



THE NATIONAL CHILD PARTICIPATION GUIDE FOR UGANDA



Creating an Environment for Children to be Heard



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Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development,
Uganda Child Rights NGO Network and
UNICEF - Uganda Office

00190 - Children participate in recreational activities at the Nkukute ECD (Early Childhood Development) centre in Malongo sub-county, Masaka district using locally made materials provided by UNICEF.
UNICEF/UGDA00190/ ANNE LYDIA SEKANDI

00204 - In 1996 in Uganda, a picture book open on her lap, a girl, Agnes Komwaka, speaks in class at a UNICEF-assisted COPE school in the village of Rwengwe, approximately 35 miles from the south-western town of Bushenyi.
UNICEF/UGDA00204/ GIACOMO PIROZZI

"I opened my mouth, I spoke
 Everyone stopped and stared
 'Hold on, Hold on'
 Was the chairperson's greeting
 'I presume Adults are running this meeting.'
 You're just a child, we know what's best
 'I am sure we'll come to some agreement'.
 I felt like screaming, but what could be done
 After all, this system can't be beaten.
 I wasn't there, just an illusion.
 Talking to the walls, still nobody noticed
 Before I knew it, my life was planned
 What's the point of me being in this meeting?
 I begun to rebel, I wanted to be heard
 But to them I was a problem
 A reject sample of a human being
 I wanted someone to come through the door
 with listening ears
 Someone who understood my fears
 The things that should have been said by this reject human being,
 Are really quite full of meaning"

- Voice of a child



UN Convention on the Rights of the Child,
 An International Save the Children Alliance Training Kit, 1997

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ABBREVIATIONS

ACRWC	African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child
CBO	Community Based Organization
CSO	Civil Society Organization
KDG	Kigulu Development Group
LC1	Local Council, Level 1
MGLSD	Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development
MoES	Ministry of Education and Sports
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
OVCs	Orphans and Vulnerable Children
UCRNN	Uganda Child Rights NGO Network
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
UPE	Universal Primary Education

FOREWORD

The Government of Uganda ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) in 1990. Since then, significant progress has been made on the observance of children's rights to Survival, Development and Protection. The challenge however remains the fulfillment of the right to Participation, which facilitates the realization of other rights.

It is the duty of the Government of Uganda to ensure that all children's rights are respected, protected and promoted. Art. 12 of the UNCRC obliges State Parties to assure a child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of a child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child." As part of its mandate, the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MGLSD) provides guidance to stakeholders on promotion and protection of children's rights. For this reason, a National Guide for the participation of children has been developed in consonance with Art. 12 of the CRC emphasized above.

This Guide is intended to facilitate meaningful participation of children from family through to national, regional and international levels. It is therefore imperative that the various audiences in the different settings are appropriately targeted.

I therefore encourage all persons interacting with children to use the Guide and provide feedback on their experiences.

Together we can make a difference in the lives of our children!

For God And My Country!



Hon. Syda N M Bbumba (MP),
Minister of Gender, Labour and Social Development.

How to Use This Guide

Is this Guide for you?

You bet! All adults have a responsibility for involving children in any issues that affect their lives. This Guide is designed to be an invaluable instrument specifically for those working at institutions/organizations including schools and health care providers; legal institutions; probation and welfare institutions; local councils; Non Governmental Organizations (NGO), Community Based Organizations (CBO) and the media. The beneficiaries will be families, communities and ultimately children.

This Guide is designed to be a user friendly tool to provide you with tips, tools and techniques and for engaging children. It is not meant to be read in one sitting, nor is this Guide meant to sit on a shelf. We believe child participation is a process and not an event. This takes time, dedication and careful planning.

It is the opportunity and responsibility as the people of Uganda to hold a vision for the future, for the future of this country. An integral part of this are decisions, laws and policies made today and how all people including children are part of the process, not the effect. Ugandans can be the cause of a positive, vibrant and democratic future. So it is time to decide... what you are willing to do? By reading this Child Participation Guide you are taking the first step in the hope and promise of delivering the dream held in the hearts and minds of Ugandans. This Guide is based on the slogan **BE THE CAUSE!** By reading this Guide and embodying the principles contained, you make a pledge to be the vehicle for children's voices to have meaning, message and momentum.

There is certainly a lot of information in this Guide. Each chapter provides you with information to enhance and deepen your learning – to increase the skills you already have or to teach you new ones. This guide has been designed so there is something for everyone. Be mindful, it is impossible for one Guide to provide every single small detailed bit of information on dealing with children in all circumstances, such as HIV/AIDS, disabilities, etc. You should leverage the resources of your organization or institution and additional experts in the field to help you.

In using this Guide, at the end of each section there is a time to stop, pause and reflect on all you have learned. This **"BE THE CAUSE! Action"** parts will ask you invaluable questions to help you review and think through how you can continue using this Guide daily.

There is one case study at the end of each section (three in total) for you to see effective child participation in action. Please note, there are many organizations effectively having children involved in consultations, we are merely highlighting a few of the many and we are not discounting the good work you are doing.

The commitment form at the end of the Guide is a way you can really challenge yourself after concluding the Guide to take the next step and create concrete actions to support your learning. Activities and forms in the Appendix are meant to be used, filled out and re-used.

You know that you've been using the Guide thoroughly if it actually looks "worn!" And this is a word of encouragement again....participation is a process and not an event. To be a cause and a catalyst for child participation requires care and a support team. Make sure you surround yourself with the proper support, thought leaders and creative thinkers who can continue to devise new and innovative ways to involve children. After all, the future is in all of our hands, yes?



This guide is specifically designed for those working at institutions/organizations including schools and health care providers; legal institutions; probation and welfare institutions; local councils; Non Governmental Organizations; Community Based Organizations; and the media.

SECTION ONE: CHILD PARTICIPATION FROM INTRODUCTION TO RECIPROCITY

INTRODUCTION

Background

- *Why do we need to involve children in decision making?*
- *Do children really have a right to have their voices heard?*
- *How can children's viewpoints be an invaluable contribution to laws and policies in Uganda?*
- *How can children's voices be joined with adults to present the true voice of Ugandan people?*

Child participation has been a subject of intense discussion among professionals working with children in the recent past. As part of efforts to promote the implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), international and national children's organizations have acknowledged the need to involve persons aged below 18 years (children) and have incorporated the concept in their objectives and policy documents.

Uganda recognizes the right to participation by all persons in the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda (1995), the Local Government Act (Cap.243), and the Children Act (Cap 59). Several efforts by both government and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) to promote child participation have been initiated. The challenge so far is the lack of guidelines to be followed by everyone promoting child participation. Each agency promoting children's participation applies its own approach, which results in complete confusion among the public including child actors, young people and the children. It doesn't help to add to the lack of knowledge that exists among everyday people regarding child participation.

The national Child Participation Guide is designed to contribute to the realization of participation as a right for all children and to respond to the good intentions of actors promoting child participation. This Guide has been developed under the leadership of the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MGLSD), a government arm mandated to set standards through policies and guidelines for services and activities targeting children, among other categories. The MGLSD collaborated with Uganda

Child Rights NGO Network (UCRNN) and UNICEF-Uganda Country Office. To ensure that the Guide is grounded on current practices, skills and knowledge, the development of the Guide was preceded by a Baseline Survey on the Status of Child Participation in Uganda. In addition, the Taskforce consulted existing local and international frameworks and undertook a series of consultations and reviews with child participation practitioners and target users.

Objectives of this Guide:

1. To provide organizations with a clear approach and methodology on how to involve children.
2. To stimulate action towards providing a safe environment and space that promotes the participation of children at the family, community and institutions.

Children's participation is not just limited to work related areas, it needs to be integrated into every part of society. Children must participate in all societal issues that affect them directly or indirectly. This Guide provides a framework for strengthening communication between adults and children and directly between children themselves.

The overall aim is for all children to participate in all issues concerning them. Every effort must be taken to ensure that all children including those with special needs have access and opportunities to participate. In order to make sure all children are involved, consider the visible and invisible requirements and the likely immediate and long term impact on the lives of children.

Additional guidelines may be developed for these children. Help stakeholders, including children themselves have dialogue and discussions on developing and designing such guidelines and even codes of conduct. It is essential to make sure there is a non-discriminatory approach for the following:

- Children with disabilities like those with difficulty in movement, seeing, speaking, hearing, learning; mental retardation, epilepsy and multiple disabilities
- Child Labourers for instance domestic workers, those employed in commercial farms or in different trades
- Children living in emergency situations, refugees and internally displaced camps
- Separated children who may be living in orphanages, foster care, child-headed households, remand homes, approved schools, vocational training institutions, boarding schools children living on streets
- Abused and exploited children
- Orphans
- HIV/AIDS infected and affected children
- Children in conflict with the law

- Children in 'hard to reach areas' including islands, rural and hilly areas
- Children in resource limited families and communities

Please note before you begin...Child participation facilitators may need special skills, and knowledge to promote involvement with these children such as, sign language, brail, etc. For children living on streets, stressed, traumatized and those with other behavioral problems, facilitators will need specific counseling skills to handle such children with delinquent tendencies. Be mindful to provide particular training so all children, regardless of disabilities will participate in the process.

As you read this Guide, consider this...if you were reading this guide in 30 years to come, would you look at our leaders, business people, entrepreneurs, government officials, doctors, lawyers and farmers and be proud of their role in society? Will you be excited how outspoken each group is? Will you be uplifted by the democratic process in Uganda that gives everyone a voice to be heard? Will everyone even realize the cause of what you are seeing was the effect of the laws, policies and actions from 30 years prior?

Probably not. It's time to act. Let's begin...



The overall aim is for all children to participate in all issues concerning them. Every effort must be taken to ensure that all children including those with special needs have access and opportunities to participate.

DEFINITIONS

Child Defined

A child is anyone below the age of 18. This is mandated and verified by the UNCRC (Art.1), ACRWC (Art.2), the Uganda Constitution (Art. 257(c) and the Children Act (Sec.2). Under some circumstances the perception of who a child is varies depending on your community and tribal heritage, when children take on roles and responsibilities of adults - child marriages, working children, child headed households and child-parents. Girls may also be perceived as adults at an earlier age than boys of the same age because girls physically mature faster than boys. Though various perceptions of who a child is prevail in different communities, the legal definition overrides social definitions in enforcement of child related provisions by state and non-state authorities.

Children are easy to discount and marginalize. They are young, do not have voting power, certain invaluable life skills and complete education. Children can be set aside as an afterthought. To adults, it is easy to say “they will adapt” when making decisions that affect children’s lives. And still, children will grow up to become adults and vibrant members of the Ugandan society. However, this Guide emphasizes that involving children in all decisions affecting them at a young age will provide the confidence and security to be active, engaged and powerful contributors throughout the years.



What is child participation?

Participation is having a voice and being heard in a meaningful way. If honored and done right, participation influences decision-making and creates change. Child Participation is defined as:

***Active engagement of children in
all issues that affect their lives.***

This includes informed and willing involvement of all children no matter the age, sex, ability, race or ethnic group, in any matter concerning them either directly or indirectly. A cornerstone to child participation is the transparent commitment by adults to listen to, respect and honor the voices of children.

Children's participation is a right in itself. Like any other human rights, people from all walks of life have a duty to respect, protect and promote the right of children to participate. It is also interwoven with other rights in the UNCRC, a treaty that Uganda has ratified. These include the right to express one's opinion and to be heard; freedom of expression - to seek, receive and impart information; freedom of thought, conscience and religion; freedom of association; protection of privacy and access to information.

What child participation is not:

- Manipulation – children have no idea why you are consulting them or why they are asked to be involved and still, they do it anyway
- Decoration – when adults ask children to take part in an event to physically demonstrate participation. Really there is nothing behind this other than a good show (includes dancing at an event to raise awareness for a cause)
- Tokenism – children are apparently given a voice and in fact have little or no input on the subject or opportunity to devise their own opinions
- Placating - making constituents happy by saying or doing a few actions without any meaningful intention. People see straight through this – especially children.

Child participation is designed to provide and promote:

- Safe places for children in families, communities and institutions
- Openness and honesty
- Forum for children to think for themselves while expressing their views – shared decision making
- Information gathering and sharing
- Effective interaction among children and with adults involved in projects/activities in a positive way
- Empowerment for children as individuals and as members of society

- Spaces for children to have influence on actions and decisions that affect their lives
- Space and time for children to identify, analyze problems and even suggest solutions to those problems.

Benefits of Child Participation

Societies have long believed that “children should be seen and not heard.” Many adults feel they know what children want. Decisions benefiting children are solely led from an adult perspective, not a child’s. This shuts children down, diminishes their confidence, curbs sharing of ideas and feelings and stints development.

Experiences of child participation both nationally and internationally indicate that children’s involvement is a clear overall benefit to them and schools, organizations, communities and political leaders:

Importance and benefits of participation to children:

- Helps to identify their key concerns
- Critical to designing programmes specifically tailored to them
- Provides children with a greater sense of ownership and responsibility, especially in programme development
- Develops life skills including empowerment, self esteem and self confidence
- Enhances democracy and the democratic process
- Increases sensitivity to perspectives and needs of others - develops competencies such as cooperation, tolerance and collaboration
- Exposure to social networks, skills and enjoyment
- Promotes group responsibility – sharing experiences and solutions
- Preparation for leadership
- Creates positive relationships among children
- It inculcates a sense of patriotism in the children.

Schools - In schools where children and young people have opportunities to be involved, it improves their discipline, promotes transparency, enhances skills, promotes learning and strengthens the quality of learning and interaction between staff and the pupils/students.

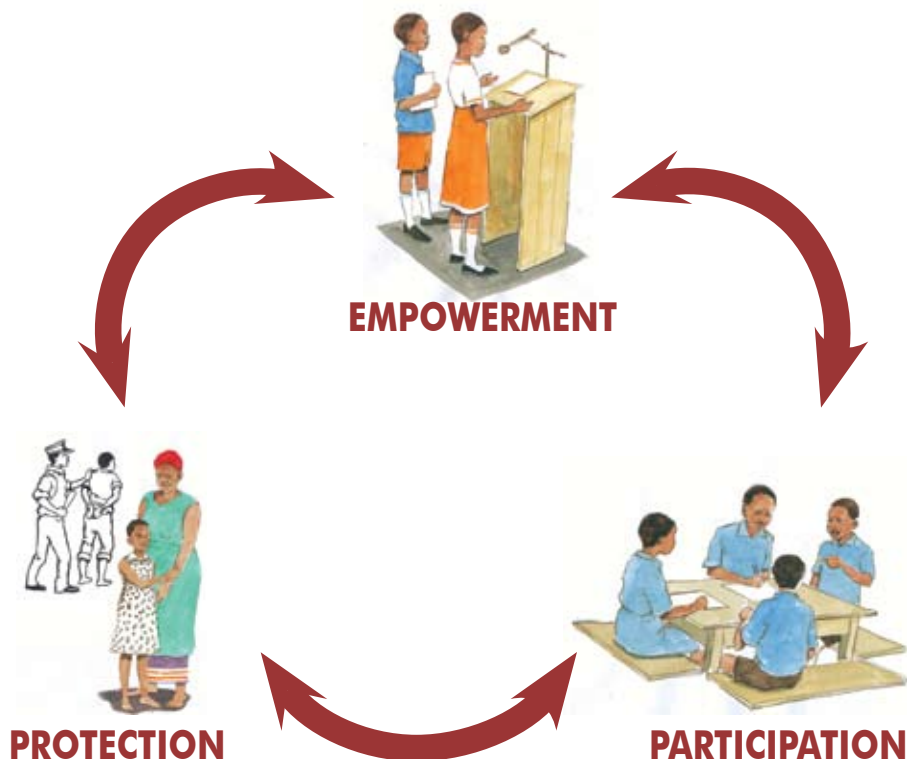
Organizations and institutions – When children are included in organizational planning, programmes and processes, it increases commitment and understanding of their rights. Also stakeholders and constituents become sensitive to children’s issues and priorities and programmes become more sustainable.

Communities – As communities begin to consider children and provide a platform for

them to be heard, this enhances community ties and increases awareness of children's issues directly from the source. Also promotes family harmony, respect and trust from children, reduces crime, builds social networks and helps communities to make plans that are all embracing.

Politicians – When politicians engage children and carry forward their concerns, they validate their commitment to this marginalized group. From the LC1 level to the President, all those who create laws and policies must put a spotlight on issues of key concern to children, especially at times of planning. Although children do not vote, they have a lot of influence over their parents and other adults close to them. When politicians support children's aspirations, they win the trust of children who constitute more than half of the population—a win for children is a win for the nation. By giving children a voice, politicians are able to make policies, laws and budgets that are sensitive to the needs and interests of children.

Participation is a key element to protection and is fundamental in different stages of protection activities such as designing and managing programs or developing an advocacy campaign. Critical to this is the inclusion of women, children of different ages, sexes, abilities, and those from minority groups. The participation of children must be integrated into humanitarian assistance.



Understanding participation in the Ugandan context

Participation of children as stated in the UNCRC is often seen as foreign, superficial and alien to the African and Ugandan culture. Whenever discussions on issues concerning children arise, it elicits political, cultural, social and emotional concerns. It is often challenged as elitist and interpreted as an intrusion into the jurisdiction of the family head and a threat to parental authority.

Although adults believe that children have rights to life, shelter, clothing, health, education, etc., many are not convinced children have the right to participate in such community issues as decision-making. Child participation is restricted because African family relationships are divided into classes and role expectations are clearly defined. In some communities children are not allowed to speak among adults without permission and doing so can bring disgrace on the parents and is punishable.

Truth is communities in Africa have embraced the slogan **"BETHE CAUSE!"** unconsciously. Child participation has been practiced in the African context for decades. However, the form of participation in traditional African society is beginning to disappear because of modern day living that has led to the loss of these practices. The misunderstanding child participation causes today emerges from old contexts. Many African traditions practice child participation without realizing that they are doing so – making it possible for children to access useful information and contribute to decisions.

Sitting round the fire, sharing folklore, stories and songs, elderly people always gave children the opportunity to participate actively. This included questions and answers; sharing of opinions and personal interpretation of the messages in a story. Dances within the community also prompted discussions around cultural, practices and morals. While some of these had negative aspects such as encouraging stereotyping, early marriage and insubordination of women, these forums still solicited the views of children.

While children's rights are enshrined in laws developed outside Uganda, they arose from the practices of different communities around the world and have been accepted by the Government of Uganda as good principles for Uganda. The differences arise in the articulation of rights, which most often do not have a direct translation in any of the African languages. A broader and clearer understanding of what child participation is and development of skills and knowledge on how to involve children within institutions is an important factor in promoting it.



Many African traditions practice child participation without realizing that they are doing so – making it possible for children to access useful information and contribute to decisions.

LEGAL AND POLICY PROVISIONS



Children's rights to participation are clearly articulated in international instruments such as the UNCRC, ACRWC. At the national level, legislation for children as well as policy documents provide for the participation of children. Below are the provisions that guarantee children's participation:

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

It incorporates child participation as a right in a number of articles. Child participation is a human right and is interwoven with other rights in the UNCRC. Child participation is embedded in several articles in the UNCRC. The main articles emphasizing participation of children are articles 12 and 13 that state:

Article 12:

State parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of a child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child.

Article 13:

The child shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, or written or in or print in the form of art, or through any other media of the child's choice.

Other articles include:

1. Article 14: Freedom of thought, conscience and religion
2. Article 15: Freedom of association
3. Article 30: Freedom of cultural expression
4. Article 31: Right to participate in cultural life

As a signatory to the UNCRC, Uganda pledged to implement the provisions of the Convention to its fullest by putting in place administrative and institutional measures for the realization of these commitments. Child participation is also recognized as

one of the fundamental principles. Other basic principles include non-discrimination, honoring the best interests of the child and dedication to realizing all of the provisions of the UNCRC.

The Children Act, Cap. 59

The Act has provisions that imply the right to participation on issues that affect children's survival and development. In cases where a matter is reported to the Probation Officer or the Police, the child is to be interviewed and their perspectives added as evidence. To ensure children are cared for at the local level, The Children Act provides for a Secretary for Children's Affairs in each local council. This only works best when the Secretaries for Children's Affairs consult children, inform them and take action based on their views.

The Local Government Act, Cap. 243

Section 8 of the third schedule, (1) (a) states that, "A Councilor shall maintain close contact with the electoral area, and consult the people on issues to be discussed in the council where necessary". Sub-section (1) (b) goes on to provide for sharing of the views from the electorate with the Council by requiring the Councilor to present views, opinions and proposals to the Council. Sub-section (d) provides for Councilors to meet with the electorate on a regular basis; and (e) requires one to report to the electorate the general decisions of the council and the actions it has taken to solve problems raised by the residents in the electoral area.

To ensure children's needs are provided for at the local level, each sub area from the villages, sub counties and districts designate one of their members to be a Secretary for Children's Affairs. This person handles all issues related to children. Additionally, the Councils are obliged to consult with their constituencies and this should include children, as well as adults. District councils and sub counties should provide feedback on what occurs in their sessions to adults and of course, children.

African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC)

This was adopted by the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in 1990 to localize the provisions of UNCRC in the African context. As in the UNCRC, the Charter recognizes child participation as a means to ensuring that all actions and decisions by individuals or authorities are taken in the best interests of the child. The main articles that provide for participation of children are 4 and 7.

Article 4(2) provides that:

In all judicial or administrative proceedings affecting a child who is capable of communicating his/her own views, an opportunity shall be provided for the views of

the child to be heard either directly or indirectly through an impartial representative as a party to the proceedings, and those views shall be taken into consideration by the relevant authority in accordance with the provisions of appropriate law.

Article 7 states that:

Every child who is capable of communicating his or her views shall be assured the rights to express his opinions freely in all matters and to disseminate his opinions subject to such restrictions as are prescribed by laws.

Other articles;

Article 8: Freedom of Association

Article 9: Freedom of Thought, Conscience and Religion

Article 10: Protection of Privacy

Article 12: Leisure, Recreation and Cultural Activities. This covers the right to rest and leisure, play and recreational activities and participation in cultural life and the arts.

Policy provisions

At the policy level, the Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP) which is the overarching national planning framework commits to applying the human rights based approach to development. This in principle embraces child participation as a right and human rights principle.



Know the laws and policies concerning children's rights. It's essential to child participation.

RIGHTS, RESPONSIBILITIES AND RECIPROCITY

The rights of children are clustered into four broad categories, namely:

1. Rights to survival: food, shelter, clean and safe water, life and identity
2. Rights to development: education and health
3. Rights to protection: from physical, psychological and sexual abuse, exploitation, trafficking, sale and abduction
4. Rights to participate: express their opinions and have that opinion registered

in all areas that affect their well being; freedom of assembly and association; freedom of expression; prepared for a responsible life in a free society; and active participation in the community

Having the rights of children represented in the UNCRC, and emphasizing the responsibilities of children represented in the ACRWC, sends a clear global message that rights of all individuals will be respected. In Uganda, having such laws as the Children Act and the Local Government Act, communicates to all people of the nation that honoring children is a requirement, not a mere afterthought. Laws and policies provide children with the confidence that regardless of the circumstances they will be given a voice.

According to the ACRWC, every child must have responsibilities towards his / her family, society, country and the world. The ACRWC (Art.31) specifies the following responsibilities of children.

- (a) To work for the cohesion of the family, to respect his / her parents, superiors and elders and assist them in case of need
- (b) To serve his / her national community by placing physical and intellectual abilities at its service
- (c) To preserve and strengthen social and national solidarity
- (d) To preserve and strengthen African cultural values in his / her relations with other members of the society, in the spirit of tolerance, dialogue and consultation and to contribute to the mutual well being of the society
- (e) To preserve and strengthen the independence and the integrity of his / her country.
- (f) To contribute to the best of his / her abilities at all times and at all levels to the promotion and achievement of African Unity.

By opening the door for participation, there is also great responsibility that accompanies this, not only for adults, for children as well. If children seize these moments and understand the value their voice brings, they can increase their own learning, and develop leadership abilities. They also expose themselves to new and creative ideas that will be of service to their family, community, nation and potentially the world. Promoting rights and responsibilities of children at the same level brings reciprocal benefits to children and adults and minimizes the negative feelings showed by target audience toward child rights promoters. Rights are not substitutes for responsibilities, neither are responsibilities to be promoted at the expense of rights. The two compliment each other.



By opening the door for participation, there is also great responsibility that accompanies this, not only for adults, for children as well.



"BE THE CAUSE!" Action :

"BE THE CAUSE!" Action is a short list of questions to help you reflect on the reading and learning from each section. Take some time to think about each question and answer these in a separate notebook. As a suggestion, create a child participation journal. This would be the home of all your ideas and insights. It is also a wonderful tool for succession planning and best practices sharing.

"BE THE CAUSE!" Action:

- How do you define child participation?
- What benefits do you see in child participation?
- What responsibility will you take regarding child participation?
- What laws are you familiar with? Which ones do you need more information and exposure?
- How will you ensure children with disabilities, from conflict, those with HIV/AIDS, etc. have equal participation?
- What will you do to ensure that children's rights and responsibilities reinforce each other?

CASE STUDY:



INVOLVING CHILDREN IN POLICY MONITORING : THE CASE OF KIGULU DEVELOPMENT GROUP

The project was initiated by Kigulu Development Group (KDG) and supported by Commonwealth Education Fund. It was implemented in selected schools in Mayuge district. According to a Programme Officer at KDG, the overall aim of the project was to enhance the involvement of children in Universal Primary Education (UPE) matters by encouraging children to give their views and expectations about the UPE program.

It was also geared at enhancing needs-based interventions by considering the needs that children would identify to improve the program. The project involved various stakeholders engaged in planning, monitoring and implementation of the UPE program at community, district and national levels. Major strategies used included consultations, sensitization and sharing of children's findings on the UPE program with the stakeholders. Such stakeholders included children, parents, local government authorities i.e. sub county/ Division district authorities and the MoES.

Children who monitored the UPE program were trained and given the necessary materials and support to document their research findings about different aspects of

the UPE program in their respective communities and disseminate them. Periodically, the children compiled simple - format reports with the support of their teachers and presented them to the stakeholders at sub county/division, district and national levels with the support of the education departments at the various levels. Children then followed up the recommendations and action plans made at the dissemination meetings and the cycle continued.. The reporting format which children used indicated achievements registered, gaps, reasons for the gaps and suggestions. Before the findings were presented, children asked teachers and administrators for explanations. According to some of the children involved in this project, a number of achievements have been realized so far and most notable according to them were the following;

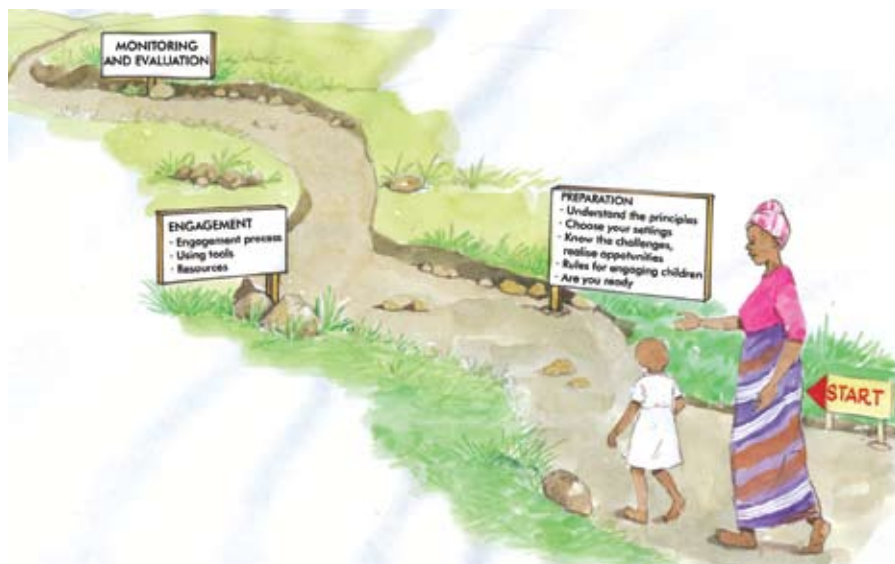
- Namutende primary school - children said they intervened in a case where the parent had married off their classmate. The children went and talked to the parent and the child came back to school
- Lobbying by the children - two children have been adopted on the school finance committee. Their role is to present the children's needs and concerns in regard to resource allocation and utilization
- Mayuge district - in 2005 Mayuge district contributed six million Uganda shillings for timber to roof Lubinge beach school based on the children's recommendations at district level stakeholders' meeting. At the same forum, The LC V chairman then, contributed 500.000/= for latrine construction in the same school
- District inspector of schools - put a guideline that whenever the district inspector of schools go for supervision, they should make sure they meet the children because children had scored the school inspection zero. The school visitors are also required to be introduced to the children at the general assembly.

SECTION TWO: INVOLVING CHILDREN – TIPS, TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES

CREATING AN ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

Introduction

Child participation is a means and an end in itself. It can be thought of as a pathway and a road towards successful integration of all members of society - to create an environment for all voices to be heard. This journey has many steps and the graphic below outlines the ones to take from preparation to evaluation:



PARTICIPATION ROADMAP

1. Preparation
 - a. Understand the principles
 - b. Choose your setting
 - c. Know the challenges, realize opportunities
 - d. Rules for engaging children
 - e. Are you ready? Checklist for consulting children
2. Engagement
 - a. Engagement Process
 - b. Using tools
 - c. Resources
3. Monitoring and Evaluation

PREPARATION

Principles of Child Participation - "BE THE CAUSE!"

The principles of child participation are based on the **"BE THE CAUSE!"** slogan. In consultations, with organizations and advocacy efforts, adults should view their role as a catalyst, a cause in a child's development. As a result they have a great responsibility to lead from the best interest of the child. This requires proactive involvement and attention. By putting in such care, they will see the effects in the child's growth. Have the confidence that you too can set up a child for the greatest success in their lives - to be key contributors to society. In every situation where you involve children, you must follow the following fundamental principles - **"BE THE CAUSE!"** These are "must do" guidelines for any engagement with children:

Best Interest of the Child

Ethical Approach

Transparency and Informed Consent

Honoring

Equal opportunity and democracy

Care, safety and protection

Appreciation, recognition and mutual respect

Uphold non-discrimination and inclusiveness

Staff effectiveness

Evaluation and follow-up

BE THE CAUSE!

B - Principle 1: Best Interest of the Child:

Does this program, issue, event or activity promote the best interest of the child and enhance their personal development? Issues should be relevant and build on their knowledge, skills, and abilities and be a central part of any planning. If not, devise another strategy. The optimum benefit for children should always be a key component.

E - Principle 2: Ethical approach:

For child participation to be genuine and meaningful it should employ an ethical approach; have a purpose and a realistic chance of achieving children's goals. This involves commitment to transparency, honesty, cost effectiveness and accountability. Measures need to be put in place to encourage and facilitate their participation according to their age, maturity and development.

T - Principle 3: Transparency and informed consent:

The purpose of the child's involvement should be made known to them before they are asked to participate. This should include the background, purpose, risks, possible outcome, roles and responsibilities from their involvement. The right to participate or not is a child's free will. Involve them in setting criteria for selection, representation for participation and designing the intervention to enable them to contribute to the content.

H - Principle 4: Honoring:

Children's desires need to be valued and heard upfront. If they have any objections, ideas or questions, these need to be considered and incorporated into the process. Honor confidentiality and unless agreed otherwise, it should not be possible to trace information back to the children. Participation should respect their other time commitments (work, play etc).

E - Principle 5: Equal opportunity and democracy:

Children's views must be treated as equal to adults - no less! If you are taking the time, effort and energy to involve children, make sure you don't shut them out in the process. Flexibility and responsiveness to the needs, expectations and situations of different groups of children should be considered. Put in place a policy to regularly revisit their concerns.

C - Principle 6: Care, safety and protection:

It is imperative to ensure the physical, emotional and psychological care and safety of the children is provided. They need to be protected from risk of abuse, manipulation and exploitation from themselves, their peers and others around them. It is important to have a child protection policy to clearly define the relationship between children and adults.

A - Principle 7: Appreciation, recognition and mutual respect:

Ensure children feel appreciated and valued for their participation and role. Make sure you have a child friendly approach.

U - Principle 8: Uphold non-discrimination and inclusiveness:

Rights of all children to participate should be upheld - regardless of age, sex or physical ability. Participation should be inclusive and accessible.

S - Principle 9: Staff effectiveness:

It is imperative to ensure that staff members working with children have adequate knowledge and skills to proactively promote and support children's participation. Training and development needs to be provided for all those working with children. A variety of child-friendly training tools such as` Problem Tree Analysis, Semi Structured Interviews (including individual, group and focus group interviews), Mapping (including Social and Resource Mapping, Mobility Mapping) and Calendars should be used to train staff and others to understand child participation.

E - Principle 10: Evaluation and follow-up:

With every activity involving children, it is critical to evaluate the quality and impact of these interactions and to provide follow-up to the children. If possible, create opportunities for the children to participate in the feedback and follow up processes or activities.



In consultations, with organizations and advocacy efforts, adults should view their role as a catalyst, a cause in a child's development. As a result they have a great responsibility to lead from the best interest of the child.



"BE THE CAUSE!" Action:

- Which principle do you know you personally embody and believe in?
- Which ones do you need to pay closer attention to?
- Now that you know these principles, how does it effect and shape your child participation plans?
- Today (not tomorrow), how can you embrace the principles of **"BE THE CAUSE!"**?

Methods and Approaches

Child participation is based on fundamental principles derived from the UNCRC that help to ensure that the participation is genuine, meaningful and ethical. There are different methods and approaches that have been applied in working with children. They can broadly be categorized in to three:

- **Consultation:** seeking children's views and giving them a voice in activities that affect them. Their involvement is typically at a programmatic level, such as in project design and implementation, development of information and

advocacy materials, monitoring and evaluation of project and or program activities.

- **Organization:** children organizing events and actions and create their own organizations such as Child Rights Clubs, managing their own affairs (including funds, running educational and out reach programs) and cultural performances.
- **Advocacy:** negotiating and advocating action with children or child groups including active membership in policy bodies, promoting children's interests at all levels, negotiating with local authorities and holding them accountable and lobbying decision makers.

CHOOSE YOUR SETTING - WHERE CHILDREN PARTICIPATE

Participation settings can be diverse and involve engagements with family, community, national, regional and international and institutional. This may include schools, workplace, health institutions, religious and cultural institutions, children and youth associations, media, CBO's and NGOs.

Family setting

Family is where children learn their first lesson about participation. Parents, other family members and even children themselves must be educated about the importance of children's participation within the family setting. Parents must create a free environment where open dialogue is encouraged, ideas are liberally exchanged and views are shared.

One of the key barriers to participation in the home is little to no support from parents. Programmes fostering child participation should work with families and other care givers to encourage active involvement of children at home.

Points to consider – essential for parents and guardians to:

- Understand and appreciate that children at whatever age have their own opinions and should be encouraged to share them
- Create an environment that fosters dialogue between them and the children, done on a daily basis
- Continuously encourage children to take part in decision-making processes at home
- Implement decisions and opinions presented by children. Where the child's opinion or decision can not be taken up, the adults should explain it clearly and supportively
- Work through community support groups to facilitate discussions on various issues including raising awareness of child rights and importance of participation of children
- Create group discussions with parents to share best practices.

Community

A community includes schools, religious groups, clans, villages, parishes, sub-counties, NGOs and districts. Communities can be significant partners in promoting child involvement and rights protection. Any decision taken by communities normally affects the well being of children. It is important for communities to see their role in a child's life as contributors to their development.

Points to consider – Essential for communities to:

- Understand, appreciate and implement opinions of children. When a child's opinion or decision cannot be done, it should be explained why. Parents and children should engage in open dialogue on issues that affect individual and family wellbeing.
- Create an environment that fosters dialogue between children and adults and between children themselves, including establishing channels for dialogue within various institutions such as Child Rights Clubs, Children's Village parliaments, etc.
- Encourage and facilitate children taking part in decision-making processes
- Provide opportunities for children to participate in the implementation of activities related to their decisions where possible and engage in monitoring and evaluation
- Work with local government or other leaders to ensure children's participation is considered in community development planning.

Media

Media is a powerful tool for children's involvement. The media creates an ad hoc validation system for whatever points, issues and concerns they feature. Involvement of children as subjects and creators of media should be encouraged.

Points to consider in having children involved in the media:

- Create opportunities for them to write and produce their own electronic and print stories
- Encourage media houses to set aside programs managed and run by children
- Create venues for them to hold discussions on radio and television and to engage with the public
- Media train them to be prepared to handle tough questions and educate them on the media process
- Support capability-building of children and young people in media advocacy, programming and presentation skills.

Organizations/ institutions including schools:

Every initiative has a bearing on children – directly or indirectly. Ensuring children are an integral part of all initiatives from the situational analysis, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation will ensure greater efficiency and sustainability. Care should be taken to ensure that child participation does not evolve into abuse or exploitation to violate their rights to play, education, etc.

Points to consider - children will participate differently at varying stages of programming namely:

- **Situational analysis** - get the views and opinions of children in a participatory assessment process. Design research tools and execute projects in a way that will ensure effective and meaningful involvement of children, such as in study samples, designing child sensitive research questions, accounting for differing groups of children, etc.
- **Planning** - children must be involved in the planning of all activities upfront, be consulted by their representatives and allowed to present their views to organizations, local government councils etc.
- **Implementation** - this involves moving children from the periphery to the center of project/programme implementation. Children should be supported to realize the goals they set for themselves and to democratically elect a committee to oversee the project/programme activities, such as raising awareness on children's rights amongst their peers and the community
- **Monitoring and evaluation** - it is critical to make children part of the monitoring and evaluation framework. Define project/programme success or lack of it using parameters and views expressed by children.

Meetings (national, regional and international level)

Children are increasingly called to participate at national, regional and international meetings including conferences, summits, workshops and other gatherings. One of the challenges that arise is representation - do the selected delegates truly represent the opinions, views and interests of the other children? Are the selected delegates willingly participating in the process? In whose interest do they participate?

Points to consider - The following should be taken into consideration when preparing children as delegates for meetings at national, regional and international level:

- **Information sharing** - information about the meeting needs to be given to the children in advance. Before selecting delegates to represent children, they will need to know well in advance the purpose of the meeting, topics to be discussed, location, key talking points and duration of the meeting. Use appropriate accessible media to disseminate information about the meeting.

Keep in mind, not all children can receive information in the same way. For example, some have access to email, and others do not.

- **Free will** - the decision to participate in the meeting should be the child's. Information about the opportunities, risks and benefits of attending the meeting should be made available to them so they can make an informed decision.
- **Selection of delegates** - children need to be given the opportunity to select who will represent them at any meeting. Participatory processes should be facilitated from village, to community and district levels. Several stages of selection should be followed until the group has reached the required number agreeable to all. This will ensure a balanced representation.
- **Message development** - children should participate in generating the messages they want their representatives to communicate
- **Involve children in planning for the meetings** - children should have a chance to participate in the development of the agenda, discussion topics as well as in preparation of any draft resolutions. This will ensure that their contributions are incorporated as real outcomes of the meetings.
- **Adult role** - adult participants should be prepared and sensitized to help them listen to and pay attention to children's presentation. Provide these adults with background information on the importance of children's participation.
- **Feedback** - delegates who represent children need to report back on the meeting activities, decisions, resolutions, etc.

How children participate in meetings

Children can be facilitated to participate in adult-led meetings in different ways and using different approaches. Some of the regularly used approaches include:

- **Spoken or recorded testimonies** - having children relate their personal stories and experiences to the audience and participating in a question and answer session immediately following
- **Prepared presentations and materials** - such as art exhibitions, drama skits, and statements from individuals or groups of children.
- **Adult conferences** - statements or declarations from forums for children taking place at adult led conferences
- **Panel discussions** - as part of a meeting session where children make brief presentations and participate in a question and answer session.
- **Full participation** - children participate in a meeting as representatives or part of a national delegation together with adults.



"BE THE CAUSE!" Action:

- What is the most appropriate forum for you to involve children in order to reach your objectives?

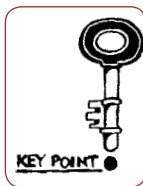
- How do children participate in your family and community?
- In your experience, have all the BE THE CAUSE! principles been applied in the meetings with children you have organized / attended so far?

HOW TO TACKLE CHALLENGES AND SEIZE OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHILD PARTICIPATION

Child participation has often been looked at as a challenge. There are several excuses ranging from the lack of human and financial resources, to lack of space, time and other challenges relating to parenting. If you are going to involve children, there will be some practical challenges. How do you overcome them? Below are ways for you to tackle even the most difficult of objections and to shift a gloomy perspective to one of opportunity.

ISSUES	OPPORTUNITY
The Local Government Act places duty on all the Local Councils to discuss community issues at all levels.	From the Local Council one to the highest levels, there are opportunities for communities to meet with their local leaders. At the lower local councils, there are regular meetings at the village and parish levels. There are also representational meetings, where the lower local councillors raise concerns from their communities to the higher levels. As a way of creating access, local councils should ensure that during every meeting, a separate group is set for children, whose concerns are documented and shared with the community and higher levels of government.
Lack of vision from adults, governments, etc. – they view children as having little to no legal rights.	Perception of rights in Uganda is beginning to change. This provides the opportunity to explain that rights actually do depend on each other; one does not exist without the other. For example, the right to full and complete education might be stopped if adults respected the right to complete participation. Additionally, all adults must be encouraged and educated to envision a world in which children are valued as equal members of the community, and where their views are recognized and respected in society.
Lack of skills for those involved with training and development programming	Relating with children requires different skills than with adults. Providing real just-in-time tools sets adults up for success and allows them to be strong and effective facilitators in child participation.

Involving children in development processes means more money	Not so! There are plenty of forums that already exist to involve children, such as in religious meetings, schools, community and planning meetings. Integrate child participation using existing personnel such as Secretaries for Children, community services officers, teachers, religious leaders, Probation and Social Welfare Officers.
Poverty, HIV/AIDS and political conflicts are major challenges in promoting child participation. Children under such circumstances are not given a chance to participate in decisions affecting their lives because of their circumstances.	Education here is critical. Because a child is impoverished, has HIV/AIDS and is from an area of political conflict does not mean their voice should not be heard. It's up to all people at all levels to advocate for these children to be heard and seen. Also, poverty reduction can empower children. For example, children having a voice can make valuable contributions to policies including improving UPE programmes, poverty reduction strategy papers with guidance of adults.
Negative attitudes, perceptions, and behaviour about children's participation.	An understanding, appreciation and coming to terms with the concept of child rights is essential. Education can help tremendously here. Also, if the person facilitating dialogues with children does not believe in participation fully, this can be a serious barrier in consulting children effectively.
Inferiority complex from children and their families.	Awareness and sensitization campaigns should start with families and their children and reach up to the top levels of government.
Inappropriate and wrong policies that don't consider children's participation a priority.	Yes, this may be true. However, you still need to devise proper strategies for involving children in policy implementation. Do not discount laws for the actions you can personally take. Also, raise these issues with your local officials. If raised well and in unison, people will listen.
Corruption and exploitation at different levels of society.	Strong laws must be put in place and enforced to respond to corruption at all levels.
Lack of commitment to "walk the talk."	If you are going to be committed to child rights, then words must match action otherwise it shows the world you are not serious. To engender trust, it is pivotal to take action that mirrors your language.
Lack of planning.	Child participation takes careful planning. Determine objectives for involving them, how you will do so and the timeframe. Careful attention will yield greater results.



Although child participation has often been looked at as a challenge, seize the opportunity to tackle even the most difficult of objections and shift a gloomy perspective to one of opportunity.



"BE THE CAUSE!" Action:

- Which of the above points have you considered prior to planning?
- What challenges do you foresee in beginning to formulate a child participation plan?
- How will you overcome these?
- How can you see this as an ideal opportunity rather than a challenge?

RULES FOR ENGAGING CHILDREN

A central part of participation is "consulting" children. This refers to the process of seeking views from an individual or a group about something. When facilitating consultations with children, there are certain critical "rules of the road" to ensure children know they are respected, honored and well provided for. To get the most out of children, remember the principles outlined in "**BE THE CAUSE!**" and follow the points below:

When engaging children, it's critical to keep in mind the following:

1. Get permission from adults/caregivers first

- Especially if the event has never been done before, adults/caregivers need to know the scope of the event and the role they want the children to play
- Tell everyone who needs to know. Oftentimes, more than one adult needs to be informed about the participation of each child, such as the teacher – to miss school, parent needs to know teacher has given permission
- Sometimes children will not want their parents/caregivers to know they are engaged with you or your agency. Get permission first!
- Explain the benefits of child participation, how it will be useful to them and the whole community (if you have testimonials, this will especially come in handy).

2. Get permission from the children

- Although it is important to get permission from the adults to involve children, it is even more critical to get agreement from the children themselves
- If a child does not want to contribute their views all the time let them! In many cases, children may not be ready to communicate their opinions. This is fine. No child should be put under pressure. In most cases, as long as

the consultative process is ongoing and potential barriers are addressed, these children eventually come around and start participating actively in consultative processes.

3. Children need time - establishing and building rapport

- Many children and even adults may have never had a chance to participate in matters that affect them. Any consultation process must be sensitive to this reality especially when working with orphans and vulnerable children (OVCs) - children with disabilities, out of school children, child laborers and abused children
- Very few children have the luxury of making decisions and often lack confidence in expressing their views. Help them to understand their role and how their opinion will be utilized
- Spend time helping children and young people understand the issue being discussed
- At the initial stage of the consultative process, raise awareness of primary duty bearers like parents or guardians about the principle of child participation. This is important since these very same people potentially can be a barricade to child participation in the child's real world!
- Keep in mind - facilitating children's consultations and participation is an ongoing process and not a one time event.

4. Techniques and methods used must be child friendly, allowing the children to express their views freely in a respectful environment.

- Confidence boosting techniques like small group discussions and individual exercises can be utilized to minimize stage fright and maximize opportunities for genuine, non coerced participation.

5. Use of culturally, age-appropriate and gender-sensitive communication techniques is of critical importance. The physical environment for consulting children must be a safe and comfortable place.

- Adequate preparation in form of planning for translations, matching age groups and gender groups is required. Provisions for children with communication challenges or learning disability must be thought through ahead of time.

6. All children must be given a chance to participate.

7. Children's views must not be distorted by adults!

- Children's views must not be influenced by adults, especially in situations where children who have communication challenges or very young ones are aided by adults as they express themselves.



ARE YOU READY? CHECKLIST FOR CONSULTING CHILDREN

Child Participation Checklist

Engaging children is far different than adults. It requires creating an environment of fun, play, trust, enthusiasm, genuineness and excitement. Before entering into these dialogues, use the “Child Participation Checklist” worksheet below to check if you are truly ready.

CHILD PARTICIPATION CHECKLIST

Question	Yes	No	To Consider
1. Do you know the laws and policies concerning children?			Understanding the current laws and policies will provide you with the proper background to engage children and to educate them, their parents and caregivers.
2. Does your project intend to have an ongoing involvement with children?			Children need to know their voice will consistently be heard and there will be follow-up.
3. Is there a plan in place to support this involvement?			Child participation has to have a comprehensive plan for sustainability. Unplanned involvement of children may result in non participation.
4. Will involving children at this stage be in the best interests of them or will it cause them harm?			Make sure your interests have pure intention. If it will harm them do not proceed with your session. Consider a different approach. Re-examine the reason for involving children and what you desire to get in the end that can be beneficial and useful to all involved.
5. Have the parents, caregivers or others responsible for the children been informed and have they given their consent?			Explain to parents why you want their children’s involvement and get their permission. Do not move forward until you do.

6. Have the children given their consent?		This is useful to avoid manipulation or decorative participation.
7. Do the children know why they are being involved, how much time it will take, and how their contribution will benefit?		Explain to them why their views and opinions matter and are important. Only move forward if they want to. Participation is a right, not an obligation.
8. Are you committed to meaningful involvement of children, listening to their freely expressed views and taking them into account?		Ensure your commitment to the children and transparency of your efforts and work.
9. Are all children being included?		It is possible you may have left out some children and even critical targets such as orphans and children with disabilities. Ensure you have all children covered.
10. Have the risks of children's involvement been considered?		Create a checklist of "risks" and "rewards." "Risks" – list out all the areas of potential pitfalls and with "rewards" – list out all areas that benefit children. See that the "rewards" outweigh the risks and all risks have been well thought out.
11. Have you discussed and planned on how you will honor confidentiality?		Children may share sentiments they would not otherwise share. Honoring confidentiality will ensure they continue to share during this process with openness and honesty.
12. Have you carefully mapped out a method for creating trust and inclusiveness with the children?		It's not easy to be in front of children and get them talking. They can tend to be shy and introverted. A few may be talkative and stand out. Utilize some of the tools illustrated in this Guide to help move children from passive to active participants.
13. Do you have a plan for sharing the children's feedback and the result of their participation?		Children need to see that their thoughts, perspectives and opinions count. Otherwise, do not involve them.

14. Have you developed a clear way to engage the children that is fun and participatory?		Children will not be as forthcoming unless they are engaged with a child-like focus of fun, humor and excitement.
15. Have you devised a plan to properly prepare children for engagements with stakeholders, media, etc.?		Do not assume children are prepared even if you actively engage them in dialogue. This needs a well thought out approach.
16. If children are participating in sessions with adults, have you made provisions for adults to be accompanying them to these engagements?		Children should always have someone accompanying them for their own safety and protection. If for some reason the child does not have anyone at the ready, see to it someone from your organization play that vital role.
17. Do you have a clear and fair process for selecting the participating children?		Children feel bias very easily. If you are choosing one child over the other because of favoritism, they will most certainly know. Make sure you have a fair and clear process that is transparent.
18. Have you included children in the planning of the consultation process?		Children will be more willing to participate in sessions and more forthcoming in comments if they are involved each step of the way.
19. Do you have a trained facilitator to engage with the children who has experience in this area?		A guide to the conversation with children is a key component to actively getting children to talk, to be honest and to create a place of confidentiality. Not everyone has this skill. Just because you are an expert adult facilitator, does not mean you are good with children. Make sure you carefully interview your facilitator and check references!
20. Have you developed a well thought out plan for monitoring and evaluating these sessions?		Monitoring will ensure an evaluation of this process and the success of the interactions. This can also form the basis for upgrading your process.



If you complete the above checklist and find yourself at a loss, go back and review the "To Consider" explanations, review earlier chapters in the Guide and consult your internal advisors at your organization. Then proceed to Chapter 4.

ENGAGEMENT



Engagement Process

Phase 1: Get Ready

The introductory phase of any consultative process with children (such as a conference, policy deliberations, national/community development planning, and research) is very important and planning for this phase must not be overlooked. An organized and effective child rights frontline actor plan ideally needs to be developed at least three months prior to implementation.

The goal of this phase is to ensure that children, their families, schools and communities approve the consultation. This permission/support for children to participate in consultative processes must not be taken for granted since sustainability of child participation is dependant on individual appreciation of the right to participate and individual ownership and responsibility for child participation.

Process

1. Identify entry points into the children's community (school, church, mosque, village and even family if required)
2. Identify focal persons in the lives of the children (parents, grandparents, guardians, teachers, probation and welfare officers, social workers, counselors)
3. Meet as many focal persons as is practical and whenever possible meet children who represent your target group. The purpose of such meetings is to establish rapport and introduce your intentions of working with children. Do not assume that key focal persons necessarily appreciate the notion of child participation so such meetings may even take the form of sensitization/lobbying sessions of sorts
4. Follow up with formal letters seeking permission to work with children to key people in authority and the children's families. In some cases it may be more appropriate for various authorities such as the school head teachers to also extend formal communication to the children's families

5. Make all necessary preparations for logistical matters like venues, materials, refreshments, identification of resource persons, delivery of invitation letters, etc. Ensure the physical environment where the children will meet is airy, safe and comfortable so that they can express themselves without fear and intimidation
6. Convene an awareness raising meeting with the target children's community (such as a school) and ensure that children and their parents are in attendance. The purpose of such a meeting is to inform or update the community about the goal and objectives of the consultative process. Information pertaining to the methods of consultation, the venue, and plans for children's welfare during the process can be shared. Such a forum may also be used to generate opinions from duty bearers about the planned consultative process
7. Organize children's breakaway group sessions for further orientation. Have children participate in groups of a maximum of 20 children. It is advisable that children be organized by age blocks: 6-9 year olds; 10 – 12 year olds; 13-15 year olds; and 16-18 year olds
8. Children may also be grouped by gender at this stage, depending on their preference. Further grouping may be done according to out of school children, school going children, etc.
9. At this orientation phase, it is possible to request each group to select a child co-facilitator to work with the adult facilitator in subsequent sessions.

Phase 2: Building rapport with children and situational analysis

This phase builds on the preparatory phase and the goal of this phase is to completely "break the ice" by getting to know each other and then together analyze the situation in the children's lives and communities (see Appendix I for ice breaker activities). You need to spend more time repeating the principle of child participation; and the purpose and objectives of the specific consultative process. This phase should enable children to also reflect on what they would like to see changing in their lives and their community.

Process

1. Facilitate self-introductions in a creative child friendly manner so that children get to know you and you get to know them. Hint: children may be requested to introduce themselves by their own names and then requested to point out their favorite name, or favorite food, or game, etc. Children may also share their expectations of the consultative process at this stage
2. Share the objectives of the consultative process again in plain, simple language. These may be summarized on flip chart or manila cards
3. Agree on the ground rules/code of behavior for the consultative process. Children must generate the rules. Such rules will help children define what they feel is acceptable or unacceptable behavior. Issues like language use,

- time keeping, and how to treat those who defy the ground rules can be discussed and agreed upon
4. Working in groups of ten, ask the children to reflect on their lives and their community. Encourage them to reflect on both positive and negative aspects. Ask children to reflect on what changes they would like to see and how that change can be brought about
5. Children must be given ample time (at least one hour) to list these reflections on a note pad. Each group must be facilitated to select or have individuals volunteer as a group leader (for overall group leadership), a note taker (to record all the issues discussed) and a reporter (who will feed back group deliberations to the bigger group). Clarify the role of these key group leaders and encourage all group members to consider taking on these roles in subsequent sessions
6. Give each group a sheet of flip chart paper and request them to draw a picture of their community depicting what they have discussed
7. In plenary, request each group to display their drawing for the other children to reflect upon. Each group then explains what they have drawn. Children may be encouraged to continue adding information they feel is appropriate
8. Wrap up this session by requesting the participants to start reflecting on who needs to know about their views and how to convey the change they would like to see to adult audiences in positions of authority such as Members of Parliament, village leaders, parents, school administrators, etc.
9. Prepare children to start planning on who will represent them in further consultative processes.

Phase 3: Selecting child representatives to communicate consultation outcomes

After the general consultations, there may be a need to select a smaller group of child representatives to continue with the process. This may be necessary because of variations in age, language or simply where one is dealing with large numbers of children. The benefit of this is that children are introduced to principles of democratic processes.

Process

1. Provide the children with an overview of how their views can be used to influence policy change and development in their communities
2. Emphasize the importance of their participation and thank them for their active participation in the consultative process so far
3. Explain the rationale of the need for child representatives to act as post runners between the sender of a letter (children) and the receiver (adult decision maker and policy makers)
4. Facilitate a brainstorming session on the qualities/characteristics of an ideal child representative and how to select children's representatives

5. Generate children's views on what they expect their representatives to do
6. Facilitate the selection of the children's representatives. Such representatives must be able to represent a range of issues that affect children. These may include disability, vulnerability, orphan hood, HIV/AIDS, civil war, child soldiers, displacement, poverty, child labor, sanitation, health, education, food security, protection from abuse and exploitation
7. Ensure children select a pool of "reserves" - back-ups just in case a representative has a conflict or drops out. Reserves do not go to the event unless they are needed
8. Ask the children to develop a code of conduct for children's representatives.
9. Help children develop a strategy for engagement between children and their representatives. This must contain a feedback component and monitoring and evaluation indicators
10. On the day the event starts, only those who have been selected formally can attend and participate. You will have to be very strict about this because you could have many more participants than you can manage. Communicate this to the children too.

USING TOOLS FOR ENGAGING CHILDREN

Engaging children takes a different skill set than with adults. It is essential to develop tools that encourage play, fun, creativity and curiosity. Tools are invaluable as a way of allowing time and space for children to be able to identify, analyze, and even suggest solutions to problems affecting them and their families. Before you begin, it's key to understand the basics of asking solid questions in order to evoke answers from children. This takes some practice since children will tend to answer questions with "yes" or "no." All the tools below can apply to all age groups, however your method in applying these will differ. So pay particular attention the ages of the children to ensure you have the most appropriate and engaging approach. Here are some tips and techniques for engaging children in a positive way:

Questioning and Appreciative Inquiry

As an approach to adopt prior to any inquiry sessions is the modality called "Appreciative Inquiry" (AI). This is the modality of looking at the world positively. It's the "search for the best in people...and the relevant world around them." AI involves the skill of asking positive questions, ones that heighten positive potential. The idea is you get more of what you look for, so if you look for the good that's exactly what you will uncover – the truth in its most positive context.

Asking Questions

There are a variety of questions you can use to elicit responses:

- **Open ended** - answered with longer explanations. Cannot be answered with a simple "yes" or "no"

- **Clarifying** – ones that clarify what the other person said. This demonstrates if you are really listening
- **Charge Neutral** - questions that don't have any emotion, opinion or bias. These simply uncover facts
- **Strategic thinking** – reveals what the other person's thought process was behind an action
- **Sentiment** – uncovers feelings at the time of action or what is felt about a given situation.

Whichever type of questions you choose to use, make sure they are “probing” – meaning they delve into the true meaning of what is truly being said and the meaning behind them. Probing questions will also give the child a place of exploration and storytelling of their experiences. The goals of probing questions are to create dialogue and understanding.

Being sensitive to age variations

Be mindful of the age group when involving children and make use of appropriate steps and tools. For example, if investigating children's level of comprehension of HIV/AIDS you may take the following approach:

Children 0 - 3 years

Methodologies:

- Understanding what they want/interests
- Defining their sex

Steps/Tools:

- Toys
- Children emulating parenthood
- Bringing age mates together
- Drawing boards at home and day care centers
- Give them opportunity to choose favorite TV programmes

Children 3 - 5 years

Steps/Tools:

- Respond to questions on health message charts
- Questions asked to get depth of understanding
- Is death, disease or suffering something they understand?
- Do they have a friend who is sick with HIV, what is the best they can do for them
- Do they know a hospital
- Can they tell the difference between drugs and food

Children 5 – 10 years

Methodologies:

- Flexibility and capitalization on questions asked by children on HIV
- Ask and listen

Steps/ Tools:

- Charts/pictures drawn by children on topic of HIV are discussed
- Giving children a chance to give opinions on their understanding of HIV

Children 10 – 18 years

Methodologies:

- Ask and listen
- Guide them through their questions

Steps/Tools:

- Seek their opinions on self respect, HIV prevention measures, relationships.
- What do they tell you about sex, reproductive health?
- How do they relate with positive friends, is it important to disclose?
- What interventions can be done differently?

Now you are ready to begin using some core tools to help elicit information from the children. The following tools are featured in this guide:

1. Problem Tree Analysis
2. Semi Structured Interviews (SSI) including individual, group and focus group interviews
3. Mapping – including Social and Resource Mapping, Mobility Mapping
4. Calendars – including Seasonal Calendars

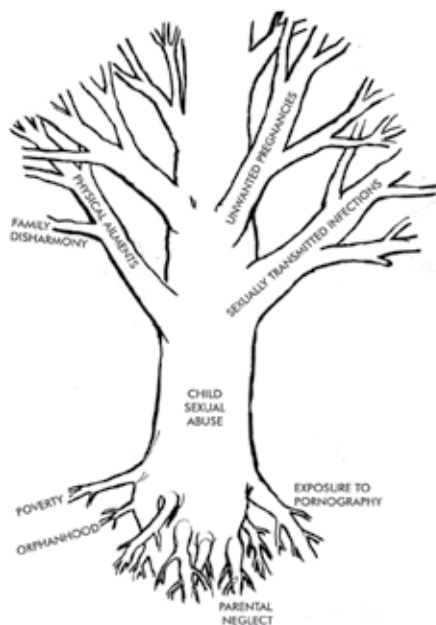
Here are some tools to consider using when engaging children:

1) Problem Tree Analysis

The Problem Tree is an easy and visual way to help address the cause and effects of an issue and see how a variety of stakeholders look at these same concerns.

Conducting a Problem Tree Analysis:

- Draw a tree trunk to represent your core issue. Add roots and rootlets to represent the direct and indirect causes, and then branches and twigs to represent the direct and indirect effects (or implications) of your core issue
- Identify the causes at one or several levels and leave out the effects
- Restrict your analysis to major causes and effects only
- Don't look for causes and effects that strengthen each other through direct or indirect connections.



2)Semi-Structured Interviewing

Semi-structured interviewing (SSI) is a form of guided interviewing where some of the questions are predetermined. In contrast to the formal survey questionnaires, some questions will be formulated during the interview (as a journalistic interview) based upon interview responses, observations and your own background and experience. It becomes apparent during the interview that some questions are irrelevant, they can be skipped.

Types of Semi-Structured Interviews:

Individual Interview: to get personal, representative information. Information obtained from individual interviews is more personal than from group interviews, and is more likely to reveal real truths (if you set confidentiality terms right from the onset) since respondents may feel they can speak more freely without their parents/caregivers/ community present.

Interviewing a number of different children on the same topic will quickly reveal a wide range of opinions, attitudes, and strategies. Many communities have at least one “trouble maker” who disagrees with everything. These responses can provide valuable cross-checks and uncover useful insights that may not result from other interviews.



Group Interview: to obtain community level-information. Group interviews have several advantages. They provide access to a larger body of knowledge, and provide an immediate cross-check on information as it is received from the group. When groups become too large (more than 20 -25), they become difficult to manage and it's wise to break into smaller groups. Especially with children, if you want each child to speak, the more intimate the setting the better.

Group interviews are not useful for discussion of sensitive information. They can also be seriously misleading when the questioner believed to have the power to control benefits or sanctions. Group interviews may reveal people's ideas rather than what actually exists. If you carefully cross check the information, you'll see the whole picture quickly. The facilitator should encourage alternative views and opinions and probe to avoid group pressure. Informal conversations after the meeting can be useful to get information from those who were not able to express their opinions during the group interview. Group interviews require more advance planning and preparation than individual interviews.

Focus Group Discussions: to discuss specific topics in detail. A small group of people (six to twelve) who are knowledgeable or are interested in the topic(s) are invited to participate in the focus group discussions. A facilitator is chosen to ensure the discussion does not diverge too far from the original topic and that no participant dominates the discussion.

Points to remember when carrying out interviews:

- Use a checklist as a guide
- Be sensitive to children's needs and ideas
- Listen and learn

- Ask open ended questions using the six helpers; what? when? where? who? why? and how?
- Probe answers carefully
- Judge responses
- Verify through cross-checking
- Record responses and observations fully

3) MAPPING

This is marking and drawing on the ground by children with minimum interference by outsiders. The person holding the stick talks about what they are drawing. As the maps take shape, more people become involved, and will want to contribute and make changes. Maps can be drawn for many topics:

- Social issues
- Social structure
- Mobility

Steps in drawing maps:

1. Find out whether the children know the topic of the mapping exercise, and who are willing to share their knowledge
2. Choose a suitable place (ground, floor, paper) and medium (sticks, stones, seeds, pens, pencils) for the map
3. Help the children to get started but let them draw the map themselves. Be patient and do not interrupt them. It's their map
4. Encourage active participation of all the informants and the use of local materials to represent features on the map
5. Transfer the map on to the paper. If there is a child who can do it, encourage him/her to do so. Put all useful information which cannot be presented on the map in a notebook. Do not forget to indicate the direction and putting a key for the symbols used.

Social and Resource Mapping

Objectives

- To establish dialogue with groups of local people
- To construct a picture of local perceptions
- To create baseline information for reference and for use in later discussions
- To empower groups to analyze and better understand their own conditions

A social/resource map helps to gain understanding of various features in a child's life. Social maps can be used to plot all the houses in the village, the heads of the households, the members of the household and any other aspects of interest (children in household, children's ages, pregnant mothers, individuals of influence or responsibilities. On the

same map could be plotted the natural resources of the study area (within the defined boundary system).

This type of map can be used to discuss the history of the village in terms of settlement, types of households, the major events in the history of the village, the famous person of the village, and what they would like the village to be like in the future. It may also be used to discuss the changes in the availability and quantity of natural resources, communication network and other infrastructure within the village.

Steps in drawing a Social/Resource Map:



1. Find out whether the children know the village well and the people in it. Ask them whether they are willing to give you information about the village, their home and their lives
2. Ask them to draw the map of the village starting with the boundary and then their own households. Then ask them to indicate the households of their neighbors
3. Record the names of the head of the household and give each household a number
4. Encourage active participation of all the children and the use of local materials to represent features on the map

5. Transfer the map on to the paper. If there is a child who can do it, encourage him/her to do so
6. Write all useful information which cannot be presented on the map in a notebook for future use.

Mobility Mapping:

A Mobility Map shows where people go and for what reasons. Contacts with the “outside world” and decision-making power in a community are closely linked. This can be used as an indicator for a child’s contact with, and knowledge of, the outside world and authority in the community and/or household. It may also indicate freedom, wealth, empowerment, education, or consciousness. The Mobility Map allows you to record, compare, and analyze the mobility of different groups of people in a community (old men young men, women, children, educated etcetera).

The Mobility Map is both a data collection and an analysis tool. It is important to identify the patterns of mobility for different segments of the community. It takes some practice to be able to see group patterns rather than just isolated pieces of information. It is a good tool to introduce participants to some basic analytical methods.

When using flip charts and markers, different colors can be used for different activities. This map can also be used to show differences in the frequency of mobility by making the lines thicker or thinner as necessary.

Steps in drawing a Mobility Map:

1. Ask children to construct to construct a map showing where people go and for what reasons. What other places do you go to? What other places have you been to?
2. Ask children to draw different symbols to represent the different towns, locations that are mentioned. This may be best done by asking participants to identify the distinguishing feature of each place. Ask the children to write the place names on the cards
3. Once a good range of places have been mentioned and cards are laid out around the central card of the village. Ask the children: for what reasons do you go or have gone to each place?
4. When all the combinations of places / reasons have been completed, ask each child at a time to put a stone (or bean etc.) next to each symbol, if they have been to that place for that reason. Add these up and place a number by the card
5. You might wish to extend the question to include other members of their immediate family. You might also wish to separate out girls and boys so as to get a gender breakdown of mobility
6. Transfer the map on paper if it is drawn on the ground.

4) CALENDARS

A calendar is a system where time is divided into fixed periods, and of marking the beginning and end of the year. It features a chart showing days, weeks, and months of a particular year. Calendars can be used to discuss events, burdens, and issues over the year and how they affect the lives of the community or home. Calendars are used to present complex information in a simple diagram.

Steps in Preparing a Calendar:

1. Draw a 12-month or 18-month calendar as appropriate. It need not start in January and should reflect indigenous seasonal categories
2. Obtain information from secondary sources and from interviews
3. Obtain quantitative information qualitatively. For example, family demands:
 - a. First determine the four busiest months by asking children a series of questions such as:
 - i. What chores do your parents expect of you?
 - ii. What are you doing then?
 - iii. What is the next thing they ask you to do? When?
 - iv. What are you doing then?
 - v. How does it compare to last month?
 - vi. What is the next time?
 - b. Then determine the four least busy months by a similar sequence of questions starting with the least busy month and working up
 - c. Then determine the four middle 'months' by comparisons such as: "How does March compare with May - is it busier, same, or not so busy?" By how much does it differ?
4. As an example, if no data is available, determine the most labor intense months, then the four least labor months, and then for the middle months
5. An alternative method is to have children use seeds, small fruits, stones, goat droppings, or other small and reasonably uniform counters to quantify. Sticks can be broken in different lengths and used to indicate relative magnitudes. In this way an entire seasonal calendar can be constructed with sticks, stones, and seeds on the ground
6. Combine all the seasonal patterns in one diagram to show correlation between different variables and identify any problem or opportunity times within the year
7. Cross-check and refine the calendar throughout the fieldwork. Watch out for seasonal and non seasonal variations.

Seasonal Calendars

Objectives

- To identify the main activities, problems and opportunities through the annual cycle and key linkages
- To identify the months of greatest difficult and vulnerability to children.



This is a calendar showing the main activities, problems, and opportunities throughout the annual cycle in a diagram form. It helps to identify the months of greatest difficulties and vulnerability or other significant variances which have impact on children's lives. Seasonal calendars can be drawn in a linear fashion with 12 months to show the typical year or it can be drawn in a circle. A seasonal calendar can be used to summarize such things as school attendance, labour demand of children, social events, etc.

RESOURCES – WHAT IS REQUIRED FOR EFFECTIVE PARTICIPATION

Are there resources for effectively engaging children? Yes, and they range beyond financial! There are many other means to help facilitate child participation including human capital and physical space. Adults are an invaluable resource because they provide mentoring, guidance and knowledge to make child participation succeed. Here are some resources:

Dedicated and safe spaces: children do not typically have a formal space to call their own. In participatory sessions, children usually express a strong desire to have a space that is their own, where they feel in charge.

Suitable location: make sure the location chosen for children's involvement is open, accessible and comfortable for all. For example a school is probably not the best setting, given that not all children actually go to school and this might inhibit their engagement.

Chaperones: when taking children away from their home, they should be accompanied by an adult caretaker (chaperone). They take care and ensure the children are comfortable. It is preferred that female children be accompanied by female chaperones and male children accompanied by male chaperones.

Facilitators: the person working with children should have a long history of facilitating children. This takes a special skillset. Some of the critical skills include ability to communicate well with children, establish trust and confidentiality, have fun, assess their needs and respond with enthusiasm and encouragement. Facilitators should:

- Be sensitive to overcome barriers to participation, with children with disabilities, children affected by conflict
- Activities are conducted in an atmosphere of respect and cooperation
- Potential risks to the children are identified way in advance of the session(s)

Funding: involving children and building their capacity to engage effectively is not a one time event, it's a process. The greatest impact of participation on children's lives is through on-going programs. This is no small investment of time, effort and of course money.



"BE THE CAUSE!" Action:

- How will you prepare to consult with children?
- Have you reviewed your checklist to know what you need?
- What actions will you take to properly prepare children?
- How will you keep your agenda on the back burner and the children's agenda on the front burner?
- How will you choose child representatives?
- What tools will you use for your sessions?
- What resources will you use? Which ones are most readily available?

MONITORING AND EVALUATION



Before you start any child participation process, it is vital to have a monitoring and evaluation framework. This will show you what worked, what can be improved, what needs to be enhanced and eliminated. This can be a great source for continued funding too.

- Monitoring gives you information on where your child participation process is at any given time relative to set targets and outcomes
- Evaluation, on the other hand, gives you insight on targets and outcomes were achieved and why.

Monitoring and evaluation are different in focus but complementary. For both it is important to measure progress against a set of targets and expected outcomes set prior to the event. Each stage of the consultative process, workshop or event should be monitored so that adjustments can be made if necessary.

After the event participant evaluations are used to assess children's level of satisfaction with a given process/activity. It also helps the facilitator to determine whether the information obtained, techniques and methods employed have been child friendly and useful in achieving the objectives of the consultative process. In the long term, the evaluation process helps plan for children better and also keeps track of the changes/ impact registered in the lives of children as a direct result of their participation in consultative processes.

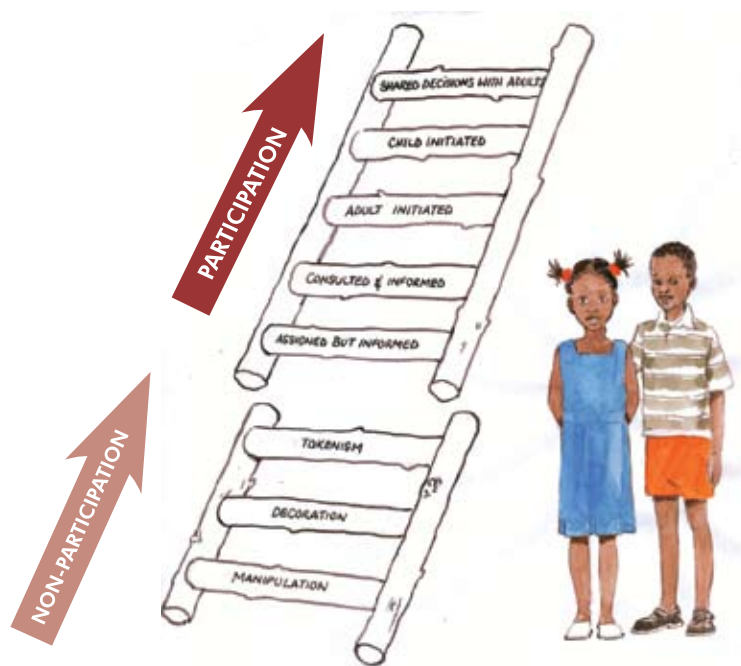
Popular evaluation techniques include:

- Use of a simple evaluation survey form or questionnaire
- An evaluation wheel split into triangles representing the stages and activities in the consultative process provides children with an opportunity to indicate their views by shading within the triangles that correspond to what they learnt or liked
- Use of a body map where children draw maps of their bodies and creatively label what they have learnt on their body maps.

The participant evaluation with children will be essential for conducting an overall evaluation of the process children participated in, in which the organizer analyzes whether and why stated targets and outcomes were reached. The evaluation should provide lessons learned and offer recommendations for future improvement.

The Ladder of Participation

Hart Rogers' Ladder of Participation has over the years been used as a standard of measurement for the application of child participation. The ladder distinguishes between tokenistic participation and effective, decision making participation. Hart uses a ladder as a metaphor to illustrate the varying levels where children can be involved in a project or an activity. Hart's ladder illustrates different stages of child involvement and the various forms in which adults (project holders) engage children.



The Ladder of Participation can be used as an evaluation tool and can put a critical spotlight on real and meaningful participation.

Definitions of each rung:

Rungs 1-3 = Non Participation

- **Rung 1:** Manipulation - young people are manipulated, adults rule and make all decisions
- **Rung 2:** Decoration - involvement of children is just a show/ window dressing

- **Rung 3:** Tokenism or symbolic participation - children are involved as part of a process to merely show that children are represented. They are not consulted nor their opinion taken into consideration

Rung 4-8 = Participation

- **Rung 4: Children assigned and informed** - children and young people are invited, assigned or given tasks by adults and are informed of the significance of the project
- **Rung 5: Consultation** - adults initiate the activity, children are consulted and their views respected. Children fully understand what is being done and why
- **Rung 6: Adult initiated** - adults initiate the activity and children are involved in planning and implementation and have a role in decision making
- **Rung 7: Child initiated** - children lead and initiate action supported by adults. Children initiate the idea and consult adults in its execution
- **Rung 8: Shared decisions with adults** - Children in charge and they initiate the activities and decide how it will be carried out. Adults are available and only play supportive and facilitative role.

There are many more evaluation techniques that a facilitator may use and children themselves must be encouraged to suggest ways of evaluating their work. All evaluation techniques must be age, gender and culturally appropriate and must encourage children to suggest ways of evaluating their participation – this is an important ground rule at this stage.

Indicators of the success of child participation:

When Children:

- Freely express their views and opinions and it is treated with respect
- Understand the potential impact they have on decision making
- Know what's required of them
- Are involved from the earliest possible stages and are able to influence the decision and content of participatory process
- Have time to consider their involvement and give their personal, informed consent to it
- Are involved in setting the criteria for selection and representation for participation
- Their participation is voluntary and they can withdraw at any time
- Involved in ways and at a pace appropriate to their capacities and interests and other time commitments are respected and accommodated (home, work and school)

- Steps are taken to include all rather than a few, this could mean reaching out to children in their local settings rather than inviting representatives to a central point
- Are given rapid and clear feedback on the impact of their involvement and outcome of any decisions/next steps
- Are asked about their satisfaction with the process and for ways to improve it.

When:

- Adults involved in any participatory processes are sensitized to working with children, they are clear about their roles and are willing to listen and learn from children
- Organizations, ministries and workers are accountable to children for the commitments they make to children
- Issues tackled are of real relevance to the children being involved and draw on their knowledge, skills and abilities
- Ways of working and methods of involvement combine and build on supportive local structures, traditions, knowledge and practice
- Ways of working build the self-esteem and self-confidence of children
- Sufficient time and resources are made available for quality and meaningful participation
- Adults are sensitized to helping children understand the value of their participation
- Child-friendly meeting places are used where children feel relaxed, comfortable and are accessible to children with disabilities
- Translators are provided for situations where children meet with different languages – allows for children's full participation
- Non-technical language is used in all discussions involving children
- Participatory practice responds to the needs, expectations and situations of different groups of children and this is regularly revisited
- No assumptions are made about what different groups of children can and cannot do
- Staffs are provided with appropriate training enabling them work effectively and confidently with children
- Specific technical skills or experience (in communication and facilitation, conflict resolution or multicultural working) is built up through a combination of recruitment, selection, staff development and practice exchange
- Consent is gotten for the use of all information provided by children and confidential information is protected
- No photographs, videos or digital images of children are taken or published without children's consent/awareness
- Results of monitoring and evaluation are communicated back to the children involved in an accessible and child-friendly way, and their feedback is taken

into account in future participation work. (Note that after a considerable period of the implementation of the National Guide, there will be a need to carry out a review/evaluation of its impact).



It is important to measure progress against a set of targets and expected outcomes set prior to the event. Each stage of the consultative process, workshop or event should be monitored so that adjustments can be made if necessary.



"BE THE CAUSE!" Action:

- As a tool for monitoring, determine where your programs are at the onset.
- At which rung do you find your programs or initiatives?
- How can you integrate the Ladder of Participation into the monitoring and evaluation of your programs?
- What indicators will you integrate to ensure you achieve your objectives?

CASE STUDY :Child Leadership in School:The Case of Maddu Primary School



At Maddu secondary school in Maddu Sub County, Mpigi district, the school prefects are elected using the voting system. The children interested in becoming prefects submit their applications to the elections committee composed of teachers and students for vetting, after which those approved go ahead to campaign and then elections take place. The school then organizes orientation meetings for the elected prefects once every two weeks to equip them with more knowledge and skills about their duties and how to accomplish them. Children selected by their fellow children at school are trained to lead the monitoring activities at the school. From each class (primary 3 – 7), three children are elected representatives by fellow children to form the UPE children's monitoring committee. In order to ensure maximum support to the children, two teachers are trained from each school to help children interpret the monitoring tools that are filled in weekly. Children are involved in monitoring the availability and utilization of the human, material and financial resources provided to facilitate the UPE program and suggest appropriate changes to the right stakeholders. Some of the specific aspects that children monitor include; child friendly learning environment, allocation and utilization of financial resources, community involvement in child education, teachers attendance, children attendance.

Wait, there's more.....

SECTION THREE: COMMITMENT CONTRACT AND NEXT STEPS

Congratulations on completing this guide! You have completed the first big step... educating yourself on what is child participation, tools and techniques to engage children and monitoring and evaluation. Now it is time to take the most vital step – to make a commitment towards participation. Take a moment now to reflect on all you have read in this guide and the questions you have answered in the “**BE THE CAUSE!**” action sections and complete the following...

I _____, as someone who desires to or already involves children, my intention is to integrate child participation completely so there's a seamless connection towards receiving input from child and implementation. I commit to do the following:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____



*Child participation is a process and not an event. By committing to involving children you set the stage to **BE A CAUSE!** and a catalyst in a child's life. You too can create a new era for the future of Uganda.*

CASE STUDY: Radio programs by and for children: The Case of Mega FM, Gulu



Gulu's Mega FM radio station airs every Saturday between 9-10am a program code named winye ber meaning negotiation is good. The program is run by children, who host other children during the show. The only visible adult is the producer, who provides the children with guidance on specific things such as when the children plan to present a drama. The presenters (who are children) keep alternating between a boy and a girl in moderating. At any one time, there are about 30 children who regularly participate as moderators, co-hosts or take part in a debate or drama. The education level of the participants usually starts from primary four (P4) up to around senior two (S2). The program targets children and the themes of the discussions or drama include: topics taught in school, debate on current events (such as the war in northern Uganda), story telling, poetry or riddles. Evidence shows the program reaches its target as intended.

APPENDICES

Appendix I – Ice Breaker Activities

Appendix II – Worksheets

Appendix III - References

APPENDIX I: Ice Breaker Activities

The following are all activities designed to be used when you first gather children together. They are games which help children to get to know each other and talk to each other while being in motion and having fun! Use these as appropriate.

My name is....and I like...

A getting to know you activity.

Tip:

- This works best in groups of ten or less.

What you need:

- Nothing

Be mindful:

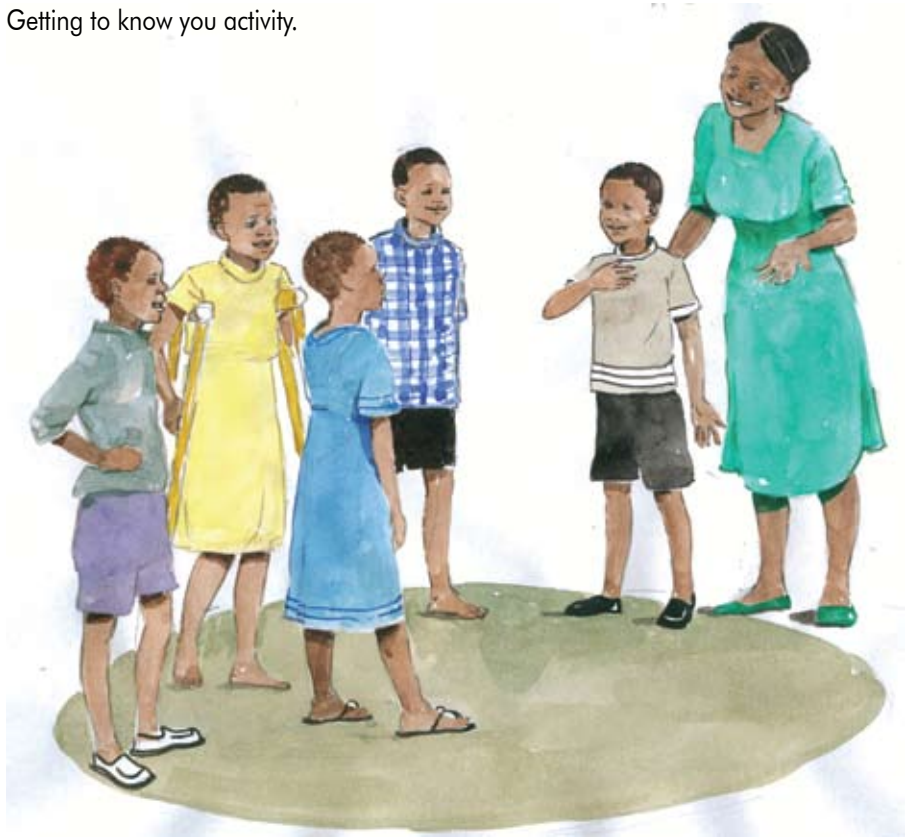
- Children should not feel embarrassed if they cannot remember all the statements. Instead, encourage the group to help each other and provide clues
- If children cannot think of a favorite animal or color that begins with the same letter as their name, don't let them feel embarrassed, encourage the group to help.

Game:

- Children stand or sit in a circle
- First child says their name and the name of a favorite animal or color that begins with the same letter as their name (for example, "my name is Esther and I like elephants")
- The next child repeats this and adds their own name (for example, "her name is Esther and she like elephants. My name is Sarah and I like snakes")
- The third child repeats the names and likes of the previous children and adds their own name (for example, "her name is Esther and she like elephants. Her name is Sarah and she likes snakes." My name is Godfrey and I life giraffes")
- Continue until all children have introduced themselves in this way.

If I could be...

Getting to know you activity.



Tip:

- Works best when done fast.

What you need:

- Nothing

Game:

- Children stand or sit in a circle
- Ask them to think about who they would like to be and why. You can suggest categories of famous people from history, sports, music, movies, etc. or characters they know in their local community.
- Ask each child to introduce themselves and say who they would like to be and why.

The sun shines on...

Highlights what children have in common

What you need:

- Chairs

Be mindful:

- Use examples from your own culture/setting
- Make sure children do not hurt themselves or get rough.

Game:

- Children stand or sit in a wide circle with one person standing in the middle
- Child in the middle calls out: "The sun shine on everyone who/with..." ("the sun shines on everyone who is wearing blue," "the sun shines on everyone who is wearing socks," "the sun shines on everyone who is wearing a younger sister,"). This has to be something true for the child as well as potentially true for other children in the circle
- Everyone that has what was said in common with the person in the middle, runs around the outside of the circle as fast as they can to an empty space or chair
- The person who does not get a space then goes into the middle and repeats the process.



Tropical rainstorm

Aim of this activity is for children to produce the sounds of a storm. Works well with larger groups. The “storm” will only be effective if everyone works together.

What you need:

- Nothing

Game:

- Children stand circle
- One child acts as the “conductor” of the storm and starts by slowly rubbing both hands together
- The child either to the left or the right of the “conductor” is motioned to do the same, with the person to their left/right following and so on until everyone is doing the same action
- The “conductor” then repeats the same process with another action (for example, clapping, slapping thighs)
- The storm can be brought to a peak by adding stamping feet or even clapping
- The “conductor” then follows the same steps in reverse to let the children know the storm is settling down.

Mirrors

What you need:

- Nothing

Game:

- Children stand in a circle
- A leader is chosen who will then slowly move their body into different positions and their face into different expressions
- The rest of the children have to copy the leader as if they were his/her reflection
- Note: this activity can also be done in pairs, where the pairs take turns at being the mirror and reflection.

APPENDIX II : Worksheets

The worksheets below are meant for you to use before and after involving children. Feel free to photocopy these and use them. They are designed to be an invaluable tool for helping you get clear and focused in all your interactions with children.

PREPARING FOR CHILD PARTICIPATION

Use this worksheet to help prepare you in advance of each of your child participation interactions.

Date of Meeting: _____ Time: _____

Meeting Location: _____

Meeting Facilitator: _____

Minutes Role: _____

Minutes Distribution Point Person: _____

Objectives

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

List of Invitees

Close the Loop

(who not in attendance needs to know what was accomplished at the meeting)

Agenda Points

Date of Agenda Distribution

Materials to Be Circulated Prior to Meeting

Date of Materials Dissemination

POST-CHILD PARTICIPATION MEETING WORKSHEET

This worksheet is to be done immediately following your meeting. It ensures you remember all assigned tasks, any lingering issues and what is most critical.

Date of Meeting: _____ Time: _____

Meeting Location: _____

Meeting Facilitator: _____

Meeting Debrief—Points Covered

Critical Issues

Action Steps

Timeline for Deliverables

Follow-Up Notes

(include next meeting date, recognition, and request for feedback in the notes)

Commitments for follow-up

Draft Agenda for Next Meeting

Date and Time of Next Meeting

Location of Next Meeting

Next Meeting Facilitator

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