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# Child-Focused Monitoring and Evaluation System Guide



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# Child-Focused Monitoring and Evaluation System Guide

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**The Sulukule Volunteers Association (SGD)** was founded in 2010. The association's primary goal is to address the psychosocial effects of the Sulukule Urban Transformation Project and prevent school dropouts in the region. To this end, art and sports-based workshops are organised to support the well-being of children aged 6-18, empowering activities are carried out with caregivers and teachers, and individual psychosocial support is provided. In addition, social support programs such as free nutrition assistance and educational scholarships encourage children to continue attending school.

**The Accountability for Children, Advocacy for Rights (ACAR) Project** is a project co-financed by the European Union (EU) and implemented by UNICEF. The main objective of the project is to strengthen the capacity of civil society to monitor the implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child in Turkey and to create an inclusive platform for dialogue in this area. ACAR aims to enable NGOs to engage in evidence-based advocacy and to influence policies at both the central and local levels through the active participation of children and young people in the processes.

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# Abbreviations

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<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>ACAR</b>	The Accountability for Children Advocacy for Rights
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>CCHS</b>	Convention on the Rights of the Child
<b>SGD</b>	Sulukule Volunteers Association
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Governmental Organizations



# Introduction

## Why Is It Important to Establish a Child-Focused Monitoring and Evaluation System?

For civil society organisations working in the field of children's rights, developing child-focused monitoring and evaluation systems is just as important as working with children themselves. This guide aims to demonstrate practical steps to ensure that the child's right to participation<sup>1</sup> is not merely a principle on paper, but a right that children can actively exercise rather than passively receive.

An effective monitoring and evaluation system that includes children in the process both improves the work and protects children; therefore, it also strengthens child participation. At the same time, it is a legal and ethical obligation. Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) guarantees that children have the right to express their views on all matters affecting them and to have those views taken seriously.

<sup>1</sup> UNCRC 12:

- a. States Parties shall recognise the right of the child who is capable of forming his or her own views to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child; the views of the child shall be given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child.
- b. To this end, the child shall be given the opportunity to be heard directly or through a representative or an appropriate body, in particular in any judicial and administrative proceedings affecting the child, in accordance with the procedural rules of national law.



On the other hand, when strategies, decisions, projects, and programs are developed based on feedback from other stakeholders, primarily children, child participation becomes integrated into all systems of the organization. This allows for better monitoring and evaluation of the long-term effects of the work on children, enabling resources to be directed to the areas where they are most needed and have the greatest impact. Thus, organizational learning takes place and the design of future work becomes more accurate.

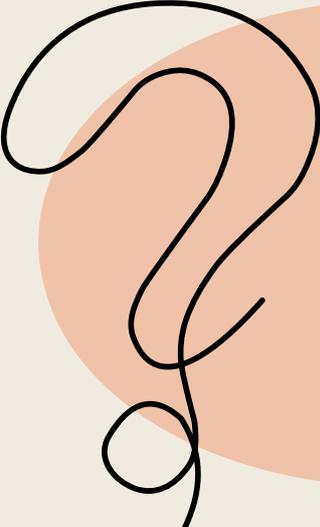
At the same time, a child-centred monitoring and evaluation system enhances the organization's transparency and accountability. Whether the work is effective and meets the needs of children is proven by data from the children themselves, who are the subjects of the work. This strengthens the organization's credibility, particularly among children, grant-supporting organizations, and the public.



# PURPOSE OF THE GUIDE

This guide outlines the steps for establishing a child-focused and child-participatory monitoring and evaluation system in activities conducted with children.

Before moving on to these steps, it invites organizations to reflect on the following **questions** to clarify the need for the guide:

- 
- **Are we ready** to listen to children and hear their opinions?
  - Do we value children's participation merely as a **token gesture**?
  - Do we know how to do this, and more importantly, **are we open** to learning and growing?

If these questions, when answered sincerely, paint a negative picture, it is recommended to first develop strategies on child protection and child participation.

This guide not only offers an ethical perspective but also provides concrete tools and methods required to establish and implement a child-focused monitoring and evaluation system. By following its practical steps, templates, and checklists, organizations aim not only to listen to children but also to integrate their views into their programs. In doing so, the guide supports the development of a genuine institutional culture of child participation.

We prepared this guide for use by all organizations working with children or aiming to collect data from children, particularly civil society organizations.



## STRUCTURE OF THE GUIDE

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The participation model<sup>2</sup> developed by **Laura Lundy** in 2007 consists of four key factors: **space, voice (expression), audience, and influence**. This guide has been prepared with these four factors at the center.

**The Space** factor describes creating an environment where children feel safe to present their views. **The Voice** factor refers to providing children with age-appropriate information and guidance to express their opinions according to age, gender, disability status and other differences.

**The Audience** factor includes ensuring that a responsible adult listens to the child's views. The audience may be peers or adults. When support and information are provided properly during the expression phase, the audience factor is more likely to succeed.

<sup>2</sup> [Lundy, Laura. \(2007\). 'Voice' is not enough: Conceptualising Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. British Educational Research Journal - BR EDUC RES J. 33. 927-942. 10.1080/01411920701657033.](#)



However, it should not be forgotten that merely listening to children's views is not sufficient for the right to participation to be realised. Listening to children's views and reflecting them in decisions is complemented by **the influence factor**. This factor defines the serious consideration of children's views. Even if the other three factors are fully implemented, failure to fully ensure the impact factor is considered a major shortcoming in terms of meaningful participation. Therefore, it is essential that the views expressed by children are taken seriously by listeners and reflected in decisions.

The guide consists of **seven** steps. Each step begins with a key question and includes explanations, sub-questions, experiences, examples, and suggestions to help users answer that question. It also includes annexes with **consent forms, guidelines for preparing child-friendly texts**, and information on **reporting obligations**, drawn from field experience.

# Sulukule Volunteers Association's Process

The Sulukule Volunteers Association (SGD), which has been active in the field of children's rights for **15 years**, has the long-term goal of supporting **children's well-being**.

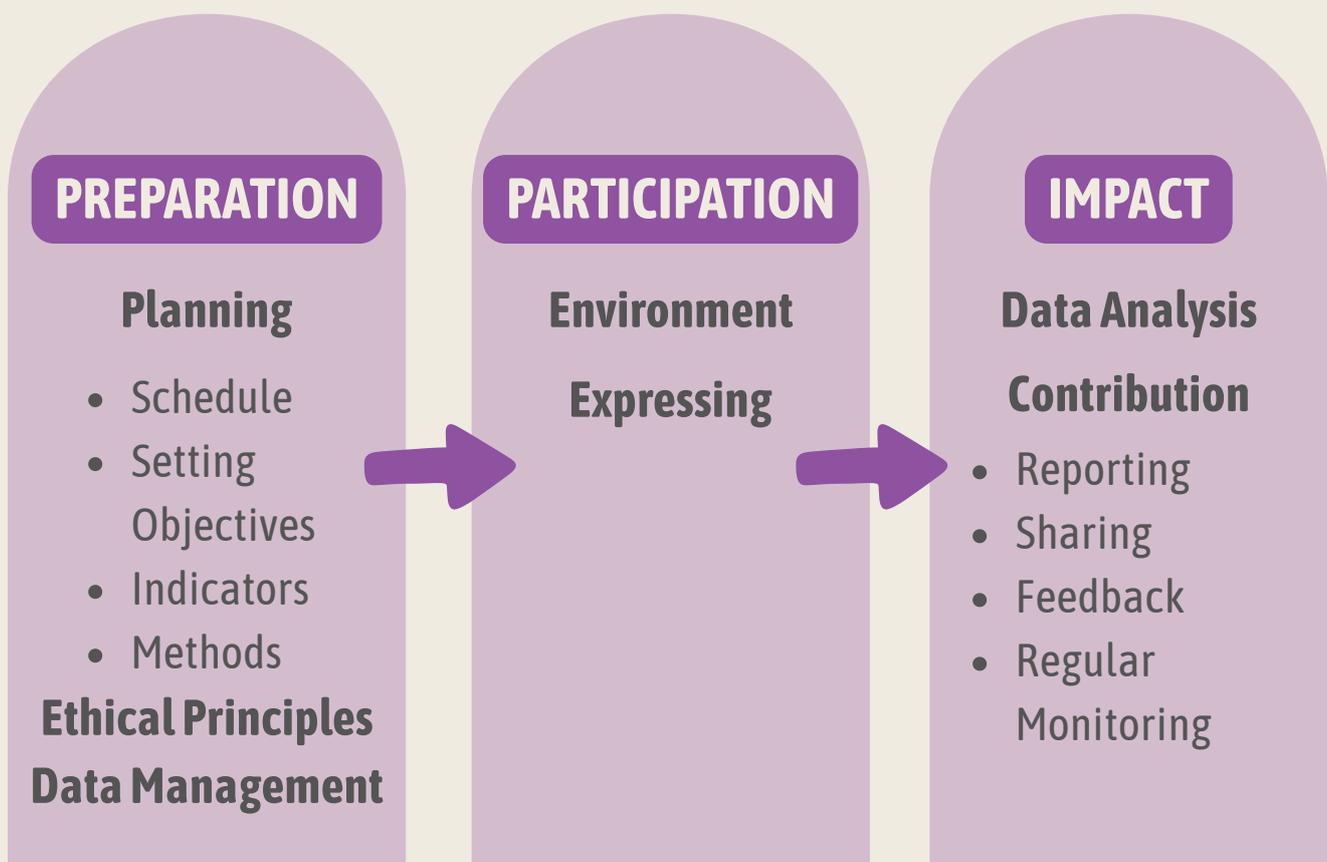
The desire to understand the impact of the association's work and learn from it dates back to its founding period. At that time, a child-based form was created, and volunteers began filling it out regularly. Although children's development was monitored, a large amount of data was accumulated, and this data could not be used for the association's strategy.

With the field team beginning to seek solutions to this problem, regular and planned monitoring and evaluation processes commenced in 2017. A theory of change encompassing all of the association's activities was developed. This clarified the association's main objective, the actions required to achieve it, and the link between these actions and activities.

At the beginning of each term, activities, objectives, and indicators are reviewed, tools are updated, and progress is monitored throughout the term. At the end of each term, a report covering all activities is prepared. You can visit the association's [website](#) for the reports.

# Establishing a Child-Focused Monitoring and Evaluation System in 7 Steps

Before transitioning to the system, remember that it is necessary to be patient at every stage of these steps, and that not every stage of our work with and for children can be completed instantly. Giving children and yourself time is also part of this system.



# PREPARATION



## 1. Have We Made Time For Planning?

- **Schedule**

The first step is to prepare a flexible schedule that fits our capacity. It is recommended that this schedule be prepared with the entire team involved before work begins. The schedule prioritizes the needs of the children and adults involved in the process.

This section is the step that involves planning all activities related to this topic:

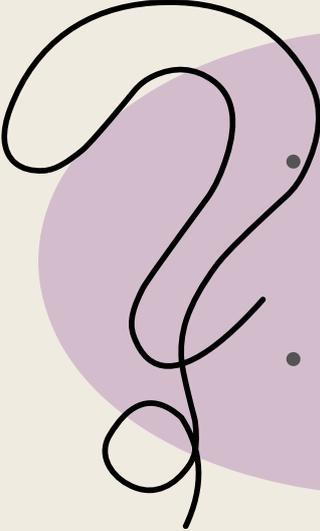
When will the objectives be set, which method will be used to monitor the indicators and over what time frame, when will the field questions be prepared, when will the children's opinions be gathered, when will the transcripts be prepared, when will the data be analyzed and reported...



## • Setting Objectives

Assuming that the mission of the institution conducting the work, which covers children, has a clear ultimate goal, the objectives of the workshops, training, or activities to be implemented with children are defined in a concise manner that covers the entire process.

To determine the objectives of the work to be carried out by the trainer, volunteer, or facilitator, they may be expected to answer the following **questions:**

- 
- What would I like to see in the children during this workshop? What would they do that would make me think: “I’m glad I did this workshop, I achieved my goal”?
  - Why are these things important to me?

## Example,

The SGD Play and Handicraft Workshop's objectives were defined by the workshop instructor as follows:

- *Development of fine and gross motor skills*
- *Development of attention and concentration skills*
- *Development of the ability to move together and in harmony*
- *Supporting thinking and imagination*

## Example,

A topic that will be briefly touched upon in a workshop is not defined as a general objective. Since the learning objective of rap concepts defined for the hip hop workshop in SGD is not generalized and only applies to this workshop, we did not include it in the general objectives.

## Suggestion

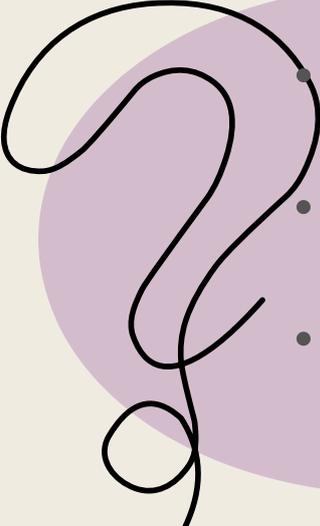
Asking the child directly, “What do you want to do in this workshop?” gives them a say in setting the goals.



## • Identifying Indicators

Before deciding which methods to use at this stage, indicators<sup>3</sup> are determined. Subsequently, data collection methods are decided upon, with the main focus being child-centred.

The trainer, volunteer, facilitator, or person conducting the monitoring and evaluation may be expected to answer the following **questions** in order to determine indicators:

- 
- What can we objectively observe in children within our goals (numerical and verbal)?
  - How does the child behave so that we know our observations are accurate?
  - Are the indicators we have identified relevant/connected to the children's lives?

<sup>3</sup> Indicator: Criteria and reference points used to determine whether an element has been achieved while monitoring, and if so, to what extent. In a child-focused monitoring and evaluation context, indicators used to concretely track whether defined goals have been achieved may have the following characteristics:

**Specific:** The indicator should clearly and explicitly define exactly what is being measured. It should be clear which area of child development or behaviour is being focused on. For example, the increase in reading levels among children aged 7-10 participating in the project.

**Achievable/Attainable:** The indicator should show a result that is possible to achieve with the child's current abilities and the support provided. For example, an increase expected after play-based social skills workshops is a realistic goal in this context.

**Relevant:** The indicator should be directly relevant to the child's overall development goals and the objectives of the program. For example, a program goal that aims to develop problem-solving skills.

**Time-bound:** The indicator should be limited to a specific time frame or end date, specifying when or within what period it will be measured/evaluated. For example, it will be measured through observations conducted in the 3rd and 6th months of the program.

The acronym SMART refers to the SMART indicator. The SMART indicator is a concrete monitoring tool that has specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound criteria for tracking progress related to the child.

The key indicators included in the monitoring plan (e.g., self-confidence) should be determined by asking the children directly, not based on assumptions.

## **Example,**

To understand and concretise the abstract concept of self-confidence in children, questions such as **“What makes you feel confident?”** or **“How do you behave when you feel confident?”** can be asked. These questions help children identify their own unique measures of success, because for some children, even raising their hand once in class can be a significant achievement. Ultimately, while our goal is to increase self-confidence, indicators should be concrete and measurable, such as **“I raise my hand more often in class.”**

## **Suggestion**

*A behaviour that children exhibit spontaneously and that was not included in the initial plan (for example, developing the habit of reading labels on packaged foods after attending healthy living workshops) can be considered important data and may become one of the target indicators for the following year.*



## • **Determining the Data Collection Method**<sup>4</sup>

In the data collection section, we first decide who the data will be collected from. Then we proceed with the following questions:

### **Do we know the needs of the children from whom we will collect data?**

We should try to identify children based on their different characteristics in terms of data collection, such as reading and writing, verbal expression, and liking or disliking drawing.

When deciding on data collection methods, it is necessary to consider the age and developmental level of the children, design appropriate methods for each group, and review these methods with the children. For all of this to work well, it is recommended that the group of children from whom data will be collected be thoroughly analysed.

We test the adaptability of the methods we will use to each type of disability (visual, hearing, physical, learning difficulties, etc.). If necessary, we consider alternative/supportive methods such as sign language interpreters, Braille materials, picture cards, and audio recordings.

### **Who (children, volunteers, instructors, etc.) is it appropriate to meet with, and by what method?**

Recognizing that every child has a different way of expressing themselves (writing, speaking, drawing), we give the child the right to choose.

<sup>4</sup> Methods used in fieldwork include observation/monitoring logs, interviews, surveys (such as pre-test and post-test), control groups, focus group discussions, stakeholder meetings, regular monitoring reports, field visits, evaluation forms, case studies, community feedback, and data from complaint mechanisms.

During the observation process, observing and recording not only the changes in the child but also those in the adult gives us the opportunity to understand the overall progress.

### **At what interval should we collect the data?**

During this process, we take time to establish a bond of trust and build a relationship with the child. We are not just practitioners, but people who share experiences with the child.

### **Who can't we reach, what data can't we collect?**

By identifying in advance segments that we may not be able to reach, such as children with disabilities or other intersectionalities, we determine how to minimize the impact of these constraints.

### **Who else can we get the data we need from besides children?**

We do not always have to obtain the data we seek from children. It is important to support observers so that they can effectively convey their observations. These individuals can be empowered through training, introduction to the guide, or pilot applications. In-house and inter-institutional supervision support can also be provided to increase the competence of those who will interview children or share their observations.

## Example,

At the beginning and end of each observation process, feedback can be obtained by organizing **evaluation circles** with the children. Asking children about their **expectations** before workshops is a **practical way to understand their agenda**. For details, see the section on “setting up feedback mechanisms.”

By conducting a **wet laundry**<sup>5</sup> activity, expectations are gathered at the beginning of the workshop. At the end of the program, a fun and concrete feedback can be obtained by visualizing which of these expectations have dried (been fulfilled) and which have remained wet.

Tools that allow **anonymous monitoring** of the issue to be monitored can be developed. A simple form can be prepared for children to fill out during the workshop and drop anonymously into a box in the room.

## Suggestion

*Practitioners/facilitators working with children from different cultures or with different native languages must be individuals who are well-versed in that culture. For children with developmental disabilities, expert support is essential.*

<sup>5</sup> Ask the children what they want from the workshop; ask them to think about what they would enjoy doing here, and distribute the cardboard laundry items you prepared in advance to the children. Those who wish can draw or write whatever comes to mind on these pieces of paper. Facilitators should cut long, thin strings. Tell the children to hang the laundry up with clothespins. Then read the expectations the children have written. Tell them that at the end of these workshops, these clothes will reappear and we will check together whether they have dried or not.

## 2. Are Our Principles Regarding Working With Children Clear?

Respecting children's privacy and rights is our priority. Regardless of the approach, focus, or context of the interview, we are responsible for upholding ethical standards in all research involving children. The following fundamental ethical principles must be adopted when planning meetings or gatherings in which children participate.

The principles<sup>6</sup> governing work with children are verified by the **following questions:**

### Non-Maleficence Principle

- Do we know what the principle of non-harming is?
- Have we taken the necessary precautions to avoid harming children?
- Are we sure that adults who come into contact with children during the process are not harming or hurting them?
- Are we prioritizing children's safety and well-being?
- For the safety of the child and the interviewer during the interview, it is important to have two people present. Did we include this in our plan?

<sup>6</sup> For the section on ethical principles, refer to the compilation of Ethical Rules to be Observed in Research Involving Children and Conducted with Children ([https://childethics.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/ERIC\\_Turkish.pdf](https://childethics.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/ERIC_Turkish.pdf)) and the source <http://www.cocugasiddetionluyoruz.net/storage/app/uploads/public/5c3/efb/016/5c3efb0165343108626452.pdf>



# Beneficence Principle



- Does the interview support the children's physical, emotional, and mental well-being?
- Did we explain to the child what impact their views will have?

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# Justice Principle

- Are differences among children in the environment taken into account?
- Are children's opinions listened to respectfully and given due consideration?
- Are explanations provided about where and how children's statements will be used?
- Are children's questions answered without being ignored or dismissed?
- Are children's original opinions preserved and accepted without alteration?

## Respect Principle

- Are differences among children in the environment taken into account?
- Are children's opinions listened to respectfully and given due consideration?
- Are explanations provided about where and how children's statements will be used?
- Are children's questions answered without being ignored or dismissed?
- Are children's original opinions preserved and accepted without alteration?

## Confidentiality Principle

- Are children's identity and contact information stored securely?
- Does the report use any quotes that could reveal a child's identity?
- Has a plan been made to destroy the data after the report?

# Consent Principle

- Are the consent forms written in a way that children can understand?
- Was consent obtained from the child before the interview?
- Was consent obtained from the caregiver before the interview?
- Were the children informed of their right to refuse to participate or to leave the interview?
- Was it clearly explained to the child that they can withdraw their consent at any time, without having to give a reason?

You can refer to [Appendix 1](#) for sample consent forms.

## Suggestion

*If the interviewer is a child, it must be ensured that all ethical principles are also upheld for the child interviewer.*

**Reporting Obligation:** If the child shares information that creates a reporting obligation for the person or persons conducting the interview, please remember this obligation. For the steps to be followed in the reporting obligation, please refer to [Appendix 3](#).

# 3. Are Our Strategies For Data Management Clear?

Data privacy and security in studies involving children are among the most important ethical and legal responsibilities. Proper management of collected information is crucial both to fulfill legal obligations and to protect children's privacy.

Data management encompasses coding and anonymization, regulatory compliance, data storage, and data destruction processes.

## **Did we encrypt and anonymize the data we collected from children in the context of privacy?**

To protect children's identities, we use a code instead of their names or initials in our reports. We do not prefer to use another name, as this carries the risk of referring to a different individual with that name or creating bias.

We can ask the child we are interviewing how they would like us to shorten or change their name. However, when doing so, we must consider the risk that a word the child chooses as a nickname may be known to their relatives.

If a quote in the report could reveal the identity of the person reading it and we need to use that quote, we obtain permission from the person.

When using artificial intelligence, we always enter data into the system anonymously.

## **Do we have guidelines regarding the Personal Data Protection Law (KVKK)?**

Even if the child consents to the sharing of their photograph or personal data, we always question the validity of this consent. For compliance with the Personal Data Protection Law, we obtain consent from both the caregiver and the child. The consent form clearly states that children can withdraw their consent at any time.

## **Have we planned the data storage processes?**

All printed documents (forms, notes, drawings) are stored in locked cabinets and are only accessible to authorized team members. Digital meeting recordings, transcripts, and analysis files are stored in secure digital environments (secure cloud servers or external drives) protected by strong passwords or encrypted. All digital access passwords are regularly updated and stored using a secure method (e.g., password manager) to prevent unauthorized access. Who accesses the data, for what purpose, and when (or will access it) is clearly defined, and only relevant individuals are authorized.

## **When and how will we destroy the data we have collected?**

We define who can access the data collected from children and when and under what conditions the data will be destroyed. Preparing guidelines on this matter can facilitate the process. The guidelines should clarify under what conditions and in what system the data will be stored, and how the collected data will be shared and used. Especially in sensitive cases, only certain experts, such as case workers, should have access to the data. The training and reliability of those collecting the data should also be considered.



# PARTICIPATION

## 4. Is the Environment Where Children Participate Suitable for Them?

The environment in which children find themselves also affects their ability to express their views comfortably and safely. It is recommended that the environment in which children are interviewed be a place they know, recognize, and feel comfortable in. An environment adapted to the child's age, gender, disability status, and other differences supports them in expressing themselves more comfortably. Establishing a bond of trust with the child also involves ensuring that the physical environment is safe.

**The safety and suitability of the environment where children are observed and interviews are conducted is checked by asking the following questions:**

- Will we meet with the children in a place they know and are familiar with?
- Will we meet with the children in a place we know and are familiar with?

- Are there any obstacles in terms of their transportation and access?
- Can they get there on foot?
- Can we make arrangements to facilitate their transportation?
- Is the physical space where we meet with the children suitable for them in terms of height, lighting, and ventilation?
- Is the environment arranged in such a way that children can move around and interact comfortably?
- Has the environment been checked for any stimulating or triggering visuals, posters, or materials?
- Is there a possibility that what the children say could be heard from outside?

## **Suggestion**

*If there are too many negative responses, in terms of time, effort, and cost, consider which ones can be easily corrected. Consider a gradual improvement plan.*

*If the location of the interview is not familiar to the organization or the interviewer, it must be visited in advance.*



## Measures for inclusivity:

When considering and implementing measures for inclusivity, we constantly monitor the direct relevance of these measures to children's needs. We strive to minimize the risk that the measures taken may stem from errors in our perception of children, from prejudices, or from stereotypes, so as not to harm children.

- We strive to understand the social, cultural, and economic conditions of the communities where the children we work with live. We adapt to these conditions in processes such as selecting the location for the interview, choosing the gender of the interviewers and participants, and formulating the questions.
- We ensure that the areas where interviews and focus groups are held are safe, central, and easily accessible for all children.
- We plan activities such as circles and warm-up games to reduce shyness and build trust.
- We meticulously apply confidentiality and security principles and implement reporting obligations, especially when girls share issues such as neglect, abuse, early and forced marriage, or pressure.



- We take into account the hygiene, menstrual, and privacy needs of girls that affect their participation.
- We ensure gender balance among interviewers and observers.
- We take care to ensure that the environment is culturally sensitive and non-alienating. Where possible, we choose a location close to or familiar to the community in which the children live.
- We acknowledge that each child's needs are different and ensure that monitoring and evaluation tools and environments are sensitive to individual differences.
- We take measures to ensure that interview, activity, or data collection environments are physically accessible.
- We review our inclusivity in terms of wheelchair ramps, elevators, and appropriate lighting.
- We ensure that the interview environment offers a calming and safe alternative for children who are sensory sensitive (e.g., excessive noise, bright lights).
- We plan special transportation support for children to reach the interview location.

## **Suggestion**

*If the location where the interview will take place is not a place known to the institution or the interviewer, it must be visited in advance.*



## 5. Do We Allow Children to Express Themselves Freely?

To enable children to express themselves comfortably, we first establish a bond of trust with the child, using child-friendly and understandable language.

Children are provided with information and guidance appropriate to their age, gender, disability status, and other differences so that they can express their views. At this stage, adults inform the children in the environment about their participation rights and provide them with guidance on the subject when needed.

Interview questions should be carefully designed so that children can easily understand and answer them, and it is recommended that children be consulted when necessary. The flow of the interview is controlled by the following **questions**:

- Do the questions allow children to express their thoughts and feelings?
- Do we know the children in terms of their literacy, disability status, whether they like drawing, their native language, and so on?
- Have we considered the appropriate tool for each of them?

**Before the interview**, children are prepared by informing them that their opinions will be sought. Before interviewing children, we can check ourselves with the following questions:

- Have the purposes of the interview been clarified to the children?
- Are the ages of the children participating in the interview similar?
- Have the children been informed in advance about the purpose of the interview?
- Have the children been informed in advance about the duration of the interview?
- Have the children been informed about who will conduct the interview?
- If deemed necessary, have arrangements been made for breaks during the interview?
- Have written consent forms been obtained from the children prior to the interview?
- Have written consent forms been obtained from the children's caregivers prior to the interview?
- Was the date and time of the interview determined in consultation with the children?

- Was verbal consent obtained from the children at the beginning of the interview?
- Were the children informed that their personal information, such as their name, surname, and place of residence, would not be shared anywhere?
- Are there any children with disabilities among those participating in the meeting?
- Have special measures been developed to include children who do not have equal opportunities?
- Have all children been included without discrimination on the basis of gender, community, disability, age, language, geographical location, or any other personal or social characteristic?
- Have alternatives been prepared for children who do not want to or cannot express themselves verbally?
- Have activities been planned to facilitate introductions and create a trusting environment, given the possibility that some children in the group may not know each other?

- Has it been determined how to approach children if they become distressed or experience problems?
- Does the facilitator or interviewer have experience working/interviewing with children?
- Is the facilitator or interviewer sensitive to establishing an equal relationship with children?
- Have measures been taken to support the emotional and physical comfort of the facilitator or interviewer?

**During the interview,** the following questions are asked to ensure a child-centred approach is maintained:

- Are we sure that the children participated voluntarily?
- Were the children informed that they could choose not to participate if they wanted?
- Were the children told where their opinions would be used?

- Was there enough time for all children to express their opinions?
- Are we sure that all children understood the purpose of the meeting?
- Are all children able to express their views comfortably?
- Are there children in the group who do not want to speak or express their views?
- Were alternative options provided for children who do not want to or cannot express themselves verbally?
- Were children told how their views would be used?
- Were children asked if they wanted to review their views before they were used anywhere?

## **Suggestion**

If there are too many negative responses, in terms of time, effort, and cost, it is determined which ones can be easily corrected. An improvement plan spread out over time is considered.

## Measures for inclusivity:

When considering and implementing measures for inclusivity, we constantly monitor the direct relevance of these measures to children's needs. We strive to minimize the risk that the measures taken may stem from errors, biases, or stereotypes in our perception of children, so as not to harm them.

- Social norms such as family pressure can limit girls' participation in discussions. We carefully analyze the groups we work with in terms of these barriers and strive to increase their participation by building trust. We do not consider it normal for girls to remain silent in the group. We ask questions that encourage participation.
- In our interviews and questions, we consider children's experiences of discrimination specific to their socio-economic and cultural contexts, their rates of access to/attendance at school, and their perceptions of their identity.
- In our interviews and questions, we consider children's experiences of discrimination specific to their socio-economic and cultural contexts, their rates of access to/attendance at school, and their perceptions of their identity.



- When interviewing children from different cultures or with different native languages, we ensure that the interviewer is familiar with that culture. If we cannot find such a person, we ensure that the interviewers receive sensitivity training on the cultural structure of the community and the discrimination it faces.
- We take care to ensure that our language is unbiased and inclusive. In conversations, we avoid trying to speak like someone from the Roma community, for example.
- We take time to establish trust and build relationships before the interview. If we have time constraints to complete the interviews, we can seek support from those who have already established that trust bond and involve people within the neighborhood/community who have established trust relationships in the process.
- We ensure that the individuals conducting the interview receive training on how to communicate with children with different types of disabilities and how to facilitate the process.
- Children may need extra time to express themselves during the interview. We include this in the interview schedule.

## 6. What Will We Do With the Opinions Expressed by the Children?

Simply listening to or recording children's views is not sufficient to realize their right to participation. Therefore, it is recommended that follow-up to discussions with children be planned realistically and that children be involved in this process as much as possible.

Simple and understandable methods are used to analyze the collected data. During the analysis process, it is recommended to focus on producing functional and usable information rather than striving for perfection.



- What will we do with the children's views?<sup>7</sup>
- How will we analyze the data?
- How will we interpret the results?
- Can we involve children in the data analysis process?
- Do children know who will see their views?
- Have we discussed how children's views will be reflected in the report?
- Will a children's version of the report be prepared?
- Have we made a plan to share the children's version of the report with the participating children?
- Have we established a strategy for the secure storage of data?
- Have we determined when and how to securely destroy information containing all personal details, including names?

## Suggestion

If there are too many negative responses, in terms of time, effort, and cost, it is necessary to see which ones can be easily corrected. An improvement plan spread over the process is considered.

Leaving the analysis processes to the last minute can complicate things in many ways and waste the effort spent collecting data. Therefore, the data collection, evaluation, and reporting steps must be clarified in the first stage, which is planning.

<sup>7</sup> Analysis methods may include approaches such as descriptive statistics, comparative analysis, content analysis, and thematic analysis, depending on the type of data collected (quantitative/numerical or qualitative/narrative).



## Measures for inclusivity:

When considering and implementing measures for inclusivity, we constantly monitor the direct relevance of these measures to children's needs. We strive to minimize the risk that the measures taken may stem from errors, biases, or stereotypes in our perception of children, so as not to harm them.

- We analyze the collected data by gender.
- We make the statements of children experiencing singular or intersectional discrimination visible in our reports. In doing so, we avoid using stigmatizing or victimizing language. We highlight the strengths and suggestions in the children's statements.
- Based on the feedback we have gathered, we will discuss how our work can be improved to provide differentiated support specifically for girls.
- We generalize the geographical locations of the groups discussed, particularly on issues where there is a risk of retaliation, in a way that does not point to a single location or the context of the issue.
- We analyze the data we collect while considering different identity and affiliation groups, reporting with attention to information that could lead to stigmatization.



# 7. How Will Children's Opinions Contribute?

Reflecting children's views in projects, programs, and practices is an integral part of child participation. We look at what changes children's contributions bring to decision-making mechanisms.

## Reporting and dissemination

The results obtained are shared with relevant stakeholders, and the recommendations/lessons learned are implemented. Reports can be written in a child-friendly language to make it easier for children to understand the results.

- How can we use and disseminate our reports more effectively?
- Are we documenting our mistakes and errors?
- Have we developed a plan to communicate back to the children what we did with the information we gathered from them?
- Do we know how to prepare child-friendly reports?
- Are we including the sets of questions or facilitating questions we used in interviews in our reports?
- Do we explain how we analyze the data?
- Do we take care to protect the privacy and confidentiality of children in the quotes or comments we use in our reporting?
- Do we publish the reports on our website and share them with the public?
- Did we clarify the reporting process with the organizations providing grant support to organize the workload at the start of the project?

## Reporting recommendations for different target audiences:

To Whom	For What Purpose	What	How Should We Report?
Grant-providing organizations	To demonstrate accountability and impact	<p>Number of participants, frequency of activities, percentage of project/program goals achieved.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Concrete changes in children's lives and behaviour.</li> <li>- Evidence that resources were used effectively and appropriately.</li> </ul>	Reports presenting children's views, containing graphs and tables, conveying needs and suggestions
Public organizations	To present policy recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Areas where current public services are lacking or inadequate.</li> <li>- Information on groups of children with limited access to data (disadvantaged, disabled, etc.).</li> <li>- Concrete proposals based on children's views for legislation, service design, or resource allocation.</li> </ul>	Short reports containing graphs and tables, highlighting concrete needs and recommendations
Caregivers	To inform them about their children's development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Children's contributions to the process, the skills they have acquired, and the positive changes they have experienced, either individually or as a group.</li> </ul>	Illustrated brochures written in simple, plain language or informational meetings
Children	For feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Which decisions their opinions have concretely changed or influenced.</li> <li>- What can be done in the new period based on their opinions.</li> </ul>	Child-friendly texts (see Appendix 2), video reports or presentations
The institution itself	For learning and developing new programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Percentage of project/program objectives achieved.</li> <li>- Development and changes of all stakeholders (children, caregivers, educators, volunteers, team members, etc.).</li> <li>- What can be done in the new period based on children's opinions.</li> <li>- Whether resources are being used effectively and appropriately.</li> </ul>	Reports that bring together the views of all stakeholders on all components, conveying needs, problems, errors, and suggestions

## Suggestion

*A children's consultation group can read the evaluation report and contribute to the creation of a child-friendly version of the report by providing suggestions for revision and visualization. This group can also share the results with their peers. The results can be presented in a child-friendly report using a step-by-step mapping technique. Instead of reports containing too much adult language or numerical values, concrete data can be illustrated and visualized. Games can be designed to present the monitoring results and provide feedback based on these results. See [Appendix 2](#) for preparing a child-friendly report.*

## Setting up feedback mechanisms

Feedback is an integral of the child participation process which is often overlooked. It is important to establish a feedback mechanism that is appropriate for the community's cultural and social structure. Child participation should be seen as part of the feedback process. Children should not be forced to give their opinions.

- Do we regularly receive feedback from children, volunteers, trainers, or relevant adults?
- Do we incorporate this feedback into our processes?
- Do we present the results of their opinions and the impact of the information they provide
  - to children in a tangible way?
- Do we explain to children clearly and understandably why we did not include their opinions in the evaluation?
- Did we try to establish the feedback mechanism not as a one-time process, but in a way that builds trust?
- Did we provide a safe environment where the child feels secure when giving feedback? For this step, see the Section 4 in this report “Is the environment where children participate appropriate for them?”
- Did we offer different means of expression for example drawing pictures or writing stories for children who have difficulties in expressing themselves verbally?

## Suggestion

*It has been observed that starting and ending circles<sup>8</sup> are effective particularly for adolescents. This method is important in terms of providing a space for self-expression and establishing peer contact. In addition, through these circles, children can acquire a culture of observation and feedback. Instead of just asking questions and receiving answers, providing children with videos, games, or other tools can be a good stimulus, especially for younger children.*

### Planning regular monitoring

Although we may sometimes think that we have had no effect on the child, we must remember that there may be effects that we cannot observe or that have not yet become observable. Therefore, the long-term and indirect effects of monitoring in our evaluation plan must always be included in the document.

We plan long-term monitoring processes for regular monitoring.

- Does the entire team agree on long-term monitoring?
- What steps should we take for long-term monitoring?
- Have we planned the effort, time, and resources for this?

<sup>8</sup> The opening and closing circles used in meetings with children are group meetings used to start the activity energized. They also establish a bond of trust between the children and facilitators and conclude by evaluating the work done and how it made them feel.

# APPENDICES



## Appendix 1: Sample Consent Forms

### Consent forms

- Include information about confidentiality and anonymity
- State that participation is voluntary
- Indicate that the decision to participate can be reconsidered
- Include information about health status and other sensitivities.

### The following information should be added specifically to the research topic:

- What is this research about? The aim of the research conducted and how the gathered information will be used should be clearly stated in the consent form.
- How is the child's participation structured (method, duration, etc.)?
- Other details (date, location, etc.)

The consent given by the child must clearly state the dates and the research for which it is valid.

### Structure of consent forms:

- The use of pictures, symbols, and emojis helps children understand the text better.
- It should be remembered that symbols may vary regionally; images appropriate to the local context should be selected.

- Forms should be made accessible for children and caregivers. The forms should be adapted to each type of disability (visual, hearing, physical, learning difficulties, etc.). It should be tested if these forms are adaptable for each disability. When needed, alternative/supportive methods of accessibility including sign language interpreters, Braille materials, picture cards, and audio recordings should be considered.
- For children who cannot read or write, methods such as raising a finger or using gestures, visual or auditory consent, or having a trusted person read the text can be used as an alternative to the written consent form.
- The details of feedback and complaint mechanisms should be included in the form.

### **When explaining the form to children:**

- Be sure to read it out loud and explain the form in a way that makes sure that the child understands the purpose and content of the form.
- By using short and concrete expressions, simplify the text into child-friendly language.
- With simple terms, Explain technical concepts such as the KVKK (Personal Data Protection Law). For example, you can say, “We will not share your information with anyone”.

### **Form security:**

- It should be clear from the outset how consent forms will be stored securely.

## Suggestion

If you have the time, you can create consent forms with the children through focus groups.

Sample forms:

### INFORMED CONSENT FORM FOR ADULTS

As the parent/legal representative of ..... I consent I do not consent to participate in interviews to be conducted by ..... (institution) on the subject of .....on ..... (date and time) at ..... (place/location).

*I consent*

*I do not consent*

I consent I do not consent for the recording of audio during the interviews.

*I consent*

*I do not consent*

The images and photographs taken during the interview can be used on the internet, social media, and other media forms such as television, magazines, and newspapers.

*I consent*

*I do not consent*

I understand that if I consider the use of images and videos on the internet inappropriate for my child, I can withdraw my consent any time regarding their participation in the meeting, the recording of images and sound, or the use of the recordings.

Name-Surname

Date and Signature

# ASSENT FORM FOR CHILDREN

I consent I do not consent to participate in the interviews conducted by ..... on the subject of .....

I consent

I do not consent

I understand that consent to this research has been obtained from my mother/father/legal guardian to participate in this discussion, but I can still ask them about the consent if I wish. Even if my mother/father/legal guardian gave permission to participate in this research, I know that I can still choose not to participate in this research if I do not want to. I know that if I do not want to continue during the interview, I can say so immediately and that the person that is conducting the interview will take me seriously.

Yes, I know

No, I do not know

I understand that audio can be recorded during the interview;

I consent

I do not consent

I understand that any images or photos taken during the interview may be used on the internet, social media, and other media forms such as television, magazines, and newspapers.

I do not want my name to be written.

I do not want my face to be clearly visible.

I do not want any information that could put me in danger to be shared.

(You can select as many of these items as you wish. You can also just check the boxes below without separately selecting.)

I consent

I do not consent

I understood everything written in this consent form.

NAME-SURNAME DATE-SIGNATURE

# Appendix 2: Preparing Child-Friendly Texts Figure

To create an accessible child-friendly, the text must be easy for children to understand, and it must appeal to their interest.

There are four stages to preparing a child-friendly document:

1. **Message**
2. **Text**
3. **Feedback**
4. **Design**



**Message:** We determine what message we want to convey to children in our text. This message is not what we want to highlight in our work or research, but rather what we want to say to children. We cannot include all of our content. So, how do we choose what we will include in the child-friendly report?

- What parts of our research are relevant and interesting to children?
- What might they want to read or know?
- What might children want to read or know?
- What information could be harmful or frightening to them?
- What will they be interested in?
- Will this content empower them?
- Will this information be useful in their lives?

These questions will help us formulate our message. In other words, our focus should be on the children, or a stance of ‘for children’.

**Text:** The text we prepare should be simple and understandable with short sentences. We can explain difficult words with a word dictionary and give examples.

- We should use positive language for example instead of saying “don't do this,” we can say “you can do it this way.”
- We should avoid excessive generalization to prevent misunderstanding.
- We can reinforce important information by repeating it.

- Instead of just providing information, we can involve the child in the process through games and questions to help engage with the results.
- If we need to use abstract concepts, we may think about the methods we can make these concepts tangible.

**Feedback:** We should review the text we have prepared with at least 4-5 children. We can have a conversation with the children about the accessibility of the text by asking them the following questions:

- Is it long?
- Is it easy to read?
- Are there any words you do not know, and if so, what would you suggest instead as an alternative word?
- What do you think this text is about?

When implementing the feedback step, it is important to keep in mind that we must follow the ethical principles and consent processes outlined in this guide.

**Design:** The design of the text should include simple visuals, have space between sentences, and include images relevant to the child and the context.

We can make the visuals more inclusive and accessible by describing them.

# Appendix 3: Reporting Obligation

When a situation requiring a case follow-up is detected, you can follow the framework below to determine which institution/organisation to report the case to:

If a child shares with you a situation involving a criminal offence such as physical/sexual abuse, torture or domestic violence, severe neglect, suicidal tendencies or mental crisis, human trafficking, or forced labour, this situation requires urgent intervention, and we have a reporting obligation.

First, it is important to stay calm and just listen to the child. It is also important not to ask for details of the situation.

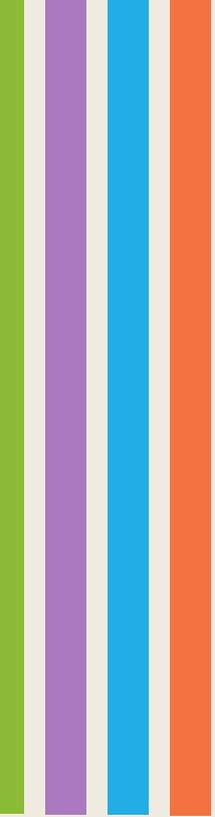
Do not judge or make comments on the matter. We must remember that ethical principles apply here as well.





## Who should you report it to?

- If the institution that connects you with the child has a designated child welfare officer, report it to them.
- Ministry of Family and Social Services ALO 183 Social Support Line
- Social Services Directorate in your province/district
- Public Prosecutor's Office
- If available in your city, the Children's Rights Centre or Children's Rights Commission. If there is no such unit, other appropriate commissions such as Legal Aid or Human Rights, Women's Rights, Migration, and Refugee Rights.



**Please send us your opinions, suggestions,  
and experiences regarding the guide.**

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