ARC resource pack

Study material

Foundation module 4

Participation and inclusion

Contents

Training material for this module

Exercises and handouts are also listed at the end of each section.

When referred to in the text, exercises and handouts are always from the list of training material at the end of the section where the reference appears, unless the reference specifically points to other sections.

This module is one of the following series of **ARC resource pack** modules.

Foundation modules
1 Understanding childhoods
2 Child rights-based approaches
3 Programme design
4 Participation and inclusion
5 Advocacy
6 Community mobilisation
7 Psychosocial support

Critical issue modules
1 Abuse and exploitation
2 Education
3 Children with disabilities
4 Sexual and reproductive health
5 Landmine awareness
6 Separated children
7 Children associated with armed forces or armed groups

All modules include:

- **study material** giving detailed information on the module's subject and a list of further reading
- **slides** giving key learning points and extracts from the study material, offering a useful resource when introducing training events and exercises
- **training material** for participatory workshops that comprises **exercises** giving practical guidance for facilitators and **handouts** for participants.

The following documents are also included in the ARC resource pack CD-ROM to ensure you can make the most of these modules.

- User guide
  An introduction to the ARC resource pack and the relationships between modules.
- Training manual
  Advice and ideas for training with ARC resource pack materials.
- Facilitator's toolkit
  General guidance on how to be an effective facilitator, with step-by-step introductions to a wide range of training methods.
- Definitions of terms
- Acronyms

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Introduction

This module provides practical information, guidelines, inspiring case studies and participatory tools to support organisations and key adult actors to engage with children as rights holders and social actors, supporting their participation in decision-making processes, which affect them and their communities. Guidance is provided to support the development of meaningful, ethical, sustainable, and inclusive participation of children (of different ages and backgrounds) in project, programme and policy responses and service delivery during different phases of an emergency, from preparedness, early, intermediate, and post emergency responses to longer-term development.

Building genuine partnerships between adults and children (and among children themselves) is a particular focus of this module as a means of transforming power relationships and creating the space for all children to interact and intervene in different levels of decision-making structures, systems and processes that are accessible and responsive to them.

Section 1 **Defining and justifying children's participation and inclusion** Provides definitions for key terms and outlines reasons and benefits of children's participation.

Section 2 **Children's rights to participation and inclusion** Identifies international legal instruments, duty bearer relationships, key actors, systems and structures that support children's participation.

Section 3 **Children's participation practice standards** Provides a standards and a framework for facilitating children's participation in emergencies.

Section 4 **Building capacity for children's participation** Lists guidelines for building the capacity of adults and children to facilitate children's participation.

Section 5 **Involving children in situation analysis** Provides guidelines and tools for involving children in situation analysis and planning emergency response.

Section 6 **Children's participation in emergency preparedness and response** Provides examples of children's participation in various emergency preparedness and response efforts.

Section 7 **Monitoring and evaluating children's participation** Provides guidelines and tools for involving children in monitoring and evaluation emergency responses.

Definitions of terms

- **Children's participation** refers to informed and willing involvement of children in matters that concern them, both directly and indirectly, through the expression of their views, influencing decision making and achieving change. Activities to promote children's participation cut across all programmes and take place in all arenas from homes to government, from local to international levels.
- **Inclusion** refers to the fair and equitable participation of all children in all spheres of the child's life, school, community, programmes and services, regardless of the child's age, gender, ethnicity, family, culture, geographical location, language, religion, ability, or financial situation.

- **Non-discrimination** is a principle present in all human rights treaties and represents an obligation to provide equal rights and opportunities to all human beings. Children may experience discrimination on the basis of their social identity for example, as a girl, someone with a disability or as a member of a particular ethnic group, or as a result of circumstances for example, when affected by HIV or as migrants or street children. In many cases these aspects of identity and circumstance are used to define children as **different**. These aspects of identity and difference can combine and result in double discrimination and an even greater denial of children's rights.

Section 1
Defining and justifying children's participation and inclusion

Key learning points

- Children's participation refers to informed and willing involvement of children in matters that concern them, both directly and indirectly, through the expression of their views, influencing decision making and achieving change.
- At each stage of programme planning and implementation, there are degrees of engagement for children and varying roles adults play in relation to children's participation.
- Child inclusion refers to the fair and equitable participation of all children in all spheres of the child's life (school, community, programmes and services) regardless of the child's age, gender, ethnicity, family, culture, geographical location, language, religion, ability, or financial situation.
- Children's participation is a human right as well as a process and a means of accessing and securing other rights.

Defining children's participation and non-discrimination inclusion

Children's participation

Participation can be defined in many ways and child participation can take many forms. For the purposes of this module, a definition of child participation and various forms have been outlined below.

Definition[1]

'Children's participation refers to informed and willing involvement of children in matters that concern them, both directly and indirectly, through the expression of their views, influencing decision making and achieving change. Activities to promote children's participation cut across all programmes and take place in all arenas, from homes to government, from local to international levels.'

Children's participation may take different forms (as will be illustrated by case studies throughout the module), but is often most relevant and meaningful to children when based on their day to day realities in their own homes, schools, camps or communities – with relevant opportunities to engage in decision making on policy matters that concern them. It can take place within and outside of formal structures which may have been created to support their participation, such as child committees, clubs, organisations, or parliaments. At each stage of developing a programme, there are three potential degrees of engagement for children.[2]

- **Consultation** takes place when adults recognise that children have views and experiences that can make a valuable contribution to matters that affect them. A preparedness to consult reflects an acknowledgement that adults do not have all the necessary expertise through which to provide adequately for children. They therefore set up mechanisms through which to elicit children's perspectives and then use them to influence and inform legislation, policy and practice relevant to children's lives.

- **Participatory processes and shared decision making** Participatory processes provide opportunities for children to be actively involved in shared decision making concerning the development, implementation, monitoring and/or evaluation of projects, programmes, research or activities. This degree of participation by children, whilst usually initiated by adults, does create opportunities for adult-child partnerships, where adults share power with children, and children play a significant role in shaping activities in which they are engaged.
- **Self-initiated processes** are those where children themselves are empowered to take action, and are not merely responding to an adult-defined agenda. Adults serve as facilitators, rather than leaders. In these processes, adults respect children's capacities to define their own concerns and priorities as well as the strategies for responding to them. It involves a commitment to creating real partnerships with children, with adults fulfilling key roles, for example, as advisers, supporters, administrators, fundraisers and counsellors.

  Children can participate in a number of ways, whether as individuals or as organised groups.[3] In each scenario efforts must be made to ensure children's participation is voluntary, safe and meaningful (see **Section 4**).
- **Through speaking out** for example, to expose abuse, to make a complaint about the distribution of relief services, to ask questions, to raise awareness of a problem faced in the refugee camp, or to press for a change in policy.
- **Through their involvement in decision making** for example, in emergency preparedness planning, in assessing their needs during a situation analysis, in designing projects or programmes which improve their protection or psychosocial wellbeing, by participating in child protection committees or refugee camp governance, by being involved in reviews or evaluations, or by being included in peace, reconciliation or reconstruction processes and policy developments.
- **Through practical action** for example, through contributing to relief delivery and response, through peer education, by setting up a child-led organisation, organising cultural programmes to raise awareness on child abuse, preparing a children's radio programme, and/or demanding accountability from responsible duty bearers.

  The ladder of participation[4] by Roger Hart is often used to represent levels of children's participation. (However, it is not always appropriate to consider moving up the ladder as a linear development. What is meaningful and good practice will depend on the situation, context and capacities and resources of those involved). It can also help to understand the varying roles adults play in relation to children's participation. It denotes the control and influence adults have over the process of children's participation and adult responses to children's participation. A modified version of this ladder has been developed by Reddy and Ratna 2002 (see **Handout 5**).

Inclusion and non-discrimination

Another key concept to consider when designing mechanisms to promote the participation of children and youth is inclusion or non-discrimination.

Definition
Child inclusion refers to the fair and equitable participation of all children in all spheres of the child's life (school, community, programmes and services) regardless of the

child's age, gender, ethnicity, family, culture, geographical location, language, religion, ability, or financial situation.

Families, communities and societies are made up of many and often very different members, with different roles, relationships, degrees of power, and interests. Without proactive efforts to understand difference and to address discrimination there is a tendency for programmes to increase discrimination against those who are less visible, less vocal and less powerful.

In many parts of the world, children and young people have traditionally been discriminated against and excluded from decision-making processes. Children are often perceived as the property of their parents and conditioned not to speak in the presence of elders or to question the decisions of adults. The ability of children to contribute to the welfare of their families, communities and nation may be underestimated and undermined by parents, teachers, community members, religious leaders, government officials, relief agencies, other civil society organisations or military actors to the extent that it is often not considered important to take children's views into consideration in decision making processes. Negative social attitudes toward particular groups of children including: children with disabilities, girls, ethnic minorities, children associated with armed forces, street children, children infected or affected by HIV and AIDS, may further undermine opportunities for children to exercise their participation rights. In many contexts the school environment reinforces existing power relations, and traditional learning and disciplinary methods, which are antagonistic to participatory ways of engaging children.

Unequal power relations between children and adults leave children more vulnerable to exploitation and abuse, particularly in situations characterised by conflict, post conflict or natural disaster. Reports of humanitarian workers sexually abusing children (especially girls) in exchange for relief items and services are a symptom of this inequality. Inequalities among children (due to gender, age, disability, ethnicity, class, caste or other factors) may likewise reflect and reinforce existing unequal power relations within wider society.[5]

The reasons for and benefits of children's participation

There are many reasons to support the participation of children in decisions and activities that affect their welfare.

Children's participation is a human right as well as a process and a means of accessing and securing other rights

Children's participation is a key principle of the UN Convention on the rights of the child (CRC), and is integral to the application of a rights-based approach. When children (especially the most marginalised) have opportunities to express themselves; to speak out; to form their own associations and to participate in decisions that affect them, they are more able to claim their rights and, to hold adults accountable for the fulfilment of these rights (see **Section 2** for more information).

Participation supports child development

Participation varies according to a child's evolving capacities. However, children can begin to participate in decision about their welfare from very early ages. Competence comes through experience, and is not suddenly endowed at a certain age. Early interactions establish a sense of identity and the confidence and skills for self-expression and to negotiate rights. Tiny day-to-day events lay the foundation for

participation.[6] Lansdown (2005) has explored the concept of **evolving capacities**[7] through three frameworks: as a development, a participatory, and a protection concept (see **Foundation module 1** Understanding childhoods). A collaborative relationship between children and their parents or carers needs to be encouraged, where adults encourage children to take more responsibility for decision making as their capacity evolves, with adults relinquishing some power, while also continuing to play a caring, supportive role (with ongoing consideration of children's best interests and bearing ongoing responsibilities as duty bearers).

Participation promotes protection, psychosocial wellbeing and resilience
Traditionally within humanitarian organisations, efforts to promote the participation of children in emergency preparedness and response efforts have been seen as time consuming, non-essential, and/or as an unnecessary risk to children. Without argument, the protection of children must be a given primary consideration when engaging children in participatory processes in emergency contexts. However, experience indicates that participation and protection can be mutually reinforcing, enhancing the competencies and networks that enable children to protect themselves and others,[8] as well as the competencies of adults to better protect children. Protection issues for children can therefore perhaps best be discussed when the entry point is children's participation. As suggested by Boyden and Mann (2000)
'It is vital to recognise that if overcoming stressful life events involves beliefs, feelings, competencies and actions, children's own perspectives on adversity and the strategies they employ for their own protection are critical to coping and resilience... It is perhaps in the context of adversity when support for children's own efforts is most crucial, since taking away even the slightest element of control from children's lives under such circumstances can be very damaging.' (p20)
For more on psychosocial wellbeing and resilience, see **Foundations module 7** Psychosocial support.

Children already make important contributions to their families, communities and societies and should be acknowledged as important stakeholders within these spheres.
Throughout their childhood, children will generally carry out a range of roles and responsibilities within their families, communities, and the larger society. The specifics of these roles and responsibilities depend on a variety of factors, including: age, gender, capacity, cultural expectations, legal regulations and other circumstances. These factors likewise influence the degree to which children participate within decisions and activities that affect their welfare. However, children's roles and responsibilities may change, and often increase, during times of emergency. Due to the death or illness of a parent, children may be required to take a job, care for younger siblings, and manage a household. Children living in areas undergoing conflict are recruited or used by armed forces or groups, witnessing and participating in war firsthand. Young girls become young mothers, suddenly responsible for the care and welfare of an infant. Children can and do influence the welfare of their families, communities, and nations as well as their own welfare, in both positive and negative ways. As a young person's roles and responsibilities change, his or her participation in decision-making processes must likewise change. Denying access to these processes may create a population of frustrated, alienated young people prone to unhealthy and self-destructive behaviour as well as violent, criminal, and extremist behaviour with the potential to destabilise a nation.

Children (of different ages and backgrounds) have different perspectives and priorities and considering these perspectives and priorities enables adults to better address the needs of children

Children experience emergencies differently than adults. Likewise, children experience the impact of emergency preparedness and response efforts differently than adults. Consulting and involving children in the design, implementation and monitoring of a response can ensure that emergency efforts meet their most urgent needs.

Children can be more effective in reaching other children

Many children and young people have strong communication, and facilitation skills, or can easily be supported to develop these skills and use participatory tools or other forms of expression to engage other young people in participatory processes, (see **Section 4**). Often these young people are more effective as facilitators than adults, due to their ability to communicate with their peers in ways that they understand and can relate to as well as their natural empathy for the experiences of other young people.

Motivations for agencies to promote the participation of children in programming tend to be categorised as **instrumental** and **transformative.**[9]

- Instrumental efforts tend to emphasise children's participation in different phases of the programme cycle and are based on an assumption that stakeholder participation improves the accountability, effectiveness and efficiency of humanitarian interventions.
- Transformative efforts are more broadly concerned with the empowerment of children (especially the most marginalised) to assume greater control over their lives and achieve structural change in society leading to positive and sustainable change.

Adopting a long-term approach to children's participation will strengthen both instrumental and transformative efforts. While more challenging and resource intensive, a primary focus on transformative efforts may be more far-reaching and beneficial, particularly in conflict related emergency contexts, where it is even more crucial to address the root causes of conflict and rights violations if sustained peace is to be achieved.

These reasons and benefits of children's participation are further elaborated in **Handout 1**.

Exercises designed to overcome commonly perceived objections and obstacles from adults towards children's participation in emergency contexts are further elaborated in the exercises in this section.

Training material with this section

Exercise 1	Ball exercise
Exercise 2	Children's participation balloon
Exercise 3	Adult roles and levels of children's participation
Exercise 4	Discrimination analysis
Exercise 5	Timeline of a day in a child's life
Exercise 6	Power ball
Handout 1	Reasons to promote children's participation in emergencies

Handout 2 Balloon picture

Handout 3 Definitions of children's participation and inclusion

Handout 4 Dealing with objections and obstacles

Handout 5 Reddy and Ratna's ladder of participation

Section 2
Children's rights to participation and inclusion

Key learning points

- Children's participation rights and rights to inclusion and non-discrimination are guaranteed by several international legal instruments, including the CRC, the general comment on CRC Article 12 and situations of emergency and armed conflict, and the Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities.
- In some contexts, parents or carers should be approached and empowered as co-claimants to support children to claim their rights.
- Children who are able to exercise their participation rights are more able to access other rights, including survival, protection and development rights.
- By carefully considering the duty bearer environment, including analysis of key actors, systems and structures, agencies can ensure appropriate, effective and inclusive strategies during various phases of an emergency response.

Children's participation rights and rights to inclusion and non-discrimination are guaranteed by several international legal instruments.

The CRC

CRC Article 12 The right to be heard and child participation

Child participation is considered a key principle within the CRC. The CRC mandates that children's views be considered in all matters affecting them, particularly legal matters.

CRC Article 12 The right to be heard and child participation

- States 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 the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child.
- For this purpose, the child shall in particular be provided the opportunity to be heard in any judicial and administrative proceedings affecting the child, either directly, or through a representative or an appropriate body, in a manner consistent with the procedural rules of national law.

CRC Article 2 Non-discrimination

Non-discrimination is another key CRC principle, mandating that all rights, including a child's right to participate, apply to all children, irrespective of gender, disability, ethnicity, religion.

CRC Article 2 Non-discrimination

- States parties shall respect and ensure the rights set forth in the present convention to each child within their jurisdiction without discrimination of any kind, irrespective of the child's or his or her parent's or legal guardian's race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status.
- States parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that the child is protected against all forms of discrimination or punishment on the basis of the status, activities, expressed opinions, or beliefs of the child's parents, legal guardians, or family members.

Interpretation of the principles of child participation and non-discrimination, particularly in emergency contexts, should take into consideration two other CRC principles:

- the best interests of the child (CRC Article 3)
- the child's right to survival and development (CRC Article 6).

More importantly, consideration should be given to a child's own understanding of his or her best interests and requirements for survival and development (the right of children and young people to participate in decisions affecting them applies to decisions affecting them as individuals as well as to decisions affecting them as human beings, increasing recognition of children and young people as a social group).

Additional CRC articles that relate to participation rights

Several additional articles within the CRC refer to and support a child's right to participate. Examples of mechanisms through which agencies can support the realisation of these rights are included in this module.

CRC Article 12 **Right to opinion** The child has the right to express his or her opinion freely in all matters and procedures affecting the child. The child's views will be given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child.

CRC Article 13 **Freedom of expression** The child has the right to express his or her views in any media of the child's choice. Children also have freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers.

CRC Article 14 **Freedom of thought, conscience and religion** The State shall respect the right of the child to freedom of thought, conscience and religion.

CRC Article 15 **Freedom of association** Children have the right to meet with others, and to join or form associations.

CRC Article 17 **Access to information** The State shall ensure that children have access to information and material from a diversity of sources, and shall encourage the

mass media to disseminate information to enhance the child's social, physical, spiritual and moral wellbeing.

CRC Article 23 **Special support for children with disabilities** A child with learning or physical disabilities should enjoy a full and decent life in conditions which ensure dignity, promote self-reliance and facilitate the child's active participation in the community.

CRC Article 29 **Education for responsible life** Education shall aim to develop the child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential. Education shall prepare the child for a responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, non-discrimination and friendship. Respect for the child's parents, his or her own cultural identity, language, values and environment will also be encouraged.

CRC Article 31 **Right to play** The child has the right to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child, and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts.

The general comment on CRC Article 12 and situations of emergency and armed conflict

In 2006, the CRC held a day of general discussion on the child's right to be heard. A general comment, intended to offer guidance to State parties on the realisation of children's participation rights, was adopted by the CRC committee in July 2009.[10] It includes a section on emergencies that states "children affected by emergencies should be encouraged and enabled to participate in analysing their situation and future prospects. Children's participation helps them to regain control over their lives, contributes to rehabilitation, develops organizational skills and strengthens a sense of identity". States parties are also encouraged to support mechanisms that enable children to play an active role in post-emergency reconstruction and post-conflict resolution processes.

Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities

The Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities and its Optional protocol were adopted by the UN General Assembly on 13 December 2006. The convention aims to ensure that persons with disabilities enjoy human rights on an equal basis with others. It includes a specific focus on children and their rights to express their views (CRC Article 7 Children with disabilities).

CRC Article 7 Children with disabilities

- States parties shall take all necessary measures to ensure the full enjoyment by children with disabilities of all human rights and fundamental freedoms on an equal basis with other children.
- In all actions concerning children with disabilities, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration.
- States parties shall ensure that children with disabilities have the right to express their views freely on all matters affecting them, their views being given due weight in accordance with their age and maturity, on an equal basis with other children, and to be provided with disability and age-appropriate assistance to realise that right.

Case study: the benefits of participation for children with disabilities[11]

As Hamdan's experience demonstrates, participatory projects can make an immense difference even to young people marginalised due to their disability. Hamdan was born with a physical condition severely affecting his ability to walk. He explains that, as a child, *'I was always alone, always crying. I didn't feel human. My family didn't know how to help me or care for me'*. A chance encounter in 2000 led to an invitation from a youth media and rights organisation (PYALARA) to attend a journalism course in Jordan. Hamdan reported that the conference *'was the first time people treated me with respect.'* After two years of regular involvement with this organisation, during which time he was able to greatly develop his skills and confidence, he took responsibility for the production of a four page special feature, focusing on disability issues, in the organisation's journal The Youth Times. This led him to find, meet and encourage other young people with disabilities living in conditions as bad as or worse than those of his own childhood. He was able to bring to light cases of appalling neglect and raise public awareness about the needs of differently-abled children. He explained his motivation for this as follows: *'I don't want others to live a hard life like me. I have a message in my life, which I must offer. Even if I die I must paint a smile on disabled people's faces.'* Summing up the impact of participation in PYALARA activities, Hamdan explained that *'it has helped to make me part of society'*.

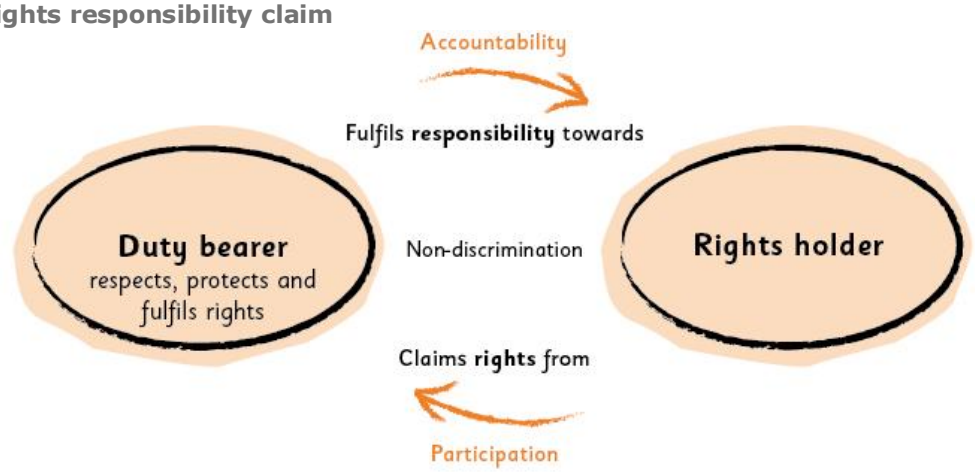
Rights holder and duty bearer relationships, key actors, systems and structures

A rights-based approach must both empower children to claim their rights and prepare adult duty bearers to listen to children and to take their views seriously so that they may be more accountable to children.

In some contexts, parents or carers should be approached and empowered as co-claimants to support children to claim their rights and, in some circumstances, to directly represent or speak up on behalf of younger children or children with profound disabilities (see also **Section 5**).

Children who are able to exercise their participation rights are more able to claim other rights, including survival, protection and development. For example, children can speak out against sexual abuse and exploitation by humanitarian workers; identify the children whose homes have been destroyed during a natural disaster in order to ensure relief items reach them; and encourage and support out of school children to attend school.

Rights responsibility claim



From Joachim Theiss

By carefully considering the duty bearer environment, including analysis of key actors, systems and structures, agencies can ensure appropriate, effective and inclusive strategies during various phases of an emergency response. For example, during a civil war, a national government may have little authority and power to protect children living in rebel held territory. However, community leaders, and local administrators may collaborate with children and young people to monitor the ways in which rebel forces interact with children and appeal to rebel commanders to protect schools and prevent recruitment of children. In a post conflict environment, agencies support young people to engage new leaders as partners in efforts to implement existing child protection policies or introduce new and improved policies and programmes to protect children.

Training material for this section

Exercise 1	Identifying children's participation rights and their relevance to emergencies
Exercise 2	Children's participation rights
Exercise 3	Supporting adult-child partnerships
Handout 1	The essence of CRC articles relevant to children's participation rights
Handout 2	Case studies
Handout 3	Roles for Part A
Handout 4	Roles for Part B

Section 3
Children's participation practice standards

Key learning points

- Adult organisations and workers must be committed to ethical participatory practice and to the primacy of children's best interests.
- Children's participation should always be voluntary.
- Efforts to create an enabling environment for children's participation ensure more sustainable, inclusive, meaningful participation of children.
- Children's participation work should challenge, rather than reinforce, existing patterns of discrimination and exclusion.
- All practitioners should be provided with appropriate training on child rights, participation, child friendly communication and participatory methodology as well as have opportunities to enable them to work effectively and confidently with children of different ages and abilities.
- Respect for children's involvement is indicated by a commitment to provide feedback and/or follow-up and to evaluate the quality and impact of children's participation.

A set of practice standards for supporting children's participation has been developed by Save the Children[12] based on years of experience supporting children's participation at local, national and global levels. Each standard is accompanied by a set of criteria. The practice standards can be used by practitioners as tools and a framework to prepare for, implement and monitor safe, meaningful and ethical participation.

Understanding and adapting each of these practice standards, with special consideration given to emergency circumstances and the particular socio-cultural, political and geographical factors in each context, can help to ensure consistent, high quality child participation practice.

Standard 1 An ethical approach

Adult organisations and workers must be committed to ethical participatory practice and to the primacy of children's best interests. Strategies must be developed to address the imbalance in power and status between adults and children so that children may freely express their views and opinions and be treated with respect. Clarity of purpose about children's participation and honesty about its parameters is crucial. Particularly in emergency contexts, where the potential benefits of participation include personal development and enhancement of children's sense of self-efficacy and self-esteem, it is crucial to ensure that children (individually and collectively) have realistic understanding and expectations with regards to how much impact they are likely to have through their participatory endeavours. In addition, organisations and workers must be accountable to children for the commitments they make to them.

Identifying barriers and challenges to children's participation are crucial, so that strategies are developed to reduce any potential negative impacts from children's participation. Hart and Tyrer (2006) note how the '*environment of armed conflict poses particular challenges for safe, ethically responsible research involving children*'

(p18), and therefore requires careful consideration of issues of timing, location, nature, content and safety of activities. They emphasise the need for good preparation, to be aware of and anticipate possible risks beforehand and to have strategies to deal with them. They suggest a list of key questions to be asked before meeting and working with children and young people. Some of the questions, with some updates (some updates were made to the questions during their use in Save the Children Norway's thematic evaluation on children's participation in armed conflict, post conflict and peace building) are also applicable to natural disaster scenarios.

- What concerns are likely to exist amongst the immediate community about bringing children together for research activities? How can these be dealt with?
- Are the local political military actors likely to take an interest in these activities? If so, what relationships may be needed to be built and what assurances received and given?
- In the event that the participatory work creates upset for individual children or division amongst participants or adverse reaction from others, what resources, individual or organisational, exist to provide back-up support (including psychosocial support) in addressing such problems?
- What spaces, if any, exist within the immediate area where it is possible to conduct participatory activities with children and young people in a manner that ensures security and privacy without raising suspicion?
- Which geographic areas need to be avoided during participatory activities to avoid risk of danger to children such as landmines, child abduction or armed conflict? Or in situations of natural disaster to avoid, for example, fragile and collapsing buildings, flooded areas.
- How can the participatory action plans with and by children be flexible enough to take into consideration the socio-political context, the possibility of strikes, continued conflict, insecurity or instability, disruption caused by elections?

Standard 2 Children's participation is relevant and voluntary

Children's participation is most meaningful when it helps them to express and address their priority concerns. Correspondingly, humanitarian responses to children will be more effective and appropriate when based on an understanding of the specific perspectives and priorities of different children (of different age groups and backgrounds).

Children should always have a choice about whether or not they want to participate, how they participate and for what length of time to ensure that their participation does not over burden them and that it recognises their other commitments (for example, education, household work, agricultural work or income generation) which may have increased during or following emergency situations. Children should give their informed consent, and permission from parents or carers should be obtained prior to starting any consultation or participatory process.

Standard 3 A child friendly, enabling environment

Efforts to create an enabling environment for children's participation ensure more sustainable, inclusive, meaningful participation of children. They involve changing adult attitudes, behaviour, structures, processes, policies and information to become

more inclusive, accessible and responsive to children. Organisational commitment to long-term processes of empowerment and social change are required, during and beyond the emergency, with investments in time, human and material resources and skill training.

Organisational staff should have their capacity and confidence built in child protection, children's participation and effective communication with children and young people (see **Section 4**). All staff should be trained in the appropriate child protection measures and procedures in place in order to be able to respond effectively should the need arise. It should also be clear who responds to child protection issues and concerns. It is important to consult and involve children in child protection planning as well as to make sure that they are aware of and have access to all feedback and complaint mechanisms. In emergency contexts these measures will not only help prevent and stop child abuse and exploitation, but will also help children get support if needed and alert agencies to the quality and extent of the services and assistance they are providing (see also Standard 6 The safety and protection of children).

The quality of children's participation and their ability to benefit from it are strongly influenced by the efforts made to create a positive environment for their participation. In all situations, including emergency contexts, efforts must be made to engage and work with children, individually and collectively, in a manner which builds the self-esteem and self-confidence of children of different ages and abilities so that they feel they are able to contribute and that they have valid experience and views to contribute. Methods of involvement should reflect their preferred mediums of expression (see **Section 3**). In some socio-cultural contexts it may be more appropriate for girls and boys to meet separately, with girls being supported by female facilitators.

While recognising the significant constraints on time in fast onset emergencies, efforts must still be made to ensure that children are engaged and supported in meaningful processes and not in one off events or consultations. Efforts should be made to involve children in all stages of programming: design and development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. Broader efforts to support the development and strengthening of child-led initiatives, organisations and networks (as key foundations or building blocks for more meaningful longer-term sustainable structures for ongoing participation and association) should be further encouraged.

In addition, broader efforts to work with adults (parents, teachers, religious and community elders, government officials, politicians) should be undertaken to ensure that all key adults are sensitised and prepared to support children's expression, to create spaces for their voices to be heard and to be taken seriously by adults, such that adults become more accountable in addressing issues raised by children (see **Section 1, Exercise 1** to **Exercise 3** and **Section 2, Exercise 3**).

As highlighted in **Section 2** information is extremely important in both preventing and responding to emergencies. Children should also be asked about what information they need, and information should be shared with children in child friendly formats and in languages that the children understand, including children with visual or hearing impairments (see **Exercise 3** and **Handout 6**).

Standard 4 Equality of opportunity

Children's participation work should challenge, rather than reinforce, existing patterns of discrimination and exclusion. Proactive efforts should be taken to encourage those groups of children who typically suffer discrimination and who are often excluded from activities to be involved in participatory processes. Children's involvement should aim to include **all** rather than a few children. For example, in efforts to consult children during an emergency response facilitators should reach out to larger groups of children (in different age groups) in their own local settings, rather than inviting a few representatives to a central point. If there is a limit to how many children can participate, children themselves should be supported to select from among their peers those who will represent them in participatory initiatives based on the principles of democracy and inclusion.

All information gathered with or from children should be disaggregated in terms of gender, age, disability, ethnicity, religion, class and other factors of difference.

No assumptions should be made about what different groups of children can and cannot do. Rather, parents, practitioners and officials should be sensitised to value the contributions of all children, including: younger children, children with disabilities, working children and children from ethnic minority groups, engaging them with a focus on their strengths and capabilities. Engaging with parents and caregivers as co-claimants of children's rights can also ensure that the particular views, experiences and needs of younger children, children with profound disabilities or other discriminated groups are brought to the forefront.

Standard 5 Staff are effective and confident

As part of emergency preparedness significant efforts should be undertaken to sensitise all managers, staff and partner agencies staff on the value of children's participation so that they understand and act upon organisational commitment to support it. All practitioners should be provided with appropriate training on child rights, participation, child friendly communication and participatory methodology as well as have opportunities to enable them to work effectively and confidently with children of different ages and abilities (see **Section 4, Exercise 1**).

Staff should be properly supported and supervised, and self-reflection and evaluation of their participation practice should be integrated in performance review processes. Within each organisation specific technical skills or expertise (for example, in child-led disaster risk reduction, or conflict transformation) should be built up through a combination of recruitment, selection, staff development and practice exchange. In each region, resource pools of competent, skilled child participation facilitators could be identified and mobilised if needed.

Standard 6 Participation promotes the safety and protection of children

Child protection policies and procedures form an essential part of participatory work with children and are of extra significance when working in emergency contexts. Practice standards in children's participation should be used in conjunction with organisational child protection policies. In all emergency situations the humanitarian principle **do no harm** and the CRC principle of **the best interests of the child** should guide decisions with regard to what are and are not appropriate activities for children of different ages and abilities to engage in. Organisations have a duty of care

to children with whom they work and everything must be done to minimise the risk to children of abuse and exploitation or other negative consequences of their participation.

Staff organising a participatory process should have a child protection strategy that is specific to each process. Skilled, knowledgeable staff must be delegated to address and coordinate child protection issues during participatory processes. The use of codes of conduct, particularly when developed in consultation with children as well as their parents and guardians, can be useful as they help to identify behaviour and good practice to make sure that children's participation takes place within safe and respectful environments. Such codes of conduct should include procedures to both protect children from risks and potential exploitation and abuse, as well as sensitive procedures to deal appropriately and effectively with possible disclosures of harm or abuse. This includes the need to identify in advance local organisations and/or individuals who have skills to provide psychosocial support to children who have faced traumatic experiences, particularly when working with children who live in insecure environments caused by armed conflict or natural disaster. Responsibilities relating to liability, safety, travel and medical insurance should also be clearly delegated and effectively planned for.

Building upon ethical practice, safeguards must be put in place to minimise risks and prevent abuse for example, children are adequately supervised and protected at all times; careful assessment is made of the risks associated with children's participation in speaking out, campaigning or advocacy. Depending upon the risks identified with and by children, young people and adults, steps may be needed to protect children's identity or to provide follow-up measures to give protection (see **Exercise 2** on risk assessment).

Case study: protecting children who participate in Afghanistan[13]

In preparation for a gathering of children's group representatives in northern Afghanistan in 2004, members of children's groups were consulted about: their expectations for the gathering; their ideas for potential agenda item and mechanisms to ensure fair election processes; their fears about participating in the gathering and ideas for ways in which organising agencies could address these fears. Over 200 children shared their views. Their fears included: girls travelling without mahrams (an accompanying male relative); car accidents or hitting a landmine while travelling to the gathering; kidnappings; discrimination by children from different districts. To reduce their fears it was suggested that: girls be accompanied by their mahrams; drivers travel carefully and safely; children stay together in a safe place with their mahrams; the gathering be organised in a safe place with security. As a result, organising agencies arranged for: children and adults to travel in convoy; cars to have a codan radio for communication; daily security briefings provided to children and adults; child protection policies to be observed, hotel staff to be trained in child protection policies, and reporting mechanisms for abuse, exploitation and discrimination to be in place.

Media guidelines should also be in place to ensure ethical, safe and constructive interactions between the media and children, especially during emergency relief and

response efforts. Journalists should be encouraged to represent children as resilient survivors and social actors, rather than as passive victims. Furthermore, consent should be obtained for the use of all information provided by children. No photographs, videos or digital images of a child should be taken or published without that child's explicit consent (and their parent's agreement) for their specific use. Unless otherwise agreed, it must not be possible to trace information back to individuals or groups of children.

Standard 7 Ensuring follow-up and evaluation

Respect for children's involvement is indicated by a commitment to provide feedback and/or follow-up and to evaluate the quality and impact of children's participation. Feedback is also a crucial element of organisational accountability to children. It is important that children understand what has been the outcome from their participation and how their contributions have (or have not) influenced change. Children are themselves key stakeholders in feedback, monitoring and evaluation. See **Section 7** for processes and tools to monitor and learn with and from children, and to provide feedback to them.

Accountability mechanisms must be put in place (at different levels) to ensure systematic follow up by adults and adult institutions to issues and concerns raised by children. Children and young people need to be able to hold adult duty bearers and institutions to account, but they can only do this if they have knowledge about what governments or organisations are meant to have done and how they are going to deliver on commitments made. Children and young people should be provided with clear feedback regarding the status of action taken, or not taken, by adult duty bearers and the reasons why certain decisions are taken or made.

Case study: following up on children's participation in the UN violence study in Lesotho[14]

In Lesotho, as follow-up to the UN Secretary General's Study on violence against children, action is being taken by civil society partners to respond to children's recommendations. Children are supported to meet regularly to make their plans on their issues and provided budgets for these meetings. There are plans to support the activities and action plan developed by the Children coordinating committee, which has requested logistical and financial support from adults.

Training material for this section

Exercise 1	Introducing practice standards in children's participation
Exercise 2	Risk assessment
Exercise 3	Developing child-friendly information
Handout 1	The practice standards in summary
Handout 2	Practice standards scoring and action-planning table
Handout 3	Assessing risks with children, Afghanistan
Handout 4	Risk assessment worksheet

Handout 5 Actions taken to reduce risks, Afghanistan

Handout 6 How to produce child-friendly documents

Section 4
Building capacity for children's participation

Key learning points

- In order to effectively promote the participation of children, adults must adopt strategies for communicating effectively with children.
- Agencies should build on existing cultural attitudes, practices, traditions and other forms of cultural expression to enable children's participation.
- Children and young people should be provided critical leadership skills so that they have the confidence and ability to be active and competent partners.
- Participatory tools and cultural forms of expression are useful in working with children of different ages and abilities.
- Many children and young people, especially the most marginalised children, are often better able to protect and promote their rights through collective efforts, initiatives and associations.

In order to effectively promote the participation of children, key duty bearers (parents, teachers, head teachers, religious and community elders, NGO staff, government officials, UN officials and other key actors) need to be sensitised to the benefits of children's participation (see **Section 1**) and opportunities for participation within emergency preparedness and response efforts (see **Section 5, Section 6,** and **Section 7**). Agencies should build on existing cultural attitudes, practices, traditions and structures, which give value to children and to their contributions and discriminatory attitudes and practices should be challenged. Duty bearers new to collaborating with children in the planning and implementation of emergency preparedness and response may be more comfortable engaging in settings where they can learn the value of children's participation by witnessing it directly.

In addition, duty bearers must also be provided with the skills they need to effectively engage young people as partners within emergency efforts. Children and young people should be provided critical leadership skills so that they have the confidence and ability to be active and competent partners.

Agencies can choose a range of strategies, resources, tools, and guidelines to build the capacity of duty bearers and stakeholders, and children. The strategies included within this section are, by no means, exhaustive, but rather are intended to be illustrative of the types of strategies available to enable agencies to meet the practice standards outlined in **Section 3**.

Strategies for communicating effectively with children

Children are not simply small adults; they have their own needs, abilities and communication styles, which may be significantly different from those of adults. If adults wish to promote their meaningful and inclusive participation, they must be prepared to adopt facilitation and communication styles that are familiar and empowering to children.

- Feel comfortable with children of all ages, abilities or backgrounds and engage with them in a manner that values and respects them as individuals and/or as a group.

- Meet children in a location chosen by children, which facilitates effective communication. For some young people, a quiet space with comfortable and culturally appropriate seating may be the ideal choice, for others going for a walk or playing or working together may provide the best opportunity for communication. Regardless of the location, facilitators should be able to ensure privacy and create a non-distracting environment, especially when children discuss personal or potentially painful information, and/or if the child has been exposed to an environment of uncertainty, change and anxiety.
- Allow time for trust building to help children to feel relaxed, to develop mutual trust and to enable them to feel that they are being taken seriously. Time for playing together may be helpful in developing rapport, and conversation about neutral issues (eg. school, games) may be appropriate before more personal or painful topics are discussed.
- Use a quiet tone of voice in an effort to help children feel safe, and show sympathy and ask open questions to encourage children to explain something in his or her own way. For example, an open question such as, *'Tell me about life in your village'* may elicit a more free response than a closed question such as: *'Where did you live?'* It is usually best to avoid leading questions which suggest an answer to the child such as, *'You like school, don't you?'.*
- Use language and concepts appropriate to the child's age and stage of development and culture; and, to share information in accessible child friendly ways that empowers children (and their carers) to make appropriate choices. There are many good examples of child- and youth-friendly material available produced by organisations such as End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and the Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purposes (ECPAT) and Save the Children. For guidance on the development of child- and young-person-friendly material consult **Section 3, Exercise 3** and **Section 3, Handout 6**.
- Listen attentively to children, even when their language is limited and concepts are difficult to communicate. Facilitators can demonstrate attentive listening by summarising what children have said, seeking clarification, not interrupting children, and using gestures such as nods of the head (or whatever is appropriate within the particular culture) and an appropriate degree of eye contact to encourage children to continue to talk.
- Show respect for the child's feelings by reflecting the feelings, for example, *'That must have made you feel very sad or angry'*. This helps to convey **empathy**, the capacity to identify with the child's situation and feelings.
- Use creative forms of expression which allow for engagement with children through their preferred style of communication, for example, using play or art as a medium of expression.
- Use creative participatory and experiential tools which enable children to identify, analyse and discuss issues which most affect them rather than relying on interviews or questionnaires which may not be effective.
- Observe cultural norms associated with interpersonal communication. In many societies there are rules about what topics can be discussed with particular adults. For example, girls in some cultures may be forbidden to discuss sexual topics with persons other than their aunts or grandmothers. Some may be restricted from contact with

anyone outside of the family. Practitioners who communicate with children need to understand the cultural norms for expressing feelings and emotions. In some societies, for example, it would be a source of great shame for children, especially boys, to cry. Those trying to help children should not make matters worse by encouraging them to talk and express feelings in a way that contravenes such norms. In addition, the use of physical touch, or eye contact, for example, will vary between cultures. The degree of formality and social distance between adults and children, in some societies, may also limit the exchange of personal information and feelings.

- Use interpreters, as appropriate. There are obvious advantages to communicating in a child's native language. Facilitators who are not from the same culture as a child may have difficulty interpreting a child's gestures and body language and grasping the nuances of words and expressions. Where the use of an interpreter is unavoidable, it is vital that the interpreter is fluent in both the language of the facilitator and the language preferred by the child. The interpreter must also understand any specialist terminology and be able to use words which the child can understand. He or she should be acceptable within the community and be seen as impartial. It is vital to ensure that the interpreter has good skills for communicating with children, can cope with any emotions expressed, and does not influence the conversation by mistranslating, summarising, omitting selected sections of what is said, or interpreting what she or he thinks a child has said.

Strategies for using creative participatory tools and cultural forms of expression with children

Participatory tools and cultural forms of expression are useful in working with children of different ages and abilities. Younger children in particular have been found to communicate more easily through non-verbal methods (see **Exercise 4** and **Handout 2**).

Traditional forms of expression such as: art, drama, dance, story telling, play, poetry, music, puppetry and drumming, as well as more modern forms of expression such as: photography, videography and radio can provide useful starting points for engaging young people in conversations about important issues. Using traditional forms of expression, young people can communicate ideas, experiences, or concerns related to these issues. They can also adopt different roles and perspectives and act out different behaviours in safe and non-threatening ways.

In addition, there are several participatory tools and resources designed specifically to assist children to identify, prioritise, and analyse issues of concern, as well as plan, implement and monitor activities to address these concerns prior to, during and following an emergency (see table *Description of participatory tools* in **Section 5** and table *Tools to support children to monitor and evaluate* in **Section 7**). Many of these tools are based on participatory rural appraisal (PRA) methodologies developed initially for engaging rural and semi-literate populations in development decisions. These tools include: risk mapping, body mapping, time lines, tree analysis, Venn diagrams and diamond ranking.

Many traditional and modern forms of expressions and participatory tools emphasise visual impressions, and active representation of ideas rather than language. They transform power relations between adults and children. Regardless of their language ability, children and young people can use these forms of expression and tools to set

the agenda and describe their own reality, rather than trying to give correct or best answers.

Various myths about participatory methods exist, many of which have been challenged by Pretty et al.[15] For example, there is a tendency to introduce PRA too quickly and too far into a planning process for the results to have significant impact. Often PRA is used to reinforce or test existing theories. Proper use of participatory approaches require careful planning, dialogue, implementation and analysis; processes that take time and may be complex. PRA techniques should not be used in isolation by persons without strong communication, facilitation and conflict negotiation skills. '*Participation does not simply imply the mechanical application of a* **technique** *or method, but is instead part of a process of dialogue, action, analysis and change'.*[16]

Many participatory tools can be easily adapted to facilitate communication with and among diverse groups of young people. Where appropriate, efforts to adapt tools should involve parents or caregivers familiar with each child's preferred styles and means of communication (see **Section 5, Exercise 4**).

Case study: communicating with children with disabilities[17]

Two-way street is a unique training video which shows children and young people (three to 19 years old) communicating with each other and with adults through different means, including signs, symbols, specific behaviours, eye pointing, facial expressions, gestures, play, art, objects of reference, speech, vocalisation and physical movement. Professionals discuss various barriers to communication, and reflect on their own experiences and early anxieties about working with children with disabilities who do not use speech. Young people with disabilities share their experiences communicating with adults, both positive and negative, and advise professionals as to how they can communicate better with children with disabilities. These young people strongly felt that communication should be a **two way street**. They noted that too often, disability is assumed to be the greatest communication barrier. However, if adults learn to listen and communicate 'on all channels', disability need not be a barrier at all.

Strategies for supporting children to take leadership

In order for children, especially the most marginalised, to have the confidence and skills to participate meaningfully in emergency preparedness and response efforts, and, in many cases, lead these responses, they must:

- know their rights
- know how to advocate for their rights through the media or engaging specific duty bearers at the local and national levels.

They must also develop key life skills, such as:

- decision making
- problem solving
- critical thinking
- creative thinking

- communication and interpersonal skills
- self-awareness and empathy
- skills to cope with stress and strong emotions.

UNICEF, UNESCO and other NGOs have developed a range of life skills curricula and programmes to support the development of these skills.

Children must also have opportunities to practice leadership skills. **Child-to-child**[18] or peer education approaches represent the earliest forms of children's participation. These approaches were developed originally in the late 1970s to communicate health messages to children but have since been used to communicate a range of information and skills. Often children can more effectively communicate these messages than adults. They can also assist in the identification of critical issues and gaps in information about these issues. Children can participate in the crafting of messages and training programmes to ensure that these are as relevant and effective as possible (see **Section 6, Exercise 1** for a practical example of the child-to-child approach).

Case study: child-to-child, peer education in Mozambique[19]

Following the 2008 floods in Mozambique, Save the Children worked for four to six weeks with groups of child parliamentarians in local districts and communities to train and sensitise them on key health issues and messages. The child parliamentarians then used large pictorial flipcharts to engage other children in resettlement areas in discussion about health issues such as diarrhoea and cholera and their dangers. They have helped children identify good and bad health practices and how to improve health practices.

Strategies to support children to organise child-led organisations and initiatives

Many children and young people, especially the most marginalised children, are often better able to protect and promote their rights through collective efforts, initiatives and associations. Their collective strength increases their negotiating power and confidence to claim their rights from duty bearers. Due to their organised nature child-led organisations and initiatives can also be more effectively involved in policy and programming development and decision-making processes that take place over a longer period of time. Child-led organisations are therefore one of the obvious starting points for creating access for children to meet and engage with decision makers in ongoing governance structures.

Case study: forming children's organisations during the Pakistan earthquake response

The review of Save the Children's response to the Pakistan earthquake in 2005 demonstrated that the establishment of forums for children's participation while responding to a mass scale emergency reduced the traumatic effect of emergency on children, rebuilt children's confidence in their abilities to take initiatives for common good, ensured quick identification of child protection and development needs and gave access to the most marginalised children and families.

In order for children to effectively manage initiatives and organisations, it helps if they:

- know how to effectively plan activities and run an organisation, including programme and activity development and management, budget development and management, reporting on results, and managing staff
- have a physical meeting space to meet (for example, their own room, club house) that is in the locality in which they live and easily accessible to them
- can address urgent and immediate concerns that are relevant to the children involved
- are provided ongoing capacity building opportunities
- adopt an organisational model that empowers all children rather than a few select youth leaders
- are supported to network, share lessons learned and resources, and launch collective advocacy initiatives with other child-led organisations
- are provided opportunities to practice leadership skills within schools and local governing structures
- are supported to mobilise local resources, support and information
- can graduate from child-led initiatives to adult initiatives when they turn 18 years old, thereby enabling younger children to take responsibility for progressively more active roles within the organisation.

Training material for this section

Exercise 1	Developing an ideal facilitator
Exercise 2	Interviewing children
Exercise 3	Identifying cultural forms of expression
Exercise 4	Promoting inclusion of younger children and children with disabilities
Exercise 5	Paper chain game
Exercise 6	Child-led organisations and adult-child partnerships
Exercise 7	Diamond ranking
Handout 1	Role-play scenarios and checklist for observers
Handout 2	Case studies

Handout 3 Case studies

Section 5
Involving children in situation analysis

Key learning points

- As described in **Foundation module 3** Programme design, a child rights situation analysis should be both participatory and inclusive, and consist of three separate but complementary analyses:
  - a rights analysis
  - a duty bearer and stakeholder analysis
  - a capacity analysis.
- During emergencies, children can be meaningfully involved in both the planning and implementation of situation analysis, as advisers, researchers, advocates, respondents, analysts, and documenters.
- Use of creative participatory tools can support children of different ages and abilities to identify, prioritise, analyse, and plan a response to issues that affect them.

At the onset of an emergency it is crucial to assess the situation, systematically gathering information, and identifying the priority concerns and resources within the affected area or population to ensure a strategic, integrated and coordinated response.

Issues to address in a situation analysis of children's participation

As described in **Foundation module 3** Programme design, a child rights situation analysis should be both participatory and inclusive, and consist of three separate but complementary analyses: a rights analysis, a duty bearer and stakeholder analysis and a capacity analysis.

A rights analysis of children's participation should focus on assessing the status of rights based on the CRC and other legal instruments, as referenced in **Section 2**.

For example, to what extent are children:

- encouraged to form opinions and express them freely in all matters that affect them, especially in legal matters?
  (CRC Article 12 Right to opinion)
- able to express their views through the medium of their choice?
  (CRC Article 13 Freedom of expression)
- free to think and believe according to their conscience?
  (CRC Article 14 Freedom of thought, conscience and religion)
- able to form or be part of associations of their choosing?
  (CRC Article 15 Freedom of association)
- able to access information on issues and decision-making processes that affect them? Including information related to emergency preparedness, disaster response, conflict resolution, peace agreements.
  (CRC Article 17 Access to information)
- able to participate in the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policy and programmes that affect them?

- with disabilities given extra support to participate; and/or, to what extent they are excluded? Which groups of children are most marginalised, excluded and discriminated against (in terms of their participation rights) and does this manifests itself in situations of emergency?

In addition:

- How might children participate more meaningfully in the emergency preparedness and response?
- What might be their potential roles and responsibilities?
- What are the barriers to children's participation, including social, cultural, political, economic, legal, institutional barriers?

A duty bearer and stakeholder analysis of children's participation should focus on identifying who has the power and obligation to promote the participation of children.

For example, who can, should, and is supporting children to:

- form and express opinions using the medium of their choice
- think and believe according to their conscience
- form or be a part of the associations of their choosing
- access information on issues and decision making processes that affect them
- participate in the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policy and programmes that affect them
- promote the participation of children with disabilities and children who may otherwise be marginalised.

In addition:

- How might duty bearers and stakeholders better support children's participation?
- What are the barriers to this support?

A **capacity analysis** of children's participation should focus on assessing the current capacity of duty bearers and stakeholders to facilitate the meaningful and inclusive participation of children as well as what additional resources are required to build the capacity of duty bearers to facilitate more meaningful and inclusive child protection. The analysis should also assess the current capacity of children to participate meaningfully, including the identification of any existing children's associations, and what additional resources are required to enable children and children's organisations to contribute in a more meaningful way to emergency preparedness and response efforts.

Information collected during a situation analysis must be disaggregated to the extent possible according to, gender, age, ethnicity, in order to understand the distinct experiences, views, perspectives and priorities of different groups, ages and gender of children. Findings from this analysis will inform the development of appropriate strategies to promote the participation of children of different ages, abilities and backgrounds to participate throughout the various phases of an emergency and beyond (see **Section 4**).

Involving children in the planning and implementation of situation analysis in an emergency

During emergencies, children can be meaningfully involved in both the planning and implementation of situation analysis as advisers, researchers, advocates, respondents, analysts, and documenters.

> **Case study: children's role in situation analysis during floods in Nepal[20]**
>
> Floods and landslides in Nepal in 2004 affected more than 300,000 people in 25 districts. In the Tarai region, members of the Junior Red Cross Circle participated in situation assessment, surveys and identification of affected people and their families. Children's participation resulted in a realistic assessment of the situation that helped avoid duplication of efforts and deliver assistance to those most in need.

The following guidelines are intended to support this participation. For more information, consult strategies for communicating and working with children in creative and participatory ways outlined in **Section 4**, and practice standards outlined in **Section 3**.

- Assess risks and do no harm. Before involving children in the planning and implementation of a situation analysis, assess the risks that children may face by taking part and take steps to minimise these risks. Efforts should always be made to ensure that children's participation does not harm children in any way. This includes taking measures to protect children from abuse by those working with them.
- Gain consent and provide information. Before involving children, consult with and seek the fully informed consent of children, parents, community leaders, or anyone else responsible for the welfare of children. Fully informed consent requires that children and their caregivers understand the purpose of the situation analysis and how the findings will be used. They must be aware that their participation is voluntary and that they can withdraw from the situation analysis at any time.
- Avoid raising expectations about the direct benefits of the situation analysis. Be honest and clear about how the outcomes of the research will affect those who are taking part.
- Ensure representation of a wide range of children in terms of age, gender, ability, ethnicity, status, religion. Make sure that the analysis does not reinforce existing inequalities by highlighting the opinions of more articulate and accessible children and excluding others. Where appropriate, agencies should organise focus group discussions with children of the same age, gender, and ethnic group to ensure that the perspectives of these groups are not overshadowed by older and more dominant children in mixed group discussions.
- Consider the timing and location. Arrange for planning and implementation of situation analysis activities to take place in appropriate settings that give children the confidence, privacy and space to share their opinions and take leadership for activities. Activities should not interfere with children's schooling, rest or work.

- Plan follow-up and seek advice on how to respond to any reports of violations of children's rights, for example, reports of abuse. Make referrals and provide further support to children and families.

Using creative participatory tools to engage children in the planning and implementation of a situation analysis

Use of creative participatory tools can support children of different ages and abilities to identify, prioritise, analyse, and plan a response to issues that affect them. See table below for examples of tools.

Description of participatory tools

Participatory tool	Purpose	Location in the module
Tools to support children to **identify** issues affecting them		
Timeline of a day in a child's life	Identifies roles and responsibilities taken on by children and difficulties they face in their day to day lives	**Section 1**
Risk mapping	Identifies risks faced by girls or boys in their locality	**Section 5**
Body mapping	Identifies children's experiences, eg. what they hear, see, feel, do	**Section 5**
Transect walk	Identifies difficulties, opportunities and resources in their locality	**Section 5**
Drawings, poetry	Encourages children to use drawings or poetry to express their experiences, hopes or fears	**Section 4**
Drama	Encourages children to use drama as a medium to analyse, present and encourage dialogue on issues affecting them	**Section 4**
Tools to support children to **prioritise** issues affecting them		
Diamond ranking	Prioritises which issue is most important to them and why	**Section 4**
Matrix ranking		
Tools to support children to **analyse** issues affecting them		
Children's participation balloon	Explores what children's participation means, its purpose, what hinders and helps it	**Section 1**
Problem tree analysis and Why? Why? Why?	Identifies the root causes and impact of a problem	**Section 5** **Section 7**
Discrimination analysis	Explores and analyses discrimination and exclusion	**Section 1**
Power ball	Identifies differences in power within families, communities and organisations, with attention to gender, disability, and other forms of difference	**Section 1**

Circle analysis	Analyses which children are included or excluded from participatory initiatives	**Section 7**
Circle of influence	Analyses which people have a responsibility to act	**Section 5**
Capacity analysis	To analyse whether children have the capacity to claim their rights	**Section 5**
Tools to support children to **plan a response** to issues affecting them		
How? How? How?	To develop a practical action plan on how to move forwards	**Section 5**
Visioning and next steps	To explore a vision, and to develop practical strategy and steps towards the vision	**Section 6**
Mapping exercise on adult-child partnerships	to explore, illustrate and plan how child groups or clubs should relate to and work in partnership with adult actors and structures	**Section 4**
Spider tool	Self-assessment evaluation and planning tool for child-led organisations and initiatives	**Section 7**

Case study: use of participatory tools for situation analysis in an Afghan refugee camp

In a refugee camp for Afghan refugees in Pakistan in 2001, Save the Children supported children to organise **reflect-action** circles to identify the problems they faced, to analyse the causes of the problems, to identify potential solutions, to explore and re-define power relations, and to appeal to the concerned camp officials for these issues to be addressed. During camp governance meetings, girls as young as five years old presented their concerns, including concerns about physical abuse of children by security guards. The agency administrators responded by organising training for security guards.

Training material for this section

Exercise 1 Preparing for effective children's participation in situation analysis

Exercise 2 Risk mapping

Exercise 3 Body mapping

Exercise 4 Introducing participatory tools for working with children

Exercise 5 Problem tree analysis

Exercise 6 Circle of influence

Exercise 7 Capacity analysis

Exercise 8 Transect walk

Exercise 9 How? How? How?

Handout 1 Key guidelines to ensure good practice

Handout 2 Capacity analysis table

Section 6
Children's participation in emergency preparedness and response

'Children's meaningful participation is crucial when developing programmes for their protection and recovery. Boys and girls are less vulnerable to abuse if they have skills to keep themselves safer, and if they have higher levels of confidence and self-esteem, and the ability to articulate and explain their wishes, together with a range of coping skills. All of these skills and attitudes can be taught prior to an emergency and then reinforced during the relief and recovery efforts.'[21]

Key learning points

- In contexts where there is a high risk of natural disaster or conflict, children can be involved in and/or responsible for a number of preparedness efforts, including:
  - risk mapping
  - disaster reduction efforts
  - preparing for early emergency efforts.
- Through carefully planned emergency preparedness efforts, children should be ready to support and/or lead a range of efforts during the initial phase of an emergency, including:
  - raising alarms
  - facilitating safe evacuation
  - organising emergency shelter
  - clean water
  - appropriate sanitation
  - first aid
  - distributing food and non-food items
  - caring for separated children and supporting family tracing efforts.
- Children can support and/or lead efforts during the intermediate phase of an emergency, including:
  - identifying and prioritising urgent concerns through emergency assessments
  - monitoring and reporting on abuse and exploitation
  - providing psychosocial support
  - supporting the management of camps for refugee and displaced populations
  - supporting peace negotiations.
- Children can support and/or lead efforts during the post emergency phase, as displaced or refugee populations return home, including:
  - participating or supporting reconciliation and peace building efforts
  - advising and/or contributing to efforts to reconstruct or rebuild communities

- establishing new and improved child protection policies and systems.

Children can and do participate in a range of emergency preparedness and response efforts.

Children's participation in emergency preparedness efforts

In contexts where there is a high risk of natural disaster or conflict, children can be involved in and/or responsible for a number of preparedness efforts.

These efforts can include:

- identifying:
  - potential hazards or flashpoints and early warning signs
  - the potential effects of an emergency and/or ongoing abuse and exploitation that may increase as a result of the emergency
  - areas or people who are most vulnerable to these effects
  - abuse and exploitation
  - resources within the community to support emergency responses. (See **Section 5, Exercise 2**)
- participating in or leading efforts to:
  - reduce hazards and resolve small conflicts before they escalate
  - monitor early warning signs
  - protect vulnerable populations from increased risk of abuse and exploitation
  - strengthen resources available in case of emergency, including emergency shelter.
- preparing for early emergency response efforts and longer-term, larger-scale reconstruction and rehabilitation efforts. The International Red Cross and several other humanitarian organisations offer emergency response training courses that can easily be adapted for young people.

Children engage in risk mapping and a disaster reduction task force in East Godavari, India[22]

A 12-year-old boy in East Godavari, India describes the role children in emergency preparedness efforts: *'I'm 12 and I work with my father who is a fisherman. In 2006 there was flooding in East Godavari and we lost our livelihood assets. That's when a local organisation called Action started working with us to protect our assets. 50 people in my community have formed a task force group to help us to prepare for disasters. Many of the people in the task force are children. Before, others would look down on children, but as part of this programme we can now sit and undergo training together with adults. As part of the programme, we also learn how to rescue others and ourselves. There is now a cyclone shelter in the village and a map of village resources. This* [pointing] *is a map of all the houses where there are widows or handicapped and old people. There are five groups in the task force. There's a warning group who warn the community of an oncoming disaster. There's a rescue group who, based on the map, get together and take people to safer places – to higher ground. There's a relief shelter group who manage the shelter area and try to get rations for people living there. There's also a second rescue group who rescue people from drowning and from collapsed houses. The last group gives first aid to people who have snake bites and who have injuries after a disaster. As part of this programme with Action, we are very confident about facing future calamities and of handling future disasters.'*

Several organisations have already developed child friendly emergency preparedness and response materials.

Child friendly emergency preparedness materials

- *Be ready 1-2-3 workbook* American Red Cross
  Educates children ages five to eight about home fires, earthquakes, and winter storms through activities and demonstrations led by Cool Cat, Ready Rabbit and Disaster Dog.
- *Disaster preparedness colouring book* American Red Cross
  Educates children aged three to 10 about disasters and ways to prepare for them.
- *FEMA for kids* US Federal Emergency Management Agency
  Prepares children for disasters and educates them about ways to prevent disasters and/or reduce damage.
- *Sparky the fire dog* National Fire Protection Association
  Educates children about fire safety.

Wherever possible, emergency preparedness and response training materials should be developed in collaboration with young people and adapted to address local concerns. In addition, efforts should be made to integrate emergency preparedness and response training within formal and non-formal education curricula so that the scale and scope of emergency preparedness is increased and sustained. Children can also be trained and supported to train other young people through child-to-child or peer education training techniques (see **Section 3**).

Case study: school-based emergency preparedness efforts[23]

In Cuba, Bolivia and Costa Rica, information about hazards and safety is integrated within school environmental studies curricula. In Costa Rica, students collect information on local hazards and teachers develop lessons to raise awareness about and address these concerns. In El Salvador, Peru and Nicaragua, children participate in school brigades that are effectively part of the civil defence structure for emergencies. In El Salvador, these **solidarity brigades** are involved in emergency simulations, risk mapping, and awareness raising about emergencies and potential emergency responses.

Children's participation in emergency response

Through carefully planned emergency preparedness efforts, children should be ready to support and/or lead a range of efforts during the initial phase of an emergency.

These initial efforts can include:

- raising alarms at the first sign of an emergency
- facilitating safe evacuation
- organising emergency shelter, clean water, appropriate sanitation, first aid, and distributing food and non-food items
- caring for separated children, and supporting family tracing efforts.

Case study: child participation in early emergency response in Bangladesh[24]

In 2004, a fire threatened an estimated 10,000 people living in a Dhaka slum, including 4,000 children. Members of Child Brigade, a local child-run organisation consisting primarily of street and working children, were among the first to respond and quickly realised that many of the children fleeing the blaze were lost, confused, and didn't know where to go. The child brigade organised a safe meeting place for children and communicated the location of the place to children who had escaped from the fire. They also provided medical care, distributed food, located the children's families, and liaised with other organisations to children affected by the fire.

Children can support and/or lead efforts during the intermediate phase of an emergency.

These intermediate efforts can include the following.

- Identifying and prioritising urgent concerns through emergency assessments.

> **Case study: child participation in emergency assessments in northern Uganda[25]**
>
> In northern Uganda formerly abducted child mothers who were part of participatory research and evaluation made a body map of a baby to describe how their babies and young children had been impacted by the conflict.

- Monitoring and reporting on abuse and exploitation.

> **Case study: child participation in monitoring abuse and exploitation in Bangladesh[26]**
>
> Floods in Bangladesh reshape river courses and wash away homes and farm land. Families who lose their homes and farms in floods must find new work in new areas, and often urban areas. Children from flood regions are more likely to engage in exploitative child labour. An estimated 25% of children working on the streets of urban areas in Bangladesh come from flood regions. They are also at greater risk of being trafficked to India because borders are less secure in times of flood. With help from a local humanitarian organisation, the children living in flood regions have organised a rights forum for marginalised and vulnerable groups to monitor abuses and raise awareness about these problems. They campaign for the protection of children and the provision of relief to vulnerable communities. The forums have been involved in raising funds for flood victims and distributing aid.

> **Case study: child participation in monitoring abuse and exploitation in Nepal[27]**
>
> In Nepal, schools were frequently caught in the crossfire between Maoist guerrillas and the army. In response, Save the Children developed a concept of schools as zones of peace (SZOP), building upon the concept of children as zones of peace (CZOP) that had been promoted in Sri Lanka. A carefully designed advocacy strategy was launched. Five major political parties made a public commitment to respect SZOP and CZOP, and a national coalition for SZOP and CZOP including 35 child rights organisations was formed. As a result, the Prime Minister's Office issued child protection guidelines for security forces. Children's clubs organised in affected schools confronted armed forces on both sides of the conflict of regarding violations of the guidelines, including reports of child recruitment to armed forces, concerns about safe passage to school, and school occupation by armed forces.

- Providing psychosocial support to their siblings, parents, other family members, and friends.

> **Case study: child participation in psychosocial activities in Guatemala[28]**
>
> Among the indigenous Mayan communities in Guatemala, who suffered from death, displacement, disappearance and torture during the 36 civil war, children and young people were trained in conflict resolution techniques and supported to participate in community peace building efforts. One young person observes: *'Being able to participate in peace building makes you feel useful, especially when you can help others. I now have the skills to analyse, reflect on, and solve conflicts. Whatever we learn we share and replicate with other groups of children and adolescents. I am happy about what I am doing. It promotes mental health and we are able to give support to other children who have been victims or who have lived through similar experiences. We need to consult all children and adolescents in decisions affecting them as they are the ones living, suffering and going through the reality of our conflict.'*

- Supporting the management of camps for refugee and displaced populations, as members of management committees or by organising separate but complementary child-led management and/or support structures.

> **Case study: child participation in camp management in Sierra Leone[29]**
>
> Save the Children supported Sierra Leonean refugees in Liberia to form boys' clubs and girls' clubs. They provided the clubs with training in issues such as children's rights, child protection, adolescent sexual health, HIV and AIDS. Each club elected a management committee and, increasingly, they became self-directing. Representatives from the clubs served on the camp management committee and were appointed to serve as child advocates for each block of the camp. The advocates monitored child protection concerns and kept an eye on especially vulnerable children, such as separated children. They provided children with a sympathetic ear and encouraged them to share problems and report incidents of abuse, exploitation, and discrimination that they might not feel comfortable reporting to adults. Advocates then took the matter up with Save the Children staff or appropriate community groups. More broadly, the clubs enabled separated children and children with disabilities to integrate with other young people.

- Supporting peace negotiations and efforts to highlight the concerns of children within these negotiations.

Case study: child participation in peace negotiations in Uganda 2007[30]

In September 2007 more than 200 children and young people from four districts of northern Uganda and Teso region participated in consultations on reconciliation and accountability: agenda item 3 within the formal peace talks taking place in Juba. The consultations were collaboratively organised by local and international NGOs and UNICEF. The outcomes of the consultations were presented to government representatives involved in the peace talks. The government officials also met directly with representatives from children's groups to gain further insight into their experiences and perspectives.

Children can support and/or lead efforts during the post emergency phase, as displaced or refugee populations return home.

These post emergency efforts can include the following.

- Participating or supporting reconciliation and peace building efforts.

Case study: child participation in peace building efforts in Kosovo[31]

During the Kosovo crisis in 1999, some 20,000 young Kosovars in six Albanian refugee camps came together to form a network of youth councils. The youth councils took action to improve the living conditions in the camps, organise sports and music events, improve safety and cleanliness, distribute landmine awareness information and provide psychosocial counselling for younger children. After repatriation, when the young activists returned to their home villages, many continued to support community development efforts. They maintained the network and promoted local peace building efforts, including efforts that involved young activists from different ethnic groups.

Case study: child participation in the Truth and reconciliation commission in Sierra Leone[32]

Between the years of 2002 to 2003, Sierra Leone's Truth and reconciliation commission (TRC), made efforts to highlight the concerns of children by:

- taking 300 confidential statements from children in all districts of the country
- inviting children to testify in the district hearings
- organising a two-day thematic hearing to address children's concerns in Freetown
- allowing children to make official submissions to the commission
- preparing a child-friendly version of the truth commission findings
- using a Voices of children radio programme to disseminate information throughout the truth and reconciliation process
- facilitating opportunities for representatives from a children's forum network to meet with high level officials.

Although children's issues were addressed by truth commissions in Peru, Argentina, El Salvador and Guatemala, the extent to which these issues were addressed by the TRC in Sierra Leone represents a significant increase in attention given to the experiences of children affected by conflict.

- Advising and/or contributing to efforts to reconstruct or rebuild communities in ways that better address the needs of children, particularly marginalised children.

Case study: child participation in reconstruction efforts in Iran[33]

Four months after the 2003 earthquake in Bam, Iran, youth groups and other community groups worked with UNICEF to successfully persuade the government to rebuild Bam as a child-friendly city. They encouraged designers to consider the needs of children, particularly disadvantaged children, and develop a city that provided a safe, healthy urban environment for children of all ages. Children and parents were involved in assessments of current living conditions and were invited to suggest architectural styles, and advise on the location and construction of streets, play spaces, and schools. The assessments revealed a preference among girls for services located close to residential areas due to their limited freedom of movement.

Case study: child participation in reconstruction efforts in Thailand[34]

Following the Tsunami in 2004, some enterprising young people in Thailand set up small local businesses to facilitate access to critical supplies. Others with more advanced English language skills assisted community leaders to negotiate with foreign humanitarian organisations for support to reconstruct homes and villages. These activities earned them respect from adults and thus gained them a place in community meetings. In another tsunami-affected area of Thailand, a teenage girl became the accountant for a community housing group. The new community housing group placed increased value on children's participation in decision making, and advocate for children to receive voting rights and participate in the process of selecting the leader of the new community.

- Establishing new and improved child protection policies and systems, involving a range of government ministries, institutions, and organisations at community, district, and national levels.

Case study: child participation in child protection systems in Nepal[35]

In Nepal, village child protection committees (VCPC) identify and address child protection concerns at the local level and district child welfare boards address these concerns at the district level, Representatives from children's clubs participate in the VCPC and district level child club forums have been established to share information, advocate for the protection of children, and elect representatives to district level structures, including child welfare boards. At the national level, ministers are developing a child protection policy and have made commitments to involve children in the development of new policies as well as the new constitutional assembly.

Case study: child participation in anti-trafficking systems in West Africa[36]

In West Africa, community-based child protection structures, involving both children and adults, advocate for the protection of children against trafficking and the rehabilitation of trafficking victims. These structures were formed as a result of awareness raising efforts focusing on the rights of children and the responsibility of communities to protect children. Following these awareness-raising sessions, community leaders formed child protection committees (CPCs) involving key community members, and children's groups, involving local youth leaders. Save the Children Sweden also trained government social workers, where they were available, to provide technical support to these community-based organisations. In areas where social workers were not available, Save the Children identified and trained community animators to provide similar support.

These CPCs and children's groups formed successful adult-child partnerships to carry out activities intended to:

- sensitise communities on children's rights
- mobilise community resources to support children
- prevent and protect children from abuse and exploitation
- create linkages between communities, governments and NGOs
- provide an arena for children's opinions to be effectively heard and taken into account.

For example, they often worked together to appeal to school directors to readmit children who had been trafficked. The children's groups were often more aware of the needs of particular children. For example, they alerted the CPCs to parents refusing to send their children to school and worked with CPCs to convince parents of the importance of educating their children.

Training material for this section

Exercise 1	Children's participation in prevention and/or service delivery
Exercise 2	Steps in child-led disaster risk reduction (CL-DRR)
Exercise 3	Visioning and next steps
Handout 1	Case studies

Section 7
Monitoring and evaluating children's participation

Key learning points

- Involving children in programme monitoring and evaluation enables agencies to learn with and from children which programmes are most relevant to them.
- Joint monitoring and evaluation activities ensure greater transparency and hold agencies accountable to children for programme results.
- Monitoring and evaluating children's participation within interventions and as a result of interventions, should focus on the degree to which the interventions have enabled children to achieve their participation rights and encouraged duty bearers and stakeholders to support the realisation of these rights.
- Children can be meaningfully involved in both the planning and implementation of monitoring and evaluation activities, as advisers, researchers, advocates, respondents, analysts, and documenters.

Systematically monitoring and evaluating the participation of children throughout emergency preparedness and emergency response programming can assist agencies to determine the effectiveness of interventions and how interventions might be improved. Involving children in programme monitoring and evaluation enables agencies to learn with and from children which programmes are most relevant to children. Joint monitoring and evaluation activities also ensure greater transparency and hold agencies accountable to children for programme results.

Issues to address when monitoring and evaluating children's participation

Monitoring and evaluating children's participation within interventions and as a result of interventions, should focus on the degree to which the interventions have enabled children to achieve their participation rights and encouraged duty bearers and stakeholders to support the realisation of these rights.

For example:

- To what extent have interventions enabled children to:
  - form and express opinions?
  - think and believe according to their conscience?
  - form and be a part of associations of their choosing?
  - access information on issues and decision making processes that affect them?
  - participate in the planning, implementation, and ongoing monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes that also affect them?
- How have interventions supported the participation of children with disabilities and which children have been marginalised, excluded or discriminated against during emergency preparedness and response efforts?
- To what extent have interventions encouraged and/or enabled duty bearers and stakeholders to better promote the participation of children?

- Which interventions have had the greatest impact on children's participation? Which might be considered best practices?
- Which interventions were less effective and what were lessons learned?
- What challenges or barriers to children's participation remain?
- What additional interventions might support more meaningful and inclusive participation of children?

Like data collected for the situation analysis, data collected through monitoring and evaluation activities must be disaggregated to the extent possible according gender, age, ethnicity, in order to understand the distinct experiences, views, perspectives and priorities of different groups, ages and gender of children.

Case study: UNHCR institutionalises participatory discussions with children

In 2002 an independent evaluation was carried out to determine the effectiveness of UNHCR's programmes for women and children.[37] The evaluation revealed concerns regarding the lack of participation of women and children in programme planning, insufficient situation analysis, and a lack of accountability to programme beneficiaries. The most effective programmes were those implemented by well coordinated and responsive teams. As a result, UNHCR introduced an **age, gender and diversity mainstreaming strategy**[38] which required that every programme facilitate participatory discussions with community groups, including children, at least once a year, and the output of these discussions inform programming. Information collected through the participatory exercises is evaluated from an age, gender and diversity perspective. As a result, staff has a better understanding of protection risks faced by children and women.

A broad framework for measuring the effectiveness of participation, which can be applied to any project or initiative, has been developed by Lansdown (2005).[39] It explores three key aspects of participation.

1 **Scope** What is being done? What degree of participation has been achieved and at what point within the project, programme, initiative?

2 **Quality** How is it being done? How have practice standards been applied?

3 **Impact** Why is it being done? What has been the impact on key actors and organisations and how have interventions supported the realisation of children's rights from local to national level?

Exercise 2 includes various matrixes for assessing children's participation according to this framework.

Involving children in monitoring and evaluating emergency efforts

As in a situation analysis, children can be meaningfully involved in both the planning and implementation of monitoring and evaluation activities, as advisers, researchers, advocates, respondents, analysts, and documenters.

The following guidelines are intended to support this participation, drawing on lessons from Save the Children Norway's global thematic evaluation on children's participation

in armed conflict, post conflict and peace building which has taken place in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Guatemala, Nepal and Uganda 2006 to 2008.[40]

- Include monitoring and evaluation activities with and by children within programme design and develop child sensitive indicators, in collaboration with children, in order to accurately assess the impact of interventions in areas that are most important to them.

> **Case study: developing indicators for children's participation in Latin America[41]**
>
> In Latin America, project implementers worked with children to develop a framework for children's participation, including the identification of key stakeholders with the ability to promote children's participation, conditions that favour children's participation, and ways of measuring their participation. Indicators were organised into two categories: general (capacity of stakeholders to promote children's participation and, relationships between children and stakeholders) and specific (forms and degrees of participation). A series of instruments were developed to analyse the projects in light of the proposed indicators for child participation.

- Establish confidential and accessible reporting mechanisms and/or involve children in monitoring and evaluation or supervisory committees for programmes in their local communities or camps to ensure that they can easily share concerns about the ways in which interventions are implemented, or other concerns about abuse or exploitation, throughout programme implementation, rather than simply during formal monitoring and evaluation activities. In this way, humanitarian agencies and other concerned actors can work with children to address concerns promptly and sensitively.[42]

> **Case study: children's participation in monitoring committees[43]**
>
> A 2003 survey on the distribution of food aid in Zimbabwe's **hungry season**, from November to April, revealed that children whose parents had died or were absent often were not included during the registration process. Many child-headed households did not know of their entitlements. Complaints were not made for fear that food aid might be terminated. In response, Save the Children established a children's committee to collect feedback, complaints and suggestions for improvement. By April 2004, seven committees were established in seven communities. Children raised concerns about the allocation of food, including within households, and the marginalising of orphans by caregivers. The mechanism was considered a success. The local management board *'generally believes that this intervention has provided information of a nature and quality that may not have been possible through the normal post-distribution monitoring visits conducted by international NGOs.'* (McIvor, 2004: 3). However, it also threatened some established interests. As one councillor remarked, it is a short step from promoting the accountability of food aid deliveries to demands for greater accountability among elected office holders (McIvor, 2004: 4).

Case study: children's participation in confidential monitoring mechanisms[44]

In Sri Lanka after the 2004 tsunami, Plan International set up a **happy-sad-letter-box** to promote the mental health of affected school children. Unexpected results included the reports of sexual abuse submitted to Plan International via the box. This abuse was subsequently addressed. In an evaluation of the project, children said the box was a means of reporting and gaining protection from sexual and physical abuse.

- Train children to use participatory and creative monitoring tools to collect and analyse data and carefully plan logistics of monitoring and evaluation activities (including appropriate resources, food, transport, and materials).

Case study: children's participation in survey methods for monitoring emergency response efforts in India[45]

In Tamil Nadu, India, just after the 2004 tsunami, Plan International involved children in a monitoring task to ensure that vulnerable groups were not left out of relief work. Children were trained in survey methods, including digital photography, and analysis and presentation of findings. They surveyed more than 700 people, analysed and presented their results to Plan International.

- Provide children with rapid and clear feedback on: the results of monitoring and evaluation activities; concerns or lessons learned identified through monitoring and evaluation activities about the effectiveness of interventions; next steps and efforts to support the sustainability of interventions; the impact and value of children's involvement in monitoring and evaluation activities.
- Follow-up and seek advice on how to respond to any reports of violations of children's rights, for example, reports of abuse. Make referrals and provide further support to children and families.
- Involve children in the documentation and dissemination of finds from monitoring and evaluation activities through media and advocacy efforts.

Tools to support children to monitor and evaluate (All tools listed below can be found with the exercises for **Section 7**)

H assessment	Explores strengths and weaknesses and identifies areas for improvement
Circle analysis	Identifies which children have been actively involved, sometimes involved, consulted, excluded from participatory initiatives and why
Practice standard rating exercise	Assesses how each of the practice standards have been met
Timeline of a child-led initiative	Identifies the achievements and challenges faced over time during a participatory initiative or programme

Body map (before and after)	Explores individual changes before and after their involvement in a project or participatory initiative
Spider tool	Helps child-led initiatives and organisations to assess their strengths and weaknesses, and make plans to improve or strengthen their organisations

- Allow for significant times for meaningful involvement and schedule involvement for times that are convenient for children.

Training material for this section

Exercise 1	Why? Why? Why? Should we involve children in monitoring and evaluation?
Exercise 2	Introducing a framework and matrix exercises for measuring children's participation
Exercise 3	Participatory monitoring tools for use with and by children
Exercise 4	Timeline
Exercise 5	H assessment
Exercise 6	Circle analysis of inclusion and exclusion
Exercise 7	Before-and-after body map
Exercise 8	Introducing the spider tool
Handout 1	Why children's participation processes and impact should be monitored and evaluated with and by children
Handout 2	Exploring scope
Handout 3	Exploring quality
Handout 4	Exploring impact
Handout 5	Key quality elements of child-led organisations and initiatives
Handout 6	Example of spider diagram

Endnotes

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44 Ibid

45 Ibid

Further reading

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