

Scope of Work

Consultancy to develop tools to support child participation in Covid-19-affected areas

Background

The Covid-19 pandemic has fundamentally altered some of the ways in which child protection actors are able to work with children, to consult with them, and to elicit their opinions and feedback about decisions that affect their lives. The dynamics of engagement with children have dramatically shifted across the world as a result of school closures and stay-at-home or quarantine orders in large swaths of the world, reducing the everyday interactions that teachers, health care workers, and child protection workers typically had with children. Traditional, in-person interviews with children have also become increasingly difficult to organize, and restrictions on congregating have meant that gathering children to participate in group-based consultations is impossible in many parts of the world, especially in contexts where there are few or no computers, where there is little or no internet connectivity and where there are low levels of literacy.

Against this daunting backdrop, child protection actors know that eliciting children's ideas and voices are more necessary than ever: rather than designing programs that assume they are helping children, we must find creative, out-of-the-box methods to hear from children in ways that remain safe and secure. Some child protection workers have indicated that they are broadcasting information about Covid-19 and child protection issues but have not yet managed to adapt their feedback loops to receive information back from children and families. The core questions that this consultancy will seek to answer are the following: How do we pick up children's voice and participation in Covid-19-affected areas where ways of operating have changed fundamentally in the past weeks and months? How do we recalibrate our ways of working so they are both adaptive and safe as we try new methods of engaging with children to elicit their voices, concerns, and experiences? How do we learn what children perceive to be their sources of resilience?

As part of a new partnership with the Child Protection Area of Responsibility (CP AoR) of the Global Protection Cluster, the Care and Protection of Children (CPC) Learning Network is seeking a consultant(s) to support the development of tools related to child participation in areas affected by Covid-19. Although we understand that online, mobile, and remote technologies are likely to be important mechanisms for adapting our ways of ensuring child participation, we do not yet have the conceptual scaffolding or the practical tools to understand how to engage children meaningfully in areas affected by Covid-19 where child protection workers' typical access to children has been severely curtailed.

Steering Committee

A small Steering Committee--which will operate with very short deadlines--will help to guide this work. The CPC Learning Network will be responsible for convening the Steering Committee with significant support from the CP AoR, particularly the CP AoR's thematic specialists and

Help Desks. Additional members may include: the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC); the GSM Association, an industry organisation that represents the interests of mobile network operators worldwide; Child Helpline International; and the Global Partnership to End Violence Against Children.

Outputs/deliverables

Rather than working in a classic design of conducting interviews, analyzing data, and report-writing, we expect this work to happen in a more iterative way--in which the consultant(s) are updating products as new conversations are able to inform them. Bearing that in mind, we acknowledge that the following deliverables may shift, and we will be conscientious in our negotiations with the consultant(s) concerning their time. We expect the below deliverables could be developed in their first iteration within 20 working days.

- 1) A categorization of the various contexts in which child protection actors must seek to adapt their programming. This categorization should take into account: mobile networks; internet connectivity; popular modes of communication; barriers to accessing phones and other forms of communication among various populations (e.g., girls, children with disabilities, etc.); population density; quarantine and/or stay-at-home orders; literacy levels; and other factors as identified during conversations. This categorization is likely to take the form of a detailed table or spreadsheet.
- 2) A set of tips for engaging with children in each of the contexts developed. These tips should include:
 - a) A decision tree about when and how to engage in child consultation and where possible child participation efforts;
 - b) Tools proposed to engage with children at various points of the program cycle, at various age groups and developmental stages, and in various contexts, with notes about the skills and knowledge needed to safely use these tools;
 - c) Safeguarding considerations for each tool/method;
 - d) Notes about how to reach particularly marginalized children and families in each setting (gender considerations, refugees and displaced people, people with disabilities, and others who fall on the wrong side of the digital divide); and
 - e) Notes about how coordination groups might use participatory approaches to maximum effect to understand needs, design programs, and collect feedback on response.

We estimate that these tips will take the form of a ten-page document.
- 3) Organization of the tools that are consolidated during the development of the above tips into a navigable set of folders, which will eventually comprise a compendium of tools.

Once the above are designed, follow-on steps (which are not currently part of this Scope of Work but rather the broader arc of the project), may include piloting some of the tools in various locations and working to adapt the tools to various stages of the humanitarian program cycle, including determining needs, informing project design & adaptations, and monitoring the response.