

CHECKLIST TO INTEGRATE THE CHILD RIGHTS-BASED APPROACH INTO THE PROJECT CYCLE



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THE CHILD RIGHTS-BASED APPROACH

The rights-based approach is based on international human rights standards. **The child rights-based approach is a conceptual framework oriented towards the protection and promotion of children's rights across all sectors.** It is based in particular on the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)¹, the first legally-binding international instrument which explicitly recognizes people under the age of 18 as full subjects of rights and holders of compulsory fundamental rights (civil, political, social, economic and cultural).

This approach addresses the **root causes**, as well as immediate, underlying and structural causes of the non-fulfilment of rights and pushes for action on inequality and discrimination by targeting the people "left-behind" and the most vulnerable.

Children, as **holders of specific rights** and in need of appropriate protection, are a priority audience for the rights-based approach. Under this approach, projects implemented by international solidarity actors must focus on the realization of children's rights and apply human rights principles such as universality, indivisibility, accountability and participation, as well as the four guiding principles of the CRC: **non-discrimination**, the right of the child to **life, survival and development**, the **best interests of the child**, and the right to **participation**.



Diagram depicting the relationship between responsible actor and rights holder.²

Thus, children are rights holders, actors of their own development and must be supported to claim them.

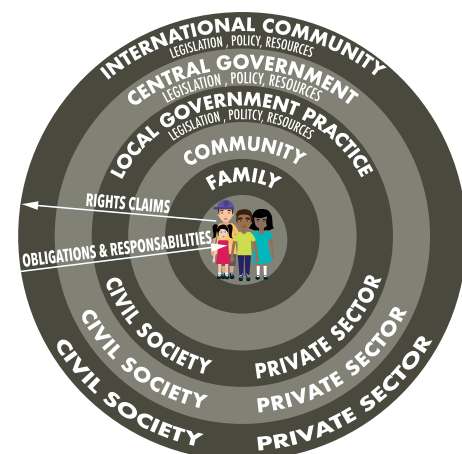


Diagram showing how different levels within society impact on children's lives and the way in which the State, as prime duty bearer, is positioned at a number of these levels³.

The **duty bearers** (the State), and **responsible actors** (the family, the **community**, the civil society including childhood professionals, the private sector, etc.) must ensure respect, promotion and protection of the rights of the child by fostering the creation of environments conducive to the fulfillment of rights and by establishing appeal mechanisms.

In addition to being essential for children, it is acknowledged that the implementation of children's rights at the strategic and programmatic levels is essential to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030 and provides an impact on populations and a high social return on investment⁴.

Within the Groupe Enfance, a working group has reflected on quality criteria for the integration of the child rights-based approach in development and humanitarian projects. It used the recommendations made during discussions on the operational practices of the NGO members of the Groupe Enfance to feed this work. It was also inspired by the numerous existing works related to the subject (see bibliography in annex) and external consultations (experts, actors of international solidarity and/or children's rights...).

The aim here is to propose a list of criteria to help professionals to better take into account the child rights-based approach throughout the project management cycle. This checklist will help professionals to better understand the rights of the child and to integrate a rights-based approach in their logic and methods of intervention.

Thus, this list of criteria is designed for civil society organizations (CSOs) as well as governmental technical services and the private sector, whether or not they are child rights professionals. In particular, it is designed for the technical and financial partners of CSOs in order to guide them in assessing the integration of a child rights-based approach in development projects. Depending on the level of ownership and the objectives of the professionals, it can be a tool for self-evaluation of practices and/or for questioning them regarding the child rights-based approach.

This checklist, which follows all stages of the project cycle, from situation analysis to capitalization, and which integrates an organizational prerequisite, is not necessarily exhaustive. It should be used as a tool to question one's practices. In the same way, the sub-questions are points of vigilance to help qualify one's level of achievement.

STAGE OF THE
PROJECT CYCLE

PERSPECTIVE

CRITERION

SUB-QUESTION

ORGANISATIONAL CONTEXT	SITUATION ANALYSIS UPSTREAM OF THE PROJECT	CONCEPTION & PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION	MONITORING-EVALUATION CAPITALIZATION
RIGHTS HOLDERS	DUTY BEARERS	RESPONSIBLE ACTORS	PARTICIPATION
<p>The project provides for the strengthening of children's knowledge of their rights and their ability to claim them (upstream and during the project's implementation).</p> <p>Do the activities allow children to better know/understand their rights and to claim them (leadership training, self-esteem, strengthening of communication skills, to form a network, etc.)?</p> <p>Do the activities planned or carried out enable children to identify violations of their rights? To claim their rights?</p> <p>To report these violations?</p> <p>To access to justice?</p>			<p>LEVEL OF ACHIEVEMENT</p> <p>USER NOTES</p> <p>comments</p> <p>A B C D</p>
<p>The project reinforces children's access to their rights.</p>			<p>comments</p> <p>A B C D</p>
<p>The realization of the rights of the child is part of the project's objectives and/or its expected results.</p> <p>Does the project aim to improve children's access to one or more of their rights by not focusing only on their needs?</p> <p>Does it aim to change the legal and political framework (at local and/or national level)?</p>			<p>comments</p> <p>A B C</p>

The level of achievement can be understood as:

A

YES, totally

Transformative, in favor of the realization and promotion of children's rights.

B

YES, in part

Positive, in favor of the realization of children's rights.

C

YES, but not enough

Neutral, no impact on children's rights.

D

NO, not at all

Potentially harmful to children's rights.

Example of identification of the criterion's level of achievement:

The organization regularly trains its employees and project stakeholders on the child-rights based approach.

- A** All the headquarters and field teams, all departments combined, have received training when hired and during continuing education sessions.
- B** All the headquarters and field teams, all departments combined, have received training when hired but no systematic continuing education.
- C** Only some departments have received training (program team for example) and some have not been able to receive it.
- D** No training.