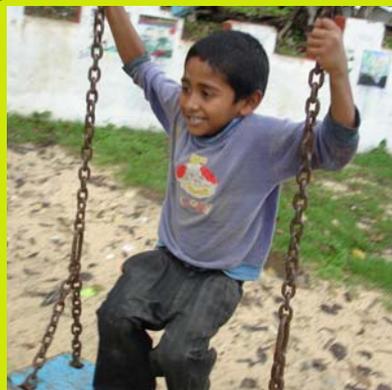




# Introductory Capacity Building Workshop on Meaningful and Ethical Participation of Girls and Boys

16-18 August 2006  
Nellore, Andhra Pradesh



**Save the Children**



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Organised by  
Save the Children  
Tsunami Rehabilitation Programme, India

Facilitated by  
Save the Children Sweden  
Regional Office for South and Central Asia

Save the Children fights for children's rights.  
We deliver immediate and lasting improvements to children's lives worldwide.

Save the Children works for:

- a world which respects and values each child
- a world which listens to children and learns
- a world where all children have hope and opportunity

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# Contents

<b>PREFACE</b> .....	<b>v</b>
<b>FOREWORD</b> .....	<b>vii</b>
<b>ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS</b> .....	<b>ix</b>
<b>ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS</b> .....	<b>x</b>
<b>1. INTRODUCTION AND CONCEPTS OF CHILDHOOD</b> .....	<b>1</b>
1.1 Concepts of Childhood .....	1
1.2 The Tree of Socialisation .....	4
<b>2. CHILD RIGHTS PROGRAMMING</b> .....	<b>7</b>
2.1 Rights and Needs .....	7
2.2 Introduction to Child Rights Programming .....	8
2.3 The Duty Bearers .....	9
2.4 Applying a Rights-Based Approach to Programming .....	9
<b>3. CONCEPTS OF INCLUSION AND PARTICIPATION</b> .....	<b>11</b>
3.1 The 'Bindi' Game .....	11
3.2 Definition and Reasons for Discrimination .....	12
3.3 The Cycle of Oppression and Exclusion .....	14
<b>4. CONCEPT OF PARTICIPATION OF GIRLS AND BOYS</b> .....	<b>17</b>
4.1 Children's Participation Activities and their types .....	17
4.2 Development and Child Participation .....	18
4.3 Save the Children's Position on Children's Participation .....	19
4.4 Justification for Working with Children and Young People .....	20
4.5 Children's Participation in the UNCRC .....	21
4.6 Child Participation from a Rights-based Approach .....	22
<b>5. SAVE THE CHILDREN'S PRACTICE STANDARDS IN CHILDREN'S PARTICIPATION</b> .....	<b>25</b>
<b>6. STRENGTHENING CHILD-LED INITIATIVES AND ORGANISATIONS</b> .....	<b>29</b>
6.1 Demystifying the Concept and Reality: Answering commonly asked Questions about Child-led Initiatives and Organisations .....	31
6.2 The Range and Work of Child-led Initiatives and Organisations .....	35

<b>7. APPLYING CHILDREN’S PARTICIPATION IN PROGRAMMES .....</b>	<b>37</b>
7.1 Children and Programme Cycle and Management .....	37
7.2 Tools/Methodologies for Creating an Enabling Environment for Child Participation .....	37
7.3 Girls’ and Boys’ Participation in Situation Analysis and Research .....	38
<b>8. ACTION PLANS FOR ONGOING AND FUTURE PROGRAMMES .....</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>ANNEXURES 49</b>	
Annex 1: Workshop Agenda .....	49
Annex 2: List of Participants .....	51
Annex 3: Introduction to Practice Standards in Child Participation .....	53
Annex 4: Hart’s Ladder of Participation .....	61
Annex 5: A Social Ecology of Children’s Rights .....	63
Annex 6: Child Friendly summary of UNCRC .....	65
Annex 7: Compilation of remarks by participants in the Evaluation Form .....	69
Annex 8: Bibliography .....	71

# Preface

For Save the Children, the core purpose of children's participation is to empower them as individuals and members of civil society. Empowerment gives them the opportunity to exercise their citizenship rights and to influence the actions and decisions that affect their lives.

Working from a rights perspective implies that all actors must listen to the voices of girls and boys and take actions based on their agenda/priorities and involve them in designing interventions. It also implies that we reach girls and boys across all backgrounds (age, caste, class, religion, ethnicity, disabilities, etc.) and give them equal opportunity to have their voices heard. It aims at addressing root causes of rights violations in order to take action to challenge inequalities and discrimination. This would help build a large constituency of actors and strengthen rights of children and communities.

It is essential to train staff and partners working in programmes on participation of children in order to involve them meaningfully. In this direction Save the Children has been providing capacity building to staff and partner NGOs on child participation. Some staff have also participated in the regional level workshops. Partners have received some training on aspects such as the United Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), participation of children, etc. In a programme, such as the Tsunami Rehabilitation Programme the team is relatively new to Save the Children as are many of our partners, so it is essential that in order to ensure that children's participation is integrated into our programme work, even or especially as we are working in a post emergency situation. With the size and speed the programme has developed we need to ensure that the large number of partners are equipped to meet the challenges in the field. So it had become vital to organise training on child participation. It is with idea that an *Introductory Capacity Building Workshop on Meaningful and Ethical Participation of Girls and Boys*, was organised in Nellore, Andhra Pradesh on 16-18 August 2006 as one of many such training to increase the understanding and practice of meaningful child participation in our programme work.

This training covered different aspects of participation i.e. participation as a right, a definition of child participation, child development, evolving capacities of children, practice standards, how to involve children in rehabilitation and reconstruction and some practical methods to facilitate qualitative participation of children.

We hope that the trainees at this workshop will further train the remaining staff and partners.

**Latha Caleb**

Director

Tsunami Rehabilitation Programme, India

Save the Children



# Foreword

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Children (UNCRC) is a clear opportunity for the government, NGO's and society at large to begin perceiving girls and boys as individuals with rights like any other citizen and not merely as objects of charity and philanthropy.

As a child rights-based organisation, Save the Children works towards ensuring that all citizens including children, have the right and the opportunity to participate and be involved in all decision-making that has an impact on their lives. Applying a child rights-based approach to programming means putting girls and boys (from various backgrounds) at the centre, recognising them as rights-holders and social actors, and recognising governments as primary duty-bearers accountable both to their citizens, including children, and to the international community.

Conscious action must be taken to actively include children's voices, concerns and recommendations in organisations, programmes, projects and activities to ensure that issues important to them do not get subsumed. Special consideration should be given to facilitate processes that enable all boys and girls (irrespective of age, gender, sex, disability, colour, ethnicity, HIV/AIDS status, sexual preference, etc.) to be involved in decision-making and to have an equal say. It is not only important to enable children to raise their voices and get involved in decision-making but also to enable them to work with key duty-bearers to act on their agenda and to engage them as partners in actions aimed at bringing changes in their lives.

Efforts need to be made to work with governments to create child friendly spaces, mechanisms and materials. Acting on a child priority agenda should be a key component while designing and implementing programmes on child rights.

Save the Children Sweden, Regional Office for South and Central Asia, provides key support to its Alliance colleagues and partners in the field. We cherish this collaboration to support the Save the Children Tsunami Rehabilitation Programme (TRP) in India and its staff and partners, on meaningful and ethical participation of girls and boys. We firmly believe that though we have been working on child participation for a long time, much more has yet to be done and we need to create a larger constituency of advocates of child rights and participation of girls and boys.

This workshop provides a way in which we can demonstrate Alliance collaboration meaningfully in order to build the capacities of our staff and partners as well as cross fertilise and learn together within the tsunami context.

**Ravi Karkara**

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Save the Children



# *Acknowledgements*

This report covers the three-day workshop on *Introductory Capacity Building Workshop on Meaningful and Ethical Participation of Girls and Boys* held in Nellore, Andhra Pradesh from 16-18 August 2006, for Save the Children TRP staff and its partner organisations.

The report does not merely present the workshop proceedings but is also intended to serve as a handy guide and reference book, enabling participants to refer back to the workshop contents. Participatory and interactive sessions including a combination of presentations, tools analysis exercises, group work and narratives were used in the workshop.

We thank all the participants for their help in making this a meaningful and successful workshop.

We would like to thank Ravi Karkara, Akmal Shareef and Aftab Ahmad for facilitating and also documenting this workshop. We would also like to thank RASS for organising field visits for the workshop participants.

We are grateful to Deborah, Ashish, Sudhir, Veera, Vijay, Siva and other colleagues at the Chennai office for assistance in organising the workshop.

**Manoj K**

Programme Manager  
Tsunami Rehabilitation Programme, India  
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# *Acronyms and Abbreviations*

<b>CBO</b>	Community Based Organisations
<b>CCVD</b>	Children's Committee for Village Development
<b>CEDAW</b>	Convention to Eliminate all forms of Discrimination Against Women
<b>CERD</b>	Convention to End Racial Discrimination
<b>CFO</b>	Common Frameworks of Operation
<b>CLI</b>	Child Led Initiative
<b>CLO</b>	Child Led Organisation
<b>CRP</b>	Child Rights Programming
<b>CSID</b>	Centre for Services and Information on Disability
<b>ILO</b>	International Labour Organisation
<b>PRSP</b>	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
<b>SWOC</b>	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Constraints
<b>SWRC</b>	Social Work and Research Centre
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>UNCRC</b>	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
<b>UNICEF</b>	United Nations Children's Fund

# Introduction and Concepts of Childhood

# 1

### *Participants' expectations from the two day workshop*

Participants worked in three groups to share their individual expectations. Following are the common expectations that emerged from the groups:

- Understand child participation and how to prepare adults in the community for child participation.
- Learn basic values and principles to work with children and also techniques for raising children's issues within the community.
- Learn ways to increase children's participation in all stages of programme cycle including present programmes.
- Be exposed to effective and innovative methods for child participation.

### **Objectives**

The objectives of the workshop and schedule (See Annexure 1 for details) were presented by the facilitator. All the participants agreed that their expectations would be covered under the workshop objectives.

By the end of the workshop, participants would:

- Be able to define and internalise the concept of meaningful and ethical standards for participation of girls and boys in programme cycle management.
- Have an increased understanding on the application of girls' and boys' participation rights in furthering child rights in programme management and in the organisational context.
- Be able to develop action plans for integrating girls' and boys' participation in their programme/project cycle.

## **1.1 Concepts of Childhood**

Participants were divided into three groups to discuss issues related to concepts of childhood as given in three case studies. This included studying possible positive cultural practices that would help the child reach his/her full potential and also negative cultural practices that might deter him/her from realising this potential. How can we listen to children's voices?

### Case 1

*Nancy is a six-year-old who lost her lower limbs in the tsunami. She has been going to a neighbourhood school but she faces humiliation and exclusion.*

Issues of childhood	Positive Cultural Practices	Listening to their voices
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Psychosocial</li> <li>• Trauma</li> <li>• Depression</li> <li>• Needs support from family members, friends</li> <li>• Emotional issues - needs care and support</li> <li>• Wants inclusion in peer group</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents, community and children</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Involve children's groups to promote inclusion (this is presently being done as part of the programmes where children with disabilities are encouraged to participate.)</li> </ul>
	<p>Negative Practices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do not allow girls to go to school</li> <li>• Festivals do not allow physically challenged girls to take part</li> <li>• Stigmatisation</li> </ul>	

## Case 2

*Aslam is 14 years old. Being the oldest he has to fend for the family and take care of his younger brother and sister. He lost his parents in the tsunami.*

Issues of childhood	Positive Cultural Practices	Listening to their voices
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Burden with responsibility</li> <li>Unable to enjoy childhood</li> <li>Exposed to abuse</li> <li>Child labour</li> <li>Psychological trauma</li> <li>Fear of the future for all three of them</li> </ul>	–	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>He may be listed to get support from the mosque</li> <li>As he is left to fend for himself his voice may not be heard</li> </ul>
	<b>Negative Practices</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Early marriage (this can be prevented through a community support mechanism)</li> <li>Issues of hegemonic forms of masculinities - boys susceptible to street violence</li> <li>Boys expected to be the bread winner</li> </ul>	

## Case 3

*Sita is a 16-year-old dalit girl. She often comes late to school as she has to assist her mother in household chores. The teacher has warned Sita many times. (Sita is thinking of leaving studies due to pressure of doing household chores.)*

Issues of childhood	Positive Cultural Practices	Listening to their voices
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No school, no food, no freedom of expression, no dream</li> <li>Pressure from household and from the school</li> <li>Vulnerable to abuse and exploitation</li> <li>Faces gender bias, and violence</li> <li>Dual discrimination of gender and caste</li> <li>Psychological trauma</li> <li>Not included in decision making</li> <li>Restricted relationships with peer group</li> <li>Exploited at home and outside</li> <li>Her thoughts are given no priority</li> <li>No control on her life</li> </ul>	–	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No, her voice has not been heard</li> </ul>
	<b>Negative Practices</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Early marriage</li> <li>Dowry system</li> <li>Girls are not allowed to go out</li> <li>Preference for boys</li> </ul> <p><i>What can be done:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with community and Panchayat on ending Gender and caste based discrimination</li> <li>Improve livelihoods option for her</li> <li>Garner support from peer groups</li> </ul>	

There are probably as many versions of childhood as there are children in the world. Despite the demands of our various cultures, children have individual experiences, ideas and capabilities. It is from culture that girls and boys learn what is expected of them. For example, take the case of gender roles. Children of both sexes are considered subordinate to adults in nearly all known contemporary societies, both by adults and by themselves. Children, especially girls, are expected to be obedient and submissive to adults.

### **Legal Age**

Legal coming of age - often related to the entitlement to vote - may not coincide with cultural perceptions of maturation or with perceptions of what a child is. Perceptions of childhood may also differ due to factors such as age, gender, disability, class, etc. A young working person is considered an adult at an earlier age than a young person who is studying. Girls usually take on adult responsibilities earlier than boys. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) defines a child as anyone less than 18 years of age, but it also recognises that national law may put legal majority at an earlier age.

### **How Children Learn**

The way parents or caretakers view their responsibilities towards children closely relates to how they conceptualise the child and his/her possible innate capacities. In the same culture perceptions may differ considerably between boys and girls, and may depend on wealth or poverty as well as age. Images of children as blank surfaces or as vessels, which adults have a responsibility to inscribe or fill with culturally prescribed perceptions of

morality and acceptable models of behaviour, are widespread in all parts of the world.

From a Western perspective<sup>1</sup>, childhood is ideally free of responsibility, full of play and happiness; and small children are innocent and not capable of making rational decisions. This Western concept is increasingly becoming globalised and being presented as "universal". Some societies consider boys and girls to be able to develop their inborn abilities to sit, walk, talk and behave properly without any particular instruction or help, while others emphasise the importance of more or less firm instructions and physical reprimands to help young children grow into responsible adults. In many countries discipline and control are considered necessary elements to maintain the social, political, and religious status quo within civil society including the family, as well as within the State structure.

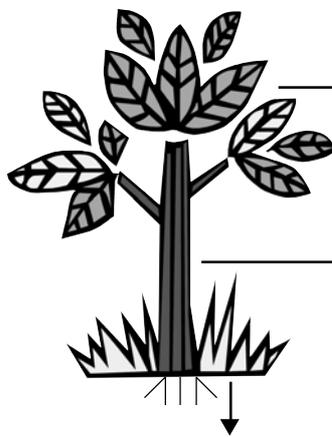
### **Culture**

Culture consists of values, attitudes, norms, ideas, internalised habits and perceptions as well as the concrete forms or expression they take. These include social roles, structures and relationships, codes of behaviour and explanations for behaviour that are to a significant extent shared among a group of people. Culture is learned and internalised. Culture influences the actions and interpretations of circumstances by boys and girls, men and women; at the same time the content of culture is influenced by people's compliance or challenge. Culture also changes due to outside influences. Culture is never completely uniform or entirely agreed upon by everyone concerned.

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<sup>1</sup> The two main theoretical traditions in child psychology are those of learning theorists and developmentalists. The former see the child as a blank sheet to be filled with instructions and experiences while the latter see children as pre-programmed human beings whose true nature would evolve if left in freedom. The modern Western view sees the potential for development as written in the genes of each human being, but its actual realisation depends on the environment and supportive social interaction.

## 1.2 The Tree of Socialisation<sup>2</sup>



**Leaves and Fruit:** The leaves and fruit depict peoples' attitudes in society and in this case adult behaviour towards children, which is mostly oppressive. This is transmitted into a seed that germinates into a new tree which will continue to oppress and discriminate against children due to age, gender, ethnicity, disability, etc.

**Trunk:** The trunk holds together social institutions (family, religion, education, etc.) that transfer social values, norms and belief. Most social institutions see children as learners of adult behaviour, and as a result give little or no importance to girls' and boys' voices.

**Roots:** The roots hold the society's norms, values and beliefs that shape and define the social fabric of people's behaviour towards each other, including the sharing of resources. These norms are generally patriarchal, putting children in a 'powerless' position vis-à-vis adults, thus excluding and discriminating against girls. Children are not expected to participate in family or community decision-making processes.

Girls and boys learn culture while also contributing to its continuity and its transformation. Socialisation ideas and practices are a key part of culture; adults use culture to explain or justify child-rearing and socialisation practices, even practices involving unequal treatment such as gender discrimination and abuse.

Gender, as a social construction rather than a biological given, differs from culture to culture, and changes over time. Efforts to bring about desired behavioural change must, therefore, be directed at all parts of the tree. Behaviour should become more inclusive, participatory, democratic and gender sensitive - not only towards children but towards adults as well.

Positive beliefs and norms that recognise girls and boys as rights-holders will lead to

the development and evolution of child-friendly social institutions that are gender sensitive, inclusive and respectful of children's voices, institutions which encourage children's participation in decision-making processes. This in turn will result in a more democratic society that discourages all forms of oppression and discrimination.

Children who are sexually abused, for example, will be unable to share their trauma with their parents, teachers or relevant authorities, if the perception and attitudes of these adults towards children discourages children from expressing their feelings or experiences, either positive or negative. Adults who value children's opinions create a more inclusive environment, one that enables children to share and express themselves without fearing oppression or ridicule.

<sup>2</sup> Ravi Karkara and Lena Karlsson (2003). *Socialisation for Encouraging Children's Participation*. Save the Children, Bangladesh.

Patriarchal values and a power structure which results in different socialisation processes for boys and girls, lead to girls and boys adopting different coping mechanisms and manifesting the impact of abuse and trauma in different ways. Both will experience low self-esteem and a psychosocial impact. Girls tend to internalise and develop more self-destructive behaviour patterns, while boys may externalise behaviour at the risk of becoming violent. A family or social environment that encourages children to express themselves will lead to their developing more resilient types of behaviour and will enable them to emerge from the trauma as resilient individuals.

Girls, who are oppressed and discriminated against, lack the opportunity to express themselves in family or society decision-making processes and have fewer opportunities and control over resources. Continuing to be oppressed in adolescence and adulthood, they develop low self-esteem and a high likelihood of perpetuating gender stereotypes that will reproduce gender stereotypical behaviour in their own children. Gender stereotypical expectations diminish the opportunities of both boys and girls to develop according to their potential. Societies that encourage diversity benefit from the dynamics and richness of different peoples' experiences and become more inclusive.



# Child Rights Programming

## 2.1 Rights and Needs

The facilitator asked the participants to assume that they all have reached an island where there is nothing to eat or any other material. The wider world/their communities/families does not know their whereabouts. They had to now identify their needs and list them.

Their list included the following *water, food, clothes, fire and shelter.*

### Definition of a Right

A right is a claim, an entitlement. Corresponding obligations also exist to respect, protect and fulfil individual rights. While rights are based on human needs, all needs are NOT rights.

Other Approaches	Right Based Approach
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Action is voluntary or optional.</li> <li>• People have needs which should be met and these can be prioritised.</li> <li>• Poor people deserve help as the object of charity.</li> <li>• Some people may have to be left out (i.e. a target can be less than 100 per cent).</li> <li>• People affected by development work are passive beneficiaries; they can be invited to participate in order to improve the effectiveness of programmes or projects.</li> <li>• Some needs may not be recognised in some cultures.</li> <li>• Power structures are too difficult to change and pragmatic ways need to be found to work within them.</li> <li>• Development is a technocratic process and should be led by technical 'experts' who know best.</li> <li>• There is a hierarchy of needs and some needs are nearly always more important than others.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Action is mandatory.</li> <li>• People have legally established claims and entitlements.</li> <li>• Poor people are entitled to help as the subjects of rights.</li> <li>• All people have the same right to fulfil their potential and should be assisted to do so (i.e. the target is 100 per cent).</li> <li>• People affected by development work are active participants by right.</li> <li>• Rights are universal and inalienable; they cannot be diluted or taken away.</li> <li>• Power structures that block progress in realising human rights must be effectively changed.</li> <li>• Development actors must empower rights holders to claim their rights and be involved in public decision-making.</li> <li>• Rights are indivisible and interdependent, though in any situation some practical prioritisation may be required.</li> </ul>

### ***Human Rights***

Human rights are the rights possessed by all persons, by virtue of their common humanity, to live a life of freedom and dignity. Human rights give all people moral claims on the behaviour of individuals and on the design of social arrangements. Human rights are universal, inalienable and indivisible. They express human beings' deepest commitments to ensuring that all persons are secure in their enjoyment of the goods and freedom necessary for dignified living.

Human rights are universal legal guarantees protecting individuals and groups against actions and omissions that affect their freedom and human dignity. They are based on respect for the dignity and worth of each person both as an individual and as a member of society as a whole, a member of a community or of a group. These values cover those qualities of life to which everyone is entitled, regardless of age, gender, race, religion, disability, sexual preference, nationality or other factors. The responsibility for ensuring that rights are respected, protected and fulfilled is initially with national governments, but also concerns all other elements of society from the level of international institutions down to individuals, their families and communities.

Human rights encompass values found in all cultures and religious and ethical traditions. They provide a guide for common standards of conduct that can be expected from governments and societies.

### ***Principles of Human Rights***

From the definition of Rights and Human Rights, four specific principles can be derived. These are:

#### **1. Universality**

All people have equal rights everywhere at all times. Rights are not applied differently for people of different cultures or traditions. Non-discrimination is at the heart of the concept of human rights.

#### **2. Accountability**

When a state party ratifies a human rights instrument it becomes accountable to all citizens, including children, and to the international community.

The state party as the primary duty bearer has a three-fold responsibility to:

- *Respect* - to do nothing to deprive people of their rights, and to put adequate legislation in place;
- *Protect* - to prevent rights violations, and to keep third persons from violating rights;
- *Fulfil* - to take deliberate actions to ensure rights and to help individuals realise them.

#### **3. Indivisibility**

Human Rights are all indivisible, interdependent and interrelated. No group of rights is more important than another.

#### **4. Participation**

Human Rights include the right of the individual to participate in political and cultural life. States are obliged to encourage participation by people in all spheres.

## ***2.2 Introduction to Child Rights Programming***

Participants recapped the basic definition of Child Rights Programming (CRP) and related concepts in a plenary session before going into the details.

**Child:** Every boy and girl under eighteen years of age unless majority is obtained by law at an earlier age.

**Rights:** Defined as international human rights laws applicable to children, set out primarily in the UNCRC.

**Programming:** Planning, implementation, monitoring and management of a set of activities towards a defined goal.

*Child Rights Programming is the use of the principles of child rights to assess, plan, manage, implement and monitor programs with the overall goal of strengthening the rights of the child as defined in international law.*

**Child Rights Programming** is a framework and approach for analysis, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. CRP brings together a range of ideas, concept and experiences related to both child rights and child development into one framework.

#### **Goal of Child Rights Programming**

The overall goal of Child Rights Programming is to improve the position of children so that all girls and boys can fully enjoy their rights, and to build societies that acknowledge and respect children's rights.

#### **Childs Rights Programming Principles**

The following principles underpin all work on CRP:

- The principle of **indivisibility** of rights
- The principle of **universality** of rights
- The four general principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child:
  - The right **not to be discriminated** against
  - The **best interests** of the child
  - The right to **survival and development**
  - The **right to be heard**
- The **principle of children as holders of rights**
- The **principle of duty-bearers**

## **2.3 The Duty Bearers**

If children are the holders of rights and have a legal entitlement for their rights to be secured, then those responsible for delivering these rights must be identified and made accountable. Although governments are often seen as the primary duty-bearers, and indeed have the responsibility to ensure that rights are secured, other adult members of society – both individuals and groups – are also duty bearers. They too have an active role to play in ensuring that the rights of the young people in their care are secured.

This concept of duty bearers is represented in the following diagram detailing those communities of interest which influence children's and young people's lives, and which, therefore, constitute the duty bearers' different obligations towards children.

## **2.4 Applying a Rights-Based Approach to Programming**

Applying a Rights-Based Approach to Programming involves the following:

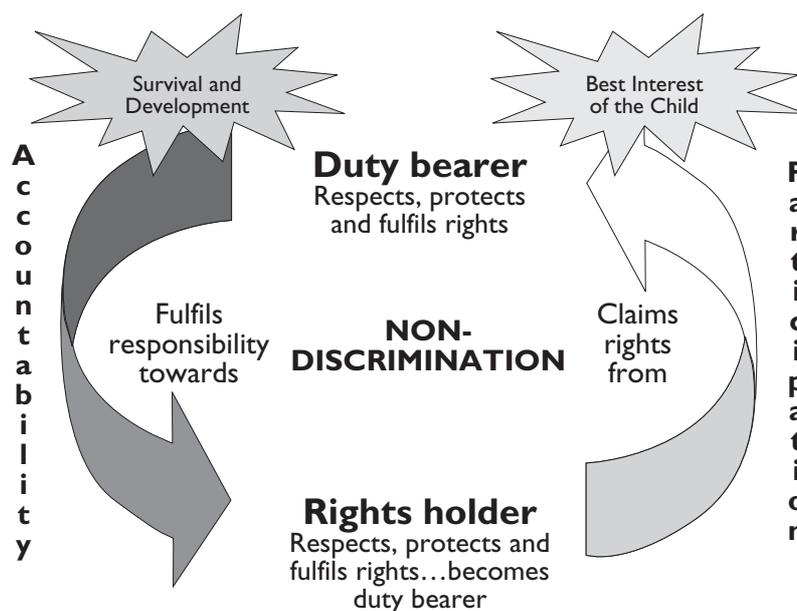
- Putting children at the centre, recognising them as **rights-holders** and social actors.
- Recognising governments as primary **duty-bearers** accountable to their citizens – including children – and to the international community.

- Recognising parents and families as **primary care-givers**, protectors and guides – and supporting them in these roles.
- Giving priority to children and to creating a **child friendly environment**.
- Being **gender sensitive** and seeking inclusive solutions that involve a focus on **those boys and girls who are at risk and who are discriminated against**.
- Addressing **unequal power structures** (class, sex, ethnicity, age, caste, religion, etc.).
- Holding a **holistic vision** of the rights of the child while making strategic choices and taking specific actions.
- Setting **goals** in terms of the **fulfilment of rights**.
- Aiming at sustainable results for children by **focusing** not only on the immediate, but also on the **root causes of problems**.
- Using **participatory and empowering approaches**, particularly with regard to children.
- Building **partnerships and alliances** for the promotion of child rights.
- Counting on **international co-operation**.
- Focusing on **those** who are most at risk and discriminated against.
- Taking a holistic perspective that requires a **multi-sectoral response**.
- Providing a long-term goal that is clearly set out in **international legal frameworks** that are shared by governments, donors and civil society.
- Encouraging **legal and other reforms**, such as regular monitoring mechanisms that create a much greater likelihood of sustainable change.

#### Key learning

- First time learnt rights and duty framework - accountability and participation.
- Difference between needs and rights - all rights based on needs but not all needs are rights - it is associated with claims and entitlement.
- Understood duty and rights holders cycle.
- Child centred approach and child focused approach.
- Changes in children's lives.

### Right-Responsibility-Claim<sup>3</sup>



<sup>3</sup> Theis Joachim, *Promoting Rights-Based Approaches: Experiences and Ideas from Asia and the Pacific*, Save the Children, 2004

# Concepts of Inclusion and Participation

# 3

### 3.1 The 'Bindi' Game

Participants worked in groups and played the experiential *Bindi Game* with black, maroon and golden 'bindis'. The game was used as an energizer where the participants were divided into three

groups using coloured stickers or *bindis*. The golden *bindis* were least in number and represented the powerful in the society, while the maroon denoted those with less power while the powerless or the most discriminated group was the black group.

Feelings of Black Group	Feelings of Maroon Group	Feelings of Golden Group
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No attention</li> <li>Ignored</li> <li>Humiliated</li> <li>Embarrassed</li> <li>Self-esteem low</li> <li>Tried to force attention by physical grabbing</li> <li>Powerless</li> <li>Needed more strength</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unity</li> <li>Understanding</li> <li>Tried to achieve the goal</li> <li>Seeking others' attention and ignoring others</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attractive</li> <li>Everyone after them</li> <li>Extraordinary</li> <li>Proud</li> <li>People tried to break their unity</li> <li>Can do anything</li> <li>Can protect themselves from others</li> <li>Sought after by others</li> </ul>
<i>Lower class or caste</i>	<i>Middle class or caste</i>	<i>Upper class or caste</i>

The groups were then asked to reflect on the following questions:

Discriminated children	Implications of discrimination against children	How we can promote inclusion through our work
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Physically challenged</li> <li>HIV/AIDS</li> <li>Orphans</li> <li>Street children</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inferiority complex</li> <li>Stigmatisation</li> <li>Vulnerability to get abuse</li> <li>Humiliation</li> <li>Isolation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Treating them as normal children</li> <li>Life skills education</li> <li>Encouraging participation of these children in various forums</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Girl children</li> <li>Caste - dalits and tribes</li> <li>Disabled children</li> <li>Children in conflict with the law</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of education, early marriage, etc.</li> <li>Lack of education</li> <li>Less education and vulnerable to abuse</li> <li>Stigmatised</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community support</li> <li>Awareness to parents and community on inclusion and child rights</li> <li>Child protection education</li> <li>Advocacy of government and child friendly policies</li> </ul>

Discriminated children	Implications of discrimination against children	How we can promote inclusion through our work
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disabled</li> <li>• Girl children</li> <li>• Caste groups</li> <li>• Small age</li> <li>• HIV/AIDS</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overall development hampered</li> <li>• Fear</li> <li>• Risk of abuse</li> <li>• Not being heard</li> <li>• Low self esteem</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spreading awareness on child participation and child rights</li> <li>• Capacity building of children and communities</li> <li>• Platform and developing mechanism for children</li> <li>• Building constituency for children for their protection</li> <li>• Opportunities for children to advocate their rights</li> <li>• Equal environment for all</li> </ul>

### 3.2 Definition and Reasons for Discrimination

**Discrimination**<sup>4</sup> - Treating an individual or group of people unfairly because of who or what they are - is found in all societies. Those with power treat other less powerful groups unjustly in some way. Social exclusion and poor access to services and resources are common forms of discrimination.

Children are often discriminated against simply because they are children. Many children face further discrimination due to their own or their parents'/guardians' disability, class, gender, etc. Non-discrimination is an essential principle of all human rights treaties. Some treaties focus solely on discrimination. These include the 1965 International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and the 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, both of which cover children.

#### The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 2:

State 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.

State 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.

<sup>4</sup> Lena Karlsson (2002), *CRP trainings*. Save the Children, Bangladesh

The principle of non-discrimination is relevant to all substantive articles in the Convention, including those relating to health, education, standard of living, or protection of vulnerable groups of children. The UNCRC is the only Convention that explicitly mentions 'disability' as a reason for discrimination.

### **Categories of Children Discriminated against: Reasons and methods of discrimination**

The Committee on the Rights of the Child has identified more than 40 categories of children who have experienced discrimination.

Some of the forms or bases for discrimination/children vulnerable to discrimination are: gender, disability, race, ethnic origin, language, children not registered at birth, children born a twin, orphans, children affected by armed conflict, working children, etc.

A variety of different factors contribute to discrimination. For example:

- Prejudice towards and fear of an unfamiliar people; the idea that one ethnic group threatens society or the jobs of another group, or that a specific group may lose its cultural identity;
- Superstition or religious or cultural taboos, such as the belief that a child's disability derives from a curse;
- Unequal power structures in society; for example boys often being more valued than girls in patriarchal societies, and poor children having fewer opportunities than rich children in all societies.

Children learn to discriminate against other children mainly from older children and

According to the Human Rights Committee "the term discrimination should be understood to imply any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference which is based on any ground such as race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status and which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by all persons, on an equal footing of all rights and freedoms".

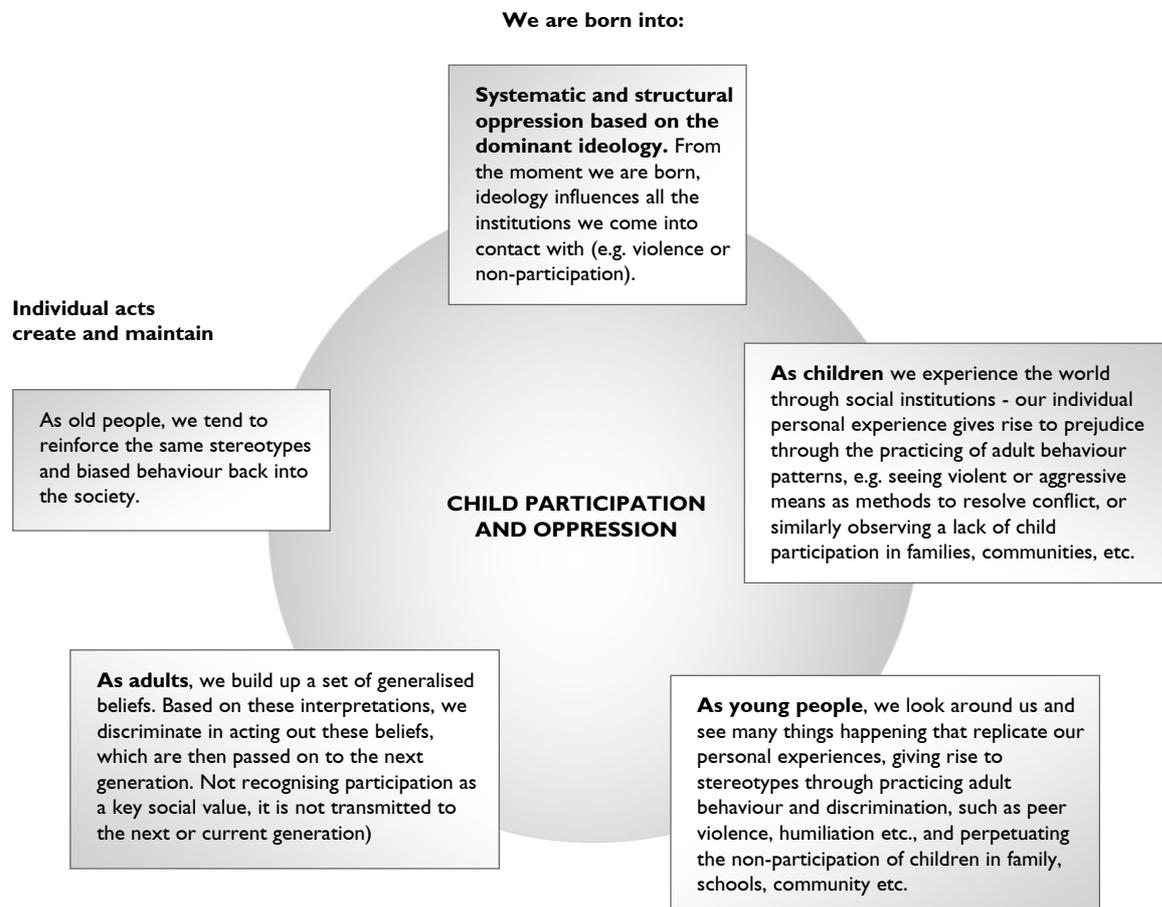
adults. (See the Cycle of Oppression ahead) Prejudice and discrimination are attitudes and behaviour learned from adult role models such as parents and teachers.

Discrimination tends to be catalysed by economic and social disparities. During times of pressure, hardship and uncertainty, feelings of powerlessness can lead to the identification of scapegoats. Hierarchical and segregated societies can create mentalities of 'we and them' that tend toward xenophobia and racism.

Discrimination can be practiced by governments, by adults against children, by one community against another, by one group of children against another. It can result from active direct and deliberate action or it can happen unconsciously.

Norms, values and attitudes about gender, ethnicity, disability and other forms of differences begin in childhood. Many children grow up aware that as children they have an inferior status. Since this diminishes their capacity to challenge the abuse they experience, they are likely to transmit it to the next generation in a cycle of oppression and exclusion.

### 3.3 The Cycle of Oppression and Exclusion<sup>5</sup>



Children are born into societies that practice oppression and exclusion. As a result they learn and practice prejudicial behaviour during childhood. They call children names, bully and exhibit targeted violent behaviour, perhaps toward minority children or girls. As they grow into adulthood and continue acting out stereotypes, this becomes their stereotypical behaviour. A cycle of oppression and exclusion results in transmitting the same practices to the next generation.

Girls and boys learn traditional roles and behaviour at an early age. Boys, for example, learn they should be active, not cry or show feelings. Family and peer groups often play a crucial role in the socialisation process. Traditional gender roles and relations are also reproduced and perpetuated by media, religious and traditional leaders, the private sector through advertisements and stereotyped toys, and by educational systems that incorporate gender stereotypes into

<sup>5</sup> Ravi Karkara (2003). *Life Cycle Approach To Child Participation*. A paper presented at the Corporal Punishment Global Save the Children Meeting in Cairo.

teaching material. In relation to sexuality, girls and boys often receive different messages. Adolescent boys frequently feel pressured to perform while girls learn to be passive. Pregnancy outside marriage is often considered a catastrophe for a girl, and some cultures closely link female virginity to male honour.

Gender roles and relations, ideas and perceptions are reproduced from one generation to another. Societies' views and values are internalised, shaping our attitudes, perceptions, behaviour and decisions later in life. Men and women are constrained by these perceptions; they can prevent people from developing to their full potential and making the choices they would like to make. Such perceptions also influence the kinds of decisions boys and girls can take concerning their own lives, the games they play and the professions they want to pursue and are allowed to choose. This has an impact on their relations with the opposite sex as well.

### ***Breaking the Cycle***

The big question is "Can we break this cycle of exclusion?" and the simple answer is "Yes!" By addressing the root causes of

discrimination and by perpetuating inclusion and respect for rights as a value, any society can break the cycle. The result will be societies characterised by greater equality and respect, and less violence.

In addressing root causes we must identify and address different power structures. These could be patriarchal structures or power structures based on age, caste, class, etc. Save the Children programs often tend to primarily address immediate causes, forgetting to look at root causes. Investing in children's participation processes will contribute to addressing the root causes of child right violations.

In order to promote equality and integrate it into our programming we first have to identify which groups of children are discriminated in our society, by whom, and what the underlying causes are. We need to understand how gender and other inequalities are reproduced from one generation to another. We also have to identify and overcome resistance towards change. We should not forget to focus on positive aspects of social values and norms and use them to challenge the negative ones.



## Concept of Participation of Girls and Boys

### 4.1 Children's Participation Activities and their Types

#### *Long-Line Short-Line: Experiential Game*

The facilitator divided the participants into two equal groups and asked them to form the shortest possible straight line. They used their little fingers and made the shortest line. From each group two participants were blind folded and their hands tied. Next, the facilitator asked them to make the longest possible line. But at this stage, one participant from each group was blindfolded. It was interesting that both groups ignored these two blindfolded participants and continued to make lines.

The facilitator then asked them to make the longest possible line using all the resources in the group. Interestingly, although the participants used their shoe laces, belt, shirts, 'chunni' or scarf, pen, currency notes, etc. yet even after many reminders 'to use all resources' they failed to bring the blindfolded participants into their group. Frustrated, the two blindfolded participants finally found their way into the game after demanding that they be involved.

In the reflection after the exercise, the blindfolded participants complained that they felt lost and that the team was too busy to pay attention to them. After finding their team mates, they tried giving ideas and offered help but no one cared.

While analysing the game, the facilitators emphasised the need to understand the distinction between participatory processes and participation. It was highlighted that the game was fun, experiential in nature and participatory but it did not enlist participation of all participants. Participation occurred but it was *not inclusive*.

Using this experiential game, the facilitator introduced the concepts of quality of participation and practice standards in child participation developed by Save the Children.

'Participation' is used by Save the Children and others to mean children and young people thinking for themselves, expressing their views effectively, and interacting in a positive way with other people. It means involving girls and boys in the decisions and decision making processes that affect their lives, the lives of their families and the community and larger society in which they live. For Save the Children, the core purpose of children's participation is to empower them as individuals and members of civil society (citizens). It gives them the opportunity to exercise their citizenship rights and to influence the actions and decisions that affect their lives.

**Some examples of children's participation shared by the participants**

- Bal Panchayats have been formed in all the project villages. A girl from one of the villages which is an island, has to come to the mainland for higher education. She is teased by boys while going to school everyday. The issue was taken up by the Bal Panchayat, which suggested the girl talk to her parents which she had already done. The Bal Panchayat finally approached the Village Panchayat and the girl's family and the problem was addressed.
- Children are making their voices heard in the children's group meetings and preparing their agenda. They are taking part in the decision making process and addressing the agenda effectively.
- Save the Children has been implementing radio programmes in Andaman and Nicobar Islands since October 2005. It organised a consultation in which children from different islands of the Union Territory participated. The children discussed the quality of the programme and the issues/programmes they wanted to air. The issues were changed accordingly.
- In Nagapattinam district of Tamil Nadu, a core committee on child rights has been formed by the district government. After lot of deliberation four children have joined the group. World Vision distributed clothes in some district schools, which never reached the children. A girl child, who is a core committee member, raised the issue asked the committee to address it.
- In Kanyakumari District of Tamil Nadu, a children's group approached the Village Panchayat to install street lights as they were facing problems while going to their tuition classes late in the evening. The Village Panchayat turned a deaf ear to their request. The children's group decided to take their own initiative and installed lamps in each pole. This action motivated the community members who collectively approached the Panchayat and forced them to take action.
- In one of the CROP Villages a girl was sexually abused by her teacher. She shared this incident with her children's club members. The club members approached the village watchdog committee members who, along with the children, urged the Parents Teachers Association to take action.

**4.2 Development and Child Participation**

A community can be considered developed to the extent that it ensures that its entire population, including girls, boys and young

people, are in a position to participate and shape a life of dignity. Young people and their communities do not develop by being passive, by simply observing or being told the 'truths' of development. It is only through participation that they develop skills, build competencies, form aspirations, gain confidence and attain valuable resources. Participation varies according to one's evolving capacities, but *all* children and young people can participate in different ways from the earliest age.

It is important to note, however, that the participation of young people depends on the skills that they have based on their development stage. A 5 year old child's capacity to participate is definitely different from that of a 15 year old adolescent.

Competence is learned through experience, not magically endowed at a certain age. Maturity and growth are an ongoing process, and achieved through

participation. This is a virtuous cycle. The more one participates meaningfully, the more experienced, competent and confident one becomes, which in turn enables more effective participation.

Children and young people can participate in multiple *geographical settings*, from the personal to the global, and in a range of *institutional settings*, from the household and school to the municipal council and international conference. However, while all settings are likely to have some relevance to adolescents, they do not all have an equal bearing. Participation that is embedded in the major institutions and processes of young person's everyday reality is more likely to have a deeper impact and be more sustainable in the long run than if it were to be located in a more remote setting. Homes and schools may be the most significant settings for a majority of young people because their relationships with family members, teachers and fellow students are likely to be particularly regular and influential. However, for young people living on the street, this is unlikely to be the case and young people's own organisations may be more important.<sup>6</sup>

Although **child development theories** provide guidelines on the usual abilities of young people based on their particular stage of development, their capacity to participate nevertheless depends on the abilities they have developed as a consequence of the context in which they live. For instance, a nine-year-old working child may be in a better position to make decisions regarding his or her future life than a child of the same age who has suffered sexual abuse or other kinds of trauma.<sup>7</sup> Due to social structures, power relations, discrimination, gender roles and

stereotypes, girls and boys of various backgrounds express themselves and participate in different ways.

Children's and young people's participation does not only mean organised mobilisation of children for an event or into a forum, club, union or organisation for collective bargaining – it is also the child's individual right to be consulted and to participate in decisions affecting his or her life. **Belief in democratic principles is an important ingredient for ensuring participation. It is also important to address all forms of discrimination and various stereotypes (based on gender, disability, social background, etc) which prevent children from participating on an equal basis.** A process that encourages participation of all children will also educate children and young people about democratic functioning.

Participants were introduced to the definition of children's participation in the Save the Children child participation paper. Most agreed that this was perhaps the most apt definition.

### **4.3 Save the Children's Position on Children's Participation<sup>8</sup>**

There is no universally accepted definition of 'children's participation'.

In the broadest sense, boys and girls obviously participate in their families, their communities and their societies in a very wide variety of ways (for example, as care givers, workers, consumers and through their involvement in sports and cultural activities).

<sup>6</sup> Rajani, R. Rakesh, *Participation Rights of Adolescent: A Strategic Approach*, A discussion paper for UNICEF, 2001

<sup>7</sup> ECPAT International and International Young People's Action against Sexual Exploitation of Children, *Standing up for Ourselves - A Study on the Concepts and Practices of Young People's Rights to Participation Manila, 1999*

<sup>8</sup> Save the Children's position on Children's Participation (2004)

More narrowly, 'participation' is used by those working with children and young people to mean children and young people thinking for themselves, expressing their views effectively, and interacting in a positive way with other people. It means involving boys and girls in the decisions, which affect their lives, the lives of their community and the larger society in which they live.

For Save the Children, the core purpose of this participation by children is to secure or protect their own rights or to claim them for a wider group of children. Children do this in a number of ways:

- Through **speaking out/ expressing** - for example, to expose abuse, to make a complaint about services, to raise awareness of a problem or to press for a change in policy.
- Through their **involvement in decision-making** - for example, in assessing needs, designing projects or programmes, sharing in school management, drawing up policy guidelines, developing legislation or evaluating services.
- Through **practical action** - for example, through peer education, setting up a child-led organisation or initiative, carrying out research or preparing a children's radio programme.

It is essential that this participation is voluntary and therefore **Save the Children's definition of children's participation** is:

**Children's Participation is children freely undertaking involvement in speaking out, decision-making or action, aimed at benefiting themselves or other children through claiming or securing their rights'.**

#### **4.4 Justification for Working with Children and Young People**

**"Children's participation is not just about giving young people a voice but getting adults to have an ear"**

**– Roger Hart<sup>9</sup>**

In all societies, young people have a lower status because of their age. In some cultures, young people are considered as property of their parents. They are expected to always obey their parents and elders. Hence, until they reach the age of maturity, they have no say in their own upbringing and much less in family, community and society matters.

The importance of young people's participation is reasonable from various points of view. First and foremost, children and young people are fully functioning members of society, and as such, they are entitled to the rights accorded to adult members of the society. Young people's participation is also necessary from the point of view of efficiency in social development projects (Singh and Trivedy 1996). Young people's knowledge of local systems can contribute greatly in the various stages of the project cycle.<sup>10</sup>

When children and young people participate in matters that affect their lives,

- They can contribute and enhance the quality of decisions made regarding issues at hand.
- They can gain useful insights in their participation in the decision making process.
- Their capacities and capabilities can be developed so that they can gain more control over decisions that shape their lives.

<sup>9</sup> Roger Hart, Children's Participation: *The Theory and Practice of Involving Young Citizens in Community Development and Environmental Care*, UNICEF, 1997

<sup>10</sup> ECPAT International and International Young People's Action against Sexual Exploitation of Children, *Standing up for Ourselves - A Study on the Concepts and Practices of Young People's Rights to Participation*, 1999

Moreover, children and young people's participation can yield benefits not only for the young people themselves but also for the community and the development agency. It is also important to advocate for the recognition and acceptance of the idea of young people's participation in the family, community, society and in global concerns.

#### **Forum for Children's Participation**

The participation of children and young people can take place in a variety of **geographical settings**, from the personal to the global, and in a range of **institutional settings**, from their households and schools to the municipal council or at the international level.

However, while all settings are likely to have some relevance to children and young people's lives, they do not all have an equal bearing. Participation that is embedded in the major institutions and processes of a young person's everyday reality, is more likely to have a deeper impact and be more sustainable than if it is located in a more remote setting. Homes and schools may be the most significant settings for a majority of young people because they spend many hours in these settings, and because their relationships with family members, teachers and fellow students are likely to be regular and influential. However, for young people living on the street, this is unlikely to be the case, and juvenile justice and organisations serving young people may be more important.

Children's and young people's participation does not only involve the mobilisation of children for an event or into a forum, club, union or organisation for collective bargaining. Their involvement can go beyond collectivism and on to individual rights. They can be consulted and can participate in decisions

regarding their own welfare. Participation takes place in an environment where there is democracy. Democratic principles ensure participation. A process that encourages participation will also educate children and young people about democratic functioning.

#### **Role of Adults in Encouraging Children's Participation**

Adults (parents, teachers, development workers, etc.) play an important role in supporting children's participation. They can do this through:

- Encouraging children's involvement
- Sharing information
- Modelling participatory behaviour
- Using positive discipline techniques
- Developing the skills needed for participation
- Creating a safe environments for children to practice participation

Boys and girls must understand that along with rights come obligations. They are rights holders and duty bearers. This means that as they have the right to have their rights respected and protected, they also have the duty to respect others' rights, and this includes other children's as well as adults' rights. Children are capable of being cruel to each other, and this is where adults have the responsibility to build children's capacity to recognise and avoid this. Adults need to create mechanisms to protect children who are being abused or who report abuse, and hold abusers accountable in an appropriate fashion that still respects basic human rights.

#### **4.5 Children's Participation in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child<sup>11</sup>**

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) could be considered

<sup>11</sup> Singh and Ravi Karkara, *Child in Globalising India - Chapter on Child Participation*, HAQ Centre for Child Rights, 2003

as a milestone in the emerging discourse on child rights in general and child participation in particular as it provides a comprehensive framework for children's rights. It does not mention the term 'child participation' explicitly but the tone and tenor of its articles advocate a proactive role for children in matters concerning them, upholding an independent personality of the child.

Article 12 is very radical in its formulation and has far-reaching implications. It recognises children and young people as holders of rights as well as beings with developmental vulnerability, need and potential. It demands reconsideration of the status of children and young people in societies as well as of the nature of adult-child relationships. It requires that we

recognise the value of children and young people's own experience, views and concerns and that we listen and respond with respect to what they say. The UNCRC is viewed not merely as an international law but also as a comprehensive framework for action.

#### **4.6 Child Participation from a Rights-based Approach**

Children's participation is one of the core principles of CRP. The lack of children's participation, e.g. unequal power relations between adults and children, lack of recognition of children as social actors, patriarchal structures and discrimination due to factors such as gender, sexual preference, ability, religion, ethnicity, social

##### **The Child Rights Programming principles:**

- **Article 2:** non-discrimination,
  - **Article 3:** best interests of the child,
  - **Article 4:** accountability, and
  - **Article 6:** survival and development
- are the core principles for ensuring child participation.

Recognition of children as subjects of rights is also expressed explicitly or implicitly, in a number of articles in the Convention:

- **Article 5:** parental provision of direction and guidance in accordance with respect for children's evolving capacity,
- **Article 9:** non-separation of children from families without the right to make their views known,
- **Article 13:** the right to freedom of expression,
- **Article 14:** the right to freedom of conscience, thought and religion,
- **Article 15:** the right to freedom of association,
- **Article 16:** the right to privacy,
- **Article 17:** the right to information,
- **Article 29:** the right to education that promotes respect for human rights and democracy.
- **Article 31:** the right to play and leisure
- **Article 12** - one of the general principles of the UNCRC – articulates the real essence of the idea of children's participation.

It affirms that children and young people have the right to express their views freely in matters affecting them and that their views should be given due weight in accordance with their age and maturity, for which they should be provided the opportunity to be heard in any judicial and administrative proceeding affecting the child, either directly, or through representatives or an appropriate body, in a manner consistent with the procedural rules of national law.

and economical background are also the key root causes for various forms of rights violations. For example, girls and boys who report on child sexual abuse are seldom listen to or believed. (See refresher on CRP).

While working on child participation from a rights perspective it is important to see which children are participating, who are they representing and what background they come from. How do we ensure that no groups of children are left out? How do we mobilise and empower all children to speak out? Do our organisations act on children's agenda? Do we address the root causes such as patriarchal structures? How do we strengthen government's accountability to act on children's priorities made by girls and boys in various arenas (forums, research, etc.)? It is not enough to encourage children in programming, but how do we promote children's participation in the overall society and in particular families? We need to address the larger issue of participation in society like participation of staff in our own organisations. We need to strengthen democratic principles and decision-making in our own agencies.

The workshop facilitator stressed the need for quality participation/greater degree of participation/real participation of children. The entire purpose of participation is diluted if and when adults decide the structure in the name of participation. We should always keep the best interests of child in mind. Participation however should not be mechanical and idealistic. Sometimes it is necessary for adults to facilitate the process.

Some points for reflection were placed before the participants:

- Who decides actually?
- Guided/Forceful participation?
- Structure of participation?
- Evaluation?
- Collective development of indicators?
- Structure of participation?

Child participation is also about adult participation. Both of them should compliment and supplement each other, otherwise it may become mechanical and a farce. Participation is an ongoing process. Adults also have to bear the responsibility.

Participation is central to the developmental approach, for several reasons. Participation itself is development, in that development is "a process of expanding the real freedoms that people enjoy".

- Amartya Sen, Nobel Laureate



## *Save the Children's Practice Standards in Children's Participation*

### **5.1 Practice Standards in Children's Participation**

The facilitator started the session with sharing a few case studies and asked the participants to express their opinion about the cases. Would such cases be considered as child participation?

**Case 1:** Teachers organised a rally against corporal punishment by children bearing placards in a main road of Hyderabad. Slogans were written in English and another language.

#### **Participants Feedback**

- It might be hazardous.
- It was not voluntarily done by children.
- Slogans were not written in language that children could understand.

**Case 2:** Teachers wanted to improve teaching and the learning situation in the school, so they invited class XI and XII for consultations. Even after 2–3 months there is no response.

#### **Participants Feedback**

- No participation.
- Only XI and XII class consultation.
- No follow up.
- No action followed.

**Case 3:** One NGO decides to work on child participation and announces that in a week to 10 days everyone has to begin child participation. Is this child participation?

#### **Participants Feedback**

- Capacity building of the staff should be done.
- One or two meetings with children does not constitute child participation. It is a process which takes time.
- No proper planning was done.
- Since no inputs were given to the staff, why expect outputs from them?

Save the Children faces critical issues in its efforts regarding children's responsibilities versus adult responsibilities, children's interventions and the extent of the need to bring in adults when they want to work with children. In order to provide some guidelines to grapple with these questions, the International Save the Children Alliance has drawn up some practice standards on children's participation for practitioners working with children. The standards aim to:

- Ensure consistent, high quality children's participation practice throughout Save the Children programmes.
- Provide a framework that gives guidance and direction to staff and management in continuously improving their participatory practice.

The standards describe an expected level of performance, stating what children and others can expect from Save the Children's

practice in child participation. Each standard includes a set of criteria to indicate whether the standard is being met. The standards are designed to be relevant and achievable. At the same time, given the enormous variation in country contexts and circumstances, they will also need to be adapted to fit local conditions. The full standards are presented in the annexure, but an overview is provided below:

#### Practice Standards in Child Participation

- Standard 1: An Ethical Approach: Transparency, Honesty and Accountability
- Standard 2: Children's Participation is Relevant and Voluntary
- Standard 3: A Child-Friendly, Enabling Environment
- Standard 4: Equality of Opportunity
- Standard 5: Staff is Effective and Confident
- Standard 6: Participation Promotes the Safety and Protection of Children
- Standard 7: Ensuring Follow-up and Evaluation

#### Field Visit

Given below are the outcomes of the field trips to two villages. The participants worked in four groups. In each village, participants met with one children's group and one adults group.

#### Village 1: Mypadu

Participants visited east Mypadu village, which has a population of over 1800 people.

Meeting with children	Meeting with adults (women and men)
<p>Participants met with children in the age group of 3-12 years in the local 'Anganwadi'. Adolescents were still in the school so participants could not meet them.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Though children expressed themselves freely not all children were heard</li> <li>• At times children were forced to participate</li> <li>• No support from key adults on child participation</li> <li>• Need to strengthen Monitoring and Evaluation department</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formation of Child Protection Committee (CPC) - 10 members in the committee</li> <li>• Positive thinking due to education</li> <li>• Awareness on children issues e.g. corporal punishment</li> <li>• Increasing awareness on child rights</li> <li>• Adults wanted to create a library</li> </ul>
General Observations	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not all child participation practice standards are adhered to. (When discussing with adults, they had limited understanding on children with disabilities. They feel that girls should study but they should not study too much as it will be difficult to get them married.)</li> <li>• Team did not see any Muslim children.</li> <li>• Did not meet any disabled children.</li> <li>• The children's animators need more capacity building.</li> <li>• Capacitate adolescents to work with younger children.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No participation of Muslim Community in CPC.</li> <li>• Village divided into fisher folks versus Muslim/Dalit community</li> </ul>

*Village 2: Srinivasanpuram*

The total population of the village is about 183 with families numbering about 76. The main occupations are fishing and farming. School is up to 5th standard and there are two teachers in the school. In the evening the mentoring centre takes care of the children.

Meeting with children	Meeting with adults (women and men)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is no relevant and voluntary participation (when asked questions the children looked at the adults for approval)</li> <li>• There is no place for play at all in the village</li> <li>• Children know a little bit about child rights</li> <li>• They were very aware about their rights to education</li> <li>• When asked, "If you have a children's club then what will you do?" They said, "We will fight for education". They want to form a child rights' club.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No practice or idea of child participation with adults.</li> <li>• No awareness about why children should be involved and how it is done.</li> <li>• Not aware of child protection mechanisms like village watch dog committee.</li> <li>• Aware of children's education, submitted a proposal to build a school compound wall.</li> <li>• Adults are willing to involve children.</li> <li>• In the village, elder people are discriminated against.</li> <li>• No disabled people</li> </ul>
<b>General Observations</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scope for peer education in the village.</li> <li>• Should work with adolescent children for working with younger children.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accountability has to be brought out between adults and children.</li> <li>• Scope to train the animators on child participation activity.</li> </ul>



## *Strengthening Child-led Initiatives and Organisations<sup>12</sup>*

# 6

The facilitator introduced the history of child-led organisations/initiatives in India and in the region by giving some examples<sup>13</sup>

- Social Work and Research Centre (SWRC), working since 1972 in Tilonia, Rajasthan, is popularly known as 'the Barefoot College'. Among SWRC's many initiatives is a system of night schools uniquely designed to address the needs and schedules of rural working children. The curriculum of these schools is specifically adapted to their rural surroundings and incorporates innovative ideas about student-teacher relations, teaching methods and the education of girls. As part of the night schools, girls and boys in Tilonia were supported to form their own 'Bal Sansad' (Children's Parliament) in 1992. The Children's Parliament was initially launched to teach children about democratic systems, the electoral process and the functioning of a government. Children experience the democratic process and work together to manage the school, while also engaging themselves in other development issues. Following from the Tilonia Children's Parliament, nine other Indian states have seen the initiation of Children's Parliaments.
- Child Brigade is an organisation for working street children established with the support of Save the Children Sweden in Dhaka in 1995. The goal of Child Brigade is to find ways and means for better living conditions for all children who are left behind in the streets. Child Brigade members have made linkages with many other children groups, NGOs, INGOs, media professionals and with human rights activists. Some members of Child Brigade played an important role in discussions and actions concerning the special session process in Bangladesh, together with a wide forum of children from NGOs and children's organisations.
- Children's Committee for Village Development (CCVD) has been formed with the support of Save the Children UK in Ladakh, India. The initiative was undertaken as a strategy to mobilise children as responsible citizens in their local communities and as active participants in the development process. CCVDs are a way to change social structures to encourage child participation. Many of the priority issues addressed by the CCVDs have related to access to quality education for girls and boys for all income levels. Children have played an active role in: monitoring teachers' attendance; motivating parents to send their children to school and preventing school drop outs, collecting donations for books for the poorer children and establishing libraries.

<sup>12</sup> Discussion document on promoting and supporting child-led initiatives and organisations, Prepared by Save the Children's virtual interest group: child-led initiatives and organisations (IN PRINT)

<sup>13</sup> Adapted from O'Kane Claire, *Children and Young People as Citizens: Partners for social change, exploring concepts, learning from experience and highlighting positive impact*, Save the Children Sweden, 2003

- Hatemalo Children's Radio in Nepal was started informally in 1982, and was registered as an NGO in 1994. Hatemalo's programmes include child-to-child, training and awareness campaigns, in addition to radio programming and the 'Sunkesra' publication. School-going children aged 8-18 years participate in Hatemalo programmes, which are dedicated to the children's overall development and emphasise child rights. It provided a platform for children to express their ideas, explore solutions to their issues and present their views in a way that will be listened to. The children receive training in radio production and produce a weekly 15 minute programme broadcast on Saturday evenings at 5pm.

Cultural initiatives in this part of the world in the form of Bal Yatras is part of the culture of the region.

One of the biggest challenges the children's organisations are facing is how to work with children who cross 18 years. It is essential to give inputs to these children on other human rights instruments. There is a need to work with children who are nearer to 18 years so that once they cross that age they understand other human rights dimensions.

With this backdrop, Save the Children Norway in Nepal is conducting an intergenerational study in the country to understand the role of youths who have crossed 18 years. The study is looking into the rights issues after crossing 18 and what kind of contribution these children are making in nation building.

*Extracts from a Discussion Document on Promoting and Supporting Child-led Initiatives and Organisations, Prepared by Save the Children's virtual interest group: Child-led Initiatives and Organisations (In Print)*

Over the last fifteen years, since the adoption of the UNCRC a plethora of child-led initiatives and organisations have emerged. Some have started off and remain, essentially adult-led and initiated

processes. Other initiatives, over time and through a process whereby adults have given more and more space to children, have become child-led and have resulted in girls and boys forming their own organisations. Girls and boys have also inspired other children to form their own child-led initiatives, organisations and networks.

In strengthening their own initiatives and organisations, children and young people are pro-actively seeking to develop and strengthen partnerships with adults. Thus, dynamic relationships between children and adults remain a key component of all kinds of child-led initiatives and organisations.

The number and variety of such initiatives and organisations has sometimes led to a blurring of definitions and of the understanding of what we mean by child-led initiatives or organisations. If Save the Children wishes to support children exercising and claiming their rights in sincere and meaningful ways, we need to have a clear understanding of the sort of child-led initiatives and organisations we are willing to promote and support and the role that we, as an organisation can play.

For example, our support to the development of **child-led initiatives and organisations of children below 18 years** may include:

- Supporting existing child-led initiatives and organisations (for example, to become stronger, more inclusive, more influential)
- Helping support more adult-led initiatives to become more child-led and child driven.
- Supporting the development of new child-led initiatives and organisations.

#### ***Rationale for Save the Children's work in this area***

At the June 2003 Save the Children Global Meeting on Child Participation one of the strategic goals identified for priority action over the next five years was to **'enable and support child-led initiatives and organisations to be a driving force of Save the Children'**.

Save the Children can achieve this goal by:

- increasing our, and other's, awareness and understanding of the range and work of child-led initiatives and organisations; and
- develop our, and other's, capacity to work better with child-led initiatives and organisations through developing and sharing guiding principles, tools and strategies to support them.

Working to better support child-led initiatives and organisations fits well with Save the Children's child rights approach to programming as it recognises children and young people firstly as rights holders, and secondly as advocates for their own (and their peer's) rights.

Developing stronger partnerships with child-led initiatives and organisations and with NGOs and partner organisations that support them, will consolidate

efforts to enhance children's role as active and responsible citizens.

Work in this area will place Save the Children in a better position to support our partners – including child-led initiatives and organisations - in identifying and building upon good practice, key principles, strategies and tools to:

- help strengthen existing child-led initiatives and organisations;
- facilitate the emergence of new child-led initiatives and organisations;
- support meaningful partnerships between adults and child-led initiatives and organisations to further the fulfilment of children's rights;
- know more about, listen and respond to the agenda of children and young people.

### ***6.1 Demystifying the Concept and Reality: Answering commonly asked Questions about Child-led Initiatives and Organisations***<sup>4</sup>

***Q.1. What difference do child-led initiatives and organisations make? What is their added value?***

- Children have 'space' to regularly share their views, listen to others, analyse their situation and plan actions on issues affecting them;
- Child-led Initiatives and Child-led Organisations (CLIs/CLOs) provide space and opportunity for empowerment, inclusion and unity that can be developed over a period of time among the children involved in the initiative/organisation;
- Children are better able to protect and promote their rights through their collective efforts, initiatives and associations;

<sup>14</sup> Discussion document on promoting and supporting child-led initiatives and organisations, Prepared by Save the Children's virtual interest group: child-led initiatives and organisations (IN PRINT)

- Children can be part of and help build a strong civil society through their CLIs/CLOs;
  - CLIs/CLOs therefore provide a 'space' where children can learn about democracy in practice and being an active citizen (schools for citizenship and democracy);
  - Children can develop friendships, gain confidence, develop life skills and challenge different forms of discrimination through their CLI/CLO activities.
  - Due to their 'organised' nature children from CLIs/CLOs can be involved in policy and programming development and decision-making processes over a longer period of time. CLIs/CLOs are therefore one of the obvious starting points for creating access for children to meet and engage with decision-makers in ongoing governance structures;
  - CLIs/CLOs provide a base for fair and representative election processes that may be required for children's involvement in policy and programming debates and decision-making forums. For example, when considering the selection of children to national, regional, or international level forums. Representatives for CLIs/CLOs can legitimately claim to represent a wider group of children, if this sort of representation is being sought;
  - Due to their 'organised' nature CLIs/CLOs provide a strong base through which children and adults can assess the impact of the initiative/organisation and review its strengths, weaknesses and learnings;
  - The formation of initiatives or organisations amongst particular groups of marginalised children can give a stronger collective voice to their concerns (for example, working children, children with disabilities, children who have been sexually exploited) and can lead to a change in their status whereby they are recognised as social actors.
- Q.2. What are the factors that enable child-led initiatives and organisations to develop and strengthen?**
- When there is good preparation with key adults in the community (parents, carers, teachers, etc.) and other duty-bearers (for example, government officials) in order to gain their support for girls' and boys' participation and to positively respond to issues raised by children;
  - When children are able to organise themselves in their local context (where they can meet easily and regularly);
  - When children have a physical 'space' to meet (for example, their own room, club house, etc.) that is easily accessible to them (for example, in the locality in which they live and organise);
  - When work is undertaken with children as well as with key support adults to allow for the inclusion of girls, children with disabilities and other discriminated against groups;
  - When the CLI/CLO addresses urgent and immediate rights issues of importance and relevant to the children involved. (However, a shift from a focus on single issues to wider issues can also help the development of some CLIs/CLOs. For example, working children's organisations taking up wider child rights issues from an initial obvious starting point around child labour issues. This has the knock-on effect of making the organisation more relevant to a larger group of children in the context of the wider community in which they live and organise);
  - When space is given for ongoing capacity building of both children and adults. Enabling adults and empowering children is key to the development and strengthening of CLIs/CLOs. For example, models which empower all children to gain life skills and play an active role in the

- organisation rather than those which encourage and promote the emergence of a few 'leaders';
- When work is undertaken to create access to and prepare key decision-makers to involve children/child representatives in governance (for example, in schools or in local and national government structures);
  - When children are supported to mobilise local resources, support and information;
  - When 'graduation' strategies are in place whereby the older (over 18-year-olds) have opportunities to engage in meaningful youth initiatives/organisations, and younger children are continuously encouraged to join and play an active role in the existing child initiative/organisation.
- When children's groups/organisations are modelled on adult organisations (with the same hierarchy, roles, etc.) without any attempt to give children the space to shape their own organisation using different or creative ways of working that are more relevant to them;
  - When a small group of 'elite'/'most experienced' children have control over the agenda, format, nature of participation to the exclusion of the majority of the members, or other more marginalised members.

#### *How can this be addressed?*

If there is a willingness to reflect on power dynamics, to learn from experience and to develop in positive directions, children and their adult supporters can make these initiatives and organisations more genuine, inclusive and child-led. For example, children and adults can be responsive to the changing nature of the partnership between CLIs/CLOs and their adult support organisations. Or, children can reflect on the power dynamics within their own organisations to ensure that they are being inclusive rather than exclusive and create opportunities for the empowerment of all. Some key tools and methods have been developed to help children and adults explore these kind of power dynamics. They are contained in the resources guide at the end of this document.

In the early phases of helping children to form or develop their own child-led initiative or organisation a significant amount of facilitation, input and support from adults may be required. However, as the children gain experience and skills, the adults need to be able to take a step back and play a more 'back up'/'guiding' role, rather than a direct facilitation one.

The fact that some CLIs/CLOs 'disappear' or re-emerge does not always have to be negative. It can be a process with positive dynamics. For example, it could be that they have achieved their initial goals and objectives meaning that they no longer need to exist in their original form. In some cases they may spawn new initiatives which eventually take over from the original.

#### ***Q.3. Why are some child-led initiatives and organisations considered to be genuine whereas others are considered to be more tokenistic?***

Some children's groups or initiatives are seen to be more tokenistic:

- When adults are seen to – and do – control or manipulate the agenda (introduced to children), the nature of their action plans and/or the extent to which children are involved;

**Q.4. What are the risks in promoting and supporting child-led initiatives and organisations and how can they be 'managed'?**

- CLIs/CLOs, especially the most well known initiatives and organisations, are often asked to participate in external policy and programming debates, child participation trainings, etc. The internal activities of a CLI/CLO may already be time consuming. It is therefore important to comply with the practice standards on child participation and develop mechanisms to ensure that children and their initiatives and organisations are not overburdened by placing too many demands and expectations on them. In the same respect, it is also important to ensure that they are protected from harm during the course of their work as a group;
- Existing power relations between children and adults can have a negative impact. In some cases adults may use their greater power to influence agendas (representing their concerns rather than the concerns of the children) or to pursue their own political agendas. In other cases it may be that resources do not reach CLIs/CLOs because adult organisations give them a lower priority. Again, mechanisms need to be developed to ensure the most appropriate role of adults in supporting CLIs/CLOs. The authenticity of children's voices need to be supported and nourished;
- Care needs to be taken that children who are not part of initiatives and organisations are not neglected and that no child is marginalised in the process of giving organisational support to CLIs/CLOs. This can be helped by ensuring the creation of more child-friendly spaces where any

girl or boy feels free to speak and share their views (in all settings – community, school, decision-making forum);

- In recent years, armed/opposition groups in some countries have emerged as a direct threat to CLIs/CLOs. Children involved in CLIs/CLOs because they are empowered (vocal about social injustices, able to articulate their rights, have acquired leadership skills, etc.) can become a recruiting target for armed/opposition groups. In all cases, children involved in public decision making must be protected from any negative impact resulting from their participation. In these particular cases child protection issues must be paramount.

**Q. 5. Is it possible to effectively include children under the age of 12 years in child-led initiatives and organisations?**

- The capacities and insights of younger children should not be underestimated. Children under the age of 12 years can be very active and effective members of their own initiatives and organisations. They can also quite clearly see where their current level of participation (that suits their age and also their capacities) lies and what they can achieve as they get older and gain more experience. Use of creative methods help children of different ages and abilities to actively participate and contribute to ongoing initiatives;
- The active engagement of its younger members (giving them space to 'grow' into their initiative or organisation) will keep the movement alive when its older members become 18 years old and 'graduate' out of the CLI/CLO.

## **6.2 The Range and Work of Child-led Initiatives and Organisations**

Child-led initiatives and organisations have become increasingly recognised for their capacity to organise and to exercise and claim children's rights to development, survival, protection and participation. Through their own initiatives and organisations, children have been able to develop knowledge and skills, gain increased experiences and insights and find ways to actively respond to their situation and change it. Through their active participation girls and boys have been able to voice their concerns, ending their 'silent status' which has for so long led to their marginalisation, exploitation and abuse.

These child-led initiatives and organisations exist in many different forms. For example, as:

- Child-led theatre groups
- Child-led media groups
- School clubs
- Child clubs, committees and child-to-child groups
- Children's commissions
- Working children's groups and organisations

Through structured children's groups and child-led organisations, children have been able to exercise their participation and citizenship rights in many different contexts and initiatives. As they are 'organised', they are often better placed to participate in long-term initiatives and processes. Their members are also more or less representative of a wider group of children and young people.

Some established child-led initiatives and organisations started off as much smaller, more adult-led approaches, such as child-to-child work around health education. Children involved in this original approach have sometimes gone on to develop their own child clubs or children's organisations thereby establishing a more organised and sustainable initiative with access to adult decision making structures. Some child-led initiatives and organisations themselves spawn new organisations or initiatives. For example, children's clubs in Nepal and other countries have started morning classes to help children in their community with their education. These are targeted at both school going and 'out of school' children but have emerged from members of children's clubs recognising that some children from their community are not able to attend school.



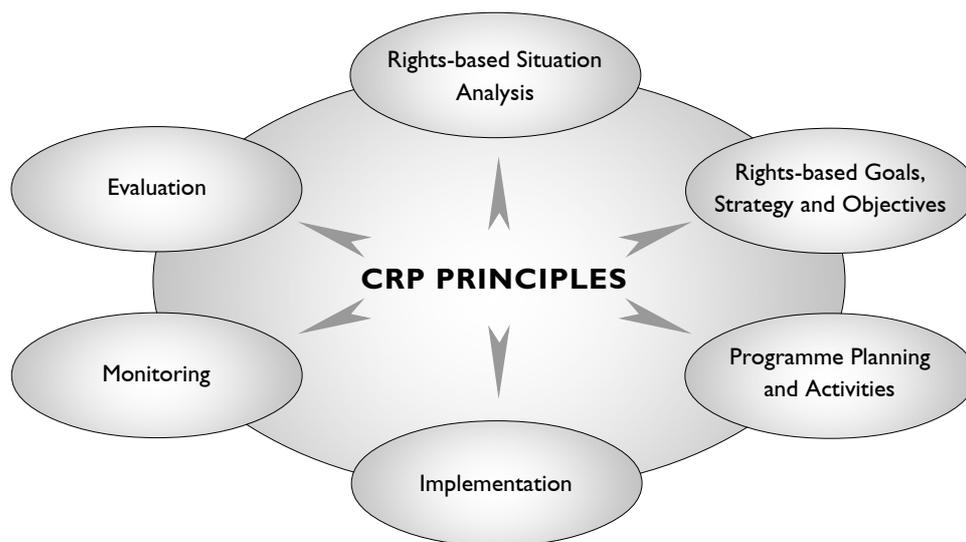
# Applying Children's Participation in Programmes

# 7

Since the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child came into force in 1990, there has been a great deal of discussion and practical action to give effect to the principle embodied in Article 12, e.g. children have a right to be listened to and taken seriously.

## **7.1 Children and Programme Cycle and Management**

It has become clear that children can become successfully involved in the following aspect of programming:



However, if their participation is to be meaningful, it is imperative that their engagement is directly linked to their own first-hand experience and that children themselves identify it as a key area of concern. **Girls and boys should also be asked when and how they would like to participate.** *There are no redefined strategies, no ideal or universal models. The method used will depend on the issue, the project, or activity – whether the process is local, regional, national or international. It will also depend on the aim of the process.*

## **7.2 Tools/ Methodologies for Creating an Enabling Environment for Child Participation**

It was mentioned that it is very effective to raise sensitive issues such as sex and sexuality through experiential learning methodology and by creating an environment where participants can freely share their experiences.

Theatre for Development and drama are other effective methods for raising sensitive issues, both for raising awareness and for identifying solutions to problems. (early marriage, discrimination, etc.) But, as it is difficult to hold younger children's attention for a long time, it is important to be flexible and to take many breaks.

Most of the tools mentioned have been used by Save the Children and its partner organisations in Bangladesh and the region. It was mentioned that a media house run by children and facilitated by Save the Children Sweden Denmark has been created. Children have been discussing the parts where adults should be involved, for example, in administration and financial management. Internet and web-sites are other tools, which will also be part of the media house.

### **7.3 Girls' and Boys' Participation in Situation Analysis and Research**

Participants highlighted some of the key learnings from the previous sessions:

- We need to involve children in all stages of programming – it will lead to effective programmes.
- In order to involve children, we need to adjust our organisation's structures and mechanisms.
- Children organise themselves in different ways than adults do.
- Child Brigades have a democratic decision making process.
- Children from Centre for Services and Information on Disability (CSID) in Bangladesh highlighted the importance of accountability. In order to have sustainable changes we need to address policies, laws and the implementation of laws.
- Children from both organisations mentioned the importance of addressing all children and create inclusive approaches.

The facilitator discussed the various steps in conducting a situation analysis. It was mentioned that it is important to base the analysis on the social, cultural and political context in the country. The analysis could be an overall analysis or a thematic analysis; it could cover the

#### **Methods for enabling participation: Girls and Boys can participate in various capacities**

Programmes can be designed using various methods that encourage young people's participation:

- **Visual Participatory Methods** include individual drawings, annotated drawings, story boards, cartoons, collective drawings, collages, drawings on slides, diagrams, mobility maps, personal world maps, community base maps, graphical representations such as time-use analysis, activity profiles, model making on small-scale and full-size simulations as well as scoring and ranking.
- **Performance Methods** include drama/theatre for development, puppetry, songs, dance, pantomime, role play, rituals, festivals, parades, and other special events.
- **Media** includes print and broadcast media such as newsletters, radio broadcasts, television, photography and video production, book publishing, comics, electronic publishing, and contributions to adult newspapers and magazines.
- **Verbal Methods** include either individual or group interviews, answering questionnaires, surveys, inventories, joining group discussions, and preparing questionnaires.

*Care should be taken so that the whole process is participatory. Participatory research should be seen as part of participatory learning approach rather than a collection of participatory methods.*

whole country or a specific geographic area.

A situation analysis and a SWOC (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Constraints) analysis helps an organisation to set priorities or to re-prioritise. It is important to regularly 'update' the situation and the SWOC analyses. Children could be involved in all stages of both the analyses. By asking children about our organisation's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and constraints we are likely to get new perspectives on our organisations. Participants shared the outcomes of SWOC analyses that have been done in their own organisations.

It was mentioned that Save the Children Sweden Denmark has recently done a situation analysis and a SWOC analysis in the process of setting priorities and developing their strategy, with partner organisations and children involved at various stages of the process. Attempts were made by Save the Children to include the findings from previous consultations in the analysis. Unfortunately, the quality of reports and the analysis from previous consultation was very poor and it was difficult to extract the key messages. It was highlighted that organisations carrying out consultations have a responsibility to ensure that children's voices are properly documented and to ensure that organisations and governments do act on a children's agenda.

It is also important to take action to address adults' resistance towards children's participation and for advocacy action to get the governments and organisations to adjust their structures and mechanism to accommodate a children's agenda. We also need to build on and follow up on the government's commitments. The UNCRC's concluding

observations and other key documents are important tools in advocacy work. The government has made commitments to include children in the UNCRC implementation as well as in the various NPA (National Plan of Action) processes. The government has recently formed an NPA committee and five subcommittees (one boy and one girl will be present in each of these committees). This is an important opportunity to build on.

The facilitator shared the key issues from 'Supporting Children's Meaningful and Ethical Participation, A toolkit for the UN Study on Violence Against Children by International Save the Children Alliance'.

It was mentioned that there is no one right way to involve children, just as there is no ideal method to use in research with children. You may want to involve children in every stage of your research, or to consult them about specific areas. Ideally, we should consult children themselves about what they think would be an appropriate way for them to be involved. Whilst there is great value to a more participatory approach, there will be research topics and contexts where a more conventional approach is the most suitable. It is very valuable for children to be properly 'heard' as research respondents, whether or not they have other roles in the research process.

#### **Reasons for Involving Children in Research:**

- Affirms children's right to express themselves.
- Research gives children a chance to be heard and be listened to. It raises children's awareness.
- Develops children's analytical and research abilities, confidence and independence.
- Develops children's ability to protect themselves, for example from abuse.

- Changes the way adults view children and changes the relationship between children and adults.
- Changes the (power) relationship between children and researchers.
- Helps develop better policies and programmes for children.
- Helps adults understand children better and to get better data.
- Improves the quality of the research findings (in some situations child researchers can get information that adult researchers cannot get).

### **Roles of Children in Research**

There are a number of distinct roles children could play in your research.

#### **As respondents**

- Fill in quantitative questionnaire
- Be interviewed
- Take part in focus group discussion
- Take part in group work including play, drawing, singing, interactive tasks, ranking and scoring
- Validate findings by hearing summary and confirming key points
- Assist in developing recommendations

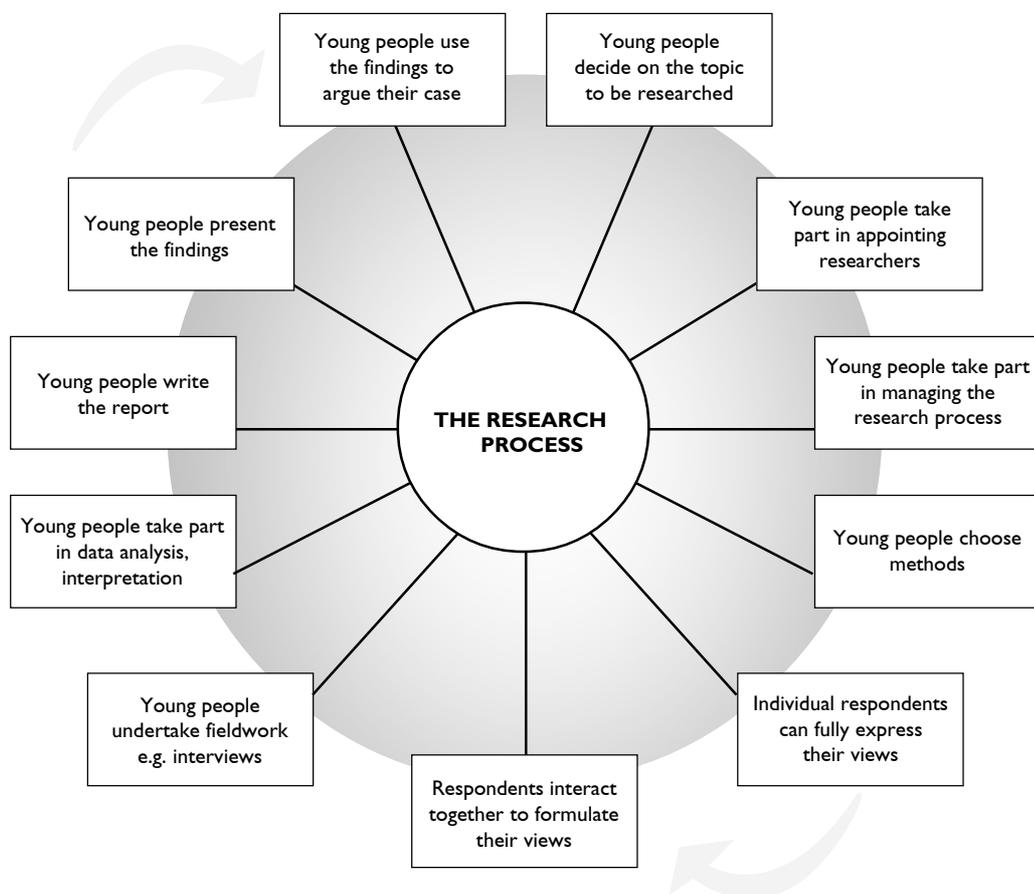
#### **As co-researchers**

- Act as peer researchers, planning the research, carrying out fieldwork
- Act as a research assistant

#### **As advisors**

- Members of advisory groups
- Being consulted on specific issues.

### **A wheel of young people's participation in research**



### *Child-Related Ethical Issues in Research*

Ethical issues<sup>15</sup> arise not only in the traditional areas of concern like consent and confidentiality, but also throughout the research process. Research needs to be well-designed, based on appropriate consultation, and properly conducted and followed through. The staff needs to have the appropriate skills and knowledge on research methodologies, children's rights, the specific subject that is researched, etc. It is also important that the researchers are aware of child protection issues; it is essential that they do not abuse girls and boys emotionally, physically or sexually. They also need to be prepared for unexpected responses, as for example, how to handle children who say that they have been sexually abused. Methods need to be suitable to the purpose, inclusive, sensitive and flexible enough to include all those whose voices

need to be heard. Children often choose to participate because they want to see change take place, so it is very important to act on the research findings. It is important not to raise expectations among children that the organisation is not able to fulfil and to come back to the children and present the outcome of the research. The research findings should be presented in child friendly versions.

The ethical issues discussed in this section are as follows:

- Avoiding harm to children who participate
- Child protection
- Informed consent
- Confidentiality
- An inclusive approach
- Fair return for participation
- Welfare of research staff
- Wider accountability

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<sup>15</sup> *Supporting Children's Meaningful and Ethical Participation, A Toolkit for the UN Study on Violence Against Children*, International Save the Children Alliance, 2003



## *Action Plans for Ongoing and Future Programmes*

# 8

Three thematic groups were formed and were asked to work on the following areas:

- Capacity Building: Target, Issues
- How to work on Constituency Building?
- How to promote Inclusion?
- How to promote Safe and Enabling Environment with children?
- How to promote Accountability?
- Identification of Tools and Methodologies to work on the above areas.

### **Case 1: Disaster Risk Reduction**

Anu is a member of the girls club. She is working with other girls to prepare herself to handle future/possible disaster. The group believes that children play a significant role in disaster preparedness.

<b>Capacity building</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sharing our work and role with children</li> <li>• Training on Disaster Risk Reduction</li> </ul>	Promote inclusion with children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creating enabling environment for inclusion</li> <li>• Working with adult and adult head of institution</li> <li>• Exposure to the role/ participation</li> <li>• Child friendly and inclusive method by the children</li> <li>• Systems are developed for non-discrimination (playing a role with the community and as well as other institution and children's organisations)</li> </ul>
<b>Constituency building</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sensitisation of duty bearers on child rights</li> <li>• Lobby with other NGOs, academia, media, other civil society actors, etc.</li> <li>• Cross learning</li> <li>• Involve INGOs in advocacy with state</li> </ul>		

<b>Create Safe and Enabling Environment with Children</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff effective and confident/innovative to promote child participation</li> <li>• Listen to all, encourage participation of all children</li> <li>• Access to participation place</li> <li>• Simple child and diversity friendly techniques/language/IEC</li> <li>• Advocate and explain larger society the value of child participation</li> <li>• Advocate for inclusion of all children</li> </ul>	<b>Promote Accountability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear roles and responsibility</li> <li>• Sharing of reports with public and children</li> <li>• Children need to be involved from the earliest possible stage</li> <li>• Stage level contingency plan to involve and share with children</li> </ul>
<b>Tools and Methodology for promoting child participation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Awareness raising – street plays, newsletter, radio programmes, etc. by children</li> <li>• Activity oriented group by children - learning through play and other participatory methods for younger children</li> <li>• Child friendly early warning methods – appreciative enquiry</li> <li>• Practise and behaviour change – media intervention, awareness campaign, make their own movies on best practices that will help them feel better</li> <li>• Disaster Risk Reduction committees and linkages with government including budget allocation. Where children share their experiences with govt. officials</li> </ul>		
<b>Strengthening participation of all girls and boys</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All children in the village are included but we need to give special focus to disabled children, dalit children, school dropouts, HIV infected/single parents/orphans</li> </ul>		<b>Enlisting Adult support</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pregnant women</li> </ul>	
<b>CRP Principles</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Best interests of the child</li> <li>• Survival and development</li> <li>• Child participation</li> <li>• Accountability</li> <li>• Non-discrimination</li> </ul>			

**Case 2: Physical and Humiliating Punishment**

Sanjay is 14 years old. He is bullied by his friends and often faces humiliation. He is planning to leave the school as he has lost interest in studies.

**Capacity building**

- Children - Child rights, child participation, child protection, non-violence, anti-bullying, life skills
- Community- child rights, child participation, positive discipline
- Child Protection Committee members - child rights, child participation, positive discipline and legislations
- Teachers - child rights, child participation, positive discipline
- Adults - child rights, child participation, child protection, positive discipline
- Parents - child rights, child participation, child protection, positive discipline
- Education department staff - child rights, child participation, child protection, positive discipline
- Sensitisation of NGO's - Issues of childhood, child participation, child rights, child protection, positive learning, experience sharing, legislation, Government Orders, advocacy skills
- Media - child rights, child participation, child protection, need to highlight children's issues

**Constituency building**

- Networking, consultative meetings, cross learning, advocacy, etc. with like-minded NGOs, academic institutions, government departments - Education Department, Department of Women and Child Welfare, Community Based Organisations, interface with political institutions - ward members, gram sabha, legislative members, parliament members.
- Strengthening and federation of children's group into block level, taluka level and district level

**Promote inclusion of children**

- Formation of children's groups without any discrimination.
- Provide special attention to vulnerable groups like orphan children, children from child headed families, children from single parent /women headed families, children affected by HIV/AIDS, children whose parents are affected by HIV/AIDS, differently abled children, girl children, and give them roles and responsibilities

**Create a safe and child friendly environment with children**

- Sensitisation of children, community level awareness campaign, establishing peer group contact, strengthening Parent Teacher Associations (PTA) and Child Protection Committees, management level consultations to curb physical punishment, consultations with education department
- Exposure visit

**Promote accountability**

- Children and adults who engage in the process must ensure that the commitments are adhered to by sharing the reports, follow-up actions and spelling out the reasons for calling the children.

**Tools and Techniques**

- Sensitisation, consultations with various duty bearers, constituency building, advocacy through street theatres, puppetry, IEC materials, workshops, seminars, sharing of documented facts happened in local target area, capacity building of children on children's participation.

**Working with children**

- All children in target area, with focus on vulnerable groups like orphan children, children from child headed families, children from single parent/women headed families, children affected by HIV/AIDS, children whose parents are affected by HIV/AIDS, differently abled children, girl children, etc.

**Working with adults**

- All adults including parents, family members, teachers, PTA members, community leaders

**Integrating CRP Principles:** Best interests of the child, non-discrimination, accountability and participation, survival and development.

**Case 3: Quality inclusive education**

Tina is 14 years of age. She is very bright in studies. She faces eve-teasing and other kinds of violence in school. She has to take care of household work at home. She wants to study but the teacher's teaching style is not child friendly.

<p><b>Capacity building</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capacity building of teacher on teaching learning, lesson wise conducting test, etc.</li> <li>• Teachers and children discuss issues and concerns</li> <li>• Giving life skills education to children, how to raise their issues and problems with community and others</li> </ul>	<p>Promote inclusion with children</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Issues discussed in children's group</li> <li>• Child Protection Committee discussed with children</li> </ul>
<p><b>Constituency building</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accessibility of Child Protection Committee members to all children</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Create safe and enabling environment with children</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Child Protection Committee members talk and discuss issues of children with children</li> <li>• Create facilities in schools for children keeping diversity in mind</li> <li>• Within the family should give attention and listen to the children</li> <li>• Community should give respect to the children</li> <li>• Awareness on ending eve-teasing and other violence against girls by youth and men</li> </ul>	<p>Promote accountability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children's participation in all activities (programme cycle)</li> <li>• Take views of the children</li> </ul>
<p><b>Tools and Methodology for promoting child participation</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consultation</li> </ul>		

The group exercise was followed by presentation in the plenary session followed by feedback by the facilitator on each presentation. In some of the presentations the facilitator suggested the group again take a look at their work and come out with some more clarity on each of the areas.

### ***Action Plan to Forward Child Participation in Programmes***

Support Child-led Children's Group in Disaster Risk Reduction

- Follow an integrated approach with a holistic perspective.
- Undertake capacity building which is participatory in nature.
- Encourage traditional practices like using folk songs.
- Undertake food storage by traditional means.
- Support system mapping.
- Knowledge of relief mechanisms should be given.
- Prepare contingency plans where local coping mechanisms can be used.

Interface with the community adults, institutions, duty bearers, along with exposure trips

- A platform needs to be created.
- Cultural groups based on traditional methods should be developed.

Develop IEC materials for spreading awareness and developing common understanding. Through this Disaster Risk

Reduction needs to be included in the curriculum.

- Encourage children to draw and write stories.
- Support children to use folk drama and songs.

Create awareness about existing government policies and programmes

- Interview District Disaster Management Centre
- Transmit this further at the village level

Advocate for strengthening safe public infrastructure such as,

- Schools
- Community halls, etc.

Children, community, duty bearers will be made accountable by narrating success stories and sharing information with them through pamphlets, newsletters or even through television

- Five programme coordinators will be provided copy of children's participation material
- Formal and informal discussions will be held with coordinators on children's participation and ways in which it can be integrated into the work
- The learnings on children's participation will be shared with coordinators employed in the target areas
- Follow-ups will be emphasised based on learnings from field experience.

1

ANNEX

# Workshop Agenda

16th August	17th August	18th August
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Welcome and introductions</li> <li>• Expectation, objectives and ground rules</li> <li>• Concepts of childhoods and participation of girls and boys</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recap</li> <li>• Meaningful and ethical participation of children</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recap</li> <li>• Feedback from field visit</li> </ul>
Tea/Coffee Break		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concepts of childhood and participation of girls and boys contd.</li> <li>• Child participation - needs or rights</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporting child-led initiatives and children's organisations (methods and tools)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthening and facilitating (strategies and plans) children's participation in programming</li> </ul>
Lunch (Film screening optional)		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding child participation from a Child Rights Programming perspective</li> <li>• Definition and concepts</li> <li>• Promoting inclusion and participation</li> <li>• Synthesis</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Field visit</li> </ul> <p><i>Note: Participants work in an evening session, preparing report from the field visit</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overall synthesis</li> <li>• Action plan</li> <li>• Evaluation</li> <li>• Close</li> </ul>



## *List of Participants*

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24.	Sunil	SARDS	



# *Introduction to Practice Standards in Child Participation*

## 3 ANNEX

### ***What are Practice Standards?***

Practice standards<sup>16</sup> are statements that describe an expected level of performance. These practice standards state what children and others can expect of Save the Children's practice in child participation. They are designed to apply to all of Save the Children's child participation work and represent minimum expectations of the ways in which staff will behave and operate.

These practice standards have been developed through years of experience supporting children's participation at both the local and global levels. This final set of standards is based on feedback and consultations with Save the Children staff, partner organisations and children in various countries and community settings.

### ***Why Practice Standards?***

The primary purpose of these practice standards is to ensure consistent, high quality child participation practice throughout Save the Children's programmes. They aim to provide a framework that gives guidance and direction first and foremost to field staff and partners in continuously improving their participatory practice.

The standards can be used to:

- Assist Save the Children staff in assessing their practice in child participation and identifying improvements.
- Inform training and other approaches to competency that ensures that staff working with children have the

attitudes, skills and confidence required to deliver the practice standards.

- Provide a basis for accountability and challenge if practice falls below a certain standard.
- Review and evaluate current practice and identify goals for the future.
- Establish a safe and meaningful environment for the participation of children and minimise the risk to children from involvement in participatory practice.
- Share Save the Children's understanding of meaningful children's participation with children's organisations and other partners.

### **Implementation of these Practice Standards**

These practice standards are intended to guide the practice of staff working to support children's participation. Each standard includes a set of criteria to indicate whether the standard is being met. Also included, are examples of how a participatory process can look when the standards are being applied properly. These examples should be used to assist in the planning and implementation of the standards and to assist staff in their understanding/interpretation of the standards.

The standards are designed to be relevant and achievable. At the same time, given the enormous variation in country contexts and circumstances, they will also need to be adapted to fit local conditions. There must always be a clear understanding of the implications relating to social, economic,

<sup>16</sup> Also known as 'minimum quality standards' or 'key elements'

cultural and traditional practices as well as the age and maturity of the child.

Save the Children staff should use these practice standards in conjunction with the organisation's child protection policy.

### ***Guiding Principles***

Save the Children supports meaningful, good quality children's participation that gives children a genuine opportunity to express their views, be involved in decisions or take action.

The practice standards should be interpreted within the context of the following general principles derived from the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child:

- Children have rights to be listened to, to freely express their views on all matters that affect them, and to freedom of expression, thought, association and access to information.
- Measures should be put in place to encourage and facilitate their participation in accordance with their age and maturity.
- Participation should promote the best interest of the child and enhance the personal development of each child.
- All children have equal rights to participation without discrimination.
- All children have the right to be protected from manipulation, violence, abuse and exploitation.

### ***Definitions***

#### **Child/Young Person**

Following the UN Convention, a child means every human being below the age of eighteen years.

#### **Participation**

Participation is about influencing decision-making and achieving change. Children's participation is an informed and willing involvement of all children, including those

who are differently able and those at risk, in any matter concerning them either directly or indirectly. Children's participation is a value that cuts across all programmes and takes place in all arenas - from homes to government, from local to international levels.

## ***Standard I An Ethical Approach: Transparency, Honesty and Accountability***

### ***What***

Adult organisations and workers are committed to ethical participatory practice and to the primacy of children's best interests.

### ***Why***

There are inevitable imbalances in power and status between adults and children. An ethical approach is needed in order for children's participation to be genuine and meaningful.

### ***How to meet this standard:***

- Girls and boys are able to freely express their views and opinions and have them treated with respect.
- There is clarity of purpose about children's participation and honesty about its parameters. Children understand how much impact they can have on decision-making and who will make the final decision.
- The roles and responsibilities of all involved (children, adults and other stakeholders) are clearly outlined, understood and agreed upon.
- Clear goals and targets are agreed to with the children.
- Children are provided with and have access to relevant information regarding their involvement.
- Children are involved from the earliest possible stage and are able to influence the design and content of participatory processes.

- Children have time to consider their involvement and processes are established to ensure that they are able to give their personal, informed consent to their participation.
- 'Outside' adults involved in any participatory processes are sensitised to working with children, clear about their role and willing to listen and learn.
- Organisations and workers are accountable to children for the commitments they make.
- Where the process of involvement requires representation from a wider group of children, the selection of representatives will be based on principles of democracy and non-discrimination.
- The barriers and challenges that participating children may have faced in other spheres of their lives are considered and discussed with the children involved to reduce any potential negative impact.
- Children are involved in setting the criteria for selection and representation for participation.
- Children are given sufficient information and support to enable them to make an informed decision on their participation.
- Children's participation is voluntary and they can withdraw at any time they wish.
- Children are involved in ways, at levels and at a pace appropriate to their capacities and interests.
- Children's other time commitments are respected and accommodated (e.g. to home, work, school).
- Ways of working and methods of involvement incorporate and build on supportive local structures, knowledge and practice and take into consideration social, economic, cultural and traditional practices.
- Preparation with and support from key adults in children's lives (e.g. parents/guardians, teachers) is gained to ensure wider support for the participation of girls and boys.

### **Standard 2** **Children's Participation is Relevant and Voluntary**

#### **What**

Children participate in processes and address issues that directly and indirectly affect them and have the choice as to whether to participate or not.

#### **Why**

Children's participation should build on their personal knowledge - the information and insights that children have about their own lives, their communities and the issues that affect them. Recognising their other commitments, children participate on their own terms and for lengths of time chosen by them.

#### **How to meet this standard:**

- The issues are of real relevance to the children being involved and draw upon their knowledge, skills and abilities.

### **Standard 3** **A Child-friendly, Enabling Environment**

#### **What**

Children experience a safe, welcoming and encouraging environment for their participation.

#### **Why**

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.

#### **How to implement this standard:**

- Ways of working build the self-esteem and self-confidence of boys and girls 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 are developed in partnership with children

so that they reflect their preferred mediums of expression.

- Sufficient time and resources are made available for quality participation and children are properly supported to prepare for their participation.
- Adults (including children's own parents/guardians) are sensitised to understand the value of children's participation and are enabled to play a positive role in supporting it (e.g. through awareness-raising, reflection and capacity-building)
- Child-friendly meeting places are used where girls and boys feel relaxed, comfortable and have access to the facilities they need. The meeting places must be accessible to children with disabilities.
- Organisational or official procedures are designed/modified to facilitate (rather than intimidate) children and welcome less experienced boys and girls.
- Support is provided where necessary to share information and/or build skills and capacity to enable children, individually and collectively, to participate effectively.
- Children are asked what information they need and accessible information is shared with children in good time, in child friendly formats and in languages that the children understand, including children with visual or hearing impairments.
- In situations where children meet with different native/first languages, access to written information and professional interpretation is provided that allows for children's full participation in discussions.
- Non-technical language is used in all discussions involving children and/or all jargon or technical terms are clearly explained.

## **Standard 4** **Equality of Opportunity**

### **What**

Child participation work challenges and does not reinforce existing patterns of discrimination and exclusion. It encourages those groups of children who typically suffer discrimination and who are often excluded from activities to be involved in participatory processes.

### **Why**

Children, like adults, are not a homogeneous group and participation provides for equality of opportunity for all, regardless of the child's or his or her parent's/guardian's age, race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status.

### **How to implement this standard:**

- All children have an equal chance to participate and systems are developed to ensure that children are not discriminated against because of age, race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status.
- Children's involvement aims to include all rather than a few, this could mean reaching out to children in their local settings rather than inviting representatives to a central point.
- Participatory practice with children is flexible enough to respond to the needs, expectations and situation of different groups of children - and to regularly re-visit these concerns.
- The age range, gender and abilities of children are taken into account in the way participation is organised e.g. in the way information is presented.

- Those working with children are able to facilitate an environment that is non-discriminatory and inclusive.
  - No assumptions are taken for granted about what different groups of children can and cannot do.
  - Children are given an equal opportunity to voice their opinions and have their contributions reflected in any outcomes of a participatory process, including in processes that involve both children and adults.
  - If there is a limit to how many children can participate, children themselves select from among their peers those who will represent them in participatory initiatives based on the principles of democracy and inclusion.
  - Influential adults are engaged to gain family and community support for the participation of discriminated-against groups.
- enable them to work effectively and confidently with children of different ages and abilities.
  - Staff are properly supported and supervised, and evaluate their participation practice.
  - Specific technical skills or expertise (e.g. in communication, facilitation, conflict resolution or multi-cultural working) is built up through a combination of recruitment, selection, staff development and practice exchange.
  - Relations between staff and between staff and management, model appropriate behaviour, treating each other with respect and honesty.
  - Support is provided for managers and staff for whom children's participation represents a significant personal or cultural change, without this being regarded as a problem.
  - Staff are able to express any views or anxieties about involving children in the expectation that these will be addressed in a constructive way.

### **Standard 5 Staff are Effective and Confident**

#### **What**

Adult staff and managers involved in supporting/facilitating children's participation are trained and supported to do their jobs to a high standard.

#### **Why**

Adult workers can only encourage genuine children's participation effectively and confidently if they have the necessary understandings and skills.

#### **How to implement this:**

- All staff and managers are sensitised to children's participation and understand the commitment to children's participation.
- Staff are provided with appropriate training, tools and other development opportunities in participatory practice to

### **Standard 6 Participation Promotes the Safety and Protection of Children**

#### **What**

Child protection policies and procedures form an essential part of participatory work with children.

*Please note: Save the Children staff should use these practice standards in conjunction with the organisation's child protection policy.*

#### **Why**

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.

***How to implement this:***

- The protection rights of children are paramount in the way children's participation is planned and organised.
- Children involved in participation work are aware of their right to be safe from abuse and know where to go for help if needed.
- Skilled, knowledgeable staff are delegated to address and coordinate child protection issues during participatory processes.
- Staff organising a participatory process, have a child protection strategy that is specific to each process. The strategy must be well communicated and understood by all staff involved in the process.
- Safeguards are in place to minimise risks and prevent abuse (e.g. children are adequately supervised and protected at all times; risk assessments are in place for residential activities away from home; children are protected from abuse from other children).
- Staff recognise their legal and ethical obligations and responsibilities (e.g. in respect of their own behaviour or what to do if they are told about the inappropriate behaviour of others). A system for reporting critical incidents is in place and understood by all staff.
- Child protection procedures recognise the particular risks faced by some groups of children and the extra barriers they face to obtaining help.
- Careful assessment is made of the risks associated with children's participation in speaking out, campaigning or advocacy. Depending upon the risks identified, steps may be needed to protect children's identity or to provide follow-up measures to give protection (e.g. to ensure their safe reintegration into their communities).
- Consent is obtained for the use of all information provided by children and information identified as confidential needs to be safeguarded at all times.
- A formal complaints procedure is set up to allow children involved in participatory activities to make a complaint in confidence about any issue concerning their involvement. Information about the complaints procedure is accessible to children in relevant languages and formats.
- No photographs, videos or digital images of a child can be taken or published without that child's explicit consent for a specific use.
- Unless otherwise agreed, it must not be possible to trace information back to individual/groups of children.
- Responsibilities relating to liability, safety, travel and medical insurance are clearly delegated and effectively planned for.

***Standard 7  
Ensuring Follow-up and  
Evaluation******What***

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.

***Why***

It is important that children understand what has been the outcome from their participation and how their contribution has been used. It is also important that, where appropriate, they are given the opportunity to participate in follow-up processes or activities. As a key stakeholder, children are an integral part of monitoring and evaluation processes.

***How to implement this:***

- Children are supported to participate in follow up and evaluation processes.
- Follow up and evaluation is addressed during the planning stages, as an integral part of any participation initiative.
- Children are supported and encouraged

to share their participatory experiences with; peer groups, local communities, organisations and with projects that they may be involved with.

- Children are given rapid and clear feedback on the impact of their involvement, the outcome of any decisions/next steps and the value of their involvement.
- Feedback reaches all children involved.
- Children are asked about their satisfaction with the participation process and for their views on ways in which it could be improved.
- The results of monitoring and evaluation are communicated back to the children involved in an accessible and child-friendly way, and their feedback is taken into account in future participation work.
- Mistakes identified through evaluation are acknowledged and commitments given about how lessons learned will be used to improve participatory processes in the future.

- Adults will evaluate how they have translated and implemented children's priorities and recommendations into their policies, strategies and programmes.
- Sustainability of support is discussed with children. Adults will provide clear feedback to children regarding the extent/limit of their commitment to support children's ongoing initiatives and organisations. If ongoing support is not possible, adults will provide children with resources and support to make contact with other agencies who can support them.

It is hoped that through using the standards, Save the Children can share its understanding of meaningful children's participation with children's organisations and other partners, and that together we can better establish a safe and meaningful environment for children's participation. To help ensure this, staff should use these practice standards in conjunction with the Save the Children's Child Protection Policy.



## *Hart's Ladder of Participation*

Roger Hart (1992) proposed the first comprehensive definition of the concept of participation based on his experiences in environmental studies. He described participation as the "process of sharing decisions that affect one's life and the life of the community in which one lives. It is the means by which democracy is built and it is a standard against which democracies should be measured." According to Hart, participation is the "fundamental right of citizenship."

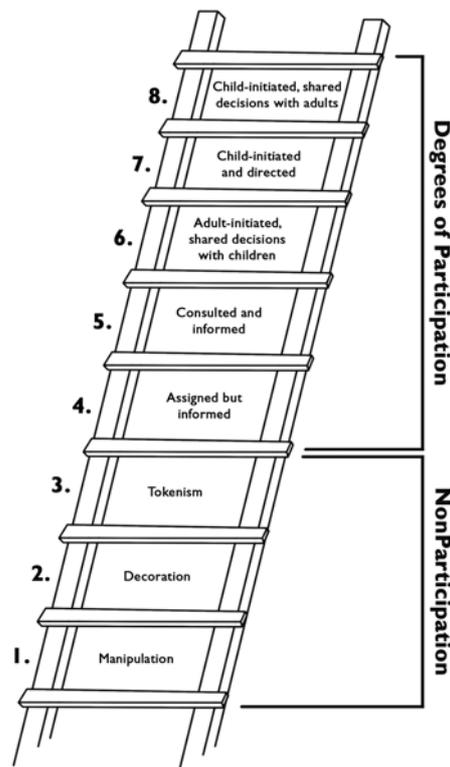
The key element of Hart's definition is decision-making. He describes participation as a ladder, with levels of children's involvement in projects ranging from non-participation to full participation. He identifies eight levels of participation, calling this the Ladder of Participation.

### *Hart's Ladder of Participation (Hart 1992)*

1. **Manipulation.** In this kind of "participation," children have no understanding of the issues and hence do not understand their actions. They are consulted but given no feedback on how the ideas they shared during the consultation are used.
2. **Decoration.** Children's "participation" involves providing entertainment through performances, or simply providing evidence of their involvement.

3. **Tokenism.** Here, children appear to have a voice. They are invited to sit in conference panels as representatives of children but provided no opportunity to formulate their ideas on the subject of discussion. Likewise no process enables them to consult with other children they are supposed to represent.

The next five levels represent genuine participation. Hart describes how the child is able to participate meaningfully by thoroughly understanding and choosing to become involved in the project.



4. **Assigned-but-informed.** This represents the first level of genuine participation. Here, children understand the intentions of the project; they know who made the decision concerning their involvement and why; they have a meaningful role; and they volunteered for the project after it was made clear to them.
5. **Consulted-and-informed.** Here, the project is designed and run by adults but children understand the project and their opinions are treated seriously.
6. **Adult-initiated, shared decisions with children.** Although adults initiated the project, decision-making is shared with young people.
7. **Child-initiated and directed.** Children can initiate and direct their own projects provided adults are able to leave children alone to design their own projects.
8. **Child-initiated, shared decisions with adults** This the highest level of participation, according to Hart's model. Here, young people incorporate adults into projects they have designed and managed. Hart does not differentiate it from the other levels of participation. He explains this level by citing examples and by saying that this kind of participation is very rare.

# A Social Ecology of Children's Rights<sup>17</sup>

# 5 ANNEX

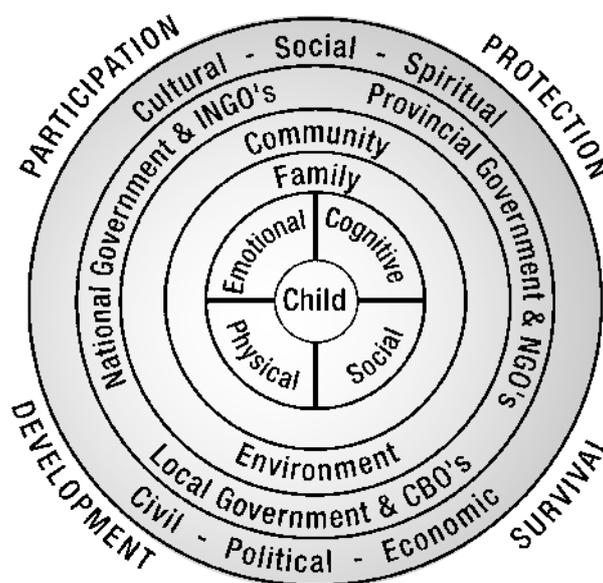
A social ecology approach to children's rights explores the complex, multidimensional and inter-related social aspects of the rights-based approach. The figure presented below represents a 'Child Rights Social Ecology Framework' that can be used to better understand the context of participation. This figure places each child at the centre of a series of concentric, nested circles or social 'systems' influencing the child's capacity to participate in his or her social environment. The child's basic human developmental needs are represented in the inner physical, cognitive, emotional and social quadrants. The next levels address the role of the child's family, comprised of various family patterns including nuclear, extended, fragmented, alternative guardians and other immediate primary care providers of children in promoting meaningful participation.

The following level includes the community and the child's natural and human-made environment. It is recognised that patterns of development and participation will take various routes and forms based on each child's "developmental niche". This system is comprised of cultural values influencing children's development, specific child-rearing patterns, and the environmental conditions influencing variations in healthy growth and development. The environment includes such things as the

presence or absence of child-friendly community structures (e.g. play spaces, safe housing, availability of fresh drinking water), as well the direct impact of the local natural environment on children's development.

The next level addresses the roles of various forms of government, including local government, provincial or state, national and regional, as well as the presence or absence of alternate forms of governance (e.g. NGOs) and civil society. The final level of the diagram represents the presence of local and

**A Child Rights Social Ecology Framework**



<sup>17</sup> *Children and Partners Project, University of Victoria, Canada, 2002*

national values that either support or do not support children's civil, political, social economic and cultural rights, as well as the role of spiritual beliefs in influencing children's physical and moral development (e.g. support for girls to attend school and values promoting girl's participation in various community activities).

The four UNCRC guiding principles of survival, protection, development and participation are represented as crosscutting themes that emerge in each of these levels that are either strengths or weaknesses in these systems in so far as they promote a rights-based approach. Typically, stronger links between each system of circles results in children having healthier connections

through positive relationships with their human and natural environment, which in turn leads to healthier individual and community development.

The present research applies the Child Rights Social Ecology Framework as a holistic conceptual grid upon which the various dimensions of participation can be assessed and compared in relation to the specific protection issues being addressed in this research. In addition to the various levels addressed in the framework, the project will also examine the temporal, historical evolution of policy and programme development affecting participation.

## *Child-friendly Summary of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child<sup>18</sup>*

# 6 ANNEX

### **Article 1**

Everyone under 18 years of age has all the rights in this Convention.

### **Article 2**

The Convention applies to everyone whatever their race, religion, abilities, whatever they think or say, whatever type of family they come from.

### **Article 3**

All organisations concerned with children should work towards what is best for you.

### **Article 4**

Governments should make these rights available to you.

### **Article 5**

Governments should respect the rights and responsibilities of (your) families to direct and guide (you) their children so that, as (you) they grow, (you) they learn to use (your) their rights properly.

### **Article 6**

You have the right to life. Governments should ensure that children survive and develop healthily.

### **Article 7**

You have the right to a legally registered name and nationality. You also have the right to know, and as far as possible to be cared for by, your parents.

### **Article 8**

Governments should respect (your) children's right to a name, a nationality and family ties.

### **Article 9**

You should not be separated from your parents unless it is for your own good - for example, if a parent is mistreating or neglecting you. If your parents have separated, you have the right to stay in contact with both parents, unless this might harm you.

### **Article 10**

Families who live in different countries should be allowed to move between those countries so that parents and children can stay in contact or get back together as a family.

### **Article 11**

Governments should take steps to stop children like you being taken out of (your) their own country illegally.

### **Article 12**

You have the right to say what you think should happen when adults are making decisions that affect you, and to have your opinions taken into account.

### **Article 13**

You have the right to get, and to share, information as long as the information is not damaging to yourself or others.

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<sup>18</sup> UNICEF

**Article 14**

You have the right to think and believe what you want and to practise your religion, as long as you are not stopping other people from enjoying their rights. Parents should guide children on these matters.

**Article 15**

You have the right to meet with other children and young people and to join groups and organisations, as long as this does not stop other people from enjoying their rights.

**Article 16**

You have the right to privacy. The law should protect you from attacks against your way of life, your good name, your family and your home.

**Article 17**

You have the right to reliable information from the mass media. Television, radio, and newspapers should provide information that you can understand, and should not promote materials that could harm you.

**Article 18**

Both parents share responsibility for bringing up their children, and should always consider what is best for each child. Governments should help parents by providing services to support them, especially if both parents work.

**Article 19**

Governments should ensure that you children are properly cared for, and protect you them from violence, abuse and neglect by your their parents or anyone else who looks after you them.

**Article 20**

If you cannot be looked after by your own family, you must be looked after properly, by people who respect your religion, culture and language.

**Article 21**

If you are adopted, the first concern must be what is best for you. The same rules should apply whether the adoption takes place in the country where you were born or if you are taken to live in another country.

**Article 22**

If you are a child who has come into a country as a refugee, you should have the same rights as children born in that country.

**Article 23**

If you have a disability, you should receive special care and support so that you can live a full and independent life.

**Article 24**

You have the right to good quality health care and to clean water, nutritious food and a clean environment so that you can stay healthy. Rich countries should help poorer countries achieve this.

**Article 25**

If you are looked after by your local authority rather than your parents, you should have your situation reviewed regularly.

**Article 26**

The government should provide extra money for the children of families in need.

**Article 27**

You have a right to a standard of living that is good enough to meet your physical and mental needs. The government should help families who cannot afford to provide this.

**Article 28**

You have a right to an education. Discipline in schools should respect children's human dignity. Primary education should be free. Wealthy countries should help poorer countries achieve this.

**Article 29**

Education should develop your personality and talents to the full. It should encourage you to respect your parents, your own and other cultures.

**Article 30**

You have a right to learn and use the language and customs of your family whether or not these are shared by the majority of the people in the country where you live.

**Article 31**

You have a right to relax and play and to join in a wide range of activities.

**Article 32**

The government should protect you from work that is dangerous or might harm your health or education.

**Article 33**

The government should provide ways of protecting you from dangerous drugs.

**Article 34**

The government should protect you from sexual abuse.

**Article 35**

The government should make sure that you are not abducted or sold.

**Article 36**

You should be protected from any activities that could harm your development.

**Article 37**

If you break the law, you should not be treated cruelly. You should not be put in a prison with adults and you should be able to keep in contact with your family.

**Article 38**

Governments should not allow children under 16 to join the army. In war zones, you should receive special protection.

**Article 39**

If you have been neglected or abused, you should receive special help to restore your self-respect.

**Article 40**

If you are accused of breaking the law, you should receive legal help. Prison sentences for children should only be used for the most serious offences.

**Article 41**

If the laws of a particular country protect you better than the articles of the Convention, then those laws should stay.

**Article 42**

The government should make the Convention known to all parents and children.

Articles 43-54 are about how adults and governments should work together to make sure all children get all their rights.



## *Compilation of Remarks by Participants in the Evaluation Form*

# 7 ANNEX

### **The most useful aspects of the workshops were:**

- The orientation towards UNCRC
- Structured learning of children's participation
- The entire concept of participation and the scope for integration
- The practice standards for ethical and meaningful child participation
- To promote accountability with children
- Child-centred and child focus approach
- Broadening the understanding of participation
- Field visit provided an opportunity to put the participation theory in practice and also know what limited tools and techniques we have for working with children.
- Positive socialisation and non-discrimination game
- Experimental games
- How to concentrate on the disabled
- Child rights - right holders and duty bearers' framework
- Field visit
- Demonstrated how to include child participation in programme management cycle.
- Taught tools and techniques on child participation with practical examples - hope we will be able to use them in our current programmes.
- Learnt how to work with children - and now we can distinguish what is meaningful and not meaningful participation.
- To know that all tools are useful for our activities.
- Need to work with adult/ community to make child participation a reality.
- Children's participation should be voluntary and not forceful. It should not be abused.
- Child participation concepts and games, tools and techniques - I will use these with my team members.
- Knowing the views of adults and children during field visit - the importance of child participation.
- Learned innovative techniques.
- To understand the concepts/issues of childhood.

### **The workshop helped me as follows:**

- Has helped to evolve my child rights and participation understanding.
- I would like to see how child participation comes into practice.
- Helped me in understanding child participation in UNCRC and Human Rights Framework.
- Provided insight on discrimination and diversity.

- Learning about practice standards.
- In understanding the logic of child participation and making me think.

### **Do you have any comments on the facilitators and facilitating style?**

- Can reduce the use of jargons and short forms or abbreviations
- The examples shared were very good and inspiring

- Very good facilitation
- Attractive facilitator
- Excellent
- Giving training schedule in advance will help the participants
- Some sessions were very fast/quick
- Very nice, you must continue your style
- Ravi, you are excellent!
- Very good facilitation. Styles are attractive
- Every thing is fine but some presentations were little too fast
- Good presentation - made more effective because of illustrations and appropriate case studies
- Please avoid jargons
- I admired Mr. Ravi as an excellent facilitator

<b>16th August</b>	<b>Excellent</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Not so Good</b>	<b>Bad</b>
Overall	4	15	0	0
Presentations	5	14	0	0
Small Group Discussion	8	11	0	0
Venue	12	7	0	0
Food and Fun	10	9	0	0

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## **The vision**

Save the Children works for:

- a world which respects and values each child
- a world which listens to children and learns
- a world where all children have hope and opportunity

## **The mission**

Save the Children fights for children's rights.

We deliver immediate and lasting improvements to children's lives worldwide.

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