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Tool No. 10: How have National Committees adapted the original CFCI 'building blocks'?

National Committees have either adopted or adapted the original UNICEF nine building blocks. Adaptation includes:

- adding or deleting one or more of the building blocks, but essentially maintaining the original framework;
- keeping reference to the original framework, but adapting how it is communicated;
- significantly re-working the framework and replacing the original building blocks with alternative components.

Frameworks closely based on the original nine building blocks

- **Republic of Korea:** The model is very close to the original CFCI framework. The National Committee has made extensive use of the tools UNICEF has produced at the global level. The tools have been translated into Korean and distributed to interested cities as key guidance tools. However, 'a safe physical environment' has been added to the original nine building blocks. This is in response to the large number of accidents, particularly traffic accidents, affecting children nationally.
- **Hungary:** The wording of the nine building blocks has been slightly modified, but the concepts remain very close to the original. However, a tenth building block has been added to take into account the role of the business sector.
- **Poland:** In Poland, the original building blocks have been closely followed, although with some adaptations. The building block relating to 'independent advocacy for children' has been removed. Under the 'children's rights strategy', municipalities have to adopt an action plan focussing on eight priorities that have been determined by the National Committee. Finally, there is an extra building block on platforms for cooperation between the municipality and the business sector, NGOs working with children and the media.

Frameworks based on the original nine building blocks, but with some changes in interpretation

- **Germany:** The initiative is based on the original nine building blocks. However, for the purposes of self-assessment via the questionnaire for municipal administrations, the blocks are re-organized under four themes:
 - best interests of the child;
 - regulatory framework;

- child participation;
- information public relations.

The administration is supposed to answer, 'How important are the nine building blocks at the local level?' and, 'How have the nine building blocks been implemented so far?' The CFCI coordinating body found that it made more sense to present the issues under the four themes given that the nine building blocks are not equally applicable across cities.

- **Portugal:** The initiative is based on four pillars, which are based, in turn, on the original building blocks. All the building blocks were taken into account when planning the CFCI. However, it was considered that they were not all relevant. The four pillars are:
 - children's holistic approach;
 - child participation;
 - children's rights strategy;
 - child impact assessment and evaluation.

A more radical approach to adapting the original nine building blocks

- **Finland:** Adaptation of the building blocks took place during the pilot phase. The changes were based on evidence available on child rights, including legislation, policies and gaps, and practices on child and youth participation. The national legislation, structures and services available for children were significant and considered to be of high quality. One of the overall CFCI goals was, therefore, to add value and quality to the ongoing work in municipalities. Some of the original building blocks were dropped because they are already included in the legislation. 'Children's participation' has been unpacked into a series of more detailed components. These now make up six of the ten Finnish building blocks. This is because it was identified as an area needing attention in the Finnish context. Each building block comes with a checklist to assess the current situation, select and develop actions and objectives, and develop indicators for monitoring progress over time. Having detailed building blocks and demanding checklists is considered an important strategy to add value to ongoing work, considering the mechanisms already available in the country. The building blocks may be revisited in time and highlight other issues that may be identified. The researcher involved in the initiative stated that if he were to re-write





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the building blocks, he would break down equality and non-discrimination into several building blocks. A similar approach was followed for children's participation. This was done to better guide municipalities to look closely at the evidence and address equality and non-discrimination in all decisions at the micro-level.

- **France:** For the first ten years, the CFCI framework was based on the original nine building blocks. However, after some time, the National Committee found them to be often misunderstood and not tangible enough for people on the ground. Therefore, they were replaced in 2014 by 'Ten key thematic areas' based on the Convention. This was done to promote a concrete realization of child rights at the city level and to ensure a better understanding of these rights by municipalities. The thematic areas are also considered to be closer to how a city might be managed. In addition, they better correspond to existing municipal offices responsible for specific sectors. These thematic areas were identified and approved during a series of workshops in 2012 and 2013 by 50 local entities (cities and departments as per the CFCI model in France).
- **UK:** UNICEF UK had initially relied on the nine traditional building blocks of the CFCI. However, it found that they were not sufficiently flexible or tangible to adapt to the multiple levels of responsibility in UK municipalities. They were too broad and abstract and did not contain sufficient information on children's rights. It was felt that the building blocks could be seen by localities as presenting an 'add-on' structure which they might not be keen to adopt in austere times. However, using a principle-based framework presents a way of systemically changing and strengthening existing structures and mechanisms. Instead of the nine building blocks, the 'Child Rights Partners' programme applies the seven principles identified by UNICEF UK as making up a child rights-based approach (see [Chapter 1](#) for more details). UNICEF UK provides guidance on the seven principles and what they imply for public services.

