

**Child-friendly Accountability (CFAcc)
Brief – Integrating CFAcc into existing Programmes**

I. Child-friendly Accountability in Brief

Background

The Child-friendly Accountability (CFAcc) project funded by the Oak Foundation is in the second year of implementation. This grant to implement the methodology within ChildFund Members programs will end in 2021. After the end of the grant, members integrating the implementation of the methodology will continue to do so as part of ongoing programs. Based on the secretariat technical support to members, this paper outlines the first step to support the integration of the CFAcc Methodology. Feedback from various sources engaged with the project will be incorporated into the final product. The operational guidelines will be finalized and shared with members at the end of the grant period.

Child-friendly Accountability Methodology

The CFAcc framework aims to support meaningful child participation and to mobilize communities to hold key stakeholders responsible for their obligations to protect children.

All CFAcc programmes, at a minimum, should meet the following criteria:

- empowerment of children
- enable meaningful and sustained participation of children
- help build children’s knowledge about child protection and their rights
- support children in challenging negative social norms
- enable children to engage with duty bearers in a safe environment
- empower children to take direct action to address protection gaps in their communities
- promote joint action and scale-up of community-based action over time

The three Pillars of CFAcc programmes are:

- **Pillar 1: Assessment** – Building the knowledge of children and youth and fostering understanding about their rights, the different forms of violence against children and its relation to existing child protection laws, mechanisms, and actors.
- **Pillar 2: Analysis** – Providing children and youth the guidance and facilitation to work with their communities to monitor and analyze their existing child protection system in a safe and collaborative way.

- **Pillar 3: Action** – Enabling children and their communities to work together to identify actions that they can take in their communities to improve child protection.

CFAcc programmes should implement activities in each of the three pillars of the CFAcc methodology (with the same group of children) and scale-up programmes over time, building confidence and trust with the participating adult community along the way.

Lessons learned have highlighted the benefit of starting first with a small group of children and youth (maximum 20 per group) in each targeted community or school. Over time, as the children engage in the CFA cycle, activities can expand to include other children and youth and connect to other CFA community-based projects.

II. Integrating CFA into Existing Programmes

Though the CFAcc methodology is unique, it can be built into existing programmes. However, attention should be given to ensure that fundamental principles are not compromised, including a focus on ‘deep’ child participation. The preparatory steps to implementing CFAcc, outlined in the Manual should always be implemented in full and should never be compromised, as they are essential to ensuring the safeguarding of engaged children.

The following steps can help Members integrate the CFAcc methodology into their programmes.

Step 1: Asking the right questions

The CFAcc methodology is a wonderful tool to engage children and youth to build their knowledge of child rights and child protection and to work with their community to find solutions to issues. It is not appropriate or useful in all contexts and situations. There are many forms of child participation: CFAcc is a specific approach to participation, learning, and action around child protection and accountability.

Before making a decision to implement CFA in a specific location or context, make sure that the programme team and implementing partners have fully read and understood all of the CFAcc material.

Organize a joint meeting to openly discuss the following issues:

- Why do we want to start a CFAcc programme? Is it for the right reasons?
- Is the CFAcc methodology right for our context?
- What are the risks in using this methodological approach? What are the benefits?
- Have we completed the required preparatory steps? If not: will we be able to undertake them before beginning the CFAcc programme?

- Can we do a CFAcc programme well? Do we have the financial and human resources capacity? Do we have the stakeholder buy-in?
- Can we sustain a CFAcc programme? Recognizing that CFAcc is not a short-term project but a long-term programme partnership with youth and communities, are we sure that we have the capacity and the interest to remain committed.

If there is a firm understanding of the CFAcc methodology and commitment to move forward in a sustainable fashion (with careful attention to protection risks), the team should move to programme development.

Step 2: Defining the goal and aligning objectives

In a joint team meeting, revisit the preparatory steps and objectives of the CFAcc methodology under each Pillar. Compare these to your existing programme.

As a group, discuss the following:

- Are the objectives of your current programme aligned with the CFAcc objectives? To which degree?
- Can you build the CFAcc objectives into one or more of your current objectives? On the other hand, will you need to modify your current results framework?
- If you alter your existing result framework to include the CFAcc objectives and methodology, will you need donor approval? If so, should the donor be involved in preliminary discussions regarding a shift in programme strategy?

Once you and your team have answered these questions, develop a new programme results framework that clearly links your on-going programmes with the CFAcc methodology. This should include indicators and targets.

Step 3: Designing the implementation strategy

Recalling that CFAcc is a process, and not a series of finite activities, it is important for your team to ensure that your implementation strategy will:

- Complete all preparatory steps with a focus on adult support and parental consent.
- Move the children and youth from a. knowledge building to b. learning and to c. action on child protection.
- Start small, with tangible outcomes that the children and youth (and their community) can build on and slowly over time scale-up (building adult buy-in and strengthening confidence over time.)
- Ensure that children and youth will have long-term support to continue to work with their communities on child protection in their communities in a safe way.

Project teams should develop an integrated implementation plan.

Step 4: Aligning financial and human resources

Though CFAcc does not require substantial financial resources, it does require dedicated staff that are committed to follow-up. It is essential that adequate human resources are dedicated to following the CFAcc methodology. This should include persons who are trained to work with children/youth using participatory methodology, as well as a team member with a background in child protection. All persons in contact with the programme need to have fully read and understood the CFAcc Field Manual and its Toolbox.

While the CFAcc does not need substantial financial input, beyond human resources, it does require sustainable engagement. CFAcc is meant to be a long-term partnership with youth and their communities. As such, discussion around engagement with the CFAcc programme should consider these long-term issues, namely organizational commitment and human resources.