THE FACILITATORS GUIDE TO THE SPIDER TOOL

A self assessment and planning tool for child led initiatives and organisations

By Clare Feinstein and Claire O'Kane

3

Save the Children

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The vision

Save the Children works for:
- a world which respects and values each child
- a world which listens to children and learns
- a world where all children have hope and opportunity

The mission

Save the Children fights for children's rights.
We deliver immediate and lasting improvements to children's lives worldwide.

The Facilitators Guide has been produced to accompany 'The Spider Tool - a self assessment and planning tool for child led initiatives and organisations', Save the Children, 2005.

The Spider Tool was piloted during 2004-2005 in seven countries and two regions where Save the Children works. A specific request emerging from the piloting was for a Facilitators Guide to be produced to accompany the tool. This would help train and prepare both adult and child facilitators in use of the tool before they used it in workshops with child led initiatives and organisations.
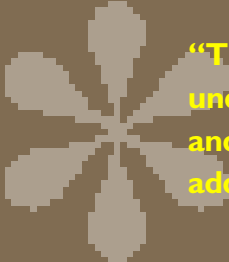
The Spider Tool is intended to help children assess their own initiatives and organisations according to a number of core dimensions (Key Quality Elements), to assess what they are trying to achieve, what they feel they are good at and areas they feel should be improved. It is also intended as a tool for reflecting upon the learning process that children, young people and adults go through as they work together on collective initiatives. And finally, it is intended that children use their assessments to plan changes and action to improve their organisation and their collective efforts.

Effective use of the tool - as with any tool - depends on how the process is facilitated. All facilitators who piloted the Spider Tool emphasised the need to ensure genuine participation by children, who should be encouraged to identify key quality elements, to think about their own indicators, to make their own assessments of the strengths and weaknesses of their initiatives and organisations and their own plans for improvements. Good facilitation of the process also requires flexibility by encouraging children to adapt the tool to their own contexts and initiatives, those they are most familiar with.

Effective use of the tool also requires TIME and good facilitation by adults and/or children who have established good rapport with the

children involved in the workshop, who understand the concept of child participation, the 'vision' behind child-led movements and groups and the meaning and implementation of genuine adult-child partnerships.

This Facilitators Guide is intended to provide users of the Spider Tool with a basic framework and some basic information for workshops with child led initiatives and organisations. It has been developed based on feedback from facilitators who have facilitated the tool. We thank Save the Children and its local partner organisations (adult and child led organisations) in Afghanistan, India, Mozambique, Nicaragua, Uganda, Wales and Zimbabwe for their valuable insights, which have fed into this process. We particularly thank Save the Children Norway, who developed their own Facilitator's Guideline specifically for use in piloting the Spider Tool in Mozambique and Zimbabwe.

> **"The tool does enable a learning process that makes it possible to better understand child participation and the concept of 'child led'. ... With ample time and very able facilitators to support the process, the tool can be adapted to address the status of CLIs/CLOs in both rural and urban areas."**
>
> (pilot project, Uganda)

How to use the guide

This facilitators guide will help you:

- Introduce local partners to the Spider Tool
- Train and prepare both adult and child facilitators in the use of the Spider Tool
- Use the Spider Tool in workshops with girls and boys from child led initiatives and organisations
- Prepare for follow up processes (action planning and follow through)

Clare Feinstein & Claire O'Kane
2005
On behalf of Save the Children's interest group on
child led initiatives and organisations
A sub-group of Save the Children's Child Participation
Working Group (CPWG) - 2003-2005

Contents

*C*onsider holding a preparatory workshop or briefing session for local partners to inform them about the Spider Tool and to invite them to use it with child led initiatives and organisations that they work together with, know or support.

Here are some ideas for introducing the tool to local partners …
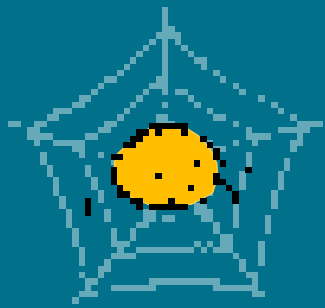You may like to start by introducing the idea of **quality thinking** by taking an example from everyday life. For example, what key elements would you look for if you were buying a jacket or a bicycle? Ask the partners to apply the same kind of thinking to child led initiatives and organisations by asking themselves why some groups function better than others and what criteria they would use to determine this. The Key Quality Elements chosen by the participants should be recorded on flip-charts.

Then introduce the Spider Tool as a self assessment and planning tool for child led initiatives and organisations. **For more information consult the accompanying publication:** *'The Spider Tool – a self assessment and planning tool for child led initiatives and organisations'*, **Save the Children, 2005.**

How it started: with a partial piloting in a regional workshop with representatives from child led initiatives and organisations in Nepal in January 2004, through a full piloting with children's groups in a province in Northern Afghanistan in February 2004, through a series of pilots in five other countries and one other region during the rest of 2004 and into 2005.

What it is: a tool for child led initiatives and organisations to assess what they are doing and how they are doing it; what they would like to improve in their initiative/organisation and how they can go about achieving this. It is a tool that allows children and adults to reflect, analyse, share, dialogue and plan action.

Distribute copies of *'The Spider Tool – a self assessment and planning tool for child led initiatives and organisations'*, **Save the Children, 2005,** and present the Key Quality Elements (KQEs) identified by Save the Children, in collaboration

with child led initiatives and organisations and their adult support organisations. Check the list of Key Quality Elements originally chosen by the group earlier in the introduction exercise. If some of the group's KQEs are not covered by those identified by the Spider Tool the group will have to decide whether or not to add them. **Adding new KQEs also means developing new indicators for them on a scale of 1-4.**
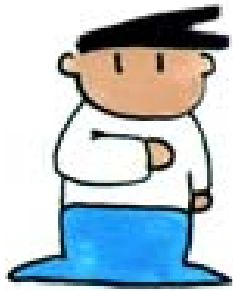
As this is an introduction to the tool you may not want to go through each KQE in detail. You might like to propose that the group looks at specific KQEs simply as a means of testing the tool before actually applying it with child led initiatives and organisations. For example, as most local partners will be adult support organisations you may want to suggest that they consider KQEs 11-14, dealing mainly with external requirements such as adult support, partnerships and influence, networking and so on. You could also ask the group to prioritise which KQEs they would like to study in more detail (for example, a total of 6). Depending on the number of participants involved, this could be done either by consensus in plenary or by breaking into smaller groups that will prioritise the KQEs they wish to work with.

Make a large drawing of the spider web on a flip-chart and explain how to build a current web (where we are now) and an ideal web (where we think we will be in two years time). Present the group with the option of building the current and ideal web at the same time for each KQE or as separate exercises – first the current assessment and then the ideal assessment. **Based on experience it is recommended to do both current and ideal assessments at the same time when introducing the tool to partner organisations.**

Introduce the four levels of indicators as developed in the piloting of the Spider Tool. **It is important to emphasise that the indicators are not a dimension of order and it is not necessary to reach level 4!** The level to reach should be clearly related to context, resources, priorities etc.

Ask the small groups to assess their prioritised KQEs by starting with the current reality (where they are) and then the future ideal (where they think they will be in a given period of time – 1-2 years) and, after discussion, to mark the current and ideal on the spider web for each KQE using different colour pens. After assessing

all the prioritised KQEs, each group should draw its own current and ideal spider web by joining up the respective points on the web. **As the local partners are not actually representatives of child led initiatives or organisations, for the purpose of this introductory exercise you can ask them to assess the KQEs by imagining they are a children's group that they know personally.**

Groups report back to plenary and discuss the assessments of the KQEs, plus an assessment of the tool itself – did they find it useful? Do they think it can be used by the child led initiatives and organisations they work with/know/support? If so, how and when? Ask them to devise a plan for facilitating workshops with children on the Spider Tool.

Remember to introduce local partners to the action planning part of the tool, to the need to intersperse assessment of the KQEs with energisers and other exercises (for example, life skills, visioning etc.,) and the important role of facilitators in helping identify and record the issues that emerge from use of the tool with children and young people, such as children's need for support, capacity building, ethical issues, exploring a common vision.

3
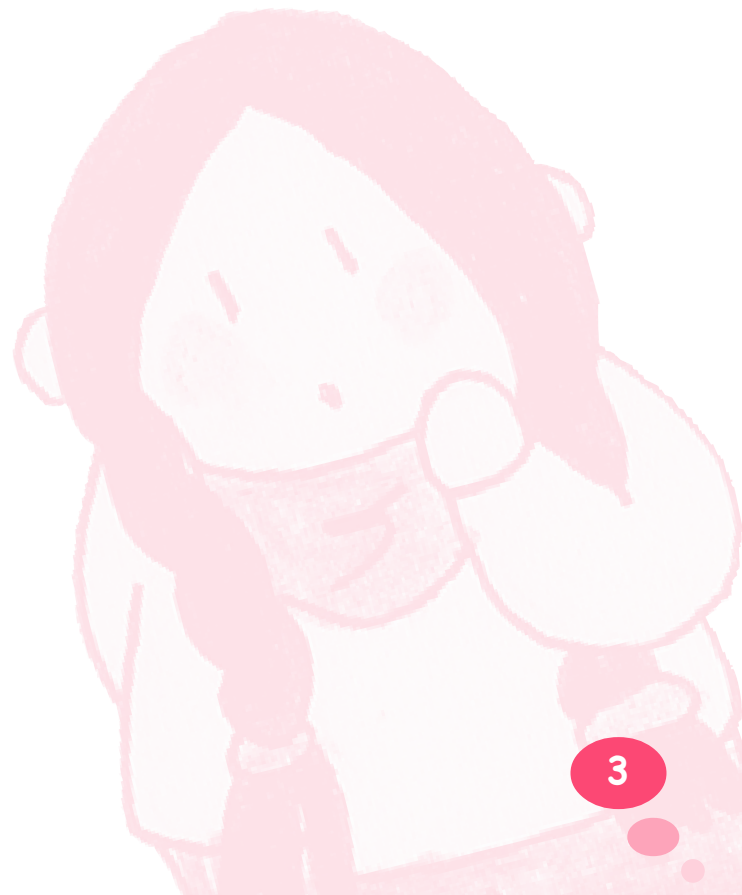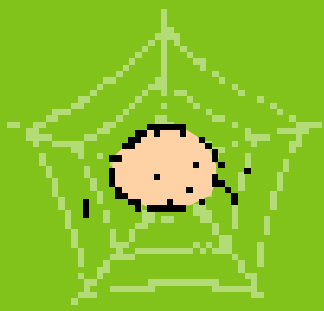
"The tool requires skilled facilitators who are knowledgeable in participatory methodologies."

(pilot project, Uganda)

The Spider Tool is best facilitated by adult and/or child facilitators who are familiar with the child led initiative or organisation involved in the workshop. While it may seem obvious, facilitators should also understand the concept of child participation as well as the 'vision' behind child led movements and groups, and the meaning and implementation of genuine adult-child partnerships. Facilitators should also be experienced in facilitating workshops with children and young people and need to be well prepared for the task. For these reasons, consider introducing the tool to them in an introductory workshop/exercise/briefing session as outlined in the previous section.

Key to good facilitation is flexibility and adaptation to the local context. All facilitators who piloted the Spider Tool emphasised the need to ensure genuine participation by children, who should be encouraged to identify Key Quality Elements, to think about their own indicators, to make their own assessments of the strengths and weaknesses of their initiatives and organisations and their own plans for improvements. Good facilitation of the process also requires flexibility by encouraging children to adapt the tool to their own contexts and initiatives, those are most familiar with.

Taking TIME for reflection, analysis, dialogue, assessment and action planning is another key conclusion that has emerged from piloting the tool.

A key role of the facilitators in this process is to challenge and probe the assessments the children make of their groups according to the Key Quality Elements. In some cases children may be very open, honest and realistic in
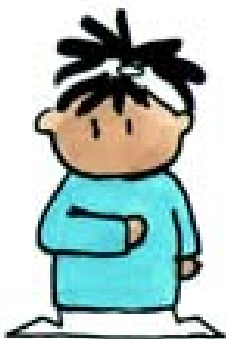
examining and discussing their group's strengths and weaknesses. In other cases, children may over- or under-rate their group and may therefore need to be encouraged to identify and explain the reasons for their assessment of a particular element. However, this additional probing should be done without directing or influencing the final assessment by the children. The need to challenge and probe reinforces the conclusion that this tool is best facilitated by people who are familiar with the child led initiative or organisation as they will be best placed to assess the assessments made by the children.

The following examples of how the Spider Tool was piloted in Nicaragua, Mozambique and Wales provide some useful ideas on how adult and child facilitators can be trained to use the tool.

In Nicaragua,

- A technical team was established, comprising one young person, eight adults representing partner organisations and two staff members from Save the Children Norway in Nicaragua
- A team of 12 young facilitators from child led initiatives and organisations piloted the guidelines for use of the tool. They were trained to use the tool and gather information from the piloting. The technical team, together with the young facilitators, prepared a methodological guide for the facilitators and a common design for the workshops with the children and young people
- Strategies for ensuring implementation of the workshops were prepared
- Sixty-seven children and young people, aged 8-18 years, from four different child led groups and organisations participated in the workshops on the Spider self assessment and planning tool
- Information from the workshops was processed and compiled into a national report
- The workshops were evaluated
- A working group from the partner organisations organised a follow up process.

In Mozambique,

- The Spider Tool was introduced to representatives from seven partner organisations, one representative from Save the Children US in Mozambique and seven staff members from Save the Children Norway in Mozambique
- A work plan for the pilot project was drawn up, including:
  - Reviewing the Spider Tool documents and translating them into Portuguese
  - Distributing information from the pilot project that had already taken place in Nicaragua

- Constituting a National Coordinating Team (NCT) for the pilot project in Mozambique and preparing a guide for the facilitators of the workshops with children and young people
- The NCT organised a training for 14 facilitators from the partner organisations
- A staff member from Save the Children Norway in Mozambique participated in the piloting of the Spider Tool in Harare, Zimbabwe, with working children from Raffingora Children's Club
- The Spider Tool was piloted with 95 children and young people, aged 9-22 years, from nine child led groups and organisations. The NCT coordinated and supported the process of piloting the Spider Tool as well as the follow up planning process based on the results of the assessment and action planning
- The results of the workshop were processed and compiled into a national report. A national plan of action was prepared, focusing on how child led groups and organisations can develop and increase the quality of how they function.

In Wales the aim was to:

- Pilot the Spider Tool – explain the idea of a 'pilot' and 'evaluation'
- Facilitate young people in evaluating Funky Dragon as a young people's led organisation (strengths and weaknesses)
- Identify young people to facilitate this process elsewhere.

The concept of Key Quality Elements (KQEs) was explained by using an analogy of buying a bicycle and the elements you would look for. The group was then asked to identify what KQEs they would use to assess their own organisation (Funky Dragon). The group were then given a list of the KQEs as identified by the Spider Tool. These were matched to those identified by the group in the initial assessment of their organisation. The timetable for the 2-day workshop was then introduced – KQEs would be addressed on day one and the resulting action plan on day two. The group was then introduced to how the KQEs would be approached. They were divided into three groups: those relating to Adults and the external world (KQEs 3, 11, 7, 14, 12, 13), Relationships with young people (KQEs 1, 2, 4, 6, 8), and Individuals (KQEs 5, 8, 9).

One KQE – 15 – was then 'walked through' by giving an introduction to the accompanying indicators (levels 1-4). The levels as described in the Spider Tool

7

were presented and then individuals were asked to stand on a continuum according to their assessment of Funky Dragon in relation to KQE 15. The group was then split into two – those representing the Management Committee and those representing the Grand Council (general members). In separate groups KQE 15 was discussed and analysed in relation to Funky Dragon. In plenary (one large group) the group decided by consensus where they are now in relation to KQE 15 and where they would like to be. This current reality and future ideal were then marked on two large spider webs. The future ideal was made achievable by assessing where Funky Dragon could aim to be in six months time. One of the facilitators will revisit the group in six months to facilitate a process of reviewing their action plan.

In this way the 15 KQEs were assessed. Each session was introduced with an activity. For example, the circle diagram introduced the first session, showing how the 15 KQEs had been grouped. An activity called 'Stepping Out' was used to encourage children to think about the inclusiveness of Funky Dragon as a means of introducing the second circle – Relationships with young people. A star activity – to get young people to note things they have done within Funky Dragon that they are proud of – was used to introduce the third circle – Individuals. (**For all these activities see Appendix I, The Games We Play: Ideas for introducing the activities/Key Quality Elements).**

The Wales pilot project concluded that the tool could be used in their local forums and suggested running 'training of trainers' to build the capacity of groups of young people to deliver the Spider Tool to the rest of their organisation and to other groups of children and young people in Wales.
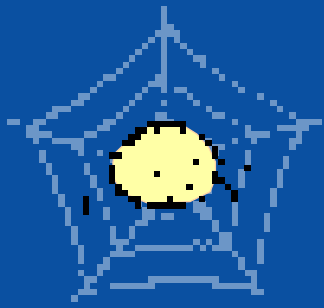
ONE GROUP at a time

The piloting clearly showed that the tool works best when used at any one time with one child led group or organisation, or with several groups who share a similar history, context, priority issues etc. The Zimbabwe piloting concluded in its evaluation of what did not work so well that "*too many different types of children's groups are represented in the same meeting*".

The Nepal regional workshop and the Zimbabwe piloting also highlighted how when several different groups are involved and the children speak several different languages, "*the issue of translation becomes a problem*". While the Nepal regional workshop also showed how the tool can be successfully introduced in fairly complicated circumstances – with 14 child and young people representatives from 14 different child led organisations from six different countries using 8 different languages – a full and meaningful Spider Tool assessment of all the Key Quality Elements with such a diverse group would undoubtedly need far more time.

SMALL GROUP

The tool is also best used with fairly small groups of children. For example, the Zimbabwe piloting concluded that "*groups of 8-10 children are recommended*".
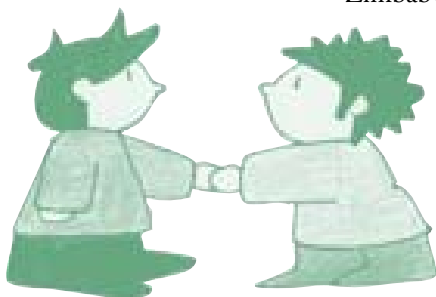
DIVERSE GROUP

Even when working with a single child led group or organisation it is a good idea to involve a mixture of children – that is, representing different ages within the group, different levels of membership (core group or general membership) and a gender mix. In the Wales pilot, for example, two groups were formed for the assessment of key quality elements – the Management Committee of Funky Dragon and its Grand Council or general membership. This meant that the organisation was assessed from different perspectives and allowed for a lot of discussion of different viewpoints during the analysis and assessment.

BRINGING TOGETHER the different perspectives

In the Uganda piloting they opted to separate the groups – adult supporters and child representatives. However, even if some assessment and analysis is done in separate groups there is also a need to bring the different perspectives together at some stage during the process to ensure common ownership of the results of the assessment. "… *at one point, the fundamental objectives of the club/CRSG [child rights support group] and its intent and purposes need to be commonly understood by those involved in it, if the web [Spider Tool] showing the ideal and the action plan are to be successfully developed. In this case we facilitated joint discussions.*"

ESTABLISHED GROUPS and newer groups

As noted in the accompanying publication, '*The Spider Tool - a self assessment and planning tool for child led initiatives and organisations*', *Save the Children, 2005*, the Spider Tool can help:

- existing child led initiatives and organisations become stronger, more inclusive and more influential;
- initiatives that are more adult led become more child led and child driven;
- embed quality thinking from the outset in the development of new groups and networks.

TIME …

The need to ensure that time is adequate was a common theme that emerged from the piloting. The general conclusion was that if the assessment and action planning exercise is carried out over a period of days, time is available for longer discussions, better analysis and motivating and building children's capacities. More time also means that other capacity building exercises – for example, core life skills, visioning – can be integrated into a more complete workshop by weaving these kinds of complementary activities through the Spider Tool assessment. As the Afghanistan pilot noted in its key learnings from the use of the Spider Tool, "*the child representatives found the life skills useful and relevant to the future development of themselves and their groups*".

UNDERSTANDING and translation of key terms

When using the Spider Tool, and especially when translating it into different languages, care needs to be taken to ensure common understanding of some key terms and concepts relating to child participation, child led, representation, inclusion etc. Time for discussion is needed to ensure that there is a common understanding and that appropriate meanings are not lost in translation. The pilot in Mozambique began by reviewing the Spider Tool documents and translating them into Portuguese.

A key learning from the Uganda pilot project was the need for good preparation, especially the translation of key concepts. In Uganda the Spider Tool was piloted with a Child Rights Club and a Child Rights Support Group. Both groups are based in schools where the approach to and environment of learning are not necessarily in tune with one that allows children to freely express their own views. The example highlighted in the Uganda pilot was that "*unless carefully translated and explained, the concept 'child led' may be misunderstood socially and culturally and opposed as an unwelcome idea that puts children against adult authority*". However, despite this observation, the Uganda pilot also concluded that "*the tool does enable a learning process that makes it possible to better understand child participation and the concept of 'child led'*".

11

While every effort has been made to make the Key Quality Elements and their accompanying indicators as child/reader friendly as possible, the Wales pilot noted that it may be a good idea to adapt the KQEs and indicators with some children/young people from the group before the Spider Tool is used.

ADULT SUPPORT to children

One critical part of the Spider Tool assessment and action plan is the use of flip-charts by facilitators from the adult support organisation to record the following issues that emerge from the children's discussions of each KQE:

- Children's support needs
- Children's capacity building needs
- Ethical issues
- Exploring a common vision
- Other important issues.

This is an important part of successful action planning – how to move from the current reality of the organisation to the future ideal and what the children are asking adults to do to help them assert themselves and improve their organisations.

The pilot project in India suggested that in addition to carrying out process documentation which captures the interesting debates amongst the children when they rate the various key quality elements, "*photo documentation is recommended to document each step*". A digital camera is a good tool for this.

PREPARING for follow up

"It is very practical, allowing a clear method of action planning to take forward issues highlighted."

(pilot project, Wales)

Quality follow up of any process or workshop with children is critically important if there is to be any significant or meaningful impact or action. Adult support organisations play a key role in providing support and feedback to children on follow up of the process. The Spider Tool and its accompanying action plan component obviously provide key directions to the child led initiative or organisation itself on how it can move from its current level to where it wants to arrive within a specific time frame. As above, however, adults need to examine the support, capacity building and other needs identified by the children in their assessment of their organisation and be transparent about whether they can follow up and deliver on these issues and, if so, how and in what time frame. Adult support organisations can also help the children in including delivery of the support and other needs in their concrete action planning.

Various concrete plans and ideas emerged as a result of the piloting of the Spider Tool. For example,

- In Mozambique, a national plan of action has been prepared, focusing on how child led groups and organisations can develop and increase the quality of their functioning;
- In Wales, young people expressed an interest in delivering the tool to other groups (being facilitators themselves) and considered the possibility of running 'training of trainers' to build the capacity of groups of young people to deliver the Spider Tool to the rest of their organisation and to other groups of children and young people. They want to encourage use of the tool with adults who work with youth led organisations (to see if there are different perspectives – adults and young people – of the same organisation). They plan

13

to revisit the tool after a certain period and evaluate progress over time in relation to the KQEs;

- In Nicaragua, children and young people were trained in the use of the tool so that they could use it with their own groups;

- In Afghanistan, it was decided that the support and capacity building action points identified will be implemented by Save the Children UK in partnership with the Global Movement for Children (GMC) children's groups. The vision, ethical issues, support and capacity building needs would be discussed at a future meeting of the provincial level children's network and time frames would be decided for the various action points;

- Save the Children Norway has a plan to introduce the Spider Tool in all its country programmes within a certain period as part of a wider strategy to increase quality on children's participation.

It is a good idea to already prepare for follow up while undertaking the Spider Tool assessment by encouraging the children involved to chose a point in the future at which to measure their 'ideal' – where they want to reach. For example, choosing six months or a year for an evaluation serves to make the ideal as realistic as possible.

It is also a good idea to continually assess progress made towards the 'ideal' and fulfilment of the action plan through a rolling evaluation programme that addresses a few KQEs at regular intervals.
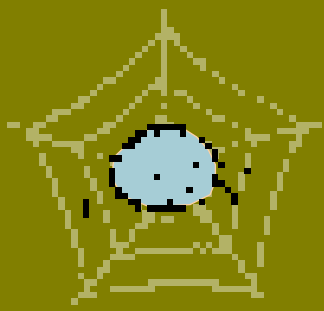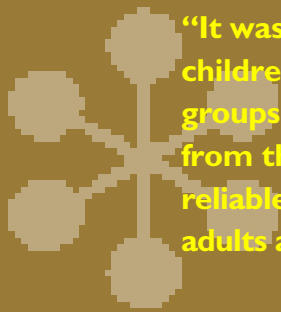
"It was interesting to note that two out of the five locations where there are children's **GMC** groups were much stronger than the other three location groups on a number of the **Key Quality Elements (KQEs)**. The **GMC** groups from these two locations were the groups which had the strongest and most reliable facilitators, thus indicating the positive impact of good facilitation by adults and adult support."

(pilot project, Afghanistan)

THE SPIDER TOOL in 9 easy steps

1. Introduce the tool
2. Introduce quality thinking
3. Introduce the Spider Web
4. Introduce action planning and support needs
5. Develop the Spider Web
6. Plan for action
7. Evaluation of the Spider Tool
8. Follow up
9. Evaluation of the workshop
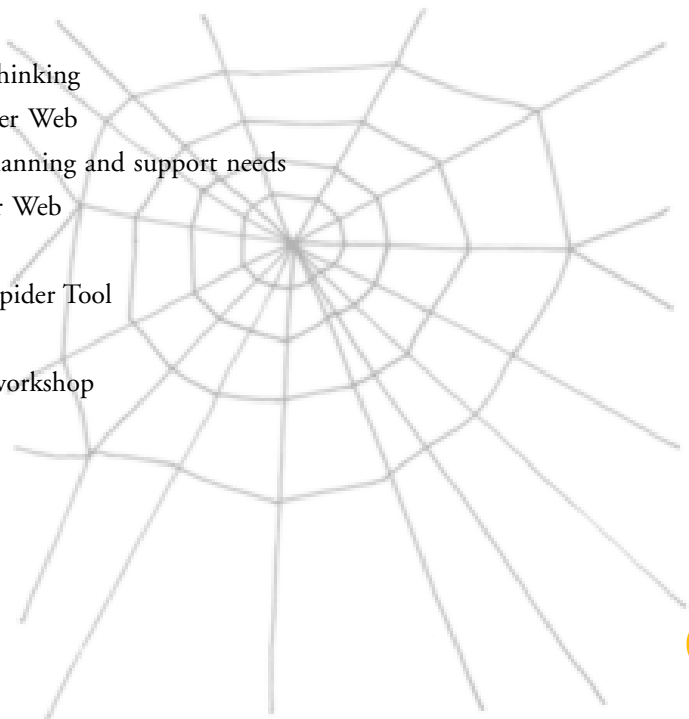
TOP TIPS on use of the Spider Tool

"It is a good evaluation tool - good reflections on the past, good to hear people's views, where we are and what we need to improve. Good visual to show analysis."

(pilot project, Wales - young people)

"It was an easy tool to explain and use and simple to replicate as no expensive equipment is needed, only time… It is very practical, allowing a clear method of action planning to take forward issues highlighted."

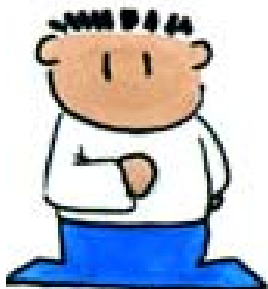(pilot project, Afghanistan - children)

The tool works best when used with **one group at a time.**

The tool is best used with a **group that you know**. Especially when probing a group's assessment of its organisation's strengths and weaknesses, the role of a facilitator who knows the group can be crucial in presenting a meaningful rating of achievements and limitations.

Effective use of the tool requires **time** and **good facilitation**. Time is needed for reflection and analysis and for free and honest self-expression. Good facilitation is crucial by individuals (adults or children) who have a rapport with the children involved and who understand the key concepts involved in child participation, child led initiatives and genuine partnerships.

A 'Top Tip' from Zimbabwe and Afghanistan – by using four days there was time for life skill experiential activities, motivating and building children's capacities.

A 'Top Tip' from India – the exercise should be planned for three days, one-day preparation and two days of actual work.

A 'Top Tip' from Wales – don't try to fit it all in one day — space it out over a period of days, so there is time for longer discussions.

16

Analysis of each KQE is intense and can become repetitive. Use of the Spider Tool therefore calls for **creative and participatory** methods. Interspersing analysis of the Key Quality Elements with energisers, experiential games, life skill activities, drama and drawings can make the overall exercise more interesting and can also help strengthen CLOs/CLIs. For example, in the piloting of the tool in Afghanistan, exploration of KQEs was interspersed by use of energisers, experiential life skills activities, drama and visioning exercises.

"It was an excellent workshop as there were a lot of new approaches... we gained new ways to claim our rights and our life skills."

(pilot project, Afghanistan - children)

"It is good that there is a repetitive process in the tool so that it covers everything."

(pilot project, Wales - young people)
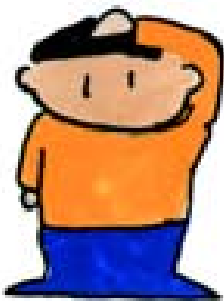
A 'Top Tip' from Wales and Afghanistan – be more creative – use mixed media drama and arts for the development of discussion.
A 'Top Tip' from Zimbabwe – use energisers and interactive games in between discussions and analysis.

Some **ethical** issues emerged from the piloting, which facilitators need to take into account when using the tool. For example, issues around confidentiality and anonymity (what to record and how to 'credit' what people say). This should be done with the total agreement of the children concerned. They need to know the purposes and objectives of any recording of their views or other information. Children must be able to give their informed consent that any information they divulge during the workshop can be used in a report or other public domain. There is also a need to keep a distance in the evaluation to avoid assessments becoming personal, critical or apportioning blame. The facilitator has a crucial role here.

Developing ground rules with the children involved at the beginning of the workshop can help deal with ethical issues that may arise. Always refer back to the ground rules whenever necessary or appropriate.

Save the Children's Practice Standards on Child Participation and the organisation's Child Protection Policy provide essential guidelines and frameworks for ensuring children's meaningful and safe participation. These should be applied at all stages of the process – from preparations through to follow up. They are referenced in the resource section of this Guide.

A 'Top Tip' from Zimbabwe – the workshop should not interfere with school hours (it may go over weekends or happen during school holidays).

Be more accurate in the **rating/ranking** of indicators. The pilots in the Wales and Europe group concluded that it was better to add a .5 to each level of indicator. For example, to allow assessment based on level 1, level 1.5, level 2, level 2.5 etc., as some groups may feel their assessment lies somewhere between two absolute levels. Adding a 0.5 to each level of the web is a way of dealing with this problem. The pilot in Afghanistan encouraged children to make their ratings anywhere along the scale (e.g. 2, 2.25, 2.5, 2.75, 3).

Some groups may be able to easily conceptualise a numerical scale of ranking as proposed in the Spider Tool. Other groups may find it harder to rank based on such a progressive improvement shown by the indicators. Being flexible and adapting the tool to the contexts and understanding of the children is key. For example, you could consider adapting the Spider Tool to a ranking system based on good, fair, poor etc.

Some facilitators have questioned the degree of subjectivity or objectivity used by participants when making their ratings. In some of the pilots the facilitators reflected upon how honest and open children are in discussing their organisational weaknesses and strengths. In other pilots, however, facilitators suggested that children and adults sometimes give unrealistic ratings of their achievements (either over-rating or under-rating). The role of the facilitator to probe and challenge without influencing is critical in helping children and adults present a meaningful and realistic rating of their achievements, limitations and aspirations.
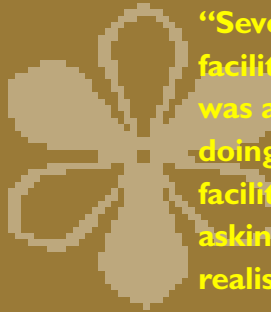
"**Several times the spider web showed that the children, teachers or facilitators were being unrealistic in their assessment of themselves. There was an obvious lack of objectivity which an 'outsider' could see and those doing the self assessment could not. Recognising the shortcoming, the facilitators probed and challenged the children, teachers and facilitators; asking questions that would help them to re-evaluate themselves more realistically.**"

(pilot project, Uganda - facilitator)

A 'Top Tip' from Wales – add more rings to indicate more levels between 1-2-3-4.

A 'Top Tip' from Wales- choose a point in the future to measure the ideal against; for example, six months time or one year. This makes the ideal more realistic and attainable.

A 'Top Tip' from Mozambique – for best results the implementation of the action plan emerging from the Spider Model analysis should take place within a year, with regular monitoring and an end-of-year evaluation.
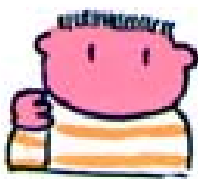
A key element behind the development of the Spider Tool is to support children to strengthen their organisations. The Spider Tool can play a powerful role in helping children from child led initiatives and organisations explore their collective and individual aspirations, develop a collective vision of a stronger organisation in and through which children are able to collectively assert their rights and develop action steps or plans to realise this vision. Use of a **visioning exercise** can help stimulate any child's aspirations regardless of their environment, context, culture, level of opportunity etc.

For example, in the regional workshop in Nepal a meditation visioning exercise was used to help each child and adult dream about how they would like their CLO to develop in future and to visualise these dreams. The children's and adult's visual dreams were drawn on 'fruit shaped' paper. A huge tree shaped poster was placed in the middle of the floor and the tree was built. The children and adults were each given two pink cards representing the 'roots' of the tree (their individual and collective strengths), which provide a basis or energy from which the 'fruit' will blossom and ripen. The 'fruit' represents the vision. One at a time

each child was asked to present their 'fruit' and their 'roots' and to attach them to the tree poster. The roots and the fruit enable a common vision to emerge. In turn the roots (strengths) and the fruit (vision) can be used to build or inform the trunk (strategy and action planning to strengthen what they are doing and reach their vision).
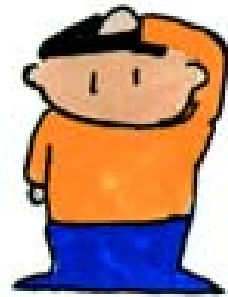
The Spider Tool can also be used as a reflection point for adults:

- To see and assess whether they have (or are asserting) more control
- To reflect on why some groups function better than others and the criteria used to assess this
- To reflect on the conditions and processes needed to develop and strengthen child led initiatives and organisations
- To identify, record and act upon the support, capacity building and other needs that emerge from children's assessment of their organisations.

A 'Top Tip' from Wales – this tool can be used with adults who work with youth led organisations to see how differently the adult and young people's perspectives of the same organisation are.

TOP TIPS for facilitating a workshop with children

1. Preparation

Information

🎈 Prepare child friendly information (in local languages) for children participating in the workshop – why the workshop, what is expected of them, where the workshop will be held

🎈 Be clear on the objectives and outcome of the workshop and inform children of these before the workshop

Venue and logistics

🎈 Choose a venue that is child friendly with lots of open space accessible to all children

🎈 Make sure the workshop room is big, airy and bright, and that you can make good use of any wall space

🎈 Organise transport, food, refreshment and, if possible, recreational activities outside the workshop

- Make sure that you have all the facilitation equipment you need – flip-chart paper and pens, post-its, tape, material to build the spider web(s)
- Provide the children with certificates of their participation

Child Protection

- Orient the children, facilitators, accompanying adults and venue staff on child protection issues
- Have adequate and appropriate mechanisms in place to ensure that any protection concerns are followed up seriously and sensitively
- Apply all aspects of the workshop – planning, implementation and follow up – in accordance with Save the Children's Practice Standards on Child Participation (2005)

Workshop design

- Involve children in planning the workshop
- Set up a facilitators group, including young people, and provide them with background information
- Develop a strategy/work-plan for implementing the workshop
- Design a realistic programme which is however flexible. Always keep the outcome in mind

Selecting children

- All children should know where and why they are going to be part of the workshop
- The process of selection should be made by the children's groups themselves and should be democratic
- Help children to prepare a criteria for selection

After the selection

- Ensure that parents/guardians know where and why their children are participating – even if the workshop is taking place in the locality
- Obtain a consent form signed by children and their parents/guardians
- Brief on child protection issues as above
- Provide final information about the workshop in a child friendly format to the children selected
- Choose accompanying adults with care and in accordance with child protection policy. Clearly state their roles and responsibilities. Make sure that the children also clearly understand the role of their accompanying adult

2. During the workshop

- Stress the role of participants – in implementing the workshop and using the Spider Tool, in proposing and facilitating energisers and creative activities, in setting up the rules of the workshop

- Go through the main parts of the programme at the beginning of the workshop and at the beginning of each day

- Have a daily child friendly agenda on a flip-chart for the children to see, comment on and add to/change

- Start with introductions, developing expectations and ground rules

- Ask children to inform the group briefly about when and how their group started

- Seek children's ideas about the benefits of assessing or evaluating their groups

- Let children draw the spider web and see how children can take on other responsibilities

- Weave energisers, games, life skill and visioning activities through the workshop to break up a too repetitive analysis and assessment of the Key Quality Elements

- Be creative – consider different exercises to help children analyse each separate KQE. For example, mixed media drama and arts can aid discussions

- Use different methods to encourage everyone's participation

- Make space for children (on walls etc.) where they can put up their drawings, thoughts etc

- Always sum up a session at its end, highlighting the key points that have emerged

- Evaluate the workshop at the end of each day and make/prepare any necessary changes to the following day's programme

- Arrange recreational activities for children outside the workshop

- Have fun!
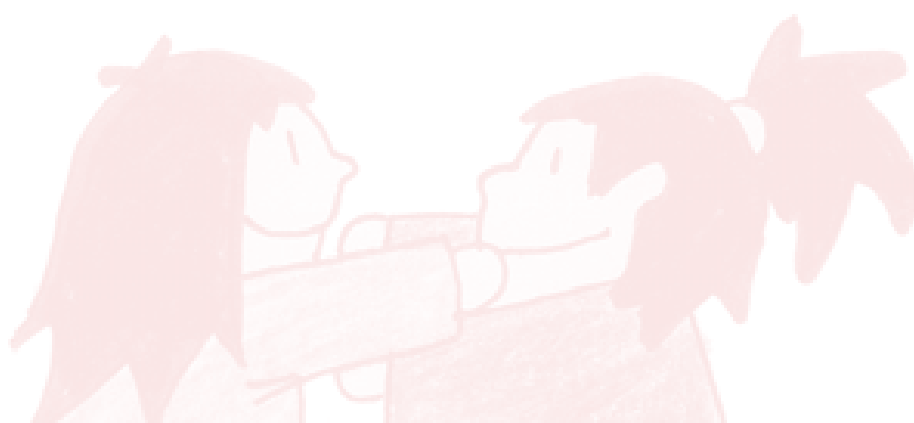
3. Facilitation

- Always be aware of group energy
- Be flexible and listen carefully
- Treat children as partners
- If you cannot answer something, say so
- Encourage all children to speak and give their views
- Ensure that clear information on next steps is shared
- Let children know that you, other facilitators and accompanying adults are approachable and ready to provide support
- Arrange for facilitators to meet at the end of each day to evaluate the work/modify plans for the next day as appropriate/involve children
- Encourage children to form different groups for time-keeping, games, cultural activities etc
- Encourage children to respect diversity, different values and cultures
- If different languages are used, ensure that no one language dominates in either small group work or plenary sessions
- If interpretation is needed, ensure that interpreters have any background information/documents/materials beforehand; meet with interpreters before the workshop for a briefing; include interpreters in daily de-briefings/evaluations; ensure that children understand the role of interpreters and enlist their feedback
- Talk directly to the children and not through their accompanying adults or interpreters
- Make sure that children are not forced to speak if they do not want to and are not manipulated/pressurised by any of the adults in the room

Adapted from Global Movement for Children, 2005.

A World Fit for Children Campaign: Facilitators Guide
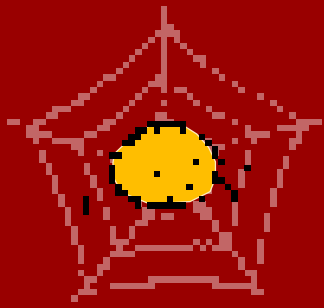
THE GAMES we play

An excellent resource for activities and practical tools is '**Participation Spice It Up!**' by Dynamix/Save the Children.

Icebreakers

'*I am glad I am a child/adult because.., but if I were an adult/child I could…*' In small groups children/adults complete the sentence, and share with wider group. This ice-breaker can help identify the differences and dis/advantages between adulthood and childhood.

'**Reporters**' – Children/young people pair up to find out information from their partner that they feed back to the group. For example, the person's name, aim for the workshop, where they are from, something they like doing, how long they've been involved in their organisation, one thing that no-one knows about them.

Collect expectations – List expectations on a flip-chart so that you can come back to them at the end of the workshop to see whether they have been met.

Ground rules – '**Making it work**' – Children and young people come up with ideas that make a set of rules for the good functioning of the workshop. A common set of rules are agreed upon and recorded on a flip-chart.

Energisers

'**Paper, Scissor, Rock**' - Two teams are formed. Each team decides if 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.

'**The Ship is Sinking**' - Children move around the floor singing 'the ship is sinking, oh no the ship is sinking'. When a number is called (3, 5, 6 etc) they

have to make a group (lifeboat) with the same number of people as the number called.

'Points of Contact' – People in groups have to cooperate with each other to make the number of points of contact with the floor as per a number called out (6, 24, 48 etc). Helps with unity, agreement and cooperation.

'On the Bank, In the Pond' - All the children sit in a circle on their knees. The floor within the circle represents a pond. When the caller 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 caller says, not what s/he does.

'Who is the Leader?' - All the children make a circle. One child is sent out of the room. The rest of the children decide who is the leader. They move round in a circle and copy the actions of the leader. The child sent out returns to the room and has 3 chances to identify the leader.

'Duck, Duck, Goose' - The children sit in a circle. One child walks around the circle, tapping children's head saying duck, duck or goose. When s/he taps a child's head and says 'goose' that child has to chase the first child around the circle. The last one to reach the empty space has to walk around the children's circle repeating the 'duck, duck, goose' game.

'Cross-over' - Children stand in a circle. A caller calls a category, e.g. all those wearing socks. If this category applies to you – you cross-over to another place in the circle. Last to cross becomes the caller.

'Street, Child, Home' - All the children make groups of three. Two of them hold hands and form a 'home'. The third is inside the home and is the 'child'. A caller stands alone and calls out either 'street', or 'child', or 'home'. If 'home' is called, then the children forming the 'home' have to scatter and make another home. With 'child', the child has to find a new home. And in 'street', everyone has to change position. The caller tries to join in. Whoever is left out becomes the new caller.

'Animal Noise' - All children are given a piece of paper with an animal on it (e.g. cow, dog, cat, duck). They have to close their eyes and move around the room making their animal noise until they make a group of children who are the same animal!

Ideas for introducing the activities/Key Quality Elements (pilot project, Wales)

Circle Diagram: Dividing the KQEs into 3 levels
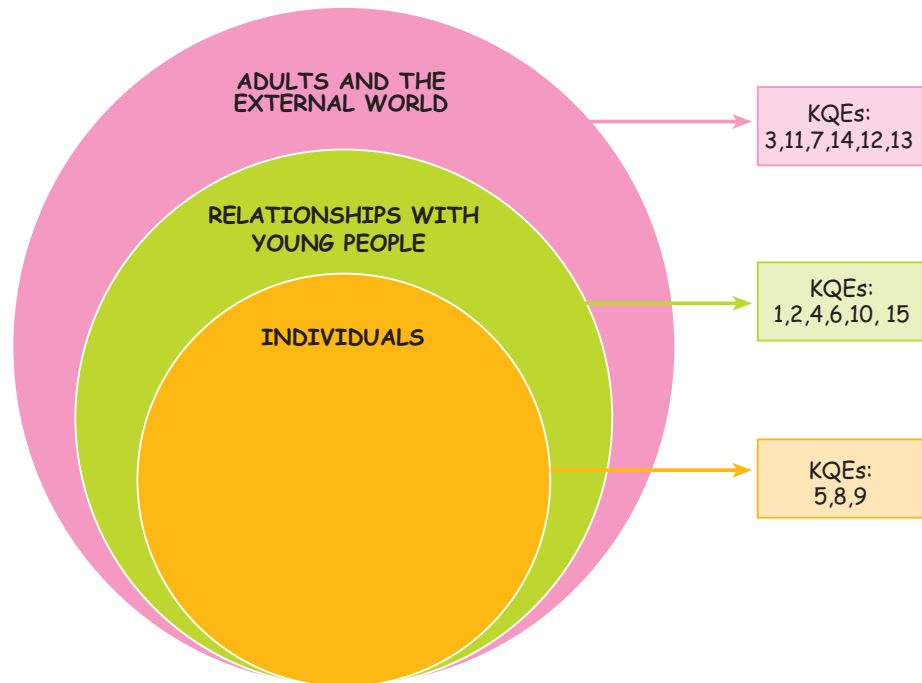
Adults and external world – This activity can be used to help young people think about how child- and young people-led organisations can engage with external agencies/people. A scenario is given where the group members imagine they are a child led organisation (Child Clubs) from Nepal and they are given three questions to think about, namely: WHO are the individuals/groups you need to make links with to help you set up and run your Child Club?; HOW are you going to link up with these people/agencies? WHAT do you need these people/agencies to provide for you so you can set up and run your Child Club? This then leads into a discussion about KQEs relating to their own organisation and the external world.

'**Stepping Out**' – This activity can be used to help children and young people think about the inclusiveness of their initiative/organisation. It may be useful when introducing the Key Quality Elements relating to relationships with other young people in the group and outside. Children and young people line up. Each person is given a label (thought up with help of adult support worker) – for example, wheelchair user, homeless young person, lives in a city, girl living in a rural area, child worker, belongs to minority group, etc. Individuals are asked to make assumptions about this label and take a step forward when they feel they can

participate in activities read out by an adult facilitator. For example, participate in a workshop, facilitate a workshop, go to school, make new friends, represent their group, meet decision-makers, make decisions within their group, attend meetings etc. At the end the group stops and looks around. Some people have hardly moved and some have moved a lot. This exercise helps children and young people think about the barriers they may face in participating.

Star activity - This activity is designed to promote children and young people's self esteem and awareness about what they may have learnt by being part of their own child led organisation or initiative. An A4 sheet with 3 or 4 large stars printed upon it is given to each of the young people. The facilitator explains that this is an individual exercise and asks each individual to write inside the stars things they have accomplished or are proud of through their involvement with the child/young person's led organisation/initiative. You can then ask for any volunteers to feed back some of the things they have recorded. This exercise can be used to initiate discussion and analysis about KQEs relating to individuals as shown in the circle above.
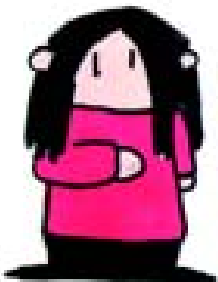
Life Skills

Life skills refer to a large group of psycho-social and interpersonal skills which can help people make informed decisions, communicate effectively and develop coping and self management skills that may help them lead healthy and productive lives. Life skills may be directed towards personal actions and actions towards others, as well as actions to change the surrounding environment.

There are **five core areas of life skills:**
- Decision making and problem solving
- Critical thinking and creative thinking
- Communication and interpersonal relationships
- Self awareness and empathy
- Coping with stress and coping with emotions.

'The Snail': Introduction to Life Skills - The children are shown a visual image of two snails. One snail is hiding in his shell, afraid to face or deal with difficult situations. The other snail has his head stretched high and is smiling, coping well with all experiences. These images help to introduce the concept of life skills. In life we need to have confidence and skills that enable us to deal with difficult situations or challenges. We need to be ready to hold our heads high, to communicate with people, to cope with our emotions and we must be able to respond effectively to different situations.

To have strong children's groups we need to think about both our individual strengths and weaknesses and our collective strengths and weaknesses. It is important that all of our members are encouraged to develop their life skills. If each member is confident and able to cope positively with life experiences our group will also be stronger. Children's experiences in their own initiatives and groups give them good opportunities to develop their life skills.

Identity Factors: 'I Can Do That Here' - The importance of 'identity factors' for understanding your own identity, values, beliefs, skills, behaviour can be introduced through visuals and through a chart describing 'I can do that here'. Children are also encouraged to recognise how their environment, their family, community, peers, and culture influence their identity.

I = who? (identity, sense of self)

Can = why? (values, beliefs)

Do = how? (skills, strategies, competencies)

That = what? (behaviour, what we do)

Here = where? (environment, surroundings)

Life Skills Exercises

'Special Me' Individual Shield - Each child is given a paper with a 'shield' divided into four sections that will help them recognise their own individual strengths and interests. In the different sections the girls and boys are encouraged to write the following: my good qualities, my favourite activity, what I want to change, what I want to learn. Each child presents his or her shield.

'Knot' (problem solving) - Children make smaller groups. Each group stands in a close circle and closes their eyes. They create a knot by holding the hands of other members in the circle. They open their eyes and have to work together to undo the knot to form a circle. Key learnings from the game – working together, solving problems together, talking to each other, listening to each other.

'Tiger, Goat, Grass – man and boat' (creative/critical thinking) - A puzzle is introduced to the children to see if they can think creatively to solve the problem. There is a man and a boat, a tiger, a goat and some grass. The man wants to take the tiger, goat and grass to the other side of the river in his boat. However, his boat is small. He can only fit one animal or grass in the boat at a time. Also, he is scared as he realises that if he leaves the tiger alone with the goat, the tiger will eat the goat; if he leaves the goat alone with the grass, the goat will eat the grass. How can the man get all three safely across the water?

The Solution: The man first takes the goat across the river and leaves him on the other side. Then he goes back and collects the grass. When he reaches the other side he drops off the grass, and takes the goat back to the original side. He leaves the goat on the original side and takes the tiger across the river. Then he goes back and collects the goat, bringing all three safely!

'**Communication Game**' - The participants are divided into pairs. One is A and the other B. A and B sit back to back so that they can't see each other. A is given a drawing and is asked to explain it to B. B tries to draw the picture. A and B then compare the drawings. Are they similar or not, and why? What did they learn from this game? What tips can they use for good communication?

'**Bindi Game**' (**exploring discrimination**) - All participants have stickers placed on their foreheads (which they cannot see). They are told that they are in a market place and they have to mingle and greet people. However, they should treat people differently according to the type of sticker placed on their forehead. If they have:
A) GREEN sticker - this person is someone they are really very happy to see and are very keen to greet
B) BLACK sticker - this person is someone they see regularly, they want to acknowledge them, greet them normally
C) BLUE sticker - this person is someone they do not want to see, they want to actively avoid them.
The participants are told to mingle and start greeting people according to their sticker. They then reflect on how they felt and whether the stickers represent any differences in their society. What did they learn from the game? How can children work together to overcome discrimination?
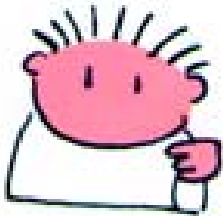
'**Building a Tower**' (**cooperation**) - The participants are divided into groups of three: A, B & C. As are told they can only use one hand, Bs may not speak, and Cs are blindfolded. Bs are told they have 10 minutes to build a 1 or 2 metres tower and they are given paper and cello-tape. Without speaking the Bs have to find a way to communicate the task to their group. At the end of the game they analyse what life skills they used in this game. What did they learn and how can they apply the positive lessons to their children's groups?

'**Win-Win Game**' (**negotiation**) - Arm wrestling for sweets. Pairs are asked to arm wrestle for 2 minutes to win sweets. Whoever touches the other's hand on the ground wins sweets.
1) In the first round the tendency is for people to fight against each other in arm wrestling - few sweets are won, as most of time is spent resisting each other.

2) In round two participants are encouraged to think about how they can cooperate with one another to win more sweets. If the members cooperate with each other and don't resist, they can both win sweets.

3) In round three they are asked to think about how they can win even more sweets in 10 seconds. If one member trusts the other they can win the most sweets – as they let the other tap their hand continuously on one side.

Cartoon and Drama (negotiation) - Introduce a cartoon drawing to illustrate negotiation skills: 'Say, Listen, Say, Listen, Agree, Try it'. In groups children develop and present dramas to illustrate how they can use their negotiation skills to solve common problems that they face.

'Why?Why?Why?' (analysis) – In groups children can analyse the root causes of common problems through asking why?why?why? A 'why' question is written on a long roll of paper. For example, why are children sent to work? Children give their suggestions. For example, children work because of family poverty. For each suggestion they again explore why. For example, why is there family poverty?

'Paper Chain Game' (team work, communication, inclusion etc) - The children are split into groups (5-7 in each group). The groups are told that they have to make paper chains. Each group is given an equal amount of old newspaper and glue. The groups are given 5 minutes to name their group and to estimate how many paper chains they think they can make within a 10 minute period. The game is started. An observer with each group carefully observes how they work together. After 5 minutes the observers explain that there has been an unfortunate accident and blindfold the eyes of one of the group members. After another 3 minutes they tie another participant's arm behind his/her back. They continuing observing the group activity until the time is up. They then start counting the knots in the chain and see if the predicted target has been met. Each group discusses what they learnt from the game. Did they meet/not meet their target? Why? How can they apply what they learnt to their children's group? This game is very useful for exploring issues of teamwork, planning, communication, inclusion, decision-making etc.

'Building a Good Citizen' Body Mapping - A body mapping exercise can be used to explore children's ideas about what knowledge, skills and behaviour you need to be a good citizen in society. One child lies down on large sheets of flipchart and his/her body shape is drawn around. The children use visual images and words inside the body shape to create the design of the body of a good citizen (e.g. big ears for listening, broad shoulders for taking responsibility etc). Children are encouraged to reflect on whether they can be good citizens and the role of their children's organisations.

Visioning Exercise

'Visualisation and Tree Building' - Use of a visioning exercise can help stimulate any child's aspirations regardless of their environment, context, culture, level of opportunity etc. A meditation/visualisation exercise can be used to help the children dream about their children's groups and their communities in the future. Children are encouraged to find a quiet place to lie down, to close their eyes, to breathe deeply and to imagine this future. After 5 minutes of dreaming the children draw their individual dreams on a 'fruit shape' paper.

A big 'tree image' is drawn to represent the children's groups:
- Fruits = Vision (individual and collective)
- Roots = Individual and collective strengths
- Trunk = Strategy and action planning to strengthen the children's groups (by children and adults)

All children present their dreams – their fruit – and stick them on the tree. Collectively, children (and adults) can then explore the roots of the tree – the strengths that could be drawn upon (individual and collective) and the strategy (the trunk) for reaching the fruit.

'How?How?How?' (**action planning**) - Write 'How …?' on a long, wide piece of paper and draw four or five arrows coming from it. Ask a 'how' question, and write down any suggestions at the end of the arrows. For example: 'How do we get more children involved in our organisation?' Explore any suggestions made in more detail by asking 'How …?' again. The action planning resulting from the HOW HOW HOW analysis can help determine what needs to be done, by whom and by when.
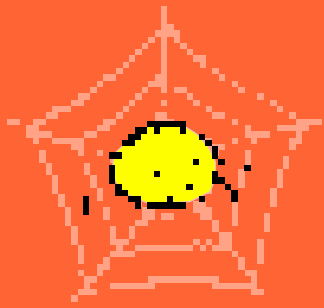
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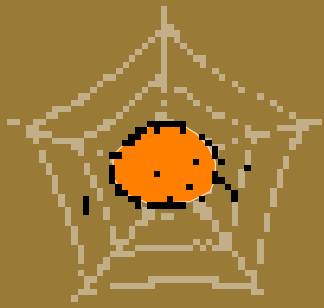
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The vision

Save the Children works for:

- a world which respects and values each child
- a world which listens to children and learns
- a world where all children have hope and opportunity

The mission

Save the Children fights for children's rights.
We deliver immediate and lasting improvements to children's lives worldwide.