

Module 11: Action-training - Drafting a report and Publishing Findings

Child-friendly Accountability Pillar: Pillar 3 - Action

Objective of the workshop: To support youth in drafting and publishing a report on their findings.

Where does this module fit in the CFA methodology?

This Action-Workshop should follow Module 10 if the youth decide to draft a report. This is not a mandatory activity. The youth or country offices may focus on other activities, such as advocacy (Module 12) or Direct Action (Module 13).

What are you trying to achieve?

During this Action-Workshop, youth and adults will work together to draft and publish a report concerning the child protection system in their protection setting as well as the gaps and bottlenecks that they identified.

How are you going to achieve this?

This Action-Workshop is divided into three sessions. During these sessions, youth will begin by reviewing their data and finish with a distribution plan for their report.

Ideas for Facilitating the Workshop

Youth should attend this workshop with their binders (Modules 6 - 9) as well as any other data or information that they have collected. If participants have laptops, it might be useful to use them during this Action-Workshop.

Duration of the Workshop: Three sessions

A. Suggested Workshop Activities

Before this Action-Workshop begins, find and print any reporting guidelines. In some cases, child-friendly guidelines have been produced. Each participant should be provided with one copy of the reporting guidelines.

Introduction: Explain to the youth that during this Action-Workshop, they will draft and distribute a report. During the first session, they will review their data (collected during Module 6 - 9) and develop their arguments. Between Session 1 and 2, small groups of youths will be responsible for drafting various sections of the report. During Session 2, the youth will review individual sections of the report, compile them into a single report, and draft their recommendations. In between Sessions 2 and 3, it is recommended that participants send their report to external adult stakeholders for review and feedback. During Session 3, the youth will review feedback, revise the report, and develop a distribution plan.

Session 1: Reviewing Data and Developing your Argument

Activity 1: Identifying Existing Guidelines*

Objective: To support participants in identifying and understanding reporting guidelines, if they exist (*knowledge-building*).

Duration: 1 hour 30 minutes

Materials: Computers, photocopies of the relevant reporting guidelines (in child-friendly version if they exist), flipchart and markers

Description: Begin this activity by explaining to the youth that some organizations, particularly formal bodies (e.g. the UN, regional bodies, government, etc.), have very specific and rigid guidelines for reports that they accept. All the reporting guidelines for the UN treaty-bodies and the Human Rights Council can be found at:
<http://www.ohchr.org/FR/Pages/WelcomePage.aspx>.

Provide participants with printouts of the guidelines. Divide participants into small groups and ask them to read through the guidelines. As a group, try to draw a diagram of the guidelines on flipchart paper. Discuss any elements that are not clear to the group.

* This activity should only be included in the Action-Workshop if participants intend to draft a shadow/alternative report to an international or regional treaty-body, the UPR process, the HLPF, or similar organization.

Activity 2: Compiling and Sourcing your information

Objective: To help youth group their information and use correct citations (*learning and realization*).

Duration: 3 hours

Materials: All raw data collected by the youth during Modules 6 - 9 (including the binders and interview notes), computer or paper and pens

Description: Begin this activity by explaining to the participants that it is critically important that information is cited, even when you are just beginning to write a paper. This helps to avoid later confusion. Participants should understand that each time they use information, they need to explicitly explain where it came from. *Plagiarism is using someone else's information or ideas without giving them credit. This is not only illegal in many countries, it also results in the loss of credibility for your organization and for you as researchers.*

Ask the group to read through the information they collected, particularly drawing on the Analysis charts in Activity 3 and 4 of Module 8 and the Child Protection Mapping chart (Activity 11, Module 7). Make a list of the sources and write them correctly as citations.

Activity 3: Making sure your information is right...

Objective: To help youth assess if the data collected is credible (*realization*).

Duration: 2 hours

Materials: Computers, all raw data collected by the youth during Modules 6 - 9 (including the binders and interview notes), paper and pens

Description: Begin the activity by asking the youth what it means to ‘verify’ data. Provide participants with the following explanation: *Verifying information is a process by which we assess if the information we have gathered is correct. This can be done in several ways:*

- **Triangulation:** *If three different and independent sources say the same thing, we can assume that it is probably true. The sources must be independent – that means that they cannot all be from the same political group, family, etc.*
- **Source credibility:** *Information gathered from interviews should be assessed for credibility. Are there any apparent reasons why a person might have provided the researchers with false or misleading information—such as political or personal motivations? Was the data gathered from people with first-hand knowledge of the situation rather than hearsay?*
- **Observation:** *Does the data confirm what you have seen on the ground? Does it seem logical? If data seems to be inconsistent or unusual, you may want to re-check the data to see if it can be confirmed by other sources.*

In small groups, ask participants to read through their raw data and discuss their sources. Are there any that might not be credible? Why? In the plenary, participants should discuss their findings. After the participants have come to a consensus regarding any sources that lack credibility, lead them in a discussion about how the data should be treated. The participants may want to reference the data in their report, explaining why they believe their information to be incorrect or why they were unable to verify it. For example, if the participants have identified governmental data as lacking credibility, they will probably want to include this in the report and explain why it is not credible. Otherwise, data lacking credibility or unverified information should not be included.

Activity 3: Designing an argument

Objective: To help the children and youth develop a principal argument supported by facts (*learning and realization*).

Duration: 2 hours

Materials: Computers, all raw data collected by youth during Modules 6 - 9 (including the binders and interview notes), paper and pens

Description: Begin by explaining that a ‘thesis statement’ is the central argument in a report: What are you trying to tell your audience? What are you trying to make them understand? Remind participants that for the report to be ‘rights-based’, the central argument needs to include an analysis of what rights are being violated.

Divide the participants into smaller groups. Using their binders and the completed “Analyzing Child Protection Laws and Policies Chart” (Activity 3, Module 9), ask each group to develop a ‘thesis statement’ or a central argument. This statement should be backed up by verified facts. These ‘arguments’ (thesis statement + supporting facts) should be presented in the plenary. The group should agree on one final ‘argument’. You (the facilitator) should type this argument and provide it to the participants in hard copy.

Activity 4: Drafting an outline

Objective: To help youth draft an outline for their report (*realization*).
Duration: 1 hour 30 minutes
Materials: Flipchart and markers

Description: Open this activity by explaining to the youth that during this activity they will draft an outline for their report to ensure that it has a logical structure and a strong argument. Explain the principle behind an outline. Together, draft an outline for their report on flipchart paper.

Activity 5: Getting ready to start drafting

Objective: To help the participants review good practice in writing and to decide who will draft which parts of the report (*learning and realization*).
Duration: 2 hours
Materials: Flipchart paper and markers

Description: Read each of the tips for becoming a good writer (below) to the youth. After each, ask participants to discuss why they think it is important.

Tips for becoming a good writer:

- *Always edit your work before passing it on to others: Even if your ideas are brilliant, if there are a lot of grammatical errors, people will not respect the report. If you are not sure of the grammar, ask someone to edit for you.*
- *Use simple words: Clarity and simplicity are the essence of communication. You are trying to get a point across, not show off your vocabulary.*
- *Keep your sentences short: It is easier to ensure the clarity and grammar of a short sentence.*
- *Make sure that each paragraph contains one central idea.*
- *Do not make generalizations that you cannot support with facts: a human rights report must be evidence-based to have impact. Statements that cannot be supported will detract from the overall quality of the report.*
- *Keep the report concise: the report should be concise to enhance effective communication. Remember that people rarely read all the way through a long report.*
- *Use quotations to give emphasis to a point, not because you are too lazy to summarize the information yourself: Long quotations break up the flow of the document.*
- *Always use citations, never plagiarize: nothing will destroy your credibility more quickly than plagiarism or a report without citations.*
- *Do not be afraid of criticism: ask someone else to read what you have written. Writing is about communication. If someone else does not understand what you have written, then you are failing in your task.*
- *Think, write, and rewrite: prepare what you want to say, then write it down, and then rewrite it to make sure that it is well written.*

As you present each “tip” to the participants, write it on flipchart paper. Ask participants if there are any additional ‘good writing tips’ that they would like to add to the list.

Explain that reports should be written in formal language. As a group, identify types of words that are inappropriate in this type of report and types of words that are appropriate. Examples of inappropriate language include: slang, discriminatory language or hate speech, generalizations that are not supported by evidence, long quotations, plagiarized language, over-use of acronyms, and personal pronouns.

As a group, decide who will draft which sections of the outline. The youth should be given a week at least to draft their sections. They should come to the next session with their draft.

Session 2: Reviewing the sections and drafting recommendations

Between Session 1 and Session 2, the participants should work in their small group to draft their part of the report. They should bring their draft to Session 2.

Activity 5: Reviewing the sections

Objective: To enable participants to review and assemble sections of their report (*realization*).
Duration: 3 hours
Materials: Sections of the report drafted by participants, computer and projector

Description: Ask each group to attend this session with printouts of their section of the report (facilitator should assist if youth don't have access to computers). Distribute all sections of the report to participants, so that each participant has a copy of all sections (they can keep these in their binders). Individually, ask each participant to read through all the sections and make corrections, comments, etc. As a group, review each section and make corrections, using a projector and laptop. Make sure that the groups make comments in a constructive manner. By the end of this activity, participants should have one full draft of their report. Ask the participants to select a small team of their best writers. This team should finalize the report, making sure that the tone is uniform and that the document flows from one section to the next.

Activity 6: Drafting recommendations

Objective: To support youth in drafting recommendations (*realization*).
Duration: 1 hour 30 minutes
Materials: Flipchart paper, draft report, paper, pens, and markers

Description: Provide participants with the list of recommendations described below. In small groups, ask participants to identify which recommendations are strong and which are weak. For each, they should justify their opinion.

List of Recommendations

- 1. The Ministry of Education should ensure that all children are in school by the end of 2014.*
- 2. The Ministry of Education should issue a decree criminalizing the use of corporal punishment in schools by the end of 2014.*
- 3. The Ministry of Education should increase their budget allocation for teacher salaries by 10 percent by 2014.*

4. *Parents should prevent their children from working in the mines.*
5. *The Ministry of Labor should issue a decree prohibiting child labor in the mining sector.*

During the plenary discussion, share the following information. A strong advocacy message is:

- **Audience-specific:** The recommendation should specify which actor (which ministry, for example) should be responsible for enacting the change. Remember that the government is the primary duty-bearer.
- **Based on evidence:** The report should clearly show why such action is necessary. The recommendation should address an evidence-based problem that is outlined in the report.
- **Specific:** Ensure that you are calling for specific action in the recommendation. A general recommendation is very difficult to implement.
- **Time-bound:** Specify in the recommendation a timetable for implementation.
- **Achievable:** The recommendation is much more likely to have impact if it is something that the government will in fact be able to achieve.

Break the plenary into small groups. Ask each group to draft two recommendations. Each group should present their recommendations to the plenary. As a group, discuss each recommendation and agree on the 3-5 best recommendations. Remember that a few strongly-worded recommendations are better than many weak recommendations. The recommendations should be added to the report.

Session 3: External Review and Distribution/Submission

Prior to session 3, it is recommended that the youth share their report with several adult ‘external reviewers’. This will help to ensure buy-in from adult stakeholders and will also allow youth to have a high-quality final report.

Activity 7: Revising the report based on external feedback

Objective: To support youth in revising their report (*realization*).
 Duration: 3 hours
 Materials: Printouts of external feedback, computer and projector, draft report

Description: If the report was shared with ‘external reviewers’, the youth should go through their comments and feedback during this activity and make the necessary revisions to their report. Otherwise, the participants should review the report together and make final revisions.

Activity 8: Developing a distribution or submission plan

Objective: To support youth in developing a distribution plan for their report (*realization*).
 Duration: 1 hour 30 minutes
 Materials: Flipchart paper, markers, printouts of reporting Guidelines (Activity 1)

Description: Begin this activity by reminding participants of who their target audience is. Lead the group in a discussion about how the report can best be distributed, with the target audience in mind. In some cases, the report will be directly submitted to a regional or

international body. In other cases, participants may wish to launch the report, either online or during an event.

Some ideas for launching a report include:

- *post the report on a website;*
- *issue a press release;*
- *organize a press conference to launch the report;*
- *publish an op-ed or newspaper article that mentions the report;*
- *convince a well-known journalist, blogger, or public official to mention the report in their own article on the subject;*
- *publicize the report on social media, such as Twitter;*
- *arrange a radio interview to discuss the report;*
- *and make a presentation during a professional conference.*

Make sure that the distribution plan is realistic – both in terms of the available financial resources and who you are able to reach. Participants should select a team of persons who will be responsible for the distribution or submission of the report. Participants should set a deadline for each identified activity.