



**Dialogue
Works**

Training module

**Embedding and institutionalising
children's participation
Part B: in external
institutional structures**

**Trainings
module**



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Kindernothilfe is a German children’s rights organisation that supports vulnerable and marginalized children and youth to develop their full potential. We partner with local non-governmental organisations in 33 countries and empower children to lead independent, self-fulfilled lives.

Terre des hommes International Federation is a network of ten national organisations committed to realizing children’s rights and to promote equitable development without racial, religious, political, cultural or gender-based discrimination.

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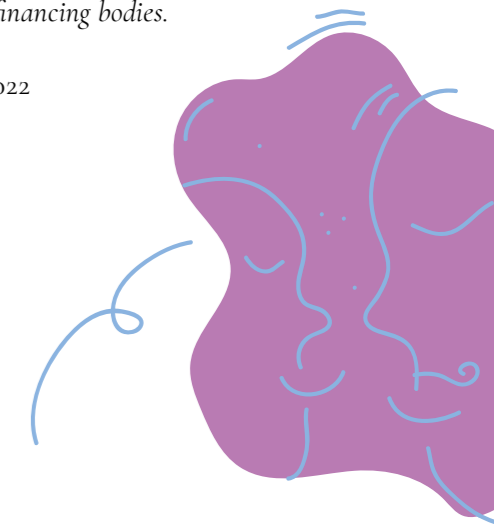
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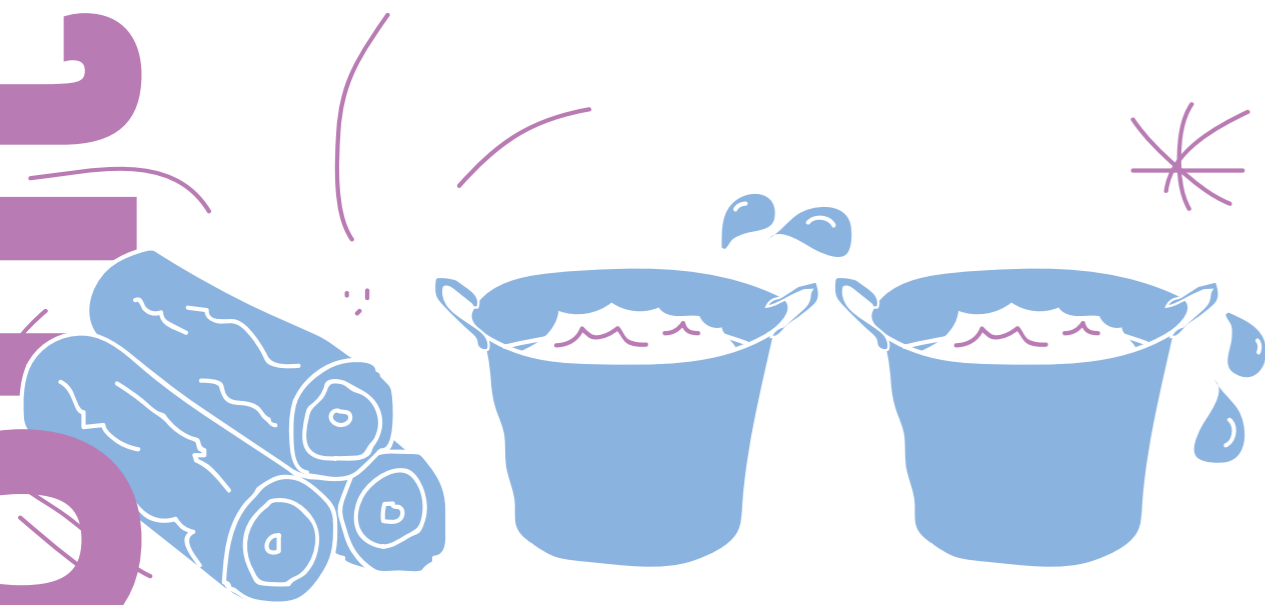


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Introductory guidance

Introductory guidance

Purpose

To strengthen knowledge, skills, dialogue and action initiatives to establish inclusive platforms and processes for sustained and meaningful participation of children externally in broader institutions and governance mechanisms (schools, local government, national policy-making forums etc.).

Target

- Embedding children's participation in external institutional and governance structures¹
- for NGO staff, CAC members, and relevant duty bearers (e.g. Municipal staff, government officials, teachers etc.)

Timing

Optional a half day plan.

This module promotes experiential learning, reflection, dialogue and action planning by adults and child representative to embed and institutionalise children's participation in institutional structures. Institutionalisation of children's participation requires policies, budget allocations and human resources to support ongoing structures/ platforms for children's participation and representation, as well as budgets for capacity building of children and adults and transparent dissemination of information.

This module focuses on efforts to embed and institutionalise sustainable platforms and processes for working children's participation in external institutions and governance mechanisms, such as school governance, local governance, national governance etc., so that working children have ongoing space and opportunities to express their views and to influence practice and policy decisions that affect them. Sustainable platforms are required to realise children's rights to be heard, and to enable the development, implementation and monitoring of practices and policies that are influenced by working children's views and consideration of their best interests.

To embed and institutionalise sustainable structures such as the Children's Advisory Committees (CACs) in ongoing organisational structures, please refer to Module A: Embedding and institutionalising children's participation in organisational structures.

Practical considerations

- To ensure participation that is safe and sensitive to risk, attention to hygiene and sanitation considerations during face-to-face workshops are noted. If the sanitation situation prevents face-to-face workshops, NGOs are encouraged to adapt the session plans for use through a series of online workshops, using applications that allow work in break out groups and in plenary.
- NGOs that have undertaken a country situation analysis on child labour and child participation, can use their findings to inform dialogue and action planning in the workshop.
- Pre-reading and opportunities for adults who can read English to participate in an online [UNICEF AGORA training on adolescent participation and civic engagement](#). ●

¹ Module developed by Claire O'Kane and Ornella Barros

Optional Training Plans

The training plan can be adapted by each NGO partner to best suit their context.

Optional ½ day plan

Embedding children’s participation in external institutional structures

Time	Activity	Page
20 minutes	B1. Welcome, introductions and positive agreements	8
60 - 90 minutes	B2a. Review child participation findings from the Situation Analysis. or if NGOs have not undertaken a situation analysis then use:	10
	B2b. “H” assessment of children’s participation rights in external institutions and governance	11
20 minutes	Refreshment break and energizer	
90 minutes	B3. Venn mapping and action planning	14
60 minutes	Lunch break	

Detailed training notes for facilitators

Activity B1

Welcome, Introduction and positive agreements

Objective

To introduce the purpose of the workshop and to establish positive agreements, including respect for different views.

Time needed

20 minutes

Use with

NGO staff and volunteers, CAC members, and relevant duty bearers (e.g. Municipal staff, government officials, teachers etc.)

Materials needed

Flipchart paper, pens

Facilitator’s notes

This module can be used with adults from the NGO and CAC members. It may also be relevant to include other relevant duty bearers, such as teachers, Municipal staff/ local government officials who have responsibilities and interest to support children’s participation, and/or national level government officials.

In countries where there is more than one NGO partner for the Dialogue Works project, NGOs are encouraged to consider organising a joint workshop to implement Workshop B with NGO staff, CAC members and other relevant duty bearers, so that they can share ideas and work collaboratively to embed children’s participation in external institutional structures.

Practical Steps

1. Welcome everyone. Ask everyone to form a circle, while respecting sanitation rules to have 1.5 metres between them. Ask each person to introduce their name and to share an action of something they like to do (e.g. Amin pretends to play cricket as he loves cricket, Betty sings, Claudio runs etc.)

2. Explain that during this workshop participants will use activities that encourage reflection, dialogue, learning and action planning to strengthen ongoing platforms and processes for meaningful participation of children in external institutions and governance mechanisms, such as schools, local governance, national governance etc. For NGOs who have completed the country situation analysis on child labour and children’s participation, their findings will also be drawn upon to inform the discussions.

3. Explore key terms (and if relevant discuss how these terms may be translated into local languages). For example:

- a) The term “institutional platforms” is used to explain how spaces for children’s participation can be integrated into existing schools, or governments (e.g. Municipal governments or national governments) to allow ongoing opportunities for children’s participation and representation.
- b) The term “sustainable platforms and processes” is used to describe platforms and processes that continue over time. For example, rather than having a one off conference between working children’s representatives and the local Municipal government, a regular space, such as a Municipal Children’s Council would enable a sustainable platform for regular dialogue between children’s representatives and adults representatives in the Municipal government.

Institutionalisation of children’s participation requires policies, budget allocations and human resources to support ongoing structures/ platforms for children’s participation and representation, as well as budgets for capacity building of children and adults and transparent dissemination of information.

4. Encourage participants to think about previous meetings where they made “positive agreements” to help everyone work together in ways that allow each individual to freely share their views and ideas.
- What positive agreements have they had in previous meetings? Note suggestions on a flipchart
 - Does anyone want to suggest any additional positive agreements? Add these suggestions.
 - Emphasise the importance of listening to one another and respecting different points of view.
 - Check that everyone agrees with the positive agreements. For example, ask the participants to give a “thumbs up” if they agree with the proposed positive agreements. ●

Activity B2a

Review child participation findings from the Country Situation Analysis

[For NGOs who have undertaken a country/ state level situational analysis on child labour and children's participation]

Objective

To review, discuss and build upon national level Dialogue Works findings from the country/ state level situation analysis on child labour and children's participation.

Time needed

60 – 90 minutes

Use with

NGO staff and volunteers, CAC members, and relevant duty bearers

Materials needed

Flipchart paper, pens, child friendly summary report/ presentations of the country situation analysis, coloured cards.

Facilitator's notes

Due to the time available it is important to focus on sharing key country situation analysis findings on children's participation, rather than trying to share all the findings on child labour and children's participation.

Practical Steps

1. Explain to all participants that in early 2021, the Dialogue Works NGO country teams undertook a country situation analysis on child labour and children's participation. These findings are really helpful to inform knowledge and action planning to strengthen institutional and sustainable platforms and processes for meaningful participation of children, especially working children.
2. Use the child friendly summary report/ presentations to review and discuss key findings on children's participation (30 – 40 minutes) on:
 - the status of existing laws, policies, strategies for children's participation
 - the status of existing associations and movements of working children or children organised through clubs and networks
 - the status of existing platforms for children's participation, representation and dialogue with policy makers, practitioners and other relevant actors at national, state and local levels
 - key strategic entry points to strengthen working children's participation in policy dialogues to influence policy and practice developments affecting them
3. In small mixed groups (e.g. the same groups that were formed for activity 2) take 15- 20 minutes to discuss, identify and record on 3 separate cards the 3 most interesting findings and/or action ideas from the country situation analysis findings.
4. In plenary each group shares their views on their 3 most interesting findings. These key findings should be taken into the next session to inform action planning to embed children's participation in institutions and governance structures and processes. In addition, CAC members may want to consider sharing these most interesting findings in any advocacy dialogues that they are planning with political stakeholders. ●

Activity B2b

"H" assessment of children's participation rights in external institutions and governance (e.g. school governance, local governance, national policy formation)

[For NGOs who have NOT undertaken a country/ state level situational analysis on child labour and children's participation]

Objective

To assess current strengths, weaknesses and suggestions to improve working children's participation in institutions, governance and policy making spaces that concern them.

Time needed

60 – 90 minutes

Use with

NGO staff and volunteers, CAC members, and relevant duty bearers

Materials needed

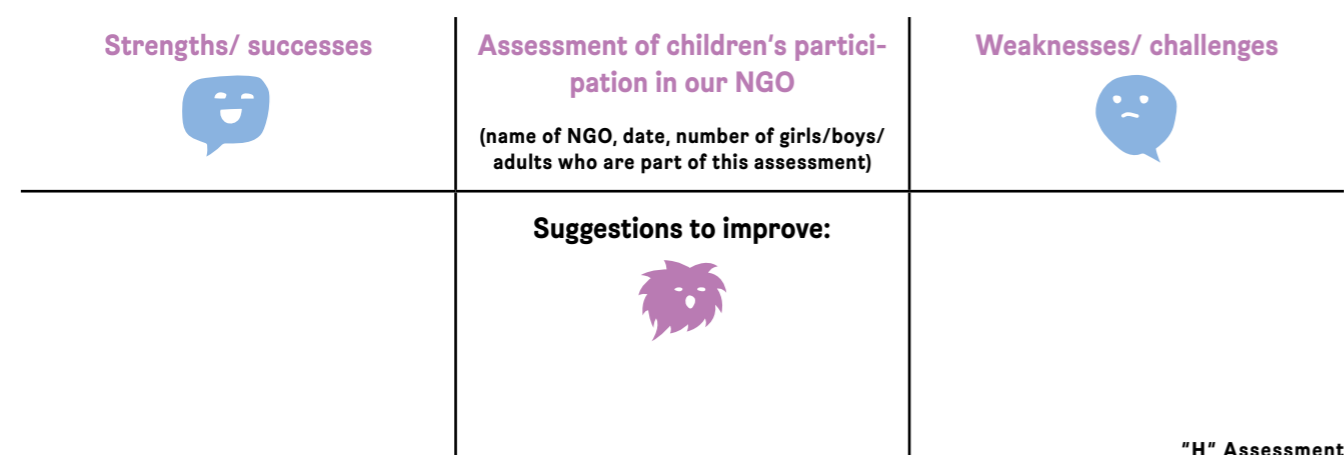
Flipchart paper, pens, make a flipchart and handouts for each group of the key questions to consider during the "H" assessment (see purple Box ii below)

Practical Steps

1. Explain that in this session, we will use an 'H-assessment' to assess the strengths and weaknesses of existing platforms and processes for working children's participation in institutions, governance and policy making spaces that concern them.
2. In plenary, brainstorm and list examples of institutions, governance mechanisms or policy making spaces where it would be relevant for working children to participate and represent their views. List participants suggestions on flipchart, for example, opportunities for children's participation and representation, including working children in:
 - School Councils
 - Municipal councils/ Local governance mechanisms
 - Sub-national or national level Child/ Youth Councils or Forums →

3. Introduce the 'H-assessment' format (see figure 5 below), by drawing it on the flipchart:

- In the left-hand column, draw a happy face 😊 to represent strengths and successes;
- In the right-hand column, draw a sad face 😞 to represent weaknesses and challenges;
- Above the horizontal line, write 'Assessment of children's participation in institutions and governance', and in brackets write (the name of the NGO, the date, and the number of girls, boys and adults who are part of this 'H- assessment');
- Below this line, draw a light bulb to represent 'bright ideas' and their suggestions to improve platforms and processes for meaningful participation of children in institutions, governance and policy making spaces that concern them.



4. Introduce some of the main questions that participants are encouraged to consider during the "H" assessment (see Box ii)

Box ii

Questions to consider during the "H" assessment on children's participation in external institutions and governance (e.g. school governance, local governance, national policy formation)

During this activity we encourage you to consider:

- i) Whether space or structures (such as child groups/ committees/ forums) exist in institutions, governance and policy making spaces that concern them?
- ii) Whether power relationships between adults and children encourage or discourage working children from expressing their views and ideas. To what extent:
 - a) Do adults (e.g. teachers, local/ national government officials) share information with children and encourage working children to freely express their views and ideas?
 - b) Do adults (e.g. teachers, local/ national government officials) listen to children and take their views seriously?
- iii) To what extent are the nine basic requirements for effective and ethical participation of children applied in institution and governance structures? (see Poster – Appendix I). To what extent is children's participation: 1) transparent and informative, 2) voluntary, 3) respectful, 4) relevant, 5) child-friendly, 6) inclusive, 7) supported by training for adults and children, 8) safe and sensitive to risk, and 9) accountable?
- iv) To what extent do working children's views influence institutional or governance decision-making and policy developments?
- v) To what extent do institutions (e.g. schools, Ombudsman) and governments (Municipalities/ local governance and national governments) allocate sufficient budget, human and material resources to sustain structures and processes for children's participation in NGO decision-making?

5. Divide the participants into mixed groups of 6-8 participants in a group mixing adults and CAC members. Each group should complete the "H" assessment.

6. Members of each group should discuss the questions in box ii) and record:

- a) Under the happy face 😊 key experiences and views concerning the strengths and success of children's participation in institutions, governance and policy making spaces that concern them?
- b) Under the sad face 😞 key experiences and views concerning the weaknesses or challenges of children's participation in institutions, governance and policy making spaces that concern them?

7. Taking into consideration the strengths and weaknesses, members of each group should discuss and record their suggestions (under the light bulb) to improve and strengthen platforms and processes for meaningful participation of children, especially working children in institutions, governance and policy making spaces that concern them.

8. Ask each group to present back 3 main strengths, 3 main challenges, and their 3 key suggestions to improve and strengthen meaningful participation of children in institutions, governance and policy making spaces that concern them.

Refreshment break and energizer games ●

Activity B3
Venn mapping and action planning

Objective

To identify strategic partnerships and actions to institutionalise platforms and processes for meaningful participation of children (especially working children) in NGOs and other relevant institutions (e.g. schools, local government etc.).

Time needed

90 minutes

Use with

NGO staff and volunteers, CAC members, and relevant duty bearers

Materials needed

Flipchart paper, pens, coloured paper cut into 3 or 4 different size circles, large sheet of flipchart, flipchart pens, scissors, and glue.

Facilitator's notes

If the workshop involves staff and CAC members from more than one NGO, they may want to consider working collaboratively on the Venn mapping, so that they can jointly plan and advocate for more strategic partnerships and representation of working children in relevant decision-making platforms.

Practical Steps

1. Explain that this tool will help children and adults to draw upon all the previous discussions and ideas to map out and to analyse strategic partnerships and actions to institutionalise platforms and processes for meaningful participation of children, especially working children.
2. In plenary take 5- 10 minutes to build upon earlier discussions to identify and list:
 - Existing platforms for children's participation,

representation and dialogue with duty bearers exist at local, state and/or at national levels for working children to influence policies and practices affecting them

- List other institutions that may not currently have children's participation platforms, but where you would like to establish platforms for children's participation
- List the names of the main existing movements and networks of working children at national, state and/or local levels

3. In plenary, identify how much power each existing platform or institution has to influence issues affecting working children.
 - For each of the platforms or institutions identified ask the participants to choose a circle according to how powerful they think this platform/ institution is to influence issues affecting working children. The platform/ institution with more power to address the issues and concerns of working children should be written on a big circle, and the platform/ institution with less power to address the issues and concerns of working children should be written on a smaller circle.
 - Ask participants to discuss and decide whether the platform/ institution should go on a very big, big, medium or small circle (*Largest circle = significant influence; Smallest circle = very little influence*). Write the names of the platform/ institution on the selected circle.



Examples of different size circles

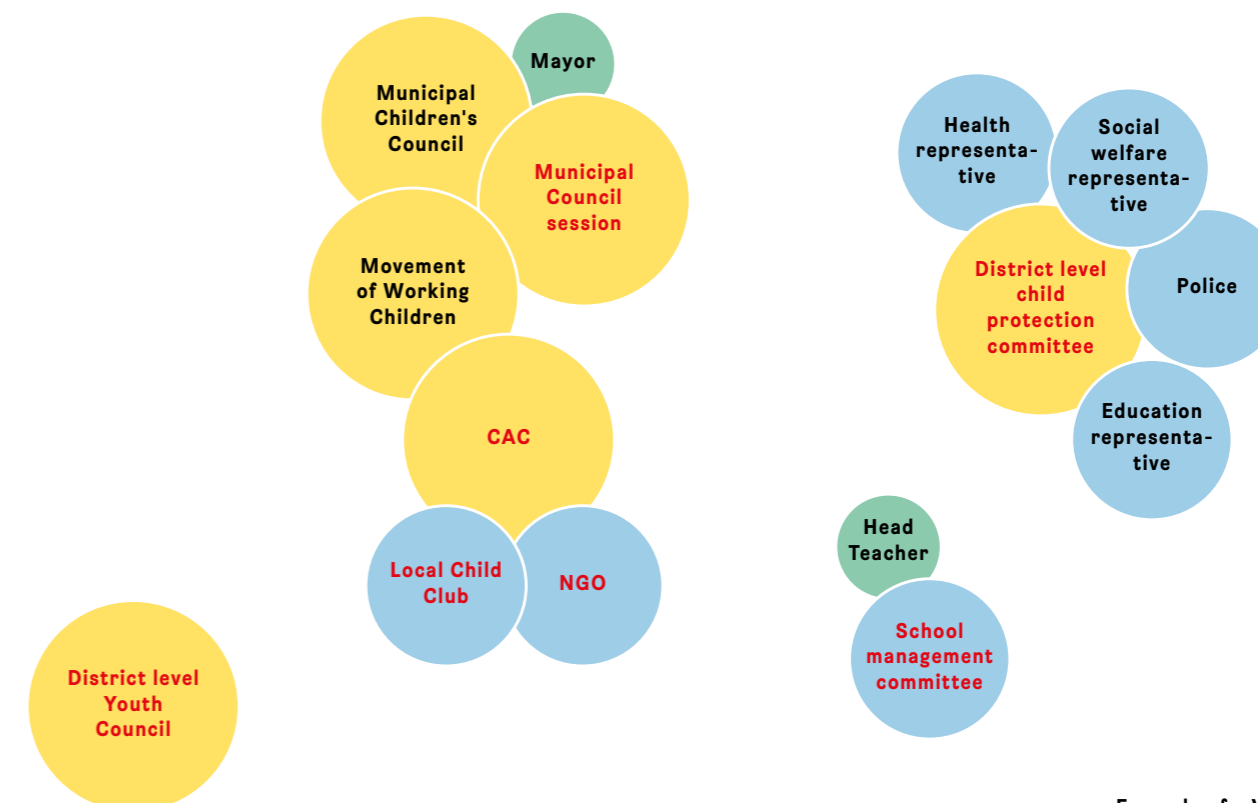
- Also place your CAC in a large circle.

4. Start to build the Venn map: On a large sheet of flipchart paper place the circle representing your CAC in the middle of the page.
5. Identify whether your CAC currently has strong or weak collaboration with the platform/ institutions on each of the circles. For each circle (platform/ institution):
 - if your CAC currently has strong collaboration with this platform/ institution, place the circle near your CAC circle.
 - if your CAC currently has weak collaboration with this platform/ institution, place the circle far away from your CAC circle. →



Young people and adults making a Venn Map, Nepal

For example if there is currently participation and representation of CAC representatives or other working children in the identified platform (e.g. the Municipal Children's Council) then place the circle

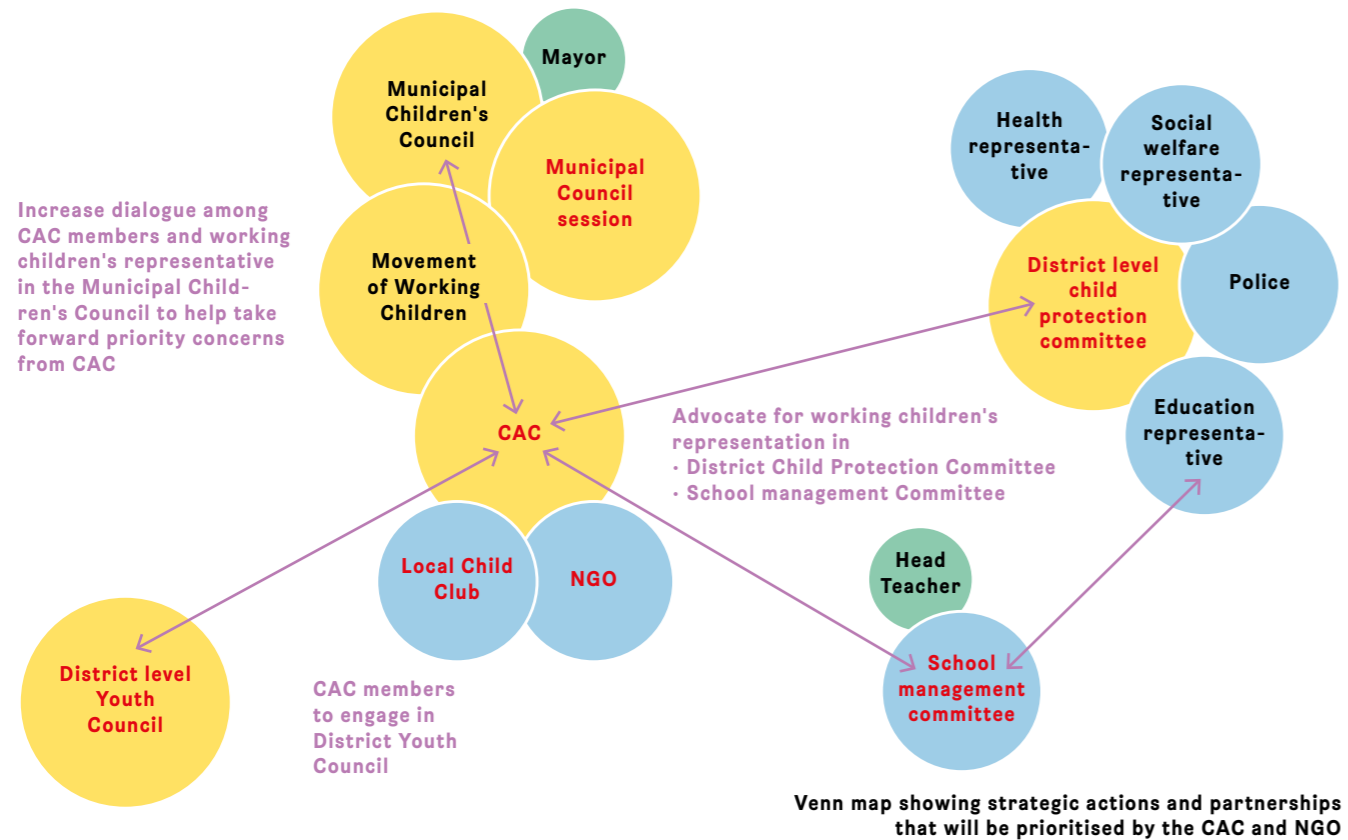


Example of a Venn map

with the Municipal Children's Council close to your CAC circle. If there is currently no participation or representation of working children in the identified platform (e.g. the Municipal Children's Council), then place it quite far away from your CAC circle (See example overleaf in figure 8).

6. Discuss and identify opportunities to update the Venn map to strengthen strategic partnerships and opportunities for CAC and/or other working children's participation and representation in existing platforms or institutions.

- Draw upon the discussions from activity 4 (country situation analysis findings) and activity 5 ('H' assessment) to inform your entry points and strategic priority actions.
- Use arrows and coloured squares/cards to identify, show and describe priority efforts to strengthen strategic partnerships and opportunities. See example below:



7. Update an action planning chart to take forward prioritised actions:

What action	Why?	How?	When?	Who will be involved?		With what resources and support?
				Lead	Support	

Links to accompanying resources:

To complement materials included in this module, NGO partners and other concerned actors are encouraged to **participate in UNICEF's online AGORA training on adolescent participation and civic engagement**. The UNICEF online training is a self-paced course that can be completed in under three hours. The online course provides learners with information and knowledge on the rational and conceptual underpinning of adolescent participation, key strategies and interventions to support meaningful and sustainable participation of adolescents, as well as organizational processes required to support it. The course is based on [UNICEF's Guidelines for Adolescent Participation and Civic Engagement](#).

Other relevant resources:

- [Article 15 resource kit materials](#) (available in English and Spanish) to strengthen CACs as effective child-led organisations
- Time to Talk (2019) Children's participation in development cooperation: [Getting ready for the journey of children's participation](#)
- Save the Children (2020) [The right of children to participate in public decision-making processes](#).
- Videos on children's participation including:
 - [What is political participation?](#) (< 5 mins)
 - ['Raised Voices'](#) - Film about Children's Participation Rights (1993) (~23 mins, most parts in English, but some parts in Spanish)
 - Ted Talk by a 12 year old girl ["What can adults learn from kids"](#) (~ 8 mins)

Appendix I: Poster on 9 Basic Requirements for Effective and Ethical Participation of Children

From the Committee on the Rights of the Child
General Comment on a Child's Right to be Heard, 2009

Note: The Time to Talk [Toolkit I](#) and [Toolkit II](#) provides more guidance on how these basic requirements can be applied as a planning tool in participatory work with children and young people.

-  1. Participation is transparent and informative
-  2. Participation is voluntary
-  3. Participation is respectful
-  4. Participation is relevant
-  5. Participation is child-friendly
-  6. Participation is inclusive
-  7. Participation is supported by training
-  8. Participation is safe and sensitive to risk
-  9. Participation is accountable



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