Tool 8:
Ideas for developing a child rights situation analysis

The following model, adapted from an approach used in Germany, suggests some of the potential questions that need to be covered in a situation analysis. It can be adopted or adapted as relevant to the local context.

Another approach would be to use the clusters of rights in the Convention as the framework for the data collection. These include:

- general principles;
- civil rights and freedoms;
- violence;
- family environment;
- disability, health and welfare;
- education and leisure;
- special protection measures.

Whichever model is used, it is important that the framework is designed to measure the extent to which child rights are being realized.

1.Questionnaire for the municipal administration

The questionnaire could gather data from the local municipality seeking information relating to:

- **What is the statistical profile of the municipality?** This would include, for example, well-being, health status, schooling, child care, after-school activities, migration, health check-ups carried out with school-aged children.
- **What is the regulatory framework of structures**, procedures and legislation, which consistently promote and protect the rights of children? These would include, for example, the existence of a child rights unit or coordinating mechanism, a child advisory committee, children's budget and independent advocacy for children.
- **What measures are in place to promote the best interests of the child?** These would include a city-wide child rights strategy and guidelines, conditions for child care, inclusion and integration, facilities for play and recreational activities, health system and prevention measures, urban planning and mobility and transport systems. And what are the gaps?
- **What measures are in place to promote social inclusion and non-discrimination?** These would include the removal of physical, transport, communication, attitudinal and other barriers impeding the rights of children from marginalized groups to access the services they need. And what are the gaps?
- **What measures are in place to promote child participation in municipal bodies?**

These would include administrative proceedings, monitoring and feedback processes, methods and forms of implementation, school and youth councils, self-organized participation projects and accessible complaints mechanisms. And what are the gaps?

- **What measures are in place to promote safety and protection?** These would include making public spaces safer, addressing bullying – including cyberbullying tackling gangs and drugs violence, and reducing domestic violence. And what are the gaps?
- **What communications and public relations are in place?** These would include a city children's report, monitoring and data collection, availability of information, information in child-friendly language and indicators of a welcoming culture for children locally. And what are the gaps?

2. Surveys or focus-group discussions

A survey or series of focus-group discussions might be undertaken with other stakeholders to determine their experiences, perspectives and priorities. These stakeholders might include parents, professionals working with children and NGOs. They will have invaluable knowledge to contribute on what is working, where the gaps are, what needs to changed and where children are most at risk.

3. Questionnaire for children

It is also vital to find out the perspectives of children on how they experience their local community. This can be undertaken through a questionnaire, which might include questions relating to, for example:

- participation in the family, in school and at the local level;
- access to information;
- opportunities for recreation and play;
- self-perceived health;
- access to confidential health services, including sexual and reproductive health services;
- access to sports facilities;
- safety (on roads, in public transport, etc.);
- eating habits;

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- violence (i.e. bullying and awareness on how to help children who have been a victim/survivor of abuse);

- perception of quality of life in the city.

The questionnaire needs to include a section on the demographic data of the children answering the survey. The questionnaires for children can be administered in schools, where larger numbers of children are gathered. However, it will be important to make municipalities aware of the importance of involving other children who may not be part of the regular educational system and who, for that or other reasons, may be particularly vulnerable. These groups may include children with disabilities who go to special education schools or children living in refugee centres. The language and format of the questionnaires will most probably have to be adapted to the needs of these or other groups of children with particular communication requirements.

4. Group activities with children

In addition to the questionnaire or survey, it can be useful to engage directly with groups of children. The added value of a more in-depth opportunity to listen to children is:

- it provides greater insight to the weight they afford to different areas of concern, as well as ideas as to how to address or overcome them;

- it enables the city/municipality to focus on particular groups of children, for example, children with disabilities, refugee and asylum-seeking children, children in public care and children from minority communities.

There are a range of interactive and fun tools available for engaging children in discussion groups (see the Resources section on the summary page for ***Chapter 5***).

A participatory situation analysis in Potsdam, Germany

An NGO involved in the implementing body of the CFCI in Potsdam carried out the children's questionnaire with 427 children between 10 and 12 years of age from seven schools. Following the questionnaire, the NGO organized a workshop on child rights with the children from the municipality, so as to raise their awareness on the Convention.

A separate workshop was organized with 17 students (class/school representatives) to explore: 'If you were the mayor, what would you do to improve Potsdam?' After collecting their ideas, the children voted on six ideas and then six working groups were established to further explore the issues. The children worked on how to develop concrete measures for implementing their goals.

The NGO also adapted the questions for an older age group and uploaded it on-line. It received 142 replies from children and young people. Most children were aged between 12 and 17 years (87 per cent), 10 per cent were aged between 18 and 26 years, and 2 per cent were older than 26 years. In the field of participation, the children and young people found it important to participate in the development of the city, at home, in school and during their leisure time and to be able to participate via the internet. They favoured more internet- and project-based participation, rather than being part of youth parliaments. Eighty per cent wished to have a budget for children and young people, which they could use and implement themselves. Regarding child rights, they found Article 19 of the Convention, regarding the right to protection from all forms of violence, to be the most important.