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Guidance on **Consultations with Young People**

2022

Cover photo:
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Rishi Aurobindo Colony, Kolkata, West Bengal INDIA.
Salim Shekh (13) show's off the comprehensive hand drawn map of the community at the Rishi Aurobindo Colony where they are undertaking a range of tasks headed by Community Mapping.

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Acknowledgements

This guidance builds upon the guidance to support consultations with young people on UNICEF's Strategic Plan developed by Kristine Sorgenfri Hansen (UNICEF ADAP). The guidance has been adapted to support practitioners and policymakers in organizing, facilitating and documenting consultations with young people on issues that affect them. This version was created by Claire O'Kane (consultant) in collaboration with Kristine Sorgenfri Hansen, Fabio Friscia and Marcy Levy (UNICEF ADAP). The graphic design is by Paolo Ciampagna and editing by Amy Souza.

The guidance draws upon insights and feedback from Morgane Griveaud (UNICEF, DAPM), Carla Daher (UNICEF, EMOPS), Katarzyna Pawelczyk (UNICEF-DGCA), Reetta Mikkola (UNICEF, NatCom), Miles Hastie (UNICEF, Child Safeguarding), Tamima Boutel (UNICEF, Senior Legal Affairs), Anna Burlyaeva and Sarah Musau (UNICEF, Disability Team), and Gabrielle Berman (UNICEF, Innocenti).

Introduction

Article 12[1] of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) enshrines participation as a fundamental human right. UNICEF[2] defines young people's participation as "girls and boys (individually or collectively) form and express their views and influence matters that concern them directly and indirectly."

The purpose of this document is to provide guidance to UNICEF staff, practitioners and policymakers on conducting consultations with young people (age 10–24) on matters that concern them and to help ensure that the findings are used to influence policies and practices.

The guidance focuses on organizing either in-person or online consultations with young people from diverse backgrounds in an effective, inclusive and ethical way.[3] It outlines the roles and responsibilities of adults and young people involved in organizing the consultations; offers advice for organizing, facilitating, analysing and ensuring follow-up to the consultation sessions; and includes safeguarding standards and annexes with illustrative templates (e.g., codes of conduct, confidentiality agreements, informed assent and consent forms and reporting templates).

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Girls' consultation for the Oky app, where they tested the product and gave feedback to it's customization

There are five sections:

- Part I. Planning for consultations
- Part II. Defining consultation team roles, responsibilities and logistics planning
- Part III. Ensuring inclusive, safe and ethical consultations
- Part IV. Analysing the findings and writing a report
- Part V. Following up after consultation

The guidance builds upon and complements existing participation and safeguarding guidelines from UNICEF, including: Engaged and Heard!, the child safeguarding toolkit, the resource Young People's Participation and Mental Health: A Protocol for Practitioners, and the procedure on ethical standards in research, evaluation, data collection and analysis.

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Meeting between Jonathan Kubben (Mom I'm Fine) and the members of Junior Reporters Club in Mahajanga (boeny region)

PART I. Planning for consultations

Before diving into planning a consultation, you must get clear on the consultation's objectives, scope and follow-up, as well as how best – and realistically – to achieve its intended goals. Consider and identify ways to partner with young people from the outset to design, co-facilitate, document, analyse and use the consultation findings. Young people can help design inclusive and relevant consultation activities that motivate and encourage their peers to share their views and ideas, often using formats and methods that adults may not have considered.

Defining objectives and scope

Consultations with young people allow programme staff, practitioners and policymakers to find out what young people think about a particular topic and to learn from their experiences, insights and suggestions. Young people's views can help inform and shape more relevant and effective programmes, practices, strategies, laws or policies.

It is important to define the goals and objectives of consulting with young people, to be clear about the consultation topics, and to ensure clarity on how team members will analyse and use the consultation findings to influence practice or policies.

It is also important to identify the consultation's overall scope, becoming clear about the intended number of young people to reach and their geographic settings, gender, ages, disability status and backgrounds.

Considering consultation modalities and methodologies

Once you are clear on the consultation's goals, objectives and scope, it is important to consider the modalities and platform you will use to host the consultation and the methodologies to apply during the consultation.[4]

First, it is recommended to identify the modalities (and platform) for the consultation:

- Facilitated in-person consultations
- Facilitated online consultations (Zoom, Teams, Google Meet, etc.)
- Self-administered online survey questionnaire (U-Report, Facebook poll, SurveyMonkey, etc.)

As noted in Table 1: Overview of advantages and disadvantages of different modalities, there are pros and cons for each. Thus in order to decide which modality best suits your needs, your team should consider the context, the objectives and scope of the consultation, young people's needs and capacities, the budget or various feasibility factors.

Photo: © UNICEF/UN0249834/Morina
On 12 February 2018 in Mitrovica, Kosovo, a group of children and youth with Down Syndrome attend a brainstorming and illustration session to design smart-phone cases. Eglantinë Avdiu (rear on right), 20, and her project partner Gresa Murati (in glasses) also attend.

Table 1

Overview of advantages and disadvantages of different modalities

Consultation modality	Advantages	Disadvantages
Facilitated in-person consultations	→ Can be more inclusive of young people of different ages, abilities and backgrounds (e.g., including those who do not have access to internet) → Provides greater opportunities for trust-building icebreakers, interaction and group work → Fosters more engaged and interactive consultations, especially on sensitive topics → Allows a safeguarding focal point to be present to sensitively listen and respond to concerns	→ May not be feasible during a pandemic or for those who live in restrictive societies or remote locations → Can be cost-prohibitive (venue, travel and chaperones) → Is less confidential than online consultations (which allow participants not to share their image or identity) → May be difficult for some young people to seek parental consent and support to attend an in-person consultation
Facilitated online consultations	→ Is appropriate in a pandemic or mobility-restricted settings → Is less costly and quicker to organize → Can include young people across different geographic areas → Makes it easy to set up breakout groups → Allows for use of assistive tools, such as captions and sign language to improve inclusive access → Allows a safeguarding focal point to be available online	→ Excludes young people who do not have access to internet → Excludes some young people with disabilities, especially those with intellectual disabilities → Can pose challenges for young people whose internet has limited bandwidth, making it difficult for them to turn on their videos and thus limits interaction → Increases potential risks for privacy concerns if young people do not have private spaces or headsets, making their conversation able to be overhead
Self-administered online survey questionnaire	→ Allows for larger scale → Once designed, a survey can be quick for young people to complete → Can be delivered through SMS which reduces dependency on internet connection	→ Excludes young people who do not have access to a cellphone or internet and those with limited literacy → Excludes deaf people who are illiterate and have no access to an interpreter → Does not allow explanation of questions if respondents do not understand them → Tends to result in shorter responses from young people and high drop-out rates per question

BOX 1

Tip Sheets for adults, and for young people are available on:
→ Adolescent and youth participation in consultations
→ Adolescent and youth online engagement

BOX 2

A quickstart guide*: How to digitalize your adolescent engagement programme?
Provides guidance to assess, define, and learn about the process and principles of digital engagement, as well as advice to kick start digitalization of adolescent engagement programmes.

*Link is pending

Once you have identified which modality you will use, you can determine your methodology. Consultations can take the form of workshops, focus group discussions, interactive activities, key informant interviews, or questionnaires. Again, the methodology used will depend on the context, topic and background of the young people invited. Existing UNICEF guidance on young people's participation supports both offline and online consultations (see Box 1: Tip Sheets and Box 2: A quickstart guide). Furthermore, when facilitating in-person or online consultations, it is useful to consider using creative arts and interactive activities, as they may enhance young people's interest and motivation to share their views and experiences. Box 3: Adolescent Kit for Expression and Innovation includes resources for creative tools and activities that can be used and adapted when organizing consultation activities. Additional resources for organizing interactive activities, focus group discussions (FGDs), key informant interviews (KIIs) or questionnaires with young people are included in Annex 1. Useful resources.

BOX 3

Adolescent Kit for Expression and Innovation
UNICEF's Adolescent Kit is a package of guidance, tools, activities and supplies to bring together adolescents in a safe space on a regular basis to have fun, cope with difficult experiences, learn and work together. The Adolescent Kit includes an Activity Box that has useful icebreakers and activity guides that could be used and adapted for consultation activities.

Ensuring allocation of sufficient resources for an accountable consultation process

It is crucial to ensure allocation of sufficient human, financial and material resources to plan and implement your consultation and accountable follow-up with young people (see Section: Logistic arrangements). This requires budgeting for costs, including but not limited to:

- Preparatory, consultation, analysis and follow-up meetings
- Information-sharing (that may require costs of translation, interpretation, sign language, etc.)
- Mobile airtime and internet data for online consultations or transport, accommodation and chaperone-related costs for in-person consultations
- Support costs for equitable participation (e.g., additional needs of young people with disabilities or young parents)
- Consultation team member costs, which may include stipends for young people (see Section: Compensations and stipends)

PART II. Defining team roles, responsibilities and logistics planning

In most cases, you will need a team of people to plan and execute your consultation. Typical team roles include organizer, facilitator, reporter and safeguarding focal point. Generally speaking, team roles that provide supervision – especially the safeguarding focal point – will be held by adult programme leaders, though some teams may include young people as facilitators or co-organizers. This section provides role descriptions and outlines key logistical issues to consider and address during planning.

Roles

Organizer. The organizer has overall responsibility for organizing the consultation, including coordinating the event, selecting facilitators and an accessible venue, recruiting participants, arranging translation and reporting services, ensuring that consultation findings are carefully analysed and used as per their intended purpose, and providing feedback to young people (see Annex 4: Organizer responsibilities).

Facilitator. You will need a minimum of one facilitator per consultation, but we recommend you have at least two (one female, one male) – especially when organizing group work in gender-separate groups. Each facilitator must be fluent in the participants' preferred language, possess good communication skills and non-discriminatory values, and demonstrate the capacities and attitudes to work respectfully with young people and put participants at ease. The facilitator is responsible for running the consultations and ensuring that all participants can freely and safely express their views (see Annex 5: Facilitator responsibilities).

Reporter. A reporter records in detail the discussions and outcomes of the consultation, photographs or takes screenshots of any relevant documentation produced, and produces a report including transcription (if required – in some cases it may not be necessary to have a full transcript) (see Annex 6: Reporter responsibilities). At least one reporter is needed per consultation. If you organize separate work groups, plan to provide a reporter for each group. The level of details expected (such as documenting the main points shared by young people, or transcribing an audio recording with fuller details) should be in accordance with any reporting templates provided by the organizers (see Annex 8: Sample transcript reporting format). In some contexts, there may also be an expectation that transcriptions of consultation findings in local languages are translated and shared with the organizer in English or other language.

Safeguarding focal point. The safeguarding focal point is responsible for assessing and mitigating risks, preparing consultations that are safe and sensitive to risk, and responding to safeguarding issues that emerge during the consultation or follow-up activities. The adult selected for this role must have skills and training to listen and sensitively respond to young people in distress and needs up-to-date knowledge of local referral pathways (see Annex 7: Safeguarding focal point responsibilities and Section: Protection from harm).

Photo: © UNICEF/UN0286833/Dicko
City of Mopti, Mopti Region, Center of Mali, September 2018. After the end of each day, the child ambassadors of the return to school in Mopti gather around their supervisor Aïssata Touré to discuss the difficulties of the day and how to overcome them.

Building your team

Team size will depend upon the scale, modality and methodology you choose. For example, a small-scale consultation may require just two people who combine different roles, while a larger consultation – or one that focuses on sensitive issues or engages young people living in adversity – will require a larger team and include a dedicated safeguarding focal point and dedicated team members for documentation. You may need administrative or logistics support for larger-scale, in-person consultations. You must also consider the human resources needed to analyse the results, plan for follow-up activities that use the consultation findings to inform and influence relevant practice and policy developments, and ensure feedback to young people.

All consultations should strive to gather a variety of perspectives. You can help promote inclusivity and diversity throughout your consultation by first paying attention to the composition of your consultation team.

To build your team, look first to your network. You might turn to your partnerships with existing young people's groups, youth networks, organizations of persons with disabilities, local volunteer teams and local partners to identify people with relevant skills and interests who can become co-organizers, facilitators or reporters. Furthermore, as outlined in Part IV, including young people as part of your analysis team is encouraged.

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Youths participating in Draft climate change bill consultation at the National Youth Climate Action Summit. GPH-Suva

Each consultation team member should complete a satisfactory background check and sign a code of conduct to ensure appropriate and safe behavior with young people (see Annex 2: Code of conduct). Keep these documents on file. In some contexts, you may also need to hire translators, interpreters and chaperones, and each of these individuals should sign a code of conduct and understand your organization's safeguarding policies and procedures.

Young people or partner staff who act as organizers, facilitators, reporters or analysis team members should sign both a code of conduct and a confidentiality agreement (see Annex 3: Confidentiality agreements for consultation team members) to ensure the protection of confidential and sensitive material and information pertaining to young people. In addition, you must decide how to recognize young people's roles as consultation or analysis team members, whether through financial compensation, certificates, letter of acknowledgment or other means (see Section: Compensation and stipends).

When assembling a team and dividing roles, it is important to think about diversity and include persons from minority groups, e.g. migrants, people with disabilities. Attention to the diverse composition of the consultation team can help ensure a more inclusive consultation approach.

Communication with young people who join consultations

You must communicate with young people in advance of any consultations to ensure voluntary and informed participation (see Annex 9: Must dos for consultations with young people). Be sure that you:

- Share clear information about the purpose and estimated time commitment, how the consultation findings will be used, and how confidentiality of participants' views will be protected (see Annex 10: Sample invitation letter to consultation with young people)
- Offer enough time for young people to determine whether they wish to be involved and time to inform and secure permission from parents or caregivers of young people under the age of 18 (see Annex 11: Informed consent and assent form for young people and guardians)
- Explain that efforts will be made to keep young people safe and minimize risks during the consultation process (young people will not be asked to share their views on matters inappropriate to their age, and they will not be asked to disclose sensitive personal information or any other information that might put them at risk; furthermore, young people will be informed about who to tell if they feel unsafe or uncomfortable)
- Share the name and contact information of the safeguarding focal point
- Ask young people if they have any additional support needs (e.g., requiring an accessible venue, sign language interpretation or childcare arrangements)[5]
- Make clear if a stipend or compensation will be provided or not (see Section: Compensation and stipends)
- Consider different forms of recognition, such as appreciation letters or certificates of participation

Logistics arrangements

Careful attention to logistics preparations for in-person and online consultations helps ensure safe and effective consultation processes. Use Table 2 to help guide your preparations.

Table 2
Logistics arrangements

Logistics	In-person	Online
Identify and book an accessible, safe and spacious venue	X	
Identify and become familiar with a suitable online platform that allows for safe and inclusive interactions		X
Ensure procedure for dissemination, collection and safe storage of information and informed assent and consent forms	X	X
Ensure equipment (laptop, projector, audio recorder, camera, video recorder, stable internet connection, etc.) is available	X	X
Ensure materials are available (in-person consultations: flip chart paper, pens, Post-its, tape, printed agenda, handouts, certificates, etc.; online consultations: Padlet, Mentimeter, Miro, etc.)	X	X
Ensure translators (including for sign language) are available, and organize captioning for online communication	X	X
Arrange refreshments and lunch	X	
Ensure safe travel arrangements for young people to and from the consultation; where relevant, arrange chaperones and accessible vehicles	X	
Make and pay for travel arrangements or ensure timely reimbursement of travel costs[6]	X	
Provide internet data or ensure reimbursement of internet data costs to young people		X
Ensure availability of a first aid kit and female hygiene kit	X	
Provide masks, sanitizer and soap (if relevant)	X	

Compensation and stipends

Consider how much time you are asking young people to commit, the level of effort expected of them, and the specific circumstances of young people. This will help you determine whether a stipend or compensation should be provided. For instance, you may decide it is appropriate to provide financial compensation to young people who are members of the consultation team or part of analysis workshops (see Box 4. Brief guidance on compensation for young people's participation).

Moreover, in all contexts, make sure you reimburse young people for any costs incurred while participating in a consultation (e.g., transport, phone use, internet data, food or accommodation costs). Additional forms of reimbursement may be required in certain circumstances, such as compensation for loss of earnings or coverage of childcare costs.

BOX 4

Brief guidance on compensation for young people's participation is available to inform decision-making using a five-step approach.

1. Be clear about what roles young people are asked to do and the level of effort (LOE) required.
2. Consider whether compensation is appropriate to the roles, LOE or circumstances.
3. Consider different forms of compensation and the pros and cons of each.
4. Decide the form of compensation (if any) and the details.
5. Ensure transparent information sharing and clarity on the procedures for timely delivery of the agreed compensation.

Sample outline of a consultation plan

To create a meaningful and safe consultation, you must allocate appropriate time for each question. The below sample agenda includes two-and-a-half hours for one topic and two main questions, provides suggested times for each activity, and ensures breaks and energizers to keep participants engaged and motivated (see Annex 12: Icebreaker and energizer activities and Annex 13: Sample consultative plan and activities to facilitate questions to young people for more details on this suggested agenda).

You may also organize longer consultations, especially when integrating arts and participatory tools for creative expression of young people's ideas and suggestions.

Table 3
Sample agenda for a two-and-a-half-hour consultation

Time	Activity
09:00–09:20	Introductions to the consultation, icebreaker activity (see Annex 12) and positive rules
09:20–10:00	Part 1: Discussion on the first question; consider using an activity to facilitate the question, especially for younger participants (see Annex 1)
10:00–10:10	Break
10:10–10:20	Energizer game (see Annex 12)
10:20–11:10	Part 2: Discussion on the second question; consider using an activity to facilitate the question, especially for younger participants (see Annex 1)
11:10–11:20	Open conversation: Ask participants what else they would like to say or ask
11:20–11:30	Thank yous and explanations of next steps; include feedback mechanisms

PART III. Ensuring inclusive, safe and ethical consultations

Consultations must be organized and facilitated in a way that ensures:

1. **Relevant and non-discriminatory selection of young people.**
2. **Voluntary and informed participation.**
3. **Protection from harm.**
4. **Anonymity and confidentiality.**

Everyone on the consultation team must recognize and respect young people's rights as articulated in the Convention on the Rights of the Child. A rights-based approach will help you create inclusive, safe and ethical consultations with young people (see Box 5).

BOX 5

Rights of young people during consultations

The following rights of young people during consultations must be respected:

- → To have their health, safety, well-being and best interests considered as top priorities
- → To have their welfare and development promoted and safeguarded so they can achieve their full potential
- → To be valued, respected and understood within the context of their own culture, religion and ethnicity, and to have their needs identified and met within this context
- → To be listened to, have their views given careful consideration, and be encouraged and helped to participate in decisions that affect them

To ensure these rights are respected, all those in contact with young people during consultations should:

- → Work with young people in a spirit of cooperation and partnership based on mutual trust and respect
- → Share clear and transparent information about the purpose of the consultations and how the outcomes will be used
- → View young people in a positive manner, recognizing their experiences, insights and suggestions
- → Encourage respect for each individual, valuing diversity and inclusion
- → Do their best to understand young people within the context in which they live
- → Work with young people in ways that enhance their capacities, confidence and potential
- → Take positive steps to ensure the protection and well-being of young people who are consulted
- → Think creatively and adopt activities for all participants, including persons with disabilities

Photo: © UNICEF/UNI358764/Ijazah
In 2017, MI Keji became one of the pilot madrasahs in Central Java that championed inclusive education under the 1in11 partnership, a collaboration between the Government of Indonesia, UNICEF and Lembaga Pendidikan Maarif Nahdlatul Ulama (LP Maarif NU), with support from Reach Out to Asia (ROTA) and the FC Barcelona Foundation.

Relevant and non-discriminatory selection of young people

Different factors will determine the scope of your consultation and the number and types of young people to involve. These factors include the purpose of the consultation, the human and financial resources available, young people's literacy and digital literacy levels, and the risk assessment (e.g., health risks during a pandemic). Your goal is to bring together young people to share their views and to create an open environment where they can do so.

Keep the following in mind as you consider reaching out to young participants:

Relevance. Participation must be relevant. It is essential to engage young people who have experience with the main consultation topics, with particular efforts to reach those most affected.

Gender. Unless you specifically want the perspectives of one gender group, try to ensure equitable representation of males and females and include young people with other gender identities. Depending on the topic and sociocultural context, you may want to consider gender-separate consultations, as well as plenary opportunities for sharing perspectives among different gender groups, to reflect on similarities and differences in perspectives. Where separate gender activities are organized, remain sensitive to the needs and preferences of young people with fluid gender identities and support non-discriminatory participation.

Age. In most cases, consultations are more effective when designed and organized with specific age groups in mind (i.e., separate consultations with 10 to 13-year-olds and 14 to 18-year-olds). Without exception, consultation activities should be tailored to the interests and capacities of specific age groups (e.g., 10–13 years, 14–18 years, 19–24 years). For example, consider shortening consultation sessions for younger age groups or making increased use of creative arts and interactive activities.

Diversity. Organizers should try to engage a diverse a group of young people in terms of gender, race, ethnicity, disability, sexual identity and age. Be sure to do necessary outreach to include young people from marginalized groups, such as those who are out of school, refugees, those living in humanitarian and conflict settings, young mothers, young people with disabilities, young people in alternative care and young people in remote rural locations.

Practical efforts to reach and engage young people from diverse backgrounds include:

- → Discussing which young people (based on age, gender, disability, geographic location, etc.) may face barriers to join consultations, listing likely barriers and identifying practical actions to increase their engagement (see Table 4: Addressing barriers to inclusion)
- → Creating or strengthening existing partnerships with local organizations that have established networks, trust and expertise in reaching marginalized groups of young people, such as organizations of people with disabilities, refugee or displaced persons youth organizations, working children's associations, ethnic minority organizations, LGBTIQ+ organizations, leaving care organizations, etc.
- → Ensuring that the consultation platform and methodology are accessible (e.g., working with sign language interpreters for in-person or online facilitated consultations)
- → Having sufficient budget to meet additional support needs (e.g., childcare costs of young parents or costs to produce information sheets in Braille)

Table 4
Addressing barriers to inclusion

Groups of young people to reach	Likely barriers faced	Practical actions
Example 1 **Young mothers**	Lack of childcare	Provide childcare during the consultation
	Fear of stigma	Share information that: → The consultation is being organized with other young parents → Young people have the choice to join gender-separate consultations → Each young person can choose whether to share their first name only or to use a pseudonym → Young people will have the chance to develop their own positive ground rules at the start of the consultation to create a safe space for all → The facilitator and safeguarding focal point will also promote a respectful and safe space
Example 2 **Ethnic minority adolescent girls and boys from a remote rural community**	Lack of transport to reach in-person consultation	Provide transport and chaperones to safely reach the consultation
	Lack of smartphone and internet data to reach online consultation	Provide access to smartphones, internet data (and if needed training on how to use)
	Reluctance from caregivers, especially for girls' participation	Share information and sensitize traditional elders, parents and caregivers about the benefits of the consultation with girls and boys
Example 3 **A young person who is blind**	Lack of information in accessible format	Share information in preferred accessible format (e.g., Word or Braille; consult first)
	Stigma	Similar to Example 1. Share information that the consultation is being inclusive: → Highlight the objectives and importance of their contribution with own experience and knowledge → Ensure that all materials are accessible and the facilitator is knowledgeable on inclusion and will describe any visual elements
	Possible dependency of caregivers	Ensure that the personal care assistance can travel together or someone from organizing team will provide support throughout

Disability inclusion. Disability is an evolving concept that results from the interaction between persons with impairments and attitudinal and environmental barriers. Persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments that, in interaction with various barriers, may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.[7]

BOX 6

Apply practical resources to consult people with disabilities:

United Nations (2021). Guidelines: Consulting Persons with Disabilities

UNICEF (2013) Take Us Seriously! Engaging Children with Disabilities in Decisions Affecting their Lives

World Institute for Disability Accessibility Resource Library

Practical actions can support inclusive consultations with young people with disabilities:

- Treat people with disabilities as you would any other young people. The heart of disability's definition includes interaction with attitudinal and environmental barriers. Therefore, when you remove those barriers and provide a safe, respectful and accessible environment, young people with disabilities will have the same opportunity to contribute as their peers without disability.
- Collaborate with organizations of people with disabilities (OPDs) to draw upon their advice, expertise and networks with young people with disabilities. Apply advice from OPDs to design inclusive consultations.
- Keep in mind that young people with disabilities may not be in school. When using school-based approaches for participation, consider community outreach to reach out-of-school young people with and without disabilities.
- Train facilitation team members on inclusive communication.
- Ensure the consultation's platform and methodologies are accessible to young people with different disabilities, such as physical, sensory, intellectual or psychosocial.
- Budget for the necessary support for participation of young people with disabilities (e.g., sharing information sheets in Braille, working with sign language interpreters, accessible transportation or personal care assistance).
- Share information in accessible formats with young people with disabilities and with their parents and caregivers. If necessary, organize home visits or phone calls with caregivers and young people to explain more about the consultation and to find ways to address their support needs.
- Give young people with disabilities the choice to be accompanied by parents, caregivers or friends who may enable their communication.
- Consider multiple vulnerabilities (e.g., consider the specific needs of consulting out-of-school refugee adolescent working girls with disabilities as compared to school-going adolescent girls with disabilities).

- Make proactive efforts to create an inclusive environment:
  - Ensure all young people can participate and have proper support (where needed)
  - Build on young people's abilities and strengths
  - Ask young people with disabilities for advice
  - Accommodate differences; give young people the time to understand and formulate their responses and participate as they can
  - Be creative and use inclusive icebreakers, games, and fun activities
  - Ask for and act upon feedback from young people to make improvements

Group dynamics. One option is to organize consultations with young people from existing groups or networks, especially when group members have existing experience and knowledge of the consultation topic. This helps ensure that young people feel comfortable around each other, enabling safer freedom of expression of their views, feelings and suggestions. Young people who participate in groups and networks may also be more accustomed to reflecting, discussing and analyzing consultation questions, thus allowing them to make richer contributions.

However, inclusivity likely means you will also need to organize consultations with some young people who are not part of existing groups. In such contexts, it is especially important that you focus on creating a safe space for young people to express their views and suggestions (see Box 7. Create an inclusive and safe space).

BOX 7

Create an inclusive and safe space by taking time for:

- Icebreaker introduction to let participants get to know one another
- Positive agreements to respect different views and build trust
- Opportunities for small group breakout discussions
- Use of creative arts and other interactive methods that let young people express their views (determined by young people's expressed preferences)

Language and literacy. Language used in information sheets and during consultations must be easily understood by young people. Local language and clear language should be used, avoiding use of technical language and jargon. Furthermore, facilitators should be ready to respond to young people's queries and explain more.

Wherever necessary, translators and other forms of interpretation, including sign language, should be made available.

In addition, the consultation methods should be adapted to participants' literacy levels. For example, young people with lower literacy levels may prefer to express their views through creative arts, dramatic presentations and verbal sharing instead of in writing.

Budget considerations for inclusive consultation. You must ensure adequate funds to support inclusive participation and representation. Consultation costs include but are not limited to costs of:

- Information sharing
- Translation
- In-person transport or chaperones
- Accommodation (if needed for young people during the consultation)
- Support costs (e.g., for additional needs of young people with disabilities, young mothers, mobile airtime and internet data for young people's participation in online consultations)

Voluntary and informed participation

Participation in consultations must be voluntary and young people must know that they have the right to withdraw at any point during the process. Where relevant, make sure to inform participants that their participation, or non-participation, will not affect their access to any services or goods provided by the agencies organizing the consultations. A sample information sheet explaining a consultation and the voluntary nature of their participation is provided in Annex 10: Sample invitation letter to consultation with young people.

Before taking part in a consultation, young people over 18 must give their informed consent. Young people under 18 cannot legally give consent but must be allowed to give their informed assent, stating that they understand the consultation and what their participation means. They must also have a parent or guardian give their informed consent. 'Informed' means people understand the purpose of the consultation and what is expected of them.

Assent and consent must be given through a signed form (see Annex 11: Informed assent and informed consent form that can be adapted to the context).

You must share information regarding the consultation's purpose, the platform and methodology, the role and potential benefits for young people, how the consultation findings will be used, how anonymity will be protected, and how costs will be covered (e.g., transportation, food, refreshment, phone and internet access costs and compensation). Annex 10: Sample invitation letter to consultation with young people can be adapted, translated and shared in local languages (see also Box 8. Ensuring clear introductions in online surveys).

BOX 8

Ensuring clear introductions in online surveys

Consultations with young people that take place through online surveys must also ensure a clear introduction outlining:

- → The purpose of the consultation and details about how updates on the consultation findings will be shared and used
- → The choice for young people to participate or not
- → Steps to ensure informed consent from young people over 18 and informed assent from those under 18 (along with informed consent from their parent or guardian)
- → Options for young people to skip questions that are not relevant to them or that they prefer not to answer
- → Details of a contact person if a young person or guardian has questions or concerns

Protection from harm

Consultation team members must ensure that young people's participation is safe and sensitive to risk, assessing and mitigating risks associated with young people's participation and ensuring sensitive and timely responses to young people's distress or disclosure of harm. Protection from harm encompasses a holistic focus on young people's physical, sexual, emotional and mental health.

BOX 9

Young people's participation and mental health

UNICEF's protocol for practitioners provides practical steps, principles and resources to safeguard young people's mental health and psychosocial well-being in the context of participation and engagement.

Consultation team members are also encouraged to join online training on Psychological First Aid for Children, through which they can learn how to listen and sensitively respond to young people who get upset or distressed during a consultation.

Ensure application of safeguarding procedures and codes of conduct

You must ensure that all team members are aware of and ready to apply your organization's existing safeguarding policies, procedures and codes of conduct. The safeguarding focal point must lead a risk assessment and implementation of risk mitigation strategies for consultations that do no harm. Wherever possible, young people can be consulted to identify possible risks and risk mitigation strategies.

Assign a safeguarding focal point

As noted earlier, you will need a safeguarding focal point who is available during in-person or online consultations (see Annex 8: Safeguarding focal point responsibilities). The safeguarding focal point and organizer must pay special attention to the safeguarding and support needs of more marginalized participants, including young people with lived experience of violence, discrimination, poor mental health, displacement, conflict, disaster or other forms of adversity. You may want to have mental health or social work professionals available during a consultation if young participants are survivors of violence or live with mental ill-health.

Secure an accessible and safe consultation venue

For in-person consultations, you will want to find a safe, accessible and spacious venue. Both the organizer and safeguarding focal point should visit possible venues and assess any risks associated with the space prior to the consultation. Ensure that the venue:

- Is accessible for participants with disabilities (e.g., ramps, handrails and accessible toilets)
- Conforms to a minimum of standards for fire procedures and hygiene and allows for sufficient social distancing during pandemics
- Allows space for young people to privately express their views (e.g., the ability to close rooms and provide protection from uninvited adults or onlookers)
- Allows for effective supervision of young people, including managed access from unauthorized persons to make sure they are safe

Ensure safe online engagement and limit exposure to online risks

For online consultations, be sure to identify and use an online platform that offers extensive safeguards. Some recommended actions to ensure meetings happen safely:

- Set up a password that is shared briefly before the meeting
- Ask participants to rename themselves using a coded ID (for example, a female, 12-year-old called Ana Kaley has the code F12AK, a male 16 year old called Pedro Juan has the code M16PJ, a 17 year old called Jay Hana who is transgender has the code MF17JH).
- Enable the waiting room function and manually check in agreed participants to prevent uninvited people from joining
- Disallow private chats
- Create entry settings that ensure participants enter with their video off and audio muted
- Set limits on screen sharing
- Disable file sharing from participants
- Prevent participants from saving chat
- Assign multiple adult co-hosts to supervise the discussion
- Limit participants' ability to record the session

BOX 10

Do a practice run

Facilitators are strongly encouraged to conduct a practice round together with their supporting team, including the safeguarding focal point. Before beginning the practice, make sure each adult team member knows their role and what it entails, understands coded IDs and how to ensure participants use them, and knows how and when to use reporting channels. Find more on safeguarding during video conferences here.

Enable a safe space for freedom of expression

Consultations must take place in an appropriate and safe space and be conducted in a non-stressful manner. Your team must work to create an inclusive and safe environment where participants feel safe to freely articulate their views without fear of negative repercussions.

Some consultations will focus on sensitive topics, such as child protection issues and gender-based violence or sexuality. In these cases especially, organizers should pay attention to the recruitment of participants and to the number and composition of young people included in each consultation. When dealing with sensitive topics, organizers should consider working with young people in homogenous groups (possibly by age, gender, social background or experiences) to ensure participants feel comfortable talking openly without fear of judgement or stigmatization. For example, in many sociocultural contexts young women and girls will feel safer sharing their views on consultation topics in female-only spaces.

© UNICEF/UN0264435/De Luigi VII
Migrant students at the University of Palermo practice an Italian language learning app in Palermo, Italy.
Piloted in 2017, the development of the app was a direct result of requests from migrant and refugee U-reporters.

Ensure sensitive responses to young people's distress or disclosure of harm

You must have safeguarding procedures in place so all team members know who to contact if a young person discloses harm or requests help. Procedures should also ensure young people receive relevant referrals and follow-up. Team members who will interface with young people directly (online or in person) should be trained on basic psychosocial support skills, such as psychological first aid, and must know how to respond in a sensitive and timely manner if a young person gets upset or discloses harm during a consultation (see Box 9. Young people's participation and mental health).

Avoid asking unsafe or inappropriate questions

Facilitators should ensure that young people are informed in advance that they will not be asked to comment on matters inappropriate to their age or to disclose any sensitive personal information or any other information that might put them at risk. Depending on the risk assessment findings, this may include matters relating to violence, conflict, or sensitive political issues.

Arrange chaperones and safe accommodation

Young people under 18 who must travel to participate should be accompanied by a chaperone. Organizers must ensure suitable chaperones are selected – for example, encouraging female chaperones for female participants – and should cover all travel costs for young people and their chaperones. Chaperones must sign a code of conduct (Annex 2: Code of conduct).

Chaperones cannot be present during the consultation, however, unless a young person with disabilities or other support needs explicitly requests their presence to enhance their active participation.

A safeguarding focal point must be present in any accommodation with young participants who have traveled and are staying overnight. The safeguarding focal point should be available to respond to any concerns throughout the stay, including at night.

Anonymity and confidentiality

Respect for privacy, confidentiality and limits to confidentiality

All team members must respect young participants' privacy. Assure young people that their contributions will be anonymously recorded and kept confidential and that their privacy will be protected before, during and after the consultation, especially in the subsequent reporting phase. This means anything young people say will not be talked about or written about outside of the consultation in a way that identifies them. However, as previously mentioned, be sure to explain limits to confidentiality if a protection concern is raised.

When working in groups, reiterate respect for privacy and remind participants to keep private any information shared by their peers during and after the consultation. Facilitators and partners who organize the consultations (including young people as co-facilitators) must sign confidentiality agreements (see Annex 3: Confidentiality agreements for consultation team members).

Careful use of photography, videos and audio recordings

Organizers may decide to take photographs, audio recordings or video recordings during the consultation. If so, you must find a way to record that protects young people's anonymity. This includes paying attention to safe and secure storage of such materials – where they will be stored, who will have access, and how long you will keep records before they are destroyed (see Annex 14: Safe transfer and safe storage).

Furthermore, you must obtain prior consent from young people and their parents or caregivers, sharing clear information about the intended storage and use of any photos, audio or video. Similarly, informed consent from young people and guardians is required if the organizing team wishes to photograph or take screenshots of any of work produced during the consultation, such as drawings or flip charts. Make sure you discuss with photographer the best time for taking images, such as in the middle of a consultation when participants feel more comfortable and familiar with each other. There is also guidance on taking images of specific groups, such persons with disabilities (see Annex 15: Guidance on taking photos and videos).

© UNICEF/UN0268079/Andrinivo
The children took over and met the two candidates in the second round of the Malagasy presidential election, Andry Rajoelina and Marc Ravalomanana. The children were able to directly discuss their expectations and topics that matter to them, with their own words.

PART IV. Analysing the findings and writing a report

From the earliest planning stages, the organizer must anticipate how and when to analyse and use the consultation findings to influence practice or policies affecting young people. Opportunities to actively involve young people in the analysis team and use of the findings is encouraged.

This section provides brief guidance to engage young people in analysing the consultation findings, especially qualitative data. To guide and support participatory analysis, you may want to establish an analysis team that includes the consultation team members and some young people who have participated in the consultation. You must get informed consent from young people (or from parents or guardians of those under 18) to participate in the analysis process (you can adjust Annex 11: Informed assent and consent forms).

Depending on the consultation methodology, the team members may use quantitative analysis of closed-ended questions or qualitative analysis of open-ended questions. Prior to such sessions the organizer and the reporters, will need to ensure that the consultation findings are available in formats that all the analysis team members can access, read and discuss.

The analysis team members will benefit from orientation, training on key terms and practical opportunities to work collaboratively with adults to undertake the analysis. An orientation/ training session can directly lead into participatory analysis of key findings from the consultations. For example, an analysis workshop for the analysis team could include:

- A recap on the consultation purpose, scope and methodology
- An introduction to analysis and key terms
- Demystifying what analysis is (see Box 12. Game to introduce analysis)
- An introduction to quantitative analysis, creating bar graphs and other graphs from the quantitative findings
- Working together to do qualitative analysis to identify key themes. Either in plenary or in groups, team members can sort through, categorize and group similar findings together and give them a name. This is a form of thematic analysis.
- Discussions on the findings and generation of practice and policy recommendations

Photo: © UNICEF/UN0299770/Ralaivita
Adolescents benecifiairies of the life skills program in Amboasary (Anosy region, Madagascar).

BOX 12

Game to introduce analysis to young people[13]

Collect differently sized sticks, seeds, flowers, leaves, stones, plastic bottles, empty plastic wrappers, stickers, pens or pencils and place them in a box or bowl. Show the box of varied objects to young people who will participate in your analysis team. Explain that items in the box represent the variety of information collected during a consultation. To make sense of the information, team members must sort it into meaningful categories. Ask young people to divide the materials into four categories and to give each category a name and a brief description. This sorting into meaningful categories and understanding more about the information can be called 'analysis'.

Key steps for qualitative thematic analysis:

Agree on the main topic or topics that the consultation focuses on *(e.g. Barriers to quality education)*

Break down key findings into "meaningful categories" and give each category/theme a name *(e.g. what are the main themes/ categories in relation to different barriers to quality education?)*. Mind maps can be used to record key themes.

© UNICEF/UN0643690/Willocq
A group of adolescents gather to attend a workshop about sexual education and gender equality.

Within each category/theme identify and note if there are similarities or differences in the views of young people based on their gender, age, or background. This is important in order to disaggregate the findings – to identify and record any differences in findings based on gender, age, and other relevant factors, such as race, ethnicity, religion, disability, geographical location or school status.

Triangulate whether the emerging findings from consultations with young people are similar to findings from any other available data findings, such as findings from interviews with adults, or findings from a review of relevant reports.

Identify gaps and seek additional information if necessary

Share emerging findings with young people and other relevant stakeholders (e.g. practitioners, policy makers) to see if they agree

Refine your findings based on the feedback

The analysis team members can collectively reflect on the findings, to discuss and generate practice and policy recommendations. Team members can also discuss how and where to present and use the findings to influence practices and policies affecting young people.

The organizer and reporter can take primary responsibility for writing the consultation report, drawing on the team's analysis and proposed recommendations.

The **Consultation Analysis Report** may include the following sections:

- **Introduction** to the consultation topic and why it is important
- **Methodology**, brief information about who was consulted and how
- **Key Findings**
  - An overview of quantitative findings (if available)
  - **Theme 1**. Description of key findings, including disagreggated findings, including relevant quotes[8]
  - **Theme 2**. Description of key findings, disagreggated findings, and quotes
- **Recommendations**

The format, style and language used for the consultation report may be adapted to reach specific audiences. For instance, there may be:

- A young person friendly version of the report, taking into consideration literacy levels and local languages used by young people. Young people may be interested to help design young person friendly versions (see Part V. Following up after a consultation).
- Briefing papers targetting specific policy makers or practitioners

PART V. Following up after a consultation

What happens after a consultation is just as important as the consultation itself. Your team must have a plan for how you will use the findings, including which decision makers you will approach and how you will share young people's perspectives with them. Wherever possible, create space for young people to directly share their findings and recommendations with relevant policy makers and practitioners.

Programme leaders must demonstrate accountability to young participants by keeping them informed and potentially suggesting ways they can remain involved. You might also want to conduct a review session or provide another method to hear young participants' feedback regarding the consultation.

Wherever possible, organizers can:

- Reflect and learn with young people about their participation in the consultation and its impact
  - What was successful?
  - What was unsuccessful or challenging?
  - What could be done differently next time? Why?
- Work with young people to develop and disseminate a youth-friendly version of the consultation findings report to their peers, or to develop and present briefing papers to concerned policy makers or practitioners
- Organize webinars or events for young people's representatives to present and discuss key findings with relevant decision makers. It is crucial that the consultation findings are used to influence the relevant audience (e.g., senior managers developing a strategic plan, policymakers refining a law that affects young people)
- Gather feedback from relevant decision makers regarding how they have acted upon young people's ideas and suggestions (this may require follow-up calls, meeting or emails)
- Ensure young people receive updates regarding how consultation findings have been used to influence policy or practices; be sure to tell them when and in what format to expect information, as well as who they can contact along the way if they have questions
- Help young people and youth networks figure out ways to use the consultation findings for evidence-based advocacy and other action initiatives

Photo: © UNICEF/UN0246340/Dengucho
Mrs. Graça Machel gave remarks and listen to adolescents' views on issues of their concern, sending a strong message to national decision-makers on the need to actively engage with adolescents on issues of their interest.

ANNEXES

Annex 1: Useful resources

UNICEF's Engaged and Heard! Guidelines on Adolescent Participation and Civic Engagement (developed in consultation with adolescents). Provides guidelines to help promote adolescent participation. The following appendixes are especially useful:

- Appendix 7: Actions to support gender-equitable adolescent participation, disability inclusion and conflict-sensitive participation
- Appendix 9: Using the nine basic requirements as a planning tool for quality participation processes
- Appendix 10: A risk assessment tool and additional guidance to enhance safeguarding
- Appendix 15: Practical tools and resources for each section of the guidelines (includes tools and exercises that can be employed in your consultations)

An accompanying Agora course provides an interactive walk-through of the resource.

Technical Note on Adolescent Empowerment (UNICEF) provides a common understanding of adolescent empowerment in relation to UNICEF's work and aims to support UNICEF staff and partners to translate the concept of adolescent empowerment into effective programmes.

Adolescent Kit for Expression and Innovation (UNICEF) is package of guidance, tools, activities, and supplies to support adolescents to express themselves, experiment, solve real problems, and explore new ideas. In the process, adolescents develop key competencies and new skills that help them to cope with stressful circumstances, build healthy relationships, and engage positively with their communities. Currently implemented in 25+ countries, the Kit is currently integrated within education, child protection, mental health, and peacebuilding initiatives.

Tip Sheets on Meaningful Adolescent and Youth Participation (UNICEF) in:

- Advisory Groups (tips for adolescents and tips for adults)
- Conferences (tips for adolescents and tips for adults)
- Document Review (tips for adolescents and tips for adults)
- Advocacy (tips for adolescents and tips for adults)
- Campaigns (tips for adolescents and tips for adults)
- Policy Dialogues (tips for adolescents and tips for adults)
- Public Speaking and Interviews (tips for adolescents and tips for adults)
- Audio and Video (tips for adolescents and tips for adults)
- Networking Events (tips for adolescents and tips for adults)
- Online Engagement (tips for adolescents and tips for adults)

Young People's Participation and Mental Health: A Protocol for Practitioners (UNICEF) supports individual and organizational capacities to safeguard the mental health and psychosocial well-being of young people in participation processes across sectors including education, health, nutrition, WASH, and protection. It is intended for staff across programming, research, advocacy and communications.

Photo: © UNICEF/UNI115953/Pirozzi
National Children's Forum organized by UNICEF in Niamey's capital, in November 2010. The Forum provided children with an unprecedented opportunity to voice out and loud their viewpoints on ways to create a child friendly environment.

Brief on Compensation for Young People's Participation provides practical questions to help staff and partners determine whether or not to compensate young people for their participation, and if so, how.

Brief on "Must Do's" for Consultations with Young People provides a brief overview of the minimum, essential steps staff and partners must take before, during and following consultations with young people to ensure meaningful participation.

Brief on Engaging Seldom Heard Young People in Participatory Processes provides guidance to staff and partners to increase the engagement of seldom heard young people in participatory processes that concern them.

Guide to Moderating Events with Children (Save the Children) provides guidance for adults who are participating alongside children in events, including as moderators, speakers and fellow panelists.

Leading the Way (World Vision) provides useful guidance on engaging children and young people in global engagements, and issues to consider during preparatory phase, the actual event and the follow up to ensure effective and ethical participation of children.

IASC Youth Guidelines (UNICEF) provide information on prioritizing young people's needs in emergencies and in engaging them meaningfully and systematically in all phases of a humanitarian programme cycle. Content is relevant across sectors including education, health and protection. The Guidelines are also a useful resource to help implement the revised CCCs and the ADAP commitments.

Youth4Peace: Training Toolkit (UNOY) provides guidance and tools for beginners and intermediate youth trainers and educators in the field of peacebuilding. It explains core concepts and practical non-formal education methods to promote creation of an enabling environment for peace. It includes a wide range of participatory tools on conflict assessment, conflict management and peacebuilding for working with and for young people.

Take Us Seriously: Engaging Children with Disabilities in Decisions Affecting their Lives (UNICEF) provides conceptual and practical guidance to support the participation of children with disabilities, including practical ways to address barriers to communication and ways to enhance inclusive development.

[Tip Sheet on Engagement of Youth with Disabilities (UNICEF) provides easy to follow tips to engage youth with disabilities in a safe and meaningful way.]

[Tips on Including Children with Disabilities in C4D initiatives in Emergencies (UNICEF) provides practical guidelines to UNICEF staff and partners on how to engage and include children with disabilities in emergencies.]

[Tips on Communicating with Children and Adolescents with Disabilities (UNICEF) provides guidance on how to communicate with children and adolescents with disabilities in all aspects in an inclusive and legally accepted terminologies and language.]

Accessibility Toolkit (UNICEF) provides guidelines to observe when planning or engaging children and adolescents with disabilities, especially on accessibility.

Child and Youth Councils: Guidance to Support Meaningful Participation* (UNICEF) supports local government officials, school managers, teachers, UNICEF staff and other practitioners to establish and/or strengthen child and youth councils, for children and young people to influence decision-making process in local or school governance.

Claiming Citizenship (UNICEF & CWC) offers a series of case studies from South Asia to strengthen regional understanding of intentional adolescent participation in governance practices.

Guide on Adolescent Participation in M&E of UNICEF Programmes (UNICEF) offers guidance on Issues such as how adolescent participation can add value to monitoring and evaluation processes; the important issues to consider when designing, planning and implementing activities; and existing tools and resources that can be used to support the realisation of meaningful adolescent participation.

Children's Participation in the Analysis, Planning and Design of Programmes (Save the Children) provides practical guidance and tools to support staff to build their capacity and ensure that children's views and perceptions are included in analysis, planning and design processes.

A Toolkit for Monitoring and Evaluating Children's Participation (Save the Children, UNICEF et al.) includes a set of 6 booklets providing a conceptual framework, guidance and tools to measure children's participation, including guidance to involve children in monitoring and evaluation processes.

A Kit of Tools for Participatory Research and Evaluation with Children, Young People and Adults (Save the Children Norway) provides more than 35 participatory tools for use and adaption with and by adolescents to explore and analyse their experiences, to prioritize and plan action.

Children in Focus: A Manual for Participatory Research with Children (Save the Children Sweden) provides practical and ethical guidance on conducting research with children. It includes chapters on participation, child-centred and conventional research methods and child-focussed research tools.

So You Want to Involve Children in Research? (Save the Children Alliance) provides guidance, techniques and pointers for involving children in secondary and primary research.

Every Child's Right to be Heard (UNICEF) provides a comprehensive explanation of how to understand the obligation to listen to children and take them seriously. It provides illustrative examples of laws, regulations and policies adopted by some governments to give effect to the right embodied in Article 12; case studies; and research evidence on the benefits of listening to children.

The Article 15 Resource Kit (CUNY et al.) provides 10 modules and 20 tools to support children's right to freedom of association and to freedom of peaceful assembly. Some of the tools support efforts by adolescents to assess and plan how to be more inclusive in their group initiatives. Tools from module 5 (who should we include as members) can be used with and by adolescents to assess and plan how to be more inclusive in their group initiatives.

*Link is pending

Children's Participation in the Work of NHRIs (UNICEF) provides detailed guidance to National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs) on what is meant by child participation, how to engage children in multiple ways in various aspects of the work of the institution and how to ensure that this work is at all times ethical and effective.

[Guideline on How to Digitize Adolescent Engagement offers a process to assess readiness on digitization of adolescent engagement programmes, define digital engagement goals with/for adolescents, learn the process and principles of digital engagement, and kick start digitization of an adolescent engagement programme.]

Bamboo Shoots (Plan International) provides training materials and guidance for facilitators to support child-centred community development and child-led community actions to address child rights violations experienced in their daily lives.

Sticks and Stones (Plan International) provides a training manual for facilitators on how to increase the involvement of children in their own protection. This manual is the sequel to Bamboo Shoots. It includes guidance and 23 activities that can be used with adolescents to increase their participation in their own protection.

Annex 2: Sample code of conduct

Code of conduct for consultation team members and other relevant resource team members, such as translators, interpreters, accompanying adults, etc.[9]

[Insert background information on the consultation here.]

[Name of organizing entity] strives to ensure that the activity does not in any way harm, abuse, or commit any act of discrimination or violence against children. [Name of organizing entity] gives primary importance to the best interest of the child in all decisions and actions.

As a member of the consultation team (or a resource person), I agree that I WILL:

- Adhere to this code of conduct and contribute to creating a safe, inclusive, and gender-sensitive environment that is free from discrimination and violence against children, including neglect and physical, mental, and sexual exploitation and abuse.
- Treat children with respect and dignity and consider their best interests, irrespective of their race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinions, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, health, birth, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, family composition, or other status.
- Listen to children's voices, give due weight to their ideas and opinions, and empower them so they learn about and are able to exercise their rights.
- Be a positive role model to other children by displaying high standards of behavior at all times.
- Seek the informed consent of children and of their parents or guardians prior to taking children's photos or videos.
- Ensure that children are represented in a dignified, respectful manner and that accurate context for the child's story or image is always provided.
- Raise any concerns, problems, or issues pertaining to child safety and well-being with the safeguarding focal point as soon as possible.
- Immediately report any violations of this policy.
- Encourage children to speak out and raise concerns about any issue, including any kind of harm.
- Cooperate fully and confidentially in any investigation of concerns or allegations of discrimination and violence against children.

I will NOT:

- Engage in any form of physical, emotional or sexual violence against children.
- Use language, images, emojis or make suggestions or offer advice that is inappropriate, offensive, abusive, discriminatory, sexually provocative, or culturally insensitive.
- Act in ways intended to shame, humiliate, belittle, or degrade children or otherwise perpetrate any form of emotional abuse.
- Encourage children or young people to do something harmful to themselves, others or property.
- Take photos or images of children that could endanger or adversely affect them by showing their home, community or general whereabouts; further stigmatize any child; include categorizations or descriptions that expose a child to negative reprisals, such as additional physical or psychological harm or lifelong abuse, discrimination or rejection.
- Take and share screenshots or recordings of online activity without the consent of all children and young people included in recording, photo or video.
- Publish a child's last name or any personal information that could be used to identify a child's location.
- Ask for personal contact details (i.e., email address, phone number, social media contact) of a child, unless there has been explicit authorization from the organizers to do so for business purposes.
- Communicate with a child via digital platforms (e.g., Facebook, Twitter), mobile technology (e.g., texting, WhatsApp, Skype), or online without consent and knowledge of the child's parents or legal guardians.
- Condone or participate in activities with children that are illegal, unsafe or abusive.
- Stay silent, cover up, or enable a known or suspected child safeguarding incident or breach of this code of conduct.
- Threaten a child with violence or abuse.
- Discriminate against or show preferential treatment or favor to a particular child to the detriment of that child or other children.
- Access, view, create, download, or distribute sexually abusive images and materials of children.

Annex 3: Confidentiality agreements for consultation team members

Customize this form to fit the local context, especially by completing the blue parts.

[AGENCY name(s)] is inviting you to participate in the consultation on [please include selected thematic area and topic] to inform [add details]. You are invited as a [please indicate here the role of the young person, as facilitator, reporter or other].

The consultation will focus on [please indicate here the questions/objectives of the discussion based on the selected thematic area/topic].

It will take place on [please indicate date and place], for [please indicate the length of the consultation here].

In your role as [please indicate role], you will be expected to [please indicate key tasks as previously agreed with the young person/ resource person].

Before you confirm, please take a moment to understand what your participation entails. You can talk to anyone you feel comfortable about this form. Feel free to contact [please include name of the organizer] to ask any questions you may have.

Information about the participants and data collected during the consultation must remain anonymous and confidential.

By signing this form and confirming your participation, you commit to the following:

1. I will attend any preparatory meetings or calls to organize the consultation with relevant agency staff. I will attend the consultation workshop in my role as [indicate role].
2. I understand that should I have any questions about this activity, I can contact the organizer, [please indicate name and contact details].
3. I will keep confidential all aspects of the consultation activity (including all conversations related to the consultation) and any material to which I have access to through this consultation. I also commit to not use or promote any file or document unless instructed to do so by the organizer.
4. I understand that in the course of my work I may have access to confidential or sensitive information pertaining to children and young people. I commit to treating such information with discretion and will not divulge or discuss its detail with any other persons formally or informally outside of the project group (e.g., the media, friends and family) without the prior consent of the organizer.
5. I understand that no young people's names will be recorded.

6. If I participate as a reporter:
    a. When writing the summary of the discussion, I commit to not writing the name and contact detail of any participant and understand that no young person should be identifiable. I will only use individual codes; for example, use 'F12AK' to represent a 12-year-old girl with the initials AK, or unique ID numbers.
    b. If I make an audio recording of the discussion to help with making the summary, I commit to deleting the recording one week after I submit the summary to the reporter or the organizer.
7. I confirm that no one (e.g., school, government, court, employer) has identified concerns about the safety of my behavior with young people or others. If I am unsure, I will discuss the concerns with the safeguarding focal point.
8. I understand that acting in a way that contravenes this confidentiality agreement may result in further action by the organizer.

Please write your name and sign below to confirm your participation in this activity. Thank you and we look forward to working with you!

I _____ confirm that I have read the foregoing information or it has been read to me. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about it, and any questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I consent voluntarily to serve as a [please indicate role] in this consultation.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

[UNICEF HEADQUARTERS / COUNTRY OFFICE LETTERHEAD]

[Date]

[PARTNER FULL LEGAL NAME]

[PARTNER ADDRESS]

Consultation of young people on *[add details]* **Confidentiality Agreement**

Dear _____

Thank you [PARTNER FULL LEGAL NAME] for agreeing to collaborate with the United Nations Children's Fund ("UNICEF") by participating in the consultation of young people on [add details] (the "Project"), as a [please indicate here the role of external partner, as facilitator, reporter or other]. Details of the specific consultation and related activities that you will be involved in are set out in the Annex to this letter.

In order to facilitate your role in the Project and the consultation activities, you will be required to collect on behalf of UNICEF, or access, use, generate and otherwise process certain non-public, proprietary data.

This letter is to set out the arrangements we have agreed and will apply to your collaboration for the Project and to confirm the terms and conditions that will apply in respect of your use and processing of Project Data and, to the extent that the Project Data includes any personal data as defined in UNICEF's Policy on Personal Data Protection (the "UNICEF Data Protection Policy"), serves as a data processing agreement under that Policy (this letter, together with its Annex, the "Agreement" or "DPA"). All capitalized terms used but not defined in this Agreement have the meaning assigned to them in the Annex or the UNICEF Data Protection Policy as applicable.

1. **Collaboration**. You will fulfill your role and the tasks assigned to you with reasonable skill and care and otherwise in accordance with the terms of this Agreement. Your collaboration for the Project will be for the period from the date UNICEF receives a copy of this letter counter-signed by you until the date which is seven calendar days after the last discussion report is sent by you to UNICEF (the "Collaboration Period").

2. **Permitted Purpose**. You will only use and process the Project Data for the purpose of fulfilling your role and the tasks assigned to you in the Annex (the "Permitted Purpose") and for no other purpose except with the express prior written consent or instructions of UNICEF.

3. **Proprietary Information**. You agree and acknowledge that the Project Data is the exclusive property of UNICEF and will not claim any ownership interest in such Project Data.

4. **Confidentiality**. You will treat all Project Data as confidential, will take reasonable precautions to protect the Project Data and will use the same standard of care in maintaining the Project Data confidential as you use for your own confidential information. This includes keeping confidential all aspects of the consultation activity (including all conversations related to the consultation) and confidential material to which you have had access through working with UNICEF for the Project.

5. **Non-Disclosure**. You will not disclose the Project Data to any other entity or person, except as follows:

    a. disclosure to those of your employees, consultants and/or other personnel who have a need to know the information for the Permitted Purpose ("Authorized Personnel") and provided that (i) you have notified such Authorized Personnel of the conditions set out in this Agreement and in any guidance provided to you by UNICEF, (ii) such Authorized Personnel are bound by the same obligations of confidentiality, and (iii) you will remain responsible for their compliance with the conditions set out in this Agreement; or

    b. disclosure to which UNICEF has given its express prior written approval.

If you receive a request for disclosure of Project Data under any judicial or law enforcement process, before you make the requested disclosure, you will give UNICEF sufficient notice of the request in order to allow UNICEF to have a reasonable opportunity to take protective measures or take such other action as may be appropriate and will notify the relevant authority of this.

6. **Personal Data**: The following provisions will apply in respect of Personal Data contained in the Project Data, in addition to the other provisions of this Agreement:

    a. In respect of any Personal Data contained in the Project Data, UNICEF will act as the Data Controller and you will act as the Data Processor (without prejudice to your responsibilities towards youth participants or other data subjects under any independent relationship that your organization has with the same participants and other data subjects).

    b. The legal basis for the processing of personal data of youth participants is consent. Consent will be recorded using the UNICEF-issued consent form which must be collected prior to initiating the Consultation.

    c. You will process Personal Data in accordance with the standards and requirements of this Agreement and all applicable data protection law and regulations (collectively, "Applicable Data Protection Law").

    d. You confirm that you have reviewed and are familiar with the UNICEF Data Protection Policy.

    e. You confirm that you have a data protection policy in place that meets all applicable data protection standards and legal requirements, including all Applicable Data Protection Law, and that you will apply this policy in the collection, storage, use, processing, retention and destruction of the Project Data.

    f. You will not process or transfer the Personal Data outside of the country of your registered office except with the express prior written consent of UNICEF. UNICEF has the exclusive right to determine the geographical boundaries and location of the facilities where the Personal Data in the Project Data may be transferred to, stored and processed.

7. **Security Measures**. You will implement appropriate organizational, administrative, physical and technical safeguards and procedures to protect the security of Personal Data, including against or from accidental or unauthorized destruction, loss, alteration, disclosure, access, or unplanned loss of availability. In assessing the appropriate level of security, you will consider the risks that are presented by processing for purposes of conducting the Consultation, in particular from a Personal Data Breach.

8. **Specific Confidentiality Measures**. You will comply with the following specific confidentiality, security and safeguarding measures:

    a. You will not, and will ensure that your Authorized Personnel do not, divulge or discuss the details with any other persons formally or informally outside of the Project team (e.g., the media, friends and family).

    b. As soon as each consent form is collected, you will assign a unique ID code system, as outlined in the guidance shared with you by UNICEF. Thereafter, each participant should only be referred to through the unique ID code assigned to them no names of children and young people should be recorded or included in any notes or reports.

    c. When drafting the consultation report, you will not include the name of any participant or any other information that could identify an individual participant, for example: contact details, city or town where consultation was organized, time and location of the consultations.

    d. The only information on participants that you can include in the consultation report is: age and gender of participants, and any information related to the background of the participants that is relevant to the interpretation of their inputs (e.g., children with disabilities).

9. **Security Breach**. You will immediately notify us if there is an actual, suspected or threatened unauthorized or accidental disclosure of the Project Data, including any Personal Data Breach. You will provide UNICEF with sufficient information to allow UNICEF to meet any obligations to report or inform data subjects of the Personal Data Breach. You will cooperate with UNICEF and take reasonable steps as are directed by UNICEF to assist in the investigation, mitigation and remediation of each such security breach. You will also promptly inform UNICEF if any Project Data is lost or destroyed or becomes damaged, corrupted and, at the request of UNICEF, assist in restoring such Personal Data at its own expense.

10. **Complaints**. You will inform UNICEF as soon as possible of any complaints, including any exercise by any of the youth participants or their parents/guardians of their data subject rights, and assist UNICEF with all information requests or complaints which may be received from any participant or other data subject in relation to any Personal Data.

11. **Retention**. When the Collaboration Period ends, you will return to UNICEF all Project Data, or, at UNICEF's option, destroy all copies of the Project Data held by you to UNICEF's satisfaction.

12. **Child Safeguarding**. You will:

    a. adhere to UNICEF child safeguarding policies, local laws and the safeguarding and child participation principles reflected in Annex B;

    b. perform any recruitment of child participants safely and on the basis of voluntary, informed consent;

c. assign personnel (facilitators, reporters or any other individuals who interact with children or their data) to the Project who are screened to assure the individuals' safety with children, their ability to meet the highest ethical standards and their suitability/training for the role;

d. communicate promptly and discreetly to the UNICEF Consultation Focal Person any risks not properly mitigated or safety incidents observed or reported;

e. follow other safeguarding procedures or instructions communicated by the Consultation Focal Person.

13. **Names, Logos, Emblems**. Neither party will use the other's name, logo or emblem without the other's express prior written approval. You will not use the name and emblem of the United Nations for any purpose.

14. **Compliance**. You will provide your reasonable cooperation with any compliance review by UNICEF of the arrangements under this Agreement for the Project.

15. **Termination**. If you or any of your personnel breaches any of the conditions set out in this Agreement, UNICEF may terminate this Agreement with immediate effect by written notice to you.

16. **Survival**. Your obligations under this letter will survive the expiry of the Collaboration Period or termination of the arrangements under this letter.

17. **Disagreements**. In case of any disagreements about this Agreement they will be resolved them through amicable discussions. You accept that UNICEF may take any action available to it to enforce its rights in the Project Data.

18. **Notices**. All notices, requests and any other communication relating to this Agreement will be sent to our respective designated focal points as indicated in the Annex.

Nothing in or related to this letter will be treated as a waiver of the privileges and immunities of the United Nations and its subsidiary organs, including UNICEF.

Please confirm your agreement with the conditions set out in this letter, on behalf of your organization, by signing, dating, and returning to us the enclosed copy of this letter.

We look forward to working with you to ensure that the voices of the young people we serve are fully reflected in our work.

Yours sincerely,

_____

[NAME]
[TITLE, Head of UNICEF Office that is leading the consultation]

ACKNOWLEDGED AND AGREED BY AND ON BEHALF OF THE [FULL NAME OF PARTNER]:

_____ Date: _____

[Name]
[Title]

Annex 4: Organizer responsibilities

- Manages overall planning for the consultation, ensuring clarity about:
  - The consultation's purpose
  - The budget and human resources available to support planning, implementation, documentation, analysis and follow-up
  - Scope and number of young people to involve
  - Key consultation questions to ask young people
  - How consultation findings will be analysed and any opportunities for involving young people's representatives in the analysis (see Part IV. Analysing the findings and writing a report)
  - How consultation findings will be used to inform practice or policy developments
- Appoints a safeguarding focal point and collaborates with that person to ensure safeguarding measures are in place and safeguarding procedures are fully applied (see Annex 8: Safeguarding focal point responsibilities)
- Coordinates information sharing and planning with partners (e.g., NGO partners, civil society organizations, youth organizations and networks, and organizations of people with disabilities) who can reach, inform and engage young people from backgrounds that are relevant to the consultation
- Ensures arrangements for timely and appropriate payment or compensation for partners and young people who are part of the consultation team. Shares clear information with young people who are part of consultation teams (or the analysis group) about how their contributions will be valued through financial compensation or other incentives, such as provision of capacity-building, certificates of participation or other relevant opportunities
- Ensures that young people, parents, caregivers and guardians have sufficient information about the consultation's purpose and young people's potential roles (see Annex 10: Sample invitation letter to consultation with young people)
- Ensures young people understand and have signed informed assent (for those under 18) or informed consent (for those over 18) for their participation in the consultation (see Annex 11: Informed assent and consent form for young people and guardians)
- Collaborates with the safeguarding focal point to:
  - Ensure consultation team members have satisfactory background checks completed and recorded
  - Find a safe and accessible consultation venue (including accessible bathrooms) or a safe online platform for the consultation (see key considerations for organizing accessible meetings)
  - Ensure parents and guardians of young people under 18 understand and have signed the consent form authorizing the young person to participate in the consultations (see Annex 11: Informed assent and consent form for young people and guardians)

- Arrange safe travel for young people to and from the consultations, when necessary
- Maintain information on young people's emergency contacts and participants' special needs
- Inform young people about the availability of the safeguarding focal point, who they can turn to if they feel uncomfortable or unsafe
- Ensure that team members observe and respect the confidentiality of young people's personal information

→ Ensures all consultation team members have or receive:

- Sufficient experience or training for their roles, including training on psychological first aid to ensure a sensitive and timely response to young people in distress or disclosing harm
- Relevant supervision and monitoring
- A signed code of conduct (see Annex 2) and confidentiality agreement (see Annex 3)

→ Informs young people that they can approach organizers at all times for questions or concerns before, during and after the consultation

→ Arranges to have staff or volunteers Marcy/Fabio/Kristine available to support large on-site events, including a help desk to answer questions on logistics, Wi-Fi, the venue, accessible bathrooms, etc.

→ Ensures that the reporter documents consultation findings and completes the report (Annex 8: Sample transcript reporting format) in the agreed language

→ Carries out or supervises the analysis of consultation findings, ensuring disaggregation of data and findings from different groups of young people based on age, gender, disability, race, ethnicity, and geographic location (see Part IV. Analysing the findings and writing a report)

→ Ensure that key findings are shared with relevant decision makers, so young people's views can be used to influence the relevant audience (e.g., senior managers developing a strategic plan, policymakers refining a law that affects young people)

Annex 5: Facilitator responsibilities

- Ensures preparation for effective facilitation of selected consultation methods:
  - Prior to the consultation, discusses roles and expectations with the organizer
  - Discusses and adapts the consultation format and methods to the local context and young people's specific needs and interests
  - Assigns tasks among co-facilitators
  - Mentors and supports young facilitators
  - Ensures all relevant consultation materials and refreshments are available
  - Shares transparent information about the purpose of consultation
- Helps create an enabling and safe environment where young people, including those who are shyer or more vulnerable, can freely and safely express their views without discrimination:
  - Shares the agenda
  - Facilitates icebreaker activities
  - Ensures young people have sufficient information about the consultation, its purpose, and realistic expectations concerning their participation
  - Explains to young people that their participation is voluntary and that they have the option to withdraw
  - Encourages young people to establish ground rules at the beginning of the consultation to enhance respectful, inclusive and safe participation
  - Promotes respect for the views of each young person regardless of age, gender, sexual identity, race, ethnicity, religion or disability
  - Introduces the safeguarding focal point and encourages young people to reach out to this person if they feel uncomfortable or unsafe
  - Reminds young people that their views will be anonymous and confidential, but that they will be shared if a protection concern is raised to ensure timely support and follow-up
  - Uses clear language that is easily understood by all, and responds to young people's queries
  - Encourages and supports young people to co-facilitate activities and energizers
  - Supports group work, including gender and age-specific groups, in contexts where this enables freedom of expression
  - Encourages and supports use of creative interactive consultation methods, using art, drama, visual methods, tailored to the consultation's purpose and young people's interests and capacities

- → Ensures that young people are not asked insensitive questions and that they protected from harmful information they do not need to know and for which they may not have the understanding and maturity to cope; facilitators must be prepared to stop discussions that are inappropriate or harmful and to get support from the safeguarding focal point if a young person is distressed or discloses harm
- → Encourages young people to share feedback about the process and outcomes of the consultation
- → Supports young people's role in the analysis of the consultation findings, when possible (see Part IV. Analysing the findings and writing a report)

Annex 6: Reporter responsibilities

- Becomes familiar with the consultation's purpose, the proposed consultation methods and any reporting templates prior to the consultation
- Ensures access to relevant reporting materials (e.g., computer, notebook, pens, audio recorder, or camera)
- Collaborates with other consultation team members to:
  - Plan whether or not to use audio recordings to complement the note-taking
  - Ensure shared expectations regarding the comprehensiveness and depth of reporting
  - Ensure that young people create name badges with their gender, age, and initials. For example, a female, 12-year-old called Ana Kaley has the code F12AK, a male 16 year old called Pedro Juan has the code M16PJ, a 17 year old called Jay Hana who is transgender has the code MF17JH
- Uses individual codes in all reporting (no full names or other identification) to provide an anonymous way to record data
- Records in detail the discussions and outcomes of the consultation; photographs or takes screenshots of any relevant documentation that is produced by the participants; and produces a full report, including transcription, on the consultation in accordance with any provided templates (see Annex 8: Sample transcript reporting format)
- Labels flip charts or other consultation products with title, date, age group and number of male, female, other gender participants
- Notes young people's views (in the actual languages used) during activities either on a flip chart, in a notebook, or directly into the reporting template, including individual unique codes whenever possible
- Transcribes all key consultation materials using the agreed reporting formats; provides translation of transcripts into an agreed-upon language, when necessary; and delivers all documents and reporting work by the stated deadline
- Ensures safe storage and transfer of all data from young people and their guardians, including safe storage of any recordings and transcripts using restricted, password-protected files (see Annex 14: Safe transfer and storage of data)

Annex 7: Safeguarding focal point responsibilities

- Collaborates with organizer to ensure planning and implementation of young people's participation that is safe and sensitive to risk
- Ensures that all the consultation team members and other relevant people (e.g., chaperones, translators, and interpreters):
  - Know and fully understand the organization's safeguarding procedures and will ensure such procedures are applied in a timely manner
  - Have signed a code of conduct (see Annex 2: Sample code of conduct)
  - Are briefed on their specific roles and aware of their safeguarding responsibilities
- Ensures that event-related risks have been identified, safeguards have been put in place, and ongoing efforts are made to assess and mitigate risks during and following consultations; wherever possible, assesses and mitigates risks and harms associated with young people's participation in collaboration with the organizer, facilitators, and young people themselves (see Young People's Participation and Mental Health: A Protocol for Practitioners)
- Ensures an updated mapping of available referral services, including mental health and psychosocial support services and other forms of support (medical, legal, protection, education, or health)
- Collaborates with the organizer to:
  - Ensure consultation team members have satisfactory background checks completed and recorded
  - Ensure access to a safe and accessible consultation venue or a safe online platform for the consultation
  - Ensure parents or guardians of young people under 18 understand and have signed the consent form authorizing participation (see Annex 11: Informed consent and assent form for young people and guardians)
  - Ensure safe travel for young people to and from the consultations, when necessary
  - Maintain information on young people's emergency contacts and participants' special needs
  - Inform young people about the availability of the safeguarding focal point, who they can turn to if they feel uncomfortable or unsafe
  - Ensure that team members observe and respect the confidentiality of young people's personal information

- Vigilant and promptly acts as the first point of contact for safeguarding concerns that arise during in-person or online consultations; is available during in-person and online consultations to support any young person who expresses distress or discomfort or who discloses abuse or other forms of harm about themselves or others
- Ensures timely follow-up and relevant referrals in a young person's best interests, and follows organizational safeguarding procedures, including documenting key incidents
- Ensures young people are protected from any harmful information they do not need to know and for which they may not have the understanding and maturity to cope
- Implements agreed organizational procedures for in-person consultations, including:
  - A 'lost child' procedure (see Annex 16: Lost child procedures) that includes meeting places known to young people in case they become separated
  - A way to document all emergencies, accidents and thefts

Annex 8: Sample transcript reporting format

Results from the consultation with young people

Please refrain from using any data or information that could help identify the youth participants in this report (see Annex 14: Safe transfer and storage of data). Use the individual code or state the gender and age of any young person quoted.

Background information

Name of the country: _____

Age	10–14	15–19	20–24
Number of girls			
Number of boys			
Number of those with other gender identities			
Number of young people with disabilities			

Any other relevant background details on the group; for example, please mention if there was participation from children and young people from ethnic minority groups, children on the move, living with disabilities or in alternative care, out of school or working youth, etc.; and please mention if the participants are youth activists, part of existing projects and specific youth or volunteer networks:

Focus of the consultation

→ Thematic area(s):

→ Consultation question(s):

Consultation contacts

Name and email address of:

- Facilitators:
- Reporters and documenters:

Please fill out the following summary of the consultation with as much details as possible. This consultation summary has been developed using the sample consultation agenda presented in Annex 13: Sample consultation agenda and activities with young people. You can adapt the following reporting format to your needs, as long as it provides clear and detailed information on the input received.

Thematic discussion (first and second discussion question)

- Please outline the consultation Question 1 exactly as it was presented to participants:
- Describe the objectives of the Question 1 discussion as presented to participants:
- What were the participants' initial thoughts about the topic:
  - Please share young people's thoughts that were written on the whiteboard or flip charts (do not forget to take a photo or screenshot of the whiteboard or flip chart to help with your note-taking, but do not take photos of participants):
- Please outline the probing statements used and share the participants' answers in as much detail as possible[10]
- Share final key takeaways and highlights from the discussion

Open conversation and closing discussion

- Provide detailed information on topics discussed during the open conversation and closing discussion. Include any comments or queries made by participants about next steps in the consultation process, as well as details facilitators shared regarding how the consultation findings will be used and when and how feedback will be shared with young people:

Additional reflections

- Include a reflection on the young people that may have been excluded from the findings of this consultation and the implications for our final analysis; for example, potential bias that existed because participants are already highly engaged on the issue and may not represent the perspective of the broader child or youth population in the country
- Share any other reflections on the consultation you may have:

Annex 9: Must dos for consultations with young people

This document provides **essential things (bare minimum) organizers must do before, during and following consultations with young people to ensure meaningful participation.**

BEFORE the consultation

1. **When designing the consultation ensure allocation of sufficient resources for quality participation.**

   a. Plan and budget appropriate resources for meaningful consultation processes: information-sharing, translation costs, skilled moderators/facilitators, transport or chaperone-related costs or other support costs (e.g., additional needs of young people with disabilities, young parents or other groups), safeguarding support including focal point, any costs for reporting and feedback.

   b. Plan for addressing barriers to engaging young people of different genders and age-groups that are most affected by the consultation topic, especially marginalized groups: accessible venues, sign language interpreter, translators, access to internet/ internet data, options of gender and age-separated group work etc.

   c. Allow enough time for young people to consider the request, to accept or decline. Avoid last minute requests, so that there is time to find alternative participants if some young people decline, and enough time for young people to prepare, especially if they have roles as facilitators or presenters.

2. **Develop and share information about the consultation with young people and their guardians**

   a. Share information in accessible, easy-to-understand formats and local languages, and allow enough time and space for questions/answers and preparation

   b. Share clear information about:
      - → The background and purpose of the consultation
      - → The timing
      - → The intended role of young people
      - → The intended audience
      - → How information will be used and how confidentiality of participants views will be protected
      - → The potential benefits for young people
      - → How relevant costs will be covered
      - → If and how compensation will be provided.

3. **Design relevant and inclusive consultation methodology**

   a. Develop consultation questions that are most relevant to the purpose of the consultation, clear and understandable

   b. Select channels (in-person or online) that are accessible to the intended target groups or do a blend

   c. Design consultation methods that are tailored to the capacities and pace of specific age-groups, abilities and interests of those targeted

   d. Train and support moderators/ facilitators to promote inclusion and respect for different views

4. **Ensure participation is safe and sensitive to risk**. This includes:

   a. Assess and minimize risks, including avoiding unsafe or inappropriate consultation questions. Ensure child safeguarding policies and procedures are systematically applied, including:

   → Ensuring voluntary participation with informed assent from young people (under 18 years) and informed consent from parents/guardians and young people (over 18 years), and ensuring individuals are aware that they can opt out if they change their mind (see Annex 11: Informed Assent and Consent Forms)

   → Allocating a safeguarding focal point (and where relevant, adult chaperones)[11]

   → Ensuring facilitators are trained in Psychological First Aid, particularly if organizing consultations on sensitive issues, or with young people affected by adversity

   → Identifying consultation venues or online platforms that are accessible

   → Ensuring young people know who to report to if they feel uncomfortable, unsafe or unwell

   → Asking young people how they would like to be supported

DURING consultations

5. **Ensure sufficient logistic and administrative support** for in-person or online consultations (including transport, materials, timely provision of refreshment etc.)

6. **Moderators/ facilitators promote inclusion, safety and respect for different views**. There is time for:

   a. Icebreaker introduction to get to know one another

   b. Positive agreements to respect different views and build trust

   c. Encouraging young people to be clear on what pronouns (for example, she, her, he, his, they, their etc.)

d. Opportunities for small group break-out discussions, with gender-separate groups where relevant (with sensitive consideration of the needs of transgender individuals)

e. Use of creative arts and other interactive methods for young people to express their views

AFTER consultations

7. **Reflect and learn with young** people about their participation. What was successful? What was unsuccessful or challenging? What could be done differently next time? Why?

8. **Share feedback with young people about how the consultation findings were used** and encourage young people to share feedback with their peers

9. **Support follow-up action**. Wherever possible, explore opportunities for longer-term follow-up and investment in collaborative and young people-led initiatives.

Annex 10: Sample invitation letter to consultation with young people

Please note that you can adapt and adjust this letter to suit your needs. The sample letter can also be adapted and used as an script in non-literate contexts or to introduce the activity during a consultation workshop or webinar. Share your completed letter with young people and their guardians to as part of your procedure to gather informed assent and consent (see Annex 11: Informed assent and consent form for young people and guardians).

Hello,

Please read this letter with your parent or guardian.

We are [please indicate name and organization of the sender] and we are consulting with young people to find out about what they think about [Consultation topic] in order to develop a plan or policy to address this issue [Add details as relevant].

We would like to invite you to take part in this consultation. Before you make a decision, it is important for you to know why this is happening and what it will involve. If you agree to take part, we will ask you to sign the attached consent form. If you are under 18, we will also ask your parent or guardian to sign the informed consent form.

Please take your time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish.

Why have I been chosen?

Young people from [x number of different countries/communities] are being asked to take part. You have been asked to participate in this consultation because of your experience with the topic. We would like to find out more about your own experience and your views on [please indicate selected thematic area and topic of your consultation].

What will I be asked to do if I say yes?

If you say yes to taking part in the consultation, you will be asked to participate in a discussion with a small group of young people of a similar age. The group will involve you discussing questions, such as [please indicate here the questions/objectives of the discussion based on the selected thematic area/ topic]. The location of the consultation will be [insert location], and the discussion will last for [please indicate the length of the consultation here].

A facilitator will lead the discussion, and someone will anonymously note what young people say to include in a consultation report. One member of the facilitation team will focus on young people's protection and well-being.

Do I have to take part in this consultation?

Participation is voluntary and you not have to take part. If you choose to participate and are over 18, you will need to sign the attached consent form. If you are under 18, this letter will be shared your parents or guardians. You will sign the attached assent form, and your guardians will sign the attached consent form. You will not be paid for participating, nor will your choice to take part or not affect any services that you currently receive.

What if I say yes and then change my mind?

You can change your mind during the consultation process and choose to leave. Just let the facilitator know that you wish to withdraw. However, please consider that anything you say before you leave the room will remain in the record, but your name will not appear anywhere.

Will my participation in the study be kept confidential?

Yes, your views will remain confidential. Your name will only be shared in writing with the organizers. The consultation report may include what you say but will not include your name.

The organizers may wish to make an audio recording of the consultations to help create a summary. If so, the recording will be deleted after the summary is completed.

What will happen to the results of this consultation?

Once the consultation is completed, the information will be written into a report. The results will help [Organization] work towards improving [add details as per the purpose of the consultation]. The consultation report will be discussed with relevant decision makers, and the organizers will get back to you to explain how the consultation influenced decisions regarding the topics you discussed.

Finding out more about the purpose of this consultation:

If you would like to find out more about this project and consultation, please contact the Organizer [please insert name and contact information here].

What next?

If you want to take part in the study, read and sign the consent form below. If you are under 18, have your parent or guardian also sign. Return the signed form to the discussion facilitator.

Annex 11: Informed assent and consent form for young people and guardians

Consultation on [please include selected thematic area and topic]

Before you agree to participate, make sure you read and understand the invitation letter and this consent form. Then make sure you tick each box to provide your consent and sign below. If you are under 18, we need your signature for informed assent, as well as your parent or guardian's signature for their consent on this form.

If you have any questions or concerns about this form contact [Organizer].

	Young person	Parent or guardian
I have read the invitation letter (or someone has read it to me), explaining the consultation and its purpose.		
I agree to (my child) taking part in the consultations referred to in the invitation letter.		
I understand that all the personal information gathered will be kept strictly confidential.		
I allow my (my child's) views, stories, drawings, poetry or other contributions shared during the consultation to be used in whole or in part in publications, such as reports, journal articles, newsletters, or social media channels. I understand that my (my child's) identity will remain anonymous.		
I understand the facilitator may make an audio recording of the consultation for note-taking purposes and that the audio file will be deleted after the consultation report is completed.		
I understand that a safeguarding focal point will be present for support and any relevant follow-up in case I talk (my child talks) about anything that could cause harm or distress to myself (my child) or others.		
I understand that if I report (my child reports) any type of abuse happening to myself (my child) or others, the safeguarding focal point may be required to share this information with the relevant authority.		
I understand that my (my child's) participation is voluntary and that I (my child) can withdraw from the consultation at any time. If I withdraw during the consultation, I will notify [Organizer]).		
I understand that the input provided by me (my child) during this consultation will be anonymized and synthesized in the consultation report.		
I declare that I will not consider UNICEF responsible and I will not ask for any sort of payment in case of any accident that occurs with my (my child's) travel to and from the consultation, including injuries, sickness or costs related to the travel beyond what was agreed.		

Participant:

I have read the information sheet and understand all of the points above, and

I **AGREE** to take part take part in this consultation.

Participant's name: _____

Contact number: _____

Gender: _____

Date of birth: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent or guardian (if participant is under 18):

I have read the information sheet and understand all of the points above, and

I **AGREE** to let my child take part in the consultation.

Parent or guardian's name: _____

Contact number: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Annex 12: Icebreaker and energizer activities[12]

Below you will find examples of activities you can use at the beginning of your consultation or whenever you need to shift the room's energy. Keep in mind that some young people have different abilities; for example, some participants may be blind or deaf. Be sure to adjust your icebreaker or energizer activities to include everyone. Prior to the consultation, ask people with disabilities prior for their suggested activities.

Name and action

Encourage all children and facilitators to stand in a circle in alphabetical order (if conducted online, the facilitator reads the order from top to bottom of the participant list). Ask each participant to say their name and show an action of something they like to do (e.g., swimming, playing football or eating ice cream). After each introduction, have each person in turn repeat the name and copy the action. (If online, make sure everyone has their video turned on so they can see each other and copy the action.)

Below are some suggested activities.

"I am glad I am a child/adult because…, but if I were an adult/child I could…" In small groups, children and adults complete the sentence. Share with the wider group. This icebreaker can help identify the differences and disadvantages between adulthood and childhood.

Rock, paper, scissors. Form two teams. Each team decides whether they are paper, scissor or rock. The teams face each other and show their symbol. Paper beats rock, rock beats scissor and scissor beats paper.

Points of contact. People in groups have to cooperate with each other to touch the floor with as many feet, hands, fingers, head, elbows, etc. as a number called out. For example, if 24 is called, the group members need to have 24 points of contact with the floor among them. This game helps with unity, agreement and cooperation.

On the bank, in the pond. All children kneel in a circle. The floor within the circle represents a pond. When the facilitator calls "in the pond," the children have to put their hands on the floor. When the caller calls "on the bank", the children have to put their hands on their knees. The children have to do what the facilitator says, not what she does. (The caller will try to trick the players by saying and doing opposite things.)

Who is the leader? All of the children make a circle. One child is sent out of the room for less than 1 minute. The rest of the children decide who is the leader. They move around in a circle and copy the actions of the leader. The child who was sent out returns to the room and has three chances to identify the leader.

Cross over. Children stand in a circle. The facilitator begins by calling a category, such as

'wearing socks'. Children for whom this category applies cross to another place in the circle. Last to cross the circle becomes the next caller and the game continues.

Seven up. Everyone gets in a circle. One person places a hand on her/his chest and says, "one." Depending on which direction her/his fingers point – to the left or to the right – the person to the left or right calls "two" and points either to the left or the right with hand on chest. This continues up to the number 'six'. For 'seven', the person must place her/his hand on top of the head but make no sound. The game continues with those who make a mistake leaving the game.

More energizers for in-person consultations that can also be adapted for online settings can be found in:

UNICEF's 10 Energizer Cards: Adapted Resource Package for COVID-19 also offer ideas for energizer exercises that work well for in-person consultation or can be adapted to online settings.

UNICEF's Adolescent Kit for Expression and Innovation website.

Annex 13: Sample consultation agenda and activities with young people

Time:	Activity
9:00–9:20	Introductions to the consultation, icebreaker activity (see Annex 12) and positive rules
9:20–10:00	Part 1: Discussion of the first question; consider using an activity to facilitate the question, especially for younger participants (see Annex 1)
10:00–10:10	Break
10:10–10:20	Energizer game (see Annex 12)
10:20–11:10	Part 2: Discussion of the second question; consider using an activity (see Annex 1)
11:10–11:20	Open conversation; ask participants what they want to say or ask
11:20–11:30	Thank you and information on next steps, including feedback mechanisms

[9:00–9:20] Introductions to the consultation, icebreaker activity and positive rules

Objectives:

- To get to know one another and to create a friendly environment between the participants
- To ensure that the aim of the consultation and the methodology are clearly understood

Brief description of the session: Conversations with young people on key priority topics relevant to the consultation purpose.

Materials:

- In-person consultation: Copies of the agenda, information sheet (translated into local language), flip chart paper and pens, statements written on large paper. A statement is a thought-provoking sentence about the topic being discussed, such as, "Young people should not be allowed to participate in adults discussions…."
- Online consultation: Share the screen showing this agenda

Practical steps:

- Welcome all participants and play an icebreaker game to introduce everyone. You can use the ideas in Annex 12: Icebreaker and energizer activities for ideas or simply ask everyone to stand in a circle and ask each person to choose a positive descriptive word that starts with the letter of their name (e.g., Creative Clara, Energetic Edgar, Joyful John).

- Introduce the aims of the consultation, how the conversation will proceed, how input will be collected, and what will be shared with organizers. Allow time for participants to ask questions and be sure to provide satisfactory answers.
- Share a blank flip chart or online whiteboard and encourage young people to verbally share their suggestions to develop and agree to positive ground rules for the day – guidelines that will help everyone feel safe, comfortable, and free to discuss and share their views and experiences on adolescent participation. Examples include respecting each other's views or providing help if someone needs it, such as with writing or understanding the questions being asked.
- After agreeing to ground rules, explain that:
  - All group discussions and individual views will remain confidential unless a significant protection concern is revealed, in which case protection procedures may need to be followed.
  - In general, no names will be recorded about who says what. Findings will be recorded anonymously, noting whether the speaker's gender, age, and initials (e.g., M10LT = a male 10-year-old with initials L.T.).
  - Each young person should wear a name badge with their name and their individual code or rename themselves in the online call. First names should only be used during the consultation but must be eliminated from all notes. When recording their views only their individual code will be used, including their gender, age and initials (e.g., F12AK= a female 12-year-old with initials AK or M13JN = a male 13-year-old with initials JN).
  - Voluntary participation is crucial. Therefore, it is important that all participants are aware they have the choice not to participate in activities. They are encouraged to actively participate and share their views and suggestions, but they are not obligated to answer any question that makes them feel uncomfortable.
  - A designated safeguarding focal point is available during the consultation. That person is the first point of contact if young people feel uncomfortable, unsafe or have any concerns or special needs.

[9:20–10:00] Part 1: Discussion of the first question

Practical steps:

- Ask the participants to spend five minutes reflecting on the question and encourage them to verbally share their views and ideas. Encourage young people to think about what this question means to their own lives, the lives of their friends and their communities. What would they like to do about this question, and how would they like to be part of decision-making to address the issue underpinning the question?
- Invite young people to share their thoughts and ideas. As they make suggestions:
  - In-person: The facilitator or the young people themselves (depending on literacy levels and preference) write each idea on a separate Post-it and stick them on a flip chart that everyone can all see.
  - Online: The facilitator or reporter captures main suggestions on a screen-shared whiteboard (or in Jamboard or Miro).

- Once everyone who wants to contribute has spoken, look at the results together and discuss them. See if similar ideas can be grouped, identify any gaps or additional insights, and add comments. Probing questions can be used; for example:
  - Can you tell me more about….?
  - Why do you think that….?
  - Does anyone else have a suggestion about what they would like to change and why?

By the end of the session, the group will know each other better, understand the consultation's purpose, and learn what is important to each participant. This will help as you move into Part 2 with a question that is a more complex and requires more reflection skills.

[10:00–10:10] Break

[10:10–10:20] Energizer game

Annex 12: Icebreakers and energizer activities provides examples you can use here.

[10:20–11:00] Part 2: Discussion of the second question

Practical steps:

- Explain that this part is intended to explore the consultation topic in more depth.
- Share some prepared statements about the selected question and use those statements to provoke a conversation with the participants in a fun way:
  - In-person: Write the statements on flip charts and hang them on the wall. Explain the statements and then ask participants to stand near the statement they most agree with.
  - Online: Add the statements to your online whiteboard, Jamboard or Miro and ask participants to vote for the statement they most agree with.
- Once everyone has made a choice, use five to seven minutes to listen to participants' reasons for their positions. Ask volunteers to share their reasons, but do not pressure anyone to participate. The reporter should note the views expressed. Ask others with the same position if they have any different reasons that they would like to share. Then move on to explore the views of other participants holding a different position. Participants may change their position after listening to others' perspectives if they wish. Reporters should make note of this.
- Next, begin to dive deeper into the topic and question. Ask participants about their own experiences and how they feel they can make a difference or practically improve on the topic in question.
  - In-person consultation: Give participants 5 minutes to reflect on this and ask them to prepare to verbally share their thoughts or to write down their thoughts on paper which they can hand to the facilitator. After five minutes, discuss the feedback.

- Online consultation: Give participants time to reflect on this and perhaps write down their thoughts on the shared whiteboard, Jamboard or Miro. After five minutes, discuss the feedback.

- After the young people have shared their reflections, the facilitator may ask the participants if they still believe the same statements as in the beginning of the exercise.

- Remember to encourage participants to notice and reflect if there are any gender differences or differences based on age or other factors.

To wrap up, acknowledge that participants supplied valuable and valid input to the process. There are no right or wrong ideas, but many ways of suggesting how the organizers can work for young people, and many ways for them to participate in helping us with making these decisions.

[11:00–11:20] Open conversation – Ask participants what they want to say or ask

Practical steps:

- Ask the participants if they have any questions or anything they would like to talk about (within the scope of the consultation topic). If possible, respond. Note any questions you cannot respond to and tell participants you will find the answers and respond in the future. Tell them when you will respond, and make sure you follow through by that time.

[11:20–11:30] Thank you and information on next steps, including feedback mechanisms

Objectives:

- To summarize and provide feedback on the key findings from the discussions.

- To provide information on how the findings will be used and how participants will be informed of the outcomes of the consultation.

Practical steps:

- The reporter may provide a summary of the key points that have been made during the consultation or can ask young people to suggest three to five key messages that they most want highlighted in the report.

- Remind participants how the consultation findings will be used.

- Thank participants for their contributions and agree on a process and timeline for how and when feedback will be shared with them on how the views have been used.

- Remind them who they can contact within the organization for more information and provide them with contact details. Remember also to share accessible helplines or the safeguarding focal point's contact information in case young people get distressed or upset at a later time.

- Explain how participants can continue to be engaged in actions or advocacy related to this topic.

- Close the session and affirm the importance of the group's work.

Annex 14: Safe transfer and storage of data

Collection of consent forms and personal information

When collecting personal information about consultation participants, the responsible staff member should follow UNICEF's Personal Data Protection Policy and relevant national-level legislation for data protection.

Whenever possible, personal data should not be collected. If so, all identifying information should be handled and stored safely and destroyed when no longer needed. This personal information does not need to be shared with the organizations responsible for compiling the report.

Confidentiality agreements

Any member of the consultation team – including young people who act as co-organizers or co-facilitators – must sign a confidentiality agreement (see Annex 3: Confidentiality agreements for consultation team members). These forms should be completed, signed and submitted to the organizer before any consultation activities are initiated.

Transfer of reports

Be clear about who the written reports should be submitted to. While individual codes may be included in the transcripts, no revealing data (names, initials or contact details) will be included in the final consultation report.

The reports can include details that cannot be used to identify participants, such as:

- Age and gender
- Ethnicity
- Any background information that is relevant to the interpretation of their inputs (e.g., young person with disabilities)

These reports will be made available to the relevant project managers and other staff and associates working on the report or the wider organization.

Annex 15: Guidance when taking photos or videos

When taking photos

- Ask permission – get consent.
- Take photos of young people and adults in a respectful, dignified way (e.g. persons are clothed).
- Use camera angles that are at a standard height, rather than having footage that 'looks down' on persons with disabilities.
- Take photos of young people with and without visible disabilities interacting and engaging.
- Avoid 'zooming in' on impairments in a dramatic way, think about the context and approach.
- Add alternative text (description) and captions to your photo properties.

When developing videos

- When taking footage, avoid camera angles that look down on persons with disabilities or zoom in unnecessarily on impairments. It's possible to subtly show assistive devices like crutches and wheelchairs but unless that is the focus of the story, it needs to be balanced and respectful.
- Avoid graphics and animations that flash several times per second and could contribute to seizures.
- Use audio or voiceover of all written text (including for credits, websites) in videos and clips.
- Caption and add transcripts to the videos that you use, making sure that the text is a large enough and has a clear colour contrast so that the text isn't lost in the background.
- Consider adding sign language interpretation to the video.
- Consider the video location/venue ensuring that it is accessible, including toilets.
- Consider the communication needs of persons with disabilities and if required engage sign language interpreters.
- In interviews with persons with intellectual disabilities, use simple, plain language, avoiding complex questions.
- In interviews, ask questions directly to the person with a disability and not to the caregiver/assistant (unless they are a focus in the video).

Annex 16: Lost child procedure

This procedure must be communicated to all team members, participating children and young people, caregivers and accompanying adults.

1. **Quick check (10 minutes)**: Anyone who is unable to find a missing child or young person after searching or inquiring for 10 minutes must immediately notify the safeguarding focal point.

2. **Search (about 60 minutes)**: The safeguarding focal point, in consultation with the young person's responsible chaperone, must assess the situation. Decide upon a short amount of time – no longer than an hour – for a further search and inquiries to be made of the relevant persons (event, hotel, restaurant, security personnel, etc.). Chaperones and children or young people may be enlisted to help, keeping all children and young people under supervision.

3. **Report to authorities**: If the child or young person is not located through the quick check or search, the event or trip coordinator must report the missing child or young person to the relevant local authorities (such as police) and inform the caregiver.

    a. The safeguarding focal point must document the circumstances in which the child or young person has gone missing and where she/he/they was last seen and prepare a detailed physical description of the child or young person to include their hair and eye colour, approximate height and build and clothing she/he/they was wearing. The information, together with any photo available, must be provided to local authorities. A copy of the report submitted to the local authority must be retained for record.

4. **Next steps**: After a search coordinated by the safeguarding focal point or local authorities has concluded – whether or not the child or young person is found – the organizer, safeguarding focal point and chaperones must discuss next steps and who is responsible for each step, including:

    → Addressing any perceived injury or need for care for the young person

    → Inquiring what happened while the child or young person was unsupervised

    → Integrating the retrieved child or young person back into their group, when appropriate

    → Providing alternative means of care when child or young person cannot be returned to their group

    → Determining which actions will be taken by childcare services in the event a lost child or young person is not retrieved by the end of the business day

Endnotes

1 CRC Article 12, para. 1: "States Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child." (UN General Assembly, 1989)

2 UNICEF (2020) Engaged and Heard! Guidelines for Adolescent Participation and Civic Engagement: https://www.unicef.org/media/73296/file/ADAP-Guidelines-for-Participation.pdf. This definition is from the 'Conceptual Framework for Measuring Outcomes of Adolescent Participation', UNICEF, 2019, <www.unicef.org/media/59006/file>

3 Including efforts to apply the nine basic requirements for effective and ethical participation of young people outlined by the Committee on the Rights of the Child. Committee on the Rights of the Child, 2009, General Comment No. 12 The Right of the Child to be Heard, CRC/C/GC/12, para. 134.

4 Platforms are the ways through which the consultations will take place, and methodologies are the tools and ways through which the consultations are facilitated. The choice of platform influences what methodologies are feasible. Thus, it is important to think about both in parallel during your planning process.

5 <https://www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org/sites/default/files/accessible_meetings_toolkit.docx>

6 In some cases, participants with disabilities will have personal care assistant costs. These should be taken into consideration.

7 United Nations (2021). Guidelines: Consulting Persons with Disabilities (p.9).

8 Quotes should be anonymous, but may mention the gender, age and relevant background details. For example, a 15 year old female from a remote rural community. Quotes can be useful to illustrate key findings and to enable young people's own words and messages to be heard.

9 Be sure to offer an alternative form of agreement (e.g., voice recording) for those who are unable to sign.

10 The amount of detail required will depends on the type of consultation and its purpose. In many cases, organizers want all the answers in as much accurate detail as possible for data analysis purposes. In other cases, the consultations are more generic and only looking for overall sentiments from participants. So the objectives and use of the consultation will determine the detail level of the reporting format.

11 Providing logistics and reimbursement for safe travel, and accessible safe accommodation arrangements. For international events, this may require timely applications to secure passports/identity papers, visas, flights, provide health and travel insurance.

12 O'Kane, C., Meslaoui, N. and Barros, O. (2016) Research Toolkit: Facilitators Guide for organising consultations with children in support of the International Campaign "It's Time to Talk – Children's Views on Children's Work. Kindernothilfe, Save the Children and Terre des Hommes.

13 Adapted from Save the Children (2014). A Toolkit for Monitoring and Evaluating Children's Participation: A 10-step guide to monitoring and evaluating children's participation. Booklet 4.

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