

## Module 4: Action-Training Introducing Child Rights, Child Protection, Violence against Children, and Child Participation

Child-friendly Accountability Pillar: Pillar 1 - Assessment

Objective of the workshop: Participants have a basic understanding of child rights, child protection and violence against children and begin to apply it to their context.

### Where does this fit in the CFA methodology?

This workshop is foundational. It must be implemented before other activities take place to ensure that engaged youth and adults understand the basic concepts related to child rights, violence and protection.

### What are you trying to achieve?

This workshop will help ensure that participants have a uniform understanding of child rights, protection, violence against children, and child participation, which is necessary for their engagement in Child-friendly Accountability. More importantly, this workshop should begin to challenge underlying social and cultural practices and assumptions that allow and perpetuate violence. It should contribute to the development of a culture of nonviolence and child protection.

### How are you going to achieve this?

At least two workshops should be held: one workshop should be held for participating children and youth and another for engaged adult stakeholders. These workshops introduce participants to key concepts and to help develop a supportive environment for Child-friendly Accountability activities.

### Ideas for Facilitating the Workshop

The activities listed below are suggestions. The training should be adapted to the local context, including with regard to available time and resources. Specifically, the training should be tailored to the protection ‘setting’ addressed by the project (e.g. school, workplace, home, etc.). Though the activities below have been developed for youth, they can also be used with adults. The activities should be tailored to the age and ability of the participants.

This training needs to be carefully prepared. It is likely that some of the adults and youth who participate in this workshop will have experienced or are currently experiencing violence. Pay careful attention to the reaction of participants. Don’t force participation and take time to speak with participants who appear distressed outside the workshop or during breaks. Refer them to psychosocial support if necessary.

### Duration of the Workshop: 1 - 2 workshop days

#### A. Suggested Workshop Activities

**Introduction:** Introduce this workshop by explaining that it is an introduction to 4 pivotal concepts: child rights, violence against children, child protection, and child participation. This workshop aims to provide the participants with a foundational understanding of these concepts and to encourage reflection and critical thinking.

## Activities Introducing Child Rights

### Activity 1: Know your rights

Objective: Participants are able to list several child rights (*knowledge-building*).  
Duration: 45 minutes  
Materials: Printouts of a Child-friendly Version of the CRC, flip chart paper, pen

Description: Ask participants to volunteer to act out a 'right'. The rest of the participants should guess which right they are acting out. List the rights that the group identified (if participants are illiterate, use drawings to illustrate the rights). Do not immediately correct the participants if they incorrectly identify rights. Once the participants have listed 10 or 15 rights, handout the Child-friendly version of the CRC. Explain to participants what the CRC is. If the participants are literate, ask each participant to read out one of the rights, until the entire declaration has been read. As a group, compare the list of rights that the participants originally identified to the rights in the CRC and discuss their reactions to the CRC. Did they know that they had these rights? Are there rights that they don't understand?

### Activity 2: Who is a child?

Objective: Participants are able to define 'child' (*knowledge-building*).  
Duration: 20 minutes  
Materials: Flip chart paper, markers

Description: Ask participants to identify who is a child. Make a list of the characteristics. Explain to the participants that in different parts of the world, childhood has different meanings and definitions. The UN CRC defines a child as anyone under 18. Discuss with participants why children need special protection (why they have their own convention).

### Activity 3: Who is responsible for making sure children have rights?

Objective: Participants are able to explain what the concept of child rights means for them (*knowledge-building*).  
Duration: 30 minutes  
Materials: Flip chart and markers

Description: Ask participants to identify who is responsible for ensuring that children have rights. Discuss each of the identified duty-bearers. Make sure that participants understand that the government is the primary duty-bearer. It is the government's responsibility to ensure that parents, schools, communities, and others safeguard child rights. When children do not have rights, governments must offer them an accessible recourse.

### Activity 4: Right to protection

Objective: Participants are able to describe children's right to protection (*knowledge-building*).  
Duration: 30 minutes  
Materials: Child-friendly version of the CRC

Description: Ask participants to read through the Child-friendly version of the CRC and identify rights that contribute to child protection. As a group, list these rights on flipchart paper. Make sure that the participants have understood the relevant rights.

## Activities Introducing Violence against Children

### Activity 5: What is violence against children?

- Objective:** Participants identify the types of violence against children in their community (*knowledge-building*).
- Duration:** 45 minutes
- Materials:** Flip chart and pen
- Description:** Divide the participants into small groups of 3. Ask each group to draw a child in the middle of a piece of flipchart paper. In their groups, participants should identify different forms of violence and map these forms of violence on their drawing of a child. Hang all of the flip charts around the room and ask the participants to walk around the room and look at them. In the plenary, make a list of the forms of violence experienced by children, ranking them from the most frequent to the least frequent, where they occur and who is the most common perpetrator. Make sure that the discussion stays general (no specific case studies presented or discussed).

### Activity 6: Impact of violence on children

- Objective:** Participants are able to describe the impact of violence on children (*knowledge-building*).
- Duration:** 45 minutes
- Materials:** Magazines, white paper, scissors, glue
- Description:** Provide each participant with several magazines, white paper, scissors and glue and ask them to make a collage illustrating the impact of violence against children. Hang the collages around the room and invite the participants to present their collage if they want to. Do not force participants to present. Make sure that participants have time to look at all the collages. As a group, discuss the following questions: 1) What is the impact of violence on the individual child? 2) What is the impact of violence against children on the family? 3) What is the impact of violence against children on the community? 4) What is the impact of violence against children on the nation?

### Activity 7: Examining our assumptions about VAC

- Objective:** Participants are able to describe and defend why children should be protected (*learning*).
- Duration:** 45 minutes
- Materials:** Flip chart paper and pen
- Description:** Begin this activity by explaining that all persons have assumptions and personal beliefs about the treatment of children. To challenge and examine these assumptions, explain that the participants will hold a mock debate. Divide the participants in two groups. Write this statement on flipchart paper: *Sometimes teachers need to hit their students to help them behave in class and learn.* Tell one group of participants that they will be arguing in support of this statement and the other group that they will be arguing against this statement. Give the participants 15 minutes to prepare for the debate; they should come up with arguments defending their position and try to imagine what the other side will say. Give each side three minutes to make their initial argument, 3 minutes to rebut the other sides' position, and 5 minutes to answer questions from the other side. At the end of the debate, discuss as a group: What did you think of the arguments posed by each side? Why do you think you have the opinion you do?

## Activity 8: Vulnerability

**Objective:** Participants are able to describe how vulnerability affects a child's access to protection (*learning*).

**Duration:** 30 minutes

**Materials:** 'Identities' printed on slips of paper

**Description:** Print or write the roles listed below on small pieces of paper and distribute them to each of the participants. The participants should keep their 'identities' a secret. Ask the participants to line up on one side of the room. Read out the questions listed below. Instruct the participants to take one step forward if they think that their fictional 'identity' would answer yes to that question. If a participant answers 'no', they should remain standing in the same position. As the activity progresses, some participants will move forward and others will be left behind.

Identities:

- A refugee girl child living with one family member
- A boy child living on the streets
- A girl child living on the street
- A displaced girl child living in a displaced camp
- A boy child with disabilities
- A girl child with disabilities
- A boy child living with two parents, who goes to school
- A girl child living with two parents, who goes to school
- A girl child working and not going to school
- A boy child working and not going to school

Questions for participants (to be read aloud by the facilitator)

- Are you able to eat at least one good meal every day?
- Do you participate in family decision-making processes?
- Do you take part in community social activities?
- Do you expect to complete primary education?
- Are you protected from any danger of being physically abused?
- Are you protected from any danger of being sexually abused?
- Are you bullied at school or at the work place?
- Do you have access to health care when you are sick?
- Can you read and write?
- Are you respected by your community?
- Do you have to work?

At the end of the activity, ask each person to tell the group what 'role' they had, why they think they are in the position they are in, and how they feel about it. Ask the participants if anyone looked back to see who was behind them. Which children came last in the vulnerability analysis? Why? Which children are most vulnerable? Why? How will this affect their exposure to violence and protection?

## Activities Introducing Child Protection

### Activity 9: Introduction to child protection

Objective: Participants are introduced to the concept of child protection (*knowledge-building*).

Duration: 30 minutes

Materials: String and balloons

Description: Divide participants into 3 groups. Give one group balloons to tie to their ankles with string. Tell them that they should try to prevent their balloon from attack. Instruct Group 2 to try to burst the balloons. Instruct Group 3 to protect the balloons attached to Group 1. At the end of the game, ask Group 1 and 3: How it felt to try to protect the balloons? What made it easier? What made it harder? Ask Group 2 what made it easy for you to attack the balloons? What made it difficult?' Close the activity by explaining that the balloons are like children and the carriers of the balloons are like families / care givers / communities, who are trying to protect their children from danger. The attackers represent all the dangers that children face in their communities. Protection is about safeguarding children and helping those who have been harmed.

### Activity 10: Understanding child protection

Objective: Participants identify actors and systems that should protect children (*learning*).

Duration: 45 minutes

Materials: Flip chart paper, markers

Description: Read the following vignette to the participants (this vignette should be modified to fit the protection setting): *Paul has trouble concentrating in class because he has to wake up early to care for his siblings and do chores around the farm. His teacher hits his knuckles with a ruler to punish him for not paying attention and not finishing his homework.* Ask the participants what they think would happen in real life. Who would protect the child? Draw a child in the middle of a flipchart paper and draw 5 circles around the child. Label the circles (family, community, school, national, and international, respectively). Ask the participants who/what should protect the child at each of these levels. Make sure participants think about the people who should protect children, as well as the laws and policies that should be in place, at the institutional level (i.e. school) and the governmental level.

### Activity 11: Exploring the holes in child protection

Objective: Participants begin to identify actions that could improve protection for children (*realization*).

Duration: 45 minutes

Materials: Small pieces of paper in two colors, pens

Description: Provide participants with two pieces of paper in two different colors. On one piece of paper, ask participants to identify one thing that they think really prevents children from being protected. On the other piece of paper, ask participants to write down one thing that they think would improve child protection in their community. Group the responses and hang them on the wall. Discuss the problems and solutions. Remind participants that this is one of the objectives of Child-friendly Accountability — to work together to improve child protection!

## Activities Introducing Child Participation

### Activity 12: What is child participation?

Objective: Participants are able to describe children's right to participation (*knowledge-building*).

Duration: 30 minutes

Materials: Child-friendly version of the CRC

Description: Begin this activity by asking participants to identify rights in the Child-friendly version of the CRC that mention participation or affect children's right to participation. Read Article 19 of the CRC to the participants. As a group, discuss the article, particularly focusing on what they think 'age-appropriate participation' means. Give each participant an age, from 0 to 18. Line the participants up by age. Starting at the youngest, ask participants to identify two big decisions/issues that affect a child of this age. As a group, discuss whether children of that age should be able to participate in those decisions. How would they do so? What happens in real life?

### Activity 13: Barriers to participation and consequences of preventing children from participating

Objective: Participants identify barriers to child participation and the consequences of preventing children from participating (*learning*).

Duration: 30 minutes

Materials: Flip chart paper, markers

Description: Draw a tree on a flipchart paper. As a group identify 'barriers' to child participation (things that prevent children from participating). Label the roots with these. Encourage the participants to look for the causes of these 'barriers', including structural issues and cultural, social and economic issues. Then ask the participants what are the consequences of preventing children from participating. Attach these as leaves.

### Activity 14: Opportunities for participation

Objective: Participants identify ways in which youth could constructively participate in protection decisions (*learning*).

Duration: 45 minutes

Materials: No materials required

Description: Divide participants into 3 groups. Ask each group to develop a role-play illustrating how youth could constructively participate in decisions that affect their protection. After each group has presented their role-play, as a group discuss if these scenarios are realistic. Does this happen in real life? Why or why not?

### Activity 15: Risk and mitigation strategies

Objective: Participants identify risks for youth participating in Child-friendly Accountability, as well as risk mitigation strategies (*realization*).

Duration: 45 minutes

Materials: Flip chart paper and markers

Description: As a group, identify potential risks for youth of participating in Child-friendly Accountability activities. Brainstorm potential risk mitigation strategies.

## Information Sheet: What you need to know...

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) is the most widely ratified international convention; only three countries have not ratified it. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child remains the primary legal framework for child rights. The **State is the primary duty-bearer** for ensuring children's rights. Governments must establish child protection systems, including relevant laws and policies, to ensure that children's rights are not violated and that children are able to realize their rights. They are obligated to provide support to families, schools and communities so that they are better able to protect and care for children. The CRC acknowledges that children's protection and wellbeing is an obligation of all parts of society. Most importantly, families are recognized as the best and most important provider of care for children.<sup>1</sup>

The four guiding principles of the CRC that guide the implementation of all rights are:

- *Non-discrimination (Article 2)*: Children should not be discriminated against for any reason;
- *Best interest (Article 3)*: The best interest of the child must be the primary consideration in all decisions which affect them;
- *Life, survival and development (Article 6)*: Children have the right to live and develop to their fullest potential;
- *Participation (Article 12)*: Children have the right to have their views taken into consideration, as appropriate to their age and maturity, in all decisions that affect them.

Critical to understanding the rights framework, the UN CRC recognizes the 'evolving capacities' of the child. Article 5 specifically explains that various aspects of the Convention must be realized in consideration of a child's growing level of understanding and knowledge. A child's maturation is unique, and may occur at different ages for different children.

### **Violence against Children**

Abuse, neglect, exploitation and **violence against children** are found in all corners of the globe. The magnitude of violence against children is generally underestimated. Violence is often condoned and even perpetuated by social, cultural and legal norms. Children experience violence in homes, schools, institutions, places of work, and in their communities. For many children, their vulnerability to violence is compounded by their cultural context and other socioeconomic vulnerabilities. Violence against children threatens children's immediate survival, their long-term development, their protection and their ability to reach their full potential.<sup>2</sup> There are various environments or settings where violence often occurs:<sup>3</sup>

1. Domestic/family violence against children;
2. Violence against children at schools and educational environments;
3. Violence against children while in institutional care and in the judicial process;
4. Violence against children at workplaces;
5. Violence against children in the community.

The Child-friendly Accountability methodology refers to these environments as '**settings**' and adopts a '**phased approach**' to address them.

### **Child protection**

There is growing evidence that violence against children is preventable, and an emerging consensus that it should no longer be tolerated. **Protection on from violence** is now globally recognized as a fundamental

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<sup>1</sup> Save the Children, Child Protection Initiative (May 2013) "Save the Children's Child Protection Strategy 2013-2015"

<sup>2</sup> WHO (2016) "INSPIRE: Seven strategies for ending violence against children" [Available at [https://www.unodc.org/documents/justice-and-prison-reform/who---inspire\\_-\\_seven-strategies-for-ending-violence-against-children.pdf](https://www.unodc.org/documents/justice-and-prison-reform/who---inspire_-_seven-strategies-for-ending-violence-against-children.pdf)]

<sup>3</sup> Quoted verbatim from Ulukot, Betul Dr. and Dr. Arzu Köseli (2013) "Training on Monitoring Violence against Children with Indicators: Participant's Manual" UNICEF and Protecting Children from Violence in South East Europe

child right, a right that the international community and governments around the world have pledged to safeguard. The UNCRC prohibits violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect. It also establishes and describes particular child protection mechanisms that state parties are obligated to put in place to prevent and respond to violence against children.

Article 19 of the CRC requires that state parties protect children “from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child.” Additionally, the UNCRC affords children protection from the following acts of violence:

- Illicit transfer and illegal adoption (Articles 11 and 21);
- Armed conflict (Articles 22, 38, and 39);
- Child labour, trafficking, and sexual and other forms of exploitation (Articles 32, 34, 35, 38, and 39);
- Torture and deprivation of liberty and capital punishment (Articles 37, 38 and 39);
- Corporal punishment (Article 28).

Additionally, the UN CRC describes specific positive actions that the State is obliged to put in place to prevent and response to violence against children, including:

- Right to family (Article 9, 10);
- Right vis-a-vis alternative care (Article 20 and 21);
- Right to quality standards for child care/protection institutions (Article 3);

**Child protection** is understood to include *formal and informal measures and structures that prevent and respond to violence, exploitation and abuse against children*. Child protection is based on the recognition that children are surrounded by people (e.g. parents, siblings, neighbors, community leaders, school and government officials, children themselves, teachers, peers, etc.) who have legal, moral, and traditional responsibilities to ensure that children are not subjected to violence and, if they are, that they have access to services and recourse mechanisms. A **child protection system** should be available at the local, provincial, municipal and national levels and should work to prevent, detect, report, and respond to violence against children. Close coordination between different levels is essential in a functional child protection system.

### **Child participation**

Fundamental to the UN CRC is the principle that children must be treated as rights holders. In addition to recognizing children’s inherent vulnerability and dependence, and thus their need for care and protection, the UNCRC also describes children’s right to participate in decisions that affect them. This not only requires that children are able to express their views, but that their views are given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child. Children’s right to participation is outlined in Articles 12 - 17 of the UN CRC. Like other rights, children’s right to participation must be implemented without discrimination (Article 2) and in consideration of the best interests of the child (Article 3). Special attention should be given to situations in which children’s right to be heard could negatively impact their well-being or protection. For children to be able to express their views, adults must enable and encourage children to participate, including through the development of an environment in which children feel safe and comfortable while ensuring that children have access to relevant information.

**Suggested Reading-** Additional training activities related to Violence against Children are available in Secretariat of the United Nations Secretary-General’s Study on Violence against Children “Our Right to be Protected from Violence”