**Child Participation – Rapid Response:**

Problems and Recommendations

**Consultation Guide and Transcription Tool[[1]](#footnote-1)**

In-school and out-of-school children aged 8-11, 12-14, and 15-17

**Why consult with children in Rapid Response?**

In a Rapid Response (RR), speed is key. It can be tempting to move head with a Rapid Needs Assessment that gathers the data that is the quickest and easiest to collect. But, if we are going to respond right - in a way that is grounded in the needs of children and is really ***accountable*** to them - then we must talk to children to understand their experiences and hear their ideas for what needs to be done. In RR, we want to do this in the ***quickest, safest, and most meaningful*** way possible. If the cluster has partners with strong child safeguarding/ protection/ PSEA expertise and with experience consulting with children, ask them to lead this activity. If the cluster doesn’t have partners with this kind of experience, ask for global-level support.

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| **Before you begin**  **Planning**   * Select your sample/ plan the number of consultations that you will do. For Rapid Response, the GEC recommends keeping the sample small. For example, you could consult with: * 3 groups of girls who are out-of-school (8-10 children/ group) * 3 groups of girls who are in-school * 3 groups of boys who are out-of-school * 3 groups of girls who are in-school   = 12 groups of children (approximately 96-120 children)  \*\* Include a mix of displaced and non-displaced children and aim for 10% children with disabilities. Reach out to Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs) for support.   * 12 consultation groups will likely take two facilitation teams (one team of two males and one team of two females) 2 days to complete (3 consultations/ day). Plan for one day of preparation, one day of training, and one day to type up results, for a total LOE of about 5 days for the activity. * Hold separate consultations with boys and girls to be able to disaggregate results by gender and so that certain topics may be discussed more openly. * Separate children by age group (8-11, 12-14, and 15-17, or other variations) to keep discussions age-appropriate and comfortable for younger children and adolescents. For Rapid Response, select 1-2 age groups to keep the sample manageable.   **Safeguarding**   * Make sure that all cluster partners participating in the assessment have:   + Child safeguarding and PSEA policies in place   + A child safeguarding and PSEA focal point (contact information needs to be shared with the cluster)   + Staff trained on child safeguarding and PSEA   + A Code of Conduct (including child safeguarding and PSEA) signed by all staff * Have all enumerators sign the [Code of Conduct](https://educationcluster.box.com/s/grwg8iccvh36woywrljptwy8wn5mwkc4) for conducting consultations with children. * Train enumerators on safe and ethical child participation. A [standard training PowerPoint](https://educationcluster.box.com/s/nz610ds6c86cl7pj14g1tpez5u9faue5) is available on Box.   + Update the training with country-specific and up-to-date referral pathways.   + Invite country-level child safeguarding, child protection, and/ or gender-based violence (GBV) colleagues to facilitate the parts of the training that cover safeguarding and referrals. * Obtain parent/ guarding consent for children to participate in the consultations ahead of time. A [consent form template](https://educationcluster.box.com/s/kthc66uk7uhl5jpu6bji4xcs0zg2uuf2) is available on Box.   **Consulting**   * Choose a safe, accessible location for the discussion where children cannot be overheard by teachers or other children. * Hold the discussion at a time that is convenient for children and adolescents, and not during school hours. * Take good notes! Write down exactly what children said using their own words. Don’t paraphrase or add any of your own analysis.   **Analyzing and Reporting**   * Have each enumerator type up their notes in the Excel [database and analysis tool](https://educationcluster.app.box.com/file/2011444936799), or a similar tool that you design for this purpose. * Assign someone to consolidate all inputs and conduct the analysis. Support from the GEC is available for this step! * Write the report, keeping it short and simple. A [report template](https://educationcluster.app.box.com/file/2011470008654) is available on Box. Stick to reporting what children actually said, without too much extrapolation or conjecture. The findings will be more impactful this way! Support from the GEC is available for this step. |

**Consultation Guide and Transcription Tool**

Time needed: 1.5 hours

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| **Topics:**   * **In-school children:** Safety in school and on the way to school, perceptions of teachers, and experiences learning * **Out-of-school children:** Feelings about school, and safety and protection in their communities * **All children:** Children’s recommendations for the response |

**Introductions and informed consent**

10 minutes

(Note: Parent/ caregiver consent must be collected before the activities start)

**Introduce yourselves to the children**

1. Tell children your names, where you work, and who is the facilitator and who is the note-taker. Explain: “The facilitator will moderate discussions, and the note-taker will record what happens and what you say.”
2. Say: “We’re here to find out more about children’s experiences at school, your problems, and your ideas for how to make things better. We will share what children tell us, so that people are better able to look after and support children who are experiencing a crisis. We cannot promise to address all of your problems or to do everything that you recommend, but we will share what children tell us with people who make decisions so that they hear your ideas.”
3. Explain: “Everyone’s participation is anonymous and confidential. We will be writing down what you tell us, and taking pictures of what you write or draw, but we won’t write down who says or does what. The information we collect today will be used in a report anonymously.”
4. Say: “But, if during the activity, someone shares something that makes us worry that you or another child might be at risk of being harmed, we will have to let others know so that we can keep you safe. It is important that you do not share with others outside this group who says what, so everyone in the group feels comfortable to share their opinion.”
5. Explain: “We would like to hear from all of you: everyone’s opinion matters. We’re not here to judge, we’re here to listen to your opinions with an open mind, your opinions help us to better understand the reality here. And, if you do not want to answer a question, you do not have to. You can ask us questions at any time.”
6. Say: “Today’s session will take about 1.5 hours. We will stay here for at least 15 minutes after the end of the discussion if there is anything that you’d like to tell us that you don’t want to say in front of the group. Sometimes discussions bring up different feelings and memories. If you would like to speak to someone about these feelings, please come and tell us at the end.”
7. Say: “Please be respectful of everyone who speaks. Everyone is free to say what they want, and no one is going to laugh at what others say too. Agreed?”

**Children’s consent to participate**

1. Say: “Your parents have agreed to your participation today, but I’d like to ask you: do you agree to take part in this discussion? Feel free to say no! It's okay if you prefer not to participate. And you can stop participating at any time: you can just tell me to stop and nothing will happen. Your choice to participate or not will not change how you and your community are served by humanitarian organisations. You can also choose to participate in some activities but not participate in others: that's fine. If you prefer not to participate, you can stay or leave this room, feel free to do what makes you feel better.”
2. Ask: “Do you have any questions about what we will be doing today?”
3. Ask: “Who would like to speak to us today? If no, it’s okay to leave. Otherwise, we will get started. Remember, you can stop whenever you want to.”

Once you have said all of the above please make sure to note that informed consent from taken verbally – note we will NOT be taking any names – just put a tick against the below for each child present that gives consent – and the other facilitator can witness this was done.

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| Verbal Consent child 1: | Verbal Consent child 6: |
| Verbal Consent child 2: | Verbal Consent child 7: |
| Verbal Consent child 3: | Verbal Consent child 8: |
| Verbal Consent child 4: | Verbal Consent child 9: |
| Verbal Consent child 5: | Verbal Consent child 10: |
| Staff witness informed verbal consent \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | |

**Consultation information**

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| Date: | District: |
| Municipality: | School: |
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| Facilitator name: | Note-taker name: |
| Organisation: | Organisation |

**Participant information**

Write down the number of children participating in the activity, disaggregated by sex, age, travel status, and disability.

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| Number of children | # girls: | # boys: | # total: |
| Age of children | 8-11 years: | 12-14 years: | 15-17 years: |
| Travel status | Refugee: | Internally displaced: | Host community: |
| Disability status | # children with disabilities: | | |

**Ground rules and icebreaker**

10 minutes

**Agreement on ground rules**

1. Say: “We want to make sure that everyone is comfortable and ready to fully participate in the activity. We will agree on the rules to follow during the session, okay?”
2. Ask children to suggest rules for the session, such as (to be adapted):

* *Everyone is free to say what they want to say.*
* *No one can make fun of others.*
* *Everyone’s turn to speak must be respected.*
* *We have to listen to what everyone has to say.*

**Icebreaker – Catch the ball**

(Note: The activity below is just an example. Feel free to replace it with a local game or song – anything to make children feel at ease with one another and with the facilitators.)

* Have children stand in a circle and throw the ball to each other. The child who catches the ball says his own first name and that of the child who threw the ball. The child who caught the ball throws it back, and so on to complete the round table of all the children and the facilitators.

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| **Potential adaptation:** If there are participants with physical or visual impairments in the group, replace this game with an alphabet game. The facilitator will go through the alphabet, naming the letters one by one and asking the children whose name starts with that letter. Each child gets to introduce themselves when it is their letter. Facilitators can ask the child to share what their favourite animal is and make the noise. This won’t require movement. |

**Activity 1: Agree/ Disagree/ Don’t Know**

30-40 minutes

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| Theme | **In-school children:** Safety in school and on the way to school, perceptions of teachers, and learning  **Out-of-school children:**  Feelings about school, and safety and protection in their communities | Objective | **In-school children:**  To explore children’s perceptions of their safety, their experiences with their teachers, and their understanding of the curriculum  **Out-of-school children:**  To explore children’s feelings about school, and their experiences of risk and protective factors in their communities. |
| Resources | 3 pieces of paper, tape, markers | Preparation | Prepare the 3 pieces of paper to make 3 signs using large, clear handwriting:   1. Write “Agree” and draw 😊 2. Write “Disagree” and draw ☹ 3. Write “I don’t know” and draw **?**   Hang each sign in a different area of the room. |

1. Say: “I am going to read out some statements. After I read a statement, think about whether you agree with the statement, disagree with the statement, or don’t know. Answer honestly, based on whether the statement is true for you (not whether it’s true for me!). Any answer is good.”

1. Continue by saying: “Then I will ask you to move. If you agree, go to the ‘Agree’ sign and move to that area of the room. If you disagree, go to the ‘Disagree’ sign, and go to that area of the room. If you don’t know, go to the ‘Don’t know’ sign, and go to that area of the room. [Point to the signs in each area of the room/space].”
2. Say: “Now we will practice with a simple statement. Ready? ‘Green is my favourite colour.’” Give children time to move to different areas of the room and check their understanding.
3. Say: “Great! Now we will do the same thing for the statements about education. Remember to listen to each statement and then move to the part of the room with the sign that reflects your answer. It’s okay to have a different answer from your friends!”
4. After **each statement** is read, and once children have chosen where to stand, facilitate a discussion with the children.  Tell children that if they change their mind, they are free to move and give another answer.
   * Ask 2-3 children who agreed: “Why do you agree with the statement?” or use the discussion probes in the table below.
   * Ask 2-3 children who disagreed: “Why did you disagree?” or use the discussion probes in the table below.
5. Ask children to go back to the middle of the room and then read the next statement.
6. The note-taker takes accurate notes of what children said. At the end of the discussion, the note-taker counts the number of children who agreed/ disagreed/ did not know.

**Statements for in-school children**

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| Statements | Discussion probes (optional) |
| 1. I feel safe in my school | * What makes you feel safe? Do boys and girls feel safe in the same way? * Why don’t you feel safe? What is missing in your school to make you feel safer? |
| 1. I don’t have any problems on my way to school | * Do you feel safe on the way to and from school? Do boys and girls feel equally safe? * What kind of problems do you encounter on your way to or from school? Are these problems different for boys and girls? |
| 1. Teachers at school are nice to students | * Why do you say teachers are nice to you? Are all teachers nice to you? * What do teachers do when they’re mean to you? When your teachers aren’t nice to you, can you tell other adults? |
| 1. I enjoy the lessons that the teacher teaches in class | * What makes your lessons enjoyable? What do you enjoy learning about? What does the teacher do to make your lessons interesting and enjoyable? * What makes your lessons not enjoyable? What do you not like learning about? What could your teacher do to make your lessons more interesting and enjoyable? |

**Statements for out-of-school children:**

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| Statements | Discussion probes (optional) |
| 1. I want to go to school (or I want to go back to school) | * What makes you want to go or go back to school? If you were there before, what did you like about it? * What makes you not want to go or go back to school? If you were there before, what did you not like about it? What are you doing instead of going to school? |
| 1. I feel safe in my community | * What makes you feel safe? Do boys and girls feel safe in the same way? * Why don’t you feel safe? What is missing in the community to make you feel safer? |
| 1. If I have a problem, there is someone I can talk to | * Who do you talk to if you have a problem? How does this person help you? * What makes you unsure of who to talk to if you have a problem? |

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| **Potential adaptations:** If there are participants with physical or visual impairments in the group, ask them what adaptation(s) would be useful. It may also be useful to adapt the approach if children seem to copy each other’s’ answers. Adaptations can include:   * Ask children to stand in a line, with their eyes closed. Ask them to take a step forward if they agree with the statement, a step back if they disagree and to not move if they don’t know. * Ask children to stand or sit in a circle. Ask them to close their eyes. Ask them to lift their right arm if they agree with a statement, to lift their left arm if they do not agree with the statement, and raise both hands if they don’t know. * Print out the emojis and make sure each child has three pieces of paper (one smile, one sad face, and one question mark). Ask children to vote after each statement, by holding up the type of emoji that best fits how they feel about the statement. |

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| **NOTES: Activity 1 – Agree/ Disagree/ Don’t Know – In-school children** | | | | |
|  | | | **What children said about why they agree/ disagree**  Write down what children said, in their own words | **Exact quotes from children**  Write down direct quotes from children using “…” |
| 1. **I feel safe in my school** | Number of children who “Agree” |  |  |  |
| Number of children who “Disagree” |  |
| Number of children who “Don’t know” |  |
| 1. **I don’t have any problems on my way to school** | # “Agree” |  |  |  |
| # “Disagree” |  |
| # “Don’t know” |  |
| 1. **Teachers at school are nice to students** | # “Agree” |  |  |  |
| # “Disagree” |  |
| # “Don’t know” |  |
| 1. **I enjoy the lessons that the teacher teaches in class** | # “Agree” |  |  |  |
| # “Disagree” |  |
| # “Don’t know” |  |

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| **NOTES: Activity 1 – Agree/ Disagree/ Don’t Know – Out-of-school children** | | | | |
|  | | | **What children said about why they agree/ disagree**  Write down what children said, in their own words | **Exact quotes from children**  Write down direct quotes from children using “…” |
| 1. **I want to go to school (or I want to go back to school)** | Number of children who “Agree” |  |  |  |
| Number of children who “Disagree” |  |
| Number of children who “Don’t know” |  |
| 1. **I feel safe in my community** | # “Agree” |  |  |  |
| # “Disagree” |  |
| # “Don’t know” |  |
| 1. **If I have a problem, there is someone I can talk to** | # “Agree” |  |  |  |
| # “Disagree” |  |
| # “Don’t know” |  |

**Activity 2: Helping Hands**

20-30 minutes

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| Theme | Children’s recommendations for the response | Objective | To gather children’s suggestions about how some of their wishes for the future could be acted upon |
| Resources | 10+ pieces of paper (one for each participant), markers | Preparation | None |

1. Give each participant a piece of paper and a marker. Say: “For our next activity, we would like you to trace both of your hands on the paper. You can also pair up with a partner to trace each other’s hands.”
2. Say: “We know that you will have some good ideas about what organisations like ours can do to make education in your community better and solve some of the problems that you have told us about.”
3. For children 8-11 years old:
   * Say: “We’ve drawn our hands on these pieces of paper. Everybody can use their hands to be kind to other people and to help them. What ideas do you have about how adults can make school better and help children?”
   * Ask: “Are there any ways that children can help other children go to school or when they are at school?”
   * Ask children to write down or draw pictures that explain their ideas about how people can help.
4. For children 12-17 years old:
   * Say, “We’ve drawn our hands on these pieces of paper.”
   * In the right hand, ask each participant to write down 1-5 things (one for each finger) that adults (like parents, teachers, or organization) could do to help make school better and more accessible for children/ adolescents. Ask them to specify who the recommendation is directed at (e.g. parents, teachers, organizations, etc.).
   * Ask each participant to write down in the left hand 1-5 things (one for each finger) that children/adolescents/youth can do to make school better and more accessible for other children/ adolescents.
5. Together with children, discuss their suggestions and ask questions to make sure you understand what they are suggesting and to whom.
6. At the end of the activity, write down the gender, age group and location of the children at the top of the hand drawings. Make sure to take photos of the hand drawings to include in the notes.

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| **Potential adaptations:** If there are participants with physical or visual impairments in the group, and/ or participants who are unable to draw and write, ask them what adaptation(s) would be useful. These could include the participant sharing their ideas with the note taker who can write them down or help the participant write them down, or the participant sharing their ideas verbally with the group (without any writing down). |

**NOTES: Activity 2 – Helping Hands**

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| Age group: | 8-11 years old | 12-14 years old | 15-17 year old |
| **Photos of children’s Helping Hands drawings** | **How adults can help make school better and more accessible for children**  Write down what children said, in their own words | **How children can make school better and more accessible for each other**  Write down what children said, in their own words | **Exact quotes from children**  Write down direct quotes from children using “…” |
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**Evaluation of the session**

5 minutes

* Have children sit in a circle. Starting with one child and moving to the next child to the right, ask children to say one thing they liked today and/or one thing they did not like today.
* Say: “Thank you all for your time and participation today. What you have said will help humanitarians to improve children’s education. The results will be shared with you in a few weeks.”

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| **NOTES: Evaluation** | |
| **What children liked today** | **What children did not like today** |
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1. Parts of this tool have been adapted from Save the Children’s [Guidance – Children’s Consultations in Humanitarian Contexts (2023)](https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/document/guidance-childrens-consultations-in-humanitarian-contexts) and Annexes. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)