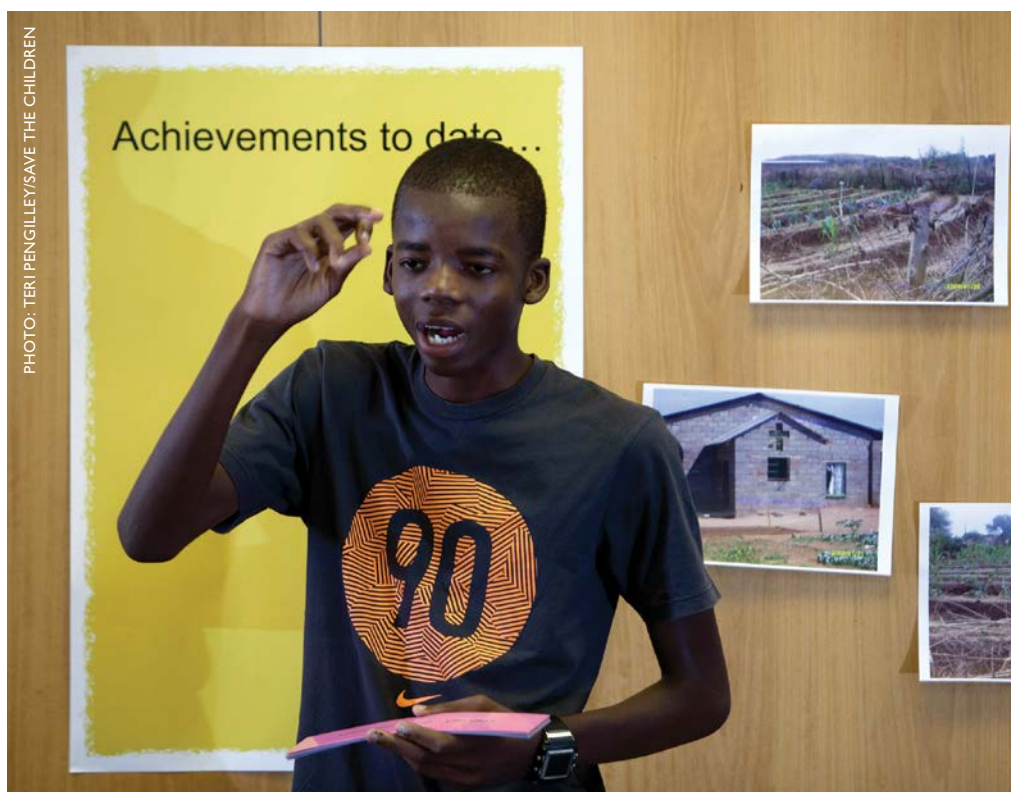


A centre for working children in Khulna, Bangladesh.

PART 2 – CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S ADVICE TO FACILITATORS OF CHILDREN'S PARTICIPATION

Children and young people were asked to give some advice for adult facilitators, to let them know what the best ways of working with children are. You can read all their advice in this section of the booklet.

1. Children and young people from Plan Togo and World Vision Zambia used the 'Nine UNCRC Basic Requirements for Effective and Ethical Practice in Child Participation' as a way of presenting their recommendations.
2. Children's organisations facilitated by the Concerned for Working Children, as well as children and young people from Neighbourhood Community Network in India and the African Movement of Working Children and Youth (AMWCY) in Nigeria, put together some general advice and pointers for adults.
3. Finally, some young people from World Vision Ghana and the AMWCY in Nigeria met together at a workshop in Ghana in May 2013 to discuss their own recommendations.



A workshop for members of Save the Children's global children's panel.

ADVICE FROM CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE FROM PLAN TOGO AND WORLD VISION ZAMBIA

BASIC REQUIREMENT 1: PARTICIPATION IS INFORMATIVE AND TRANSPARENT

Message: dear adults, you need to involve children in decisions that concern them!

- Do not
 1. Decide without consulting us which club members will participate in which event;
 2. Create jealousy by always selecting the same children for participating in events.
- Adults, don't manipulate us into doing your bidding. Give us accurate information on what you want to achieve out of this project or activity. Listen to us. Give us the opportunity to freely express our views.

BASIC REQUIREMENT 2: PARTICIPATION IS VOLUNTARY

Message: dear adults, let children participate freely. If someone does not want to join an activity, don't force the child.

- Don't force us to get into activities we are not comfortable with or simply don't want. Accept our "Yes" or "No".
- Do not force a child to join an activity even if you think that it might be good for him or her!

BASIC REQUIREMENT 3: PARTICIPATION IS RESPECTFUL

Message: dear adults, be aware of children's availability when asking them to participate in events!

- Adults, respect us as people who have something useful to offer in our communities.
- Do not make us leave school classes to participate in trainings and meetings!

BASIC REQUIREMENT 4: PARTICIPATION IS RELEVANT

Message: dear adults, we like training sessions! But please make sure that the training sessions are relevant!

- Do not train us on any topic that could affect us negatively. Trainings on weapon use, for example, is not relevant for us.
- Please ensure that the activities you take us through and the training material you give us are relevant.

BASIC REQUIREMENT 5: PARTICIPATION IS CHILD-FRIENDLY

Message: dear adults, everything that is organised for us needs to be child friendly and accessible for all children.

- Adults, please ensure that you take us through activities that are appropriate with our age. Always remember to speak to us in a language that we best understand.
- Do not organise meetings in venues that are not accessible to all of us and always make sure there are spaces for playing in!

BASIC REQUIREMENT 6: PARTICIPATION IS INCLUSIVE

Message: dear adults, make sure that children don't discriminate against each other and that no child is excluded!

- Do not exclude children with disabilities from activities!
- We would like you, adults, not to discriminate against us on the basis of our sex. In addition, our friends with disabilities, and those of other races must not feel left out. We all must have equal opportunities to be involved.

BASIC REQUIREMENT 7: PARTICIPATION IS SUPPORTED BY TRAINING FOR ADULTS

Message: dear adults, make sure that the adults who work with us don't abuse us and are well trained!

- Do not use corporal punishment when working with children!
- Do not use sticks or other objects to discipline us!
- We want you, adults, to be effective and confident when teaching us about these tools and other issues related to our participation.

BASIC REQUIREMENT 8: PARTICIPATION IS SAFE AND SENSITIVE TO RISK

Message: dear adults, when you transport us to events, use safe means of transportation! One seat per child!

- Use responsible, trained and careful drivers!
- During our participation, we want to be/feel safe and not be scared that we are going to be abused.

BASIC REQUIREMENT 9: PARTICIPATION IS ACCOUNTABLE

Message: dear adults, give us clear feedback on how and for how long you commit to support our organisations.

- Make sure you feed back to us when you have asked us about something. How have our thoughts been used?
- We would like you to be transparent and honest when dealing with us.

SOME OTHER ADVICE FOR ADULT FACILITATORS...

ADVICE FROM CHILDREN'S ORGANISATIONS FACILITATED BY THE CONCERNED FOR WORKING CHILDREN, INDIA

- Children should be supported to represent the children's organisation they come from.
- Children should enjoy all forms of cultural expressions like music, drama and sports. Do they need a platform to express themselves? This is children's right to leisure. And this also helps children to express their opinions. Children should take part in sports and games that give us happiness.
- Children's organisations should enjoy the opportunity to get together from time to time. This helps all children's organisations to learn from each other mutually and feel strong from more strength.
- There should be some structures at the local government level for children to interact with adults and governments.
- Adult governments should also invite children to their meetings and assist children to share their issues and concerns with adult governments at various levels.
- Families of children should be aware of children's participation and should also know how to allow their children to express their opinions.
- Adults in the family should listen to their children and allow them to make choices when purchasing personal belonging like clothes, footwear, etc.
- Children's organisations should get information about various things including democracy, participation, rights, representations, managing organisations, etc. These are helping children's organisations to learn how to participate more meaningfully in their own organisations and in all platforms they take part in where decisions are made about children.
- Children's organisations should be provided with information about the concept of protest against unjust and illegal practices. Children should also protest the illegal activities which affect their life.
- Children should take part in the process of getting their education.
- Children should take part in the process of developing 'save and conserve environment' of their surroundings and they should have some role in conservation of nature.

ADVICE FROM CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE FROM THE NEIGHBOURHOOD COMMUNITY NETWORK, INDIA

Help build and strengthen children's parliaments and their federations!

- We want you to **be our friends**.
- We **don't** want you to **behave like a class teacher**.
- We don't want you to give us all answers. Give us the **joy of finding answers ourselves**.
- We understand that sometimes you will have to be firm and we appreciate that. But mostly we would like you to **be one like us, coming to our level, playing with us**, enjoying what we enjoy and taking us seriously, giving a serious and involved listening to our joys, successes, struggles and pains.
- Don't stand or sit on a pedestal/chair to teach us. **Be seated on the floor** if we are seated on the floor. Then we feel at home with you.
- Help us know that you are interested in us. That you **love us**.
- We enjoyed being in the inner circle, with adults and others in the second circle around us. It is usually adults who get the prominence. Here, it was different.
- Yes, we want to learn. But don't make it boring. **Make things dramatic and participatory**. This way, with all the seriousness of searching together, the evaluation and monitoring tools and the process become fun.
- **Make sure everybody participates**. Some have the tendency or ability to give all the points in a discussion. This will leave others with no points left and no opportunity to participate. Make everybody share one point at a time. They could add in the other missing points when they get chances in the second or third rounds.



Children participating in a focus group as part of an M&E project baseline process in Walala, Nicaragua.

- Please also intersperse the programme with some **songs, games, cultural activity**, etc.
- We enjoyed when we **didn't have to sit in the same place** and position.
- **Make us do things** like drawing a chart, acting out, etc. This would make us enjoy the programme better.
- We were happy when you **come prepared with the required materials**. Like charts, pencils, balls, seeds, balloons, etc. That makes us take the programme with more earnestness.
- And please **avoid talking over cell phone** while you facilitate sessions for us.
- And be patient with us when we ask questions and give in to some mischief. Never ever make anyone feel guilty and stand accused in front of the whole group. You can correct us. But do it gently and tactfully. We like to be respected among our peers.

ADVICE FROM CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE FROM THE AFRICAN MOVEMENT OF WORKING CHILDREN AND YOUTH, NIGERIA

Please note: The following contributions from children and young people have been compiled and summarised by an adult facilitator. . .

- Think about the place you plan to meet with us!
- Consider everyone's opinions, making sure that all our contributions or expressions are all useful. Every child's contribution is relevant.
- Always use simple English/local language that we can understand when explaining things.
- Try to use demonstrations where necessary.
- All facilitators should be experienced in working with children and young people.

Adults should be inclusive in their approach

- Adults should find out the views of all children and young people.
- Is there a particular target group such as teenage parents, those from an ethnic minority background, those children and young people with disabilities?
- Depending on who you want to engage with, in terms of age and ability, you will need to tailor the approach you take.
- It is important to understand that a one-size-fits-all approach is not suitable for different age groups and those who have additional needs. Questionnaires, for example, may be helpful if you want to obtain a general consensus of opinion with a large group of children and young people, but the style will need to be adapted for children with low literacy levels or for children who find filling out a questionnaire difficult. Where more qualitative data are required on a specific topic such as issues facing teenage parents or those who are in the care of the local authority, focus group discussions may be more appropriate.
- Make sure to build in enough time when working with children and young people.

When working with children and young people to use the M&E tools...

- Children and young people need to be clear, and develop a plan with you detailing how you will use the tools together.
- There needs to be at least a three-month build-in time depending on the extent of the required involvement of children and young people. For example, if the M&E team wants to develop a questionnaire that is distributed through schools and other community groups, time will be needed to develop one that is suitable to the different levels of age and ability of children and young people.
- Although an original draft of the questionnaire can be drafted by an adult, the wording and the style of the questionnaire should be discussed with a group of young people.
- You should also think about how you want to publicise the opportunity for children and young people to be involved.
- Adults will need to think about school holidays and busy exam times for children and young people. Although the school holidays may not be the best time to obtain quantitative data, with the provision of school holiday activities, there may be the opportunity to obtain some valuable qualitative material. But again, staff resources within your office may be limited and you need to think about whether other agencies could support you in gaining the information that you require.
- One key question is whether there is the opportunity to link with other community-based organisations and agencies within the district, or even at a county level. Many organisations need to involve children and young people as part of their reviewing and service planning arrangements. There is a danger of overloading children and young people with consultation documents. There is the potential of gaining a greater understanding of the links between different aspects of a young person's life if you collaborate with other agencies.
- Children and young people should be involved in planning events.
- Plan well in advance with children and young people about the best kind of participatory approaches to use.

Children and young people should be consulted about:

- **Where you will work together:** What kind of space is available to work with children and young people? Is the venue accessible? What transport will they need? What equipment is needed to work with children and young people (eg, projector; written materials)? How safe is the environment? Is the venue young person-friendly? How is the layout of the room and how comfortable is it? Are there adequate heating, lighting and refreshment facilities?
- **How you follow up and provide feedback:** How will the information be fed back and to whom/when? If it's a long-term project, is the initiative sustainable? How will the process be evaluated? Where will the information go and in what form?

What children and young people need from adults to participate fully:

- **Responsibility:** Give us the chance to prove to you that we are responsible.
- **Respect:** Treat us like you would like to be treated.
- **Trust:** Don't judge us because we are children.
- **Give us a chance:** To make mistakes, learn from experiences, and to explain our opinion or our side of the story.
- **Care for us:** Let us know you care about us.
- **Support us:** We need to be assured we are doing the right thing.
- **Understanding:** Listen to what we have to say and understand that we have stresses and problems too.
- **Balance:** Don't leave us totally alone – we need you to catch us if we fall.
- **Give us praise:** When we are doing things that are good or we make good decisions.
- **Freedom:** It may be hard, but let us go. We have our own path and make our own decisions and mistakes. Part of growing up is finding out who we are, what we value, and what we need as a person.

In May 2013, a group of young people from World Vision Ghana and the African Movement of Working Children and Youth in Nigeria came together to create some recommendations about how they would like adults to work with them...

We like it when...

- adults respect our views
- adults allow us to participate in activities
- adults appreciate our expression
- they help us further on what we do not know
- they participate with us equally
- they communicate with us in a child-friendly way
- they do not treat us badly.

We don't like it when...

- teachers and parents distract us when reading
- adults judge children with partiality (all children should be judged equally)
- we are being told to shut up when we are expressing our views
- children are loaded with a heavy burden
- the government refuses to do their responsibilities to children in school
- children are maltreated
- community leaders exclude children from decision-making processes.

One of the participants made an illustration incorporating several of the above issues: a girl was not able to read for an exam because she was told by her stepmother to carry a crate of eggs to the market. It was difficult for her to carry them and she dropped the eggs on the way. She was berated and called a stupid girl.

Another drawing illustrated adults excluding children from decision-making processes. One of the young participants developed a script for a drama that was acted out by the other participants. The drama showed how by not listening to the views of children, who had suggested a clean-up campaign, members of the community became sick with cholera.

This comic strip was made by children and youth in Nigeria. It shows that adults need to know that when children are weak, they need to rest and not work all the time.

THE RIGHT TO REST WHEN SICK



A TOOLKIT FOR MONITORING AND EVALUATING CHILDREN'S PARTICIPATION

BOOKLET

6

Children and young people's experiences, advice and recommendations

This toolkit looks at how to monitor and evaluate children's participation in programmes, communities and in wider society. It is aimed at practitioners and children working in participatory programmes, as well as governments, NGOs, civil society and children's organisations seeking to assess and strengthen children's participation in society.

The toolkit comprises six booklets:

Booklet 1: Introduction provides an overview of children's participation, how the toolkit was created and a brief guide to monitoring and evaluation.

Booklet 2: Measuring the creation of a participatory and respectful environment for children provides a framework and practical tools to measure children's participation in their community and society.

Booklet 3: How to measure the scope, quality and outcomes of children's participation provides a conceptual framework for children's participation and introduces a series of benchmarks and tables to measure children's participation.

Booklet 4: A 10-step guide to monitoring and evaluating children's participation looks at involving children, young people and adults in the process. It includes guidance on identifying objectives and progress indicators, systematically collecting data, documenting activities and analysing findings.

Booklet 5: Tools for monitoring and evaluating children's participation provides a range of tools that you can use with children and young people, as well as other stakeholders.

Booklet 6: Children and young people's experiences, advice and recommendations has been produced by young people who were involved in piloting the toolkit. It consists of two separate guides: one for adults and one for children and young people.

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