# Getting it Right for Children

**A practitioners' guide to child rights programming**



**Save the Children**

**The International Save the Children Alliance is the world's leading independent children's rights organisation, with members in 28 countries and operational programmes in more than 100. We fight for children's rights and deliver lasting improvements to children's lives worldwide.**
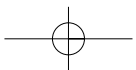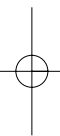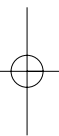
Cover Photo: Christie Johnston
*Mohammehd, 12, who attends a school for child domestic workers in Kolkata, India. More than 50,000 children work as domestic servants in Kolkata, many of them without pay and without access to education.*

# **Contents**

# Foreword

When, in 1989, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and the process of ratification by Member States began, we entered a new period of history in the quality of the relationship between public bodies, society and children throughout the world. The Convention gave birth to a new social contract based on two basic premises – the recognition of the child as an active subject of rights, and of the States Parties as bearers of non-transferable responsibility for creating the necessary conditions for the full exercise of these rights, as enshrined in the United Nations instrument.

In the course of this journey – through economically, culturally, socially and otherwise diverse contexts, including regions seriously affected by conflict – the Convention has been incorporated into new legislation and has found its way into treatises and doctrinaire definitions, with organised civil society at both national and international level taking a leading role. The universal monitoring system, essentially comprising the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child, has accompanied the States Parties on their journey, highlighting, by means of its observations and recommendations, the need to concentrate efforts to increase implementation of the Convention's provisions and principles.

The International Save the Children Alliance, together with other international non-governmental organisations has, and continues to, promote the different paths explored during this process. At the same time, it has recognised in the last few years that the legitimacy of the Convention on the Rights of the Child – as with other human rights treaties – lies in the capacity of states to employ a rights-based approach to policy-making. Through a

number of different initiatives, the Alliance has thus worked strategically towards setting a conceptual agenda that will be acceptable in different parts of the world and at all levels of society.

With this publication, the Alliance is reaffirming its commitment to policies that safeguard children's rights, and also draws attention to the need to take actual steps in this direction, in the form of a practical guide to the implementation of rights-based public policy programming. This guide, which has undoubtedly been enriched by the Alliance's own experience and which takes into account the wide range of possible implementation scenarios, provides a great incentive to take the UNCRC beyond rhetoric and lip service to a rights-based approach and on to a more practical level, one of direct impact on those policies that guarantee the rights of children and adolescents throughout the world. By rising to the new challenges presented by the enforcement of the UNCRC, in a context where the strengthening of international, regional and national bodies working to promote and protect child rights is essential, this Save the Children Alliance publication represents a particularly significant contribution to this new period of history in child rights.

**Dr Norberto I Liwski**
Former Member
UNCRC Committee

# Preface

Fighting to realise children's rights is at the heart of Save the Children's mission. In a world where children continue to go hungry, suffer preventable diseases, are abused and exploited and denied access to education, Save the Children works to give children the best possible start in life and to ensure that their rights are universally recognised.

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) underpins everything that Save the Children does. When it was ratified by the vast majority of states, the Convention brought with it a renewed worldwide commitment to children's rights and improving their lives. Save the Children therefore pursues a child rights programming approach in its development and humanitarian work. The concepts underpinning this approach were set out in our handbook *Child Rights Programming: How to Apply Rights Based Approaches to Programming.*

However, despite increasingly wide acceptance of the need for a systematic application of approaches based on children's rights, it has proved difficult to move from conceptual understanding to practical delivery. Application remains patchy and unsystematic.

This practitioners' guide complements our handbook and provides a range of explanations, tools, checklists, case studies, programme examples and key references. Most are taken from our own global experience. It presents what has already worked for those applying child rights programming and answers some of the recurring questions.

We invite development and humanitarian practitioners to take on the challenge of making a reality of children's rights. Make child rights

programming part of your day-to day business. Please try out the tools, adapt them, and develop new tools.

We need to learn from your experiences. Please document them and share them with us. Together, we can make real progress in child rights programming for the benefit of children and young people everywhere.

**Barry Clarke**
Chair, International Save the Children Alliance

# Acknowledgements

This guide has been developed by the Save the Children CRP-PEN (Child Rights Programming Professional Exchange Network). The project has been co-ordinated by Duncan Trotter on behalf of the network with much of the material being gathered and written by Amanda Harding, a freelance consultant. Thanks are also due to all those in Save the Children programmes and offices who have contributed examples of their work.

Save the Children thanks the following organisations for permission to include their resources on the CD ROM that accompanies this publication: Child Rights Information Network (CRIN), Inter Agency Standing Committee (IASC), NGO Group for the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

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## International Save the Children Alliance CRP-PEN members

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# Abbreviations and acronyms

| | |
|---|---|
| CP | Child protection |
| CRB | Child-rights based |
| CRP | Child rights programming |
| CRSA | Child Rights Situation Analysis |
| CBO | Community-based organisation |
| EPP | Emergency preparedness plan |
| FBO | Faith-based organisation |
| GIM | Global impact monitoring |
| HEA | Household economy analysis |
| HRBA | Human rights-based approaches to programming |
| INGO | International non-governmental organisation |
| M&E | Monitoring and evaluation |
| NGO | Non-governmental organisation |
| PRSP | Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper |
| RBA | Rights-based approaches |
| UNCRC | United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child |

# 1  Introduction

This child rights programming (CRP) practitioners' guide will help you apply child rights principles and values[1] at every stage of your programming. It answers many of the "how to" questions that staff and organisations using a CRP approach have raised.

CRP puts children at the centre of your programming. It recognises children as rights-holders and helps you engage them as actors in their own development. It recognises governments as the main duty-bearers in fulfilling children's rights, and promotes accountability to their citizens. It will ensure your plans and activities are based on four fundamental principles relating to children's rights: survival and development; non-discrimination; child participation and the best interests of the child.

Each chapter in the guide gives you: key steps that are tried and tested; top tips to help you as you begin the process; case studies of successful practice from a range of countries and contexts; a 'yes, but' section with common dilemmas and possible solutions; and key websites and publications if you need further information. The key steps and case studies are mostly taken from Save the Children's own global experience.

The guide shows that adopting a child rights-based approach is the most effective way to bring about positive and lasting change for children, their families and communities. It is not an easy process to embark on – many organisations are still addressing the challenges it involves.[2] It will take time, resources (both human and financial) and commitment, in both the short and long term. You might need to change the way your organisation works, its culture, structures and management. You might also need to change the way you work with children, communities, partners and donors. But your investment will reap huge rewards.

## Who is this guide for?

The guide is designed primarily for people working in humanitarian and development programmes, in a wide range of situations and contexts. It has been written with the needs of senior national programme staff in mind. It also targets organisational decision-makers, policy advisers and programme support staff. And it is relevant to your partner organisations, donors and others with an interest in rights-based approaches and/or children's rights.

The guide assumes that you:
• have a working knowledge of the UNCRC
• have some understanding of CRP, its concepts and principles, and that you are familiar with the basic concepts of programming (eg, the programme cycle, including planning, setting goals and objectives, implementation, monitoring and evaluation)[3]
• have a basic understanding of good practice in humanitarian and development work
• ideally will have read the handbook *Child Rights Programming: How to Apply Rights Based Approaches to Programming* (Save the Children, 2005).

## How to use this guide

We hope the guide gives you a framework you can use to incorporate a child rights perspective when you draw up new strategies and plans or update existing documents. The following tips should help you get the most out of the guide:
• Take your time to read Chapter 2, as it is more conceptual than the others. It sets out what we mean by child rights programming and the key tools and processes involved. **An understanding of Chapter 2 is essential, as it provides the basis for each subsequent chapter.**
• Chapters 3, 4 and 5 look at three key stages of a child rights programming cycle – situation analysis; planning; and monitoring, evaluation, learning and feedback.
• Chapters 6, 7 and 8 explore three aspects of implementing a child rights-based approach in greater depth – partners and working relations, advocacy, and emergencies.
• Chapter 9 looks at what it means to become a rights-based organisation.

Try out the various tools with your team members. They are not blueprints but should be explored and adapted to your specific context. We encourage you to test out the ideas and share your own experience and insights with others. You can use the guide during inductions of new staff, with partners and donors, in planning workshops, training sessions and at any stage of your programme cycle.

## CD-ROM resources

The accompanying CD-ROM contains various resources that are referenced in the guide or the further information sections.

## Notes

[1] These concepts have previously been set out in the Save the Children handbook, *Child Rights Programming: How to apply rights-based approaches to programming*, Save the Children, 2005

[2] For an analysis of Save the Children's progress to date, see *A Study to Benchmark Progress in Adopting and Implementing Child Rights Programming*, Save the Children, 2004

[3] See, for example, *Toolkits: A practical guide to monitoring, evaluation and impact assessment*, Save the Children, 2003

# 2 Child rights programming

> **By the end of this chapter you will:**
>
> • be aware of the human rights standards and principles that form the basis for child rights programming (CRP)
>
> • understand the key CRP tools and how to apply them
>
> • know how to plan your programme activities to help duty-bearers meet their obligations, and rights-holders claim their entitlements.

This chapter explains what we mean by child rights programming. It sets out the key tools you need to ensure that your programme activities and advocacy work are based on protecting and fulfilling children's rights, and helping others do the same.

## What is child rights programming?

Rights-based approaches to relief and development work are based on fundamental human rights principles and standards. Child rights programming (CRP) draws upon these and upon the general principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). In 2005, Save the Children developed an organisational statement of intent (see box opposite) on CRP. It echoes the United Nations' own Common Understanding on Human Rights Based Development, agreed in 2003.

Similarly, if your organisation is committed to CRP, you should use the standards and principles set out in the UNCRC as your guide. All of your programme and advocacy work should be based on two key activities: helping duty-bearers meet their obligations, and supporting children (as rights-holders) to claim their rights. (See the section on duty-bearers and rights-holders on p.9.)

**Child Rights Programming: Save the Children's Common Understanding**[1]

**Realisation of Rights** All Save the Children's programme work, including development and humanitarian assistance and all policy interventions, should further the realisation of children's rights as laid down in the UNCRC and other international human rights instruments.

**Standards and Principles** Children's rights standards and principles derived from the UNCRC and other international human rights instruments should guide Save the Children's work in all sectors and in all places at all stages of the programming process.

**Obligations and Claims** All Save the Children's work should contribute to the development of the capacity of duty-bearers to meet their obligations: to respect, protect and fulfil children's rights. Save the Children should empower and support children as rights-holders, directly and through their families and communities, and contribute to the claiming of their rights.

You might find it helpful to think about CRP in terms of the definition of each word:

**Child** – *all girls and boys under the age of 18, characterised as a period of evolving capabilities and of vulnerabilities relative to adults.*

**Rights** – *defined as international human rights applicable to children, set out primarily in the UNCRC but also found in all other human rights conventions.*

**Programming** – *management of a set of activities (including analysis, planning, implementation and monitoring) towards a defined goal or objective and involving good development practice.*

Together, this gives you a working definition of CRP:

*Child rights programming means using the principles of children's rights to plan, implement and monitor programmes with the overall goal of improving the position of children so that all boys and girls can fully enjoy their rights and can live in societies that acknowledge and respect children's rights.*

### Children and childhood

The understanding of childhood varies significantly around the world. There are different perceptions about what children need for their optimum development, what environments best provide for those needs, and what form and level of protection is appropriate for children at a specific age. A 17-year-old has very different needs and capacities to those of a six-month-old baby. A ten-year-old in one country may be protected from economic or domestic responsibilities, while in another such responsibilities are deemed beneficial for both the child and the family. How should governments and societies, including parents and other carers, interpret and apply universal human rights standards across such diverse perceptions of childhood? This is one of the questions you will need to consider in the context where you work.

You need an awareness and understanding of childhood and children's 'evolving capacities' to use CRP effectively (see box below).

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### Evolving capacities and childhood[2]

Different societies understand 'childhood' in different ways. This leads adults to see children through a set of pre-determined assumptions that inform both how they are treated and what they are deemed capable of achieving. The tendency is to judge children's competencies against a set of adult standards, rather than to value what children have to offer as children.

The UNCRC recognises that children in different environments and cultures, with different life experiences, will acquire competencies at different ages, and this process will vary according to circumstances. Children do not acquire competencies merely as a consequence of age, but rather through experience, culture and levels of parental support and expectation.

The concept of 'evolving capacities' is central to the balance embodied in the UNCRC between empowerment and protection. This balance recognises children as active agents in their own lives, entitled to be listened to, respected and granted increasing autonomy in the exercise of rights, while also being entitled to protection in accordance with their relative immaturity and youth.

It is important to recognise that it is not the respect for rights, as such, that is influenced by the evolving capacities of children; all the rights in the UNCRC extend to all children, irrespective of their capacity. What is at issue is where responsibility for exercising those rights lies.

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## Key tools

Here are the key tools you need to use CRP in your day-to-day work. Each tool has a corresponding icon to help you identify it more easily as you work through each chapter in this guide.

**The duty-bearer and rights-holder relationship**

**The four general principles of the UNCRC**

**Circles of influence and obligation**

**Dimensions of change**

**The three pillars**

**The learning and feedback loop**

The following diagram shows how the child rights-based programme cycle is rooted in an understanding of human rights and child rights principles. The relationship between duty-bearers and rights-holders informs all subsequent stages of the cycle. The cycle then moves through analysis, using the circles of influence and obligation tool (see Chapter 3 on carrying out a child rights situation analysis (CRSA)), and on to planning, using the dimensions of change as your framework (see Chapter 4). Implementation should be a balance of work across the three pillars. Monitoring and evaluation provide the basis for the learning and feedback loop.

**The child rights programme cycle**



**6. External influencing, advocacy and accountability**

**2. Analysis (CRSA) (Circles of influence and obligation)**

**1. Understanding and awareness of human rights principles and childhood**

**5. Monitoring, evaluation, learning and feedback**

**4. Implementation (The three pillars)**

**3. Planning (Dimensions of change)**
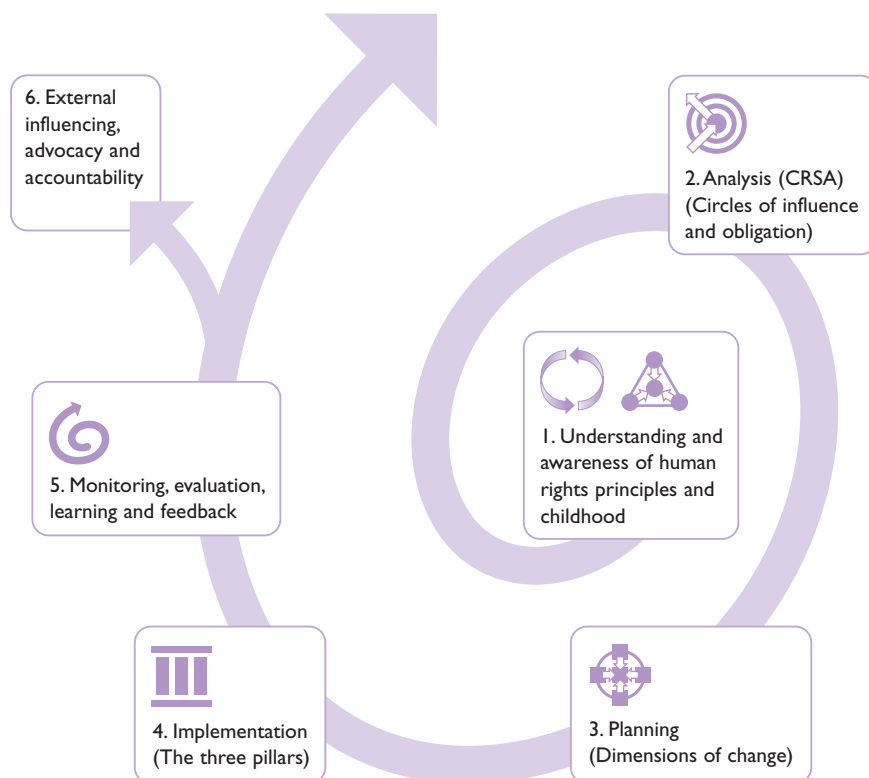
## An important note on ways of working

Using a CRP approach means adopting certain ways of working (processes) that are grounded in human rights and child rights principles. Bear these in mind at every stage of your work and when using the tools presented in this guide.

The key processes are:
• involving children at every stage of the programme cycle
• working with the most vulnerable children and countering discrimination
• creating a rights climate through redressing power relations in favour of children and their rights
• working in partnership
• working with and enabling the state
• empowering civil society and encouraging community involvement.

The first two relate directly to two of the four UNCRC general principles (see The four general principles of the UNCRC on p.10). The notion of a rights climate is introduced in Chapter 3, on child rights situation analysis (CRSA). Working in partnership is explored more fully in Chapter 6.

The degree to which you can implement these ways of working will depend on your context.

Here are the details on each of the key tools for CRP.

## The duty-bearer and rights-holder relationship

A fundamental element of rights-based approaches is the process through which duty-bearers meet, and are held to account for, their obligations, and through which rights-holders are empowered to claim their entitlements. So you will need to understand how this relationship works at various levels in your particular context. Your programme should help enable the effective functioning of the duty-bearer–rights-holder relationship. You may need to take action to hold duty-bearers to account and to support them to fulfil their obligations. You may also need to empower and strengthen the capacity of children as rights-holders (and others in civil society) to claim the entitlements to which they are due.

The diagram below describes this relationship.

**The duty-bearer and rights-holder relationship**



**Accountability**

**Duty-bearers**
Enabled to respect, protect and fulfil rights

**Participation**

**Human rights are**
• universal (non-discrimination)
• inalienable (not taken/given away)
• indivisible
• interdependent (loss of one impacts on all)

**Duty-bearers**
Fulfil *responsibility* towards rights-holders

**Rights-holders**
Enabled and empowered to hold duty-bearers to account

**Rights-holders**
Claim *rights* from duty-bearers
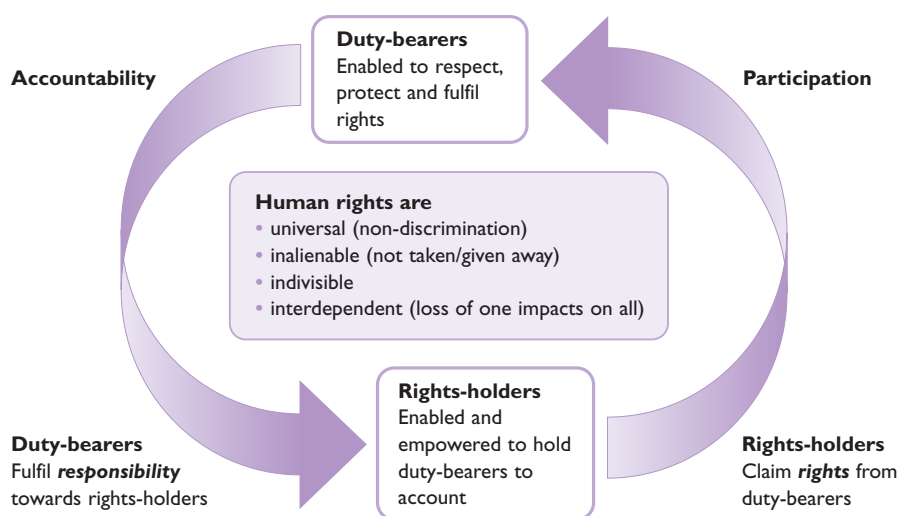
### Who is the duty-bearer?

Duty-bearers are those defined as having obligations under the UNCRC and other international human rights conventions. The **state** is the **main duty-bearer**. It has obligations to respect, protect and fulfil people's rights. It may delegate some of its responsibilities to others (such as private companies or civil society groups). The international community also has obligations to support the state in meeting its responsibilities to fulfil children's rights. **Parents and others who care for children** are also duty-bearers, with specific responsibilities towards children. They may be described as **secondary duty-bearers**. Other individuals and groups may have certain responsibilities for children, depending on the moral codes of the particular society or culture. These are generally **moral duties** rather than legal duties.

Here is some more detail on the responsibilities of the state:

As main duty-bearer, the state has obligations to respect, protect and fulfil children's rights.

- *Respect* – States must not interfere directly or indirectly with the enjoyment of rights.
- *Protect* – States must take measures that prevent third parties from interfering with the enjoyment of rights.
- *Fulfil (facilitate)* – States must adopt appropriate legislative, administrative, budgetary, judicial, promotional and other measures towards the full realisation of rights.
- *Fulfil (provide)* – States must directly provide assistance or services for the realisation of rights.

The rights-holder must be enabled to claim his/her rights and hold duty-bearers to account for the fulfilment of their obligations. A child's ability to do this directly will change over time according to his/her evolving capacities. Rights-holders also have a duty to respect the rights of others.

## The four general principles of the UNCRC

If the duty-bearer–rights-holder relationship is to work effectively for children, it requires a 'rights climate' in which the four general principles of the UNCRC are fulfilled. The four principles are: survival and development; non-discrimination; child participation and the right to be heard; and the best interests of the child. They are based on human rights principles,

while taking into account the situation of children and their evolving capacities. A fuller explanation can be found in the handbook *Child Rights Programming: How to Apply Rights Based Approaches to Programming* (Save the Children, second edition, 2005). This guide describes how the principles can be applied in practice.

**The four general principles of the UNCRC**
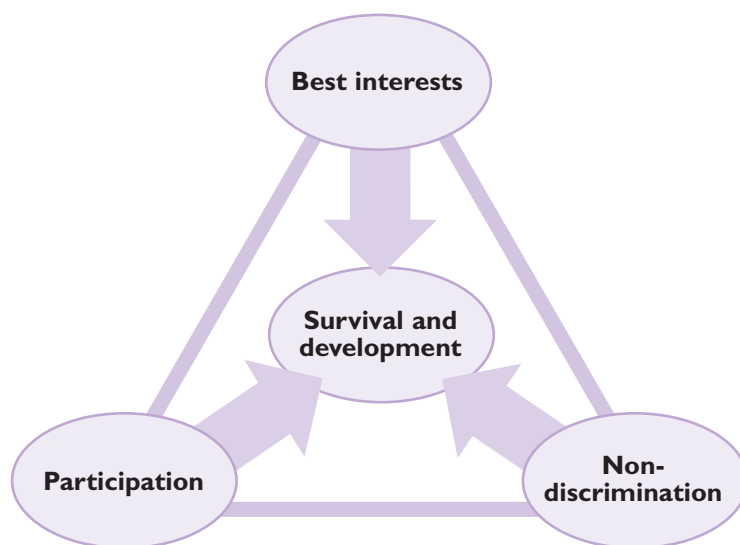


### Survival and development

While children's survival often relates directly to children's right to life, children's right to development (as described in the UNCRC) must be interpreted in its broadest sense, encompassing the physical, psychological, emotional, social and spiritual development of the child. The state, as main duty-bearer, has a responsibility to ensure the survival and development of children to the maximum extent possible. Where the state is unable (or at times unwilling) to assume its responsibilities, international donors, NGOs, civil society organisations and the private sector may need to support and complement the state through financial, technical and logistical responses.

To fulfil children's right to survival and development in practice, you need:
• an **awareness** and **understanding** of childhood and children's evolving capacities. You should also provide appropriate information and training to the children you work with, to government, and to partners

● GETTING IT RIGHT FOR CHILDREN

- an **analysis** of the state's capacity to prioritise children's survival and development, including: financial resources, budget allocation and funding mechanisms; policies and legislation; technical capacity; and organisational capacity. You should also **analyse** the capacity of other groups (civil society, international organisations, private sector, etc) who contribute to the fulfilment of children's survival and development rights
- **to plan** programmes based on this analysis, including the perspectives of all relevant stakeholders in the process
- **to implement** responses that strengthen the state's capacity to fulfil its obligations while also working with a broad range of other partners
- **to monitor and evaluate** against clear indicators that measure direct changes in children's lives, as well as changes in capacity, policies, legislation and attitudes.

### Non-discrimination

The UNCRC focuses on the elimination of discrimination in three main areas: against individual children; against specific groups of children; and against the population group as a whole. Tackling discrimination is not simply about imposing top-down strategies. Instead, your programmes should analyse power relationships and discrimination and the impacts these have on the children you work with.

In practice this means:
- your organisation should promote non-discrimination and diversity **awareness**. You could also provide appropriate information and training to the children you work with, and to governments and partners
- you should include non-discrimination/diversity **analysis** as part of your child rights situation analysis (CRSA) defined in Chapter 3. This would consider:
  - which groups of children experience discrimination (make sure data is disaggregated)
  - multiple forms of discrimination on the basis of different aspects of social identity; for example, a disabled girl from a minority ethnic group
  - an analysis of work that other local, national or international groups are doing to tackle discrimination
- you should **plan** objectives and advocacy goals that reflect the non-discrimination analysis and clearly demonstrate how discrimination will be addressed

- you should **implement** your programme in ways that engage with, empower and impact on children who face discrimination; that build internal and public awareness around issues of discrimination; and that demonstrate to others the value and abilities of vulnerable children, viewing them as social actors
- **monitoring and evaluation**: use clear indicators to measure a reduction in discrimination and changes in attitude. You should also consider the intended and unintended impacts on different groups and get the views of a range of stakeholders.

### Child participation and the right to be heard

Participation, as enshrined in the UNCRC, is about children and young people having the opportunity to express their views, influence decision-making and achieve change in areas that affect their lives. Children's participation is the informed and willing involvement of children, including the most marginalised and those of different ages and abilities, in all matters concerning them.

In practice this means:
- you need an **awareness** and **understanding** of children's evolving capacities and their ability to act on their own behalf. (For example, there are different ways of involving older and younger children depending on their level of understanding and ability to participate. See references at the end of this chapter.)
- you should **analyse** the programme environment to identify the barriers to children speaking out or to their voices being heard
- **planning**: you should create space and opportunity for children's views to influence programme design
- **implementation**: you should create space and opportunity for children's voices to be heard within their families, communities and beyond; build children's confidence, knowledge of their rights and ability to protect themselves; give children an opportunity to learn and practice important life skills; and empower children as members of civil society and as active and responsible citizens
- **monitoring and evaluation**: use clear indicators to measure the extent of children's participation and the creation of spaces and mechanisms for their views to be taken into account in decision-making
- being accountable to children through **feedback**.

## Ensuring quality participation

Save the Children has developed seven **practice standards** to guide children's participation:

1. An ethical approach: transparency, honesty and accountability

2. Children's participation is relevant and voluntary

3. A child-friendly, enabling environment

4. Equality of opportunity

5. Staff are effective and confident

6. Participation promotes the safety and protection of children

7. Ensuring follow-up and evaluation

A more in-depth exploration of these practice standards can be found in *Practice Standards in Children's Participation*, Save the Children, 2005.

### The best interests of the child

This principle touches on every aspect of a child's life. It means that whenever decisions are taken that affect children's lives, the impact of those decisions must be assessed to ensure that the best interests of children are the main consideration. The interests of others – such as parents, the community and the state – should not be the overriding concern, even though they may influence the final decision.

In practice this means:
- you should promote **awareness** of the best interests principle and its implications for decision-making
- you should **analyse** how local and national policy, legislation and practice is informed by children's best interests
- **planning**: allow children's views to influence programme design
- **implementation**: you should facilitate children's direct involvement in the practical implementation of programme activities
- **monitoring and evaluation**: you need to measure the impact of programme activities on children to assess whether their best interests are being

**Case study**

In **Uganda**, working on HIV issues, memory books have become an invaluable tool to help children and parents prepare for the future. Putting together a memory book helps parents find the words to disclose their HIV status to children and their wider families. It helps parents listen to their children and involves children in planning for their future. It helps parents and children consider legal issues, like passing on property to their children and making a will.

The project has been hailed as an unqualified success. Families and communities are more open about disclosing HIV status, with a reduction in the social stigma around HIV and AIDS in project areas. Communities have found practical ways to help affected families, such as waiving school fees for children. The project has expanded to more than 20 districts in Uganda.

Save the Children still supports its partner, the National Community of Women Living with HIV/AIDS in Uganda (NACWOLA), and is currently also doing memory work in Ethiopia and South Africa. The Memory Training Programme has now been adapted and used by other development organisations in many African countries, and is also being used in east Asia. Many organisations are collaborating on the Ten Million Memory Project, which aims to share memory work with ten million people by 2010.

realised. You should also measure the impact of programme activities on policies, practice, attitudes and communities to assess the extent to which children's best interests are being prioritised.

## Circles of influence and obligation

Use this tool when you do your child rights situation analysis (CRSA). It will help you assess how the duty-bearer–rights-holder relationship works, and identify any rights violations and gaps in provision.

Circles of influence and obligation is a practical tool you can use to establish two key things: the dynamic relationship that children, as rights-holders, have with a range of different groups and individuals; and the obligations that duty-bearers hold in relation to children. Understanding who the duty-bearers and

stakeholders are at every level and their respective roles, responsibilities and capacities, is a crucial step. It will help you plan your programme, identify possible partners, and target your advocacy. It will also help ensure that your work at any one level is both informed by and reinforces work at all the other levels.

**Circles of influence and obligation**



## The dimensions of change

Use this tool to help you design your programme and address the gaps identified through your CRSA. It will also help you define indicators so that you can measure what impact your programme is having. Mapping your objectives, indicators and activities against the dimensions of change will show where you need to strengthen your programme design and implementation.
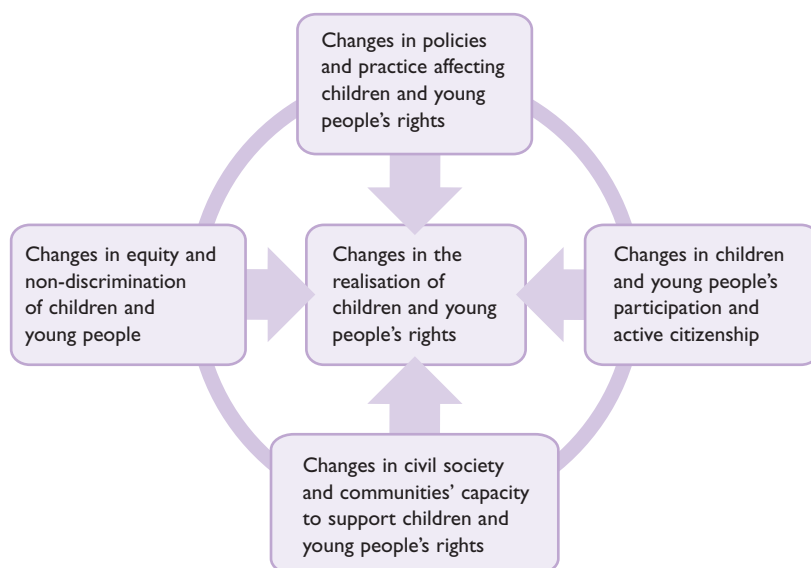
There are five dimensions of change that are critical to the realisation of children's rights. Only by bringing about change in one or more of these areas will you be helping children achieve positive, long-lasting changes in their lives:
• changes in the realisation of children and young people's rights
• changes in policies and practice affecting children and young people's rights

- changes in equity and non-discrimination of children and young people
- changes in children and young people's participation and active citizenship
- changes in civil society and communities' capacity to support children's rights.

This diagram shows how the dimensions of change relate to each other:

**The five dimensions of change**



The dimensions of change are inter-related and mutually reinforcing. They address aspects of the duty-bearer–rights-holder relationship (vertical axis), and the issue of power relations (horizontal axis). Taken together, the five dimensions provide a framework for measuring sustainable impact and change in the realisation of children's rights.

## III  The three pillars of child rights programming
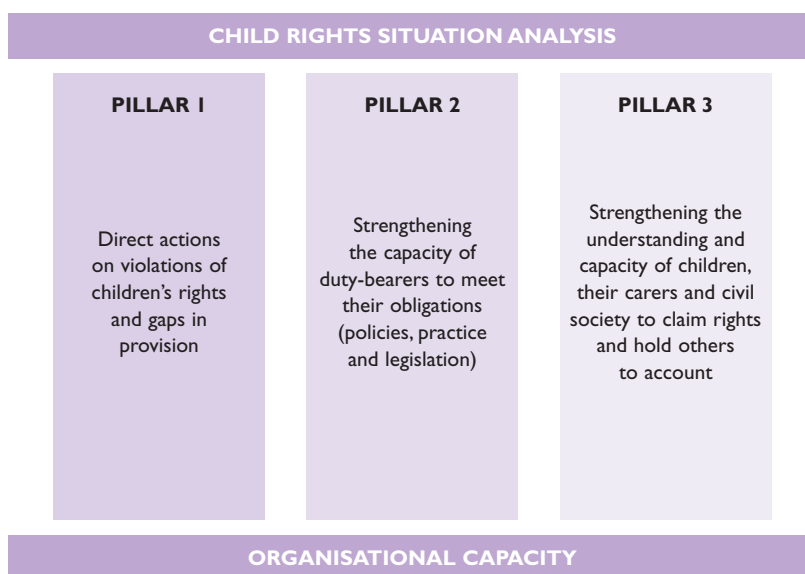
The three pillars model shows the three essential components of a child rights-based programme. Use the tool when you are planning your programme. Your CRSA will establish who the main duty-bearers are in your area, and the extent to which children's rights are being violated. You can then identify how the duty-bearers can be enabled to fulfil their obligations and how children and

civil society can be supported to claim their rights. This may involve you in demonstrating what works and advocating with civil society for its larger scale adoption.

The three pillars can be used as a visual aide to represent a programme strategy, describing the mix and balance of activities. The balance of activities and resources that you allocate between the pillars will vary over time, as your programme progresses and as the capacity and involvement of your partners, the state and other stakeholders change. It is important that you know what the appropriate balance should be at any time, and that work in each pillar is being informed by, and is reinforcing work under, the other two.

**The three pillars of CRP**

| CHILD RIGHTS SITUATION ANALYSIS | | |
|---|---|---|
| **PILLAR 1** | **PILLAR 2** | **PILLAR 3** |
| Direct actions on violations of children's rights and gaps in provision | Strengthening the capacity of duty-bearers to meet their obligations (policies, practice and legislation) | Strengthening the understanding and capacity of children, their carers and civil society to claim rights and hold others to account |
| ORGANISATIONAL CAPACITY | | |

The **first pillar** refers to **direct actions** you take that address gaps in provision and violations of children's rights. Your work should create an evidence base to influence other practitioners. It will give credibility to any advocacy work you undertake (at national or international level). Depending on the nature of your programme, activities could include therapeutic feeding for under-fives, counselling for girls experiencing sexual violence, the provision of primary school materials... and many others.

The **second pillar** focuses on strengthening the capacity of duty-bearers to fulfil their obligations to children. It emphasises the responsibilities of the state as main duty-bearer, and calls for actions that bring about improvements in legislation, policies and practice, structures, mechanisms and resource allocation. Activities could include the integration of child protection measures into a poverty reduction strategic plan, budget monitoring with local authorities, the establishment of decision-making mechanisms that involve children, influencing law reform, the creation of a children's ombudsman… and many others.

The **third pillar** is concerned with strengthening the understanding and capacity of children (as rights-holders) and their carers and civil society to hold duty-bearers to account and to claim rights for children. Activities could include supporting networks promoting children's rights (particularly child-led organisations), organisational development of community-based organisations, raising awareness of children's rights, training and mobilisation of the national media, mobilising professional groups, working in international coalitions… and many others.

Activity in the **first pillar** provides you with evidence, experience and credibility through working directly with children and their families. You can use this evidence to inform your advocacy in the **second pillar** as you seek to influence policy decisions that will bring about the changes you want for children. Your advocacy will be most effective if supported and undertaken by a strong civil society – your work in the **third pillar** – where children and young people and other key groups are empowered and mobilised to claim children's rights.

## The learning and feedback loop

What you learn from monitoring and evaluating your work provides a feedback loop on progress. The knowledge gained informs your future choices and decisions. Through feedback you communicate the results and learning from your work to the various stakeholders, both within and outside of your organisation. It is a key way to demonstrate your accountability, especially to the children and young people involved in your programme. It can stimulate changes that will improve the way in which you work and your effectiveness, provide examples of good practice to be shared with others, and can inform your national and international advocacy work.

## *Remember!*

Child rights programming demands that:
- you use the **UNCRC** as your **framework**. It provides legitimacy, a reference point and opportunities for engagement with its monitoring mechanisms
- the **four general principles** of the UNCRC constitute a filter mechanism throughout your organisation's work. They focus attention on issues of discrimination, the views of children, the mobilisation of resources to ensure children's survival and development, and decision-making processes that make children's best interests a primary consideration
- you seek **children's perspectives**, recognising them as people with dignity and evolving capacities; that they are empowered and assisted to speak out, have their views heard and become an integral part of processes of change.
- **duty-bearers** are identified and held to account
- attention is paid to the most **marginalised**, those whose rights are presently least assured and recognised
- the overall goal is a measurable **impact on the lives of girls and boys** and their rights
- a **long-term** perspective is taken, necessitating an analysis of trends, opportunities and capacities, while also addressing urgent and immediate rights violations
- evidence-based **advocacy** is used to increase the scale of impact on girls and boys (eg, through replication, policy change or increased resource allocation)
- your programme operates at **all levels of society**, ensuring links from one level to another and so maximising impact
- you use **participatory processes** (with a variety of stakeholders, including children and young people) that are empowering
- you enter into a range of **partnerships** (with the state, civil society groups, communities, the private sector, etc) to bring about real change for children.

## **Notes**

[1] The 'common understanding on child rights programming' was agreed by the International Save the Children Alliance CRP Professional Exchange Network, 2005.

[2] For further information, see Lansdown G *The Evolving Capacities of the Child*, Innocenti Insight 11, UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre, Italy, 2005.

# 3  Child rights situation analysis

**By the end of this chapter you will:**

- understand what is meant by a child rights situation analysis (CRSA)

- know how to carry out a CRSA using the key steps.

*This chapter builds on and requires an understanding of the core CRP principles, tools and processes given in Chapter 2.*

This chapter shows you how to do a CRSA, making sure that children and duty-bearers participate in the process. Your CRSA will identify the problems facing children so that you can plan how to make a positive difference to their lives.

## What is a CRSA?

A CRSA is an analysis of the situation of children and their rights. Use it to set out the extent to which children's rights have been realised and to identify the obstacles to fulfilling their rights. Your CRSA can cover a country, a region, or a sector of work (eg, health). No two CRSAs look the same!

## How to do a CRSA

Your CRSA should be carried out by team members, where possible, because they, along with the children and communities you work with, need to own the process. Equip them with extra skills if necessary.

Start by asking some key questions about overall rights, duty-bearers and stakeholders, and the capacities of key groups of people.

## Key questions to ask for your CRSA

### 1. To find out about existing rights

- What is the prevailing rights climate (overall macro economic, political, cultural and social situation as well as likely trends and scenarios)?
- What rights are being violated and why (immediate, underlying and root causes, including a macro analysis)?
- To what extent are all children's survival and development rights being guaranteed?
- What is the situation of marginalised and vulnerable groups of children; what discrimination is taking place and why?
- What is the legislative, policy and practice environment, including national integration of and reporting on the UNCRC?
- To what extent are children's best interests prioritised at every level of society?
- What are the likely scenarios and trends in the coming years and how will they affect different groups of children?

### 2. To find out about duty-bearers and stakeholders

- Who are the duty-bearers?
- Who are the other key actors and stakeholders involved in the protection and fulfilment of children's rights?
- What are the power dynamics between the various stakeholders?
- What are the views and perspectives of a range of stakeholders, including children and young people, particularly in relation to the role different children play within the society?

### 3. To find out about capacity of key groups of people

- What is the capacity of duty-bearers to fulfil their responsibilities?
- What are the obstacles or barriers limiting the capacity of the duty-bearers?
- What is the capacity of stakeholders to fulfil their roles in strengthening the capacity of the duty-bearers and holding them to account?
- What is the capacity of stakeholders to fulfil their roles in empowering children, their carers and communities to claim their rights?
- How far can children influence decisions affecting their lives and why?

## Key steps

Before we present the key steps you will take, here are some top tips to help you plan your CRSA.

**Top tips:**
- Treat this as a learning opportunity for your staff and the people they work with.
- Plan well and include a training element if necessary.
- Encourage the participation of children, carers, duty-bearers and other key stakeholders from the start.
- Think carefully before bringing in consultants. You already know a lot. Use the insights and experience you have!
- Make it clear and concise. This will help you share the findings with the children and communities involved.

Here are the key steps to carrying out your CRSA.

**1. Planning your CRSA**

**2. A desk review/literature review**

**3. Primary research**

**4. Initial analysis**

**5. Further data gathering**

**6. Drafting your CRSA**

**7. Consulting widely**

**8. Finalising and using your CRSA**

Your CRSA is likely to take at least two months. Take care not to let the process take much more time than this, as it may be using up limited resources. You may risk losing momentum.

### 1. Planning your CRSA

Be clear about the purpose, process, roles and responsibilities, time frame and support needs for your CRSA. Discuss your CRSA with your team. A planning workshop is a useful way of discussing the role and process of a CRSA (see sample timetable overleaf).

**Sample timetable for a CRSA planning workshop**

**Aims of the workshop**

1. Achieve a common understanding among all participants of the characteristics of CRP and its practical application within the strategic planning process.
2. Agree on what the current situation for children is (and likely future scenarios) within the country and analyse this situation from a rights-based perspective.
3. Identify areas of missing information and analysis in order to plan for completion of the key areas of the CRSA.

| Day 1 | Day 2 | Day 3 |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Introduction<br>　– Aims and outputs/context<br>　– Introductions<br>　– Approach and expectations<br>　– Day's programme<br>2. Exercise: your personal and professional values and motivation – links to rights-based approaches<br>3. Overview/recap<br>　– UNCRC (quiz)<br>　– CRP, including rights-based programme cycle, Three Pillars and Dimensions of Change<br>4. CRSA<br>　– aims, purpose, headlines, process<br>5. Brainstorm/meditation – what images do we have of children today across the country?<br>6. Presentations (sectors or groups of rights) – max. 10 minutes each<br>　– general context (macro political, economic; perceptions of children)<br>　– health<br>　– education<br>　– protection<br>Buzz and plenary discussion<br>7. Recap of day and evaluation | 1. Introduction to the day and feedback from day 1<br>2. Exercise: "But why" – problem tree on key rights violations and gaps based on agreed problem statements to give an appreciation of linkages and perceptions of cause and effect relationships (immediate, underlying and root causes)<br>3. Exercise: duty-bearer and stakeholder analysis<br>　– mapping duty-bearers/stakeholders at different levels<br>　– barriers to duty-bearers/stakeholders meeting their obligations and responsibilities<br>　– identification of other stakeholders including *influentials* and allies<br>　– Tools: using Circles of Obligation and Influence and capacity gap analysis matrix<br>4. Recap of day and evaluation | 1. Introduction to the day and feedback from day 2<br>　– taking stock – where have we got to so far?<br>　– what do we know and what do we still need to find out?<br>2. Brainstorm/mapping of sources of information<br>　– secondary data<br>　– key informants<br>3. Exercise: children's participation<br>　– identify benefits of and barriers to children's participation within the country<br>　– identify solutions for overcoming those barriers<br>4. Action planning<br>　– next steps on CRSA (timing, roles, responsibilities, etc)<br>　– next steps on overall strategic planning process<br>　– challenges and proposals<br>5. Workshop evaluation |

The box below outlines the areas you would want to consider for a sector-specific CRSA, in this case a CRSA focusing on issues of poverty and economic justice.

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### A sectoral CRSA: Poverty and economic justice

Checklist of areas to consider:

- *Poverty affecting children and their families* from: national survey data (eg, household budget surveys), administrative data, participatory poverty assessments, vulnerability assessments (including household economic approach), other NGO, donor or academic assessments of poverty and exclusion.
- *The root causes of poverty*: economic policy, pandemics, conflict and natural disasters, socio-cultural discrimination, geographic isolation, natural resource base, etc.
- *What keeps the poorest children poor?* Political, cultural, economic, national policy, local (and intra-household) power relations, etc.
- *To what extent is poverty caused by economic policy, and how?* Based on an assessment of the major sources of national income and major economic policies being promoted in your country (contained in a variety of policy documents including those listed below).

You also need to understand the policy context and opportunities for influencing change.

- *Poverty policy frameworks and plans*: Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP), other national poverty reduction strategies (interim or agreed), local poverty plans, sectoral poverty plans (eg, social protection plans), national plans of action for children/orphans and vulnerable children (OVC).
- *The poverty monitoring system/structures*: the institutions involved, approaches to monitoring poverty, the role of civil society organisations (CSOs) and international NGOs, indicators monitored, progress made, PRSP review documents, poverty and social impact analysis work.
- *Key national processes underway*: decentralisation, public sector reform, etc.

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**A sectoral CRSA** *continued*

- *Key donor policies*: World Bank Country Assistance Strategy, other key donor strategies, aid co-ordination frameworks, key funds for sectors/ poverty reduction.
- *Budget frameworks and processes*: Medium Term Expenditure Frameworks, public expenditure reviews, etc.
- *Sector strategies*, including sector-specific financing policies and processes.
- *The private sector's role*, and regulatory framework.
- The major private companies and other institutions operating.

Remember to prioritise getting children's perceptions and analysis of poverty.

## 2. Desk review

You can use data that is already available from other sources. These sources might include your organisation's own reports and programme evaluations; reports from other NGOs or UN agencies (particularly UNICEF); statistics from research institutes and others, such as the World Bank; reports from local and national government (ministries dealing with finance, planning, development, women and children); key donor reports; information produced by civil society groups; and information from the UNCRC monitoring

**Case study**

In **Somalia**, Save the Children decided to undertake a CRSA with a particular focus on food security and livelihoods in preparation for a three-year strategy. Two consultants with knowledge of Somalia and the programme were involved; one a livelihoods expert and the other with extensive CRP experience. Using mainly secondary data, including Save the Children's own materials, and some primary data (on the perspectives of children, community members and key duty-bearers), the final document presented a unique analysis of children and their rights in this area. It has played a key role in ensuring that the programme focuses on real change for children through its sectoral strategy, and does not assume that changes in overall food security will automatically benefit vulnerable children.

process. Your aim is to identify what support is already available for children, and where there are gaps.

## 3. Primary research

The best way to find out about the issues affecting children is to use participatory research tools. Here are just a few: direct observation, semi-structured interviewing, focus group discussions, ranking and scoring, drawing diagrams and maps, and special techniques for working with children. If you do not have any experience of using these tools, see *Toolkits: a practical guide to monitoring, evaluation and impact assessment*, Save the Children, 2003. This will take you through all of the steps you need to follow. See also *So You Want to Consult with Children? A toolkit of good practice*, Save the Children, 2003.

## 4. Initial analysis

Your initial analysis should:
- assess the prevailing rights climate and future trends/scenarios
- identify the causes of rights violations
- map the duty-bearers
- map other key stakeholders
- analyse the capacity of duty-bearers and other stakeholders
- identify gaps in data and analysis
- plan for the completion of the CRSA.

You could do this using a **workshop** format. Include the core CRSA team and some external stakeholders, if possible, for mapping the duty-bearers and stakeholders and the capacity gap analysis.

**Rights climate**: To assess the prevailing rights climate where you are working, use the general principles and measures of implementation of the UNCRC (see box overleaf). From this assessment, you will know what is in place, what works, what does not work and how you can contribute to make the system work better.

**Causal analysis**: Use a problem tree analysis to see the immediate and root causes of violations of children's rights, the key problems children face, and how these are linked. See www.odi.org.uk/rapid

**Excluded children mapping**: To make sure you are using a non-discriminatory approach, you should map the different groups of children and the factors that

**General measures of implementation**

- **Law reform**: Requires States Parties to ensure compatibility of new and existing legislation and judicial practice with the UNCRC. This includes: constitutional amendment, amendments to legislation and development of new laws, responding to new issues relating to children's rights and by considering effective remedies for children and their representatives.
- **Independent national institutions for children's rights**: Such as children's ombudsman offices, child rights commissioners and focal points within national human rights institutions.
- **National plans of action**: Comprehensive national agendas or strategies for implementation of the UNCRC are needed; their relationship to the follow-up process to the World Summit for Children and UN General Assembly Special Session on Children is critical.
- **Children's rights-focused permanent institutions and structures within government** are required to ensure co-ordination and pursue implementation.
- **Allocation of resources** to the maximum extent of their availability.
- **Systematic monitoring of the implementation of the UNCRC**, through effective child-related data collection, analysis, evaluation and dissemination.
- **Education, training and awareness raising** on children's rights should be steadily promoted.
- **Involvement of civil society, including children, in implementation.**

prevent their rights being fulfilled. For a ready-made tool, see *Making a Difference: Training materials to promote diversity and tackle discrimination*, task 14, Save the Children UK, 2005.

Opposite is a checklist of points to ensure your CRSA takes a non-discrimination perspective.

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### Diversity/non-discrimination analysis

Your CRSA should include a thorough diversity analysis that considers:

- which groups of children experience discrimination – data must be disaggregated according to relevant categories such as age, gender, disability, ethnic, religious, cultural or linguistic groups
- multiple impacts of discrimination – for example, regarding access to education for children with disabilities from marginalised ethnic communities
- the impact of discrimination in terms of rights – using the UNCRC and other human rights instruments such as the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD), or the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)
- any work that other local, national or international groups are doing to tackle discrimination.

With this information you can plan appropriate interventions that recognise multiple layers of discrimination and that do not reinforce existing inequalities.

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You need to **map duty-bearers, influentials and other stakeholders**. You can use the Circles of Influence and Obligation tool (see Chapter 2) to help you. There are other useful tools to help you: see www.odi.org.uk/rapid; Laws S *Research for Development: A practical guide*, Save the Children/Sage Publications, 2003, p.336; Gosling L and Edwards M *Toolkits: A practical guide to monitoring, evaluation and impact assessment*, Save the Children, 2003, p.302; and Save the Children *Working for Change in Education: A handbook for planning advocacy*, 2000.

Finally, you need to understand the **capacity of duty-bearers and others** to meet their obligations and their ability to influence processes of change.

Overleaf is a capacity gap analysis matrix that can be used within the context of a CRSA workshop.

**Capacity analysis matrix**

You need to identify gaps in capacity so that you can design your programme interventions to address them. Capacity gaps may include lack of information, knowledge or skills, will/motivation, and/or financial or material resources. Duty-bearers (be they families, communities or governments) might not be aware of their responsibilities, or not have the authority and support to carry out their duties.

| Duty-bearer/stakeholder (focus on influential)<br><br>As defined in relation to the issue at hand<br>and local situation | Role analysis<br><br>Responsibilities and roles of each actor |
|---|---|
| Immediate caregiver, eg, parents | |
| Community, eg, village leader | |
| Private sector, eg, multinational company | |
| Civil society | |
| Local government, eg, teachers, health workers | |
| National government, eg, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Finance | |
| International community, eg, UN agency, donor | |

| Capacity analysis | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Motivation/willingness** Does the duty-bearer/ stakeholder accept their responsibility? If not, why not? | **Authority** Does the duty-bearer/ stakeholder have the authority to carry out their role? If not, why not? | **Resources** Does the duty-bearer have the knowledge, skills, organisational, human and material resources? If not, what's missing? |
| | | |
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**Capacity analysis matrix – worked example (child protection)**

| Duty-bearer/stakeholder (focus on influential) As defined in relation to the issue at hand and local situation | Role analysis Responsibilities and roles of each actor |
|---|---|
| Immediate caregiver, eg, parents | To protect children directly in care from abuse and exploitation |
| Community, eg, village leader | To protect children in the community from abuse and exploitation; assist carers in their responsibilities; create opportunities and listen to children |
| Private sector, eg, multinational company | To protect children directly in employment from abuse and exploitation |
| Civil society | Support children and their carers to claim rights, hold State (and others) to account, demonstrate effective child protection approaches |
| Local government, eg, teachers, health workers | To protect all children directly from abuse and exploitation |
| National government, eg, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Finance | To protect all children directly from abuse and exploitation |
| International community, eg, UN Agency, donor | To assist the State in its responsibilities to children |

| Capacity analysis | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Motivation/willingness**<br>Does the duty-bearer/ stakeholder accept their responsibility?<br>If not, why not? | **Authority**<br>Does the duty-bearer/ stakeholder have the authority to carry out their role?<br>If not, why not? | **Resources**<br>Does the duty-bearer have the knowledge, skills, organisational, human and material resources?<br>If not, what's missing? |
| Cultural/religious taboos<br>Gender/power relations<br>Lack of access to information | Male decision-makers | Knowledge, prioritisation, limited livelihood options; weakened family base (HIV and AIDS) |
| Cultural/religious taboos<br>Gender/power relations<br>Lack of access to information | Decision-making processes led by traditional few<br>Prioritisation | Knowledge and skills<br>No effective child protection mechanisms |
| Motivation based on profit<br>Responsibilities not widely accepted<br>Role as a social actor not widely accepted | Authority – yes, but not willing<br>Weak policy and legislative environment<br>Access to prime duty-bearers | Knowledge<br>Skills |
| Knowledge of child protection and children's rights | Limited recognition of role of civil society reflected in policy and legislative frameworks, funding patterns | Organisational capacity, knowledge, skills, political space; funding – donor prioritisation |
| Often motivated but frustrated by lack of resources, particularly poor terms and conditions. Political appointees; high turnover | Official authority with potential for abuse rather than in support of fulfilment of children's rights. Limited knowledge of obligations | Lack of effective technical capacity, financial resources, bureaucratic decision-making processes |
| Little demonstrated political will. Other priorities, particularly to fund ongoing conflict | Authority with lack of clarity of specific obligations to children; content and implications of UNCRC and other international instruments | Ministerial technical capacity weak, decision-making process dominated by President's cabinet – limited consultation and overall poor governance |
| Child protection high on the donor agenda | Ability to set State agenda – but competing priorities.<br>Weak authority within PRSP | Poor understanding of child protection and programming implications. Funding and monitoring mechanisms not adapted |

## 5. Further data gathering and analysis based on gaps identified

The CRSA workshop will no doubt reveal that some information you need is still missing. Some information may simply be impossible to get hold of, so just note this in your CRSA. Allocate any resources needed for additional information gathering. If this is not possible immediately, build it – and the necessary research – into the early stages of your programme plans.

## 6. Drafting your CRSA

You need someone to draft your CRSA – ideally someone who has been involved in the process, is familiar with the context and with rights-based approaches, and has good writing and analysis skills. This could be someone from your team, a partner organisation and/or a consultant.

Here are the contents pages of two real CRSAs from Save the Children programmes in Myanmar (Burma) and Côte d'Ivoire.

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**Myanmar CRSA (54 pages in total)**

1. Introduction
   1.1 Background
   1.2 Conceptual framework
   1.3 Country context

2. General measures for implementing the UNCRC
   2.1 Application of the general principles of the UNCRC
   2.2 Role of civil society
   2.3 International community

3. Main challenges to achieving children's rights
   3.1 Civil rights
   3.2 Education
   3.3 Health and nutrition
   3.4 HIV/AIDS
   3.5 Human trafficking
   3.6 Children in need of special protection
   3.7 Food security
   3.8 Children displaced as refugees or IDPs

4. Summary of opportunities and constraints for Save the Children
   4.1 Cross-cutting issues
   4.2 Summary of thematic opportunities

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**Côte d'Ivoire CRSA (40 pages in total)**

1. Introduction
   1.1 Methodology
   1.2 Approach/conceptual framework
   1.3 Challenges
   1.4 Scenarios

2. General context
   2.1 Geography
   2.2 Population and profile
   2.3 Administration
   2.4 History and political process
   2.5 The economy

3. Legal and policy framework for children
   3.1 International instruments and national legislation

4. Children – perceived by children and perceived by adults
   4.1 Key obstacles to children's participation

5. Main challenges to achieving children's rights
   5.1 Education
   5.2 Health
   5.3 HIV/AIDS
   5.4 Food security and nutrition
   5.5 Children in need of special protection
   5.6 Discrimination against children

6. The duty-bearers
   6.1 Who are the duty-bearers?
   6.2 Civil society

7. Summary of opportunities and constraints for Save the Children

## 7. Consult widely

Once you have a good draft of the CRSA you should send it around for wide consultation both within your programme team and with as wide a range of stakeholders and potential partners as possible. Not only is this good rights-based practice (part of the learning and feedback loop), it is essential to validate your analysis. If others have major issues with your analysis, they may be unlikely to work with you to achieve the goals you set out.

## 8. Finish your CRSA and use it!

Having finished your CRSA it's time to use it! Use it to inform your programme plans and strategies, funding proposals, research projects, advocacy strategies, etc. Treat it as a living document, to be revisited and updated regularly.

**Case study**

In **Sri Lanka**, following important internal organisational changes and recognising the need for more strategic and long-term considerations in the post-tsunami phase, Save the Children carried out an ambitious CRSA. Planning was extensive. Terms of reference were drawn up for the CRSA itself, and consultants and team members from across the country were brought in to the discussions. The CRSA was essentially a field-led participatory process; programme staff spent two weeks gaining a better understanding of the situation of children in different parts of the country, using a range of participatory approaches. To complement this primary research, a consultant was hired to undertake a wide-ranging desk review, analysing national and international influences on the fulfilment of children's rights. The analysis from the secondary data was presented, for the first time, at the country strategic planning workshop.

All in all, the CRSA involved 700 working days. It guided our strategic planning process at a key time in the programme's history in the country, and also exposed team members directly to children's realities and helped build their capacity as effective children's rights practitioners.

The CRSA brought out some unexpected directions for our programme, such as a shift in emphasis onto protecting children from physical and sexual abuse, children's access to education in conflict areas, and an overall thematic focus on integrating and applying a children's rights perspective at all levels of society. The programme has also decided to adapt its geographical coverage based on the CRSA.

**Case study** *continued*

Here are the key lessons learned from Save the Children's CRSA in Sri Lanka:

- the CRSA provides a really good opportunity to build team capacity in child rights programming. But it does make it more difficult to guarantee consistent results when the people who are involved are also learning
- the need to split CRP/CRSA concept development from skills development around participatory research
- the need to have team leaders in the field who are confident enough to adapt fieldwork exercises to take into account local circumstances
- the need to set up a common framework beforehand so that the secondary data matches the fieldwork parameters, and the desirability of managing research internally, so that it is better owned
- collecting secondary data and analysing this before the fieldwork means you can use it as a prompt for things to 'check up on', so reducing the time and human resource needs for the fieldwork
- the importance of acknowledging, as part of the fieldwork design, that questions about who bears and takes responsibility for what might produce different answers from different stakeholders, and that an analysis of these different perceptions is important.

*Yes, but…*

**❝ Undertaking a CRSA takes too long, costs too much and takes staff away from their already pressurised jobs. ❞**

A CRSA, though rigorous, need not be a long drawn-out process. The essentials can be covered in two months. Think of this time as an investment – your CRSA is the foundation for your programme plans, baseline data, indicators, monitoring and evaluation, advocacy work – everything that you do! The process will enhance your team's understanding, commitment and ownership. And remember – making sure that children and their families and communities participate is going to take time.

**❝ We already know the situation; we've been working here for years. ❞**

Situations and contexts change constantly and are subject to new influences. Your CRSA will allow you to check and document knowledge that your programme has been accumulating. It also gives your programme team the chance to move away from routine responses and consider different options in taking a holistic view of children. Root causes can be analysed, assumptions questioned and new linkages made.

**❝ We have so little room for manoeuvre – what with organisational strategies and donor agendas, the CRSA will not be able to inform our strategic choices. ❞**

Your CRSA may inform your overall programme strategy, but you can also carry out a CRSA for a particular sector or area of work (eg, education) or even a geographical area. It will help identify the areas and possibilities for manoeuvre given the existing constraints. It is the key starting point for advocacy work. Mapping duty-bearers and power relations will help determine the most effective ways to respond, as well as what to respond to.

**❝ The information just doesn't exist. ❞**

It is true that in many countries good quality information doesn't exist. Government statistics may be inaccurate or have been destroyed, census figures are out-of-date, disaggregation has never taken place, etc. Your CRSA needs to clearly state what information is missing and why. Where possible it should complement the data that does exist with your own primary research. No CRSA will be perfect, but it should give the fullest picture possible. It can also identify areas to advocate for the establishment of better data collection mechanisms in the future.

**❝ The security and political situation prevents us from involving key stakeholders; we can't get to the field and certainly not to all parts of the country. ❞**

Where the security situation limits movement, try using alternative sources of information – eg, from other organisations and agencies. Be open about the limits to the information you are presenting. You may be able to get a clearer picture of children's situation as the operating environment evolves. You should then review and update your CRSA to reflect this.

**❝ We already know which sectors we want to work in. ❞**
If you have already made decisions about your overall strategy, a CRSA offers an opportunity to look at your chosen sector(s) in depth, analysing the root causes, ensuring links with other sectors, and applying a holistic approach.

**❝ This is an emergency. We simply don't have the time or resources to carry out such an assessment before deciding what we're going to do. ❞**
At the onset of an emergency, it is good practice to undertake a range of assessments. The CRSA framework allows you to do this quickly and effectively, with a core range of questions and approaches at your fingertips. If the emergency situation is prolonged (a 'chronic' emergency), the core questions remain relevant. The CRSA framework can also be used to good effect as part of your emergency preparedness planning (see Chapter 8).

## Where to go for more information

*A Toolkit on Child Rights Programming*, Save the Children Denmark, 2002
This toolkit applies the principles of the UNCRC to the practice of project planning in order to strengthen the child rights profile of programmes.

*Making a Difference: training materials to promote diversity and tackle discrimination*, Save the Children UK, 2005
A comprehensive training manual for teams wanting to understand issues of diversity and non-discrimination both from a personal perspective and in terms of programming. It includes a number of tools to help analyse what different groups exist, their situations and responses for working with them to improve the fulfilment of their rights.

*Toolkits: A practical guide to monitoring, evaluation and impact assessment*, Save the Children, 2003

*Research for Development: A practical guide*, Laws S, Save the Children/Sage Publications, 2003

*So You Want to Consult with Children? A toolkit of good practice*, Save the Children UK, 2003

# 4  Planning a programme

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**By the end of this chapter you will:**

• understand what is meant by child rights-based programme planning

• know how to develop a child rights-based plan

• be ready to try out child rights-based planning tools.

*This chapter builds on and requires an understanding of the core CRP principles, tools and processes given in Chapter 2.*

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This chapter explains what we mean by a child rights-based programme plan, and how you can build a child rights perspective into your planning systems.

## What is a child rights-based programme plan?

Your child rights-based programme plan should set out:

• your **vision** (informed by the CRSA) of the changes you want to bring about for children in the long term (10–20 years' time). For example, *"children's survival and development rights are fulfilled in all our project areas"*

• your **goal** (also informed by the CRSA) – what practical contribution you will make to the vision and the fulfilment of children's rights with the resources available to you. For example, *"10 per cent of the poorest households in the areas where Save the Children is working will have secured a minimum income"*

• your **change objectives** – the changes you need to bring about to fulfil your goal. You can use the dimensions of change tool (see Chapter 2) to help you set your objectives. For example, *"by 2010 an alternative model for household economic security, which is relevant and effective for children, established in one district"*.

- a range of **activities, outcomes and indicators** linked to your change objectives. Activities are the actions you take that will lead to the changes described in your objectives. The activities should together lead to the achievement of your objectives and can usefully be expressed using the three pillar model (see page 17). The outcomes and indicators relate directly to your objectives and enable you to measure progress in each of the dimensions of change. (See Chapter 2 for a detailed explanation of the dimensions of change and other core CRP tools.)

## How to plan and design a child rights-based programme

Your child rights-based programme plan should reflect:
- an awareness and understanding of human rights, childhood and child rights programming
- the CRSA – with your geographical or sector focus (eg, health, education – see Chapter 3)
- a good internal analysis, covering capacity, partners, funding, organisational culture, opportunities, etc. (See Chapter 9)
- the views and contributions of children, community members, donors, partners and government (your stakeholders)
- ownership by the programme team, based on their involvement throughout the planning process
- the values, priorities and strategies of your organisation.

### Case studies

In **Côte d'Ivoire**, Save the Children needed to draw up its first country strategy in 2006. But there was no CRSA, limited planning and strategic thinking capacity, and the added pressures of an emergency programme working in an insecure environment. Planning to complete the strategy within six months, we began by carrying out some internally led capacity-building on CRP and CRSA planning. This enabled us to carry out a CRSA, with cross-programme involvement, using field research, and consulting children. We then

*continued overleaf*

### Case studies *continued*

held a workshop (facilitated by an external consultant) to analyse data and identify any missing information. The CRSA laid the foundations for our country strategy.

A further workshop was held to identify the key content for the country strategy and again involved a range of programme participants. The CRSA was key to the analysis during this workshop; it helped create a common understanding of the situation for children in the country, identifying the different stakeholders and their capacity, and the unique contribution Save the Children planned to make. Each stage of the planning process reinforced the programme's integration of a child rights-based approach, giving confidence to team members and greater clarity and direction to the overall country strategy. However, no other key stakeholders were involved at the planning stage and so, to some extent, the country strategy was left unvalidated by the very people it aims to work with and for.

Nevertheless, the strength of the process lay in its momentum, buy-in and motivation across the team, with concrete and useful outputs put to immediate use and investment in capacity-building.

In **Uganda**, Save the Children's team emphasised inputs to their country strategy from children, their carers and a range of other stakeholders. Similarly, the CRSA was based on primary research using participatory approaches to find out the views of children, young people and a range of community members. The feedback we received varied from ''continue distributing mosquito nets to children in camps'', to ''build separate school toilets for girls'', to ''train all out-of-school youth in vocational skills so that they are self-reliant''. Messages from children to fathers, mothers, government officials, local organisations and community leaders also informed the strategy.

## Key steps

Before we present the key steps to take, here are some top tips to help you as you plan your child rights-based programme.

### Top tips

- Get the preparation right, including your baseline information; be clear about roles and responsibilities and the limits to your time, capacity and finances.
- See this as an opportunity to build the capacity of your team as you make key decisions.
- Consult your external stakeholders – you will be working with them and need their buy-in.
- Limit your planning workshop to a maximum of, say, 20 participants. Be clear from the start whether the workshop is for making decisions or getting new ideas.
- Make sure that the process is open. You should keep all team members up to speed on progress, their roles and expected inputs.
- Ensure that your activities together will achieve your objectives, your objectives together will achieve your goal and that, overall, these have diverse impacts on children reflected through the dimensions of change.

It can be difficult to decide who should be involved, and to what extent, when you design and plan your programme. Keep in mind the following checklist, adapted from *Toolkits: A practical guide to monitoring, evaluation and impact assessment*, Save the Children, 2003 (p.23).

**Who to involve in the planning process**

| | Insiders | Outsiders |
|---|---|---|
| **Who** | Staff, managers and partners Individuals and groups affected by the work Non-beneficiaries | Staff from same agency but another programme External consultants with specialist expertise |
| **Advantages** | Know the organisation Know the programme Understand organisational behaviour and attitudes Known to staff Greater chance of adopting recommendations Less expensive Build internal capability Familiarity with context Know the constraints | Objective – no organisational bias Fresh perspective Broader experience Broader skills Not part of power structures Can bring additional resources |
| **Disadvantages** | Can question objectivity Organisational structure may constrain participation Personal gain may be questioned Accepts assumptions Lacks expertise Acceptability/credibility by others Bias | May not know organisation May not understand constraints May be perceived as an adversary Expensive Follow-up may be weak Unfamiliar with environment Learning leaves with the person May miss out on important insights |
| **Role of leader** | Facilitator, with skills in participatory techniques, particularly in children's participation Needs good communication skills | Consult with others, but ultimately responsible for drawing conclusions and making recommendations |
| **When is it useful?** | Any rights-based programme Social development projects Where aim is to enable groups to develop organisational capacity Where active participation of different groups is essential for success of the work Where there is an opportunity to do so | When a particular type of expertise is needed To take a more objective view To gain a wider view of a project or programme When a donor needs specific information about the programme |

Here are the steps you need to take in your child rights-based planning process.

**1. Analyse your organisation's capacity**

**2. Set your goal**

**3. Set your change objectives and indicators**

**4. Identify activities**

## 1. Analyse your organisation's capacity

You can use the **SWOT** (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) tool to analyse your organisation's capacity. See www.odi.org.uk/rapid and *Toolkits*, p.242 (Save the Children, 2003).

Save the Children has also developed a tool you can use to see how far your organisation meets the profile of a rights-based organisation. See *Child Rights OD tool*, Save the Children Sweden, 2007) for how to put this tool into practice.

## 2. Set your goal

Your overall goal will be informed by your CRSA. It should help you identify the changes you want to bring about for children and how you can help them fulfil their rights. You can draw this as a Problem Tree, showing both your goal and the changes you need to start making, which you can then transform into SMART objectives (see overleaf).

See www.odi.org.uk/rapid for how to do a Problem Tree analysis, and how to identify goals and objectives. The Roots and Fruit Tree may also be of help, outlined in *Working for Change in Education: A handbook for planning advocacy* (Save the Children UK, 2000).

### 3. Set your change objectives and indicators

You can also use the Problem Tree and/or Roots and Fruit Tree tool to set your change objectives. But remember to check your change objectives against the **Dimensions of Change** tool (see Chapter 2). This will help you identify any gaps and link your activities to the wider changes you want for children

You can use the familiar **SMART** tool (specific, measurable, agreed/ achievable, realistic/relevant and time-bound) to draw up your objectives. But you could try a different tool that reflects a more rights-based approach. Ask yourself if your objectives are:

a) **clear** – is it easy for an outsider to see what changes you are trying to bring about *for children*?

b) **change-oriented** – make sure you are talking about something that is related to one or more of the Dimensions of Change, rather than describing an activity. Being able to distinguish between a means to an end (an activity) and what that end is (the change you want to bring about) will help you identify clear indicators so that you can monitor the impact your programme is having on children's lives

c) **realistic** – can your team achieve the objectives, given the time frame, resources and budget available?

d) **measurable** – do you know how you will go about collecting the information you need to tell whether you have achieved your objectives?

If the answer to any of the above questions is 'no', you need to rethink your objectives!

Here is an example from an education programme in Myanmar. It shows the overall goal, objectives and indicators. You can see how each indicator relates to one or more of the Dimensions of Change, to make a real difference to children's lives.

### Example – change objectives and indicators (education)

#### Overall goal

By April 2011, we will increase access to, and the quality of, early childcare and development (ECCD) services for 40,000 children and of primary education, specifically grades 1 and 2, for 100,000 of the poorest children in Myanmar. A total of 120,000 children will be reached through this strategy. Half of these children will be from minority ethnic communities.

#### Specific objectives – (change objectives)

#### Objective 1

ECCD: By April 2011, 40,000 children (disaggregated by gender, ethnicity and disability) in the programme areas who have never had access to ECCD will acquire access to high-quality home or centre-based ECCD.

(This covers Dimensions of change – 'Changes in the lives of children and young people'; and – 'Changes in equity and non-discrimination of children and young people'.)

*Indicators*
- 40,000 children, both girls and boys, benefiting from ECCD services for the first time.
- Children from households in the poorest category and from minority ethnic communities participating in ECCD programmes at the same rate as the community as a whole.
- Children in ECCD programmes achieving key developmental milestones.

*Process indicators/milestones*
- 140 new ECCD centres constructed and equipped with adequate learning materials by the end of year 1, and 200 more by year 4.
- 600 ECCD teachers trained and capable of providing quality care and stimulation for children by end of year 1, and 1,000 more by year 4.
- 140 ECCD centres functioning at end of year 1, and another 200 by year 4.

### Example – change objectives and indicators (education)
*continued*

### Objective 2
Transition into primary school: 100,000 children (disaggregated by gender, ethnicity and disability) in the programme areas will have a better transition to, and experience in, primary school compared with those outside project areas (measured by improved active learning, reduced dropout and repetition rates, assertiveness).

(This covers Dimensions of change – 'Changes in the lives of children and young people'; and – 'Changes in children's and young people's participation and active citizenship'.)

*Indicators*
- 100,000 grade 1 and 2 pupils, both girls and boys, benefiting from improved learning environment in their community and schools.
- Children are well prepared and happy in first three months of grade 1.
- Reduced drop-out rates in grades 1 and 2, especially among poor and minority ethnic children.
- Teachers and local authorities demonstrate a change in attitude to children and their development, with 480 schools demonstrating welcoming, active, developmentally appropriate learning environments for children by end of year 2.

*Process indicators/milestones*
- School orientation activities implemented in 480 schools by mid-year 2.
- ECCD management committee members trained on learning environment/school assessment and improvement by end of year 2.

### Objective 3
The government adopts and implements: ECCD best practice policy guidelines, a revised transitions curriculum, and a developmentally appropriate (child-centred) methodology in grades 1 and 2 of primary school.

(This covers Dimension of change – 'Changes in policy and practice affecting children's rights'.)

## Example – change objectives and indicators (education)
*continued*

### *Indicators*
• Government accepts revised transitions curriculum (including methodology) and includes it in teacher training.
• Government commitment to change the methodology in the first couple of years of primary school to a child-centred one is included in the EFA mid-decade assessment report.

### *Process indicators/milestones*
• Transitions curriculum reviewed by end of year 1.
• Transitions curriculum piloted by mid-year 2.
• Strong working relationship with DEPT by mid-year 2.
• ECCD and ''transitions'' best practice policy guidelines developed and disseminated by mid-year 3.

### Objective 4
80% of the ECCD centres are being managed sustainably by ECCD management committees without Save the Children's support by April 2011.

(This covers Dimension of change – 'Changes in civil society and communities' capacity to support children and young people's rights'.)

### *Indicators*
• Parents and ECCD management committees demonstrate a change in attitude to children and their development.
• 80% of ECCD centres started by Save the Children working viably by end of year 3.
• 60% of ECCD centres started by local NGOs working viably by end of year 5.

### *Process indicators/milestones*
• 140 ECCD management committees mobilised, trained and functioning by end of year 1.
• ECCD committee members trained on management, leadership and book-keeping by end of year 1.

**49**

● GETTING IT RIGHT FOR CHILDREN

## 4. Identify activities

The Three Pillars tool (see Chapter 2) is ideal for looking at the overall balance of your programme strategy and how this may change over the lifetime of your plan. By mapping separate activities onto each of the pillars a picture of the full programme and the links between the different elements can emerge. This tool can be used for various levels of planning, such as country strategy, sectoral strategy or donor project proposal.

## Pulling it all together: the planning workshop

Your planning workshop is a key part of the process. The box below gives an example of a programme for a four-day country strategy planning workshop.

**Example of a four-day planning workshop**

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**Day 1 – setting the scene**
(could be a short or half day)

1. Introductory session
2. Participatory exercise around personal challenges, working environment, capacity, etc
3. Quiz on corporate positions and child rights-based approaches
   Organisation planning processes
   Lessons learned from others
4. Your organisation's history in the country/region, what you are doing now, key challenges
   and lessons learnt
5. Wrap up and evaluate the day

**Day 2 – analysis and vision**

1. Introductory session and feedback from previous day
2. Identify key issues for children's rights in the country/region. Use your CRSA and other
   information available
3. Roles and responsibilities:
   i)   who are the main stakeholders?
   ii)  what are their capacities?
   iii) roles (job descriptions) for your organisation, civil society, the state, the private sector
        and the international community
   iv)  SWOT analysis
4. What is your vision and the vision of children you work with? What will their lives look like
   10 years from now?
5. Wrap up and evaluate the day

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**Day 3 – identifying goals, change objectives activities and indicators**

1.  Introductory session and feedback from previous day
2.  Consolidate your vision
3.  How will you choose priority areas of work?
4.  Where will you work (scale and scope)?
5.  What key approaches will you use?
6.  What are your change objectives? What are the risks and what assumptions are you making?
7.  Mapping your activities onto the three pillars – your overall programme strategy
8.  Wrap up and evaluate the day

**Day 4 – resources and further planning**

1.  Introductory session and feedback from previous day (consolidation/quiz, pick up from challenges on first day)
2.  Impact: link your objectives to the dimensions of change (map onto cards and put full programme on the wall)
3.  Resource implications – financial, human resource, organisational cultural change, etc (in groups)
4.  Next steps: finalising your strategy. Make sure you consult all teams and key stakeholders
5.  Wrap up and final evaluation

*Yes, but...*

**❝ We don't have the time to consult and involve different stakeholders. ❞**

You will already have consulted key stakeholders when you did your CRSA. You can consult further by holding information meetings, tagging discussion onto other meetings or building it into regular field trips. This is important both as a reality check and to build up your analysis over time.

**❝ Our plans and positions are sensitive. We can't share internal analysis and discussions with others, given the security risks and potential to alienate. ❞**

You need to decide when, what, with whom and how to share information given your situation. Some discussions do need to be internal. But if you want to make a real difference to children's lives, you have a responsibility to be open and accountable.

**❝ We haven't completed our CRSA but still need to go ahead and agree on key strategies. ❞**

Your decisions need to be based on detailed and reliable information. If your CRSA is not complete, make sure you have the best possible information base and that you ask the relevant questions. Be clear about what information you don't have and, if possible, build research to gather this into your plans. When you do complete your CRSA, be aware that you may need to review your strategic decisions.

**❝ We've only got a general CRSA and not a health-specific analysis, yet we have to complete our health strategy soon. ❞**

Use the information in your general CRSA as your starting point. Decide what information is missing and how you can get that information. Try and fill some of the gaps by taking advantage of ongoing opportunities (planned field trips, meetings with partners, etc). Make sure you plan and carry out a sector-specific CRSA as early as possible.

**❝ Most of the staff haven't had any CRP training and exposure and have certainly never used the core CRP tools. ❞**

Then use this as an opportunity to build the skills base of your team! Take them through some of the basics and use the core tools in your planning process.

**❝ Why bother with a ten-year vision when we are only planning a three-year strategy? ❞**

Ensuring substantial and lasting changes for children requires a long-term perspective across various sectors. You must be able to review and adapt your activities over time to ensure that your work contributes to a longer lasting legacy.

**❝ Service delivery is not rights-based, it is needs-based and reinforces unsustainable and charity-orientated responses. ❞**

Where the state (the main duty-bearer) is unable to meet its obligations, you may be fulfilling this role by providing basic services such as food, water and medicines. But you also need to support the duty-bearer to meet their obligations, and help children and their communities claim their rights as part of a longer-term vision for change.

**❝ Writing a proposal for a donor within their format leaves no space for much of the CRP elements and, anyway, is not necessarily what the donor wants to see. ❞**

**52**

Many donors have adopted a rights-based approach to their development and emergency programmes. They will want to see that you are accountable to the children and communities you work with, and that you are working in partnership. They will also want to see that they are getting value for money and that their funding is having a positive impact on children's lives. Keep to your donor's reporting format – but also use it to get your message across.

## Where to go for more information

*CRP: A resource for planning*, Save the Children UK, 2004
This will help support your team in the practical application of CRP throughout the strategic planning process (and beyond).

*CRP checklist for assessing project proposals*, Save the Children Sweden, 2007
A series of questions you should ask when assessing project proposals. For example: Has a child rights situation analysis been carried out? Are the goals and objectives rights-based? Does the organisation have the capacity for the project? How will the project be monitored?

*Format for rights-based project proposals*, Save the Children Sweden, 2005
This model project document format was developed in Asia as a means of assisting the implementation of a child rights programming approach.

*Generic Guidance for Thematic Programme Plans*, Save the Children UK, 2005
Particularly good executive summary checklist taking you through each stage of the programme planning process, asking key questions to enable you to plan a child rights-based strategy.

*Toolkits: A practical guide to monitoring, evaluation and impact assessment*, Save the Children, 2003

*Working for Change in Education: A handbook for planning advocacy*, Save the Children, 2000

Overseas Development Institute (ODI) planning tools: www.odi.org.uk/rapid

# 5  Monitoring,[1] evaluation, learning and feedback

**By the end of this chapter you will:**

- understand how to monitor, evaluate, learn from and get feedback on your efforts to realise children's rights

- know how to use the five Dimensions of Change to ensure your programme plans include monitoring and evaluation (M&E), learning and feedback

- be aware of a range of M&E, learning and feedback tools.

*This chapter builds on and requires an understanding of the core CRP principles, tools and processes given in Chapter 2.*

This chapter shows you how to put children at the heart of your monitoring, evaluation, learning and feedback systems. You need to know if and how you are making a real difference. Monitoring, evaluation, learning and feedback will help you to assess and make any necessary changes to your work in order to improve your effectiveness. They will also ensure that you are accountable for your actions and will help you to hold others to account for theirs. Together, they are key elements of any successful rights-based programme.

The chapter links closely to the previous chapter on planning. Identifying your goals, change objectives and indicators is an essential part of setting up effective monitoring and evaluation systems. The five dimensions of change (Chapter 2) will help you to monitor and evaluate your progress and the impact of your work.

# What are monitoring and evaluation (M&E), learning and feedback?

## Some definitions

**Monitoring** is the ongoing collection of relevant data. It helps you to know whether your programme is 'on track' or not.

**Evaluation** can take place at certain times throughout the programme cycle, but not as often as monitoring. Evaluations use the data you collected during monitoring to compare how things are now with how they were when you began, and so to what extent you have achieved your objectives. **Process evaluation** tells you if your programme is running as intended. **Impact evaluation** tells you how far you have come in achieving your objectives.

**Impact assessment** generally happens less frequently than evaluations. You can use the information collected during monitoring and the analysis done through evaluations to look at the bigger picture in the longer term. An impact assessment will tell you what lasting and significant changes your programme has brought about and how. It looks at any unexpected or negative changes, as well as planned changes.

**Learning** is the process of reflecting on and drawing conclusions from the information you have gathered about your work and its impact. The knowledge gained can then help inform your future choices and decisions. Your organisation needs to be committed to developing a learning culture if this does not already exist. Learning takes time and resources. It requires a willingness to acknowledge mistakes, and a readiness to change if need be.

**Feedback** is the process of communicating the results and learning from your work to the various stakeholders within and outside of your organisation. It is a key way to demonstrate your accountability. Feedback can stimulate changes that will improve the way in which you work and your effectiveness. It can provide examples of good practice to be shared with others, and can inform your national and international advocacy work.

## How to do monitoring and evaluation, learning and feedback

There are many learning and feedback frameworks, such as M&E systems, action-research projects, impact assessments, reviews and reports. Whatever system you use, make sure it has a clear purpose, a plan for collecting data, time to analyse the results and ways to communicate them to stakeholders. You may need to change your existing M&E system to make sure it provides the information you need on how your activities are affecting children.

You will have the baseline information you need for M&E in the CRSA. Your programme plans – including your change objectives developed using the Dimensions of Change and your activities/expected outputs mapped against the Three Pillars – become the starting point for further developing your monitoring and evaluation systems, including the development of process and impact indicators. Be ready to document and share the results of your monitoring, evaluation, learning and feedback with other stakeholders, including the children and communities you work with, your donors, and other partners, such as local government. The reporting format should be relevant and accessible to your intended audience. Communicate with each group in the way you feel is most appropriate (a group of children will not want the same lengthy written report you submit to donors).

### Case study

In **Ethiopia**, poor rains (mainly the *belg* rains) between 1998 and 2002 led to widespread drought and loss of assets among vulnerable households in parts of the Amhara region. Save the Children used Household Economy Assessments (HEAs) to understand how different households were getting food and money in relatively normal years. We then carried out monitoring assessments to see how the drought was affecting people's ability to make a living. The assessments led to a food aid programme to support the poorest families in 2002/03.

**Learning systems, tools and outputs**

| **Learning systems** | **Tools (how to get your information)** | **Outputs (your end product)** |
|---|---|---|
| Regular field reports | Dimensions of Change | Publications |
| Monitoring systems | Secondary sources | Reports (internal, donor, evaluation, impact assessments, government-led, etc) |
| Evaluation systems | Budget analysis | Donor proposals |
| Participatory research | Direct observation | Strategy documents |
| Surveys | Questionnaires | Press releases, briefings |
| Rapid assessment | Semi-structured interviews | Marketing and fundraising material |
| Impact assessment | Individual interviews | Multi-media documentation (film, photo, theatre, sound recording, posters, etc) |
| CRSA | Key informant interviews | Sharing results: meetings, conferences, workshops |
| Case studies | Group interviews and discussions | |
| Household Economy Approach | Focus group discussions | |
| | Oral history | |
| | Ranking and scoring | |
| | Construction of diagrams and maps | |
| | Timelines | |
| | Historical profiles | |
| | Songs | |
| | Theatre for development | |
| | Games and role-play | |

**Case studies** *continued*

In 2004, we evaluated the food aid programme using a modified version of HEAs that placed the emphasis on understanding how children's food security and livelihoods had been affected. We talked to children and their parents. The assessments found that children were heavily involved in work both at home and for money, even when there was no drought. But their workloads increased in years of stress, as they increasingly worked in the homes of better-off families, or migrated to towns to look for casual work. This led to more children dropping out of school, and also put children at greater risk of abuse. The assessment showed that providing relief would not only help children to get enough food, but could have other important benefits in terms of preventing harm.

**Research projects and evaluations** increasingly involve children and young people in the design, research, analysis and dissemination of findings.

**Case studies**

In **Sialkot, Pakistan**, 40 young people (20 girls and 20 boys), most of whom were school or university students, carried out research on child labour. Many of them actually came from the Sialkot project area. Two local NGOs were involved, and a consultant carried out statistical analysis. The report was written by a representative team and edited by the research adviser. Each member of the team contributed one section. The whole team agreed the conclusions and recommendations.

**Case studies** *continued*

One year into a partnership with a local NGO in **Bangladesh**, Save the Children undertook some action research to improve our own programme and persuade others to adopt best practice. The results were documented using children's voices as well as photos. For example:

*"Normally I beg for food in the park, or I pick rags, but I never sleep in the park. Now I sleep in the centre, or near a tea stall or in front of a bakery. It is safer than Kumlapur. In Kumlapur the men always call for massages, and once a policeman tried with me. I hit him with a brick."*

11-year-old boy quoted in *Safe Nights – for Life:*
*A guide for supporting sexually exploited street boys*,
Save the Children Denmark, 2006

**Feedback mechanisms** can also actively involve children and young people.

**Case studies**

In **Zimbabwe**, Save the Children set up children's committees to monitor food aid distributions and what impact they were having on children (including any negative impacts). We reviewed and adjusted our distribution systems as a result of children's feedback.

In **India**, we trained children in participatory rural appraisal to help inform our response to floods. We wanted to know the number of families affected, and children's needs. The information the children gathered was then used to develop further activities. For example, the children found that the size of rations was wrong, as standard amounts were distributed per family rather than on the basis of family size, thus causing considerable hardship for larger families.

**Your M&E, learning and feedback system should:**

- be informed by your CRSA
- be included at every stage of the programme cycle
- use the five Dimensions of Change to help you measure progress
- make sure information is disaggregated by age, gender and other relevant categories
- include both quantitative (objective) and qualitative (subjective) information
- find out how things happened as well as what happened (process learning)
- recognise unexpected changes as a result of your activities
- involve children in drawing up questions, monitoring systems, collecting and analysing data (but consider carefully ethical issues and ensure children's best interests and protection at all times)
- involve a range of stakeholders, taking into account issues of power, discrimination and access
- use multiple sources of information to draw conclusions (triangulation)
- say what impact you have had and why
- disseminate your results strategically.

## The tools

Before we present some tools to use, here are some top tips for your M&E, learning and feedback system.

### Top tips

- Always think about your learning system and approaches from the very beginning. Review and adapt them regularly.
- Be clear about what you want to find out, and why.
- Consult with children and encourage them to participate by involving them at all stages.
- Be consistent – ask the same basic questions throughout the life of the programme.
- Be interested in what hasn't worked as well as what has, and why.
- Consider the impact of your actions on different groups of children (girls, boys, those in certain age groups, etc).

- Learn as you go – don't wait until the end. Change takes time. Measure the incremental steps as well as the final impact.
- Make sure the findings are made easily available to all your stakeholders.
- Build the capacity of teams, partners, children and communities through the process.
- Recognise that becoming a learning organisation takes time and resources.

Here are three areas to consider when making children's rights integral to your M&E, learning and feedback systems:

**1. Setting indicators**

**2. Monitoring and evaluation systems**

**3. Measuring levels of participation**

### 1. Setting indicators

Indicators are things you can use to measure or assess progress. They may be expressed as numbers (quantitative, or objective) or words (qualitative, or subjective). They may be internationally or locally defined and can be used to measure your activities at different levels – for example, processes/activities and outcomes/impacts (Save the Children, 2003).

You can use the five Dimensions of Change (see Chapter 2) to identify relevant indicators for your programme, based on your change objectives. To help you, each dimension can be expressed as a question.

**Direct benefits** – have you brought about any major changes in the lives of children and young people, or other stakeholders such as community members? How?

*Examples of indicators:*
- Increased use of health services disaggregated by gender, age and type of service
- Increased % of children under one year fully immunised

**Wider impact** – have you brought about any changes in legislation, structures, mechanisms, policies, practices and beliefs in relation to children's rights? How?

*Examples of indicators:*
- Effective staff training and retention policies implemented
- Increased state budget allocation for maternal and child health services

**Enhanced participation** – have you helped children participate more, not just in spaces specifically set up for them but in arenas that are traditionally the preserve of adults? To what extent? How?

*Examples of indicators:*
- Increased involvement of children in the setting of priorities for health services
- Involvement of children in community health committees

**Reduced discrimination** – have you brought about a reduction in the discrimination faced by marginalised groups of children and young people (with specific reference to gender, disability and ethnicity)? How?

*Examples of indicators:*
- Increased access by marginalised populations to health services
- Health services made more acceptable and affordable for adolescents

**Collaborative working** – have you brought about improved partnership and collaborative working? How?

*Examples of indicators:*
- Number/type/success of local and national civil society organisations actively campaigning for increased investment in health systems
- Funding secured to support the participation and training of national civil society groups

It is important to be realistic about whether it is possible to obtain reliable information when setting indicators. This is especially relevant for qualitative indicators on sensitive issues such as discrimination.

Here are some examples of indicators you might use to measure the impact of your programme. They are grouped by sector.

**Food security and livelihoods** – the impact of cash transfers could be measured by changes in:
- household assets (indicator for household socio-economic status) – primary impact group is the household
- diversity of children's diet (an indicator of food intake) – ultimate impact group
- anthropometric indices (weight-for-age, length/height-for-age, and weight-for-length/height) – (indicators of nutritional status) – ultimate impact group
- national targeting policies

**62**

- community-based organisations' (CBOs) involvement in monitoring cash transfers
- household-level decision-making processes.

**Education** – the impact of your education support could be measured by changes in:
- net enrolment rates, gender disaggregated – ultimate impact group
- drop-out rates, disaggregated by key groups – ultimate impact group
- teachers using child-friendly methods – ultimate impact group
- children's contribution to designing child-friendly approaches
- survival, retention and completion rates, disaggregated by key groups
- national and provincial education budgets
- effectiveness and parent participation in parent-teacher associations
- national legislation and educational policies.

**Child protection** – the impact of your child protection activities could be measured by:
- the number of separated children or ex-child combatants who have been successfully reintegrated with their families and/or communities, disaggregated by age and gender – ultimate impact group
- the number of cases where child abuse or exploitation has been successfully dealt with by community protection networks – ultimate impact group
- children's clubs being active and informing community protection networks
- having a national fostering policy in place
- co-ordination within government structures
- changes in national legislation and protection policies
- the number of cases of abuse or exploitation that have been dealt with by an independent office protecting children's rights.

**Health** – your activities to improve children's health could be measured by:
- changes in child morbidity rates from measles, diarrhoea and/or fever – ultimate impact group
- changes in prevalence of sexually transmitted infections among adolescents reporting to clinics for treatment – ultimate impact group
- changes in number of children with disabilities accessing healthcare
- changes in reproductive health awareness through peer education groups
- changes in traditional birth attendants' practice
- changes in the use of government health fees
- changes in the co-ordination mechanisms of national health actors.

**63**

## Monitoring and evaluation systems

Integrating a child rights perspective into monitoring and evaluation systems requires:
• clear planning processes
• corresponding indicators
• mechanisms for regular monitoring

**Child rights-based Logical Framework**[2]

|  | Narrative summary | Indicators |
|---|---|---|
| **Goal (fulfilment of children's rights)** | Which children's rights are being met? (informed by CRSA and framed as overall changes for children) | What indicators tell you whether children's rights have been met? |
| **Objectives (contribution to goal)** | What is your contribution to the goal, framed in terms of all the Dimensions of Change and SMART? | What indicators tell you whether the changes have taken place and how? |
| **Process** | How does the process encourage participation, develop capacity, accountability and equity? How does it empower people? How does it affect equity and gender disparity? Is it sustainable? | What indicators (or other evidence) will you use to measure participation, improved capacity accountability and empowerment? |
| **Outputs/impact** | What outputs/impact will your programme produce that lead to fulfilment of rights? | What outputs/impact will you produce and when? |
| **Activities** | Did you identify and target underlying causes? What activities must duty-bearers undertake? Which ones and when? | *Inputs:* What responsibilities and authorities are accepted and what resources are required by duty-bearers over the period? |

- capacity within your teams
- an understanding of children and their rights, both within your teams and by your donors.
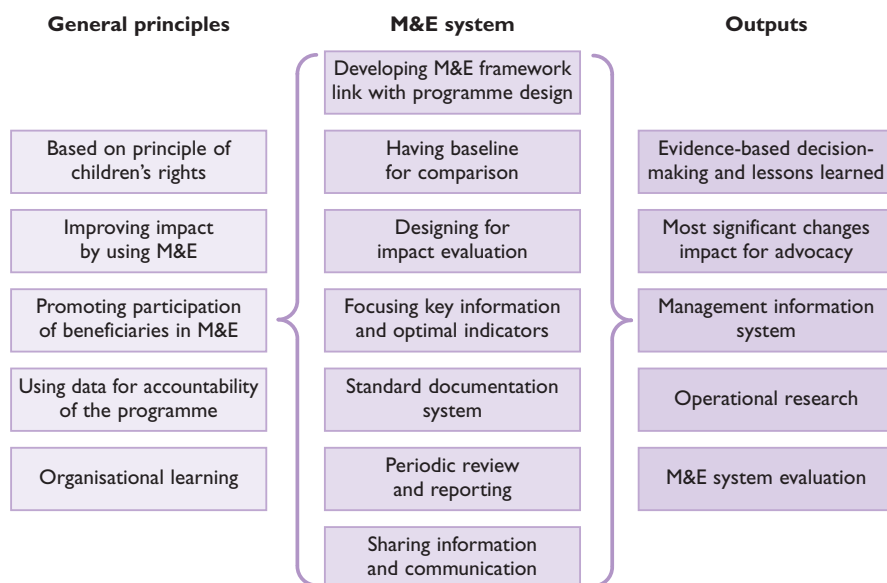
The M&E framework most commonly used by development practitioners and donors is the Logical Framework. Below, we have adapted the Logical Framework to include a rights-based approach.

| | Source | Underlying assumptions |
|---|---|---|
| | What information do you have? What additional information do you need? How will you get it? | *Goal to vision:* is the achievement sustainable? Were underlying causes resolved? |
| | What information do you have? What additional information do you need? How will you get it? | *Objectives to goal:* will the sum of your objectives achieve your goal? What are the barriers? |
| | What information do you have? What additional information do you need? How will you get it? | *Participation to goal:* if the project process improves participation, and produces the desired results, what external factors are needed to reach your goal? |
| | What information do you have? What additional information do you need? How will you get it? | *Output to goal:* if the programme achieves participation and produces its outputs, what external factors are needed to reach the goal? *Output to objectives:* will the success of your outputs achieve your objectives? |
| | What information do you have? What additional information do you need? How will you get it? | *Activity to output:* what external factors must be realised to produce the planned outputs on time? |

In **Myanmar**, with multiple donor requirements and agency approaches, Save the Children tried to establish a common M&E framework. Comparing the various reporting formats, we arrived at a commonly agreed set of principles and approaches that could be expanded to the whole of our learning programme. It is summarised below.

**Monitoring and evaluation framework – Myanmar**

| General principles | M&E system | Outputs |
|---|---|---|
| | Developing M&E framework link with programme design | |
| Based on principle of children's rights | Having baseline for comparison | Evidence-based decision-making and lessons learned |
| Improving impact by using M&E | Designing for impact evaluation | Most significant changes impact for advocacy |
| Promoting participation of beneficiaries in M&E | Focusing key information and optimal indicators | Management information system |
| Using data for accountability of the programme | Standard documentation system | Operational research |
| Organisational learning | Periodic review and reporting | M&E system evaluation |
| | Sharing information and communication | |

## Measuring children's participation[3]

You need to recognise that children are competent actors in their own development and that they have the potential to play a constructive role in the development of their communities. To involve children meaningfully, you need to analyse and understand how they already participate in their communities. Meet children where they are and where they meet – don't just invite them to participate and fit in to *your* programmes.

You can use scales of participation to see how far children are taking part in your activities. You can also use them to set performance targets or to compare projects.

In **Cuba**, Save the Children assessed the levels and quality of children's participation in project activities, using the tool opposite.

**Assessing children's participation**

| Children and young people's involvement in: | Level of child and youth participation | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Not involved** | **Receive information and services** | **Provide input** | **Responsible for planning and action** |
| Planning the service or project | | | | |
| Recruiting staff | | | | |
| Selecting leaders and volunteers | | | | |
| Delivering the service | | | | |
| Reviewing and evaluating the service | | | | |
| Training and peer education | | | | |
| Policy advocacy work | | | | |

## *Remember!*

You need to put children at the centre of your M&E activities to improve:

- **your learning** – setting your objectives and monitoring whether you are achieving them helps you understand the relationship between your work and changes in children's lives. You can share your successes and help others avoid failure in future
- **your accountability** – measuring the impact of your work and involving those you are working for ensures that you are held to account for your actions and provides a good example to other duty-bearers you may be trying to influence
- **your decision-making** – you need to know what you are doing well, and what you are doing less well, to make changes to improve your effectiveness and impact on children's lives.

*Yes, but...*

**❝ Our donor imposes a monitoring and evaluation system and associated reporting requirements. ❞**
Most donors welcome reporting that shows the impact your activities are having on children's lives. Stick to their format. But if you have set out your goals, objectives and indicators, and can show the extent to which you are meeting them, this should fit well with donors' reporting requirements. They will want evidence that your activities are having a positive impact for children, and that their money is being well spent.

**❝ The programme staff, even if they have some of the skills to carry out some participative monitoring and research, have very limited written skills. ❞**
So use this as an opportunity to invest in your staff! Help and encourage them to learn new skills. This will take time and money, so you must have the support of senior managers. But you are building staff capacity for the longer-term benefit of your organisation and the children and communities you work with.

**❝ Even if we had all this documentation how would we know what to do with it? ❞**
Make it useful from the start! Your learning programme must be part of your overall strategy. Plan and design on the basis of what you want to achieve.

**❝ How can we carry out such complete and in-depth information gathering and recording in an emergency situation, where time is short and resources are scarce? ❞**
Be prepared. Having an up-to-date CRSA and including ways of gathering information in difficult situations in your emergency preparedness plans will help you plan for the necessary resources. You will then be better able to demonstrate impact, good practice and effective advocacy and be well positioned to make the case for further resources.

**❝ Do we need an M&E officer if we're going to succeed in carrying out all of this? ❞**
Be careful if you decide to create a 'learning officer' post. This is not an excuse to hand over responsibility for learning to one person or even one unit! Staff at all levels of your organisation need to adopt a learning approach.

**" We already have a raft of reports to write, internal and external. This is just adding to the load and taking staff away from doing their real jobs. "**
You need to ask the right questions, record the answers, analyse them and use the information effectively to make a real difference to children's lives. You may need to make some changes as you go along, which requires leadership and financial investment. But if yours is a learning organisation, this should be integral to the way you work rather than additional to it.

## Where to go for more information

*Research for Development: A practical guide*, Laws S, Save the Children UK/Sage Publications, 2003
You can use this book as a quick reference manual. It has two sections – managing research for development and doing research for development. It outlines the role and purpose of research, highlights issues specific to development research and demonstrates how to evaluate and secure the best results from research.

*Toolkits: A practical guide to planning, monitoring, evaluation and assessment*, Save the Children, 2003
Use this book as you would use a real 'toolkit'. Select the tools you need (in this case, approaches or techniques) to deal with a specific problem. It has three parts: read part one when you are planning, monitoring, reviewing and evaluating your impact. Part two looks in more detail at the processes of planning, monitoring, review, evaluation and impact assessment. Part three describes the different tools and techniques available.

*The Sphere Project: Humanitarian charter and minimum standards in disaster response*, The Sphere Project, 2004
This manual offers a set of minimum standards and key indicators that inform different aspects of humanitarian action, from initial assessment through to co-ordination and advocacy. www.sphereproject.org

*Children and Participation: Research, monitoring and evaluation with children and young people*, Save the Children UK, 2001
This tells you how to involve children and young people in gathering information. It will guide you to other sources of information rather than provide detailed descriptions. It also includes information on good practice, ethics, methods and tools.

**69**

*Introduction to learning and impact assessment*, Save the Children UK, 2006

*Global Impact Monitoring Guidelines*, Save the Children UK, 2004 and *Global Impact Monitoring Format*, Save the Children UK, 2004

*Impact Measurement and Accountability in Emergencies: The good enough guide*, the Emergency Capacity Building Project, 2007

## Recommended websites

**www.oneworldtrust.org** for information on international accountability and monitoring on international targets and pledges through the Global Accountability Project.

**www.alnap.org** dedicated to improving the quality and accountability of humanitarian action by sharing lessons, identifying common problems and, where appropriate, building consensus on approaches.

**www.hapinternational.org** The Humanitarian Accountability Partnership is committed to making their work more accountable to disaster survivors. It includes a set of principles, and auditable benchmarks that assure accountability to beneficiaries.

## Notes

[1] This is not to be confused with the monitoring and reporting process of the UNCRC itself which offers an excellent source of data as a contribution to CRSA, opportunities for engagement and advocacy as part of programme activity, and a framework for monitoring the rights climate in any context and the extent of realisation of children's rights. Engaging with the UNCRC monitoring and reporting process should be a key element of any CRP approach. It is fully explored in *Reporting to the UNCRC – a Starter Pack for Country Programmes*, Save the Children UK, 2007.

[2] Adapted from Patel M *Human Rights as an Emerging Development Paradigm and some implications for programme planning, monitoring and evaluation*, UNICEF, Nairobi, 2001

[3] Adapted from Theis J *Promoting Rights Based Approaches*, Save the Children Sweden, 2004

# 6  Partners and working relations

> **By the end of this chapter you will:**
>
> • understand the importance of working in partnership to fulfil children's rights
>
> • have identified a range of potential partners who can help you bring about changes in children's lives (including the State)
>
> • understand the key principles for choosing partners and managing working relations.
>
> *This chapter builds on and requires an understanding of the core CRP principles, tools and processes given in Chapter 2.*

This chapter explores the challenges of working in partnership. It tells you what we mean by 'partners' and how you can work effectively together to bring about the changes you want in children's lives.

## Why work in partnership?

You are more likely to achieve the changes you want for children if you work with other groups that can support the fulfilment of children's rights. Your partnerships should be based on common values, clear positions and clarity of roles. You need to make careful decisions about the partners you want to work with.

By working with partners you can:
• strengthen communities and their capacity to hold duty-bearers to account
• create a platform for accountability and openness

- increase legitimacy – on a long-term basis, children's rights are better secured through national rather than international organisations
- improve the sustainability of your work through developing and supporting local structures
- increase the potential scale and scope of your work
- encourage mutual learning through co-operative relationships
- promote participatory approaches through local organisations.

## Who are your partners?

The term 'partner' can cover a wide range of working relations in many different contexts. It refers to any organisation that works with another in a formal or semi-formal manner towards a shared goal. Partners may be regional, national or local NGOs, networks, community-based organisations (CBOs), faith-based organisations (FBOs), child and youth associations, trade union movements, women's organisations, parliamentary groups, manufacturing companies, government ministries, international NGOs, UN agencies, and others… The list is long!

Wherever possible, you are likely to form key partnerships with local organisations. They are often better acquainted with programme/project areas, more sensitive to local cultures and traditions, and thus able to maintain better relationships with local communities.

The box opposite lists some of the different types of partners you may work with.

### Case study

Save the Children's experience of working in coalitions and evolving partnerships in **Iraq** was based on the creation of a network of international and national NGOs in 2005. The network aimed to integrate a core consideration of children's rights within the new Iraqi Constitution. Despite very difficult operating conditions, the Children's Rights and Constitution Network was formed. The network put together a strong advocacy plan based on good research. It has continued to operate beyond the drafting of the constitution.

**Who are your partners?**

- **Local, national or regional NGOs**, including large, medium or small NGOs, specialised or general NGOs, coalitions, alliances and networks.
- **Common interest associations**: organisations of people rather than for people; usually membership organisations bound together by a mutual concern or objective. These include trade unions, professional associations and guilds, child and youth associations, and school clubs.
- **Community-based organisations (CBOs)**: organisations of people rather than for people, representing and accountable to their constituencies either formally or informally (according to tradition). These include village committees, producers' groups, co-operatives, women's groups, credit organisations, parent-teacher associations, and federated CBOs (eg, farmers' unions).
- **Private sector**: NGOs are entering into an increasing variety of partnerships with the private sector. These include transnational corporations, individual companies (local and international), local chambers of commerce or industry, business federations and the media.
- **Government**: national, regional/provincial, district and local levels of government. These include: government-run institutions, government-funded pilot projects, municipalities, coalitions of municipalities, and parliamentary groups.
- **Support and academic institutions**: these include academic, training and research institutions, and professional associations (lawyers, doctors, engineers, journalists, etc).
- **Faith-based groups and institutions**
- **Multilateral and bilateral agencies**: for example, the European Union (EU), UNICEF, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and others, although relationships with these organisations will often be in their capacity as donors, rather than as partners.

**73**

## How to work in partnership

There are a range of partners you might want to work with, and there are many ways of working together. To achieve the changes you want for children, your partnerships should be based on the following general principles.

### General principles

- A shared vision and commitment towards children's rights
- Common values, policies and practices concerning non-discrimination, the protection of children from abuse and exploitation and the best interests of children. These will be reflected in an organisation's mandate, vision and governance structures.
- Common objectives, clearly defined and measurable
- Mutual learning and recognition through well-planned systems
- Mutual respect for different cultural perspectives, reflected in partners' profiles, approaches, own networks and personnel
- Mutual empowerment
- Mutual accountability through well-managed systems
- Openness and trust, including regular reviews of the partnership itself
- Impartiality, so that children's best interests are prioritised over any political or other affiliation.

Your partnerships should be about influencing others and being open to influence yourself. It is a process through which both partners gradually learn from each other.

### Identifying and choosing your partners

Your CRSA and programme priorities will determine the type of partner(s) you work with. You need to know the strengths and weaknesses of both your own organisation and any potential partners before entering into a working relationship.

Among other things, you need to know your potential partners':
- **vision, objectives and policies** – what makes the organisation what it is, the reason it was set up and by whom, and how long it has been operating for
- **activities and ways of working** – current and planned activities, practices, achievements (expected results), and, crucially, the extent to which children are involved in project planning, implementation and monitoring

- **relationship to target group and beneficiaries**: how is the organisation viewed by the community? Does the organisation have good working relationships with others?
- **organisational structure** – membership, staff, leadership and participation in decision-making.
- **organisational capacity** for project and financial management, its planning and administrative capability
- **funding situation** and capacity to raise funds, as well as who they receive funds from
- **information and advocacy work** – knowledge of child rights issues. Does the organisation carry out information and advocacy work?
- **legitimacy**, legal status and constitution. Are audited accounts, reports and references available?

## Case studies

In **South East Asia** a number of **children and young people's organisations** have been set up. Their members have a strong commitment to improving the lives of children. Most of these children and young people are struggling to keep their organisations going, having limited experience in management, policy development, administration, proposal writing and fundraising. What they do have is experience and expertise on children's rights issues, having been trained as peer educators and having implemented projects for local and international NGOs. Typically, such projects have a limited life span and when the project comes to an end there is no provision for children and young people to continue working on children's rights issues, unless they organise themselves. Save the Children has entered into partnership with such organisations, helping them to develop, with a strong focus on the principles of accountability, participation, openness, the best interests of the child, non-discrimination and inclusion. The aim is to support children and youth organisations to become strong and autonomous members of civil society. Challenges include understanding partnership, roles and responsibilities of all involved, power relations and agenda setting. Successful partnership working requires openness and flexibility on both sides.

**Case studies** *continued*

Save the Children in **South Africa** is supporting the development of new legislation concerning sexual offences, through a revision of the Children's Act. We have facilitated consultations with various stakeholders, including children, on what the new law should be. The Children's Bill Working Group is a coalition of children's rights organisations, and as such, is a key partner for Save the Children. The coalition's lobbying efforts have resulted in significant changes to the text of the bill, with the government reintroducing important clauses that had been removed.

### Partnership agreements

You need a partnership agreement to set out your mutual commitment and clear roles and responsibilities. It should be mutually binding and signed by both or all parties.

Make sure your agreement includes:
- **a partnership vision**: What do we believe in and what changes do we want to bring about for children?
- **partnership objectives**: What are the reasons for working together? Define what you all need in terms of experience, methods, knowledge and capacity to achieve your vision and specific changes for children.
- **partnership outputs**: What will your partnership produce? This may include projects, studies, networks, etc.
- **a partnership strategy**: How will you all achieve the objectives and outputs?
- **partnership activities**: List the main activities you will all carry out to achieve your objectives and outputs.
- **a partnership process**: How will the partnership be managed? Be clear about what you need to produce in terms of: reporting; child protection and other obligations; respective roles and responsibilities; financial arrangements; approaches and mechanisms for conflict resolution. You should also define the circumstances under which the partnership can be terminated by either or all side(s).

Whenever you decide to end a partnership, it is important to evaluate what you achieved together and how successful you were in bringing about changes in children's lives. This will inform any future partnerships you enter into.

### Working with and enabling the State

All States that have ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) are primary duty-bearers and have the main responsibility for ensuring the realisation of children's rights in their country. In principle, they are accountable to children and adults of that country and to the international community. The State also has an obligation to support parents and primary caregivers to ensure that children's rights are fulfilled.

Working with the State can increase the effectiveness of your interventions and ensure that any improvements are sustainable and long term. A key aim of such a partnership would be to encourage and support the State to meet its obligations to children. You would also aim to facilitate greater involvement of civil society in the work of the partnership as it develops.

States vary in their commitment to fulfilling the rights of their citizens, including children, as well as in their willingness and ability to fulfil their obligations. The opportunities for, and barriers to, you working with the State will vary according to your local context. Sometimes there is no option but to work in partnership with the State.

Whatever the context, working in partnership with the State is important because:
- it creates a relationship of trust and understanding between you and the State
- it can increase your effectiveness as the State has a unique insight and experience, and a crucial role to play in the fulfilment of children's rights
- it ensures sustainability, with the expectation that the State will work with increased capacity, larger scale and greater impact over time than you can.

Partnership arrangements might involve:
- secondment of specialist technical staff into government departments
- capacity-building programmes for State officials at different levels
- demonstration of effective practice through joint or contracted service delivery in selected areas
- supporting State bodies to develop and implement new policies.

Whatever method of partnership you choose, you will need to:
- identify appropriate fora during the **planning** process through which the state can contribute, with roles and expectations clearly defined.
- **implement** programme interventions that strengthen the State's own capacity

• **monitor and evaluate** your work in ways that develop and apply systems and indicators for data gathering, analysis and feedback processes in collaboration with the State.

All these ways of working together can pose particular challenges. You may encounter bureaucratic rules and regulations that lead to frustrating delays. There may be a different organisational culture, ideology and way of working. This may limit the potential for effective advocacy work on your part. You will need to know how decisions are made and what opportunities exist to influence decision-makers at all levels of government. This should be an important part of your CRSA.

Consider the following issues if you are working in partnership with the State:

• **Independence**: If your partnerships involve political parties, governments or their agencies, does this raise questions about political independence? You may encounter conflicts of interest by involving duty-bearers in partnerships or coalitions.
• **Reputation**: An organisation's reputation is affected by those it works with closely. Although a government partner may offer strong support for the issue at hand, there may be other aspects of the partner that your organisation is not comfortable with.
• **Motivation**: There is often likely to be greater uncertainty about the motives of government and other high-risk partners. This can lead to direct conflict of interests.
• **Target or partner?** Working with the State as a partner means you may be in a better position to influence them and the positions they take. They might also be thinking the same about your organisation! Be careful not to blur the lines between who is the partner and who is the target. Recognise the power imbalance that a partnership with government may involve.

## *Remember!*

If you decide to work in partnership with the State, you are looking to support it in fulfilling its obligations to children over the long term. It is vital that you continue to work closely with civil society groups to support them in their role as watchdog, in holding the state to account and in advocating for children's rights.

**Case study**

In **Mexico City**, Save the Children works in partnership with a network of community-based early childcare centres. Despite 30 years of experience and excellence in providing services, when preschool education became compulsory the community-based centres were in danger of being forced to close. This was because their educators were not formally qualified and their buildings did not meet legal specifications. There was an urgent need to secure official recognition of these initiatives by women in their own communities. So, representatives from NGOs involved in education, the childcare centres themselves, and government officials for national childcare and education agreed to set up a working group on the issue. It took two years to agree a set of new regulations in which the efforts of civil society and the quality of community services were officially acknowledged. The working group still meets and has developed a set of indicators to evaluate the quality of early childhood education.

## Working with partners and the programme cycle

Working with partners should feature at every stage of your programme cycle. You are aiming to:

- share **awareness and understanding** of human rights principles and children's rights programming with your partners

- assess the capacity of civil society groups and potential partners (including the State), and the dynamics between them, through your CRSA

- take into account communities' capacity to support the rights of children at all levels when drawing up your programme plans and choosing the partners you want to work with

- reflect the range of your partnerships in programme implementation. These can link to the three pillars. For example, your partners could be a local NGO building emergency shelters (pillar 1); a national NGO building the capacity of government

officials in child protection skills (pillar 2); and your own support for a national coalition of civil society groups working on children's rights (pillar 3)

● learn lessons and feed back your experience to make further improvements to your programme and to inform your advocacy. Use your **monitoring, evaluation, learning and feedback** systems to do this. Involve your partners in gathering and analysing data and communicating results.
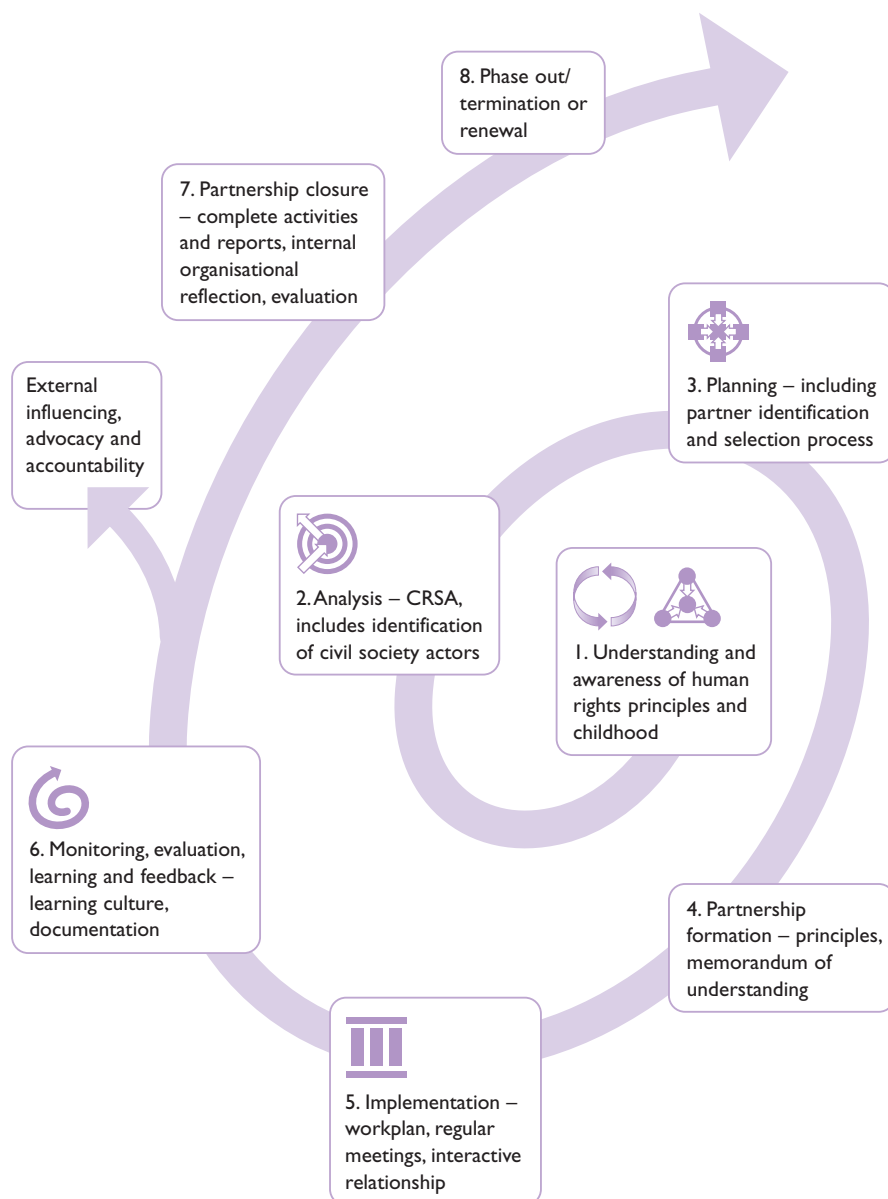
### Case study

In the aftermath of the Ceausescu era in **Romania**, and with growing awareness of the extent of child abuse (particularly the conditions of children in care institutions), Save the Children decided to support a national children's NGO. During the first three years we supported the setting up of governance structures within the organisation. By-laws were drafted and approved, stating that the organisation should be governed by representative democracy through annual members' meetings. Roles and responsibilities were divided between the governing board and the executive director. We also helped with programme development.

From the mid-1990s we gave financial programme support and technical support for capacity building alongside our other partners in eastern Europe. We provided training on the UNCRC and its reporting mechanisms, as well as meetings, workshops and conferences on issues such as child sexual abuse, violence, child labour, street children, and children in institutions. The NGO developed technical skills in counselling and conceptual frameworks, including rights-based programming. A Communication and Information Centre was set up, acting as a focal point for UNCRC monitoring, as a research centre and as a base for advocacy work on children's rights.

In 1997 the NGO became a member of the International Save the Children Alliance (Salvati Copiii – Save the Children Romania). It is currently supported by Save the Children Sweden, including setting up a marketing department so that it can secure a stable income. It is also reviewing its governing structures to respond to wider changes in Romania.

A possible **partnership cycle** and its various steps can be illustrated in the following way and is shown within the framework of the programme cycle in the next diagram:

**Partnership in the programme cycle**



8. Phase out/ termination or renewal

7. Partnership closure – complete activities and reports, internal organisational reflection, evaluation

3. Planning – including partner identification and selection process

External influencing, advocacy and accountability

2. Analysis – CRSA, includes identification of civil society actors

1. Understanding and awareness of human rights principles and childhood

6. Monitoring, evaluation, learning and feedback – learning culture, documentation

4. Partnership formation – principles, memorandum of understanding

5. Implementation – workplan, regular meetings, interactive relationship

## Codes of conduct

You may require your partners to be familiar with, or in some cases sign up to, certain codes of conduct – for example, on child protection. The table below shows how you can make sure that such agreements – in this case the child protection (CP) code of conduct – become more than just a piece of paper.

**Child protection (CP) code of conduct and local NGOs**

| Requirement | Options/resources |
|---|---|
| Build CP clause into partnership agreement | • Use standard CP contract clause |
| Clarify roles and responsibilities | • Build into partnership agreement |
| Provide ongoing support to partner development | • Include partners in CP training and other events on CP<br>• Schedule updates/briefings at regular intervals<br>• Support development of CP focal point in partner agency |
| Briefing of partner staff | • Provision of CP and other supporting material<br>• Initial introductory workshop |
| Monitoring of CP compliance | • Build CP updates into project reporting mechanism<br>• Schedule CP audits<br>• Agree feedback sessions via staff and children<br>• Include discussion of CP as part of scheduled visits<br>• Observation during visits |
| Establish case management procedures that cover CP issues in partner | • Draft joint reporting procedure<br>• Agree roles, responsibilities, lines of reporting and accountability in relation to CP incidents |
| Measure impact of CP on partner | • Agree impact assessment process and indicators |
| Ensure process is established for succession planning/ continuity after partnership arrangement ends | • Agree CP development plan<br>• Identify continuing support to partner on CP issues |

(Adapted from Save the Children's programme in Liberia)

## *Yes, but...*

**❝ Why can't we just do things ourselves? Working with partners is expensive, takes a lot of time and often doesn't bring results. ❞**
It's true that working with partners, especially small, local NGOs, takes a lot of time, energy, skill and financial resources. But the rewards are great. Local partners help you to ensure sustainable solutions, improve your understanding of local realities, build up local advocacy networks, provide greater potential for replication and scale, and work towards greater accountability.

**❝ How about in emergency situations or where partners simply don't exist? ❞**
There may be times when you need to set up operations that bring services directly to children and their communities. For example, in an emergency in a country with weak and/or overburdened civil society networks, or in conflict situations where the possibilities for access and humanitarian intervention are very limited. But even in these situations you should try to form local partnerships where possible and will be working in coalitions at national and international levels as well as working with state partners.

**❝ In some countries the state simply doesn't exist and in other countries non-state actors govern some regions. What do we do about the imperative to work with "state partners" in these situations? ❞**
Just as each situation is different and constantly changes, so the form of your partnerships will also evolve. Even if working with the state at national level is challenging, there are good examples of where local government partnerships have flourished. These may be the only way of gaining access to vulnerable children. Save the Children has worked with the humanitarian wing of non-state parties in southern Sudan for many years, and has co-ordinated with non-state actors in northern Sri Lanka and formed vital partnerships with local authorities in Somalia. So, it is possible. But you need to stay impartial and true to your vision to see children's rights fulfilled. This can create the most unexpected of partnerships!

**❝ Mainstreaming the child protection code of conduct is already a challenge for our staff, given the local cultural realities. Extending this to our partners and making it a contractual condition seems unrealistic and unreasonable. ❞**

If you have a child protection or other code of conduct you may want your partners to adopt the same. If you have chosen your partners carefully, on the basis of shared values and vision, it is not unreasonable to ask them to consider adopting such a code. Especially as it encourages all involved to work with children in responsible, safe and respectful ways.

**❝ How can we apply the child protection code of conduct to commercial companies whose mandate is so different from our own? ❞**

You will find some notable successes of NGOs working with private sector partners and helping them build a code of conduct on child protection into their working practices. For example, working in a partnership of international agencies and donors with trucking companies contracted to deliver food aid in southern Africa in 2002 led to code of conduct agreements in that and similar partnerships. Code of conduct agreements have also been reached with construction companies, as in Mozambique when a new bridge was being constructed across the Zambezi.

## Where to go for more information

*Common understanding in relation to the State and Civil Society* for Save the Children Denmark, Save the Children Sweden and Save the Children Norway, 2006
This sets out the rationale for different relationships, key principles and approaches. It takes a strong rights-based approach.

*Partnership Policy and Guidelines and Partnership Implementing Guide*, Save the Children in Uganda and Save the Children Denmark, 2006
Step-by-step guides to working with a wide range of partners. They contain examples, formats and checklists that, though produced specifically for work in Uganda, can be adapted and used worldwide.

*Child Protection Policy*, Save the Children, 2003

*Keeping Children Safe: A toolkit for child protection*, Keeping Children Safe Coalition, 2006

*A tool for programme staff to undertake a CRP assessment of a partner organisation*, Save the Children Denmark, 1999
You can use this tool to assess a partner organisation in terms of how it understands and applies the CRP principles. It will help programme officers make a baseline assessment so they can measure the impact of capacity building (training and support for children's rights programming).

### Recommended websites and materials on the web

For extensive information on working with others on children's rights, including national and international coalitions and advocacy initiatives, publications and guidelines, see www.crin.org

*The Partnering Toolbook*, Tennyson R, International Business Leaders Forum and Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition, 2003. A complete guide to working with partners with tools written to assist you at every phase in the partnership relationship. Internet access to the book is found at: http://thepartneringinitiative.org

For more information on how to work with the **media** and guidance for the media when working with children, see www.mediawise.org.uk, and *The Media and Children's Rights*, MediaWise, 2005 (commissioned by UNICEF).

For more information on community-based initiatives against child trafficking in the Mekong sub-region, see www.mekongchildrensforum.com

See www.intrac.org for more guidance on NGO and civil society capacity building.

# 7  Advocacy on children's rights

**By the end of this chapter you will:**

• understand what is meant by advocacy

• understand each step of the advocacy cycle

• know about the key tools needed to apply these steps within your programme.

*This chapter builds on and requires an understanding of the core CRP principles, tools and processes given in Chapter 2.*

This chapter explains briefly how advocacy can help you achieve the fulfilment of children's rights. It is not a definitive guide, but sets out the key steps you need to take.

## Why do advocacy?

You cannot bring about all the changes you want to improve children's lives alone. Children's rights are often violated through a combination of complex processes, from the levels of family and community to those of national, regional and international. You need to be able to influence and lobby duty-bearers so that they meet their obligations under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). Based on evidence from your experience and your commitment to giving children a voice, you can play a key role in supporting children, their families and communities to claim their rights. By doing effective advocacy, you can bring about key changes in policy, legislation and practice that will have a lasting impact on children's lives.
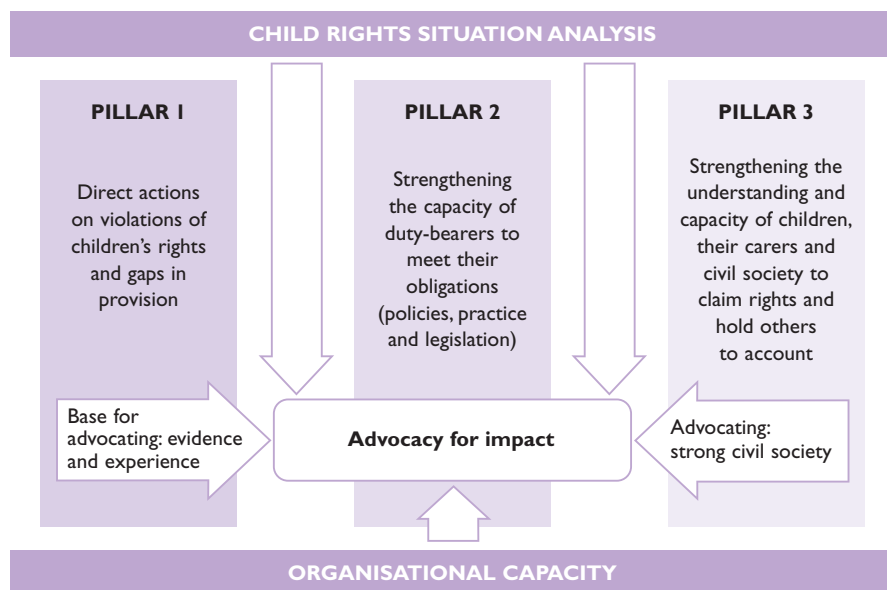
Effective advocacy can:

- demonstrate the value of children, their families and communities participating in decisions that affect their lives, and being key actors in their own development

- demonstrate the advantages of changing policies, practices and legislation to benefit children

- encourage states to recognise children's needs (particularly those of disadvantaged children), and act to fulfil their obligations

- challenge international donors to spend their budgets in ways that will make a real difference to children's lives

- document the need to put systems in place to monitor the situation of children.

Your CRSA should guide your advocacy strategy. You can see below how this fits in to the three pillars (see Chapter 2). You use the experience and knowledge gained from your activities (the first pillar) to inform and influence changes in policy, practice and legislation (central pillar). This process is reinforced by a strong civil society, with children and young people expressing their views, claiming their rights, and holding duty-bearers to account (the third pillar).

**Advocacy and child rights programming**

**CHILD RIGHTS SITUATION ANALYSIS**

| **PILLAR 1** | **PILLAR 2** | **PILLAR 3** |
|---|---|---|
| Direct actions on violations of children's rights and gaps in provision | Strengthening the capacity of duty-bearers to meet their obligations (policies, practice and legislation) | Strengthening the understanding and capacity of children, their carers and civil society to claim rights and hold others to account |

Base for advocating: evidence and experience → **Advocacy for impact** ← Advocating: strong civil society

**ORGANISATIONAL CAPACITY**

● GETTING IT RIGHT FOR CHILDREN

## Some definitions

Save the Children defines advocacy as:

*"a set of organised activities designed to influence the policies and actions of others to achieve positive changes for children's lives based on the experience and knowledge of working directly with children, their families and communities".*

### Top tips:

For advocacy that promotes children's rights:
- start your advocacy in the field: base it on evidence from your programmes and those of your partners
- never see advocacy as a one-off event or an add-on to an existing programme
- plan, on the basis of your CRSA, clear goals and measurable indicators, so that you can monitor progress and achievements
- make sure that the process is itself empowering
- take positive action and offer credible alternatives that lead to changes in policy, practice and legislation to benefit children
- work in a wide range of partnerships, coalitions and networks
- work for long-term results. It may take years, even decades, before your overall aims are reached.
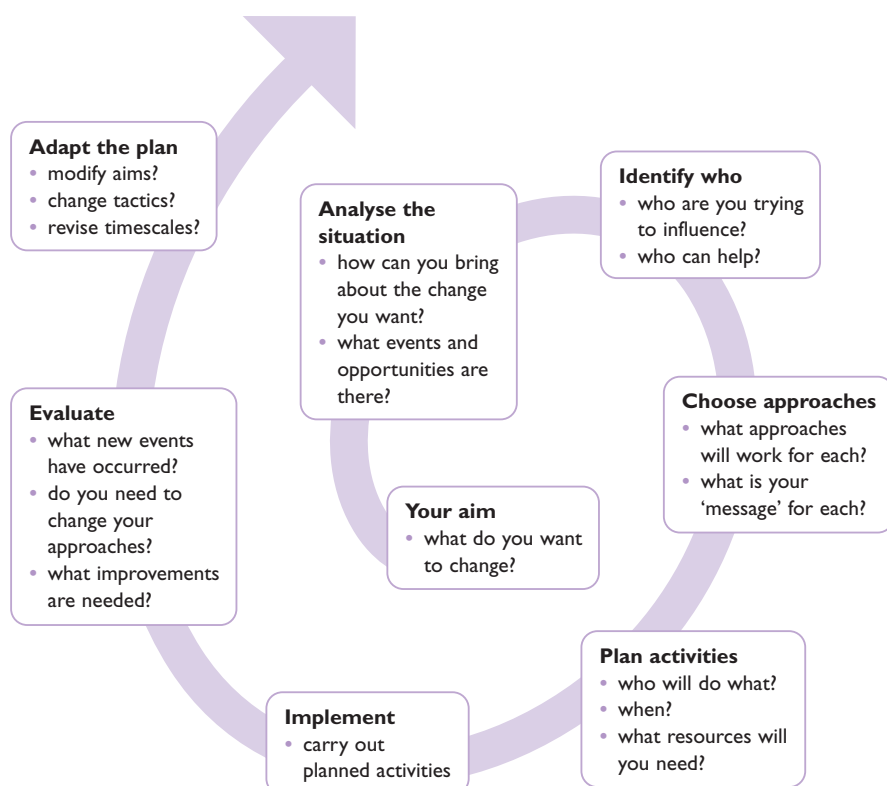
## How to do advocacy work

Here are the key steps you need to take to make your advocacy work effective in bringing about positive changes for children.

1. **Understand child-rights based advocacy**

2. **Identify your aim: what do you want to change?**

3. **Analyse the situation: how can change be brought about?**

4. **Identify your target and influentials/allies – who are you trying to influence? Who can help you influence them?**

5. **Set your goals and change objectives**

6. **Identify events and opportunities you can use to get your message across**

7. **Choose different approaches that will work for different targets. What is your message to each target?**

8. **Plan activities: who will do what? When? What resources do you need? What indicators will you use to monitor progress?**

9. **Implement your planned activities**

10. **Monitor and evaluate: what has happened? Do you need to change your approaches? What improvements are needed?**

11. **Adapt the plan: Modify aims? Change tactics? Revise timescales?**

Here is a diagram to help you think through the different steps of the advocacy cycle:

**Key steps for effective advocacy**

**Adapt the plan**
• modify aims?
• change tactics?
• revise timescales?

**Analyse the situation**
• how can you bring about the change you want?
• what events and opportunities are there?

**Identify who**
• who are you trying to influence?
• who can help?

**Choose approaches**
• what approaches will work for each?
• what is your 'message' for each?

**Evaluate**
• what new events have occurred?
• do you need to change your approaches?
• what improvements are needed?

**Your aim**
• what do you want to change?

**Plan activities**
• who will do what?
• when?
• what resources will you need?

**Implement**
• carry out planned activities

**Charting the advocacy cycle**

Some people find diagrams a useful way to think through all the steps that they must undertake. But people picture these processes differently.

• The diagram on the previous page shows them as a continuous spiral. What are the advantages of this? Is there anything it leaves out?

• Work with one other person to devise your own diagrams, which include the processes your organisation will need to go through.

• Get each pair to explain their diagram to the others in the group. Together, decide on the features that work best, and produce a final diagram for your own planning.

Based on the above cycle, Save the Children in Liberia devised its education advocacy strategy. The result was a range of messages, objectives, targets and approaches, outlined below.

**Save the Children Liberia education advocacy strategy**

**Message 1**: The new government of Liberia and the international community use the post-conflict environment to ensure free primary education is adequately funded and becomes a reality for all children.

**Advocacy**: The Liberian government, donors and the international community match their promises and commitments with adequate funding to rebuild Liberia's education system, which provides quality and free primary education.

**Change objectives**:
**1.** Government allocates a minimum of 20% of the national budget to education, 40% of which is allocated to primary education.
**2.** Government supports the transparency and accountability of education funding.
**3.** Increased donor funding supports the government of Liberia to provide free quality education.

**Save the Children Liberia education advocacy strategy**
*continued*

**Targets**: Ministry of Education (MoE) at national and local levels; key donors involved in education (EU, USAID). Ministry of Finance, World Bank (WB) and IMF for the macro-economic framework and decisions that allow increased investment in social services from the government budget.
Globally: WB/other Education for All-Fast Track Initiative (EFA/FTI) donors.

**Allies**: USAID and the UK Department for International Development (DFID) are both potential allies who can influence the forthcoming donors' conference.

**Approaches**:
• Coalition for Better Education in Liberia, which aims to improve the resourcing of the education system, through lobbying in key national meetings (eg, donor group) for better funding of education.
• Analysis of budget allocations and spending to primary education at national and local levels (with UNESCO, who are leading on analysis of financing, at local level working with MoE and schools).
• Children's and communities' awareness of local budget allocations for their schools and their involvement in monitoring whether money is getting through.
• Constructive dialogue with MoE and Ministry of Finance using evidence generated in programme areas.

Save the Children's advocacy strategy in Liberia is part of the International Save the Children Alliance's Rewrite the Future Campaign to ensure access to education for children living in countries affected by conflict. See www.savethechildren.net/rewritethefuture

At every stage of your advocacy work you should be looking for opportunities to involve children, members of their communities, and local organisations. Not only does this give you greater credibility, it can also help defuse politically or culturally sensitive situations. Through this process, you are also empowering the people who will most benefit from the changes you are seeking.

**Case studies**

In **Bangladesh**, a local NGO, supported by Save the Children, facilitated the involvement of a group of street children working in a city marketplace who were experiencing harassment. After some discussions, the street children suggested that carrying identity cards would help their situation. The local NGO supported the children to discuss this with the market committee. They convinced them of the benefits of ID cards, not just for children, but for stallholders and customers too. The children were successful in their advocacy – they now have ID cards and their situation has improved.

Also in **Bangladesh**, acting at a national level, Save the Children and UNICEF took a proactive stance in advocating for the inclusion of children in the National Plan of Action (NPA) process. The NPA was led by the government, which had its own agenda. Save the Children insisted that the government honour the commitment it made to the UN concerning children's participation in the NPA process. Towards the end of this process, 12 children were involved, two in each of the six committees of the NPA.

Save the Children has extensive experience in working at international levels, and in influencing policies and international legislation. Our advocacy work is constantly informed by our experience working directly with children and their communities. Here are some examples of the different approaches we use.

**Case studies**

In 2005 the G8 nations agreed to support any country that abolished healthcare user fees. Intense **international lobbying** by Save the Children, using solid and credible research, contributed to this decision and the subsequent results. Now, even the World Bank acknowledges that user fees discriminate against the poor and it no longer promotes fees for basic health services for poor people. **Uganda, Kenya, South Africa and Zambia** have now stopped charging for some or all of their basic healthcare services. Take-up of healthcare by children in these countries has risen dramatically and

## **Case studies** *continued*

at relatively low cost to governments. In Uganda, use of health services has more than doubled, largely as a result of increased take-up by children. We are now encouraging more countries to follow this lead and abolish healthcare fees.

We have also worked on an **international** level, in coalitions of like-minded organisations, to lobby multinational corporations to change their practice – for example, in relation to the harmful use of child labour in the textile industry, or to stop advertising baby milk powder. These campaigns are rooted in our programme experience and are backed up by research. They operate internationally and rely on the active participation of a diverse group of partners.

The **UN Study on Violence against Children** and its nine national and regional consultations held around the world during 2005 provided a platform for effective and meaningful participation of children. Giving greater importance to children's voices, recognising their concerns and recommendations, and, most importantly, providing a platform for the recognition of children's own action to end violence against girls and boys has been central to the UN Study.

Representatives of children's networks from countries in each region took part in preparatory meetings prior to each of the regional consultations. This gave them an opportunity to explore with peers the issues relating to violence and to plan their participation in the consultations that followed.

The participation of children and young people in the regional consultations was designed to ensure that they actively shared their voices and, more importantly, their actions to stop violence. Advocating for their own recommendations alongside government representatives, planners and policy-makers proved to be much more than just a meeting of minds.

The lively participation and involvement of children in all stages of the consultation brought a sense of urgency and reality that is crucial for the success of the study. Children and adolescents adopted their own declaration or outcome document at every regional consultation. They identified their

**Case studies** *continued*

own priorities that contributed directly to the working group's discussions at the consultations. These priorities were ultimately reflected in the final recommendations of each consultation.

A total of 260 girls and boys from various backgrounds in various countries took part in the regional consultations. Save the Children was largely responsible for arranging their participation in the study, creating the appropriate structures and providing technical support and training. Quality standards for children's participation were systematically applied. We also led national, regional and global advocacy strategies in relation to the UN Study, with resulting direct influence on the final recommendations, the UN resolution on violence against children, and the commitments made by individual member states.

## Key tools

You can use the *Advocacy Toolkit* (Save the Children, 2007) to help you plan your overall strategy. Here are the stages of the advocacy cycle, with the tools you can use at each stage:

### 1. Understand child-rights based advocacy
Use the advocacy competency and capacity assessment tool, based on a list of advocacy skills required as individuals and as a team. There's also an exercise to identify strengths and weaknesses (*Advocacy Toolkit*, Save the Children, 2007, pp.19–20).

### 2. Identify what you want to change
See the Roots and Fruits tree, *Working for Change in Education: A handbook for planning advocacy*, Save the Children, 2000, p.21.

### 3. Analyse the situation
How can you bring about the changes you want for children? What events and opportunities are there?

Refer back to your CRSA for your evidence base and analysis. Use the Circles of Influence and Obligation as a starting point.

**4. Identify who you are trying to influence and who can help you reach them**

Use any of the following tools to help you in this:
- Identifying targets and influentials, *Working for Change in Education*, Save the Children, 2000, p.29
- Lines of influence, *Working for Change in Education*, p.35
- Allies and opponents matrix, *CRP: A resource for planning*, Save the Children, 2003

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### A reminder of who's who

**Stakeholders** are all those individuals or groups who may have an interest in the change you are advocating.

**Targets** are the key individuals who are in a position to bring about the change you want.

**Influentials** are those people who have influence over your targets.

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**5. Set your goals and objectives**
Use the Roots and Fruits tree, *Working for Change in Education*, p.21.

**6. Identify events and opportunities you can use**
Use the opportunities planner, *Advocacy Toolkit*, Save the Children, 2007, p.68.

The NGO group for the UNCRC has also produced a guide to assist NGOs in reporting to the Committee on the Rights of the Child (2006 edition). This includes an outline of procedures, tools for planning, checklists and tips for each stage of the process.

Save the Children has produced a guide to help teams wanting to engage with the reporting process. It presents background material, tools, references and case studies: *Reporting on the UN Committee for the Rights of the Child: A Starter Pack*, Save the Children, 2007.

**7. Choose the right approaches**
What approaches will work for each objective and target? What is your message for each objective and target? There are different types of approach –

**co-operative**, **persuasive** and **confrontational**. Make sure you carry out a risk analysis related to the different approaches.

The range of possible advocacy approaches includes:
• events
• demonstrating solutions
• action research
• policy analysis
• awareness-raising
• campaigning
• lobbying
• media work
• partnerships
• creating ways for people to act.

For more discussion on risk in advocacy, see the *Advocacy Toolkit*, Save the Children, 2007, pp.65–67. It includes a risk assessment matrix and risk management matrix.

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### Case study

Working in a coalition of international agencies, Save the Children brought the deteriorating situation of people in **Gaza** to the attention of donors and the public. We did this by working through the media. As chair of the Advocacy Sub-Committee of the Association of International Development Agencies (AIDA), we led the planning for an event called Gaza Six Months On.

#### Lessons learned:
• *Safety in numbers*. Get a group of reputable organisations to work together on potentially risky or sensitive statements.
• *Be prepared*. The AIDA planning committee did a lot of work to make this possible.
• *Know your audience*. Our messages were tailored to a receptive audience. The donor community was on board with our basic message, but wanted support in making the case at their HQ level.

**Case study** *continued*

- *Get the timing right.* The event was held at the right time, as high-level discussions were taking place within the donor community on exactly the issues we were trying to influence.
- *Do your homework.* Make sure you get your facts and figures correct, quote others, base your information on impartial sources.
- *Monitor the environment.* The election of Hamas really distracted people from the situation in Gaza.
- *Get support from head office.* They will help with press releases, media statements, etc, but they can also promote the message at their end. You can also reduce your risk on sensitive issues by making sure other relevant departments (fundraisers, public advocacy, campaigners, media people, regional office) know what's happening.
- *Be punchy.* Make your statements clear, make your 'asks' clear, use soundbites.
- *Don't just be responsive – have a bigger goal in mind.* You're not just saying children are suffering because of a single event, but that children's rights are denied, and the action you are taking now is one of a series to point out the structural/systematic reasons why.
- *If it's a high-risk event, get your sign-off/risk reduction procedures clear.* Know who can make the decision, where they are, let them know when to expect the statement and then provide it.
- *Identify your enemies.* Know your allies but know your enemies too. This can help you prepare, think through the arguments, understand the other point of view, make sure you've identified risks, and have strategies to respond to attacks!

### 8. Plan activities
Who will do what? When? What resources do you need?

You can use the three pillars to plan your activities. This will help you make sure you have the evidence base, the experience and the support of a strengthened civil society to influence duty-bearers in terms of their policy, practice and legislation as it affects children.

### 9. Implement

Carry out your planned activities.

You can use the planning matrix in *Working for Change in Education*, Save the Children, 2000, p.77.

### 10. Monitoring, evaluation, learning and feedback

What have you done and what has happened so far? Do you need to change your approaches? What improvements are needed?

Use either: Frameworks for monitoring the advocacy process and monitoring advocacy impact, *Advocacy Toolkit*, Save the Children, 2007, pp.71–72.

or: List of questions and dilemmas when evaluating advocacy, *Advocacy Toolkit*, p.78.

Oxfam has developed an alternative to the Dimensions of Change, known as the Stages of Change (see box opposite). These can be applied to your planning, monitoring and evaluation systems.

### 11. Adapt the plan

Do you need to modify your aims, change your tactics or revise your timescales?

The learning and feedback loop is again key to improving your advocacy programme, and informing its content, approaches and evolution.

When you have carried out your analysis, planned your advocacy work and resourced it, and are sure your partners are ready and that you all share the same motivation, then check through the following questions:

• Are you clear about your change objectives?
• Have you involved and listened to the views of children?
• Do you have evidence and solutions in place?
• Do you know your audience?
• Do you have good contacts among your influentials?
• Have you decided on what approaches to use?
• What are you expecting from your partners?
• Are you sure of their motives and goals?
• Do they enhance your credibility?
• What will happen if they drop out of the picture?

**The Stages of Change**

**1. Change in debate**: the first step to getting your advocacy message into the policy development process is to make sure that your message and argument feature in debates on the issue among relevant stakeholders. For example, are the press carrying your message? Is a minister using your terms of reference for the issue? You will need to note factors that enable or constrain, eg, ideological biases.

**2. Changes in opinion**: did your message change any opinion? Are the messages being used within debate to effectively influence what people think and then may do? You will need to make sure you cover a wide range of stakeholders in this analysis.

**3. Changes in policy**: getting suggested alternative policy into legislation or relevant context.

**4. Change in implementation**: recommended change in policy is implemented by targets – government or agency. Funding has been allocated and is being spent. Implies monitoring budget allocations and distributions, eg, to regional or local-level budgets, and tracking whether or not funds are expended on target activity (and if not, why not?).

**5. Change in people's lives**: this stage is only reached when the desired policy has been put into practice and the results are showing (or not). At this point the changes should be considered through the perspective of all the dimensions.

- What resources – financial, technical, human – are available?
- How will you co-ordinate and monitor the different approaches you are using?
- Are there any risks?
- How will your activities affect the reputation of your organisation?
- How will it affect your funding?
- What would you do if…? What are your alternatives and contingency plans?

**Case study**

A success story from **Bulgaria**: Save the Children became aware of three signs of bad conditions and maltreatment in a home for children with disabilities. The programme immediately informed the responsible ministries, the European Union in Bulgaria and key investigative journalists. Each of these exerted pressure, and this triggered an immediate reaction. The home was planned for closure, while each child's needs were assessed and plans made for their care outside of institutions. The team summarised their learning points as: *"Don't go it alone, don't expect quick results, don't underestimate the negative 'fall out', don't forget you are dealing with politicians, and don't take 'no' for an answer."*

The Advocacy Center at the Institute for Sustainable Communities (ISC) has developed an alternative strategic planning tool for advocacy, known as the 'Nine Questions' (see www.advocacy.org).

**The Nine Questions**

**External factors**
1. What do we want? (goals)
2. Who can give it to us? (audiences, key players or power-holders)
3. What do they need to hear? (messages)
4. Who do they need to hear it from? (messages)
5. How can we get them to hear it? (delivery)

**Internal factors**
6. What do we have? (resources)
7. What do we need to develop? (gaps)
8. How do we begin? (first steps)
9. How do we tell if it's working? (evaluation)

*Yes, but…*

**❝ We can't measure the impact of our advocacy work. It will take many years and who knows if our efforts will have contributed to any change? ❞**
Break it down into phases, each with objectives and indicators. This way you can monitor your progress and maintain momentum and motivation over time.

**❝ What happens if a great opportunity arises – eg, we're invited to a high-level round table discussion on a subject that we have not planned any advocacy for? ❞**
The short answer is, go! But before you go, ask yourself these questions:
- Does the subject for discussion relate to our existing programme and strategy?
- Do we have a clear position?
- Do we have evidence to back up our position?
- Do we have the skills to present our position?
- Do others share our position and objectives?
- Is this the best use of our time and resources or would we be better off doing something else?
- Can we document the discussion, share the conclusions and ensure follow-up?
- Can we present children's opinions, directly or indirectly?

**❝ Policy and legislation is more about politics than children and their rights. Aren't we just wasting our time here? ❞**
You need to know who can bring about change and how, so you have to have a good understanding of power relations. This can take a long time, but it is vital for large-scale change. Through fundamental changes to policy and legislative frameworks you will start to see changes take place for large numbers of vulnerable children, potentially over generations. Taking strong positions based on direct experience, working in good partnerships and demonstrating real commitment over time will earn respect from the 'powers that be' and bring eventual success.

**❝ Without the financial resources at national and decentralised levels neither us nor the state can really have an impact. ❞**

You need to work with governments and donors at all levels and press for the necessary funding and budget transparency to bring about the improvements you want to see in children's lives. For example, Save the Children's global campaign, Rewrite the Future, calls on states and donors to adequately fund education in conflict and post-conflict countries. The specific recommendation demands: "increasing allocation of long-term predictable aid for education in conflict-affected fragile states, with a significant proportion of this aid being used to provide basic education".

## Where to go for more information

There are many resources on advocacy. Here is a small selection of the most practical ones and those that deal with child rights-based advocacy.

*Child Rights Advocacy Operational Guideline* and *Advocacy Position Paper*, Save the Children Denmark, 2006. Two complementary papers outlining what is meant by advocacy and practical approaches to carrying out advocacy initiatives, with a focus on planning.

*Advocacy Toolkit*, Save the Children UK, 2007. A step-by-step practical guide with a range of tools, explanations and formats.

*Advocacy Matters: Helping children change their world.* An International Save the Children Alliance guide to advocacy, 2007.

*Working for Child Rights from a Budget Perspective.* Studies and experiences from a number of countries, Save the Children Sweden, 2005

*Working for Change in Education: A handbook for planning advocacy*, Save the Children UK, 2000. A key reference that, despite its focus on education programmes, is of great value across all programme areas. It includes key tools, checklists and case studies.

*Act Now! Some highlights from children's participation in the Regional Consultation for the UN Secretary-General's Study on Violence against Children*, Save the Children, 2006

*Regional Capacity Building Workshop on Advocacy for Realising Child Rights*, Save the Children Sweden, 2007

*A New Weave of Power, People & Politics: The action guide for advocacy and citizen participation*, VeneKlasen L, Just Associates, 2002, Washington DC www.justassociates.org

*Critical Webs of Power and Change*, ActionAid International, 2005 www.actionaid.org

*Children's Ombudsman Training and Resource Manual*, Save the Children Norway, 2006

## Recommended websites:

New Tactics in Human Rights: www.newtactics.org/main.php provides a range of good training tools.

The International Budget Project, www.internationalbudget.org, is more rights-based with a further focus on budget analysis, country case studies, information exchange and tools. Civil society and capacity building feature highly.

Young Lives, www.younglives.org.uk, is an innovative long-term international research project, investigating the changing nature of child poverty in Ethiopia, India, Peru and Vietnam. The project links research and policy-makers and planners, so that the information produced is used to improve the quality of children's lives. Young Lives involves academic and NGO partners in these four countries, as well as in the UK and South Africa.

For information on **ombudspersons** see the European Network of Ombudspersons for Children, www.ombudsnet.org, which includes background information and a training pack.

# 8  Child rights programming and emergencies

**By the end of this chapter you will:**

• understand why and how to apply CRP in emergency situations

• understand the constraints to applying CRP in emergency situations.

*This chapter builds on and requires an understanding of the core CRP principles, tools and processes given in Chapter 2.*

There's no good reason why you shouldn't be able to use a rights-based approach in your emergency response. Indeed, Save the Children argues that CRP should be integral to any emergency response. You will no doubt face particular challenges that are specific to emergency situations. This chapter shows you how to respond to those challenges.

## Why apply child rights programming in emergencies?

You should apply a CRP approach in emergencies for two reasons: the international community, through a framework of rights and principles, has mandated that children should maintain their full range of rights in all situations; and the values and principles that underpin CRP represent good humanitarian practice!

Applying a CRP approach in emergencies is rooted in a number of internationally accepted guiding frameworks. These include:

• international humanitarian law and the Geneva Conventions

• refugee law

## Some definitions

By **emergencies** we mean: "a situation where lives, physical and mental well-being or development opportunities for children are threatened as a result of armed conflict, disaster or complex situations and where local capacity is exceeded or inadequate".[1]

Emergencies can be further categorised as:
- **natural disaster**: where "the consequences of events triggered by natural hazards overwhelm local response capacity and seriously affect the social and economic development of a region"
- **complex emergency**: "a humanitarian crisis where significant breakdown of authority has resulted from internal or external conflict, requiring an international response that extends beyond the mandate of one single agency"
- **chronic emergency**: where "a number of natural or people-created situations are referred to as 'emergencies' but which may more usefully be considered as 'long-running complex situations'.[2]

- international human rights instruments, including the UN Charter and the UNCRC
- humanitarian standards, including the Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movements and NGOs in Disaster Relief (1994), the SPHERE Project Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards, the INEE minimum standards for education in chronic crises and early reconstruction, the Paris Principles and Guidelines for children associated with armed forces or armed groups, and the Humanitarian Accountability Project minimum standards.
- international targets, including the Millennium Development Goals.

One such framework states that: *"Persons affected by disasters should enjoy the same rights and freedoms under human rights law as others in their country and not be discriminated against." Protecting Persons Affected by Natural Disasters, IASC Operational Guidelines on Human Rights and Natural Disasters,* 2006

Other frameworks state that:

• children must maintain the full range of rights in all situations, irrespective of who they are (as clearly stated in the UNCRC and a host of other international human rights instruments and International Humanitarian Law).
• these rights are more at risk of being violated, left unprotected and unfulfilled the more fragile the situation
• duty-bearers must continue to meet their responsibilities and obligations in all situations and in relation to all rights
• international conventions, charters and principles reinforce a rights-based approach in emergencies.

Using a CRP approach for your emergency response also represents good humanitarian practice. It will ensure that you:

• stay impartial
• protect children against abuses of power
• encourage children's participation as well as the participation of other beneficiaries
• target the most vulnerable children, their families and communities
• collaborate with and strengthen civil society, giving this increasing priority as the humanitarian response progresses, but keep it rooted in your initial analysis (CRSA, emergency preparedness plans (EPPs) and rapid assessment)
• hold the state to account to meet its obligations to children, their families and communities
• are accountable to beneficiaries and other stakeholders, enabling their input into your programme response and getting their feedback on your impact.

## Codes of conduct for emergency response

Some agencies, networks and coalitions have developed codes of conduct (or minimum standards and operating procedures) to guide their emergency work. One of the most commonly used is the Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movements and NGOs in Disaster Relief. This is a voluntary code, developed in 1994. It is a rights-based code, widely respected by humanitarian organisations, donors, governments and non-state actors.

The box opposite shows how the Red Cross/Red Crescent Code of Conduct relates to key human rights and CRP principles.

**The Red Cross/Red Crescent Code of Conduct and CRP principles**

| Code of Conduct | Human rights and CRP principles |
| --- | --- |
| 1. The humanitarian imperative comes first | 1. Application of principles of universality and inalienability |
| 2. Aid is given regardless of the race, creed or nationality of the recipients and without adverse distinction of any kind. Aid priorities are calculated on the basis of need alone | 2. Application of principle of non-discrimination |
| 3. Aid will not be used to further a particular political or religious standpoint | 3. Application of principle of non-discrimination |
| 4. We shall endeavour not to act as instruments of government foreign policy | 4. Implying an understanding of power, capacity, and marginalised and vulnerable populations (linking to the CRSA) to ensure both accountability of the State and assist in strengthening its capacity |
| 5. We shall respect culture and custom | 5. Implying an understanding and analysis of social, cultural, economic and political context (building on the CRSA), including the perspective of children and young people |
| 6. We shall attempt to build disaster response on local capacities | 6. Sustainable impact based on empowerment of rights-holders and capacity/role of civil society (see the three pillars and dimensions of change) |
| 7. Ways shall be found to involve programme beneficiaries in the management of relief aid | 7. Participation and involvement of stakeholders, including children and young people in decision-making processes |
| 8. Relief aid must strive to reduce future vulnerabilities to disaster as well as meeting basic needs | 8. Sustainable impact based on empowerment of rights-holders and capacity/role of civil society (pillar 3) and advocacy to address the underlying causes (CRSA) |
| 9. We hold ourselves accountable to both those we seek to assist and those from whom we accept resources | 9. Accountability to beneficiaries and range of other stakeholders, including children |
| 10. In our information, publicity and advertising activities, we shall recognise disaster victims as dignified humans, not hopeless objects | 10. Beneficiaries, including children and young people, are social actors |

### Constraints

All organisations face constraints, either internal, organisational constraints or features of the operating environment. In an emergency, these are likely to be significant. Constraints can be summarised as follows:

• the lack of capacity or will of the authorities (duty-bearers) to fulfil their responsibilities

• the pressure to respond quickly, restricting the ability to undertake a CRSA, involve stakeholders, plan strategic advocacy initiatives and ensure sustainable impact

• the unpredictable nature of the operating environment, making planning hard, demanding flexibility and agility and often removing the possibility of implementing in keeping with a clear-cut programme cycle

• a focus on technical expertise, limiting a holistic view of children, integrated response and longer-term planning, with children viewed as victims and not rights-holders

• high staff turnover, limiting effectiveness of capacity building and increasing the likelihood of poor understanding of CRP

• focus on security conditions, limiting stakeholder involvement, potentially putting children at risk if targeted and identified

• less secure/long-term funding available, creating a focus on immediate and tangible results

• unresponsive and disempowered children, their carers and civil society, limiting children and other stakeholders' involvement, working in partnerships and co-ordinated advocacy

• limited access to children, leading to adult-informed planning and implementation. This restricts children's involvement through the programme cycle, their empowerment and the possibility for long-term improvements to their lives.

## Key steps

You can use the core CRP tools and child rights programme cycle described in Chapter 2 to guide your response in emergency situations as shown in the diagram opposite. This may mean that you need to adapt or change some of your usual ways of working in emergencies.

**Child rights programme cycle in emergencies**
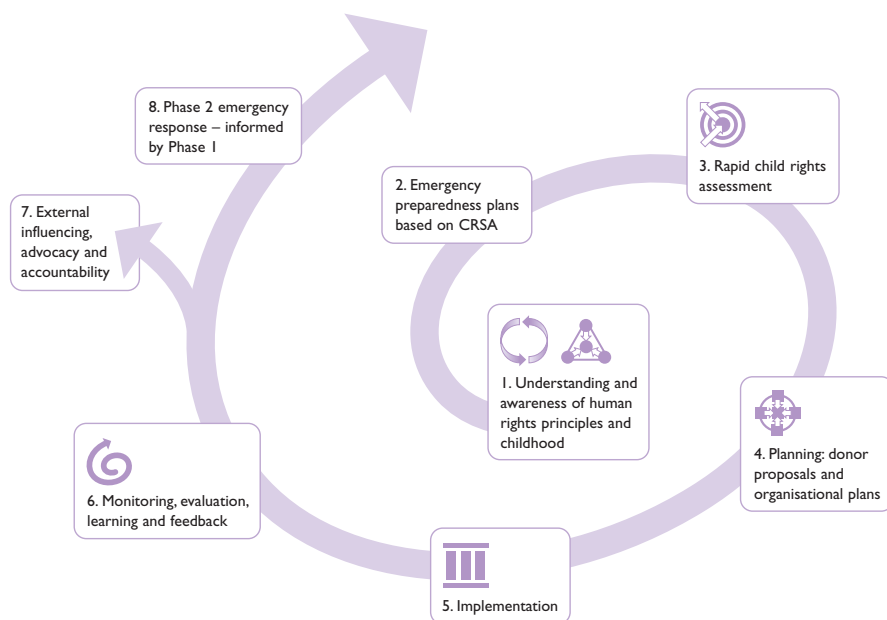


## Awareness and understanding

You should build an awareness and understanding of children, childhood and children's rights into programme teams and emergency staff (if they are separate). This may involve reviewing terms of reference, recruitment procedures, job descriptions, briefings and debriefings, inductions, individual staff development plans, etc. Where separate emergency teams exist or new staff are recruited, this understanding and sharing of values and principles also assists in creating the respect and sensitivity needed between them and existing programme staff teams. This will require resources and leadership.

**Tools:** Duty-bearer and rights-holder relationship, Four General Principles of the UNCRC, Code of Conduct, SPHERE Humanitarian Charter

## Analysis

You should establish emergency preparedness plans. These should be based on the same framework as a CRSA in terms of data collection and analysis. But you will also need to carry out a rapid child rights assessment at the onset of an emergency. Use the Circles of Influence and Obligation tool to map stakeholders and analyse their roles, capacities, and the power relations between them. Be sure to include children in your data gathering and analysis.

**Tools**: Circles of Influence, capacity gap matrix. Also useful is a tool developed by the Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance (ALNAP) on participative approaches in the assessment phase of humanitarian action (see p. 98 of *Participation by Crisis-affected Populations in Humanitarian Action: A handbook for practitioners*, ALNAP, 2003).

### Case study

Children and Livelihoods in Emergencies in **Sri Lanka**: Emergency **assessments** are, by their nature, very time-constrained, and a fine balance has to be struck between being sufficiently consultative in assessing needs and getting results fast enough to respond on time. However, in recent years Save the Children has ensured that its rapid livelihoods assessments in emergencies have included discussions with children to understand how the crisis and its impact on household livelihoods have in turn impacted on a variety of children's rights. In Sri Lanka, following the tsunami in 2004, for example, Save the Children held discussions with groups of affected children and covered a checklist of issues derived from their "Children and Livelihoods" briefing paper. The assessment found that children from the poorest families were most likely to be the ones out of school and unable to afford healthcare. As a result of the additional economic stress caused by the tsunami, those children were more exposed to three major protection risks: (a) under-age recruitment into armed forces; (b) engagement in high-risk livelihoods activities such as commercial sex work; and (c) potential risk of sexual exploitation in displaced camps and during the process of distribution of relief supplies.

# Planning

Set your goals and objectives based on your emergency preparedness plan, your CRSA, and the rapid child rights assessment you carried out at the onset of the emergency. Use the five dimensions of change, and locate your activities within the three pillars. This will ensure that you not only deal with immediate survival needs, but look at the underlying causes and plan to strengthen the capacity of the state and civil society to address longer-term development rights.

**Tools**: dimensions of change and three pillars

# Implementation

Implementing a humanitarian response programme, set against the three pillars model and consistent with CRP principles, may imply a shift in the way you work, even if identified specific activities remain the same. For example, learning from the tsunami response in Sri Lanka emphasised the lack of focus on implementing sustainable solutions, particularly working in collaboration with local civil society organisations:

> *"The tsunami response in Sri Lanka is a prime example in which not taking local capacity into account slowed international assistance ... every international agency came with a set of interventions in its tool kit to respond to the immediate needs of the population, but without a real backup plan for how to assist, should functioning local structures be already working to meet those needs."*
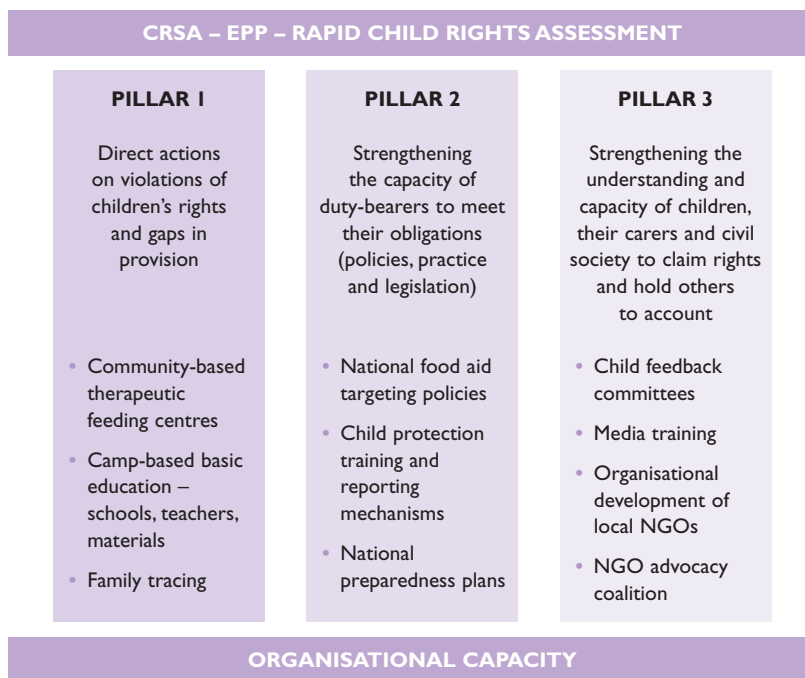>
> Fitzpatrick M *Responding in the More Developed World*,
> Monday Developments, 2006

**Tools**: three pillars

Overleaf is an example of an emergency programme set against the three pillars. The balance of your activities between pillars would probably shift as the situation evolved.

**Example – Implementation planning using the three pillars**

| CRSA – EPP – RAPID CHILD RIGHTS ASSESSMENT | | |
|---|---|---|
| **PILLAR 1** <br><br> Direct actions on violations of children's rights and gaps in provision | **PILLAR 2** <br><br> Strengthening the capacity of duty-bearers to meet their obligations (policies, practice and legislation) | **PILLAR 3** <br><br> Strengthening the understanding and capacity of children, their carers and civil society to claim rights and hold others to account |
| • Community-based therapeutic feeding centres <br> • Camp-based basic education – schools, teachers, materials <br> • Family tracing | • National food aid targeting policies <br> • Child protection training and reporting mechanisms <br> • National preparedness plans | • Child feedback committees <br> • Media training <br> • Organisational development of local NGOs <br> • NGO advocacy coalition |
| ORGANISATIONAL CAPACITY | | |

## Case studies

In Aceh, **Indonesia**, many children were separated from their families by the tsunami in December 2004. Save the Children set up a family-tracing database within the Ministry of Social Services in Aceh and seconded staff to the ministry to help build its capacity in managing the caseloads.

In the **Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)**, we implemented a programme to help vulnerable children in a conflict environment with limited access to much of the population. This involved working across all three pillars.

**Case studies** *continued*

At the national level, we provided technical assistance to the Ministry of Planning on the development of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP). The strategy aimed to address the root causes of children's problems as well as the symptoms, to promote 'joined-up' policy and programme planning for vulnerable children, and to ensure priority sectors included activities for children's health, education, nutrition and protection. Despite the fragility of national government structures, Save the Children saw this as a key opportunity to help the greatest number of vulnerable children over the coming ten years. The process included undertaking action research, strengthening the knowledge base of government ministries, working in a coalition of civil society actors, and developing participatory mechanisms through which children's opinions could be considered.

## Monitoring, evaluation, learning and feedback

You need to build in effective monitoring and evaluation systems at the planning stage for the same reasons and using the same processes discussed in Chapter 5. In an emergency context, you may want to review your activities after one month, then again after four to six months, then after one year – taking due account of funding structures and donor requirements.

A number of evaluations of emergency responses in recent years have produced consistent recommendations, particularly around preparedness, working with and capacity building of local partners, beneficiary involvement, accountability and overall transparency and co-ordination.

**Tools**: Use the five dimensions of change (and a wide range of participatory monitoring tools detailed in Chapter 5) to monitor and evaluate your impact.

Overleaf is an example taken from a chronic emergency protection programme in Africa.

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### Example – Monitoring indicators using the five dimensions

**Objective**

By the end of 2009, community-based protection mechanisms are directly benefiting 42,000 children living without adequate family care and this is informing national debate, policy development and resource allocation.

**Impact indicators** (in each of the five dimensions of change)

*Changes in the lives of children*
- Number of children directly supported by child protection networks
- Number of out-of-school children returning to and regularly attending school
- Number of reported abuses of children and percentage successfully resolved
- Poorest households demonstrate greater economic capacity to withstand shocks

*Children and young people's participation and active citizenship*
- Children and adults understand benefits of children's participation in planning processes

*Changes in policies and practices affecting children and young people's rights*
- Number of child protection networks formed and operating effectively

*Changes in equity and non-discrimination of children and young people*
- Most vulnerable children receiving adequate care and support

*Changes in civil society and communities' capacity to support children's rights*
- Number of new community initiatives targeting vulnerable children

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## Key processes

In Chapter 2, we presented the key processes that CRP is based on: involving children at every stage; working with the most vulnerable children and fighting discrimination; creating a rights climate; working in partnership; working with and enabling the state; and empowering civil society and encouraging community involvement. The key processes will have a number of practical implications for your emergency work.

### Involving children

You will be under pressure to assess and plan quickly, and this can make involving children seem more of a challenge. You will obviously need to carefully assess whether involving children puts them at risk of harm. But many emergency responses have proven that involving children at every stage of the programme cycle actually maximises the impact of activities, on children, their carers and in their communities (see case studies later in this chapter on Pakistan and Cuba).

In practice, involving children in emergency contexts means:
- creating opportunities for children to influence and shape emergency preparedness plans and engage meaningfully in emergency responses
- acquiring the knowledge, understanding and skills to ensure the safe, meaningful and ethical participation of children
- being familiar with child protection procedures
- preparing child-friendly materials
- ensuring safe and supportive environments
- strengthening children's capabilities
- increasing adults' capacities to engage with children
- exploring opportunities for children to influence advocacy and reconstruction efforts
- ensuring that learning feeds back into planning to improve children's participation
- equipping staff with the skills and techniques to work with children.

### Case study

### Children's participation – setting up safe spaces

Safe spaces can be a useful way to guide your emergency response. In the response to the 2007 earthquake in the **Solomon Islands**, Save the Children set up safe spaces and trained staff to find out children's views during all phases of the emergency response. Here are the guidelines we followed.

**115**

**Case study** *continued*

**Practical guidelines**

*Assessments*
- Interview children about their protection threats and education needs and desires.
- Young people can be trained to participate and lead assessments. They are often enthusiastic and well informed, with key insights into the demographics and needs of an affected population.

*Safe space design and set up*
- Include children when developing a list of safe space supplies and materials. They know best the games and activities that protect them cognitively, physically, and psychosocially.
- Include children and communities in determining where the safe space should be. They will be able to indicate safety and security precautions, as well as practical information about proximity to key resources.
- Include children and communities in deciding what materials to use when building a safe space. When possible, include them in safe space construction.

*Safe space administration*
- Children can help with administrative tasks such as registration, monitoring safe space policies, distributing snacks, keeping track of schedules, and helping set up and pack away games and activities.

*Safe space activities*
- Safe space activities should be participatory and learner-centred. They should be co-operative, interactive, and should help children learn for themselves.
- Responsible young people can lead and support activities for younger children.

*Safe space monitoring and evaluation*
- Children should be actively involved in monitoring and evaluating the safe spaces against the indicators. Through surveys, checklists or questionnaires, and interviewing other children and parents, they can help you find out what is working well, any problem areas, and possible solutions.

**Case study** *continued*

By continually seeking children's views, the safe spaces continued to be relevant to children's needs, and achieved the overall objective of helping them cope with the emergency affecting their lives.

**Case study**

In **Paraguay**, a national organisation, Global Infancia, supports emergency preparedness in schools in some regions of the country. The project is implemented in co-operation with school councils. It emphasises risk prevention and preparedness in case of emergencies and includes awareness-raising and building students' capacities. Preparedness plans are devised and shared by the students. There is training on first aid and the prevention of fires, and evacuation drills involving both students and teachers.

### Working with the most vulnerable children and countering discrimination

You will already have identified vulnerable and marginalised children in your CRSA. Rapid assessments can build on this and identify specifically how these groups have responded to the shocks in the environment and how you can best assist them. (See box overleaf for how to assess the impact of gender relations on vulnerability.)

In countries where your access to vulnerable children is limited – for example, in parts of the DRC or Sudan – it is important to focus on the obligations of the state as the main duty-bearer, whose responsibilities to children within its borders do not change.

### Working in partnership

Many of the challenges of co-ordination and working in partnership in an emergency situation (pressure of time, limited capacity of local partners, security considerations, issues of impartiality, competition for resources, etc) can be turned to your advantage if you analyse and plan in advance.

**117**

## Gender relations and vulnerability

An understanding of how gender relations and inequalities influence both capacities and vulnerabilities involves looking at:

• the difference between boys' and girls' security and protection needs
• who holds what responsibilities, who does what work, and who controls resources
• the differences (as well as commonalities) in women's, men's, boys' and girls' priorities
• how women and girls are currently organised or are participating in social, economic, political, and religious structures
• the capacities of women, men, girls, and boys to participate in decision-making processes and reconstruction
• how men's gender identities influence their vulnerabilities, needs and priorities
• the differences among women and girls (as well as among men and boys)
• the opportunities to narrow gender gaps and support the equitable participation of women and girls in decision-making.

Working in partnership is particularly important in an emergency context because:

• local partners' knowledge of the culture and environment can increase the impact of your interventions
• it ensures longer-term impact of your interventions – your local partners are likely to remain long after international agencies have left
• it increases the potential of access, scale and scope, especially where local partners are integrated into communities that, due to security situations, national and international organisations do not have access to
• it creates knowledge and understanding of children and their rights beyond your organisation
• it creates networks of organisations with the capacity to support the fulfilment of children's rights at all levels of society
• it builds the capacity of partners.

### Working with and enabling the State

The State remains the prime duty-bearer during times of conflict, natural disaster, or protracted complex emergencies. But it is unlikely to be able to meet all of its obligations. This may be due to shocks to its local structures (such as destroyed schools and health centres, and displaced personnel), or due to an unwillingness and/or lack of authority in the area (eg, budgets prioritising military spending, geographical areas of the country no longer under central control, and policies directly aimed at further marginalising particular groups of people).

In practice, working with/enabling the State in an emergency context means you should:

- clarify the different roles of the State, international agencies, local organisations, etc, with a constructive and transparent approach
- assist the State as prime duty-bearer – for example, in terms of technical capacity, funding, co-ordination mechanisms, etc
- share awareness and understanding with the State of human rights principles, international humanitarian law, and child rights programming, through a demonstration of good practice in your own programmes, research, advocacy and policy development
- identify appropriate fora during the planning process through which the State can contribute, with their roles and expectations clearly defined
- implement programme interventions with State partners
- monitor and evaluate your activities, involving the state in data gathering, analysis and feedback processes
- maintain impartial and transparent positions in relation to the State
- carry out risk analysis as you make strategic decisions that could involve the State.

### Empowering civil society and community involvement

When emergencies take place, and the longer they last, the more likely it is that communities and civil society become weak, disempowered and marginalised. However, empowering civil society and involving communities affected by an emergency from the outset can counter this process. It builds rather than undermines local capacity, decreases dependency and helps people to retake control over their lives. It also creates an understanding and awareness of children's rights that can provide the basis for bringing about longer-term change in children's lives.

In practice, empowering civil society in an emergency context means you should:

- analyse the roles, capacities and power dynamics of communities and civil society and monitor these as your programme progresses
- share awareness and understanding with civil society of the principles that underpin children's rights
- involve civil society and community members (as well as children) in gathering data and analysis for your CRSA, emergency preparedness plan and rapid assessment
- identify appropriate ways for civil society groups to contribute, with their roles and expectations clearly defined
- implement your programme interventions with civil society partners and community members
- involve civil society groups and community members in monitoring and evaluating the impact of your activities.

## Creating a rights climate

Children's rights are at their most vulnerable during emergencies – both their immediate survival rights (such as access to food, healthcare and education) and the increased risk of marginalisation, abuse and exploitation.

In practice, creating a rights climate in an emergency context means:

- fostering an understanding and awareness of the dimensions of social change, power dynamics, and access to rights and ideologies by all actors directly involved in the emergency response, including humanitarian staff themselves
- implementing a programme that challenges existing power relations, by creating opportunities to involve and empower people and groups who are marginalised through the emergency. Understanding the risks and consequences involved in challenging power relations will inform your programming decisions. For example, whether or not to undertake a large-scale food distribution programme where access is dependent on local authorities known to exploit children, and whether or not to challenge their abusive practice
- involving people who are marginalised and disempowered in the monitoring and evaluation of your work.

**Case study**

In 2005 a huge earthquake hit **Pakistan**, India and Afghanistan. Save the Children responded immediately in each of the countries affected. Of the 4 million people affected, 1.6 million were children. Three International Save the Children Alliance members, already present in Pakistan, took the lead in defined geographical areas to implement a co-ordinated response.

Save the Children Sweden adopted a community mobilisation approach as the implementation strategy. This approach had been successful in the post-Afghan conflict emergency response, where experience showed that meaningful community participation results in empowering communities to take control of their lives. Using this approach, communities affected by the earthquake were facilitated to take the lead in all phases of the emergency response – from assessment to survival support, and later in the ongoing reconstruction phase.

At the outset of the operation, one male and one female social animator were selected from each target community on recommendations of the community. They organised male, female and child community groups. These groups, with support from the project staff, carried out assessments of damage caused by the earthquake and identified inputs for ensuring survival of the affected people. The community-prioritised response was implemented with community groups leading the process for relief distribution and ensuring it reached the most vulnerable families.

In the second step, these community groups were facilitated to organise formal male, female and child committees. These were informed about child protection issues and how communities could ensure the protection of children in emergencies. The committees are now being supported to organise themselves into formal community-based organisations (CBOs). As an exit strategy, Save the Children will support these CBOs to cluster into one organisation and build its capacity to work on children's rights.

Our response included the distribution of tents, blankets, children's waterproof shoes, cash transfers, construction of shelters, and the establishment of safe play areas for children and children's clubs. We also took

*continued overleaf*

**Case study** *continued*

a lead role in restoring access to primary education for affected children. We built 130 school structures and partnered with teachers, communities and the government in provinces to reopen and support government primary schools. Many of these students, especially girls, had never attended school before. Great efforts were made to ensure that all children could go to school.

To improve local ownership, Save the Children helped revive school management committees, involving them in the planning, management and evaluation of public education. These committees existed before the earthquake, but many only on paper. Communities have now selected committee members, trained committee chairs, co-ordinated with the government, facilitated initial meetings and recruited women and children as participants. With the emergency phase of the response still ongoing, we are already planning to continue long-term support for education and child protection. This involves a commitment to investing in our local partners, signing long-term contracts with them and engaging with local authorities to plan for the handover of responsibility for our projects to these partners. In some districts the education programme has now been extended to cover all primary education. We have created strong partnerships with both local NGOs and the Department of Education, based on the best practice experience from the emergency response.

## *Yes, but…*

**❝ We simply don't have the time. Humanitarian work is all about speed, effectiveness and life-saving responses. We know what works and what doesn't. ❞**

CRP will help you understand the environment and respond appropriately. It does not have to slow down your response. It does mean asking the right questions of the right people – including children, young people, women and others. This is the best way to ensure your response is fast and appropriate, meeting priority needs and ensuring that underlying as well as immediate causes are addressed.

**❝ Emergencies cultures and development cultures are essentially at odds with each other, with teams attracting very different people, different skills and experiences and different operating practices. ❞**
This has been an issue for a long time. A CRP approach is a real opportunity for you to bring these two worlds together. You can apply the basic principles, approaches and tools in all situations – emergency programmes or development work – because your priority is to see children's rights fulfilled (both immediately and over generations).

**❝ We are professional humanitarian workers with our specialisations, experience and priorities. We're not rights workers – we're not informed and trained in rights-based approaches beyond our ability to refer to international humanitarian principles. ❞**
Working for a child rights organisation demands that you engage with and apply a rights-based approach. Even so, and in other organisations, it may be that you and your teams need additional support, through training and development. This in no way negates the importance of your technical specialisation that helps ensure the best possible response.

**❝ Working with partners is a luxury in humanitarian situations. Local partners, where they exist, are quickly overwhelmed and are not likely to be considered impartial. It's better if we do the job ourselves, building directly the capacity of local people. ❞**
It is fundamental to a rights-based approach that you assess the capacity of local organisations and work with them. It will improve the impact of your activities, and help you bring about the changes you want for children both immediately and in the longer term. Your emergency preparedness must involve planning to work with these potential partners alongside direct operations and working with the State.

**❝ If only we had the tools, checklists, formats – the operating procedures – we'd give it a go. ❞**
It's true that specific tools for applying a CRP approach in emergency situations are few and far between. This is partly because the generic rights-based tools and questions can be adapted and used in emergencies, as we hope we have shown. However, there is still scope to develop further tools based on proven experience that are more easily accessible in emergency situations (in terms of language and flexibility).

**123**

**" Even more than in development situations, donors have their own agendas in emergencies, often politicised and always with pressure to spend funds fast and produce immediate and concrete results. "**
Your relationship with your donors should be a two-way relationship. Accepting and spending the funds must be compatible with child rights-based principles and these must be reflected in emergency response programmes. With certain donors this can be negotiated over time, especially with those who claim to be rights-based (such as DFID, SIDA, CIDA and WFP). Your emergency response can bring immediate and very visible results. But it must also address the root causes of the situation. This implies effective learning programmes, capacity building of civil society organisations and state structures, the active involvement of children and their communities and effective advocacy work.

**" Community-based targeting, response identification and even implementation sound great, but we don't always have the time to do all or even some of these. In addition, communities themselves are also subjective, with their own agenda and discriminating power bases. "**
In our experience, involving a wide range of community members – not just the obvious (such as village chiefs, the most educated, elders, etc) – in identifying the most vulnerable children pays real dividends. It creates long-term buy-in and confidence, real potential partners, and it ensures a transparent and more equitable process that empowers all involved. Often you can check and triangulate this information against other sources (eg, school attendance, government census figures, nutrition surveys, etc).

**" Where we operate, our priority is on life-saving humanitarian responses. We don't have the time or resources to undertake such a wide range of activities. "**
Clearly, in a rapid onset emergency, you have to prioritise life-saving responses. But experience shows that the long-term effectiveness of your response is dependent on the capacities and commitment of the communities you work with to bring about improvements in children's lives.

**Case study**

**Cuba** is hit frequently by hurricanes and floods, yet the impact on its population and environment is relatively slight compared with other disaster-prone countries.

In recent years, the Cuban government has pioneered emergency preparedness education in schools and communities to reduce the population's vulnerability to natural disasters and to promote children and young people's active participation in society. It is a process that could be adapted as a model elsewhere.

A project called 'We are Prepared, Listening to the Waters', was launched by the Cuban Ministry of Education and Cuba's Civil Defence in collaboration with other organisations, including Save the Children. The aim was to involve young people in risk management for floods, earthquakes and hurricanes in the east of the country. Forty-two schools took part, and the project's success has meant that local authorities and members of the community responsible for protecting the public can now call on a large number of children for assistance in times of emergency.

Most importantly, the students were involved at every stage of the design and implementation of the programme. Four groups were set up to be responsible for emergency measures, focusing on: technical risks and resources; health and sanitation; social issues in the community; and education. Each group learned about their particular area, was trained in risk reduction and shared their ideas with other community members and authorities. For example, the education group launched a campaign to target those most at risk and made proposals about how disaster risk management could be included in school curricula.

## Where to go for more information

There are many manuals, guides and training kits on approaches to emergency work, but using a child rights-based approach to emergencies is a relatively new field. Here are some of the most practical resources to guide your CRP approach to emergency work.

*CRIN Newsletter: Child Rights and Emergencies*, 2007

*The Minimum Standards for Education in Emergencies, Chronic Crises and Early Reconstruction*, as promoted by the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE)

*Impact Measurement and Accountability in Emergencies: The Good Enough Guide*, Emergency Capacity Building Project, 2007 (see Monitoring, evaluation, learning and feedback)

*Child Rights Perspective in Response to Natural Disasters in South Asia: A retrospective study*, Save the Children Sweden, 2006. This is a comprehensive overview of Save the Children's experience in the South Asia region, with detailed case studies and lessons learned.

*Protecting Children During Emergencies in Nigeria: A toolkit for trainers*, Save the Children UK, 2005

*Child Protection in Emergencies*, Save the Children, 2006

*Rising from the Rubble: Communities lead the earthquake response*, Save the Children Sweden, 2006

*Gender in Emergencies: General guidelines*, Save the Children UK, 2005[3]

*Working with the Most Vulnerable in Emergencies*, Save the Children UK, 2005

### Recommended websites and additional materials on children and others in emergencies:

Action for the Rights of Children (ARC): *Training modules for refugees/displaced children*, Save the Children, 2002, including on situation analysis, child soldiers, separated children. http://www.icva.ch/doc00000773.html#bc

*Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response*, The Sphere Project, 2004 Edition, Published by Oxfam Publishing. Can be accessed via: www.sphereproject.org This manual offers a set of minimum standards and key indicators that inform different aspects of humanitarian action, from initial assessment through to co-ordination and advocacy (see monitoring section).

*Gender and Humanitarian Assistance Resource Kit* – www.reliefweb.int/library/gharkit

*Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Against Refugees, Returnees and Internally Displaced Persons: Guidelines for Prevention and Response*, UNHCR, revised version 2003, can be accessed via website: www.unhcr.ch

*Adolescent Programming in Conflict and Post-Conflict Situations*, UNICEF, 2004, can be accessed via website: www.unicef.org/publications

*Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movements and NGOs in Disaster Relief*, can be accessed via website: www.icrc.org

*Humanitarian Accountability Partnership – International*, can be found on www.hapinternational.org and aims to make humanitarian action accountable to its intended beneficiaries through self-regulation and compliance verification.

*Protecting Persons Affected by Natural Disasters – Operational Guidelines on Human Rights and Natural Disasters*, IASC, 2006, can be accessed via website www.reliefweb.int

*Growing the Sheltering Tree: Protecting rights through humanitarian action*, IASC, 2002 http://www.icva.ch/files/gstree.pdf

People In Aid Network: www.peopleinaid.org Promotes best practice in the management and support of aid workers.

Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance (ALNAP): www.alnap.org ALNAP was established in 1997, following the multi-agency evaluation of the genocide in Rwanda. It is a collective response by the humanitarian sector, dedicated to improving humanitarian performance through increased learning and accountability.

## Notes

[1] Based on the International Save the Children Alliance Emergency Liaison Team definition in the positioning statement on Alliance co-operation on emergencies, as well as Save the Children Child Protection in Emergencies documents from 2003

[2] From the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) definitions

[3] Adapted from the summary guidelines of the inter-agency workshop on the integration of gender into needs assessment and planning of humanitarian assistance; plus Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and World Food Programme (WFP) gender guidelines

# 9  Becoming a rights-based organisation

**By the end of this chapter you will:**

• understand what a rights-based organisation is

• know what steps to take for your own organisation to become rights-based.

*This chapter builds on and requires an understanding of the core CRP principles, tools and processes given in Chapter 2.*

*"Becoming a child rights-focused organisation requires profound changes, as much at the level of values and clear principles as at adequate organisational structures."*

From *Experiences and Lessons Learned in the Framework of Implementing Child Rights Programming in the Latin American Region*, Save the Children Sweden, 2006

This chapter explains what a rights-based organisation is, and shows practical steps you can take throughout your organisation to become rights-based.

## What is a rights-based organisation?

A rights-based organisation applies human rights values and principles to itself at all levels through its internal policies and practices. It doesn't just talk about them to others! It promotes participation, accountability and non-discrimination as much in its internal procedures as in its programme activities. In all of its dealings it treats people with respect and dignity, and in all of its actions it demonstrates a commitment to equity and fairness. The diagram overleaf (taken from the International Save the Children Alliance *CRP Handbook*, 2005) shows what a child rights-based organisation

**Aspects of a rights-based organisation**
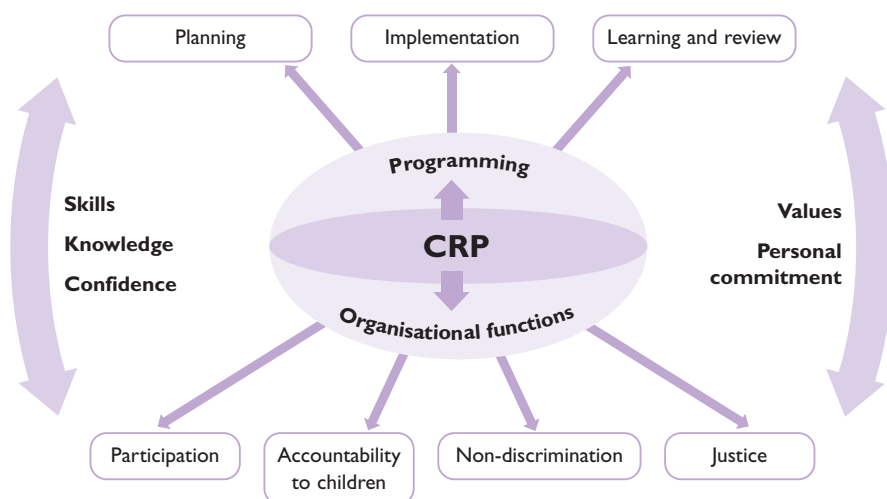


looks like – on the outside (its programmes) and on the inside (organisational structures).

The principle of organisational justice is a crucial one for rights-based organisations, so we go into a bit more detail on this below.

## Organisational justice

Becoming a rights-focused organisation demands addressing issues related to organisational justice.[1] As an employer, you are a duty-bearer, and your staff are rights-holders. But your staff also have duties and you, as employer, have certain rights. In human resource and organisational development terms, a 'psychological contract' is established between you as an employer and your members of staff. This is made up of the set of reciprocal expectations held by you both about obligations and entitlements – what your staff will do for you as their employer, and what they expect to receive and how they expect to be treated in return.

Organisational justice focuses on the perception of an individual or group about the fairness of the treatment they have received, and the behavioural reactions that follow from this. Rights-based organisations work hard to ensure high standards of organisational justice. There are three dimensions to organisational justice:

**Distributive justice**: Do your staff perceive the distribution of praise, rewards, workloads or other organisational demands and benefits to be fair? This may have implications for your organisation's wage differentials, salary structures, job evaluation, benefits packages, and recognition processes.

**Procedural justice**: Do your staff perceive the application of organisational rules and procedures to be fair and consistent? This is characterised by consistency of implementation; impartiality; basing decisions on accurate information and reasonable analysis; mechanisms to correct inappropriate decisions; opportunities for staff to have their voices heard, to participate in decision-making and have their concerns represented; and compatibility with ethical and moral standards.

**Interactional justice**: Can staff openly communicate with and trust their managers? This concerns the quality of interpersonal treatment received at the hands of decision-makers – whether the individual feels that the reasons underlying decisions and resource allocation were clearly and adequately explained to them; and whether those responsible for implementing a decision treated them with dignity and respect.

### Staff morale, motivation and retention

It is no coincidence that people who work for rights-based organisations are strongly committed to their work. Such commitment arises from a particularly close personal identification with the mission, values and principles of the organisation they work for.

So if a rights-focused organisation takes actions or decisions that are perceived by staff to be contrary to these values and principles, it is seen as a denial of organisational justice. Staff may feel a very real sense of personal betrayal, which is damaging to their own individual sense of integrity, thereby resulting in anger and resentment. For this reason, the way you run your organisation – its processes and procedures – is as key to staff morale, motivation and retention as your achievements in the field.

## How to be a rights-based organisation

No two rights-based organisations are the same. Each organisation has different staff teams, has its own culture and history, and operates in different environments. You need to find your own path to becoming a rights-based

organisation. But there is a lot of experience you can benefit from and adapt to your context. Save the Children's experience has been documented in *A Study to Benchmark Progress in Adopting and Implementing Child Rights Programming* (2004). (See also the case study from Save the Children Sweden later in this chapter.)

## Rights-based principles

Here are some steps you can take to make sure that your policies and procedures reflect your move towards a rights-based organisation.

### 1. Non-discrimination

- Change working hours to consider family commitments. For example, in Kenya, Friday is a half day in Save the Children offices, so allowing staff time to make the long journey home, get to the local market and be with their families for the weekend.
- Improve access for people with disabilities.
- Your recruitment procedures and terms and conditions should actively encourage applications from a diverse range of groups, reflecting the diversity of the communities you work with.
- Develop codes of conduct based on respect and protection.
- Carry out communication and education work on non-discrimination (including policies, practices and procedures) through publications, debates, discussions and staff review mechanisms, eg, development of a poster campaign.

### 2. Dignity, respect and justice

- Implement security, health and safety measures.
- Set up mechanisms for feedback and praise.
- Set up mechanisms for reward and remuneration that are fair and transparent.
- Ensure staff representation, eg, staff unions.
- Adopt transparent and consultative decision-making processes, eg, in developing strategies, policies, organisational changes, and moving/changing localities.
- Develop effective internal communications, eg, staff newsletter, intranet.
- Adopt a behavioural code of conduct.
- Ensure you invest in ethical companies.

### 3. Accountability

Based on openness, transparency and effective communication, this can be achieved through:

- codes of conduct
- contracts of employment
- job descriptions
- plans and budgets
- clarity of expectations
- definition of competencies
- reporting mechanisms
- audit procedures
- performance management processes
- grievance and disciplinary procedures.

### 4. Participation and empowerment

Your staff should be able to participate fully and be empowered through:

- induction procedures, eg, introduction to the organisation, its goals, values, strategies, policies, working methods, basic routines
- appropriate access to support
- equitable, transparent resource allocation with inclusive decision-making processes
- delegation that respects competencies, potential and confidence
- opportunities for growth and development (secondment, acting up, training, mentoring, etc).

### 5. Working with children

You should prioritise developing the following:

- child protection policy
- impact assessments looking at harm to children
- adapted recruitment and induction procedures
- child-friendly spaces in the workplace
- performance management processes
- implementation of practice standards in children's participation
- ways to involve children in governing structures
- ways to involve children in planning processes
- ways to involve children in implementing, monitoring and evaluating programmes
- child-friendly communication strategies.

**Responsibilities of a child rights-based organisation[2] (managers and staff)**

| Responsibilities towards children | Responsibilities towards partners | Responsibilities towards staff | Responsibilities towards supporters and donors |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Feedback**, monitoring, evaluation, review and audit mechanisms to assess **impact, effectiveness**, use of resources and **efficiency** | | | |
| • assess impact of work on children<br>• children give feedback on programmes and are involved in reviews | • programme reviews | • performance appraisal<br>• set and apply clear performance standards | • financial auditing<br>• honest reporting<br>• stakeholder assessments<br>• ethical investment |
| **Equity, fairness, non-discrimination, diversity.** Concentrate on the worst rights violations and on the most vulnerable and marginalised children. Fight discrimination and promote equity and inclusion of all children | | | |
| • focus on the most marginalised children<br>• ensure programmes do not exclude some groups of disadvantaged children | • select partners who are committed to inclusion and non-discrimination<br>• challenge partners who discriminate and exclude<br>• select diverse group of partners<br>• encourage partners to be more inclusive | • diverse workforce<br>• equitable pay<br>• clear policies for promotions<br>• staff development plans<br>• career planning | • challenge discriminatory policies of donors<br>• promote fairness, equity and diversity among supporters |
| **Protection, safety, security, ethics.** Protect children, adult community members, staff and partners | | | |
| • child protection policy<br>• ensure safety of all children involved in the programme | • protection of partners: avoid putting partners at risk as a result of advocacy or work in dangerous areas<br>• promote and monitor child protection policies in partner organisations | • follow labour laws<br>• staff safety<br>• sexual harassment policies<br>• child protection policies<br>• health insurance and social security benefits | • promote child protection policies among donors |

**Participation.** Support people and other institutions to demand children's rights. Promote children's participation and children's rights to information, expression, decision-making and association

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Access to information* | | | |
| • child-friendly information on all relevant parts of programme and organisation | • partners are informed about the programme | • comprehensive staff induction<br>• staff have free and easy access to all relevant information<br>• ensure confidentiality of personnel files | • complete and honest reporting to donors, supporters and members |
| *Involvement in decision-making* | | | |
| • involve children in recruitment of staff who work with children<br>• involve children in planning and implementation | • involve partners in programme decisions | • transparent and participatory decision-making | • involve supporters in programme decisions |
| *Freedom of association* | | | |
| • support children to organise themselves | • strengthen organisational capacity of partners | • staff have right to unionise | |

**Collaboration.** Work with other agencies to promote children's rights

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| • collaborate with child-led organisations | • support networks of partners | • encourage collaboration among staff | • promote donor collaboration |

It doesn't have to be difficult to involve children in your organisation's structures and procedures. Here are some examples of successful ways of doing this.

### Case study: involving children in planning processes

In **Zimbabwe**, Save the Children set up a children's advisory board to give feedback on programmes they had not been involved in. They evaluated programmes on education, reproductive health, emergency food aid and water and sanitation. One of the strengths of this approach was that their independence from the programmes enabled them to criticise without fearing repercussions. One of the weaknesses was that, at times, the children found it difficult to fully understand the nature and complexity of the programmes they were investigating.

### Case study: involving children in governance structures

In **Vietnam**, during the second year of a child-focused HIV and AIDS intervention project, representatives of the children involved took part in quarterly project management board meetings. Despite initial resistance from project partners, it was felt in the end that the children demonstrated confidence, and excellent facilitation and communication skills.

### Case study: involving children in recruitment of staff

In **India**, Save the Children decided that children should be involved in the recruitment of all programme staff. The process always involves children from the communities we work with. They become involved once the shortlist of candidates has been drawn up. They are given an induction into the interviewing process, presented with the prospective candidates' applications, and are asked to think of three or four questions to ask. They then take part as panel members alongside, and with equal status to, the adult members.

### Rights-based management or simply good practice?

So, you might ask, what then is the difference between good (professional) practice and management in rights-based organisations? The answer is one of belief and motivation, the imperative for rights-based organisations to address these issues that is demanded by fundamental rights, values and principles.

People In Aid, an international network of development and humanitarian aid agencies, has developed a Code of Good Practice that deals with many of the human resource issues outlined above. The box below shows a summary of their seven principles.

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**People In Aid Code of Good Practice**

**Guiding principle:** people are central to the achievement of our mission.

**Principle 1: Human resources strategy:** human resources are an integral part of our strategic and operational plans.

**Principle 2: Staff policies and practices:** our human resources policies aim to be effective, fair and transparent.

**Principle 3: Managing people:** good support, management and leadership of our staff is key to our effectiveness.

**Principle 4: Consultation and communication:** dialogue with staff on matters likely to affect their employment enhances the quality and effectiveness of our policies and practices.

**Principle 5: Recruitment and selection:** our policies and practices aim to attract and select a diverse workforce with the skills and capabilities to fulfil our requirements.

**Principle 6: Learning, training and development:** learning, training and staff development are promoted throughout the organisation.

**Principle 7: Health, safety and security:** the security, good health and safety of our staff are a prime responsibility of our organisation.

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**137**

## Case study

In 2004, the International Save the Children Alliance co-ordinating group on child rights programming commissioned a study. The aim was to see how far a number of Alliance organisations had succeeded in implementing a rights framework. An innovative element of the study was the development of 14 benchmarks (see box opposite) that highlight the most significant organisational changes needed to adopt a rights-based approach to programming.

**Save the Children Sweden** used the benchmarks for a baseline study. This confirmed that the organisation has a clear commitment to children's rights, evidenced in its steering documents and overall policies. Staff have been trained to promote and incorporate a child rights-based approach in their work, and tools have been developed and introduced. However, many did not feel fully competent and confident in CRP. Another area that needed further development was how to involve children as stakeholders, and what it means to be accountable to children.

It was decided to use the 14 benchmarks and conclusions of the study as the basis for a strategy to strengthen competencies, identity and profile as a child rights organisation. The strategy has six main components:

1.  Application of Save the Children Sweden values for in-house management and human resource development, including building competencies in children's rights and child rights programming, a review of leadership and human resource policies and clarification of the organisation's position on child participation in internal workings.
2.  Mainstreaming of a child rights perspective in programme work.
3.  A child rights perspective in external communication, including production of child-friendly materials on key priority areas.
4.  Knowledge management and method development, including compilation, analysis and dissemination of lessons learned in key priority areas
5.  Capacity building of external actors, including the elaboration of a strategy for training and advisory support to external audiences
6.  Participation in and support to the NGO development of a global child rights agenda, emphasising the monitoring process of the UNCRC.

One of the lessons learned so far is that it is crucial that senior management is committed to, leads and supports the strategy.

## Benchmarks of progress in implementing child rights programming (CRP)

**Benchmark 1** A clear mandate, vision and mission expresses commitment to children's rights

**Benchmark 2** Policies and strategies translate the mandate and mission into practice

**Benchmark 3** Staffing policies, including recruitment and induction, facilitate effective CRP

**Benchmark 4** Tools, guidance and planning guidance have been developed to build capacity for CRP

**Benchmark 5** Organisational support has been introduced to strengthen an integrated approach to CRP

**Benchmark 6** All staff and board members have a clear understanding and commitment to CRP

**Benchmark 7** Staff feel competent and confident in CRP

**Benchmark 8** Partners are supported and enabled to work within a rights-based approach

**Benchmark 9** Situation analysis is directed towards mapping rights violations, and identifying causes and duty-bearers, through a process that respects the views of children

**Benchmark 10** Priority setting and planning is informed by a rights-based perspective, and takes account of the views of children

**Benchmark 11** Implementation is directed towards the fulfilment of all children's rights, without discrimination, involving both holding duty-bearers accountable and supporting children to claim their rights

**Benchmark 12** Monitoring and evaluation is informed by CRP, in respect of its process and focus

**Benchmark 13** Children are acknowledged as stakeholders

**Benchmark 14** Mechanisms for accountability to children have been introduced

*Yes, but...*

**❝ Children don't have the capacity or competence to be part of our governance structures. We would be simply tokenistic. ❞**

You should carefully plan how best to involve children in your governance structures. It should be a gradual process and can take many forms. You might include children's representatives on your decision-making structures, or involve children in evaluating projects at community level. There are many examples of successful ways to include children. You must make every effort possible to do this in ways that are appropriate to your context and that respect and understand children's evolving capacities.

**❝ What happens if we're being offered funds from a donor that does not act in the best interests of children? ❞**

Your relations with your donors need to go beyond purely financial and contractual issues to what is in children's best interests, based on your values and principles. You will need commitment and determination for this to happen and, at times, you may need to take difficult decisions. (See Chapter 6 on advocacy and partners for more guidance.)

**❝ How can we make these internal changes with all the investment it involves and the resulting bureaucracy, yet remain effectively focused on bringing changes to the most vulnerable children? ❞**

All change is gradual. Don't expect a miraculous transformation from one day to the next. But if you really want these changes to take place, and you know how they will improve children's lives, then you know it is worth the investment. You will need to plan, be systematic and at times opportunistic. Learn from others, share your own experience and be part of a wider movement of rights-based organisations.

**❝ Most of our non-programme staff are neither informed nor trained in CRP. How can we expect them to accept and apply this approach? ❞**

The principles of rights, duties, transparency and accountability that lie at the heart of rights-based organisations apply to every level of staff. It is your responsibility to promote child rights programming with all your staff in the most effective way possible. Respecting each member of staff and recognising the role they have to play creates a motivated, effective and ambitious team.

**66** **Assuming our own staff pick up on this rights-based approach, with all the investment that implies, what about our partners? Isn't that an even bigger and possibly unrealistic challenge? 99**

You have already chosen your partners carefully, based on shared values, principles and approaches (see Chapter 6). You should already be working towards the same goal, supporting duty-bearers to fulfil their obligations and helping rights-holders claim their entitlements.

**66** **What about our fundraising, branding and communications strategies? How can we continue to attract funds and support while remaining 'ethical'? 99**

You need to find appropriate ways to involve children in your communication work – there are lots of examples where this has been done to great effect. But it takes time, leadership, commitment and effort. Recent evidence in Europe has shown that involving children in a positive and dignified way has more impact and generates sustained interest from the public. Having clear criteria for investment and for donor funding will help create the transparency and confidence you need to pursue an ethical approach.

**66** **Direct operations are mostly led by technical staff and field officers. We can't expect them to understand and apply CRP while also meeting the day-to-day pressures of their jobs. 99**

You need to give all your staff the time, space and investment they need to put these key principles and approaches into action. Technical experience is essential for some jobs; but you can only achieve the lasting changes you want for children if all staff promote rights-based values.

## Where to go for more information

*Ethical Guidelines: Guiding principles for Save the Children Sweden staff and persons*, commissioned by Save the Children Sweden, 2005
These comprehensive guiding principles lay the foundations for all Save the Children Sweden's work and, in asking all staff to sign their recognition of these principles, works towards creating a rights-based organisation and culture.

*Children as Stakeholders Policy*, Save the Children UK, 2003
Save the Children UK's policy on involving children as stakeholders lays out both its approach and main areas for action (at project level, programme and advocacy levels and at policy level).

*Child Protection Policy*, Save the Children, 2003

*So You Want to Consult with Children*, Save the Children, 2004

*Practice Standards in Children's Participation*, Save the Children, 2005

*Involvement of Children and Young People in Shaping the Work of Save the Children*, Lansdown G for Save the Children UK, 2003
Fascinating analysis of progress made by Save the Children to date in involving children throughout the programme cycles and in internal management and decision-making processes. Includes practical recommendations for ensuring further progress.

*Promoting Rights-Based Approaches: Experiences and ideas from Asia and the Pacific*, Theis J, Save the Children Sweden, 2004

*Evolving Capacities of the Child*, Lansdown G, Innocenti Insight 1, UNICEF, 2005

## Recommended websites and materials

People In Aid is an international network of development and humanitarian aid agencies. It helps organisations whose goal is the relief of poverty and suffering to enhance their impact through better people management and support. www.peopleinaid.org

## Notes

[1] See, for example, Sparrow P and Cooper C, *The Employment Relationship: Key challenges for HR*, Butterworth-Heinemann, 2003

[2] Theis J, *Promoting Rights-Based Approaches. Experiences and Ideas from Asia and the Pacific*, Save the Children Sweden, 2004

# Glossary

**Accountability**: There are two sides to an understanding of accountability: the first by which individuals, organisations and government account for their actions and are held responsible for them and the second, by which systems are in place to safely and legitimately report concerns, complaints and abuses, and get redress where appropriate.

**Advocacy**: Save the Children defines advocacy as "a set of organised activities designed to influence the policies and actions of others to achieve positive changes in children's lives based on the experience and knowledge of working directly with children, their families and communities".

**Best interests**: Article 3 of the UNCRC: "...in all actions concerning children, whether undertaken by public or private social welfare institutions, courts of law, administrative bodies or legislative bodies, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration." This emphasises the need for the impact of all actions on children to be assessed.

**Child rights programming** is a framework for the analysis, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of all relief and development work with children. It brings together in one unifying framework a range of ideas, concepts and experiences related to the protection and promotion of children's rights in development and humanitarian work. It is primarily based on the principles and standards of children's human rights but also draws heavily on good practice in many areas of work, with children (eg, the study of children's physical, emotional, cognitive and social development; childhood studies; early childhood education; child psychology; etc) as well as good development practice more generally.

**Claim**: claiming the respect, protection or fulfilment of a right or group of rights involves identifying the duty bearer and holding them to account. The ability to claim rights is an intrinsic element of child rights programming. Not all children have the capacity to claim the fulfilment of their rights and must rely on the assistance of others (namely their families, communities and civil

society) to do so on their behalf. This depends on the child's evolving capacities.

**Disaggregate**: analyse data according to different groupings to show differences between certain groups (by gender, age, ethnic group, etc)

**Duty bearer**: body or individual who has responsibilities and obligations towards the rights holders, as enshrined in international and national law and human rights instruments. The State, as the prime duty bearer, has an obligation to respect people's rights, to protect people's rights and to fulfil people's rights.

**Empowerment**: A process/phenomenon that allows people to take greater control over the decisions, assets, policies, processes and institutions that affect their lives.

**Evaluation**: an assessment at one point in time that can have different purposes, but is based on the assessment of pre-defined objectives, and often undertaken by external researchers in order to ensure independence.

**Human rights**: "agreed international standards that recognise and protect the dignity and integrity of every individual, without any distinction. Human rights form part of customary international law and are stipulated in a variety of national, regional and international legal documents generally referred to as human rights instruments. The most prominent of these are the United Nations Charter, and the UN Bill of Rights, made up of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and the International Covenant on Economic and Social Rights" (*from the United Nations High Commission for Refugees Glossary of Terms for 2006*)

**Impact assessment**: the systematic analysis of the lasting or significant changes, positive or negative, intended or not, in people's lives brought about by a given action or series of actions.

**Indicators**: objective ways of measuring (indicating) that progress is being achieved. These must relate to the aims and objectives of the project.

**Influential**: individual or organisation that is well positioned to influence the thinking and practice of a stakeholder through a variety of means (eg, financial pressure, status and reputation, power relationship, etc)

**Monitoring**: the systematic and continuous collecting and analysing of information about the progress of a project or programme over time.

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

**Participation** is about having the opportunity to express a view, influencing decision-making and achieving change. Children's participation is an informed and willing involvement of all children, including the most marginalised and those of different ages and abilities, in any matter concerning them either directly or indirectly. Children's involvement is a right and a way of working and an essential principle that cuts across all programmes. The involvement and participation of children should therefore take place in all arenas – from homes to governments, from local to international levels.

**Programme**: A collection of projects that are intended to contribute to the achievement of a common goal, supported by an agency within the same sector, theme or geographical area.

**Rights holder**: the individual or collection of individuals in possession of a right and who can make a claim to see the right respected, protected and fulfilled. The Rights Holder may also have duties and obligations in relation to other rights holders.

**Stakeholder**: groups of people – including children, individuals, institutions, enterprises or government bodies that may have an interest or involvement in a project or programme. There are differences in the roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders, their access to and control over resources and the part they play in decision-making.

# Child Rights Programming

## How to apply rights-based approaches to programming

This publication provides a comprehensive introduction to the concepts and principles of child rights programming and is the ideal publication to read before using *Getting it Right.*

*Child Rights Programming* looks at the basic concepts and use of child rights programming and how it differs from existing good practice in relief and development work. It traces the development of this approach and the impact its development has had on working for and with children. It provides tools to help you translate the principles in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child into practice, how to link child rights programming into the programme cycle and how to begin to transform your organisation into a child rights-focused organisation.

*Child Rights Programming* is accompanied by a CD ROM of further reading and useful resources.

ISBN 978-9972-696-33-6, 72 pages, 2005, £10.95

## Toolkits

### A practical guide to planning, monitoring, evaluation and impact assessment

A useful companion to *Getting it Right*, *Toolkits* has proved a popular and practical guide to monitoring and evaluation for development workers around the world. It systematically takes you through the whole process of planning, monitoring, evaluation and impact assessment, and looks at key questions such as who to involve, how to avoid discrimination, and what methods to use. It includes 14 practical monitoring and evaluation tools that can be adapted to suit different circumstances.

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*Toolkits* takes a commonsense approach, drawing on lessons learned from Save the Children's experience. This practical guide will be of use to practitioners and academics in development and humanitarian fields.

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Andrew Jowett, Harvest Help

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Dr Tom Corsellis, shelter project.org

ISBN 978 1 84187 064 9, 342 pages, 2003, £12.95

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