



LEADING THE WAY

GUIDANCE ON THE PARTICIPATION
OF CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE
IN GLOBAL ENGAGEMENTS

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Two child delegates from supported by World Vision Vietnam dialogue with decision-makers in a high-level policy event to discuss children's rights issues.

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I Using this document



As part of World Vision's advocacy strategy, we prioritised the need to ensure that the most vulnerable children are given a chance to make their needs visible and their voices heard to decision makers. The goal is to ensure decision makers both 1) acknowledge the role of children and youth, and 2) meaningfully including their contributions in decision-making process. We have been witnessing a paradigm shift towards this direction, as evidenced by more opportunities for children and youth to input into national, regional and global processes.

This paradigm shift is resulting in unprecedented levels of demand for children and youth participation, particularly at the global level. However, the right and opportunity for children to participate can be compromised by the lack of an enabling environment, which is necessary for effective, meaningful and ethical child participation. Therefore, it is critical that we continue to work towards creating and educating others on the need for environments where children feel listened to, consulted with and free to express their views on all matters that affect them. At the global level, this can only be achieved if the planning of such forums for participation or events allows for appropriate time to prepare child and youth delegates prior to the event. This document seeks to provide guidance for our staff as opportunities for child participation at the global level continue to increase, without compromising the integrity of our own standards in child participation.

2

World Vision's Guidelines for Children and Young People's Participation in General



We begin with a reminder of our own guidelines which give internal and external stakeholders a more concrete idea of what to expect of WV's practice in child participation. *Italicized portions indicate how the Guideline can be interpreted for participation at global level engagements.*

1. Adults, relevant partners, children, and youth in the community are continuously sensitised to the importance and value of child participation. *During global engagements that involve children working alongside politicians, opinion-formers, celebrities or decision-makers, the attitudes and behaviour of these adults are often critical to whether a child or young person feels their opinion is genuinely valued versus feeling patronised or ignored. Therefore, it is essential that this first guideline is met throughout the engagement, from the planning stage onward.*

2. WV staff members, partners and volunteers who facilitate child participation have the capacity and training to work safely and effectively with children.
3. Children and care-givers give informed consent for children to participate in WV or partner supported activities while recognising children's rights to freedom of association or peaceful assembly. *Global engagements usually involve international travel and for many children and young people, it will be the first time they are travelling so far from their families and loved ones. "Informed consent" in this case means that in addition to understanding why they are traveling, children and their care-givers need to understand the process and requirements of international travel as well.*
4. WVI Child Protection Standards are in place and followed. Behavior protocols for chaperones are followed and Child Protection considerations for child travel are in place.
5. Child participation involves children in issues and decisions that are relevant to their daily lives and concerns.
6. Child participation is accessible, inclusive, and non-discriminatory.
7. Child participation is facilitative, not manipulative, and values children's input. *At global decision-making events, there may be pressure to have children speak a certain way or say certain things to persuade international leaders. Every effort must be made to ensure that children speak authentically, using their own words, and are communicating messages that they and their peers decided upon during their preparation for the event.*
8. Child participation activities and methods are child-friendly.
9. Child participation is conducted in ways that lead to empowerment of children, youth who are responsible citizens, and community transformation.
10. WV staff, partners, and volunteers demonstrate accountability to children through a commitment to timely feedback, monitoring, evaluation, and learning cycles with children that improve the quality of child participation.¹ Follow-up meetings and reporting back on the processes where children and youth provided input should be essential part of the engagement.

1. http://www.wvi.org/sites/default/files/WV_Guidelines_on_Child_Participation.pdf



It is very useful to consult the '**Chaperoning: It's fun but it's not a holiday**' booklet. This guide was prepared to assist staff members in making proper and informed decisions about chaperoning activities, and to help them carry out their responsibilities in an objective, systematic and comprehensible way. The booklet provides tips and recommendations based on the direct experiences of chaperones who have supported children and young people through a variety of activities, trips and conferences, both locally and internationally.

3

Actions, Procedures and Suggested Timeline for Children's Participation in Global Events



To ensure a solid foundation for children to participate in global events, the Inter-Agency Working Group on Children's Participation established that **preparations must commence six months in advance**. However in practice, communications about upcoming opportunities for global engagements usually start three months and sometimes even less in advance. Even with knowledgeable staff and good collaboration among internal and external partners, a shortened time frame of 3 months has compromised the principles of child participation in the past.

For our own organisation, the process begins with a communication to our National Offices who are directly working with children on the issues that are most relevant or applicable to the opportunity for engagement.

Before approaching the National Office

When requesting a National Office to support the selection and participation of children that they work with on the ground, keep in mind the different protocols that must be followed internally. For instance, the National Director must be involved in the approval process from an early stage. Therefore, it is necessary to provide national offices with all or most of the information needed to answer any questions that might arise.

Below please find the basic level of information needed for National Offices prior to approaching them about child participation:

BASIC INFORMATION

- Agenda, logistics and any necessary procedures for the event
- Source of funding and any budget allocated to the engagement
- Information on other participants and/or partners
- Language needs. Language can be a major barrier to children's participation especially in global engagements.
- Time available to approve the engagement and start the selection process of a child or youth delegate

CONCEPT NOTE

- Purpose of the overall event
- Topics of discussions at the event itself and on which we are seeking input from children
- Type of participation (i.e. UN High-Level Event, Side Event, Meetings with Governments/Missions)
- Linkages to our broader agenda, strategy and our current work with children and youth on such topics
- How the participation of children and young people will impact decision-making
- How children and young people should prepare; ideas for NOs to consider
- Selection requirements for child delegates
- Proper follow-up and review measure following engagement



Working with the National Office

Once the National Office approves and agrees to support the participation of children and/or youth from their programming, the selection process for the candidate can begin. **Since the primary role of the child delegate is to represent the voices of other children and youth, they should be elected by their peers.** This election process can vary depending on the structure of the children's group or forum and their particular method of electing representatives. Some groups use a voting process while others are chosen based on the position they already hold in the group (i.e. Child Forum President, district/national representatives of child parliaments)

After a child delegate is elected, the following information should be shared with others who are coordinating and facilitating the engagement.

Information of Child Delegate(s) Elected to Represent their Peers

- Name and Age
- Short biography detailing the involvement and history with the children's group particularly around a certain theme or issues
- Sponsorship status of any child participant, along with location of sponsor if relevant
- Brief description of child group, forum or parliament

Planning Ahead within your office for global engagements

Understandably, it is difficult to forecast upcoming opportunities with great accuracy. This is due to a lack of understanding among external partners (particularly at the global level) and at times within our own organisation, on 1) the level of preparation needed - i.e. consultations with other children and youth prior to engaging, and 2) the logistical obstacles to overcome – i.e. obtaining necessary travel documents in time.

When deciding upon external engagements for the year, it is best to create a calendar or projected timeline of upcoming events and opportunities. If there is an opportunity for meaningful child participation, please flag it as soon as possible with the necessary parties who would be supporting the engagement.

Sample from the Global Capitals Office in New York from 2014

EVENT/OPPORTUNITY	DATE	TYPE OF PARTICIPATION
UN Open Working Group Reaches Final Agreement and Adoption of Report on SDGs and Targets	14-18 July	Create a child-friendly version of the report and distribute among children's groups and forums to gather input and feedback
65th Annual UN DPI/NGO Conference	27-29 August	Youth participant confirmed; child participation TBC
69th Session of the UN General Assembly (UNGA 69)	16-29 September	No plans for children to participate in NY at this time; possibility of showing children's feedback from child-friendly version of OWG Report into discussions or at events
25th years of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)	20 November	Initial plans to select 4-5 children to come to NY for high-level event

4

Relevant Actions & Procedures for the Participation of Children and Young People in Global Engagements



On the next page, you'll see a full-page graphic that addresses some of the major points to keep in mind as you plan and prepare for a global engagement with child participation. The purpose is to give a quick and broad overview of what will be needed and taken into consideration at different stages of the planning, engagement and follow-up. The graphic is not exhaustive by any means. An annex of materials that accompanies many of the items and checkpoints in the graphic is provided as an add-on to this guidance document.



Relevant Actions and Procedures the Participation of Children and Young People in Global Engagements

THREE TO SIX MONTHS PRIOR

SELECTING A DELEGATE

- Create child friendly versions of documents and information
- Facilitate a transparent and fair process for selection
- Define roles and responsibilities
- Child and youth delegates consult with their peers, with support from National Office & Global Centre

HANDLING LOGISTICS

- Passports, visas, consent forms need to be signed by participant, WV Staff and parents
- Insurance
- Hotel/Travel Arrangements
- Reimbursement procedures
- Child Protection/ Emergency Plans are distributed

PREPARING THE CHAPERONE

- Refer to existing guidance in the Annex "WV Chaperone Booklet"

DURING THE ENGAGEMENT

ENSURING A SAFE ENVIRONMENT

- Child protection policy and strategies are enforced
- Any media engagements should follow the ethical code and child protection standards

SETTING THE STAGE

- Preparatory workshop and orientation conducted prior to engagement
- Translation and interpreters provided if needed. Prep interpreters beforehand on how to work with children and youth.
- All delegates are given the opportunity to reflect on and evaluate their participation practice during the consultation

ROUNDING OUT THE TRIP

- Time is allotted for sightseeing and tourism for a more holistic experience

AFTER THE ENGAGEMENT

FOLLOW-UP IS KEY!

- Ask participants how they want to share their experiences with their peers
- Support opportunities at the national level where the delegates consult with their peers and community
- Follow up process and interviews are key. A debrief before the trip home, followed by a 1 month and 1 year meeting is suggested.
- Children and young people often return home to be met with requests for TV, radio and print interviews. Support and guide children in responding to media requests alongside Communications staff, following child protection protocols.

5

Recommended Formats for Engaging Children and Young People in National or Global Events



When negotiating the space for children and young people to participate in a global or national event, it is important to consider the range of activities that are appropriate for children to participate in, as well as the type of activities that are tokenistic and should be avoided. There are three key principles to keep in mind when planning the actual event activities that young people will engage in:

1. The reason for inviting children should be so that they can actively take part in decision-making: The activities that children take part in should be related to or directly part of a process of decision-making process. We should not bring children to these types of events if their voice will not have an impact on the end result of the meeting or workshop.
2. Authentic opportunities for child expression: The environment and specific activities should allow children to express their opinions, perspectives, and personal stories freely and safely.
3. Children's involvement in the planning process: Children should be actively involved in deciding the format and method of how they would like to express their opinions and key messages. This entails involving children in the initial planning processes and allowing time before the actual event for them to prepare and finalize their preferred method of expression (be it through song, presentation, panel interviews, role play, etc.)



Examples of past events include the following types of activities:

- A Children's Panel where a moderator asks children to comment on specific issues with their own experience and suggestions for solutions
- A role-play created and directed by children to highlight the impact of a certain issue in the lives of children
- A formal power point presentation created by children to offer their insights into solutions or the impact of a particular intervention
- Child journalists interviewing decision-makers and other children then presenting their findings
- A speech delivered by a child delegate to communicate his/her ideas for how an issue might be addressed in their local community or at the national level

The common theme among all of these activities is how children were the ones who decided what type of engagement they were comfortable with and the method of delivering their opinions and key messages.

Here are some key aspects to AVOID:

- Inviting children to read a pre-written speech that was composed by adults
- Having children simply present flowers or gifts to adult decision-makers
- Inviting children to sing a song or perform a play purely for entertainment purposes
- Having children participate in a demonstration or rally that they didn't organize or have a say in planning
- Having children pose for pictures with adult decision-makers without giving them any opportunity to dialogue with adults



Incorporating the voices of children into reports, briefs or other communications

One example that is already mentioned in the table from the previous section is gathering the responses of children into a child-friendly version of a global report, proposal or process. Use their input in creative ways, such as infographics (to be used in social media, distributed at events), videos, and blog postings, to influence messaging/asks, etc.

Virtual participation via videos or live-streaming

By partnering with our Communications team, local film and footage of children can be gathered. Interview children in their children's groups and forums. Get feedback from those who participated in global events through interviews and also focus on feedback from those who have not been chosen as children/youth delegates (which would help to bring forward the voices of the most vulnerable children as they are the ones who have the most to overcome in participating in global events).



Selection of child delegates who previously participated in past global events

In cases of extremely short timelines (i.e. three months or less in the lead-up to the engagement), a frequent response is to narrow the search to those children and young people who already possess travel documents paired with the necessary knowledge and experience on the subject matter to meaningfully participate in such events. However, consistently drawing from this pool of candidates is not the preferred method and should be avoided. It should only serve as a last resort as it puts us in danger of violating our 6th Guiding Principle mandating that child participation is accessible, inclusive and non-discriminatory.

Some risks associated with consistently asking the same group of children to participate in such events, simply because they have the necessary legal documentation, runs the risk of exposing them to unfavorable conditions of engagement where their participation is rushed and will not be of good quality or have any real impact. It can also lead to burnout of child delegates as well as damage to our own credibility as leaders in child participation if we create an “elite” group of children and youth who are called to speak at multiple events. A cost-benefit analysis weighing these risks against the importance of the global engagement must take place, where the best interests of the child (not our organisation) are prioritised.

Annex to Guidance on the Participation of Children and Young People in Global Engagements



A. Sample of Biography/Profile of representative or candidate

B. Consent Forms for child participation

- Memorandum of Understanding for a Child on World Vision Travel
- Consent Form for Parents/Guardian
- Media Consent and Release Form for Parents/Guardians and the Child
- Confidential Health Information Required for Children Supported by World Vision to Travel Out of their Country

C. Sample action plan for medical incidents and emergencies

Lastly, a great source of documents is available online at WV Central under the Child Participation & Rights CoP homepage called Foundational Pieces for Child Participation:

<https://www.wvcentral.org/community/cpr/Pages/WVFoundationalPiecesforChildParticipation.aspx>

You can access six of our foundational pieces on child participation:

- Guidelines for Child Participation (in 4 languages and the Child-Friendly version)
- Child Participation Reference Guide
- Child Protection Risk Assessment for child participation activities
- Preventing and responding to distress in child participation activities
- CEP03 ICD Competency: Facilitating the Engagement of Children
- CEP03 Resource Pack for groups and individuals to build their capacity in facilitating child participation

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Latest version can be found here: <https://www.wvcentral.org/dev/Pages/ChildProtection.aspx>

ANNEX A:
SAMPLE OF BIOGRAPHY/PROFILE
OF REPRESENTATIVE OR CANDIDATE

Child delegate profile
[Event, Date]

Name	
Nationality	
Gender	
Age	
Languages spoken	
Description of the children's group where the child participate	
Description of the major activities where the child has been involved	
Themes that child is interested	
Any other additional information	
Attach a photograph of the child	

CONSENT FORMS FOR CHILD PARTICIPATION

Memorandum of Understanding For a Child on World Vision Travel

Date _____

World Vision has requested that I, [FULL NAME OF CHILD], travel to [NAME OF COUNTRY], to participate in the [EVENT], which will be held in [CITY/TOWN/PROVINCE] from [DATE] to [DATE].

I have been consulted about decisions regarding this visit and the request that I be accompanied by [NAME OF ACCOMPANYING ADULT/CHAPERONE], who will be responsible for my care and protection. I agree to this visit and the choice of accompanying adult.

I understand that if I become ill, have an accident or other emergency, World Vision will provide any medical treatment that may be required. I have read the Behaviour Protocols for the Accompanying Adult. I have been given contact names, addresses and phone numbers in each city where I will be and have a copy of the most recent itinerary.

I agree to act responsibly. I will treat other children and adults with respect. I understand that I will be with others who have different values and cultures and I agree to listen to their views and experiences with respect and hope they will do the same for me. I will follow the instructions of the Accompanying Adult whose role it is to care and protect me. I will not hit or hurt others. I will not drink alcohol, smoke cigarettes or take any illegal drugs. I will not use bad language, make suggestions or offer advice which is offensive or abusive. If I have any concerns about being with my Accompanying Adult I know that I can contact [NAME AND PHONE NUMBER].

Name, Signature & Date of Birth of the Child & Passport Number & Country of Issue

_____ Date _____

Name and Signature of WV Representative

_____ Date _____

Name & Signature of the Accompanying Adult/Chaperone

_____ Date _____

Consent Form for Parents/Guardian

To Whom It May Concern:

I / We, [FULL NAME/S OF PARENT/S/GUARDIAN], of [ADDRESS], do hereby allow my child, [FULL NAME OF CHILD] to travel to [NAME OF COUNTRY], to participate in the [EVENT], which will be held in [CITY/TOWN/PROVINCE] from [DATE] to [DATE].

All expenses related to this trip will be paid by the sponsoring organisation, World Vision International. These costs include transportation, accommodation, food, passport and visa costs, medical and travel insurance.

She/he will be accompanied by [NAME OF ACCOMPANYING ADULT/CHAPERONE], who will be responsible for the care and protection of [FULL NAME OF CHILD].

I/we recognise that if an illness, accident or other emergency involving my/our child should occur, medical treatment may be required and I authorise the World Vision personnel who are supervising my child and the medical personnel that they select, to provide such treatment and take measures they deem appropriate under the circumstances. I/we have read the behaviour protocols and discussed them with my/our child, have been given the contact names, addresses and phone numbers of emergency contacts, and have a copy of the most

Name and Signature of Parent/Guardian of the Child & Proof of Identify (ID or Passport Number)

_____ Date _____

Name and Signature of WV Representative

_____ Date _____

Name & Signature of the Accompanying Adult/Chaperone

_____ Date _____

Media Consent and Release Form for Parents/Guardians and the Child

I/We, [FULL NAME/S OF PARENT/S/GUARDIAN], hereby consent to the use of any photographs, video or interviews taken of my child [FULL NAME OF CHILD] by World Vision or the media for the purpose of advocacy, advertising or publicizing events, news stories and human interest stories on the radio, internet, television or in print publications.

World Vision protects the privacy of the children and is prohibited from releasing children's personal information. Representatives of the news or media may be present at the events your child will be attending and there is a possibility your child may be photographed, videotaped, or interviewed for a news story.

Print Name and Signature of Parent/Guardian of the Child & Proof of Identify (ID or Passport Number)

_____ **Date** _____

I, [FULL NAME OF CHILD], give permission for any photographs, video or interviews of me taken by World Vision or the media to be used for advocacy, advertising or publicizing events, news stories and human interest stories on the radio, internet, television or in print publications.

These materials will only be used to promote the activities that you will be involved in and contribute to creating more awareness on the issues and topics that you will be addressing. All interviews by the media will be conducted in consultation with and in the presence of your chaperone and other World Vision staff members.

I will have the right to not respond to any questions that I don't want to answer.

Print Name and Signature of the Child

_____ **Date** _____

Confidential Health Information Required for Children Supported by World Vision to Travel Out of their Country

(To be filled in by the parent/guardian)

While traveling there is always the possibility that a child may become ill or need emergency health treatment. I/We, [FULL NAME/S OF PARENT/S/GUARDIAN], from [ADDRESS AND CONTACT DETAILS] consent to the following information being given to a trained health professional as required, in the event that my child, [FULL NAME OF CHILD], requires urgent health care while traveling, and I understand that it will not be used for any other purposes. The child and the Accompanying Adult will have a copy of this information. The Accompanying Adult will keep this information in a safe and known location at all times.

Date of birth _____

Known Allergies (food, drugs, other allergens):

Known Drug Reactions (Name of drug, reaction and any treatments previously used):

Chronic or current health problems:

Any major illness (date, diagnosis and treatment):

Any previous Hospitalisations (date, diagnosis and treatment):

Current Medications (both over the counter and prescription - name, dose, number of times per day, purpose):

Prescription for visual/hearing aids (glasses etc) in the event they break or are lost while traveling:

Please note any cultural implications or expectations with regards to health diagnosis or treatment:

Is there any other information that you wish to give to a health professional in the event of your child needing urgent care?

SAMPLE ACTION PLAN FOR INCIDENTS AND EMERGENCIES INVOLVING CHILDREN

[Event name]

[Date]

A. Purpose

This plan delineates the processes for decision-making and action by the chaperones and child participation team members only in the event that a child's safety and/or well-being are jeopardized.

B. Principles

1. Best interests of the child: Children will always be at the center of all decisions and actions taken by the chaperones and Child Participation Team – their safety and well-being will be paramount.
2. Involvement of affected children in decision-making processes and responses:
3. Limited confidentiality: The Child Participation Team will maintain the confidentiality of all reports it receives, as well as personal information belonging to the children. However, whenever harm is evident or suspected, the Child Participation Team will make an assessment on whether to breach confidentiality. Such a situation must be considered only if the following circumstances exist.
 - The safety of the child/young person (or another) is threatened
 - The child's mental or physical state means that they are incapable of making a decision
 - The child is terrorized by an abuser (i.e. he/she is under threat by an abuser)
 - A staff member is, or is alleged to be, the perpetrator of abuse
 - There is assessed to be a continual serious risk to the child's and/or the choice to maintain confidentiality is likely to lead to another child being harmed

C. How to use this plan

The steps and 'types' or examples given in this Action Plan are intended to outline the proper actions to be taken, yet are not rigidly defined and will be somewhat altered on a case-by-case basis. Chaperones or Child Participation (CP) Team members are not bound to follow each step in strict fashion; rather, the chaperones and CP Team must work together and collectively decide the action to be taken for the more moderate or serious cases, with the best interests of the children at the core of the response.

D. Action Plan for Medical incidents and emergencies

Step 1:

Assess the type and severity of the medical incident or emergency

In the event that a medical incident or emergency involves a child, the chaperone or Child Participation Team member who is either first contacted or at the scene must make a rapid assessment as to the type and severity of the inflicted medical injury or condition. The location and the time of the incident or emergency occurs also affects the response that should be taken.

A. SEVERE:

Medical emergency requiring ambulatory care, hospitalization or emergency first response

Types (for example):

- Serious wounds or deep cuts, e.g. internal bleeding
- Serious allergic reaction to food, insect bites, drugs or substances
- Convulsions
- Head or spinal injury
- Bone breaks or fractures
- Heat stroke
- Serious burns
- Respiratory system failure
- Cardiac arrest

B. MODERATE:

Illness, injury or allergic reaction requiring hospital or clinic visit

Types (for example):

- Cold or flu
- Fever
- Food poisoning
- Fainting or dizziness
- Migraine
- Sprains or strains
- Dehydration
- Major stomach ache or upset

C. MINOR:

Lesser illness or injury requiring basic first aid care

Types (for example):

- Headache
- Minor wound or cut
- Minor bruising
- Minor sun burn
- Insect bites not causing an allergic reaction
- Minor stomach ache or upset

D. Action Plan for Medical incidents and emergencies

Step 2:

Take the following actions depending on severity

A. SEVERE:

Medical emergency requiring ambulatory care, hospitalization or emergency first response Types (for example):
CALL [EMERGENCY NUMBER] using your mobile phone. Tell the operator what the situation is and where you are located.

B. MODERATE:

Illness, injury or allergic reaction requiring hospital or clinic visit
*To access medical care, visit one of the following nearby hospital centers:
[RESEARCH AND LIST INFORMATION FOR NEARBY HOSPITAL CENTERS]*

C. MINOR:

Lesser illness or injury requiring basic first aid care
Ask the hotel, event facility or call one of the Child Participation Team members

Step 3

Call one of the Child Participation Team members if they are not already present;

Call: [CONTACT INFO OF TEAM MEMBERS]

Step 4

Ask them what papers or forms need to be filled out to document the situation or incident.

- A. Keep copies of any completed forms at the hospital or other medical center.
- B. Provide a copy to a Child Participation Team Member.



It takes a world

to end violence against children

For further information, please contact:

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