A TOOLKIT FOR MONITORING AND EVALUATING CHILDREN'S PARTICIPATION

BOOKLET 4

A 10-step guide to monitoring and evaluating children's participation

Plan

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This guide was written by Gerison Lansdown and Claire O'Kane

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Cover photo: Members of Child Brigade, an organisation of street and working children in Bangladesh. (Photo: Ken Hermann)

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A member of Child Brigade, an organisation for street and working children in Bangladesh. Their motto is 'Be Together and Organised'.

PHOTO: KEN HERMANN/SAVE THE CHILDREN

INTRODUCTION

This booklet provides a 10-step guide to help you undertake a participatory monitoring and evaluation (M&E) process, with children and other key stakeholders. It supports planning for and practical implementation of **Booklet 3** *How to measure the scope, quality and outcomes of children's participation*. It offers guidance to support children, young people and other stakeholders to identify relevant objectives and indicators against which to measure progress. It also provides guidance to support systematic data collection, documentation and analysis of the monitoring and evaluation findings.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOKLET

This booklet takes you through each of the 10 steps you will need to follow to undertake participatory monitoring and evaluation of children's participation in the programme concerned. Throughout, you will find case studies from the organisations that piloted the toolkit to give you more insights into how you can approach the different stages.

There is also an appendix that gives definitions of some of the main words and phrases used in monitoring and evaluation.

AN OVERVIEW OF THE 10 STEPS

Step 1: Identify the programme and objectives to be monitored and evaluated

Step 2: Build support and buy-in

Step 3: Establish a monitoring and evaluation core group

Step 4: Build the capacity of the monitoring and evaluation core group

Step 5: Develop an M&E plan or integrate into an existing M&E plan

Step 6: Introduce monitoring and evaluation of children's participation to the stakeholders

Step 7: Collect baseline data

Step 8: Use tools to gather information, to reflect on and to analyse the scope, quality and outcomes of children's participation

Step 9: Document and report the process and findings

Step 10: Draw up an action plan on findings and feedback to key stakeholders

STEP 1 IDENTIFY THE PROGRAMME AND OBJECTIVES TO BE MONITORED AND EVALUATED

What do you want to measure? Which programme(s)* do you intend to monitor and evaluate to find out the scope, quality and outcomes of children's participation? What are the main goals and objectives of the programme? Is children's participation a goal in itself or is children's participation a means to achieve other outcomes? Every programme has different goals and objectives. You will need to assess the outcomes associated with children's participation in accordance with the programme's objectives for involving children.

Wherever possible, we encourage you to gather baseline data at the start of the programme. Baseline data serves as the basis for comparing any change. It gathers information about the situation before or at the start of a programme, against which any changes can be measured. Baseline data should be collected on the set of indicators that you have established for measuring change in the programme (see Step 7 in this booklet).

We encourage you to maximise opportunities to **build on existing M&E systems and processes within your organisation**. We would therefore encourage you to review the existing systems, processes, plans and methods for M&E. You can identify relevant indicators, sources of information and M&E tools that enable information gathering and analysis concerning the scope, quality and outcomes of children's participation.

Booklet 3 provides indicators for monitoring and evaluating the scope and quality of children's participation. But each organisation working to support children's participation needs to identify its own outcome indicators that are specific and relevant to the programme.

DEVELOPING OUTCOME INDICATORS

For each identified programme, you need to review and agree the objectives of children's participation in order to identify or develop relevant indicators for monitoring and evaluating the outcomes of children's participation.

In monitoring and evaluating the outcomes of children's participation, **Booklet 3** divides outcomes into two broad categories (see pages 27–29 of **Booklet 3**):

1. **Behaviour or attitudinal outcomes:** outcomes associated with children's participation that have influenced those directly or indirectly involved in or affected by participation initiatives – for example, children themselves, their parents or caregivers, staff of the supporting organisation, or members of the wider community.

* The word 'programme' is used throughout this booklet, but also includes 'projects' or 'initiatives'.

2. **Wider external outcomes:** outcomes which indicate that a concrete change has happened in the community, or at local or national level, as a consequence of the children's participation.

See the box below for examples of both types of outcomes.

IMPORTANT NOTES

- It is crucial that indicators are relevant to your specific programme objectives.
- It is also important to recognise that some programmes will have children's participation as a goal, as a desired outcome in its own right. In other programmes children's participation may be perceived as a means to achieve other outcomes such as increased protection (see page 7 of **Booklet 3**).
- When measuring wider external outcomes, it will be crucial to identify the relevant situation at the start of a programme. This will provide you with baseline data against which changes can be monitored or evaluated.

EXAMPLES OF BEHAVIOURAL AND EXTERNAL OUTCOME INDICATORS

The following examples are from Save the Children Nepal and local partners involved in creating protection environment for children (CPEC) and child-sensitive social protection (CSSP) projects.

Behavioural or attitudinal outcome indicators

- Children are empowered, confident and capacitated
- NGO recognised that process is important to achieve quality outcome from preparation to follow-up
- Changes in NGO culture towards great respect in programming and capacity-building of staff working with children's groups

Wider external outcome indicators

- Increased school enrolment rate (CSSP)
- Increased resources to children's programme from Village Development Committee and organisations (CSSP)
- Increased involvement to stop child marriage (CPEC)
- Better management of complaints box (CPEC) and kit box (CPEC)

LEARNING FROM EFFORTS BY A GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENT IN IRELAND TO INVOLVE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN A HEALTH BEHAVIOUR STUDY

The Irish government's Department of Children and Youth Affairs (DCYA) has lead responsibility for ensuring that children and young people under the age of 18 have a voice in the design, delivery and monitoring of national and local services and policies that affect their lives. The DCYA has a dedicated Citizen Participation Unit, which has developed effective structures for children's participation in decision-making, conducts consultations and dialogues with children and young people, and has developed evidence-based policy in keeping with national and international best practice.

Ireland is part of a Health Behaviour of School Children survey, which is being conducted in collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO). The aim of the study is to gain new insight into and increase our understanding of young people's health and well-being, health behaviours, and their social context.

During 2011, the survey team approached the DCYA's Citizen Participation Unit for advice on how to involve children and young people more comprehensively in the study cycle. The Citizen Participation Unit proposed that the most meaningful form of participation would be to involve children and young people from the earliest stages of its development. They proposed involving them in identifying the study domains and questions, as well as at all other stages of the study process. Dedicated human and financial resources are being allocated to this initiative by both organisations.

A member of Save the Children's global children's panel.

STEP 2 BUILD SUPPORT AND BUY-IN

Whether you are working for a government department or a non-governmental or community-based organisation, you will need to gain increased interest, permission, support and commitment (buy-in) from key stakeholders, internally and externally, including children, community leaders, local or national authorities, and civil society organisations. Institutional buy-in (support from all levels of the organisation) is necessary to ensure that you can mobilise adequate human, financial and material resources to undertake systematic, participatory M&E processes, and accountable follow-up.

INTERNAL SUPPORT AND BUY-IN

Each government agency or NGO has its own history, vision, aims, organisational structure, and set of activities involving different stakeholders in diverse contexts. Gaining institutional buy-in will help you to make effective and sustainable use of the toolkit, and to identify how you can best build on existing organisational structures, mechanisms and processes to facilitate systematic M&E processes that involve children and other stakeholders in meaningful ways.

At the start of the process it is very important to take the time to read and understand the whole Toolkit (**Booklets 1–6**), to see how it can help you in your work, with the type of information you need to collect, and for you to become familiar with the tools that will help you assess the scope, quality and outcomes of children's participation.

Wherever relevant, you may need to translate and share **Booklet 3** (How to measure the scope, quality and outcomes of participation), **Booklet 4** (the 10-step guide to participatory M&E) and **Booklet 5** (the tools) into local languages and/or in other accessible formats (eg, Braille), to make it more accessible to children, young people and staff members, including people with sensory impairments.

EXTERNAL SUPPORT AND BUY-IN

When preparing to monitor and evaluate the scope, quality and outcomes of children's participation, it is also important to discuss and understand the socio-political and cultural context in which you are working. The context influences opportunities for participation, and thus also influences factors that should be taken into account when measuring success. Understanding the context may help you identify which stakeholders need to be informed about the programme and involved in the monitoring and evaluation processes. It will be useful to involve children in discussions to help identify and list relevant stakeholders, including those who influence decisions that affect children's lives.

Understanding the context will also help you to identify threats, challenges or risks that may be faced during participatory M&E exercises, so that you may develop strategies to overcome them. For example, sensitisation may be required to overcome adult resistance to children's participation, including their participation in M&E processes. You are encouraged to organise activities to orient and sensitise key stakeholders to gain increased interest, permission, support and commitment to the participatory M&E process.

IDENTIFY AND MOBILISE NECESSARY RESOURCES

You will need to secure the necessary financial, material and human resources to support the participatory M&E process, including the core group (see Step 3). Costs and materials need to be considered in relation to:

- orientation of staff and wider stakeholders on M&E of children's participation
- capacity building of children and adults who are members of the M&E core group
- materials for ongoing M&E activities (eg, notebooks, flip charts, Post-it notes, pens, photography, filing cabinet and access to a computer)
- transport and refreshment costs that may be incurred when bringing concerned stakeholders together for the M&E activities, discussions or interviews
- regular M&E core group meetings
- M&E analysis and action planning workshops with key stakeholders
- reporting and documentation of key findings (including costs of developing a child-friendly summary report)
- dissemination of key findings.

You are also encouraged to consider the needs of children with disabilities, ensuring that budget lines are available to include them in all M&E activities – for example, hiring a venue with good accessibility; developing Braille translation for children with visual impairments; or securing appropriate assistance for young people with disabilities who might have limited mobility or speech impairments.

A child researcher carrying out an interview on how rights are respected in school in La Dalia, Nicaragua.

ENSURING AN INCLUSIVE APPROACH

You are encouraged to consider the backgrounds and age range of the children and young people who may be involved, and to involve them in planning from the earliest phases so that M&E processes and methods can be adapted to suit their needs. An orientation of a wider group of children on the proposed M&E process will help children and young people make an informed decision about which girls and boys to nominate and elect to be part of an M&E core group.

THE IMPORTANCE OF AN INCLUSIVE APPROACH

You should make all efforts possible to include girls and boys of different backgrounds and ages in your participatory M&E processes, especially those from the most marginalised sections of society, and children with disabilities.

All children and young people should be approached with a focus on their capacities and strengths. Many of the existing tools (see **Booklet 5**) may be accessible to children with some type of impairment, and wherever necessary the processes and tools can be further adapted to the local context and to children's individual and collective needs. You could form or strengthen partnerships with organisations supporting people with disabilities to increase guidance and access for the meaningful involvement of children with disabilities.

Children with disabilities are not a homogenous group. Children with disabilities include those who have one or more long-term impairments which – together with physical, social, economic or cultural barriers – may limit their ability to participate fully in society on an equal basis with others. You should consider involving the following children, and what they might need to take part: children with physical impairments (for example, wheelchair users); children with psychosocial conditions such as depression; children with intellectual impairments or learning disabilities; children with sensory impairments (including those who are deaf, blind, or deaf and blind). You also need to consider and recognise the multiple dimensions of exclusion that affect children's lives (eg, a girl who is a street child and also has a disability).

When working with children with multiple disabilities or with significant learning disabilities, each child may have unique ways in which they communicate. During the preparation phase you may need to do more to understand the ways in which different children and young people are able to communicate, and to adapt the tools and methods so that they are suitable for their specific needs and capacities (see pages 16–19 for more guidance). When working with children with intellectual disabilities or multiple impairments, it may be helpful to consult and seek advice from children's parents, caregivers, siblings and/or professionals and people with disabilities with expertise in communicating with individual children.

STEP 3 ESTABLISH A MONITORING AND EVALUATION CORE GROUP

ESTABLISHING CORE M&E GROUPS INVOLVING CHILDREN AND ADULTS

To guide and support participatory monitoring and evaluation of children's participation, you are encouraged to establish an **M&E core group**. The size and composition of the group will depend on the size and geographic spread of the programme or project that you are seeking to monitor and evaluate.

It is recommended that the group includes different stakeholders, including a manager, at least two staff members, and children and young people's representatives, who should be selected or elected by children and young people themselves (see box below on how one NGO approached this part of the process in India).

Through regular meetings with children, you can share information about the M&E process. Children with disabilities can also be encouraged and supported to be actively involved in the core group. It is essential that you obtain informed consent from the children involved, as well as the necessary support from their parents or caregivers.

M&E CORE GROUP AND FIELD TEAMS UNDERTAKING M&E IN FIVE LOCAL AREAS IN INDIA

The Concerned for Working Children programme aims to facilitate children to assert their citizenship and to take an active part in local governance. It also aims to sensitise local government officials to be more receptive to children's participation and to be more accountable to them.

The organisation initially involved staff from its Research and Communications Department and Field Coordinators to start planning for the M&E process. They decided to integrate the M&E process with existing work on children's participation and recognised the crucial need for involvement of child and adult representatives from their constituencies. Thus, in five local areas (panchayats) "field teams" were formed consisting of local activists, representatives from children's organisations, and adult stakeholders.

The field teams were involved in initial preparation and capacity-building workshops to review the programme objectives and to begin to develop indicators for measuring the scope, quality and outcomes of children's participation. During this workshop the tables and tools were discussed in detail in the local language.

INVOLVING AN INDEPENDENT EVALUATOR

You should consider whether the M&E process will be conducted as a self-evaluation involving internal stakeholders (staff, volunteers, children and young people) or whether it would be beneficial to involve an independent evaluator or a peer evaluator in your M&E core group (see box below for another example from India). Both approaches have benefits:

- Self-evaluation increases opportunities for organisational reflection, learning and participatory programming. However, extra efforts must be made to collect unbiased data that reflect the views of different stakeholders.
- If the resources are available, you may want to consider involving an independent evaluator or peer evaluator from another organisation to be part of the M&E core group. An independent evaluator may help ensure rigour, and a level of independence. They can also support the core group in facilitating participatory M&E processes.

INDEPENDENT EVALUATOR SUPPORTS PARTICIPATORY EVALUATION IN INDIA

In India, the Neighbourhood Community Network decided to appoint an independent evaluator who was experienced in participatory research and development, and thus able to support children and stakeholder participation in the M&E process.

Monitoring and evaluation of children's participation in the "Neighbourhood Parliament of Children" (NPC) was undertaken in three districts in Tamil Nadu. Meetings were organised in six local areas (panchayats) involving child ministers of the NPCs, ward members, active leaders of community-based organisations, heads of child protection committees, and parent–teacher association (PTA) members to help identify and form M&E core groups in the local area.

During these initial meetings, the meaning of children's participation and the importance of measuring it was explained. Furthermore, a handbook was produced in the Tamil local language, explaining the various steps of the whole M&E process. This included a detailed explanation of each tool and how to use it. Two-day capacity-building workshops for children were also organised.

CLARIFYING ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF M&E CORE GROUP MEMBERS

The M&E core group should discuss and develop an **overall process** for its activities, identifying the **time frame**, and how and where the toolkit will be applied. The opportunities and constraints to conducting M&E may be influenced by the socio-political context, the human and financial resources available, and the time commitments of key stakeholders, especially children.

Taking into consideration the availability and interest of children who are to be involved in the process, the M&E core group can explore and agree the roles and responsibilities of different members (see table) and, if relevant, the roles and responsibilities of advisory group members (see below).

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF M&E CORE GROUP MEMBERS – AN EXAMPLE

Who is responsible	What for	When	Comments
Programme manager (government agency or NGO)	Overall management of the M&E process; coordination with partners; ensuring inclusive meaningful participation of children; ensure budget; use M&E data to improve planning, etc.	Throughout the M&E process	Need budget for: capacity building of M&E core group; information gathering meetings and workshops with different stakeholders; action planning/feedback workshops; developing and disseminating the final report, including child-friendly version Budget for monthly M&E core group meetings; and for stakeholder meetings at key intervals Ensure informed consent and parental consent; and planning activities at times that suit children. Choice to 'opt out' at any time
M&E officer	Supporting children and staff to review objectives, to identify and adapt relevant indicators from tables; to support capacity building of M&E core group; active role in data gathering, analysis, documentation and feedback, including note-taking during M&E events	Monthly M&E core group meetings Workshops with children and other stakeholders	
Field staff	Support children's meaningful participation in M&E, informed consent and planning at times that suit them; awareness raising and support from parents, caregivers and others; support logistical planning for stakeholder meetings, including feedback to stakeholders		
Children's representatives	Active role in pilot M&E process. Participate in monthly core group M&E meetings to develop M&E plan, to gather data from children and adults, to be involved in analysis, documentation and feedback		
Parent representatives	Advisory role in gaining support from parents, caregivers and elders in community	Quarterly M&E core group meetings	
Traditional or religious elders	Advisory role in M&E planning and coordination with relevant government stakeholders		

ENSURING AN ETHICAL APPROACH TO ADDRESSING POWER DIFFERENCES

When involving girls and boys in participatory M&E, it is important to be aware of the power differences between adults and children, and between different children. M&E core group members should be supported to communicate effectively, and to share information and decision-making in ways that support inclusive and ethical participation of children of different ages and backgrounds. You should apply the nine basic requirements for children's participation as detailed in **Booklet 3** in conjunction with organisational child protection policies or a code of conduct where available. You can refer back to the checklist for ethical participation in monitoring and evaluation in **Booklet 1** (pages 16–17).

FORMING AN ADVISORY GROUP TO SUPPORT THE PARTICIPATORY M&E PROCESS

To ensure local support for the M&E process, you may also want to consider involving other relevant stakeholders in an **advisory group**. For example, teachers, parent representatives, community leaders, local officials, religious leaders, and other children and young people could be invited to join an advisory group that guides and supports the M&E core group. To maintain the focus on inclusive participation, you could invite representatives of disabled people's organisations or other relevant groups to be members of the advisory group.

PHOTO: ZEUDI LIEW/SAVE THE CHILDREN

Children from a refugee camp in Iraq in a workshop about children's rights.

STEP 4 BUILD THE CAPACITY OF YOUR MONITORING AND EVALUATION CORE GROUP

CAPACITY BUILDING OF M&E CORE GROUP MEMBERS

You are encouraged to support capacity building of the M&E core group members (adults and children) to increase their confidence, skills and knowledge to undertake effective M&E of children's participation. Depending on the existing capacities of group members, it can be helpful to organise and provide training on basic M&E concepts; the importance of children's participation; facilitation, communication and interviewing skills; documentation and analysis skills; and relevant child protection policies.

Much information can be gathered simply by asking, listening, looking and reading. Members of the M&E core group need to be willing to ask a lot of open questions – what, where, why, when, who, how – and to keep their eyes and ears wide open. Core group members will also need to be able to create a safe and enabling environment where girls, boys, parents, caregivers and other stakeholders are able to freely express their views. (See the box below for examples of children's participation in M&E.)

M&E core group members need to listen to girls, boys, women and men from different backgrounds to understand different people's perspectives about what has or has not changed as a result of children's participation. They also need to consider whether all children (or adults) have benefited, asking which children or adults have benefited and why?

Children, young people and adults can make effective use of different M&E methods and tools (see **Booklet 5**) including:

- analysis of existing reports
- interviews
- observations
- focus group discussions
- use of participatory tools (mapping, drawings, tables) and creative expression (drama, songs, poetry, stories)
- questionnaires or surveys.

As described in **Booklet 2**, when M&E core group members are gathering information, they should explore unintended outcomes as well as intended outcomes. You should encourage people to share any negative outcomes, so that these risks can be mitigated in future. Thus, it is especially important to create a space where girls, boys and other stakeholders feel safe to share critical feedback and make suggestions without fear of negative repercussions.

STEERING COMMITTEE INVOLVING CHILDREN AND ADULTS, PLAN TOGO

The NGO Plan Togo established a steering committee comprising eight members, including two children, a representative from an NGO partner, and five staff members, to guide its M&E of children's participation.

A four-day orientation meeting on the M&E framework and tools was organised for the steering committee members (children and adults), facilitated by Plan's M&E specialist. The objectives of this meeting were: to get to know each other; to familiarise themselves with the project under evaluation (addressing violence against children); to orient team members on the toolkit; and to further develop and validate the M&E framework for the project with all team members.

The orientation of the steering committee members on the M&E framework (measuring scope, quality and outcomes of participation) and the range of child-friendly tools enabled them to better understand the project and assessment tools, and to plan for implementation.

CAPACITY BUILDING WITH CHILDREN AND NGO STAFF, NEPAL

In Nepal, Save the Children initially organised a two-day training workshop on the toolkit with 12 children's representatives (seven girls, five boys) and five local NGO staff from two partner organisations, in project areas where the M&E of children's participation was to be carried out.

Children and adults from each Village Development Council (VDC) then worked together to develop their action plan for the M&E process. A project advisory committee was also formed in each of the NGOs comprising NGO staff and children's representatives (six children from Dalit and other ethnic groups and two staff in each NGO).

BUILDING THE CAPACITY OF CHILDREN THROUGH DISASTER RISK REDUCTION (DRR) CLUBS, WORLD VISION GHANA

In Ghana, a four-day workshop was designed and organised by a consultant in collaboration with World Vision staff to train selected members of two DRR clubs and their facilitators on the tools and M&E process.

In total, 19 children (nine girls and ten boys) took part in the M&E capacity-building workshop, together with two adult patrons of the clubs and four World Vision staff. The workshop enabled the children and staff to become familiar with the toolkit and the specific tools to help them monitor the scope, quality and outcomes of their participation in the DRR clubs' activities.

Good facilitation and communication skills are essential for participatory M&E processes, especially where they involve children. Children themselves can make effective monitors and evaluators, if they are provided with opportunities to improve their skills in core methods such as interviews and group discussions.

BUILDING THE CAPACITY OF CHILDREN AS EVALUATORS, TAJIKISTAN[1]

An evaluation of a female-headed household project in Tajikistan was carried out by children as the main evaluators. Children were trained in the necessary tools and techniques, including interviewing, by local field workers.

However, when the child evaluators began interviewing, it was observed that they were unsympathetic towards the children they were interviewing and their manner was somewhat aggressive. The field workers had expected that the children would be empathetic towards young people in the same circumstances as themselves. In reality, they misused the techniques, dominated discussions and rushed through the sessions.

To overcome the problem, the field workers used role-plays to discuss the issue of empathy. This proved to be a turning point, and subsequent interviews were done with far greater sensitivity. The children grew in stature as interviewers and felt increasingly confident in their role.

PHOTO: SAYAKA KITAMURA/SAVE THE CHILDREN

Young people in a secondary school drama club in North Eastern Province, Kenya perform a play for their local community on how to prepare for drought.

MAKING SPECIAL EFFORTS TO INVOLVE AND BUILD CAPACITY OF MARGINALISED CHILDREN, CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES AND YOUNGER CHILDREN

You should consider all opportunities to build the facilitation skills of children, young people, or adults involved to ensure that the M&E process is inclusive. Special efforts must be made to reach and effectively communicate with children from the most marginalised backgrounds, including children with disabilities and younger children.

INVOLVING MARGINALISED CHILDREN IN THE M&E PROCESS, NIGERIA

The **African Movement of Working Children and Youth Nigeria** piloted this toolkit in three states of Nigeria with children and young people (male and female) aged between nine and 24. Most of those involved were from poor backgrounds, and included some children with disabilities. The working children and young people involved in the project were barbers, fishermen, carpenters, motor mechanics, petty traders, farmers, seamstresses and students.

Effective communication skills for members of M&E core groups mean that they are able to:[2]

- ✓ create a friendly, comfortable and inclusive atmosphere
- ✓ ensure that everyone is informed about the purpose of the discussions and that their participation is voluntary
- ✓ speak slowly and clearly, avoiding the use of jargon
- ✓ use open-ended questions and prompts to elaborate on simple answers
- ✓ explore whether all members of a group agree with an expressed statement
- ✓ encourage reflection
- ✓ be a good listener
- ✓ be respectful, trustworthy, non-judgemental, and playful
- ✓ use participatory and interactive methods
- ✓ keep an eye on participants needing translation to ensure that they have genuine opportunities to participate
- ✓ ask participants to identify key points that emerged during the discussion and/or summarise the main points that have been highlighted
- ✓ provide feedback to the participants about how the information will be used, and next steps in the process, including opportunities for children's involvement.

Respectful and effective communication, as well as thoughtful preparations, are fundamental. As part of preparations for the M&E process, the core group should tailor the approach and tools to support the meaningful participation of children of different ages and backgrounds.

There are some general practices that will contribute towards creating an environment in which children with disabilities feel accepted, included and confident:[3]

A welcoming introduction

- Check whether the environment allows everyone to participate equally – check for ramps, wide enough doorways, no intrusive or dangerous hazards, effective lighting, accessible toilets, and the space to allow children with different types of impairment to move freely.
- Always ask the child concerned for advice on how best to meet her or his needs, such as how to lift or move her or him; consider the child as the expert on her or his disability.
- Always ask if and how a child wants or needs to be assisted. Do not insist or be offended if your offer is not accepted. Always address the child and not the child's assistant or sign language interpreter.
- Ensure that the children establish ground rules which address all the issues that might lead to exclusion or withdrawal.
- Create time to help the children get to know each other. If the group comprises children with and without disabilities, engage in activities and games that help them learn about each other and about disability. Children may come with many preconceptions and misunderstandings that need to be explored.
- Introduce consistent, predictable structures and routines so children know what to expect.

Equal opportunities for every child

- Recognise that every child has a contribution to make to the group or activity – but that they will make their contributions in different ways. Encourage the children to understand and value each other's differences.
- Encourage children with disabilities to contribute equally and to share the same obligations – for example, volunteering to be involved in specific activities, asking for feedback from the group, speaking to the media, meetings with policy-makers.
- Allow children with disabilities to take the same risks as other children in order to help them gain confidence. Over-protection denies them the chance to explore, discover what is possible, and learn how to keep themselves safe.
- Do not help children with disabilities unless they need it. Too much support denies them the chance to become independent and can feel patronising.
- Be open and flexible to change. Depending on the children involved, some participatory activities may need to be altered or changed.
- Introduce activities that allow children to learn about and understand the experience of disability.

Building on children's strengths

- Focus on reinforcing each child's strengths and abilities rather than the things they cannot do – for example, a wheelchair user might have strong arms and hands, a deaf child might be great at drawing.
- Use peers and encourage teamwork and child-to-child activities that can contribute towards overcoming difficulties and exclusion.
- Encourage children to pair up to support each other – a wheelchair user can help read flip charts to a blind child, a deaf child can facilitate the wheelchair user to engage in activities involving movement, a non-disabled child can help explain ideas or concepts to a child with learning difficulties.
- Encourage an inclusive environment by praising children who say, "I don't understand" or children who ask for help. Thank them for asking and then offer help or an explanation.

Accommodating difference

- Give children plenty of time to understand what is being talked about and to formulate their responses.
- Respond to the individual needs of a child and listen to them.
- Be flexible and use the right level of language for different children.
- Recognise that children with different impairments will need to be able to access information in different ways. You can make documents more accessible by ensuring that they are clearly written, as concise as possible and as legible as possible by using slightly larger typeface.
- Use pictures and images to help communicate ideas and to help children share their views.
- Allow children themselves to decide where they sit and take part in activities – for example, a child with poor vision may need to sit near the front of a room if s/he needs to read flip charts or see PowerPoint presentations; a child that uses a wheelchair may find it difficult to work in groups of children who are sitting on the floor; and a child who is deaf may need to be away from windows or external noises that distract hearing.
- Use smaller groups that can allow for different patterns of language exchange.
- Model good communication so that children learn from what they see and hear.

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION AND INVOLVEMENT OF CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES[4]

The 'Ask Us' project (led by The Children's Society in the UK) used a multi-media approach to involve disabled children and young people in influencing policy development. More than 200 children and young people with disabilities across England, aged 4–24, were consulted about their experiences of consultation, participation and services through multi-media techniques. Young people were also given opportunities to undertake their own consultations with other children. For example, some young people helped to organise an Inclusion Festival over two days. They invited all the children from the local respite unit as well as children from local special schools. The festival offered a wide choice of media and activities, such as art, music, dancing, song-writing, camping, and a graffiti wall. Two young researchers were 'roving reporters', asking other young people at the festival for their views about inclusion.

'Two Way Street' (led by Triangle and the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC)) involved children with disabilities to produce a training video for practitioners to build confidence and skills in communicating with children with disabilities, including children who do not use speech or language. The video shows children and young people (aged 3–19) communicating with each other and with adults in different ways, such as through behaviour, sign, symbols, body language, eye pointing, facial expression, gesture, play, use of art, objects of reference, speech, vocalisation, and physical movement.

Children and young people with disabilities from both of these projects felt that, too often, the focus is on young people's impairments and not on the real barrier: adults who do not listen and do not try to communicate 'on all channels'. All children can be included and enabled to express their wishes and feelings. However, this needs sensitivity and openness to different ways of communicating, and also requires time and a willingness to try a range of approaches.

You will need to give creative thought to how best to adapt the different elements of this toolkit to meaningfully involve children from different backgrounds, and younger children (those under the age of seven), in your participatory M&E processes.

Practical tips for working with younger children:

- ✓ Engage with younger children respectfully with a focus on their capacities and strengths.
- ✓ Ensure that consultations are organised in child-friendly venues that are safe and accessible to younger children.
- ✓ Develop and use child-friendly summary information about the participation initiative.
- ✓ Build trust and get to know children to enable better communication.
- ✓ Observe how girls and boys under seven years are expressing themselves, playing, and/or participating in decision-making processes.

- ✓ Be creative, and encourage the use of different methods to support children to communicate their views. You may want to use drawings, puppets, stories, photos or games to seek children's views and experiences regarding the scope, quality or outcomes of participation. Use 'natural conversations' and open questions to seek and understand younger children's perspectives. For example, ask children about what they have drawn, and about what it means to them.
- ✓ Use plenty of games and energisers (see appendix of **Booklet 5**).
- ✓ Continuously monitor each child's willingness to be involved. Everyone should have the right to contribute as much or as little as they choose, and to opt in or out at any stage.
- ✓ With informed consent from the child, use digital cameras and audio recorders to record children's views and experiences.

INVOLVING CHILDREN UNDER FOUR YEARS OF AGE IN A PLAY SPACE REVIEW, UK[5]

When care is taken to develop and use creative participatory tools and respectful processes, children as young as three or four can be meaningfully involved in participatory review and planning processes.

In the UK, a pilot study was undertaken over a six-month period to involve children under five in the decision-making processes concerned with changes to an outdoor play space. In the first stage it used the 'Mosaic approach', with 28 children (3- and 4-year-olds) and adults (practitioners and parents). This approach combines the traditional research tools of observation and interviewing with participatory methods, including the use of cameras, map-making and child-led tours.

In the second stage, children and adults were creatively involved in discussions of the key findings. Children's comments and photographs from stage one were made into a book, so that children could talk about their photographs and answer questions about future changes to the space. A large plan was made to summarise the visual and verbal material produced by the different research tools.

In stage three, decisions were made about changes to the play area based on children's views and ideas. For example, the fence was made safer while also ensuring that there were gaps for children to continue people- and dog-watching, which had been described as activities they enjoyed.

The pilot project demonstrated that young children's views and experiences about their outdoor environment can play a tangible part in decisions to improve those spaces, with 3- and 4-year-olds of different abilities proving themselves to be competent documenters of their play space.

STEP 5 DEVELOP A MONITORING AND EVALUATION PLAN OR INTEGRATE INTO AN EXISTING M&E PLAN

Your M&E core group will need to undertake detailed planning for implementation of the M&E process. The process and plans will differ, depending on the nature of the programme being monitored and evaluated, the stakeholders, the socio-political context, the time that children and adults have to be involved in activities, budget, and other factors.

We encourage you to develop or to adapt an **M&E plan and budget**. The M&E plan will include the objectives and indicators for your programme and will help you to identify the methodology and sources of data that can be used to regularly gather data on relevant indicators.

For Step 5, we set out how to:

- develop or update an M&E plan
- identify relevant sources of existing secondary data and tools for primary data collection
- ensure critical reflection and triangulation of data from different sources
- consider the timing of M&E and integrating M&E into ongoing programme meetings.

DEVELOPING OR UPDATING AN M&E PLAN

If your organisation already has an M&E plan for the programme you are evaluating, you will need to review the existing indicators for children's participation to see how you can effectively integrate more indicators and a more systematic and inclusive process for monitoring and evaluating the scope, quality *and* outcomes of children's participation.

If your organisation does not have an M&E plan, then this process provides an opportunity for you to develop one.

M&E PLAN (WITH ILLUSTRATED EXAMPLES[6])

You will first need to summarise key information about the programme:

- name
- objectives
- duration

Indicators	Any existing reports we can look at?	What methods will we use to gather data?	How often will we collect this data?	Who will we collect this data from?	Who will collect the data?	What materials are needed?
Indicators for the scope of children's participation (see tables in **Booklet 3**, pages 14–15)						
Set of indicators on scope of children's participation	Children's meeting reports; proposal; children's drawings and poems	Interviews, focus group discussions, visual programme cycle analysis; H assessment; circle analysis; secondary data analysis	Baseline at start; and every six months	Girls and boys age 6–18 years (from diverse backgrounds) from ten communities; NGO staff	M&E core group	Funds to cover refreshments during child group meetings; and transport for regular M&E core group meetings
Indicators for quality of children's participation (see tables in **Booklet 3**, pages 21–24)						
See set of indicators on quality of children's participation – the 'basic requirements'	Children's meeting reports; H assessment; M&E reports	Interviews, focus group discussions, observations, pots and beans activity with girls and boys aged 5–7, 8–12, and 13–18; secondary data analysis	Baseline at start; and every six months	Girls and boys age 6–18 (including working children and school-going); parents	M&E core group	Transport and refreshments for children's meetings

continued overleaf

M&E PLAN *continued*

Indicators	**Any existing reports we can look at?**	**What methods will we use to gather data?**	**How often will we collect this data?**	**Who will we collect this data from?**	**Who will collect the data?**	**What materials are needed?**
Indicators for outcomes of children's participation (see examples of outcome indicators, **Booklet 3**, pages 31–32):						
Eg, children have enhanced self-confidence	Body map before/ after; stories of most significant change; M&E reports	Self-confidence scoring; body mapping (before and after); stories of most significant change; interviews; observation	Baseline scoring at start of programme; at 12 months and 18 months; stories every three months	Girls and boys age 6–18 (from diverse backgrounds, including children with disabilities); parents	M&E core group	Refreshments for children's meetings; and focus group discussions with parents/caregivers
Eg, decreased incidence of parents beating their children	Body map before/ after; stories of most significant change; M&E reports	Interviews; focus group discussions; observation; body mapping (before and after); stories of most significant change; children in context analysis	Baseline knowledge, attitudes and practices (KAP) survey at start of programme; stories of most significant change every three months; children in context analysis after 12 months	At least 100 parents/caregivers from across ten communities; children	M&E core group	Budget for baseline survey, and stakeholder meetings/workshops (transport, refreshments)
Eg, law is amended to make corporal punishment illegal	Children's forum recommendations and advocacy papers; secondary data analysis	Interviews; secondary data analysis; children in context analysis	Baseline and every 12 months	Government officials; teachers	M&E core group and NGO manager	Budget for transport and interviews

IDENTIFYING RELEVANT SOURCES OF EXISTING SECONDARY DATA AND TOOLS FOR PRIMARY DATA COLLECTION

It is crucial to identify existing reports that may already contain quantitative or qualitative data and information that are relevant to monitoring and evaluating the programme concerned, as well as the nature of children's participation processes.

Start by listing all relevant sources of information (internal and external) that may provide data to inform your findings. For example:

- baseline or situational analysis reports relating to the situation at the start of the programme. These might include data that are relevant to the thematic area the programme is focused on (eg, child protection, child labour, education, health, HIV, government budgets and/or children's participation rights)
- minutes of regular meetings, including: children's group meetings or network meetings; training workshop reports on children's participation with adults or children and evaluations from the training
- consultation findings; reports of research carried out with and by children
- policies and any references to children's consultation findings
- progress reports; field visit reports; monitoring and evaluation reports; case studies
- media reports and newspaper cuttings
- government policies and laws
- government budget allocations and expenditure at national, sub-national and local levels
- government strategy papers and plans on relevant thematic issues (for example, education, health, early marriage, child labour and HIV)
- data from relevant ministries and departments (for example, school enrolment, school dropout; data on marriage registration and age of marriage)
- periodic government and supplementary reports on child rights to the UN Child Rights Committee; Universal Periodic Reviews, or other human rights reports.

CORE M&E TOOLS FOR PRIMARY DATA COLLECTION

(see **Booklet 5**, pages 1–8)

- ✓ Interviews
- ✓ Questionnaires or surveys (including knowledge, attitudes and practices (KAP) surveys)
- ✓ Focus group discussions
- ✓ Observation
- ✓ Participatory data collection and analysis tools
- ✓ Stories of most significant change, case stories or oral testimonies

THE IMPORTANCE OF CRITICAL REFLECTION AND TRIANGULATION OF DATA FROM DIFFERENT SOURCES

As described earlier, M&E groups need to be as systematic as they can in data collection, and to be open-minded so that they are ready to listen to and record unexpected as well as expected outcomes. At every stage of the M&E process, it is important to review and identify any other relevant reports or data that may be used to cross-check (triangulate) your findings with other data. Triangulate means that you compare data from three different sources – when the results reveal similar findings, it increases the validity of the data.

You should also apply rigour (consistency and honesty) when collecting valid evidence. You need to gather clear evidence for the assertion being made, and ensure that evidence is sufficiently detailed. You can better increase rigour through:[7]

- ✓ gathering baseline data and/or using control groups so that you can compare changes before and after interventions
- ✓ using communication and participation methods that develop relationships based on mutual trust and open communication with different groups of stakeholders, enabling them to share their own perspectives, and also to explore any differences in perspectives
- ✓ using multiple methodologies, multiple sources of data, and multiple methods of data collection (triangulation)
- ✓ critically assessing the intended and unintended outcomes
- ✓ critically assessing whether outcomes are distributed evenly – which children benefit, and which children do not? Why?
- ✓ critically assessing the quality and the usefulness of the evidence
- ✓ taking a systematic approach to data analysis and reporting processes.

CONSIDERING THE TIMING OF M&E AND INTEGRATING M&E INTO ONGOING PROGRAMME ACTIVITIES

Monitoring should be carried out regularly. The M&E core group can identify what data may be gathered on a monthly, quarterly, six-monthly or yearly basis. In terms of evaluation, it is recognised that some of the programme objectives – especially those relating to policy change or changes in institutional space for children's participation, for example – may not be achievable in a two- or three-year period. However, it remains useful to monitor and evaluate any initial indications of change.

OPTIONS FOR ORGANISING M&E ACTIVITIES

Option A: Build M&E activities into ongoing programme processes, such as children's meetings and other stakeholder discussions over a period of time. For example, an M&E core group may be formed and receive training. Regular monitoring can be built into ongoing programme processes by incorporating regular participatory M&E activities (60–90 minutes) into regular monthly children's meetings, staff meetings, or into periodic meetings and interviews with parents, community members or local officials, etc. Analysis findings from the M&E core group could also be shared and further discussed with children and stakeholders in regular programme meetings, in addition to bringing key stakeholders together to share their perspectives and negotiate the findings.

Option B: Periodic workshops and/or focus group discussions and interviews involving key stakeholders to gather the M&E data. An M&E core group may be formed and its capacity could be strengthened to organise and facilitate periodic monitoring and evaluation workshops or focus group discussions for key stakeholders. The M&E workshops would enable different groups of stakeholders to share their views and perspectives using a sequence of core M&E tools to explore different aspects of the participation process and outcomes. Such workshops may be organised periodically for monitoring or evaluation purposes (eg, every three, six or 12 months).

Option C: A creative mixture of options A and B. Your organisation may have different creative ideas on how to implement the M&E process in ways that best suit the particular context.

When developing an implementation **workplan for the M&E process**, you are encouraged to consider each of the steps outlined in this booklet and to plan according to your own available resources and time availability. Staff who are also members of the M&E core group should ensure that their roles and responsibilities in M&E are integrated into their individual workplans to increase the necessary support from their managers.

You should carefully consider the times and places that are most convenient for girls, boys and adult stakeholders to be part of monitoring or evaluation activities. If the programme involves school-going children, you may want to consider organising more evaluation activities during the school holidays or at weekends, when children may have more free time. If the programme involves working children, find out the times they are most likely to be able to participate.

In terms of a meeting place, if there is enough space to conduct the evaluation activities in the place where children have their regular meetings, this may be most convenient. However, if the space is not sufficient, then discuss with girls and boys to identify other suitable locations that are accessible and safe for them to meet to share their views and experiences. Ensure that the proposed venues are accessible to children and young people with disabilities.

STEP 6 INTRODUCE MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF CHILDREN'S PARTICIPATION TO THE STAKEHOLDERS

It is important to introduce the purpose of the monitoring and evaluation process to key stakeholders and to gain the necessary permissions to undertake participatory M&E processes.

It may also be necessary to undertake additional sensitisation to ensure that:

- the most marginalised children (including children with disabilities) have opportunities to participate in the M&E process; and
- adults provide private space for girls and boys to speak freely to share their views and experiences without interference or fear of negative repercussions.

INTRODUCING THE M&E PROCESS TO STAKEHOLDERS, PLAN GUATEMALA

In Guatemala, community meetings were conducted in 30 communities. The project and M&E process was presented to parents, community leaders, and the coordinating body of the Community Development Council (COCODE). These meetings were crucial in order to get buy-in from the communities and gain parental/caregiver consent for children to participate.

The main successes achieved include parents and local authorities establishing mechanisms and spaces for children's participation, as well as children's involvement and enthusiasm for citizen participation opportunities.

When introducing the M&E process to children and young people, it is useful to use icebreaker games, activities and energisers to create an informal atmosphere where girls and boys feel at ease to share their views. It is important to ensure that the games are inclusive of children with mobility and/or other impairments.

(See timeline tool on page 11, transect walk on page 12, and energiser in the appendix of **Booklet 5**.)

STEP 7 COLLECT BASELINE DATA

As described in Step 5, monitoring and evaluating needs to be undertaken as systematically as possible. Baseline data can help ensure rigour and a stronger evidence base regarding the scope, quality and outcomes of children's participation.

Wherever possible, your M&E core group is encouraged to plan and implement efforts to gather and collect baseline data at the outset of the programme (see box for how three of the NGOs involved in the pilot approached this). The indicators set out in **Booklet 3** will help you work out what baseline data you need to collect.

When measuring the outcomes of children's participation, it is essential to collect and analyse data that enables **comparisons** or **changes** – either over time (before and after their participation) or between children (in similar circumstances and with similar characteristics) who did participate and those who did not.

You will find the key tools and approaches to help you collect baseline data in **Booklet 5** (see pages 14–20).

BASELINE WORKSHOPS WITH CHILDREN, THE CONCERNED FOR WORKING CHILDREN, INDIA

The Concerned for Working Children conducted baseline workshops involving 108 children's representatives from children's organisations (59 boys, 49 girls) across five local areas (panchayats) in October 2011, to gather baseline data concerning the scope, quality and outcomes of children's participation. Information was gathered on indicators that had been jointly determined by children and adult members of the M&E field teams.

A day before the workshops, a training session was organised for field staff to fine-tune the data collection tools. Through a process of trial and error, three tools were identified, one each for collecting data on: the *scope* of participation, looking at quality of engagement in initial concept, planning, implementation and M&E; the *quality* of participation, focusing on the extent to which basic requirements were met; and the *outcomes* of participation. The latter covered process outcomes relating to children's participation in child-led organisations, and external outcomes regarding the extent to which children's issues are represented in and responded to by local government.

UNDERTAKING A BASELINE ON THE QUALITY OF CHILDREN'S PARTICIPATION, CESESMA NICARAGUA

The Nicaraguan NGO CESESMA (Centre for Education in Health and Environment) developed a child-friendly self-appraisal tool for quality participation based on the nine basic requirements (see **Booklet 3**, pages 16–20). Six focus group discussions were organised to collect baseline data, one with children (aged 9–12) and one with adolescents (aged 13–17) in three districts. Through these, children learned about the programme cycle and how to distinguish the three types of participation: consultative, collaborative and child-led. Working in small groups, they applied the simplified self-appraisal tool on the nine basic requirements to evaluate the "quality" of their participation.

BASELINE SURVEY OF SERVICES IN THEIR COMMUNITY, NCN, INDIA

In Tamil Nadu, children and adults were involved in a community mapping exercise to collect baseline data concerning the profile of their village and key issues like water scarcity, unhygienic conditions, etc.

STEP 8 USE TOOLS TO GATHER INFORMATION, TO REFLECT ON AND TO ANALYSE THE SCOPE, QUALITY AND OUTCOMES OF CHILDREN'S PARTICIPATION

The M&E core group will need to adapt the tools provided (see **Booklet 5**) to gather information on the scope, quality and outcomes of children's participation to the specific context of the programme concerned, with reference to the tables in **Booklet 3**. Across all three dimensions of participation (scope, quality and outcomes), you will need to ensure that the perspectives and views of all relevant stakeholders – girls, boys, parents, caregivers, staff, community elders, government officials, and others – are heard. Using mixed methods to collect data will help you do this, including interviews, focus group discussions, observations, and participatory tools. You can also use games, songs or other child-friendly activities to ensure that children will be interested and enthusiastic about participating (see energisers in appendix of **Booklet 5**).

The table overleaf gives a summary of the tools that you will find in **Booklet 5**.

A child researcher from La Dalia, Nicaragua carries out an interview about how rights are respected in school.

THE METHODS AND TOOLS YOU CAN USE TO MEASURE THE SCOPE, QUALITY AND OUTCOMES OF CHILDREN'S PARTICIPATION

Main focus	**Core M&E methods applicable for gathering information on all dimensions**	**Key participatory M&E tools**	**Complementary tools for gathering information from younger children**
Introducing the participatory M&E process	Interviews Focus group discussions Questionnaires or surveys Observation Case stories or oral testimony Secondary analysis of relevant reports	Timeline of intervention/ programme Child-led tour "Comal and Tortilla"	Puppets or drama Drawing or painting Child-led tours Body mapping Magic carpet Creating a scrap book Games
Gathering **baseline data** (on scope, quality, outcomes)		Before body mapping Decision-making chart Pots and stones Self-confidence rating	
Measuring the **scope** of participation		Spaceogram Footsteps (Hejje) method Visual programme cycle participatory mapping "H" assessment Circle analysis on inclusion/exclusion	
Measuring the **quality** of participation		Pots and stones	
Measuring the **outcomes** of participation		Body mapping Red, amber, green traffic lights Children in context analysis of change Stories of most significant change with creative expression Self-confidence rating Decision-making chart Red ribbon monitoring Tracking school attendance	

STEP 9 DOCUMENT AND REPORT THE PROCESS AND FINDINGS

When using different tools and methods to gather monitoring and evaluation data, it is important to ensure that you systematically record and store the information you have gathered. Your M&E core group should be clear about what data are being collected and for what purposes.

This section of the booklet gives:

- practical tips for documentation
- key guidance for analysis
- suggestions to collate and review findings from the M&E plan in relation to the tables and indicators (**Booklet 3**).

PRACTICAL TIPS FOR DOCUMENTATION

- Ensure that you have a note-taker at each session to record as much detail as possible, noting whether the person speaking is a girl, boy, woman or man. A lot of valuable data will be shared during discussions, which may not be captured on flip charts.
- During each monitoring or evaluation activity, it is essential to record *when* (date) it took place, *where* (location), and *who* participated (number of girls/boys/men/women, with age ranges). Log all collected data accurately – *but do not include individual names so that confidentiality and anonymity can be ensured.*
- After each session, members of the M&E core group should write up the flip chart notes while the discussions are still fresh in their minds, to avoid forgetting what something meant or the explanation given.
- Negotiate with children's group members about where and how to store the monitoring or evaluation findings safely and securely. You might want to consider making two copies, so that the children's group keeps a copy, and the M&E core group keeps a copy.
- Wherever possible, take digital photos of any visual images, including the body maps, decision-making chart and drawings, as an additional means of recording and keeping such findings safe.
- Ensure that all the materials and data are kept safely and securely. Store any sensitive documents in a locked cabinet or metal box; and ensure that the computer or database is password protected.
- Where possible, develop and/or use an appropriate software for storing, accessing and analysing the data systematically (eg, Excel, SPSS).

Documentation may include visual (non-written forms) and written documentation, including:

- written notes from interviews, focus group discussions or observations
- written notes and diaries by the evaluation core group members capturing observations and reflections
- flip charts and evaluator notes from the interviews, focus group discussions, visual participatory tools (timeline, visual programme cycle, pots and stones, body map, etc.)
- drawings, photos, poetry, stories, essays
- written notes, photos and/or film recording of children's drama
- secondary data, including monthly reports, previous evaluation reports, case studies, meeting minutes, laws and policies, and budgets.

We encourage each member of the M&E core group to keep a **diary**. A diary can help elicit reflections and information about the progress of the M&E activities, and can help keep track of the different sources of information gathered, to ensure cross-checking and triangulation of results.

SAFE STORAGE OF DATA

Ensure that all the data you have gathered are stored safely and securely. If you do not have adequate storage space, you may want to consider purchasing a big metal box with a lock and a key that the flip chart findings and other materials can be safely stored in. You also need to ensure that key findings from the flip charts are written up.

You may also want to keep one **main reference folder** or ledger that lists each source of information used or gathered during the evaluation, the type of information, date, who was involved, and where the information is stored. Such a 'master file' can help with organising your records, and with cross-checking of data.

FORMS OF DOCUMENTATION USED IN NIGERIA AND INDIA

In Nigeria, the African Movement of Working Children and Youth (AMWCY) used diaries, log books, questionnaires, scrapbooks, notepads, cartoons, photos and film to document its M&E findings.

In India, The Concerned for Working Children's M&E teams used many different ways to document the M&E process: *log books* by children's organisations to maintain a regular note of their activities; *worksheets and charts* by children when using the tools to capture scope, quality and outcomes of their participation; *spreadsheets and documents* – the data collected are first consolidated in spreadsheets and then analysed along with the qualitative data; *case stories*; and *photo documentation*. All workshops and other regular activities were photographed when possible.

KEY GUIDANCE FOR ANALYSIS

"The principles of analysis are those of simple logic, with which everyone manages to find their way about the world and solve everyday problems."[8]

GAME TO INTRODUCE 'ANALYSIS' TO CHILDREN

Collect different-sized sticks, seeds, flowers, leaves, stones, plastic bottles, empty plastic wrappers, stickers, pens or pencils, etc, and place them in a box or bowl. Show the box of varied objects to children and young people who will be involved in analysis of the information gathered during the monitoring and evaluation process. Explain that the variety of items in the box represent the variety of information that we have collected from different individuals and groups of people during the evaluation. In order to make sense of all the information, we need to sort it out into meaningful categories and to understand more about the types of information we have gathered.

Thus, take the box of items and first divide the materials into two categories, giving a description of each category. Now divide the materials into four categories and give a description of each category. Explain that this sorting out into 'meaningful categories' and understanding more about the information we have gathered can be called 'analysis'.

An M&E workshop with young people in Togo.

Principles of analysis:[9]

- Identify the issue
- Break it down into smaller elements
- Identify gaps and seek additional information if necessary
- Make a provisional diagnosis
- Check it out with interested people
- Form a conclusion

Children and adults from the M&E core group need to work systematically and logically to use the M&E plan and indicators to gather information from different sources. The M&E group needs to systematically analyse the findings to see what they reveal.

As described in Step 5, the M&E core group needs to critically reflect on and consider the validity and usefulness of the data that have been collected. You need to **compare findings gathered from different people** to explore: whether different stakeholders have expressed different or similar perspectives; the different reasons provided; and what this means. Your M&E core group needs to be clear about what can be deduced from the findings and be open about their limitations. Wherever possible, the core group should also gather additional information that may provide objective data to support subjective views expressed by children or adults. For example, if adults or children describe how children's studies have improved since being part of the child club, can any quantifiable data be gathered from the school to see if this claim is backed up by improved test or exam results of child club members?

Your M&E core group also needs to **compare findings gathered using different methods**. As mentioned earlier, this cross-checking of data is called triangulation. It helps us see which findings match up, and which issues are controversial in terms of different findings from different stakeholders. It may help to determine which evidence is strong and which evidence is weak. It can also help the M&E core group identify information gaps, where they need to check with additional sources of information.

Quality of evidence star rating: To encourage rigour in data collection and analysis, we can introduce 'star scoring' to reflect on and score the quality of evidence gathered.

Weak evidence ★	**Medium-strength evidence** ★ ★	**Good evidence** ★ ★ ★	**Excellent evidence** ★ ★ ★ ★
Only a few subjective examples given. The finding is not really backed up by other data sources that have been checked.	Quite a few subjective examples given from different stakeholders. But no other data are available to back up the subjective claims.	A number of subjective examples are given. Other data sources support the subjective claims.	Subjective and objective data sources from different stakeholders indicate a similar finding.

A **'scale of change' thermometer** may be used during the participatory M&E sessions to encourage children or adults to indicate how many children have benefited through participation, and from which backgrounds. The change may either be due to their direct involvement or as a result of a policy or practice change that was brought about through children's participation. For example, if children are describing how they reduced the incidence of child beating through their participation in a programme, then how many children are now reporting less frequent beatings? Is it fewer than 10 children, between 11 and 30, between 31 and 75, between 76 and 100, between 101 and 300, between 301 and 1,000, and so on? Which children have benefited – girls and boys equally, or one more than the other? Children from which age groups? Children from which backgrounds?

You might also find this 'scale of change' thermometer useful when exploring outcomes, in terms of whether other children have benefited from the programme indirectly, and if so, how many.

SUGGESTIONS TO HELP YOU COLLATE AND REVIEW FINDINGS FROM THE M&E PLAN

The following suggestions are in relation to the tables and indicators (**Booklet 3**).

The M&E core group should plan to meet regularly or at strategic points of the evaluation process to collate and review findings in relation to each of the tables in **Booklet 3**. Each of the tables – on the scope, quality, and outcomes of participation – can be reviewed in turn (using adapted indicators from your M&E plan that are relevant to your project or programme).

PHOTO: CESESMA

A child researcher carrying out an interview on how rights are respected in school in La Dalia, Nicaragua.

In each table, each of the indicators should be reviewed in relation to the information you have gathered so far. Your M&E core group members should discuss the following:

- Current information and findings. Ensure that these finding are disaggregated according to gender, age and other relevant factors (such as sibling order, ethnicity, caste, religion, disability, HIV status, socio-economic status, etc).
- The 'quality of evidence'.[10] It can be difficult to attribute change directly to the impact of a programme. Your M&E core group should try to ascertain not only if there are changes as a result of children's participation, but if these changes can be attributed to children's participation rather than to other factors. The M&E core group may need to gather additional information through follow-up interviews and/or further secondary data analysis to ascertain if changes are a direct result of children's participation. It is important to be honest about the strengths and limitations of your evidence base.
- Any key information gaps or weak areas of evidence.
- Ideas to gather other relevant information and/or stronger evidence.
- The 'scale of change', especially in terms of wider external outcomes.
- Which children or adults have benefited most? Which have benefited least? Have the most marginalised children benefited? If not, why not?
- Possible next steps are to:
  - gather additional information or to further disaggregate data
  - document findings and analysis for each of the tables in **Booklet 3**
  - discuss initial findings and recommendations with different stakeholders and/or feedback key findings to concerned stakeholders
  - reflect on and document lessons learned in terms of the M&E process
  - reflect on and document lessons learned in terms of the programme, and how these lessons can be used to improve future programmes.

STEP 10 DRAW UP AN ACTION PLAN ON FINDINGS AND FEEDBACK TO KEY STAKEHOLDERS

It is crucial that your M&E core group creates opportunities for wider groups of children, young people, staff and other key stakeholders to reflect on lessons learned from the process and findings of monitoring and evaluating children's participation. This will increase opportunities for acting on the findings to improve the programme.

This section of the booklet explains how to:

- draw up an action plan
- develop and share reports
- communicate the findings and be more accountable.

ACTION PLANNING

It is important that you use the M&E findings to improve the quality of your children's participation programmes. The findings may also inform advocacy to scale up children's participation through engaging government departments and civil society organisations. The media may also be involved to support communication and dissemination of key findings and important advocacy messages.

You could facilitate key sessions with relevant stakeholders to explore recommendations and action planning to act on the findings of your M&E process:

- Brainstorm and list ideas, suggestions or recommendations for action.
- If there are lots of recommendations or ideas for action, stakeholders may want to consider prioritising areas for immediate action, and others for longer-term action.

Once you have identified the priority areas with stakeholders, you can begin action planning (see box overleaf for an example from Guatemala).

Action planning on priority recommendations	**What?**	**Why?**	**Who?**	**Where?**	**When?**	**How?**
1.						
2.						
3.						
4.						
5.						

PLAN GUATEMALA

Through the M&E process, Plan Guatemala identified that the organisation and functioning of the Community Development Council of Children and Youngsters (COCODITOS) has become more systematic and standardised. Lessons learned in the implementation of the M&E pilot project have served to identify gaps in staff training to promote children's participation according to the quality criteria (the nine basic requirements for effective and ethical participation). These quality criteria are being used to ensure that all children have the chance to participate in the Community Development Councils, with an emphasis on gender equality, non-discrimination, and protection of children.

Results of the M&E work have been shared in community assemblies, with leaders, parents and volunteers, and in school activities, with students and teachers. Plan Guatemala also plans to use the results to inform ongoing programming and advocacy with municipal and national authorities, partners, and other stakeholders.

DEVELOPING AND SHARING REPORTS

Your M&E core group should also consider different ways of sharing the findings, through written as well as other more creative and accessible mediums. You may want to consider developing formal monitoring or **evaluation reports**, which may be useful for institutional learning and follow-up action planning, and for sharing with relevant donors and supporters. In addition, or as an alternative, you could support the children and young people involved in the process in developing **creative child-friendly reports**, which may highlight key aspects of the process and findings through drawings, photos, cartoons, art work, and posters, as well as through words. Alternatively, children and adults may want to share key findings through more interactive methods – for example, using theatre for development, or puppet shows.

SHARING THE RESULTS WITH STAKEHOLDERS, EVERYCHILD MALAWI

EveryChild Malawi organised project-based review meetings to share key achievements of the M&E Child Participation project. The review meetings targeted traditional leaders, children, community-based organisations, teachers, district social welfare officers, and children's corner supervisors.

Encouraging children to document the history, achievements, and lessons learned can be cause to celebrate, offering chances for creativity and cultural expression.[11] Drawings, paintings and photos can be displayed in the community; or children may develop and display wall newspapers of their findings.

DEVELOPING AND UPDATING A VISUAL TIMELINE OF BHIMA SANGHA, WORKING CHILDREN'S UNION IN SOUTHERN INDIA

Working children who are members of Bhima Sangha, a working children's union in Southern India, have developed and updated a pictorial timeline of the history of their child-led organisation and significant events. They have sketched their timeline through pictures as a mural on the wall, and have copied it onto a large cloth. Every six months members update the timeline, as a living history of their organisation. It has proved useful to share with new members, and other interested stakeholders.

COMMUNICATING THE FINDINGS AND BEING ACCOUNTABLE

It is important that you find ways to share feedback on the findings with all key stakeholders, especially children. Children and adults should be given timely and clear feedback on the impact of their involvement, the outcome of any decisions, and next steps. Key challenges or weaknesses in programming identified through the evaluation should also be acknowledged, and commitments given about how lessons learned will be used to improve programming in the future. Developing and sharing child-friendly reports can increase accountability to children and communities.

Children and young people who are actively involved in the M&E process are likely to have very creative ideas about different ways they can share key findings with other children and adults (see box for an example from Myanmar (Burma)).

DEVELOPING AND SHARING A CHILD-FRIENDLY EVALUATION REPORT

In Myanmar (Burma), an external evaluation of Save the Children in Myanmar's emergency response to Cyclone Nargis was undertaken in February 2009 by a multi-disciplinary team. A focus on the meaningful participation of children was integrated into the evaluation, including the commitment to develop and disseminate a child-friendly report on key findings. Using cartoons and visual images, a publication was developed in English, translated into Myanmar language, and distributed to children and other community members in programme areas, especially to those children who had actively participated in the evaluation.

APPENDIX UNDERSTANDING TERMS USED IN MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Here are some definitions of key words that are useful to understand when undertaking monitoring and evaluation.

Accountability Obligation of agencies who are implementing interventions for the public to provide stakeholders, particularly beneficiaries, with information, explanations, and opportunities for input and feedback on the expected and actual performance of the project/programme and results of an intervention, with regard to the sound use of resources.

Activity Action taken or work performed through which inputs such as funds, technical assistance and other types of resources are mobilised to produce specific outputs.

Aim Broad intention or overarching objective, usually to bring about positive change.

Analysis The logical process of examining data to see what they mean.

Assessment A process (which may or may not be systematic) of gathering information, analysing it, then making a judgement on the basis of the information.

Assumption A belief that is taken for granted and used as the basis of a statement or research question.

Attribution Attribution refers to that which is to be credited for the observed changes or results achieved. It represents the extent to which observed development effects can be attributed to a specific intervention, taking account of other interventions, other factors (anticipated or unanticipated), or external shocks.

Baseline A baseline serves as a basis for comparing any change. It gathers information about the status of something before or at the start of a programme or project, against which any changes can be measured.

Benchmark A standard, or point of reference, against which things can be compared, assessed, measured or judged.

Case study A methodological approach that describes a situation, individual, case or project at specific sites or programmes.

Concept An idea that is part of a structured theory.

Control group A group of eligible people who have been excluded from participation in the intervention by a process of random selection. Apart from non-participation in the intervention, the control group is, from every point of view, comparable to the group of participants, and thus it provides an opportunity to compare changes resulting from the programme.

Data source The document, dataset, person, location or activity that contains or generates information and facts.

Description A verbal account of places, events, people or situations.

Disaggregation Analysis of data according to different groupings to show differences between certain groups and variations within the sample. Data may be disaggregated according to gender, age, ethnic group, disability, geographic location, socio-economic status, employment status, refugee or other status (such as internally displaced or stateless persons), and other social identities.

Dissemination Process by which organisations communicate their M&E findings and lessons learned to the relevant audiences. In particular, refers to communication with beneficiaries (children, communities, governments) involved in the programme or project as a means of increasing the organisation's accountability.

Effect Intended or unintended change due directly or indirectly to an intervention.

Effectiveness The extent to which an intervention's objectives were achieved, or are expected to be achieved, taking into account their relative importance.

Ethical standards The principles and standards of conduct that direct a group or individual in research, monitoring or evaluation activities. In particular, it relates to the appropriate use of the power held by a group or individual in those activities.

Fact A justified, true belief (based on information that has been properly collected and analysed).

Feedback The sharing of findings generated through the M&E process between parties for whom it is relevant and useful so as to facilitate learning. This may involve the collection and dissemination of findings, conclusions, recommendations and lessons from experience.

Focus group discussion A purposeful, facilitated discussion between a group of participants with similar characteristics. Focus group discussions are usually carried out within a fixed time frame, and focus on a limited number of questions.

Goal A summary statement of what the programme or project is contributing towards in the longer-term achievement of children's rights. The goal usually relates to the broader impact, or is often seen as the ideal situation, state or condition.

Idea A theory that has not yet been proved.

Impact Positive or negative, primary or secondary long-term effect produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended.

Indicator A quantitative or qualitative factor or variable that provides a simple and reliable means to measure achievement, to reflect the changes brought about by an intervention, or to help assess the performance of a development actor.

Input The financial, human, and material resource used for the development intervention.

Interview An interview can build upon the 'natural' process of conversations to better understand and find out more about people's thoughts, ideas, actions, and observations.

Lessons learned Generalisations based on monitoring and evaluation experiences with projects, programmes, or policies that abstract from the specific circumstances to broader situations. Frequently, lessons highlight strengths or weaknesses in preparation, design, and implementation that affect performance, outcome, and impact.

M&E plan A written plan providing an overview of the specific activities and processes that will be performed for the monitoring and evaluation of a specific programme, project, or group of projects.

Means of verification The means of verification tell where to obtain the data necessary to prove that the objectives defined by the indicator have been reached.

Methodology A set of analytical methods and techniques appropriate for evaluation of the particular activity. It could also be aimed at collecting the best possible evidence needed to answer the evaluation issues and analytic questions.

Objective A summary statement detailing what the programme or project should achieve given its time frame and resources.

Observation Observation is the act of actively watching to notice and record patterns of behaviour, communication or response.

Outcomes The short-term and medium-term changes produced by the outputs of one or more interventions.

Output A tangible (easily measurable, practical), immediate and intended result that must be achieved for the programme or project to realise its objective or purpose.

Participatory tool Participatory tools include visual mapping, tables, drawings, and movement or drama to explore relations, patterns and issues affecting people.

Qualitative data Narrative text-based information, collected systematically. Collected through: interviews, focus groups, participatory tools, semi-structured questionnaires, observation or document review.

Quantitative data Numeric information that can be used for statistical analyses. Collected through: tests/assessments, secondary source/data review (ie, pre-existing data sources), surveys/questionnaires.

Questionnaire/survey List of questions designed to elicit specific information from a defined group of people.

Relevance The extent to which the objectives of a development intervention are consistent with beneficiaries' requirements, country needs, global priorities, and partners' and donors' policies.

Reliability Consistency or dependability of data and evaluation judgements, with reference to the quality of the instruments, procedures and analyses used to collect and interpret evaluation data.

Result The achieved output, outcome or impact (intended or unintended, positive and/or negative) of a development intervention.

Sample A subset of a defined population. Samples are collected in order to determine parameters or characteristics of the whole population. The act of selecting the subset of the population is termed 'sampling'.

Situation analysis Assessments and analysis to understand the situation at the start of the project or programme. For programmes relating to children's rights, this often involves identifying which rights are being violated or not fully realised ('gaps'). It may also include causal analysis – understanding the immediate and root causes of such violations or gaps. In addition, it may identify who is responsible for fulfilling children's rights at different levels (duty-bearers), and the reasons why they are not fulfilling their responsibilities.

Triangulation The use of three or more theories, sources or types of information, or types of analysis to verify and substantiate an assessment.

Validation The process of cross-checking to ensure that the data obtained from one monitoring method are confirmed by the data obtained from a different method.

Validity The extent to which the data collection strategies and instruments measure what they purport to measure.

ENDNOTES

[1] J Parry Williams, An Evaluation Primarily by Children Evaluators in the Save the Children UK Female Headed Household Project in Tajikistan, Save the Children UK, 1998

[2] See Horwath et al. *You Respond: Promoting effective project participation by young people who have experienced violence – a guide to good practice through training and development*, University of Sheffield, 2011

[3] UNICEF, *Take Us Seriously: Engaging children with disabilities in decisions affecting their lives*, 2013

[4] Joseph Rowntree Foundation, *Consulting with Disabled Children and Young People* (from the Findings series), 2001

[5] A Clark and P Moss, *Listening to Young Children: The Mosaic Approach*, National Children's Bureau, 2001

[6] The details included are for illustration only. Children and adults in each project need to develop their own indicators and M&E plans.

[7] See J Lennie, 'Increasing the rigour and trustworthiness of participatory evaluations: learnings from the field', *Evaluation Journal of Australasia*, 6, 1, 2006, pages 27–35

[8] See J Boyden and J Ennew, *Children in Focus: A manual for participatory research with children*, Save the Children Sweden, 1997

[9] From Peter Loizis, Save the Children UK workshop, Sri Lanka, 1996. Described in Boyden and Ennew, 1997 (see note 8).

[10] See 'Quality of Evidence star rating tool' on page 34 of this booklet.

[11] See also Tearfund, *Roots Resources: Root 7 – child participation*, 2004.

A TOOLKIT FOR MONITORING AND EVALUATING CHILDREN'S PARTICIPATION

BOOKLET 4 A 10-step guide to monitoring and evaluating children's participation

This toolkit looks at how to monitor and evaluate children's participation in programmes, communities and in wider society. It is aimed at practitioners and children working in participatory programmes, as well as governments, NGOs, civil society and children's organisations seeking to assess and strengthen children's participation in society.

The toolkit comprises six booklets:

Booklet 1: Introduction provides an overview of children's participation, how the toolkit was created and a brief guide to monitoring and evaluation.

Booklet 2: Measuring the creation of a participatory and respectful environment for children provides a framework and practical tools to measure children's participation in their community and society.

Booklet 3: How to measure the scope, quality and outcomes of children's participation provides a conceptual framework for children's participation and introduces a series of benchmarks and tables to measure children's participation.

Booklet 4: A 10-step guide to monitoring and evaluating children's participation looks at involving children, young people and adults in the process. It includes guidance on identifying objectives and progress indicators, systematically collecting data, documenting activities and analysing findings.

Booklet 5: Tools for monitoring and evaluating children's participation provides a range of tools that you can use with children and young people, as well as other stakeholders.

Booklet 6: Children and young people's experiences, advice and recommendations has been produced by young people who were involved in piloting the toolkit. It consists of two separate guides: one for adults and one for children and young people.

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