

CHAMPIONS FOR CHILDREN HANDBOOK

How to build a caring school community

Any champions for children's rights could use this handbook, including:

- educators
- principals
- teacher unions
- school governing bodies
- parents and other caregivers
- children and youth
- early childhood development practitioners
- child care committees and child and youth care workers
- community-based facilitators including youth care facilitators
- community-based organisations
- non-governmental organisations
- faith-based organisations
- service providers
- home-based caregivers
- clinic staff
- traditional healers
- social workers
- district educational officials
- local business people
- ward councillors and ward committee members
- traditional leaders
- any government officials

Caring Schools Project: research and action

This handbook is a guide to mobilising schools and neighbourhoods around the well-being and needs of children to create caring school communities. This approach has been developed through action research in four different school communities in the Western Cape and the Free State between June 2005 and December 2006 by the Children's Institute, University of Cape Town in partnership with the South African Democratic Teachers' Union, and in collaboration with other organisations, including members of the Caring Schools Network (CASNET).

Some of activities and stories in the handbook came out of: the four action research sites; workshop with 'schools of good practice' and 'service providers' in 2004; the introductory Stop AIDS Now! Networks of Care meeting in 2007; and the Catholic Institute of Education Caring Schools Project. All names in the community stories have been changed for the sake of confidentiality.

We want to hear from you

This first version of the handbook will be revised with feedback from users during 2008 and 2009, so please contact us if you are using this handbook or want a copy. We will keep a database of all users so we can help you form clusters with other users in your area.

Please tell us how you used the handbook. What worked and what didn't? What can we improve in the next version? Would it be better in colour? What illustrations would be helpful? Please send us your stories and illustrations. We will acknowledge all contributions but protect confidentiality. We welcome your suggestions and look forward to hearing about your journey to build your caring school community

Contact Norma Rudolph at the Children's Institute, University of Cape Town:

E-mail: Norma.Rudolph@uct.ac.za or info@ci.org.za

Tel: +27 (21) 689 5404 / +27 (21) 689 8343 Fax: +27 (21) 689 8330

46 Sawkins Road, Rondebosch, 7700, Cape Town, South Africa.

For more information about the Children's Institute and the Caring Schools Project, visit www.ci.org.za.

For more information about SADTU contact Shermain Mannah

e-mail: smannah@sadtu.org.za, Tel: +27 (11) 33 44 830, website www.sadtu.org.za

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Written by Norma Rudolph, Jo Monson, Karen Collett and Brenda Sonn

Editing: Carohn Cornell, Allison Arrison and Charmaine Smith

Proofreading, design and print liaison: Charmaine Smith and Allison Arrison

Distribution: Anthea Arendse and Nafeesah Majal

Design and layout: Nazley Samsodien and Marise Groenewald, Liquid Amber Graphic Designs

Artwork: Nazley Samsodien and Wouter de Witt, Ghost Cartoons

Hardcopy and CD-ROM cover concept and design: Jenny Young

CD-ROM design and interface: Maghmuda Ockards

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How to use this book

This book guides school communities to build a shared vision of a better future and work together for change through partnership and protecting child rights. Since communities are different, facilitators will find what works best through practice, listening with openness to feedback, and trying different strategies. The book does not give steps that can always be followed in the same order. Each time you repeat the overlapping steps, understanding and action improve. New plans and actions for change build on previous experience. You can adapt the steps to bring in new ideas from your own or others' experiences, but we recommend that you use the whole approach rather than just picking bits and pieces. We suggest you read all eight chapters to get an overview and then decide what you think will work best.

The chapters at a glance

Chapter One explores why we need champions for children and caring school communities. Inspiring stories deepen understanding of 'well-being' and 'vulnerability'.

Chapter Two introduces the participatory approach for building caring school communities by using three interlinked phases: Understanding what is; Imagining and dreaming what can be; and Making plans and taking action. We look at ethical guidelines and the role of facilitators.

Through the 'Journey of Hope' in **Chapter Three** community members can experience these three interlinked phases, get involved, understand what help children need, and take small steps toward change. We introduce human rights and the need to track the impact of our actions.

Chapters Four, Five, Six and Eight explain the three phases and describe participatory activities. Before detailed planning we deepen understanding of children's rights. Each set of activities takes you through a complete cycle, building on the set of activities that came before. Participants should experience the activities as a single journey to deeper understanding, to more powerful visions of what is possible, and to more effective planning and action. Throughout all the phases participants make commitments to take small steps to help children. Once the phases are completed, we start the cycle again. Smaller cycles of three phases can be done within bigger cycles.

Chapter Seven gives activities and ideas to strengthen writing and keep a portfolio of written and other records. It discusses collecting and analysing information and separating facts and opinions.

The **Resources** section introduces some organisations, networks and materials, with contact details.

The **Appendices** give additional information and some can be copied as handouts.

Features to help users

Key terms and more difficult words are highlighted in bold text the first time they are used in each chapter and are explained in the List of Key terms on page x. You might want to translate them into the languages used in your community.

Guiding questions or descriptions are highlighted in italics to help facilitators.

Group activities are clearly marked with a side bar and are listed on page vi.

◇ draws attention to direct facilitator cues that are not part of an activity.

Variations to activities are ideas and suggestions from facilitators.

Comments from facilitators or participants report their experience of the activity.

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from the Children's Institute (CI) and South African Democratic Teachers' Union (SADTU)

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OPEN LETTER TO CHAMPIONS FOR CHILDREN

**from the Children's Institute (CI) and
South African Democratic Teachers' Union (SADTU)**

We salute you, champions for children! If you are working to improve the lives of children in a school community, you are a champion for children. You can use this handbook to strengthen your work with children and to involve more people. We invite you to use the steps and activities for participatory work in the handbook to mobilise for the well-being of all the children in your school community.

Generations of champions before us fought for human rights, including children's rights. After 1994, South Africa's democratic Constitution enshrined these rights in law and it is the responsibility of government, and society at large, to ensure that all children enjoy their rights. We know that children need certain things to survive and grow up safe and healthy – things like schooling, loving care, and a safe and healthy environment. All children have rights to these conditions for their well-being.

Our knowledge about children's rights does not only come to us from books. We feel upset and angry when we find children whose rights are denied or violated. These strong feelings gave rise to the movement for children's rights and continue to give us energy for our work with children. As champions for children we believe passionately in working for children's well-being and in working against the conditions that make children vulnerable. We are committed to making sure that all children get what they need to grow and develop their full potential. We are champions for the rights of children.

One key role of champions for children is to inspire others in the school and the community, including government officials, to work together so that all children can thrive, grow well and enjoy all their rights. A school can be a gateway for service delivery – what we call 'a node of care and support'. A school community is a good place to work for children's rights. What do we mean by a school community? It is the school and the broader community around the school: people and organisations (perhaps other schools) that interact with the school or could interact with the school.

A caring school community is a group or groups of people who share a commitment to ensuring the health, safety and well-being of all children in that school and in the neighbouring community. They know which children need special help – including younger children who have not yet started school and older children who have dropped out – and they are able to draw in resources to help vulnerable children, from inside the school and from the community outside of the school.

This handbook focuses on how to build relationships between champions for children who are based inside the school and those based in the surrounding community (including government officials) to create a safe, healthy and caring environment for all children in the school and in the wider community. This is what the ‘South African White Paper 6 on Special Needs Education: Building an Inclusive Education and Training System’ (2001) asks us to do through establishing school-based support teams.

We recommend that schools form clusters with other schools in the same ward to work jointly with the ward councillor, ward committee members and other government and non-government service providers.

Of course every school community is different. In some school communities gangs and guns are a big issue, in other school communities many young children suffer from foetal alcohol syndrome (FAS), or many children may have lost parents and family members to AIDS-related illnesses. You need to work out with all the role players what your school community needs and how to make it happen. We believe the steps and activities outlined in this handbook will help you work with others to build a caring school community.

Champions for children, we invite you to use the approach outlined in the handbook to build a caring school community. We invite you and your school community to become partners in this work. Let us work together to build the nation by creating caring school communities!

Yours in the continuing struggle for children’s rights!

CI Director, Professor Shirley Pendlebury and
SADTU General Secretary, Mr Thulas Nxesi

Key terms used in this Handbook

Accountable: responsible for the time and the resources you use and able to report back about how you have spent the time and resources. Results-based accountability makes everyone responsible for making lives better.

Accurate: correct. We must have evidence to support our facts.

Acting: doing something to change the situation; intervening in a complex social process.

Action-reflection cycle: a process of reflecting (thinking and talking in groups), taking action, reflecting some more, taking action again, reflecting, and so on. Understanding and solving problems to create new knowledge and social change (see planning, acting, reflecting and observing).

Advocacy: public support for and defence of a cause (e.g. children's rights).

Appreciative Inquiry: An approach that always starts with the positive (strengths, resources and successes, even very small successes). It uses stories to find themes and topics for discussion. Groups create shared images for a preferred future and find innovative ways to create that future.

Caring school community: a group or groups of people who share a commitment to ensuring the health, safety and well-being of all children in that school and in the neighbouring community, including all government and non-government service providers responsible for that area.

Caring school: a school which works toward well-being for all children and which identifies the vulnerable children in the community and knows how to get help for them.

Celebrate small successes: take note of and mark each small step that takes the community closer to its goals. Hold small ceremonies with opportunities for public praise, fun and enjoyment. Think of creative ways to do this with little or no resources.

Champion for children: someone fighting for children's rights – working to improve the lives of children in a school community.

Change: this handbook is about making the lives of children better. This involves big changes at all levels, including: individual people, small groups, institutions and the wider society.

Children: When we refer to children in this handbook we include youth up to the age of 18. A factsheet available from the Children's Institute gives a detailed answer to the question: 'At what age can children act independently from their parents and when do they need their parents' consent or assistance?' This factsheet provides information on the current law and proposed reforms to the ages of consent and capacity for children.

Cluster of schools: a group of schools that link together for a specific purpose. Caring Schools Project recommends that all school in the same ward cluster to engage jointly with service providers.

Community-based facilitator: someone living in the community who can be a link between the school and community and can help people access services. Some projects have young people playing this role, sometimes called 'youth care facilitators'. See Appendix 9 for suggested selection criteria.

Consent form: Form used to prove that someone has agreed to take part in research. Sometimes called a release form. See informed consent.

Constitution: the highest law of the land which includes a democratic Bill of Rights.

Consulted: It is not enough to inform some important leaders, we need to ask for permission, or consult them about relevant decisions.

Continuum: Comes from the word 'continuous', which means connected without a break or uninterrupted. Think about a line that connects the two opposites of 'vulnerability' and well-being'. Children are always moving along this line as their family and community situation changes.

Conversation: talking with others with whom there is some relationship. There is the possibility of change and something new coming from sharing ideas.

Creating energy for change: Change is difficult. We need to use strategies that help people to feel hopeful and believe that the change they want is possible. Celebrating small successes is one way to create energy for change.

Creative imagination: ability to make a picture in your mind of objects not present to senses (see imagine).

Discrimination: treating people differently (usually worse) because they are seen as not the same as other people.

Diversity: differences of age, gender, language, religion and ethnic background, education and levels of literacy, ability and status.

Duty-bearer: a person who has a duty to respect, protect and fulfil a specific human right.

Empowerment: when people have the power to bring about the changes they want and they know it.

Ethical guidelines: principles that show us how to act in the correct way to protect rights (see ethics).

Ethics: a set of moral values to guide honourable behaviour.

Families: all those related to each other closely through blood or household connections.

Gender sensitive: take into account the historical inequality between men and women. Ensure that women are recognised, respected and can participate fully in all ways.

Human right: a specific relationship between a person who has a valid claim and another person, group or institution (including the state) with a duty to respect, protect and fulfil the right.

Imagine: form a picture in your mind, consider the possibility; think of something that does not exist.

Indicators: measures or evidence used to check progress (including individual children and actions to protect child rights and build a caring school community); tell you where you've been, where you are and can guide you to where you want to be; Can help us understand how we are doing compared with others.

Informed consent: agreement that is based on understanding fully all the implications.

Informed: When we inform someone, we tell them about what is happening. Often people with high influence are busy and cannot come to meetings, but it is important to phone them, write to them or meet them regularly so they know what is happening in the project.

Inspire: make others or yourself feel strongly about doing something, especially something creative to change the situation.

Involved: Being involved means you are participating actively in the process and helping to take action. The aim is to get as many people as possible as involved as possible in protecting child rights and building a caring school community.

Leadership: the role of any person who is willing to think and take action, showing others the way.

Link person: A link person is anyone who can be a link between the school and community. This could be a youth care worker, a community worker or volunteer.

Monitoring progress: involves thinking about what has been done, conversation in groups, and revising plans based on experience and reflection (see accountable and indicators).

Participatory approach: a way of working that includes everyone in thinking, talking and taking action.

Partnership: people or groups come together for a specific purpose. Members of the partnership are the partners. Caring school community partners work together to support the well-being of children, their families and communities.

Planning: a process of thinking through and developing our intention to act.

Points of light: places where children can get care and support.

Policy: course or general plan of action decided on by government.

Portfolio: a file, folder or container of some kind that contains loose sheets of paper, drawings, photographs and other documents. Teachers keep a record of children's work in a portfolio. Keep important information that you are collecting for your caring schools project in a portfolio.

Predict: know what to expect, based on previous experience. Outcomes in complex social situations are often not predictable (that is unpredictable). It is not easy to see the relationship between cause and effect.

Protective factors: things which protect a child from harm (like the love of a caring adult, or a clean environment).

Ratifying: confirm or accept by formal consent.

Reflecting/reflection: Thinking deeply about the situation, talking in groups and deciding what to do to improve the situation. Making meaning or sense of the situation using our minds, senses and feelings.

Resilient: able to cope with change and with difficulties, recovering quite easily from a setback.

Resources: assets which are available for use, including people with skills, money and infrastructure.

Right claimant or claim holder: a person who is entitled to claim a specific human right.

Rights: needs you are entitled to.

Rights-based approach: an approach to development work that is based on human rights principles. It develops the capacity of claim holders to realise rights as well as the capacity of duty bearers to respect, protect and fulfil them.

Risk factors: things which expose a child to physical or emotional harm

Role player: someone who has a specialised role or function in a process (e.g. any group or individual who can mobilise a school community around child well-being). Same as 'stakeholder'.

School clusters: schools grouped together in the same ward, to work jointly

School community: the school and the broader community around the school, the people and organisations (perhaps other schools) that interact or could interact with the school.

School Governing Body (SGB): Committee elected to govern a school. All schools in South Africa must have an SGB.

Stigma: when people try to make others feel ashamed because they are different.

Vulnerability: being at risk of/exposed to harm (physical, mental, emotional or spiritual).

Ward committee: a committee of up to 10 elected representatives of the people living in the ward or municipality, usually chaired by the local ward councillor. (See Resources section for useful details.)

Well-being: feeling in harmony with yourself, being in a good state of health (mental, physical, emotional and spiritual).

CHAPTER ONE

CONTEXT AND KEY IDEAS

In Chapter One we explore why we need champions for children in school communities.

We look at some inspiring examples of champions for children and caring school communities and discuss why schools are good places to reach children and why we need caring school communities.

We discuss well-being and vulnerability, protective factors and risk factors, and look at stories showing what these mean in the lives of children.

Why we need champions for children in school communities

Research has shown that the single biggest factor in building a caring school community is leadership from an individual – a **champion for children**. A caring school community can start with one person who does something to make a difference in the lives of children or educators. This does not require a lot of effort, **resources**, management and leadership capacity. The champions we spoke to started with a simple action which grew.

A **caring school community** needs many champions for children's rights: activists and leaders in the school and the community who are committed to making sure that all children get what they need to grow well and develop their full potential. Anyone can be a champion for children's rights:

- in the education system: educators, principals, **school governing body** members, learner representatives, early childhood development practitioners, librarians, district education officials
- in families: parents or other family members, caregivers, neighbours
- in health and social services: clinic staff, home-based carers, child care workers, social workers, peer educators and traditional healers
- in non-governmental and community-based organisations
- local government officials: ward councillors and ward committee¹ members, service providers, development workers and traditional leaders
- police officers and probation officers

¹ The ward committee, up to 10 elected representatives of the people living in the ward or municipality, is usually chaired by the local ward councillor. The ward committee members can play an important role in the caring school community: they communicate the basic needs of the community, including children, to the municipality which is required by law to prioritise those needs. (Ward councillors receive a stipend; ward committee members are generally volunteers but in some areas they are compensated out of pocket expenses.) See Resources section at the end of the handbook for more information.

- community members: sports coaches, choir leaders, religious leaders, bus drivers, taxi drivers, spaza shop owners and street traders, and other local business people.

Inside the school we need educators to be champions for children. Educators have enormous power to promote children's **well-being** and build confidence and self esteem. Even small actions, a smile or a word of praise, can make a difference. Educators are in a good position to know about children's home circumstances, notice **change** in their lives, identify those who need help, and support special learning needs. They are important role models for parents and other caregivers. Their first responsibility is to teach, which means coping with big classes and a challenging new curriculum, as well as administrative work. If educators are to take on the role of caring for and supporting children, they need the support of the broader community. We need champions to mobilise this support for educators.

Through the experiences we have already had, and the children we have already helped, we have our own ideas about building a caring school community. But as champions for children we want to **inspire** and mobilise others in our school and broader community to work with us – and this involves having a shared understanding. We need a shared understanding about what we are doing so that we can dream and act together to make a difference in the lives of children.

Some inspiring examples of champions for children

Before we look at the difficulties that many children face, let's look at some examples of work done by champions for children in different communities. It is important to honour and appreciate the work of these champions for children.

Try to collect examples of champions for children from your own community and keep them somewhere that you can refer to later.

Champions who help individual children

Nokhwezi explains how educators helped her to reach her dream

I believe that teachers can have a huge impact on the lives of learners who are infected or affected by AIDS. I lost my mother and sister to AIDS in 1999. That was heartbreaking but I did my best to carry on in school. I was a good student with dreams of doing tertiary studies and becoming a professional. In 2000, I was raped by my father. A year later at the age of 16 I discovered that I am HIV-positive. I felt my life was over and my dreams would come to nothing. The first person I told was a teacher. She had such a positive attitude that she helped me to think positively and that has made all the difference in my life. She and other teachers helped me financially, not only emotionally. My school governing body and teachers paid for my antiretrovirals and my boarding fees so that my granny would be secure that I would finish

school. They motivated me to continue studying and I am about to graduate from university. I have invited my teachers to attend my graduation.

Educators in the Free State

At a Caring Schools workshop, participants were each invited to share one story of how they had helped a child. Educators told stories about feeding hungry children 'out of their own pockets', helping children and their parents or caregivers apply for grants, or simply being someone to talk to at a critical point in a child's life.

An educator who teaches in the foundation phase described how she became concerned that one of her learners might be partially deaf. This was confirmed when she took him to the special school for the deaf and blind. This child, who had been struggling, is now thriving at his new school.

Another educator shared a story about how a mother came to the school very worried about her daughter's attitude to her school work and poor attendance. Although the girl was not in any of his classes, he had a chat with her and other staff members. He realised that her eyesight might be a problem and arranged for her to go to the mobile eye clinic for an eye test. Now that she has glasses, she is doing much better at school.

A third educator described how he bought a uniform for one of his Grade 12 learners, a bright student who was in danger of leaving school. He later organised food for him as he was living with grandparents and they were unable to provide for him. The learner passed matric with an exemption and this educator encouraged him to apply for a bursary. The young man is now studying at a local technikon and the educator continues to show an interest in his tertiary studies through regular telephone calls.

Champions who mobilise caring school communities

The stories below show how **leadership** from champions for children can inspire a range of community projects. The stories show some of the resources that a school can offer in poor communities with little infrastructure.

A story from the Eastern Cape

It is the vision and leadership of principal Nomsa Mthathi that has made her primary school the driving force behind many activities in the wider school community. For example, staff members started a support group for people living with HIV/AIDS and they trained home-based carers. The school helps people establish food gardens, does clean ups, has initiated a community policing forum and welfare forum and facilitates an 'adopt a family project' where a better-off family supports a poor family. When asked about what motivates her, Nomsa says: 'It has been my life. I cannot sit back.' She explains that she realised the school had the potential to do something and with this realisation

came a willingness to take responsibility for developing the potential. Says Nomsa: 'I take the leader position because it's needed.'

A story from KwaZulu-Natal

At a small school in northern KwaZulu-Natal, the staff and governing body raised funds to build a home for children in difficult circumstances, including those affected by HIV/AIDS. To bolster food supplies for children and their families, the school has a vegetable garden, a fish pond and hens which provide eggs as well as food for the fish. Learners help maintain the vegetable garden and look after the chickens. These activities fit in with the Lifeskills curriculum and extend the children's learning environment. Educators help to organise the government feeding programme. They also help with clinic referrals where necessary. The school raises funds to extend school feeding to weekends and holidays. Parents and educators help with the weekend feeding programme, using the school kitchen. Staff members use parent-teacher meetings to inform parents and caregivers about the children's home and the extended feeding programme and to get them **involved**. They also inform parents and caregivers how to access social assistance grants and other community and government services or support.

A story from the Free State

Educators from one community reported a growing problem with violence in schools: an educator and two learners had been stabbed. A group of men who work out at the gym – including two educators – started talking about how they had stayed out of trouble. They decided to form a karate club – convinced that karate is a good way to channel the energy that can get boys into trouble and to teach self-discipline and confidence. The club is growing fast and there are no weapons allowed. They meet in a church hall, and some of their members have been graded at the provincial level. So far it's only boys but they plan to have a club for girls and women next year – this might help combat violence against women. The idea is to have new role models for the youth.

A story from the Western Cape

This is the dream that some participants in the Caring Schools Project shared in 2006:

We have a dream that every child born will be a wanted child, every child born will be a child with well-being. Every mother will take good care of herself for the sake of her unborn child – she won't smoke or drink and her family and community will encourage her. There will be no more children born with foetal alcohol syndrome [FAS²]. There will be excellent free antenatal care available for all mothers and HIV-positive mothers will have treatment to prevent mother-to-

2 Foetal alcohol syndrome (FAS): The baby developing inside the womb is called a 'foetus'. Mothers who drink alcohol when they are pregnant can cause damage to their unborn children. Foetal alcohol syndrome is the name of the group of symptoms caused in children whose mother's drink alcohol when they were pregnant.

child transmission. Unemployed people in the community will be trained and supported to do early childhood development for young children in homes and in workplaces so mothers with jobs can go to work without worrying about their children. Every child will be registered at the clinic and will receive their immunisations at the right time. Everyone in the community will know the child maintenance laws and sports stars and other local heroes in the community will advertise: 'Real men support their children!'

It's a beautiful dream. Unfortunately, we can't ensure that every child is a wanted child born to a happy, stable family – we have to be realistic. We decided to start with FAS which is a huge, huge problem in rural areas like ours. We found an NGO that works with women on farms and they have good posters and pamphlets about how to prevent FAS and how to recognise and help children with FAS. We formed a "Save our children" committee with a trainer from the NGO, the clinic sister, two community health workers, representatives from two crèches, three primary schools and two churches, the high school principal and some parents. Wherever you go in the community we have put up posters and the schools are going to have a FAS awareness week. Next year we will have a campaign about child maintenance to inform mothers of their rights and fathers of their responsibilities.

Why caring school communities are vital for children

Many children are vulnerable and need help and support. In fact, in some communities all or almost all children are vulnerable. An estimated 67.7% or 12.3 million of South Africa's children are living in poverty (living in households with an expenditure of R1,200 per month).³ Poverty and the deep inequalities in our society fuel violence and crime. The spread of HIV/AIDS makes this situation even more difficult. There are growing numbers of children whose basic needs are not met and whose rights are not protected.

Schools are good places to identify children who need help and support and to monitor their well-being. Approximately 10.6 million children are in school. Children spend a lot of their time at school over many years. Educators see children five days a week and the school is focused on children and their development. Schools are often close to the homes and families of children.

Schools are also good places to integrate the delivery of resources and services for children. Schools are sometimes the only infrastructure in a community and school buildings and grounds can be used for many things. People at the school can be resources for care

³ General Household Survey 2006, analysis by Marera DS, Children's Institute, UCT.

and support: the school staff and school management team, school governing bodies and auxiliary support services, as well as learners and the learners' representative council, and school-based youth groups.

A caring school community tries to ensure that children's basic needs are met and their rights protected by:

- making sure there is physical and emotional support available to all children
- identifying children who need special help or additional support
- helping them to get the services and resources they need
- tracking the progress of individual children
- promoting access to services and community action.

When schools work as a cluster they can work together and reach more children. All **role players** in the same ward can engage together with the same ward councillor and ward committee and other government role players responsible for that area.

Understanding well-being and vulnerability, protective factors and risk factors

Well-being and vulnerability

Well-being includes physical and emotional health and safety. Building caring school communities means working to strengthen the **protective factors** that promote the **well-being** of children and reducing the **risk factors** that make children more **vulnerable**. A child who is vulnerable is not protected and is at risk of being harmed.

Protective factors

Think of things that promote the well-being of children, protect them and make them less vulnerable to hardship, illness, violence and abuse. Protective factors may prevent or reduce the risk of something bad happening or help a child and family to cope when something bad happens. Protective factors build the child's resilience. A child who is **resilient** (able to cope with change, difficulties and setbacks) is protected and is less at risk of harm, even in difficult circumstances.

All children need protective factors:

- support and care from family or caregivers (Even if the child does not have loving support from a family, it can make all the difference to have even one person – a champion – who cares, supports and is interested in him or her. This caring relationship builds the child's self-esteem, confidence, ability to communicate and sense of responsibility.)
- access to services: enough food and clean water, shelter, health care, education and social security
- protection from violence and abuse.

All children have the right to protective factors under the South African **Constitution** and the Bill of Rights. In government and in society there are people who have a duty to provide these protective factors that support well-being. If we want to make children less vulnerable we need to make sure those people carry out their duties and responsibilities. This is part of the **rights-based approach** that we will discuss in depth in Chapter Six (page 81). There are government policies and programmes to support and protect the rights of all children.

Risk factors that make children more vulnerable

Think of all the risk factors that put children more at risk of sickness, abuse and hardship. Here are two lists drawn up by groups of educators. You could tick the main risk factors that apply in your school community and add others.

- Many children do not get the love and care they need.
- Many children do not have good role models.
- Many children live in poverty and do not have adequate food, shelter and clothing.
- Many children live in unhealthy polluted environments, without clean air, clean water, sanitation, and do not have safe spaces to play.
- Many children have little or no access to healthcare and social services.
- Many children get poor schooling, enter school late and/or drop out early.
- Many children have special learning needs that are not identified by a parent or caregiver.
- Many children are abused, neglected or exploited.
- In many homes, alcohol and drug abuse and family violence are the norm.
- Many children suffer from foetal alcohol syndrome (FAS).
- Many children are exposed to negative peer pressure, gangsterism and crime.
- Some **families** and their children are treated as outsiders in the school and the community and may be bullied and victimised.
- Many parents or caregivers are unemployed, seasonal workers or migrant workers.
- Many children live in families where someone is very sick or has died (e.g. AIDS-related illness).
- Many children have lost one or both parents.
- Many children have no birth certificate, no access to grants.

Children are vulnerable when they:

- don't have their basic needs: adequate food, clothes, shelter
- don't have adult guidance
- don't have a loving home
- don't have time and safe spaces to play
- are often scolded and shouted at by adults
- are bullied by other children
- are sexually harassed by adults, including teachers
- take drugs
- join gangs
- sell their bodies for money
- become 'taxi queens'
- get drunk at taverns and are sexually exploited
- bunk school and hang around at shopping malls and taxi ranks
- hang out with 'wrong friends'
- are rude and aggressive towards other children and towards adults

Stories of vulnerable children

These are fictional stories about children. Invite participants to discuss any of these stories in pairs or small groups before discussion in the big group. Adapt these questions to guide the discussion:

- ◊ ◦ *What risk factors can you identify in this child's story?*
- ◊ ◦ *Can you identify any protective factors in this child's life?*
- ◊ ◦ *Do any of these stories sound like real-life stories of children in your community?*
- ◊ ◦ *How can you change the stories to make them more true to life for children in your community?*
- ◊ ◦ *If the small groups report back and/or if there is a discussion in the big group, list the risk factors and any protective factors on newsprint.*

Lerato (13) doesn't have parents. He explains that first their baby sister died, then his mother, then his father, so he looks after his younger brother. He wakes up early to wash, then makes food – if they have food in the house. He and his younger brother walk to school carrying their books. After school his brother goes to herd cattle and goats for their uncle and he comes back late and drives them into the kraal. His uncle pays his brother's school fees. Lerato's uniform is too small for him so he sometimes doesn't go to school. Lerato works for people in the village, and they give him and his brother food. Every Saturday night, Lerato washes their clothes and then on Sunday they go to church, only if their clothes are dry.

Sindi (12) only started school when she was ten because she didn't have a birth certificate. She is big for her class and she is tired of being scolded by the teachers and teased by the other children so she sometimes bunks school. There is nowhere else to go so she hangs around the shebeen to listen to the music. Her stepfather finds her there and beats her for bunking school. She runs away to town and sleeps with other runaway girls on the street. The next morning the social worker from the shelter finds her and invites her to come to the shelter but her new friends tell her it's easy to earn money on the street so she must rather stay with them. Sindi feels confused.

Moses (14) is thinking about quitting school. He is a junior member of a gang – he joined to be more popular and respected. Recently he started to deliver drugs for the gang but he doesn't like doing this. He is afraid of gang violence and so far he hasn't done anything violent himself. He lives with his parents and six brothers and sisters. His father works as a long distance truck driver and is away from home a lot. His mother is a domestic worker who looks after other people's children so she is also away from home a lot. Moses doesn't see the point in staying at school any more. He decides to drop out because he wants to earn money. He is tall for his age so maybe his cousin can get him a job on a fishing trawler.

Ernest (15) dropped out of school at the age of 14. His stepfather was always nagging him because he was no good at sport. The best thing in his life was tik – it made him feel confident and strong and happy, as if he could do anything, and when he was on tik he always had friends around him. He started shoplifting so he could pay for tik. That was how he landed up in jail, awaiting trial. He should have been in the juvenile section but there was no room so he was put in a cell with adults where he was gang raped. He may be HIV-positive as a result but he hasn't been tested.

Ridwaan (16) is angry with the world, his parents and his friends. Last week he bought a gun and this made him feel powerful and confident that people would fear him. He hates his father, who used to give him heavy beatings as a child, and he has threatened to kill his father if he ever hits him again. Sometimes Ridwaan flies into a rage when he is with his girlfriend if she doesn't do whatever he wants. Once he beat her up but afterwards he apologised and she took him back.

Children are made vulnerable by their environment, community and circumstances

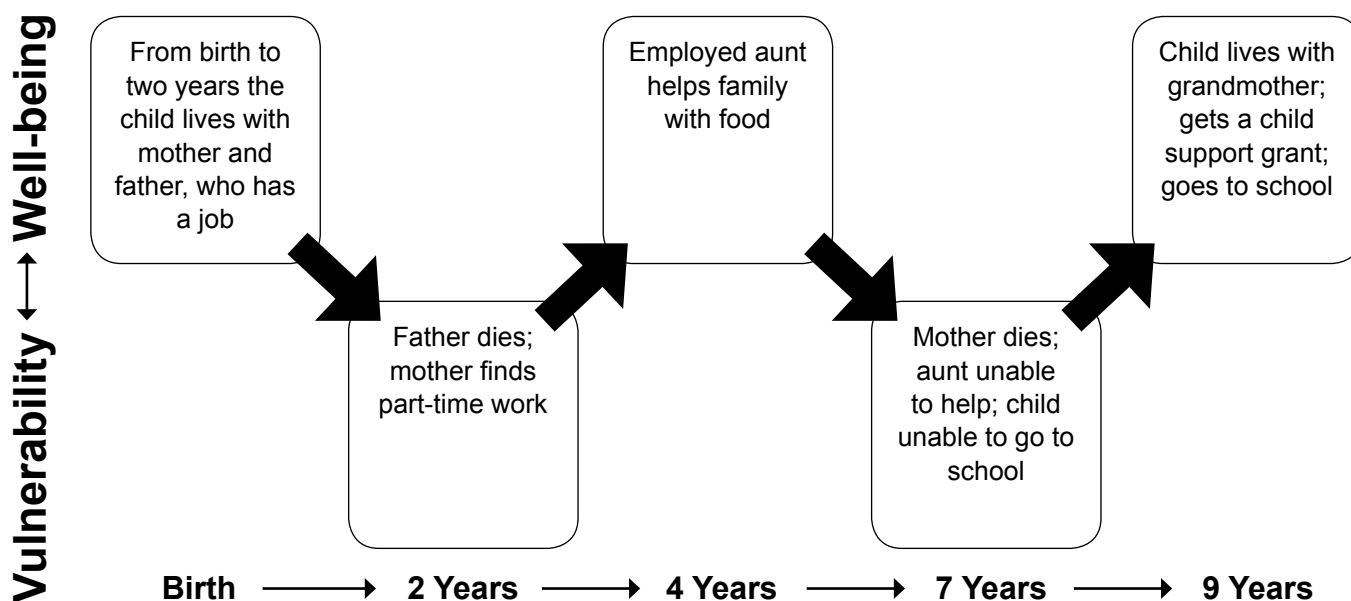
Generally, the problem is not with the child. We need to understand why children are vulnerable. We need to ask, 'Which factors in the home, school or community are affecting the well-being of this child?' Helping individual children without tackling the underlying causes which make them vulnerable can only be a short-term solution. For example, it is not enough to look for hungry children and to feed only those selected children. We need to make sure all children are well fed.

Looking for hungry children

An early childhood development programme in Uganda used special arm bands to measure around a child's upper arm. If the tip of the arm band reached a 'danger' area marked in red, it meant that the child was malnourished and could join the feeding programme. Children who joined the feeding programme soon gained weight and were then taken off the programme – only to be admitted a few weeks later, malnourished once again.

Children can move from being vulnerable to well-being and back again

Children can become a little less vulnerable and go back to being very vulnerable. For example, the diagram below shows how a child whose mother loses her job, may move from well-being to being vulnerable when the family loses income, and back to well-being when the situation changes.



Involve children in all the phases of building a caring school community

A caring school community project is for and about children and it is important to involve a diverse range of children – children of different ages and backgrounds, children with special learning needs, children who are infected or affected by HIV, and children who are out of school. Children can give adult role players insight into their situation, they can provide care and support for each other. They can sometimes mobilise to get what they need.

Children outside of school include children of school-going age who have never attended school, those who have dropped out of school, as well as children who are too young to be in formal school. Because these children are often the most vulnerable, it is important to include them in the understanding, dreaming, **planning** and making of a caring school community.

SUMMARY OF CHAPTER ONE

In Chapter One we looked at why we need caring school communities and why schools are good places to reach children. Chapter One focused on the situation of children in general and on specific examples of champions working for caring school communities.

Chapter Two introduces the approach used in the Caring Schools Project.

CHAPTER TWO

OUR PARTICIPATORY FRAMEWORK FOR BUILDING CARING SCHOOL COMMUNITIES

In Chapter Two we introduce a participatory approach to use in school communities. Our aim is to build school communities that support the well-being of all children and that care for the most vulnerable. The participatory work follows clear phases: understanding what is, imagining what can be, and planning and taking action to create what will be. We examine ethical guidelines for participatory work, discuss the crucial role of facilitators and suggest guidelines from experienced facilitators.

The phases in participatory work: understanding, imagining, planning and taking action

Our participatory work follows a clear cycle: first understand what is, then **imagine** what can be, plan and take action to create what will be, and then repeat the cycle.

In the process community members get to know one another and build relationships, while coming to a better understanding of their reality, imagining a better future, and taking action to bring that future to life. Each group within the **school community** will work at a different pace. For example a group of children might do all three phases and be ready to start the next round in less than a term, while the **school governing body** group might take much longer.

Let's look at the phases in creating a **caring school community**.

1. Understanding the present situation of children in your school community

Start by asking: *What are we doing well? What do we value most about this school or community?* ◇

We need to identify and celebrate the existing strengths and assets of the community – what is working and wonderful – so we can see what to build on. We deliberately don't start by focusing on problems. As we think and discuss, listening to many different voices, perspectives and experiences, we can move beyond our assumptions to build a shared understanding of the community in which we live.

2. Imagining: your vision of how the future will be for those children

- ◇ Start by asking: *What future do we want for the children in our community – what is our dream for them? If our dream of a caring school community comes true, what will it look like? Who will be part of it, what values will they share, what will they do?*

It is important to stimulate the **creative imagination** through drawing, painting, clay modelling, acting and singing. The aim is to **inspire** community members with a new sense of what is possible and to move them towards a shared vision of the school community they want to create together. Encourage them to express their dreams in positive, detailed, specific statements. (e.g. not: ‘Children will have no problems’. but ‘All children will get three nutritious meals a day.’)

3. Planning and taking action to create what will be for those children: making your vision real

- ◇ Start by analysing: *What do we need to do to create our caring school community – to bring our vision of the community to life? What **resources** do we have already and what other resources do we need? What small steps can we take immediately without help or resources from outside this group?*

Participants need to agree who will do what, by when:

- *Who is interested in taking the small steps?*
- *What small action groups could we form?*
- *How and when will we report back on progress?*
- *What bigger steps do we need to keep in mind for later?*

It is best to start with small steps. These can lead to small successes and celebrating small successes creates the energy for taking on bigger challenges. **Monitoring progress** involves thinking about what has been done, **conversation** in groups, and revising plans based on experience and reflection.

As you facilitate this process, keep in mind which of these ideas is guiding your work at that moment, how what you are doing builds on what came before and how you will link it to what follows. This cycle of understanding-imagining-planning-taking action-understanding will repeat itself over and over again as you work together to create a caring school community. Encourage as many people as possible to participate. Make sure they are very familiar with the cycle of understanding, imagining, planning and taking action so that, in future, they can continue the process without you. Keep on believing in people’s ability to make a better world for themselves and for others.

Ethical guidelines for participatory work

Sharing information, experiences and perspectives is essential if you want to create a caring school community using participatory methods. We must be honest and respectful when we share information about people, schools and organisations. We must make sure the information we share is **accurate**; but it isn't enough to be accurate – we need to make sure we share information in ways that facilitate positive **change**. This is a big issue in the context of HIV/AIDS. To help vulnerable children, we need information about HIV-positive family members. But **stigma** is a very big problem so we have to be very, very careful how we share information or the project could have negative results for those who take part.

1. Get informed consent from participants

Explain the project fully to participants and let them know how information will be used. Do this before you ask them for permission to collect and use the information. For children under 18, a parent or adult caregiver must sign a form to give permission for them to participate, and the child must also sign to show that he or she agrees to participate. Children over 18 can sign the form themselves. You can adapt the Informed **Consent forms** from the Children's Institute, University of Cape Town, for your organisation. (See Appendix 6 on page 143) When a school wants to take part in the project, you will need official permission from the principal, the district office and the provincial Department of Education. You also need to inform the educators to get their agreement and support. Before you take any photographs in a school, ask the principal for permission. When you want to take photographs of children or adults, ask their permission first. You need their written permission if you want to publish the photographs.

2. Invite participants to confirm that information is accurate

When you want to share information from an interview, workshop or focus group, it is important to give the people concerned an opportunity to check the information. This way you can be sure that you have accurately captured what was said. Allowing people to check the information allows them to consider the potential implications of sharing that information more publicly. Someone may decide that he or she is uncomfortable sharing that information more broadly and may ask you to change or remove some information (even if it is accurate). It is often difficult to decide how to use information, particularly information about children who need help.

3. Protect the identity of individuals and schools: don't use their real names when you write or when you speak about them

4. Involve participants at all stages, including the development of findings and recommendations

Involve participants in meaningful ways throughout the process. Hold regular meetings for members of the school community to respond to the findings (what has been learned) and recommendations (for what should be done). Participants themselves will generate findings and recommendations. Facilitators may find they can learn from participants how to express findings and recommendations in ways that do not cause harm to individuals and communities.

Comparing different approaches

You will sometimes read about the **action-reflection cycle** of research. In this handbook our participatory work follows a cycle of understanding, imagining, planning and taking action to create a caring school community, which adds some very important elements to the action-reflection cycle. See if you can spot the differences.

Action-reflection is a process of reflecting, taking action, reflecting some more, taking action again, reflecting, and so on.

- **Reflecting** means we think deeply about our situation, we talk about it in groups and we decide what to do to improve the situation.
- We reflect about our situation to affirm our strengths, resources and successes, and decide what to build on and what to change to improve the situation.
- We take action to improve the situation.
- Again, we reflect: this time we think and talk about what happened when we took action and what has changed in the situation. We celebrate any successes and develop more ideas for action.
- Again, we take action to improve our situation.

The action-reflection cycle helps people to understand their own situation – what is happening around them, what successes there are to celebrate, and how to make changes. As people reflect and take action, they realise what has already been achieved and that they can change their situation. They become more confident. When they reflect and work together, the group support makes them stronger.

Questions to discuss with a partner or in a small group

- ◇ ◦ *Can you see where this cycle of action-reflection has been influenced by **Appreciative Inquiry** – an approach that always starts with the positive (strengths, resources and successes, even very small successes), it does not start by focusing on problems?*
- *Do you agree that it is good to start by looking at what we are already doing well – or do you think we should always start with the problems?*
- *Did you notice which phase of our cycle of understanding, imagining, planning and taking action is missing in the action-reflection cycle above?*

- *Do you think it's important to include this phase³ as you work to create a caring school community – why/why not?*

The facilitator's role

We use a **participatory approach** to create caring school communities. This means we work directly with those who are most affected – including children – to find out what works best for them in their specific context. We believe the issues we face as individuals, as communities, as a nation and as a world can best be solved in conversation with those who are most affected. All the different **role players** need to work together, but the people who are most affected – including children – should decide what needs to be done. The greater the participation, the better the outcomes of the process will be.

As a facilitator of this process, your job is to create opportunities for all members of the school community to share their different experiences, perspectives and information; to engage in creative reflection and to imagine a caring school community; and to identify and explore the challenges facing them:

- to understand those challenges in new ways,
- to identify solutions based on that understanding, and
- to take action together to make a better future.

To facilitate this participatory process, you need to be able to listen well, to observe carefully and to ask generative questions⁴ that will help community members think more deeply. You need to be of service to the community's best vision for itself and to let go of your own ideas of what is best for the community.

Sometimes when we try participatory processes, the voices of children remain marginalised. This is a problem. To develop a full and accurate understanding of a situation, we need all community members to share their experiences and insight. When we are trying to create caring school communities, we need to listen to the voices of children and young people. As a facilitator, you need to help the adults understand the benefits of having children participate. You need to be an advocate for an approach that:

- safeguards the rights of children,
- gives all children equal opportunity to participate, whatever their gender, language, ethnicity, socio-economic background,
- gives children opportunities to participate in ways appropriate to their age and stage of development, and
- ensures that what they say is taken seriously, not ignored.

3 The missing phase is imagining: having a dream or a vision of what is possible. Creative imagining is a crucial phase in participatory work to create a caring school community. We need a shared vision to inspire us.

4 See page 20: *Guidelines for asking generative questions to get people thinking more deeply and discussing key issues*

Respect the rights of all the participants but pay special attention to the rights of children during the process and in the visions that emerge for the future. Keep children at the centre of the circle and create around them a community of people to love, guide and protect them.

Community-based facilitators: the ‘eyes’ and ‘ears’ of the school community

Community-based facilitators (CBFs) and youth care facilitators, mostly young people,⁵ played a crucial role in the pilot phase of the Caring Schools Project as the ‘eyes’ and ‘ears’ of the school. CBFs can help to collect information about learners, their circumstances and the community. They can bring vulnerable learners to the attention of educators who, on account of heavy workload and overcrowded classrooms, are not aware of the circumstances of these learners. They can visit learners in their homes and follow up on learners who are ill and/or absent from school. They are able to see the school and the community through the eyes of learners and represent learners’ voices in school and community forums and meetings. They can help with the community mapping process to identify available services, dangerous or high risk places in the community, and safe places or **points of light**. They can collect information and contact details of services offered in the community and develop a database for referrals and for building **partnerships**. They can help **families** apply for grants and access⁶ other services.

CBFs in a Free State school community reflect on their role:

- Because we are young, learners identify with us and are willing to confide in us. We teach them how to talk to someone.
- Because of alcohol abuse most of our children are neglected and abused. There are many domestic violence cases and the children are directly affected. We encourage the youngsters to come forward to express their feelings and tell us about their fears.
- When we see a child who is hiding, alone, crying all the time, shy or someone who is shouting we speak to the child to find out what is wrong and what we can do to help.
- When we talk to learners in a class, we sometimes give them paper to draw a picture and then ask them to tell a story about the picture. In that way we hear how they feel about being vulnerable. We also talk about what is happening in the community.

⁵ See *Appendix 9: Community-based facilitators* on page 148 for selection criteria and future possibilities.

⁶ **Access:** a way to get somewhere.

Practical guidelines for facilitators and participants

These guidelines have been contributed by a number of experienced facilitators working in different contexts. You can use or adapt these guidelines for use in your context.

Here is a list of the guideline topics that follow.

Guidelines for facilitators

Guidelines for participatory work with a community
Guidelines for asking generative questions to get people thinking more deeply and discussing key issues
Guidelines for facilitating group meetings

- Getting everyone to participate
- Facilitating small group work
- Dealing with diversity
- Being gender sensitive
- Communicating in a multi-lingual group

Guidelines for a private conversation with a child

Guidelines for participants

Ground rules for working together in a group
Guidelines for good listening
Guidelines for successful exchange of ideas

Guidelines for participatory work with a community⁷

Hillbrow-Berea Regeneration Initiative Imbewu Inner City Renewal Consortium 2000.

- We appreciate and affirm the positive achievements in each person and community and build on those.
- We start from where people are – their reality, their frame of reference and help people to take the next steps in their own development.
- We don't come with our own fixed idea of what is best for that community.
- If community members move more slowly than we expected, we don't push them to move faster, we slow down.
- The facilitator is there to get people really involved and talking to each other, but also to challenge people to go beyond fixed mindsets, attitudes and habits.
- Development needs to be a process of ongoing capacity-building, enabling people to empower themselves and take responsibility for their own development on a personal and community level. In this way, development becomes sustainable.
- The way we work shows how we respect **human rights** including children's rights.
- We respect **diversity**.
- To bring about change for the better, we must carry on learning. That is why we use an action-reflection approach from the start.
- We need to make sure that community members have realistic expectations from the project.
- We believe that society can only change for the better when community members are really thinking and taking action, both conceptually and practically.

Guidelines for asking generative questions to get people thinking more deeply and discussing key issues

- Ask questions that will encourage people to appreciate and affirm positive achievements and opportunities. (*e.g. What is working well in this community? What gives life and hope in this situation?*)
- Avoid yes/no questions and questions that have only one right answer. To get people thinking and discussing, ask more open-ended questions. (*e.g. What challenges do children face in this community?*)
- Sometimes narrowing the question can open up discussion. (*e.g. What do you think are the three biggest challenges facing children in this community?*)
- Make a statement and ask people to agree or disagree, or just to react, giving reasons for what they say. (*You can use a provocative statement like some people believe all street kids should be jailed, or a more neutral-sounding statement: as a caring school community we should be concerned about all children in the community, including street kids.*)

⁷ See Appendix 1: *Imagine Chicago's Key Organising Principle*, another inspiring document. Closer to home, the Proudly Manenberg campaign (see page 117) is working with some of the same principles.

- Listen to people's responses with respect and appreciation – show that you expect to hear good ideas and important new insights.
- Pick up on what people say. (*e.g. That's an interesting idea – how can we try to do that? As the representative from Home Affairs said ...*)
- Don't be afraid to ask challenging, provocative questions that will make people think more deeply about issues.
- Make a note of questions and responses that you want to come back to at another time.

Guidelines for facilitating group meetings

- Establish ground rules from the start. (*e.g. switch off cell phones; respect each other and each other's differences; respect confidentiality: don't tell names of people and don't tell others about private things which are shared in the meetings*)
- In every meeting and in every activity remind people of the damage we can do by being insensitive and not respecting confidentiality.
- Encourage people to speak to each other – don't allow one person to dominate.
- Invite people to share stories about real personal experiences: if they are slow to respond, tell a story about your own experience.
- Be sensitive to participants' needs and feelings and be patient.
- Acknowledge the value of what people already know and make the links between this and what you are trying to achieve.
- Always put children first when making any decisions in the meeting.
- Encourage people to express doubts and questions openly.
- Aim to empower people: don't do things for them that they can do for themselves.
- Keep everyone updated about developments.
- Plan to meet again to take forward ideas from the group and share with others.
- Check with people before using their stories or photographs.

Getting everyone to participate

- Sing and dance or have other quick activities to break the ice.
- Tell a story and/or show pictures to raise a key issue and invite responses.
- When you pose a key question, ask people to talk in pairs for a short time. (*e.g. Turn to the person sitting next to you and react to the question – you have three minutes to discuss/decide your answer/s.*) Or they can discuss in pairs before joining another pair or other pairs to form a small group. Talking in pairs breaks the ice and prepares people to join in the large group discussion.
- From time to time, invite the group to write individual responses before they discuss. This can be a quick answer that they then share with a partner or the big group. Or it can be a free write to get them thinking. (For example: *Free write for five minutes starting with the words: 'The biggest challenges for children in our community ...'* Then participants share one of these challenges with a partner or the group.)

- Break into small groups if there are lots of people and have brief report backs.
- Have role plays.
- Invite key speakers. Brief them beforehand and give them a time limit. Keep speakers to their time limit to allow time for discussion.
- Have a quick go-round for everyone to say something (e.g. *one sentence on one thing you learned today; one dream you have for children*) – or everyone who has not yet spoken in the meeting. This is very useful if the same few people answer questions every time and dominate the discussion.
- Provide food and drinks if you can.

Facilitating small group work

- Make sure everyone participates.
- It is often useful to begin with pair work then pairs can join to form small groups.
- Choose one person to chair/guide the discussion in the small group.
- Choose one person to take notes in the small group.
- Choose one person to report to plenary.

Dealing with diversity

- Be prepared to deal with diversity in the group: differences of age, gender, language, religion and ethnic background, education and levels of literacy, ability and status.
- Set ground rules about respecting each other and each other's differences and show by your own attitude and actions what this means in practice.
- If catering, allow for different food preferences, e.g. halaal or vegetarian.
- Choose a language or languages most participants are comfortable with.
- Encourage participants to speak in a language they are comfortable with (including sign language); encourage participants to translate for each other in the groups and/or use an interpreter – allow enough time for this.
- Use verbal and non-verbal exercises and forms of communication.
- Allow for people with different abilities.
- Take care to make everyone feel welcome and acknowledge everyone's contribution.

Being gender sensitive

- Encourage everyone to speak, women and girls as much as men and boys.
- Use 'she' as often as you use 'he': use stories and examples about women and girls; as well as about men and boys.
- Avoid gender stereotyping (e.g. *men can share chores like washing up or take minutes*).
- Avoid sexist comments and jokes.

- In the activities and discussions get participants to highlight any differences in the experiences of girls and boys. Ask questions like:
 - *Does this affect girls and boys the same way or differently?*
 - *Are boys and girls vulnerable in different ways?*
 - *How can we support girls to become more **resilient**?*
 - *How can we support boys to become more resilient?*

Communicating in a multi-lingual group

- Try to facilitate meetings in the language or languages most participants are comfortable with. Take care not to give the message that people who have difficulty understanding or speaking the language of the meeting are at fault. After all, South Africa has eleven official languages.
- Encourage participants to speak in the language of their choice, including sign language, and be flexible about how translation happens. If you decide to use an interpreter or interpreters, allow enough time for this, but formal interpretation may not be the way to go, especially if there are several different languages in the group. Many bilingual and multi-lingual⁸ people are skilled at mixing languages to communicate with a diverse group, or doing quiet simultaneous translation⁹ for a partner or small group (translating as much as necessary while the speaker is actually speaking).
- Use non-verbal as well as verbal exercises and forms of communication.

Guidelines for a private conversation with a child

- Find a place where you will not be overheard, but it may be better if this is not behind a closed door – use your discretion.
- Assure the child that what he or she says is private and confidential.
- Be gentle and unhurried.
- Ask questions to encourage the child to talk more.
- Don't make judgements about the child or his or her family.
- Find at least one positive thing you or the child can do at the end of your time together.

⁸ Multi-lingual group: a group of people who speak many different languages.

⁹ Simultaneous translation: translating into another language as the speaker speaks.

Ground rules for working together in a group¹⁰

- We agree to follow these rules in meetings and in the project:
- Any personal information we share we will keep confidential and we won't mention names when telling stories.
- We will switch off cell phones during sessions.
- We will treat each other with respect at all times.
- We will ask questions if we don't understand.
- We will share the talking time – not some dominating and talking all the time while others keep quiet.
- The facilitator/s will use -----¹¹ but if anyone needs to express him/herself in another language, we will make a plan to translate.

Guidelines for good listening

- Sit in a relaxed, comfortable way.
- Ask questions which encourage the teller to talk more – avoid questions that require one word or very short answers.
- Don't interrupt but if you are running out of time, ask a question to help the speaker sum up or conclude.
- Don't talk or do anything else while the other person is talking to you.
- Repeat what you have heard or summarise the key points to check you have the story right.

Guidelines for successful exchange of ideas¹²

- Listen when the other person is speaking.
- Be aware of the language needs of others.
- Take risks and say things that might make you feel uncomfortable.
- Hold your judgement.
- Encourage others.

10 This is one example of guidelines or ground rules negotiated in a group as a kind of working contract. The ground rules were written up on a poster and read aloud at every meeting. Copies were given to newcomers in an effort to ensure continuity.

11 State which language/s the facilitator/s will use.

12 This list comes from a group of teenagers in a village in the Free State.

SUMMARY OF CHAPTER TWO

Our aim is to build school communities that support the well-being of all children and that care for the most vulnerable. Chapter Two introduces a participatory approach for doing so. The participatory work follows clear phases: understanding what is, imagining what can be, and planning and taking action to create what will be. The chapter gives ethical guidelines, discusses the crucial role of facilitators and offers a series of practical guidelines for facilitators and participants.

Chapter Three, the Journey of Hope, takes you into an experience of these phases:

- starting to understand the situation in your community: strengths, resources, needs
- starting to imagine what your caring school community will be like
- starting to make plans and taking one step towards creating the caring school community of your dreams.

CHAPTER THREE

JOURNEY OF HOPE

The activities in the Journey of Hope¹² are a relatively quick way for participants to experience what it is like to work through the phases of understanding, imagining and planning a caring school community to the point where they are ready to take action. The activities were designed to help participants:

- develop a shared understanding of well-being and vulnerability, protective factors and risk factors, children's rights and duty-bearers for those rights
- develop a shared vision for the children in their school community
- identify and commit themselves to practical steps to move towards their vision
- find practical ways to track the impact of their actions.

The Journey of Hope brings different role players together and gets them talking and thinking. Working and thinking together over time, they will find ways to bring to life the vision of the future that they have created.

Some groups choose to do the Journey of Hope later, after they have worked through Chapter Four. It's for you to decide what will work best for your group.

When can you use the Journey of Hope?

When you do the Journey of Hope is for you to decide. Some **school communities** do the activities in a one-day workshop while others spread the activities over two or three shorter sessions.

You can use the Journey of Hope to **inspire** people about what they can do in the school community, to talk about what **well-being** and **vulnerability** mean for children, and to talk about the situation of specific children anonymously.

You can use the activities in different ways with different groups of people, for example:

- with children in school to identify what promotes their well-being, what makes them vulnerable and what their hopes are for a better future
- with educators to identify what needs to be done to promote their own well-being and to encourage them to care for themselves and each other

¹² This activity was developed by Sally Price. The original idea was taken from the Journey of Hope (2001) developed by Peter Labouchere and Johns Hopkins University Centre for Communications Programmes, incorporating ideas from Bernard Joinet and the Fleet of Hope Organisation. This was further adapted with help from Sr Mary Jane and Carrie Pratt.

- with parents and other family members to learn from their insights about child well-being and vulnerability and to raise awareness
- with different **role players** (government officials, NGOs and other service providers with educators and other community members) coming together to share insights about child well-being and vulnerability and build a shared understanding of how to support child well-being.

Journey of Hope: A series of group activities

Time: about 5 hours in one session or a series of sessions

During the Journey of Hope role players:

- begin to identify and talk about the risk and **protective factors** that impact on children in their communities
- develop a shared understanding of well-being and being vulnerable and the **continuum** between them
- begin to discuss children's rights and **duty-bearers** for those rights
- start to **imagine** what a **caring school community** will be like
- start to make plans and commit themselves to practical steps to move towards the caring school community of their dreams
- discuss practical ways to track the impact of their actions.

Group activities

1. Discuss the continuum between well-being and being vulnerable and share examples from your own lives
2. Look more closely at the continuum between well-being and vulnerability and what it means for children in your community
3. Create a shared vision for children in your community
4. Understand **risk factors** and protective factors
5. Bring rights into the picture
6. Link rights to duty-bearers
7. Plan specific actions
8. Plan how to monitor the impact of what you do for children

Discuss the continuum between well-being and being vulnerable and share examples from your own lives

What you need

- Newsprint
- Koki pens in several colours, crayons or coloured pencils
- A pair of scissors
- A piece of wool several metres long
- Prestik and blank A4 size white paper.

What to do

Discuss the meaning of the word well-being and come to a shared understanding that includes being safe and healthy and feeling loved and cared for. Discuss the meaning of being vulnerable or vulnerability and come to a shared understanding that includes being unprotected and exposed to danger or harm, both physical and emotional. *Explain: The word 'vulnerable' comes from a Latin word meaning 'to wound': vulnerable means at risk of being wounded.*

Variations¹³

This activity works brilliantly as long as people feel safe enough to share experiences. Emphasise that you won't ask anybody to tell their story in the big group if they don't want to but you do hope some people will be willing. It helps if you lead the way as the facilitator by sharing an experience from your own life that made you feel vulnerable. It also helps in this activity if you don't allocate partners but let people choose partners they feel comfortable with.

Don't be surprised if this activity brings deep feelings to the surface. In one group a woman in her 30s spoke for the first time about how she was sexually abused as a child and a man in his 50s recalled seeing the police beat up his all-powerful father during a pass raid when he was a small child. In another group, a young woman talked about being afraid to test for HIV after her boyfriend died. You aren't there as a therapist or a trauma counsellor but you do need to know where to refer people if necessary.¹⁴

As the facilitator you have to respond with respect and empathy but not let any one person's story take up all the time. Pair work makes it easier for everyone to have a turn and it's less intimidating than the big group.

¹³ The extra suggestions in 'Variations' come from facilitators who used the activities.

¹⁴ See the *Resources* section at the end of the handbook.

Group activity 1

Read aloud: *Think about a time in your own life when you felt vulnerable and exposed to harm. It could be when you were small or it could be recently, as long as it is something that really happened to you. Please choose an experience you are willing to share with the group.*

Give participants a few minutes of silence to think of a story. Then ask questions, pausing between each set of questions.

Read aloud: *Think of some time in your own life when you felt vulnerable – when you were a child or as an adult. I'm going to ask you some questions to help you to remember that time when you felt vulnerable. Don't answer out loud. Answer the questions silently in your own mind. Close your eyes if you want to. Think of a time in your own life when you felt vulnerable. Try to remember that time in detail. How old were you at that time? Get a picture in your mind of what you looked like at that time.*

Think about where you were at that time. Was it a city, a town, a village, a farm? What do you remember about the place? What did it look like? Can you remember what season it was? Was it hot or cold? Day or night? What sounds and smells do you remember from that place?

What happened that made you vulnerable? How did you feel at that time? What did you think would happen – and what really did happen? Who else was involved in that experience? Were there people who helped you – people who made it easier for you at that time? Were there people who made it harder – people who were part of the problem for you?

How was that situation resolved – if it was? Did you remain vulnerable? Did you move out of that situation? What happened next? Looking back, how do you feel about that experience now? What impact did it have on you, if any? Are you different in any way because of that experience?

Invite participants to share their stories in small groups of no more than five, or if there is time, in the big group. When everyone has told their story, ask what the stories show about well-being and vulnerability.

At the end of the discussion, highlight the fact that vulnerability is a continuum, not a fixed state. Explain: *It is not that you are either in a state of well-being or in a state of vulnerability, either one or the other. Rather, there is a state of well-being and a state of vulnerability and at any specific time most of us are somewhere in between – on a continuum.*

Prestik a piece of paper that says 'well-being' on one end of the wall and another piece of paper on the other end of the wall that says 'vulnerability' and prestik a piece of wool or string on the wall to join the two pieces of paper.

Ask people to discuss examples from their own lives in pairs: how they themselves have moved on this continuum: being sometimes more vulnerable, sometimes less vulnerable. Invite volunteers to share the examples with the big group. Continue the discussion until you are sure everyone understands the continuum.

Variation

If this is the first time that the group is meeting, it would be better to start with the positive. You could do paired interviews about, *What you are doing well to care for vulnerable children or What you value about your community.*

Group activity 1

Look more closely at the continuum between well-being and vulnerability and what it means for children in your community

This activity should reinforce the idea of a continuum between vulnerability (the water) and well-being (dry land).

What you need

- A piece of newsprint
- Crayons or coloured pencils
- Some blank A4 paper
- A pair of scissors.

What to do

Draw a circle on newsprint in the top right hand corner. Colour the circle tan or brown. (You can prepare the newsprint in advance.) Put the newsprint on a table or on the floor. Ask participants to form a circle around it. If there are too many participants for all to see, put the newsprint on the wall.

Explain: *The brown circle is land, dry land. This is a place of well-being where a child is safe and healthy – physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually. It is a place where children's rights are put into practice and where they can learn and develop to the best of their potential. The rest of the page is water – a river, a lake, the sea. The water represents different states of vulnerability. The children in the*

Group activity 2

Group activity 2

water have to swim to stay alive. They are very insecure, at great risk and suffer many hardships in life. They are in constant fear and in very real danger of physical, emotional and spiritual harm or danger of dying. They are also in danger of not being active in the world and not enjoying opportunities. They may even give up hope and decide not to accept help if it is offered.

Remember that when the child is on dry land he or she is in a state of well-being but when that child is fully in the water he or she is at risk and vulnerable. Remember the piece of string that showed the continuum between well-being and vulnerability? A child can move from well-being to vulnerability and back again. Where can a child be that is not dry land but also not fully in the water?

Invite participants to give examples and respond to their examples. For example: *being on a leaky boat is safer than being in the water but the leaky boat can easily sink. Being in a good boat is usually safer than being in the water but the boat can still hit high waves or storms and capsize. A lifejacket or an inner tube can prevent a child from drowning but it doesn't get the child out of the water. People may also suggest a log, a raft, a leaky boat.*

Ask the group to suggest two to three symbols that represent different levels of support for a vulnerable child who is in the water – places where the child would be more protected or out of the water. For example, a child who is in the water in danger can be given a lifejacket or get onto a raft or a boat and move to dry land. If they suggest places that offer more or less the same protection from the water (e.g. a small boat, a ship, a submarine) ask them to think again.

Ask volunteers from the group to draw the symbols on A4 paper, cut them out and prestik them onto the newsprint. Another option is to cut out or make the pictures or buy some props beforehand (e.g. cheap plastic toys: crocodiles, boats). Ask them to place the paper symbols or the toys so that those that represent most vulnerability are furthest away from the land. They should show the stages or levels of vulnerability.

Ask participants to work in small groups. Ask each group to make up the story of a child in their community: not a real child, a made-up¹⁵ child whose life story shows what life is really like for some of the children in the community.

¹⁵ A made up or fictitious story that is based on a real story, but does not identify any specific person. By using made up stories, we can talk about real problems without talking about people in the community. This is important where there is **stigma**, for example about HIV/AIDS.

The group agree on these details. *Who is the child? (Don't use the names of real children in the community.) How old is she? What is she or he like? How does she spend her time? Where does she live and who does she live with? What responsibilities does she have in life? What are her hopes and dreams? What challenges does she face?*

Give each group a piece of blank A4 paper and ask them to draw a picture of their child. Ask each group to show their pictures and to introduce their child as if they know that child personally. Ask them to describe their child: her name, how old she is, what she is like, her personal circumstances, her hopes and dreams and some of the challenges she faces.

When the first group have introduced their child, ask: *Where is this child today – where would you place this child in our picture? Is she on dry land? In the water? In a boat? Explain why you say so.*

Place the child where the group feel she belongs at the moment.

Ask: *During your story, did this child move away from the water or did she move away from dry land into the water? What happened to this child in the past to move her further towards dry land or back into the water? What could happen to this child in the future to move her further towards dry land or back into the water?*

Keep reinforcing the concept of a continuum. Repeat this process until all groups have introduced their children and placed them on the paper. Highlight the many different spaces that children may be in – on the land, in the water, on a boat, and so on.

Helping children move toward well-being

Ask the group to pick out one of the children who is the most vulnerable and in the water. Remember the child's story and why she is in the water.

Ask about this child: *How is this child feeling today? If she could talk to us, what would she ask for? What does she need? Which rights are not being protected? How could this group, school or community help this child?*

Cut out a piece of coloured paper or card to represent a bridge, and then put the bridge from the child in the water to the raft or boat. On the bridge write some of suggestions for help or protective factors. Then you can choose another child, maybe one on a raft. Do the same and write ideas

Group activity 2

for help on the bridge from the raft to the boat. Choose a child on a boat and draw a bridge from the boat to the dry land. There should be a number of bridges, with ideas for helping children move towards well-being.

Write up a list of risk factors and protective factors in the community that the groups have mentioned. Ask participants to discuss the list in pairs, add anything that is missing and arrange the list so that the most important factors come first. Display the newsprint and the pictures in the room or keep them to bring to the next session. You will build on this work in the activities that follow.

Variations

Many people can relate to the image of dry land and water but feel free to use an image that works better in your context and modify the activities to fit with your image. Some facilitators have used the image of a soccer match or a jungle. Some facilitators have used a larger sheet of blue fabric instead of newsprint. This works very well. You can cut the circle or island out of paper and stick it, and the boats, on with Prestik.

Group activity 3

Create a shared vision for children in your community

What you need

- Newsprint sheets
- Crayons
- Koki pens or coloured pencils.

What to do

Ask participants to work in groups of not more than six. Explain: *The next few activities explore the picture you made. The first activity looks at the dry land: a place of well-being where children are safe and healthy – physically and emotionally. It is a place where children have their rights and they can develop their full potential.*

Imagine that all the children in your community are safe on that dry land. You live in a community where all children are safe and healthy and supported to develop their full potential. Discuss in your group: What do you see in your imagination – what are the children doing, what is happening around them? What is different from what you see in your community right now?

When your group have a mental picture of your community with all the children safe and thriving, draw your picture on the newsprint. Don't write any words, draw a picture that shows what that future – what that dry land – would look like in your community. Show your drawing to the big group and tell us about the future you imagine for the children of your community.

These drawings show your best vision of the future for the children of your community. What is at the heart of your vision? What is most important to you? What things must change? What things must we put in place to give children the best possible environment in which to grow and develop?

Write the main points from the discussion on newsprint headed: 'Our vision for the future'. Explain: *this is what we need to work towards in the community.*

Variations

Variation 1: One facilitator uses visualisation to help everyone to first find their own idea of the future they wish for before they work in groups. Appendix 12 on page 152 describes how she does it.

Variation 2: 'After the drawing activity, I divide participants into pairs or groups of three or four and ask each group to show an interaction between people living in the ideal futures that they drew. It could be an interaction in a family, in a school or between people on the street. The idea is to use the drama to show that internal change (how people relate to each other; what they value) is as important as external change or maybe more important (new school buildings, better roads, etc.).'

Variation 3: 'Sometimes we do the drama activity instead of the drawing. I divide participants into groups and ask them to make up short dramas or role plays to show what they want for children in their ideal future. After the groups present their dramas I facilitate a discussion on what the dramas tell us about their ideal future.'

Understand risk factors and protective factors

Variations

Before doing Group activity 4 we looked at fictional stories about children that illustrated risk factors and protective factors in the lives of children. These stories prompted very lively discussion and debate and some participants contributed more stories, changing the names. Some facilitators preferred to do Group activity 4 first and discuss the fictional stories later. You will find the fictional stories at the end of Group activity 4.

What you need

- Their newsprint drawings from before, blank newsprint
- Koki pens
- Prestik.

What to do

Explain: *So far, we have explored the continuum between well-being and vulnerability. You created a picture to show how the continuum works: children can be on dry land or in the water or somewhere between the two. Then you created a vision of the future – a future in which all the children in your community would be on dry land. Now we are going to look at ‘risk factors’, what keeps children in the water, and ‘protective factors’, what helps them move out of the water, and helps them to stay on dry land once they get there.*

Begin by looking at the risk factors. Explain that there are all kinds of dangers in the water. Ask participants to identify something in the water that could be dangerous for children (e.g. rocks, sharks, waves). Using whatever image they suggested, explain that the ‘rocks’ in the water are risk factors for the children: things that can be dangerous to children.

Prestik a piece of newsprint onto the wall and at the top draw the dangers for children in the water that participants have identified. Facilitate a discussion in the big group or first in pairs or small groups.

Use this instruction: *Remember the made-up stories that the groups told us about vulnerable children. Remember what you told us about times when you were vulnerable in your own life. Now brainstorm all of the ‘rocks’ that can be dangerous to children in your community. Be as specific as you can – don’t say ‘drugs’, say ‘tik’, and say where the children get tik. Include the ‘rocks’ or risk factors that affect children in different ways – physically, emotionally and*

spiritually. Name each of the risk factors that impact on children in your community.

Capture all of these risk factors on the newsprint. Ask whether some risk factors are mainly for boys or mainly for girls. If so, note that on the newsprint. When participants run out of ideas, briefly review the concept of risk factors and link it to the drawing (of land and water). These risk factors are the things that cause children to move from dry land into the water, to fall off boats, and to stay in the water. Link your examples to the specific stories of children told by the groups.

Possible risk factors include:

- Poverty
- Poor nutrition
- Unemployment (or seasonal work)
- Children without birth certificates/IDs
- Overcrowded housing
- HIV/AIDS and stigmatisation
- Death of parents/caregivers
- Child-headed households
- Lack of sport/recreational facilities and programmes
- Physical, sexual, emotional abuse
- Teen pregnancy
- Loss and lack of self esteem
- Lack of access to schooling
- Long walks to/from school
- Gangsterism
- Peer pressure/Lack of sense of belonging
- Fragmented/unco-ordinated service delivery from government
- Drug and alcohol abuse
- Crime/violence
- Not being aware of rights

Now move on to explore the protective factors. Refer to the activity with the bridges on page 34. Explain that protective factors help children stay away from the water (e.g. safety fences) or help them to get closer to dry land or get out of the water. They are like 'bridges' that help children move from where they are to a better situation. Stick a piece of newsprint onto the wall and at the top draw the protective factors for children, e.g. safety fence, water wings, boats, rafts.

Facilitate a discussion in the big group or first in pairs or small groups. Use this instruction: *Think again about the made-up stories that the groups told us about vulnerable children. Remember the times in your own life when you were vulnerable. Now brainstorm: in your community, what supports children to get out of the water onto dry land and, once there, to stay there? Be as specific as you can – don't*

Group activity 4

say 'sport', say 'playing junior league soccer' or 'karate club at the civic centre'. Include protective factors that affect children in different ways – physically, emotionally and spiritually. Name each of the protective factors that impact on children in your community.

When participants run out of ideas, briefly review the concept of protective factors and link it to the drawing. These protective factors are the things that help children to move out of the water to a log or a raft, that help them to get onto a boat or from a boat to dry land and that help them to stay on dry land and not slip back into the water. Link your examples to specific stories of children told by the groups.

Possible protective factors include:

- Enough nutritious food
- More parental involvement in the lives of children
- Regular home visits (from the school)
- Recreational programmes and facilities in the community
- Aftercare (academic and recreational) at school
- Making schools safer for children
- Transport for learners
- Crossing guards at main intersections near school at opening/closing times
- A local network of care; safe houses
- Parent education/awareness programmes on communication and emotional awareness, drugs, sexuality, HIV/AIDS
- Community action to address unemployment and poverty

Point to the two lists and ask participants to silently reflect for a few minutes on the risk factors and protective factors that played a role in their own lives.

Discuss: *Which of those factors increased their resilience, endurance or well-being? Which of those factors increased their vulnerability? After a few minutes of silence, ask everyone to find a partner. Each person has five minutes to tell the partner about the risk and protective factors that played a role in his or her life.*

To close this session, bring people together in the large group. Ask them to share any new understanding they have about vulnerability and the risk factors and protective factors associated with vulnerability. Emphasise again that children move backwards and forwards along the continuum between well-being and vulnerability. The risk factors push children in the direction of vulnerability (the water) while the protective factors pull children towards greater resilience and well-being (dry land).

Variations¹⁶

'I usually buy two disposable cameras for this activity – 36 exposure with a flash is best. When the activity is complete, I ask participants to make a joint plan to take pictures that illustrate the risk and protective factors they have identified. They have two cameras, each with 36 pictures. I ask them to use one camera to photograph risk factors and the other protective factors. I demonstrate how to use the cameras and give them time to plan. We agree on when and where I'll collect the cameras from them and when and where I'll return the photographs so they can write captions before the next session. You may want to arrange a time to help group representatives with the captioning of photographs. At the next meeting, we have an exhibition of photographs and discuss what the risk and protective factors mean in practice in the community.'

GROUP ACTIVITY 4

Discussing children's stories: understanding risk factors and protective factors¹⁷

These are all made-up stories. You can use or adapt any of these stories or make up your own stories, using fictitious names. Invite participants to discuss some or all of the stories in pairs or small groups before discussion in the big group. Adapt these questions to guide the discussion:

- *What risk factors and what protective factors can you identify in this child's story?*
- *In what ways is this child's story similar or different to the real-life story of a child in your community?*
- *Which story or stories sound most like real-life stories of children in your community?*
- *How can you change the stories to make them more realistic for children in your community?*
- *Can you add your own stories for younger and older children?*



If the small groups report back and/or if there is a discussion in the big group, list protective factors and risk factors in separate columns on newsprint.

An outsider might see **Nelisiwe (11)** as a vulnerable child because she lives in a poor community and works in a shebeen but there are many protective factors in her life: her loving family, the close

¹⁶ Refer to the 'Ethical guidelines' on page 15 and discuss how to apply these guidelines when taking photographs and captioning photographs.

¹⁷ See 'Variations' at the beginning of Group activity 4.

community, her own self-esteem and confidence. Nelisiwe loves her community, mainly for the kwaito music and because everyone knows everybody else and greets one another. She is sometimes given chores in the shebeen that her father and mother run. Everybody knows the family and they always greet her too. She has a lot of friends at school and enjoys her studies, especially maths. Her parents are very proud of her when she does well at school.

Wandile and Mandisa lived with their **four children (aged 3 to 13)** and his mother in an RDP house. Wandile had a steady job as a petrol attendant and Mandisa worked three mornings a week as a char in town. The family was financially secure. Three of the children were at primary school and the youngest was at home with the grandmother. When the parents were killed in a bus accident on the way back from an uncle's funeral, the happy secure life of these children was shattered but the grandmother was determined to keep the family together and to keep the children at school. With support from the grandmother's church group and her love and care, the children have been able to cope with the terrible shock and to carry on with their lives. The grandmother has applied for grants for the children and in the meantime they have been exempted from paying school fees.

Linda (9) lived with her father and mother up to the age of three. At that time her father had a job and her mother made vetkoek for the school children. When Linda was three her father was retrenched. Her mother found part-time work. When her father couldn't find a job he started drinking. When Linda was five her father died. She and her mother moved in with an old aunt who was very fond of them both and shared her food with them. Linda's mother died when she was seven. Her aunt still feeds her and tries to look after her but does not send her to school. Linda has no birth certificate and her aunt does not know about child support grants. Then a neighbour who works at a crèche invited the aunt to the one-stop shop that the primary schools and the Departments of Home Affairs and Social Development organised to help children get birth certificates and to help caregivers apply for grants.

Jomo (12) lives in a small place with his mother and two younger brothers. His father left home when he was still very young. His mother sometimes has other men around the home. They often drink and play loud music. They do not pay any attention to him and he is angry. He doesn't want to go back to school as he has missed too much and feels ashamed to study with younger boys. He doesn't have a school uniform. Last week his granny, whom he loves very much and who is always very encouraging and gentle with him, said he can stay with her if he helps with some of the chores. He is very excited and hopes that his mother will agree.

Florentina, Christian and Albert (8 to 12), were born in a refugee camp in Zambia, to Congolese parents. The family have legal refugee status in South Africa. The father, a mechanic, and the mother, a nurse

by training, are both working long hours as car guards but hope to find work that fits their qualifications. The family live in a backyard shack and the neighbours hardly even greet them because they are foreigners. The children attend the nearest primary school where they are teased about their French accent and dark skin but all three are doing well academically and Christian is a very good runner and boxer so he is earning respect from his classmates. The children do the shopping, cooking and cleaning, do their homework and look after themselves until late at night when their parents get home.

Max (11) is in the brass band at the church learning to play the sax and he sings in the boys' choir. When his voice breaks he won't be able to sing in the choir any more but his dream is to play tenor sax in a big jazz band. His big brother laughs at him for doing church stuff and tells him that as soon as his voice breaks he can join the New Americanos gang as a kid member. He feels honoured that his big brother (who is like a father to him) is inviting him but he's scared of gangs and drugs. His mother encourages him to go to choir practices and band practices. The other kids in the street laugh at him, his brother shows him the gang tattoo, and Max is scared of the day his voice will break.

Group activity 5

Bring rights into the picture

What you need

- Their newsprint drawings from before
- Blank newsprint
- Koki pens
- Prestik.

What to do

Explain: *You have a vision of the future for children in your community and what can help and block them from getting there (the risk and protective factors). In the next three activities we will look at what you can do to move closer to your desired future. We will identify specific actions you can take to move children in your community out of and away from the water and onto dry land. We will look at the concept of rights and the concept of duty-bearers.*

The Bill of Rights in the South African **Constitution** guarantees:

- the right to a name and identity
- the right to life
- the right to equality – not to be discriminated against
- the right to a healthy environment
- the right to social assistance.

All children have rights and these rights cannot be taken away for any reason.

Section 28 of the Constitution also sets out special rights for children:

- the right to food
- the right to clean water
- the right to shelter
- the right to health care
- the right to basic education (schooling).

Protective factors protect rights and risk factors relate to rights that are not being fulfilled. For example, a social grant is a protective factor that relates to the right to food and shelter, and no-fee schools are a protective factor linked to the right to basic education (schooling). The lack of a birth certificate is a risk factor for children and relates to a right in the South African Bill of Rights: the right to a name and identity.

Discuss several examples with the group to make sure they see the link. We will discuss the rights of children in more depth in Chapter Six but if you have now time, introduce some specific rights and make the link between protecting rights and child well-being. Ask everyone to name a right and to say what risk and/or protective factors it relates to.

Link rights to duty-bearers

Explain: *Rights are associated with duty-bearers. A duty-bearer is a person who has a duty to protect the rights of children and ensure that children get these rights. For example, think about some of the different people who have the duty to help a child get a birth certificate.*

- When the child is born it is the duty of the parent of the child to register the child within 10 days of birth.
- It is the duty of officials at the Department of Home Affairs to make it easy for the parent to register the birth of a child. For example, Home Affairs should provide forms to birth attendants and have a special queue so that parents who come to register new-born babies do not have to wait. The Department of Home Affairs also needs to help the parents get their own IDs so that they can register the birth of their children.
- It is the duty of municipal **planning** to plan for roads and transport so that the parent can get to Home Affairs.

Group activity 6

So there are different duty-bearers who need to be involved in helping every child get a birth certificate to protect and fulfil the child's right to a name and an identity.¹⁸

Ask participants to suggest what duties must be carried out to protect each right and who is responsible for each action. As they give examples, emphasise the link between the risk or protective factor, the right and the duty-bearers. You can put some of these on newsprint on the wall and show the links by attaching strips of paper, wool or string.

Risk or protective factor ----- Right ----- Duty-bearer/s

Discuss in pairs and then in the big group: *To move children towards dry land we need to identify duty-bearers who are responsible for protecting the rights of children and we need to hold the duty-bearers **accountable**. How can we do this?*

Group activity 7

Plan specific actions

In the different activities in the Journey of Hope:

- You looked at the continuum between well-being and vulnerability.
- You explored specific factors that put children in your community at greater risk and those that protect them from risk.
- You discussed how those factors are related to rights and how children become more vulnerable when their rights are not respected.
- You discussed duty-bearers in society who are responsible for ensuring that children's rights are upheld and who can and should be held accountable.

Explain: *Now it is time to decide on specific actions you can take to move children in your community out of the water and away from the water to dry land. Everyone needs to think of one concrete action you can take to bring your community closer to the group's vision of an ideal environment for children.*

You can choose any kind of action that you can do yourself:

- *an action to reduce one of the risk factors*
- *an action to make one of the protective factors stronger*
- *an action to get a duty-bearer to fulfil a responsibility.*

¹⁸ See Chapter 6 for two stories about how various duty-bearers came together in the community to provide children with identity documents. The Soul City story goes into detail about birth certificates.

Say what you will do, not what someone else must do. Don't say 'the government must', or 'the Mayor must'. Say 'I will work with others to get a feeding scheme organised at my children's school', rather than 'The school must organise a feeding scheme'.

The aim here is not to discourage collective action but to encourage personal responsibility. Give people time to think and then ask them to get into groups of six to share their ideas for action. They should discuss what they have heard and what excites them in the possibilities for **change**.

In the big group ask people to share the ideas they find exciting. At the end of the discussion, ask each person to make a commitment to take one simple action to make a change for the better – this can be the action they proposed, or an action that someone else proposed, or a new idea they had during the discussion. Go around the room and ask everyone to use one sentence to describe his or her idea.

To close this activity, emphasise that there is always something you can do to make a difference in a situation. It is easy to be overwhelmed when problems look too big but when you look at the causes and think about possible solutions, it is always possible to make some positive change. We need to believe in our power to make changes!

Variations

'In this kind of community mobilising, it is vital to get people excited about their own potential for creating change. So before I ask people to think about action, I ask them to get into small groups to share one thing they have done in their lives to make a difference in the life of a child.

It can be anything, big or small: sharing lunch with a hungry learner, helping pay school fees for a child who was about to drop out of school, or spending time listening to a niece who was having difficulty with her parents.

When all the participants have shared something I ask them how they feel – usually they say great! I use the feedback to facilitate a discussion about what it means to make change. Too often we make the mistake of thinking that change comes only through huge, expensive, visible projects. I try to help people see that each one of us changes the world each day through our actions.'

Plan how to monitor the impact of what you do for children

What to do

Explain: *when you take action to create change, you need to monitor the impact of your action. To create caring school communities, we have to record and track carefully the impact of our actions on individual children and on the broader school community.*

Ask participants to discuss in small groups:

- *When we take action, how can we monitor whether we are moving children away from vulnerability and towards greater well-being?*
- *What are other role players already doing that can help us monitor?*
- *What information is already being collected that we can use to help us monitor impact?*

Ask people to share ideas in the big group – not a formal, group-by-group report back, but a discussion where people share useful ways of tracking the impact of action on individual children and on the broader school community.¹⁹ The group does not need to come up with a shared approach.

¹⁹ Chapter Six on page 81 discusses useful ways of tracking the impact of your actions, learning from that experience, and being accountable for your actions.

SUMMARY OF CHAPTER THREE

During the Journey of Hope participants experienced a short version of the three phases of building a caring school community: understanding, imagining, planning and taking action:

- They began to identify and talk about the risk and protective factors that impact on children in their communities.
- They developed a shared understanding of well-being and being vulnerable and the continuum between them.
- They began to discuss children's rights and duty-bearers for those rights.
- They started to imagine a caring school community.
- They started to make plans and committed themselves to small practical steps to move towards the caring school community of their dreams.
- They discussed practical ways to track the impact of their actions.

CHAPTER FOUR

UNDERSTANDING THE SITUATION OF CHILDREN AND HOW TO MOBILISE YOUR SCHOOL COMMUNITY

We will now work through the three phases of building a caring school community: understanding, imagining, and planning and taking action.

Chapter Four takes you through Phase 1: Understanding the situation of children in your school community at present.

Chapter Five takes you through Phase 2: Imagining your caring school community.

Chapter Eight takes you through Phase 3: Planning and taking action to create the caring school community of your dreams.

Each set of activities takes you through a complete cycle of understanding, imagining, planning and taking action; and builds on the set of activities that came before. When you do these activities, and how much time you take, will depend on the situation in your community and your ability to involve others in the project. Each caring school community will use their own strengths and resources to care for vulnerable children and to support the well-being of all children in ways that suit their own environment, their values and their vision for the future. What is important is that participants should experience these activities not as separate tasks but as a single journey to deeper understanding, to more powerful visions of what is possible, and to more effective planning and action.

Before you start making detailed plans (Chapter Eight – Phase 3, starting on page 109), you will spend some time exploring the meaning of children’s rights and a rights-based approach (Chapter Six, page 98). Chapter Seven (page 95) is about keeping written records: how to write the stories of all three phases.

Phase 1

Understanding the situation of children in your school community and how to mobilise for a caring school community

1. Start to find out and affirm what is already being done for children in the school and wider community

- Make a list of champions for children in your school or community and write down what they have been doing – highlight anything that has been done to protect vulnerable children and to promote the **well-being** of children in general in your school or community, even very small things.
- Include what you yourself have done as a **champion for children**. You might like to do this as a free writing exercise (see page 98).
- You will find a group of champions for children who share your commitment to building a **caring school community**. Some could be working in a school to draw in community **resources** for children. Others could be working in the community to involve the school in care and support activities for children. Get a small group together for an informal discussion. It's very important to start with the positive things, not the problems.



- *What positive things are happening for children in your school and community?*
- *Who made these things happen, how?*
- *What was the secret of their success?*
- *What can we learn from these successes?*

2. Start to identify role players in your school community

Make a list of all possible role players in the school. Role players could be anyone interested in the well-being of children, parents/ caregivers and other family members, and anyone or any organisation with a duty to provide care and support to children. Here are some examples to check against your list.

Role players directly linked to school/s:

principal
 educators
 school management team
school governing body
 school nutrition programme
 volunteers
 school-based support team²⁰
 other schools in the area

 school health services

Community role players:

community-based facilitators and
 youth care facilitators
 community health centre or clinic
 child care forum
 youth and out of school children

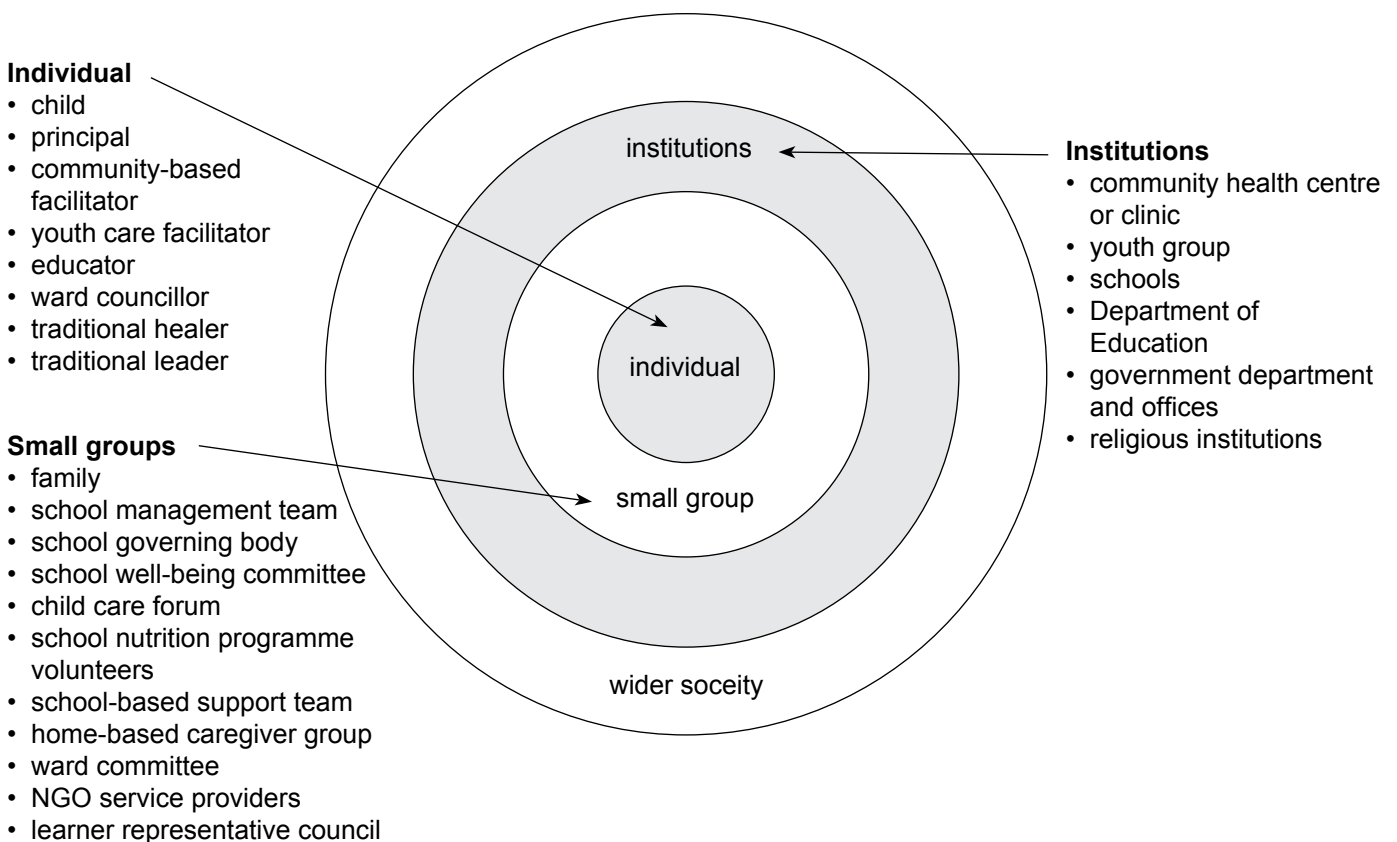
 home-based caregivers
 ward councillor and ward committee
 members
 key government and NGO service
 providers (education, health, social
 services, and home affairs)

schools for learners with barriers to learning	traditional healers
learner representative council	churches
youth groups	community forums e.g. community policing forum
children of different age groups	traditional leaders
children with special needs	civic associations
children living with HIV/AIDS	community newspapers
provincial Department of Education	local radio stations
district Department of Education and Training or Education Management and Development Centres ²¹	

3. Plan to involve children

Another way to look at role players

Ann Hope explains that **change** happens at four levels: individual, small group, institution and wider society. Do you agree? Look at the diagram below. We have placed some examples of ‘individuals’, ‘small groups’ and ‘institutions’. Can you add to each of these categories? What would you put under ‘wider society’? Do you notice that some individuals are also part of other categories? For example, the ‘principal’, would be a member of the small group of ‘management team’ as well as the institution ‘school’



20 This has different names in different areas: Institution-based Support Team or Educator Support Team or Teacher Support Team.

21 In the Western Cape, Department of Education and Training district offices are currently known as Education Management and Development Centres (EMDCs).

To develop a full and accurate understanding of the situation, you need children to share their experiences and their insights with you. The group activity ‘Share your stories about helping vulnerable children’, on page 58 outlines a variety of ways to involve children in group activities and in other ways. Have a look at this activity to see how you can plan to involve children. You can also use the posters in Appendix 14 to start children talking about a caring school community.

◇ 4. Plan to involve role players in different ways

Different role players will participate in different ways. You need to assess the level of influence and interest of different role players to decide whom to keep informed, whom to consult and whom to involve in activities.

- Inform as many role players as possible about the project and keep them updated.
- Inform and consult people in high positions²² but don't expect them all to become **involved**: principals, ward councillors, traditional leaders and district officials. They may help to get the message out and get other people involved, or they may be able to make important decisions that support the work of the project. Meet with them regularly to inform them about the process and strengthen their interest.
- Consult any person whose work or well-being is directly affected by the project. Make an extra effort with hard to reach²³ groups who would normally not come to meetings or who do not feel comfortable about talking to people they think might have more education than them. Use creative strategies, such as street theatre, to get their attention.
- Involve role players who have high interest in the project.
- Don't judge and exclude people. Keep inviting people in – even if they take time to get involved.
- Media people can raise awareness among large groups of people.
- People with money can help with funding to make things happen.

Involve as many role players as possible in working together to support the well-being of children. The following activity helps you to think about different relevant role players to decide who should be **informed**, **consulted** or **involved** at each stage of the process. This understanding can help you strategise how you relate to each role player and focus your energy.

Prepare a table like the one below. Write down the names of all the role players you can think of. Think about the level of interest and influence, and mark the relevant block.

22 People in high positions are usually leaders in the community or church; elected or appointed officials and other people who hold positions in the community.

23 Hard to reach People, who are very poor, have low education, disabilities or other problems. They sometimes do not attend meetings because they are ashamed or prevented by their difficulties. They might not feel comfortable about talking to people they think might have more education than them. It is important to find ways to include them and make them feel welcome.

Role player analysis

Role player	Interest			Influence		
	High	Med	Low	High	Med	Low
Ward councillor						
Child care forum member Mr A						
Parish councillor B						
Director of NGO X						
Community development worker L						
School governing body chairperson Mrs G						
Community member F						

Use the correct name and role of each person. Here they are identified by their role and an initial. Once you have filled in the names of each key role player, tick the appropriate blocks to show their level of interest and influence.

This can help you decide in each cycle:

- *Whom to inform?*
- *Whom to consult?*
- *Whom to involve? and*
- *Where to focus energy?*



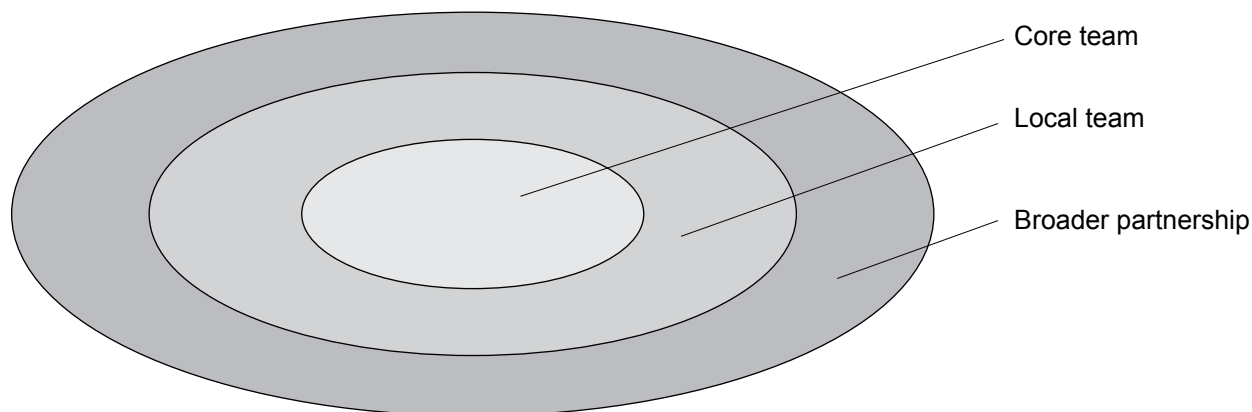
For example, leaders with high influence and low interest might need to be regularly informed or consulted and encouraged to get more involved. However, it might sometimes be necessary to decide not to spend energy on a particular role player at that stage of the process, if they have low interest and low influence. As some stakeholders find out more, their interest might be sparked, but the process might need to continue without them if necessary.

Use the table format below to decide whom to inform, whom to consult and whom to involve in action. Come back to this list from time to time because people’s levels of influence and interest may change.

Keep them informed and updated but don’t plan to involve them.	Inform and consult them to ask advice or permission but don’t plan to involve them.	Involve them in activities: they attend meetings, talk to people in the community and take action.

5. Start building local ward teams

- ◇ Start building a multi-sectoral and multi-skilled team. Different groups of people might carry different levels of responsibility and be **involved** in different kinds of activity. Think about the teams as a series of concentric circles. People might move between these teams. The most important team is the core team. It would be helpful to have as much consistency as possible in this team.



Questions to consider

- ◇
 - *Who is in the core team, the local team and the broader partnership?*
 - *Are the numbers in each group manageable? Are there enough people to get the job done? Is there a spread of both community and service providers (both government and non-government)?*
 - *Is there buy-in and ownership?*
 - *Does everyone feel welcome to join?*

Learning from the Imagine Hout Bay initiative:

Keep inviting people in – don't judge and exclude people²⁴.

Hout Bay was frequently in the news as a divided community with struggles around land, housing and jobs. The *Imagine Hout Bay* initiative used a process of **Appreciative Inquiry** by first looking at what people were already doing to build a united community. This focus on the positive helped to get diverse community groups working together. A leader of the initiative, Bronwen Lankers-Byrne, reflects:

'The experience in Hout Bay taught me the value of including everyone. As soon as you start judging people – deciding who is worth talking to, who isn't – you start to exclude and to separate from people. I found it was much better to keep asking, "How can we bring them in, what can they offer?" The Appreciative Inquiry approach sees differences among individuals and groups as a strength rather than a barrier to working together. We worked with as many people and as diverse a group as possible: that was our method. It was also our goal and our vision – a united society where everyone is valued for their unique contribution.'

²⁴ See also 'Imagine Chicago's Key Organising Principles' in Appendix 1 on page 136 and news coverage of the 'Proudly Manenberg' campaign (see page 117) on the Cape Flats.

If you already have a group of role players, you can use the Busometer activity below or the community mapping activity on page 60 to make a plan for involving role players.

The Busometer²⁵

Time: 2 hours

Small groups

Outcomes

- Participants share a broad understanding of what is involved in developing caring school communities.
- Participants identify all the role players who are or who should be involved in building child well-being and caring for vulnerable children.
- Participants consider where these role players are involved and where they should be placed to strengthen caring school communities.
- Participants have a shared understanding of what could facilitate the development of a caring school community and what could make it difficult.

What you need

- Large sheets of newsprint or plain paper
- Koki pens
- Small sheets of coloured paper and scissors.

What to do

- Remind participants of the values of respect and confidentiality.
- Ask them to imagine a bus big enough to transport all the role players who are travelling together to the same destination: a caring school community. The bus won't pick up any other passengers.
- Each group draws the bus (or any other vehicle) and identify and place all the role players in specific places on the bus, starting with themselves. They draw the role players or make coloured paper cut-outs. They discuss these questions and find ways to show their answers in the drawing of the bus:
 - *What is our destination?*
 - *What is my contribution?*
 - *Who is driving the bus at the present moment?*
 - *Who is reading the map and helping the driver with directions?*
 - *Who are the noisy passengers?*
 - *Who is sitting at the back?*
 - *Who is just coming along for the ride?*

25 Adapted from an activity used by Mary-Anne Brockelsby, during the UNICEF Mid-term review, Tanzania, 2004.

- Who has not noticed that the bus has got to get somewhere at a certain time?
- Who maintains and services the bus?
- What is helping the bus move forward?
- Is there anything that slows the bus down?
- Who is still waiting at the bus stop?
- Who can't get to the bus stop?
- Who has not even heard of the bus?

All the groups report back. Summarise their responses keeping the outcomes of the activity in mind. Keep the drawing of the bus with the project records for later.

You can also use the Busometer:

- to check whether people have a shared understanding of roles and responsibilities
- to get a quick picture of role player involvement at a specific point
- to reflect at various stages in a project
- to plan where more involvement is needed
- to reflect on who is driving the process.

Variations

'Of course, you can change the name and the form of transport to suit your situation – make it a taxi ride or a train trip or whatever is most familiar to people. We didn't draw our vehicle; we made it out of stones on the ground. One group used bottle tops to represent a spaceship on the ground.'



6. Plan meetings with role players

Decide which role players to meet with first. The role player analysis on page 49 will help. You may identify other important role players to meet later as you have more meetings. Inviting everyone to one big meeting may be a mistake, especially if some come from less advantaged sections of the community. You may need to start with smaller meetings to get ready for a big meeting where they all come together.

Your meeting/s should cover:

- *What is already being done to support children: what services and resources already exist?* ◇
- *What structures already exist to support children: government; non-government and community-based organisations; faith-based organisations?*
- *What does a caring schools community project do?*
- *What kind of support do children need?*
- *Who could link your group with existing structures?*
- *How can you communicate with each other?*
- *Who else can you involve in the project?*
- *Where can you get information about vulnerable children: are there any existing databases?*
- *What values should guide everyone in the project?*
- *What resources can you draw on?*
- *What issues are important for your school community?*
- *How can you organise around these issues?*

You can use the group activity, The Meeting, on page 48, as a role play with a small planning group to prepare for the first big meeting. You can use the same format when you facilitate meetings.

7. Facilitate meetings with role players

Meetings can be a good way to introduce people, to encourage initial discussions about issues and at critical stages in the planning or implementing of a programme. ◇

When you facilitate meetings, you can use or adapt the format of the group activity below. We have all been in meetings that are quite well chaired but not at all interesting and where very few people participate. You want role players to take an active part in meetings, so try the suggestions in Chapter Two: *Practical guidelines for facilitators* on page 20–23.

The Meeting

Time: Meetings can be anything from 10 minutes to a full day. If you are meeting for a long time, then plan regular breaks.

Outcomes

- All participants know what the meeting was about and who was present.
- All participants feel they had a chance to speak.
- All participants know what was agreed.
- All participants know what they need to do and by when.
- All participants know when the next meeting is.

What you need

- If you have a speaker, brief him or her before the meeting about the purpose and the time limit.
- Try to arrange chairs in a circle so that everyone can see each other.

What to do

- Welcome and introduce all present; set a time for the meeting to end.
- Decide who will chair and who will be responsible for taking notes and preparing the report.
- Decide on language medium and if necessary use interpreters to make it easier for everyone to participate.
- Talk about the agenda for the meeting. Give the purpose of the meeting and raise the points for the discussion.
- Invite participants to add agenda items.
- Remind participants of values of respect and confidentiality.
- Send around a register for the name and contact details of all present.
- Use an ice-breaker for introductions in the group.
- Make sure that everyone present at the meeting has a chance to have their say.
- Summarise any agreements reached.
- Flag any follow-up actions needed.
- Make sure that the note-takers record what has been agreed and who will do what by when.
- Go round, inviting everyone to comment on how the meeting went and what could be done better.
- Set a date and time for any follow-up meetings.
- Keep the agenda, register and report of the meeting in the records of the project.

8. Find out as much as you can: what are role players in your school community doing to support child well-being and identify vulnerable children?



You need to find out from a range of role players what is already happening in your school community to support child well-being and to identify vulnerable children.

This section outlines activities you can use:

- Paired interviews
- Group activity: Share stories about helping vulnerable children
- Start collecting stories (with **informed consent**) from the storytellers
- Group activity: Map your community
- Interview service providers about their work and make a database. You can meet them individually or in focus groups.

You can use these activities to build shared understanding among role players about vulnerability and well-being and to find out how they identify vulnerable children – but the activities won't work if participants are still stuck in complaining or making excuses. Children are important role players and it is essential to include them in these activities, to listen to their stories and to learn about their experiences and perspectives. The next section in this chapter on page 60 focuses on how to talk with children about vulnerability and well-being and suggests a number of activities that you can use or adapt.

Paired interviews²⁶

You can use paired interviews across groups or boundaries to gain new insight and develop relationships. For example, community leaders and young people can interview each other. The interview can take just a few minutes. You can ask participants to select the person they know least well in the group and have a short **conversation** (3 – 5 minutes each way) about one time when they felt they made an impact on the lives of children through their work or intervention.

Or the interview could last up to 20 minutes each way if you ask pairs to take turns to interview each other using a set of questions.

For example, you can start like this: *In each of our lives there are special times when we know that we have made the right choice, moments when we feel really good about the work we are doing and what we are contributing to others. As you think back over the last four or five years, can you tell me a story about one of these special moments when you felt most alive, most involved and most excited about what you were doing?*



- *Who were the significant others and what made them significant?*
- *What was happening at that time in your life?*
- *What made it a peak experience – a very positive experience?*
- *What factors in your school or community made it a peak experience?*

²⁶ This is part of the **Appreciative Inquiry** approach which starts with the positive and tries to build on the positive: it does not start with needs or with problem solving.

The interviewer can ask questions for clarification and questions that probe more deeply into the story but should not give his or her own views. The interviewer's role is to listen.

Share stories about helping vulnerable children

Time: 2 hours

Small groups

When to use storytelling:

- for groups of all ages at all levels
- to get everyone confident in participating
- to build trust
- to appreciate everyone's experiences
- to get people to know each other better
- to generate the energy needed for change.

Outcomes

- Sharing stories about what the community is doing well to support child well-being.
- Appreciating the life experience of every participant.
- Encouraging participants to connect with and share their own knowledge about supporting vulnerable children.
- Deepening understanding of the ways children are vulnerable in the area.
- Connecting participants with the energy for change.

What you need

- Participants should sit so that they can all see each other.
- Be ready to write up what people say in the group – use a black board or large sheets of paper.

What to do

- Remind participants of values of respect and confidentiality.
- Ask participants to sit quietly and think of a time they helped a child or a young person.
- Discuss with the group what it means to be a good listener. (Refer to Chapter Two: *Ground rules for working together in a group* on page 24, *Guidelines for good listening*, and *Guidelines for successful exchange of ideas*.)
- Each person has a chance to tell their story to rest of the group (no more than five minutes a story).
- Reflect on the stories using these questions:
 - *How did you know that the child needed help?*
 - *What steps were taken to help the child?*
 - *What kind of support did you need to help the child?*
- Write up the group responses where everyone can see them.

Sharing stories among groups of role players is a good way to understand what they are already doing in the school and the community.

At the end of a storytelling workshop in the Free State an educator in a very poor area said:

‘We don’t always realise how other teachers are helping learners. Unless we share stories we don’t know what one person does for another.’

Another educator commented:

‘A problem denied is a big problem but a problem that is recognised starts to go away.’

There is a wide range of care and support activities – from simply listening, to knowing when a child has a learning barrier, to providing food for hungry children, to supporting parents and caregivers to apply for grants.

Sharing stories is also a good way to find out how different role players go about identifying vulnerable children. This story from KwaZulu-Natal describes innovative ways in which one school identifies vulnerable learners.

A principal finds different ways to get information about vulnerable children

Sbongile Kuzwayo is the principal of a small school in the far north of KwaZulu-Natal. She describes several ways that her staff identify vulnerable children and learn more about their home circumstances without making the children feel uncomfortable:

- They set essay topics that provide children with opportunities to talk about personal experiences if they want to.
- They use drawings and other forms of expression in the classroom to find out more about children’s experiences and coping strategies.
- There is a ‘post box’ at school where children can post anonymous letters to teachers about anything they want the school to know.
- Children have ‘communication books’ to take home so caregivers can communicate with educators about their concerns.
- The school holds regular meetings with children’s caregivers to provide information and support (e.g. information on how to access a child support grant).

◇ **Start collecting personal stories, with informed consent, from the storytellers**

It is important to collect stories from people's personal experiences. You may hear very moving stories of how champions have worked for the well-being of children and helped vulnerable children, even in difficult contexts. You may hear stories that show clearly the **risk factors** that make children vulnerable and **protective factors** that help them to become more **resilient**.

Take the storyteller aside at a break or after the session and ask if she or he is willing to share the story. Explain that you will change names and place names and how you plan to use the story. You can record the story as she/he talks and then transcribe it, or he/she can write the story for you. There is an example of an **Informed Consent form** in Appendix 6 on page 143. Go through the form together before he or she signs it. See also the section on 'Ethical guidelines' in Chapter Two on page 13. Keep the story and the signed consent form in a safe place where only those who have permission may access the story.

Later you can use the information (with names and place names changed) with different groups so that they can learn about other perspectives and check these against their own experience. As we go through the phases, we will discuss how to collect information to describe how the process works in your community. Chapter Seven (starting on page 95) focuses on various ways of writing about and learning from the process.

Group activity 12

Map your community

Time: 1 hour

Small groups

When to use it

The community mapping activity can be used with different **role player** groups at different times:

- for children in school as part of their life orientation and social studies, to motivate them to be champions
- for community members to share their knowledge with each other
- to educate and inform people about existing services
- to inform people about key people in the community to contact
- to make information visual and display it in the community
- to collect basic information (it is not so useful for getting deeper information but it can help you know where to look).

Outcomes

- A shared understanding of the particular environment, services and resources around a **school community**.
- A shared understanding of the **points of light** in the community: what organisations, structures and supports are already in place that support child well-being and help children in need.
- A shared understanding of what difficulties, barriers or places of danger confront children in their school community.
- Plans to interview service providers to get more detailed information.

What you need

- A very big sheet of paper or cardboard to draw the map on.
- Smaller pieces of coloured paper for cutting out places.
- Scissors, glue, koki pens and Prestik.
- Some groups code places on the map using different coloured paper, koki pens or crayons, e.g.:
 - green for places to get services and things we need; points of light
 - yellow for other important places
 - orange for fun places
 - red for dangerous places.

What to do

- Remind participants of the values of respect and confidentiality.
- In a small group they reflect on their own and each other's stories about children in the school community.
- Participants work together to draw a rough map of their school and the surrounding community. They cut out small squares of paper to represent different places in their community and place them on the map (clinic, school, shebeen, soccer field, playground, taxi rank, police station).
- They draw significant landmarks such as a river or cave or main road on the map.
- For significant places outside of the map they could show the direction and the number of kilometres.
- The small groups report back to the whole group using the map.
- Ask the group to discuss in pairs what they have learned from the community mapping exercise, before discussion in the big group. Write up their responses so the whole group can see.
- Invite everyone to collect newspaper headlines and extracts and make a collage to highlight key issues.

◇ Interview service providers about their work and start a database

To follow up the community mapping activity, get contact details for service providers and resources for children in the area of your school community (e.g. educators, health workers, community-based organisations, faith-based organisations and other non-governmental organisations). Your **link person** (a youth worker, community worker or volunteer) could visit these service providers to find out more information.

Ask these questions:

- ◇
 - *How do you identify vulnerable children?*
 - *Which children qualify for your services?*
 - *What services do you provide?*
 - *What follow up do you provide?*
 - *How do you track and evaluate children's progress?*
 - *What records do you keep of individual children?*
 - *What other records do you keep?*
 - *Where do you refer children that you cannot help?*

Keep a record of what each service provider does and put the information together to start your database of service providers with contact details. Keep your database up to date when contact details change and add to it as you collect more information. Later you may be able to link up with other databases. Make this information available to everyone in the community.²⁷

9. Talk with children about vulnerability and well-being

- ◇ The best way to find out how to identify vulnerable children is to speak with children. There are many ways of doing this, including:
 - Talking with children one to one.
 - Group activity: Use pictures to talk with children about vulnerability and well-being.
 - Group activity: Use Persona Dolls to talk with children about being vulnerable and about well-being.

You can use the group activities²⁸ with youth forums, learner representatives or other groups of children or youth. Group activities may show that you need to talk one to one with children who are very vulnerable.

Talking with children one to one

Being listened to (by an adult or a peer) can help the child feel valued and shows that he or she is not alone.²⁹ Many schools have successfully implemented a child-to-child programme where they

²⁷ Many schools place information about important local service providers on the notice board. Catholic Institute of Education has developed a helpful interactive poster. See the *Resources* section for contact details.

²⁸ You could also adapt some of the group activities from the Journey of Hope in Chapter Three (page 27) for use with children.

²⁹ See ideas for 'Paired interviews' on page 57 of this chapter (above).

introduce listening skills³⁰ to their learners and pair an older child with a younger child. The pairs meet regularly, perhaps once every two weeks, and share lunch. Benefits for both children include more confidence in building a relationship, a feeling of being cared for and a greater awareness of the school beyond their own classroom. The teacher needs to supervise the process carefully and be aware that both children may need help.

You can arrange one to one interviews between children or youth and adults. You can learn a great deal from listening to a child. Later you can share the child's story (with names and identifying details changed), as well as the experience of listening, with the wider group. Listening may give you the information you need to help the child further. You need to know which service providers you can call on to help the child.³¹

Use pictures to talk with children about vulnerability and well-being

You can use the picture activity for talking with groups of children of different ages or for finding out details of vulnerability in a school community without exposing individuals.

Time: 1.5 hours

Small groups

Outcomes

- A shared feeling of having been listened to and understood.
- A deeper understanding of the context in which children are living.
- A shared understanding of vulnerability and well-being.
- Awareness and energy around what can be done to support other children.

What you need

- Seat participants so that they can all see each other.
- Use a black board or large sheets of paper to write up what they say.

Group activity 13

³⁰ See 'Guidelines for good listening' in Chapter Two on page 24.

³¹ 'Big brothers and big sisters of Africa' is a non-profit organisation mentoring children at risk, aged 6 to 18. It matches children with trained adult volunteers in one-to-one relationships. See the *Resources* section at the end of the book for contact details.

What to do

- Introduce your caring school project to participants.
- Ask them to introduce themselves.
- Speak about ground rules. Make sure they know not to give people's names when they tell stories. Invite them to share only as much as they are comfortable sharing.
- Show participants a picture of a child or young person looking happy. Ask them to tell a story about the child in the picture and what makes him or her happy.
- Show the participants a picture of a sad child. Ask them to tell a story about the child and what makes him or her sad.
- Discuss the stories using these questions:
 - *Do you know children in your school community who feel or look like the child in the second picture? Do not mention names, just tell the story.*
 - *If we say that a child is vulnerable, what do we mean?*
 - *What do children do that makes them vulnerable?*
 - *What do adults do to children to make them vulnerable?*
 - *What can each one of us do to help vulnerable children?*
 - *What can the school and the community do to protect children?*

At the end of the activity ask the children how they feel and how the experience was for them. Identify some of the next steps children can take to be champions for vulnerable children.

Variations

The picture activity has worked well with groups of high school learners. In one school in the Free State teachers chose participants from a background of poverty or because of their unruly behaviour. It took time and patience for the conversation to get going. At first the group insisted they themselves were not vulnerable and said there were very few vulnerable learners at the school. As the activity went on, some shared stories of their own vulnerability and spoke about other vulnerable learners at the school. They all agreed that they needed to protect each other by not using names. At the end of the activity the facilitator gave the group the contact details of resource people in the community and put the resource list in a place it can always be seen by everyone.

Use Persona Dolls to talk with children about vulnerability and well-being

Persona Dolls have been used most extensively with preschool and primary school children but also with youth groups and adults. Before using Persona Dolls with children, the facilitator needs to do the Persona Dolls training which is offered countrywide in **partnership** with various education departments and NGOs. See *Resources* section on page 125 for contact details.

Persona Dolls are realistic looking cloth dolls, about 70 cm tall. They represent the rich **diversity** of South African backgrounds. They can be male or female, young or old, slim or plump, they have different skin colours, hair types and styles of dress, and they can use spectacles or crutches or wheelchairs. Teachers transform Persona Dolls into 'people' by creating a unique Persona for each Doll: his or her own name, personality, family and cultural background, home, language/s, favourite food, sport and TV programmes, the things (s)he enjoys doing, the things (s)he can't manage very well.

The teacher takes the Doll to 'visit' the class once or twice a week. The teacher holds the Doll and tells the children what the Doll is 'saying': *'Gina is excited because it's her birthday – she's six ...'*; *'Jabu says he's feeling sad today because his granny died.'*

Children get to know the Dolls personally, bond with them and respond thoughtfully and sympathetically to them. They understand that they are Dolls and the teacher is '**pretending**' but think of the Dolls as 'real'.

Here is one example of a story. The teacher developed this story for a group of 6-year-olds when some of the children refused to play with Sandra, a girl with a darker skin colour and a different accent. Notice that the teacher did not use a girl doll so it was not obvious to the children that this story was about Sandra's situation. Being involved in problem-solving with and for a Doll can help children to think critically and realise that sometimes the things they have been told are not true.

Mandla is six years old. He lives in a council flat with his mommy, his aunty and her daughter Charlene. Charlene is two and cries a lot. Mandla has no brothers or sisters – he would love to have a brother. His mommy speaks Afrikaans. His daddy speaks Xhosa and is a teacher. He only sees his dad on weekends. His best friend is Maya. Mandla loves to eat ice cream and play soccer. He got a soccer ball for his birthday. Maya runs very fast and is

Group activity 14

good at scoring goals when they play soccer. Yesterday, at Mandla's school the Grade 2 children wouldn't let him play soccer with them at break. They called him 'darkie' and said 'You talk funny,' and 'You can't run properly'.

The teacher then led a problem-solving discussion using these questions:

- *How do you think Mandla felt when this happened?*
- *How would you have felt?*
- *Do you sometimes feel like that?*
- *If you saw what happened to Mandla, what would you do?*
- *If it happens again, what do you think Mandla should do?*
- *Who can help him with this problem at his school?*

This discussion brought the issue out into the open and led to an open discussion about similarities and differences. The children also expressed how they felt emotionally when they were excluded from games. They identified with Mandla's story. The teacher reports that children sometimes intervene when someone is being teased and treated as an outsider.

The Dolls help to build children's self-esteem, their ability to empathise and their vocabulary of 'feeling' words, and empower them to stand up for themselves or their friends when they experience or witness **discrimination**. The Doll can help children not to feel alone in their situation or with their problem, e.g. living with HIV/AIDS, struggling with maths at school.

Through the happy and not so happy stories that the Dolls 'tell' about their lives via the teacher, children are encouraged to empathise and identify with the Dolls and to express their own feelings and opinions. Real identities are not exposed but children experiencing extreme poverty, illness, abuse, bullying and exclusion are supported and made to feel 'not alone'. The teacher can also introduce Dolls that are different from the majority in the group. This helps break down barriers as the children can empathise with the Doll who is a stranger/outsider but has much in common with them (e.g. age and interests).

Persona Dolls and their stories offer an enjoyable, effective cross-curricular and user-friendly way to challenge the values, stereotypes and prejudices that underpin exclusion, bullying and discrimination. They build children's sense of identity, self-esteem and confidence and encourage them to relate to others with empathy, respect and sensitivity.

You can integrate Persona Dolls into existing early childhood development (ECD) programmes and school curricula. You can use the Dolls in implementing the National Curriculum Statement.

10. Strengthen co-ordinating structures and links for the project



Your group needs to work with other groups that are committed to child well-being. From your community mapping and other activities, you already know quite a lot about who is doing what and who offers services to children in your school community. To make a difference in the lives of children you need to make strong links with other groups in the community and beyond the community. Here are some different ways of organising and linking groups of people around children's well-being.

Identify existing co-ordinating structures in the school

Each participating school can identify key educators to lead the project among the school staff. The school governing body³² can form a subcommittee to lead the project in the school or they can ask the **educator support team** or **institutional support team** to do so. Representatives of management, the school governing body, staff and learners from all the schools can play an important role in a community reference group or child care forum.

Identify existing structures in the community³³

There needs to be a committed group of people to co-ordinate partnerships in the community. Look at what exists in the community before you think of starting something new. There may already be a co-ordinating structure like a child care forum, a **ward committee**, an inter-sectoral committee, a local development forum, a local network of care or a local programme of action for children. You could help to make the existing co-ordinating group into a stronger community reference group or child care forum, with representatives from schools, community, NGOs and government.

Identify people who can link the school and the community

Identify people who can form links between schools and the community and network actively. Think of school- and community-based people who can link children to services and give support to school staff:

- classroom assistants
- school health nurses
- child and youth care workers
- youth care facilitators
- home visitors
- home-based caregivers
- community health workers
- family and community motivators
- community development workers
- peer educators and counsellors.

32 Soul City has produced a manual for school governing bodies to strengthen school-based support: see the *Resources* section (on page 125) at the end of the handbook.

33 The MIET Toolkit looks at how a reference group or institution-based support team can work: see *Resources* section (on page 125).

Identify people who can link schools, community and government at local, district and regional level

The ward committee is an important local government structure. Try to involve the ward councillor and relevant ward committee members. We know that if services and planning can be co-ordinated at a district level, we can reach more children more effectively. The Departments of Health, Education, Social Services and Water Affairs are used to working on their own and need to find ways to work together.

Examples of existing structures

Child care forums are community structures made up of volunteers, working with a Child Policing Forum and giving technical support. It is a Department of Social Development initiative. It is supposed to be everywhere but they have only been started in pilot sites. Save the Children UK is involved in capacitating them.

Youth care facilitators – male and females younger than 28 years with a Matric education. Their role is to identify problems within the school and refer the cases of specific children to different government departments. In the Free State Nelson Mandela Foundation Project, they receive a stipend of R500 per month. They also help children who are struggling at school (e.g. tutor reading and writing) and assist with homework. They are based within a school. (See page 18 for more information about community-based facilitators.)

11. Share the information you have gathered about children in your school community

Share the information you have gathered and acknowledge the champions who are doing the work. Don't reveal the real names of children and their **families** or any details that might identify them.

- Write letters to or articles for the local newspaper.
- Talk on a local radio station.
- Paint the map of your community on a wall.
- Develop a database of organisations and service providers, with contact details.
- Invite all role players to celebrate what is working well in this school community. The case study below describes a celebration held in the Hout Bay community of the Western Cape.
- Have a social dialogue.

Two kinds of social dialogue activities are given below. The Africa Café activity gets individuals and groups to share ideas on given topics through a series of silent 'conversations'. Everyone participates, even very shy people. The Kgotla or Imbizo activity evokes the spirit of the old tribal councils where all the people of the village came together to discuss important matters.

Africa Café

Doing this activity in silence encourages everyone to participate, is good for very shy people, and is good for people who usually dominate because they have to think about what to write, but it is not suitable for people who are illiterate or have low literacy.

Time: 1 hour

Small groups

Outcomes

- A group of people share information on a given topic.
- They raise many issues around the topic and all share their perspectives on the topic.

What you need

- Place one large piece of paper and some koki pens on each table.
- Write one key question on each sheet of paper based on the issues that have been raised, for example:
 - *How can we involve out-of-school children?*
 - *How can we involve the principal and other educators who do not seem to be interested?*
 - *How can we speed up the pace of development?*

What to do

- Remind participants of the values of respect and confidentiality.
- Ask them to imagine they are in a café having a conversation about the question on the newsprint. This is a completely 'silent' conversation.
- Everyone has a koki pen to write ideas on the newsprint in speech bubbles. They can all write at the same time. They can challenge each other without talking and connect the ideas or question them further on the newsprint.
- After five to eight minutes, the group move together to another table to repeat the process, so everyone gets a chance to work with each question, see what others have written and maybe add something.
- The groups go back to their original tables to see what the others have added through their silent conversation. This time the groups talk and answer these questions about the topic at their table:
 - *What are the key issues or questions about this topic?*
 - *What insights or learning do you have about this topic?*
- Groups summarise their discussion and report back in plenary.

Group activity 15

Variation

This also works well with participants talking. One person stays at each table as the host and tells the new group what the previous group discussed. The new group then adds their own ideas. At the end, the group at each table writes the three most important points from the discussion on cards. These are put up on the wall, and organised into categories and reviewed.

Group activity 16

Kgotla (Imbizo, Pitso, Indaba)

This activity is a good way to talk about difficult and controversial issues with a diverse group of role players, allowing everyone to be heard and encouraging shy people to be involved but without putting pressure on them to speak.

Time: 1 – 2 hours

One large group

Outcomes

- A group of people share information on a given topic.
- They discuss and debate issues around that topic.
- All their voices and perspectives are heard.
- New and creative responses to problems emerge.

What you need

- Use chairs to make two circles, a small inner circle with five chairs and a larger outer circle with the rest of the chairs.
- Place a candle in the centre of the smaller circle to represent the fire and light of wisdom.

What to do

- Invite participants to sit down.
- Explain: *We are sitting in circles. Many societies throughout history have used the circle for communication and conversation. Rituals can help to facilitate conversation. Other words for Kgotla are Pitso, Indaba or Imbizo.*

- Introduce the rules of speaking: *If you want to speak, you can move to the inner circle, but you are not allowed to talk from the outside circle. You don't need to ask permission to enter as long as there is a spare seat. Be aware when you are taking up the speaking space. When you have had enough, move out of the inner circle to the outside circle.*
- Remind everyone of values of respect and confidentiality (see page 21).
- Ask people to take on different roles at different times during the discussion:
 - Fire: the one who proposes or advocates for something to get things moving.
 - Air: the one who is supportive and explores what the other person is saying.
 - Earth: the one who focuses the discussion, brings it down to earth, summarises.
 - Water: the one who reflects and questions.
- One participant lights a special candle to indicate that the group are ready to start the conversation.
- From the inner circle, the facilitator introduces the topic and starts the conversation.
- The facilitator listens for key points and summarises at the end.

12. Go back to your records and reflect on the process so far



During this first phase, the phase of understanding, you have gathered valuable information about your school community:

- the service providers
- the services they offer
- where they are located and their contact details
- what makes children vulnerable in the community
- how vulnerable children are tracked and monitored.

Your records from this process will help you:

- to keep a database of who does what and where to find them
- to link children whose needs and rights are not being met with the **duty-bearers** who are responsible for offering services, care and support
- when you write reports and funding proposals in future: you can include information about the community, the context, the role players, what works in the community and what the needs are.

Set a time to think about and discuss how you are working to mobilise the school community: your own role and the role of the group.

Use these questions as a guide:

- *What have we done well during this phase?*
- *Did the facilitators do their job well?*
- *How was leadership given?*
- *How well did we listen?*
- *How well did we acknowledge others?*
- *What do we need to improve on or do more of?*
- *What new insights and skills have we gained?*
- *What have I learned about myself and how I work with the community?
What do I need to do differently?*
- *What have we as a group learned about how we work together?
What do we need to do differently?*

Find out which children need help and start documenting individual stories about children.

Use these heading as a guide:

- *age, school and grade*
- *family situation*
- *risk and protective factors*
- *help needed*
- *steps taken*
- *access to services*
- *barriers to accessing services*
- *progress made and hurdles.*

SUMMARY OF CHAPTER FOUR

A large group of role players have contributed to understanding what is already being done to support child well-being and how vulnerable children are already being identified and helped in your school community. You have listened to what children have to say about how they understand vulnerability and well-being and the ways they support each other. You have collected information about service providers in the community and how they help children. You have shared the information you have gathered.

You have worked to strengthen co-ordination and links between school, community and service providers (in government and NGOs). You have talked with a range of role players and built a shared understanding about what a caring school community is and how you might create one together. After conversation and sharing what champions for children have already achieved, you are ready to move onto the next phase: dreaming together about the future.

CHAPTER FIVE


IMAGINING AND DREAMING ABOUT YOUR CARING SCHOOL COMMUNITY

In the first phase we heard inspiring stories of what champions for children have done and are doing in their communities. In this second phase, diverse groups of role players, including children, speak about their dreams for children in their community.

Creative imagining or dreaming is a crucial phase in participatory work to create a caring school community. The process of imagining and dreaming helps to involve everyone in creating a vision for the future for our children. We need a shared vision of what is possible to inspire us and give us energy. Dreaming, especially dreaming together, generates energy so that we can take action to make dreams come true. Later, we can come back to our dreams for children in the school community to renew our energy.

Introducing the Dream Triangle

We start with the Dream Triangle activity in which groups of people dream together about what they want for children in their community. The Dream Triangle helps participants to see each others' dreams. It helps them to organise the dreams and to start planning to take action. It helps to break big dreams into small steps they can take immediately without extra resources or help from outside the group. When they see which dreams they can realise quickly and which dreams need more planning, this gives energy and a shared commitment for action. The co-ordinating team and possibly other teams can do more detailed planning afterwards and give feedback to the key role players.

Involve as many different role player groups as possible in the Dream Triangle activity. You can run the activity with a different group each time or get many groups together at once. You can do the activity with children and adults separately and then bring them together. 

You can introduce the Dream Triangle when schools make strategic plans every year as part of their whole school development. It is important to build on existing structures, e.g. school governing body, school management team, institutional support team, local forums, ward committees and so on.

Group activity 17

Preparing for the Dream Triangle

Time: 20 minutes

Group

Outcomes

To stimulate creative imagination, start with individual reflection, either free writing or drawing.

What to do

Explain that the writing or drawing is private and nobody will be asked to share what they have done. This preparation should encourage fuller participation in the Dream Triangle activity.

- Ask participants to free write for 10 minutes, starting with the words: 'My dreams for children in the community ...' They can translate these words and write in the language of their choice.
- Or ask them to draw their dreams for children in the community. If they feel shy and say they can't draw well, suggest that they draw with the wrong hand, left hand for the right-handed, right hand for the left-handed. Then nobody can be expected to draw well.
- Ask participants to discuss one or two of their dreams for children in the community in pairs.

Group activity 18

Dream Triangle

Time: 1 hour

Groups

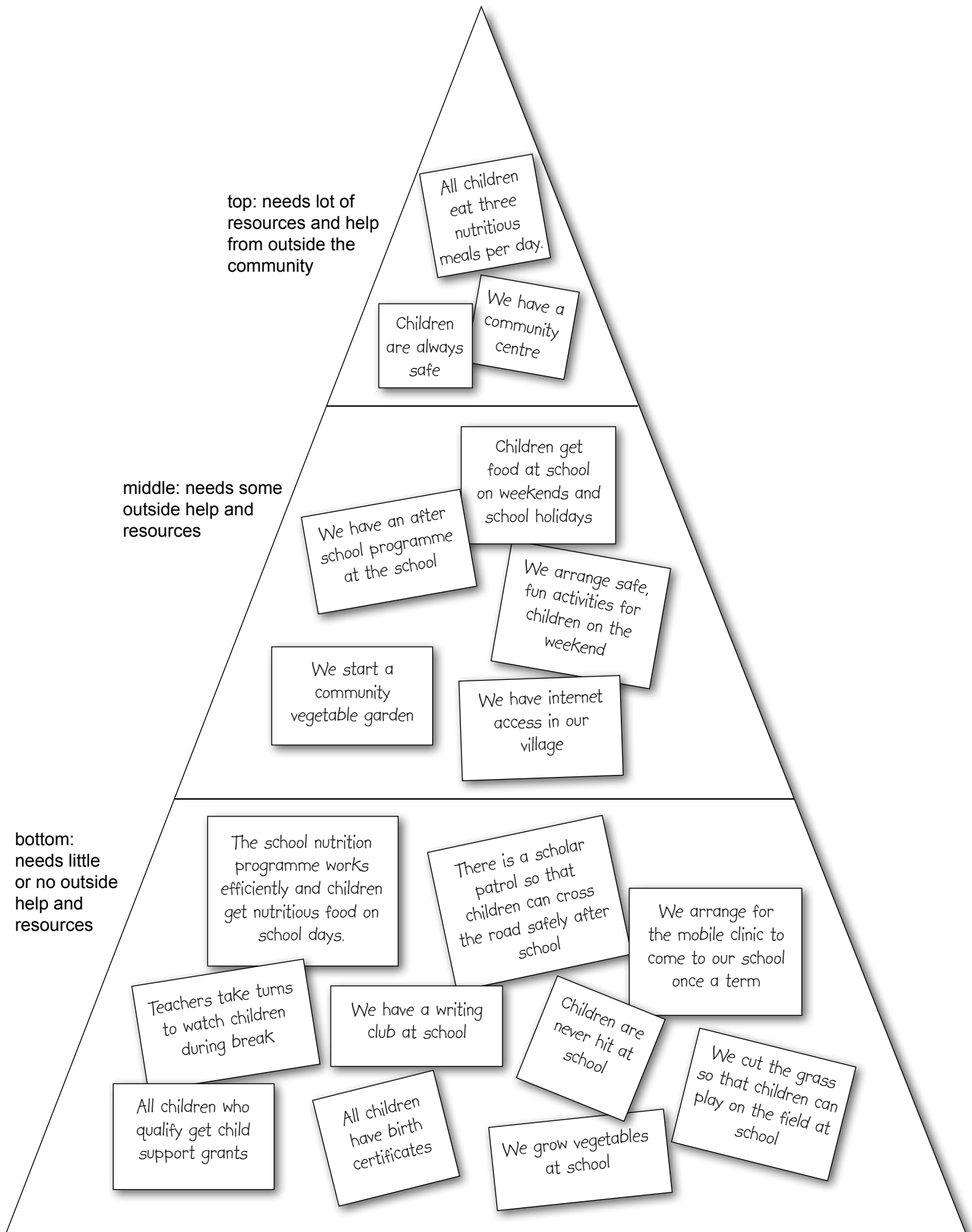
Outcomes

- All participants have a shared vision for children in the community.
- They share their dreams about how to establish a support system for children in the community.
- The different role player groups begin to see what resources and planning are needed and how much time it will take to achieve their dreams for children.

What you need

Slips of coloured paper and three big sheets of paper or newsprint each with a big triangle drawn on it. The triangle is wide at the bottom and narrow at the top. Make sure everyone can see the Dream Triangle (on the floor or on the wall or on a big table).

Example of a Dream Triangle



Group activity 18

What to do

Dream

Read aloud: *Close your eyes and imagine your school community a few years from now – with a support system in place for all the children in the school community. Don't think of any barriers or obstacles. The sky is the limit. Imagine the children in the community. They all have three nutritious meals a day and there is a big green field where they play. What else do you see?*

Hand out coloured slips of paper and give this induction: *Please write one dream on each slip of paper. Make your dream as detailed and specific as you can. Write your dreams in the present – as if they are really happening right now. For example: The children are dancing together and teaching each other songs in their own languages.*

Express your dreams in detail and in a positive way

Check that you have expressed your dreams in a positive way and in detail. Do not use any negative words like 'no' or 'don't' or 'can't'. For example, change 'No more hunger' to 'All children get three nutritious meals a day'; and change 'End violence against children' to 'Children are safe and well cared for at home, at school and in the community'. If necessary, rewrite your dreams in a positive way, with specific details. Each dream should have an action word and say who is doing the action. Express dreams in a brief, clear and simple way.

Stick your dreams in the right places on the Triangle

Decide where your dreams belong and put them in the right place:

- *Place those dreams that don't need outside help and resources such as skills or money at the bottom of the Triangle.*
- *Place those dreams that need some outside help and resources in the middle of the Triangle.*
- *Place those dreams that need a lot of help and resources from outside the community at the top of the Triangle.*

When all the dreams are on the Triangle, discuss in pairs and then in the big group:

- *Which dreams are the same or almost the same? (e.g. 'Parents are more involved with their children' and 'Parents spend time with their children'.)*
- *Which dreams are connected? (e.g. 'Children have aftercare at school' or 'Children are safe after school' and 'Children have sports activities in the afternoons'.)*

Discuss with a partner or in a small group for a few minutes:
Which are the two or three most urgent dreams?

Variation

We used a Dream Tree rather than a Dream Triangle. This worked particularly well. Children especially could understand the idea of dreams that fell like ripe fruit onto the ground. Those dreams that can be picked up and don't need any resources or help from outside the community to make them real. Here is a picture of a Dream Tree we made.



Prepare for planning and action

Explain that the next phase is planning and taking action to make dreams come true:

- Talk about the longer term planning that is needed to get the dreams at the top of the Triangle. You could ask small groups to discuss: *What kind of information do you need and who can help you achieve the big dreams? What small steps can you take to move towards these?* Write these smaller steps and add them to the dreams near the bottom of the Triangle.
- Talk about shorter term planning to achieve the dreams at the bottom of the Triangle. Ask groups to discuss the dreams at the bottom of the Triangle: *Make a step-by-step plan to make the dreams come true. Describe every step and decide who will do what, when.*
- *Now it's time for you to write what you plan to do right away to start making the dream real. Remember the Journey of Hope (page xx)? Did you plan to do something at the end of the Journey of Hope? Maybe you have already started doing something to achieve your dream for children? It can be something you want to do on your own or you can work with a partner or a small group.*

Group activity 18

- Make sure that everyone writes what he or she plans to do or what they plan to do as a group. Ask them to keep what they write in their files. Invite volunteers to share their plans with the big group.
- Display the Dream Triangle in a public place where everyone can add their dreams.
- The co-ordinating team and possibly other teams can do more detailed planning afterwards and give feedback to the key role players.

Keep a record of the dreaming process

- *Keep each group's Triangle with the dreams on it. Note which dreams are from which role player group. Use these questions to guide your reflection and records.*
- *What reasons did they give for putting specific dreams on the Dream Triangle?*
- *How did they feel specific dreams could affirm or change community values?*
- *How can you link the dreams on the Triangle with existing projects in the community? (For example, a dream to stop drug abuse could be linked to a service provider doing good work in a neighbouring community.)*
- *How can you link the dreams with existing policy and programmes?*
- *How can you link the dreams with potential service providers for the planning phase?*
- *How many people took part? How much did it cost to run the process?*

Reflect on the process

- *What were the most powerful dreams for you?*
- *What dreams did everyone share?*
- *Where there any dreams that came from one person only or a few people only?*
- *What made it easier for the group to dream and what made it harder?*
- *What new insights do you have?*
- *What would you do differently if you were doing the dreaming process again?*

Link your dreams with government policies and rights

As champions for children, we need to link our dreams with government policies and rights. Much government support is available in South Africa but delivery is often weak, so we need to find ways to make the system stronger. Sustainable solutions will only come if we can make the system work. It is better for the school community to take action if we can use our own resources – including government resources – before looking outside for help.

For example, many groups share a dream and a vision in which all our children are well fed. We know that children have the right to nutritious food. We know that there is a national school nutrition programme designed to give good food to hungry primary school children. The challenge is to make the policy work for the children in every school community so that they get their right to food. This is where you move into planning.

Planning to get the right to food in your school community may mean contacting the Department of Education to get school feeding at your school. It may mean putting new responsible people in charge of distributing the food. It may mean challenging people who are stealing money or food that comes from the national school nutrition programme. It may mean finding ways to feed hungry children during weekends and school holidays or finding ways to feed children in high schools that do not have the national nutrition programme. There are also government programmes that provide food parcels for indigent families (very poor families, with very low income or no income at all). Find out more from your ward committee or the Department of Social Development. One important way of helping families to feed hungry children is by helping them access the grants for which they qualify.

Keep the dreams achievable

Don't focus on big long-term projects that require funding proposals and external funding. The main thing is to start taking action and achieving now with fast gains. You want to be able to celebrate successes, even small successes. That will build a momentum. If you only focus on writing project proposals and wait for external funding it can take months if not years before anything happens. That can be very disempowering.

SUMMARY OF CHAPTER FIVE

Diverse groups of role players, including children, have spoken about their dreams for children in their community. Dreaming, especially dreaming together, generates energy for action. Individuals and small groups have already started to take small steps to make their dreams real. The role players are ready to come together to plan concrete steps and actions to realise some of their dreams – dreams that need more people and different groups to work together.

Later, you may need to go back to your dreams for the children in your school community to renew your energy. That is one reason why it is important to keep a record of what you do in each phase: keep the Dream Triangles your group completed and any writing you have done. The free writing is for your eyes only but you may want to refer to it later.

CHAPTER SIX

GOING DEEPER INTO CHILDREN'S RIGHTS: A RIGHTS-BASED APPROACH

This chapter focuses on children's rights. We start with the 'Power Walk'³⁴ that helps us understand the link between rights and power.

We look at three declarations of children's rights to inspire us as we work together for children's rights.

We discuss complicated real-life situations and analyse the needs of the people in the situation: who needs what, who are the rights-claimants and who are the duty-bearers? We look at the difference between needs and rights and the pattern of duty-bearers.

At the end of the chapter we make a Rights Tree as a kind of summary to show where rights come from; how to access rights; who are the rights-claimants, who are the duty-bearers?

Group activity 19

The Power walk

This activity is a lively way to analyse the power structure and the pattern of roles in a community. It helps participants understand the experience of marginalised groups and appreciate their problems. It illustrates how access to power and **resources** affects people's ability to enjoy basic **human rights**.

What you need

- Prepare a set of role cards that represent a range of different people in a community. There should be one role for each workshop participant. Write each role or character on a separate piece of paper and fold it so that it is not possible to see what is written on it. See list of examples of characters on page 82. You can print them in large font (16 point). Place all the folded pieces of paper in a packet, big envelope or container.
- Write the statements you will use for the activity on a piece of paper. See examples on page 82.

34 Adapted from UNICEF (2002) *Human Rights Approach to Programming (HRAP): A workshop guide for facilitators, contextualised to South Africa*. Unpublished draft compiled by a national facilitator working group.

Group activity 19

What to do

- Explain that in the Power Walk each participant will play a different character/role. All the characters live in the same community. If you don't have enough people for all the characters or if you have too many, it's easy to combine characters or add new ones, but make sure that at least half the characters are very marginalised.
- Ask participants to each take one piece of folded paper with a character written on it. Ask them to read their paper to see which character they will be, but not to tell anyone until you ask them to disclose who they are.
- Ask participants to stand in a row shoulder to shoulder in a big room or open space that is long enough to take 20 big steps forward.
- Read out the statements one at a time and ask participants to take one step forward if the statement is true for his or her given character or stand still if it is false.

Examples of characters for the Power walk

- Infant aged 2 years
- Orphaned boy aged 9
- Unwed mother aged 14
- Girl aged 15 looking after sick mother and siblings
- Girl aged 10 with both parents employed
- Orphaned boy aged 6 cared for by older sibling
- Girl aged 11 who was raped by principal at her school
- Boy aged 12 who is physically and sexually abused by his uncle who is his guardian
- Visually impaired young man
- Grandmother taking care of orphans
- Unemployed single mother of three students at school
- Principal
- Male school teacher – HIV positive but not open about his status
- Male leader of youth group
- Community social worker
- Community religious leader
- Policewoman
- Ward councillor
- District education officer
- Chairperson of **school governing body**
- Provincial Premier

Statements to read aloud for the Power walk

1. *I eat at least two nutritious meals a day.*
2. *I have access to clean water.*
3. *I have a flush toilet.*
4. *I have a regular income or means of supporting myself.*
5. *I get new clothes on religious holidays.*

6. *I have access to and can read newspapers regularly.*
7. *I have access to the radio and time to listen.*
8. *I have access to micro credit.*
9. *I can negotiate condom use with my partner.*
10. *I am not in danger of being sexually harassed or abused.*
11. *I can easily access family planning and reproductive health information and services.*
12. *I went to secondary school or I expect to go to secondary school.*
13. *I have time and resources for recreational activities.*
14. *I have all the love and care I need.*
15. *I will always be **consulted** on issues affecting young people in our community.*
16. *I have access to all the HIV and AIDS information, treatment and services I need.*
17. *I can pay for treatment at a private hospital if necessary.*
18. *I can speak in meetings of my extended family.*
19. *I can influence decisions made at local government/school level.*
20. *I get to meet visiting government officials.*
21. *I sometimes attend workshops and seminars.*
22. *I can question spending of community funds.*

What to do (continued)

- Ask the group to guess who the characters are at the front.
- Ask those who have moved to the front to say who they are (their roles). Did they look back to see what was happening to those who did not move forward?
- Facilitate discussion of why they are at the front.
- Ask the group to guess who remained at the back.
- Ask those at the back to identify their roles and say how they feel about being left behind and how they feel about those who moved to the front.
- Facilitate discussion of why they did not take steps.

Facilitate a discussion about what happened in the Power Walk. Some key questions:

- *Think about those who take no steps forward or only take a few steps. Can their voices be heard by those at the front? Can they access services on their own? What will make it possible for their voices to be heard?*
- *What communication channels do people at the front use? What channels do those at the back use?*
- *What kind of communication or negotiation would get those at the front to consider the viewpoints of those at the back?*

Group activity 19

- *How can those at the back access services they are entitled to?*
- Ask the men characters to put up both hands and the women characters to put up one hand. Ask the group: *What do you notice about the position of men and women in relation to each other? Are they equal?* Ask the boys to put up both hands and the girls one hand. Ask: *Are they in the same position as the adults?*
- *What special steps can help girls and boys to communicate and participate better?*
- Look how far participants are from each others. This distance symbolises lots of inequalities in **communities**. *In what ways are people in the community unequal? (Socio-economic, cultural, rural/urban, status, etc.)*
- *What happens when some people/groups do not or cannot communicate?*

Brainstorm: *What lessons can we learn from the Power Walk for when we **imagine**, plan and take action to create our **caring school community**?*

Variations

After you have discussed why some characters moved forward and others were left behind, you can ask participants in the front to find a partner at the back. They stay in character and in pairs talk about ways to solve the problems that prevented that character from moving forward.



Key legal instruments on children's rights³⁵

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

The United Nations (UN) Convention on the Rights of the Child is an international convention setting out the rights of all children. The Convention has four central principles:

- Children should not suffer **discrimination**.
- States must act in the best interests of the child.
- Children have a right to survival and development.
- Children's views should help to shape decisions.

All the member countries of the United Nations including South Africa (but excluding the United States of America) have signed and ratified the UN Convention to show they agree to it. This gives it a special status in international law.

African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child

The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child was adopted by the Organisation for African Unity in 1990. It draws heavily on the UN Convention but there are some differences. It is more practical and easy to understand. It contains some specific provisions that are not in the UN Convention, for example special consideration for the education of pregnant children and more protection for refugee children. South Africa has signed and **ratified** the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child.

South African Constitution and Bill of Rights

The South African **Constitution** is the highest law in our country. The Bill of Rights is in the South African Constitution and the government has a duty to safeguard, protect and promote all the rights in the Bill of Rights.

There are general rights in the Bill of Rights for all people in South Africa, for example:

- the right to a name and identity
- the right to life
- the right to equality – not to be discriminated against
- the right to a healthy environment
- the right to social assistance.

Section 28 of the Constitution also sets out special rights for children. All children have these rights and these rights cannot be taken away for any reason:

- the right to food and clean water
- the right to shelter
- the right to health care
- the right to basic education (schooling).

³⁵ Other legal instruments that address human rights more broadly are: the South African Charter on Rights of the Child and the Freedom Charter.

What are children's rights?

Facilitate an introductory session to focus on the three declarations of children's rights given below.

Variations

'We made this part of the session into a kind of motivational talk and that worked well with our group though it wouldn't suit others. One participant who is a lay preacher with a dramatic style of speaking started us off: "As champions for children's rights we need to be aware of these important declarations of children's rights – to **inspire** the work that we do." Then she took us through the information on the UN Convention and the South African Bill of Rights and invited everyone to chorus the UN principles and the rights in our Bill of Rights, almost like a creed or statement of faith.

I invited everyone in pairs or small groups to read aloud and discuss the UN, African and South African documents about children's rights. Then they discussed a question: "Which of the rights in the South African Bill of Rights inspires the work you do?" It was actually inspiring to hear what they had to say.'

◇ What's the difference between a need and a right?

Ask participants to discuss in small groups for five minutes: *What is the difference between a need and a right?* Then (for 25 – 30 minutes) facilitate a general discussion in the big group and record responses on newsprint. Make clear during the discussion: *All rights are based on needs but not all needs are rights. There is a difference between what people want and need.*

◇ Who needs what help? Who can help? Who has a duty to help?

Write these stories on newsprint and paste them where everyone can read or give a copy to each pair. These are complicated real-life situations. Use one or both of these stories or adapt the stories to suit your situation. Ask participants to analyse the needs of the people in each situation: *Who needs what help and who can help?*

Thandi (27) is the mother of three children, a boy of eight, a girl of five and a new baby boy. The father of her children, who was retrenched, has started drinking and taking drugs. He beats Thandi and has threatened to kill her and the children. They have lived together for nine years but are not married. Thandi runs away from her home with the children, taking only the baby's clothes. She has temporary shelter in

a woman friend's room and tries to take Samora, the eldest, to school. The school won't accept him as he has no record of schooling from his previous school but especially because he has no birth certificate. She has no money, support, or work.

The **Whande household** is now a child-headed household: a boy of 15 in Grade 10 and two girls of six and 10. The father has died. The mother who has a live-in job has remarried and lives in town because her new husband does not want to move. The uncle who inherited the property from the children's father allows the children to stay on the land. A neighbour keeps an eye on the children and sometimes gives them food. The children go to her for help and advice when they have a problem. The uncle has offered to take the boy to stay in his house in town so that he can complete high school but he has not offered to take the girls.

Ask participants to discuss these questions in small groups:

- *Who needs help?*
- *What help is needed?*
- *Who can help?*

One person from each group reports back to the big group. Then ask them to discuss in the big group:

- *Which rights of the children are being violated?*
- *Taking those rights one at a time, who is the **duty-bearer** for the right?*

On newsprint, make two lists, one for the rights and the other for the duty-bearers. Ask questions like these:

- *Is it Thandi's duty to enrol her son in school?*
- *Who has a duty to see that the Whande children have enough food?*
- *Is the kind neighbour a duty-bearer?*
- *Does the uncle have a duty to support the little girls as well?*
- *Who should decide whether the boy goes to live with the uncle?*
- *Do the children have a right to stay together?*
- *What responsibilities does government have?*

Then decide: who are the **rights-claimants** and who are the duty-bearers? Make clear who are the rights-claimants and who are the duty-bearers. Make clear that not everyone who can help is a duty-bearer. Children cannot be duty-bearers: for instance, children cannot be expected to work if it interferes with their own rights such as the right to education.

Variations

Participants identified strongly with the people in the stories – the stories generated a lively discussion. In our group we took it one step further, posing the question: Are some rights more important than others?

We invited all participants to form a circle around cards, each with a different right written on it, and asked them to put the rights in order from the most important to the least important. The discussion got quite heated at times and people realised that it's impossible to prioritise rights as no one right is more important than the other. At the end they placed the cards with rights in a circle to show that they are interlinked and interdependent and that a violation of one right leads to a violation of another right. We can prioritise needs, but not rights.

Group activity 20	Find the chain of duty-bearers
	<p>Time: 1 hour Group / small groups</p>
	<p>Outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Participants understand how needs are related to rights. ◦ They understand what duty-bearers and rights-claimants are.
	<p>What you need</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ The stories discussed earlier in the chapter – Thandi's story and/or the story of the Whande children. ◦ Newsprint/blackboard and koki pens. <p>What to do</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Read and/or hand out copies of the story that worked better with the group. ◦ Ask participants: <i>What are the needs of the children in the story?</i> List the needs on newsprint. ◦ Ask: <i>What are the rights of the children in the story?</i> List the rights on newsprint. ◦ Explain: <i>The law turns needs into rights, identifies the duty-bearer/s for each right and describes actions that the duty-bearer/s must take to protect that right. Duty-bearers include government ministers, heads of department, parents and others. All people including children are rights-claimants. Most adults are also duty-bearers unless they don't have the capacity to be duty-bearers, for example if they are mentally ill. Children cannot be duty-bearers. Many people are duty-bearers for the same right but with different duties. Think of the right to education or the right to a name and identity.</i>

- Brainstorm: *Who are the duty-bearers?* List all the people who have a duty to provide and protect the rights of children. Include family members, community members, government officials and NGOs. Spend time discussing the chain of duty-bearers. Refer to the story and ask: *In what ways are the rights of the children protected and not protected?*
- Discuss how to change this by linking the rights-claimants and duty-bearers in the story/stories. Make notes from the discussion on newsprint.
- Ask participants how they are feeling. Stress that it is not only children who have rights. Educators have rights. Parents and caregivers have rights. Invite participants (in pairs) to think about one or two examples where there is a conflict between the rights and needs of children and the rights and needs of educators or other adults. Discuss their examples in the big group.

How Soul City in the Free State brought together all the duty-bearers involved in getting birth certificates and social grants

Think about the different people who have a duty to help a child get a birth certificate.

- When the child is born it is the duty of the parent of the child to give the child a name, inform the Department of Home Affairs of the name and get a birth certificate.
- It is the duty of the officials at the department of Home Affairs to make it easy for the parent to get a birth certificate for the child when it is born: for example, Home Affairs should provide forms to birth attendants and clinics.
- It is the duty of municipal planning to plan for roads and transport so that the parent can get to the Home Affairs office.

The work of different **role players** needs to be co-ordinated so that children can get birth certificates. At a recent Soul City event in the Free State there were mobile units to bring together different duty-bearers in a 'one stop shop': Home Affairs and Social Development officials, parents and caregivers. Three hundred **families** were able to get birth certificates and apply for grants and grants were approved – just like that.

Why we need to hear what the children have to say

When the Office of the Rights of the Child (ORC) was launched in the Western Cape, this is what one learner said:

‘As children we need opportunities to express ourselves about the lives we are living. The new Office of the Rights of the Child must create awareness of the rights of children as set out in the Constitution so that we can overcome the problems we face as children of South Africa: child trafficking, child labour, child abuse, violence at school and in the community. These are very urgent issues. For example, last year a boy from my school was stabbed inside the school premises. Luckily he did not die. He [boy who stabbed him] could not be kicked out of school because he has a right to education but at the same time everyone at the school has a right to safety. The other learners and teachers were at risk – we didn’t know if the other gang members would come back to the school. In a case like this, ORC’s Advisory Council should give advice and intervene when necessary to make sure that the rights of all children and adults are respected. That is not an easy task but we as children expect this of you.’

Group activity 21

Make a Rights Tree to show how to access rights

You can use this activity to sum up and revise what people already understand about **rights**, rights-claimants and duty-bearers. Some people find the visual image of a tree helps them understand how the system works.

Time: 1.5 hours

What you need

- *Briefing document on Human Rights* (Appendix 4)
- Card with a definition of **human rights**
- Picture of a very large tree drawn on four pieces of newsprint stuck together (without labels)
- Completed Rights Tree (coloured handout Appendix 10)
- People figures cut out of paper (adults and children: duty-bearers). These can be very simple, like ‘stick people’.
- Ladder drawn on a long strip of paper.
- Prestik, stones, koki pens
- Various cards: cards (oval, circular and rectangular), triangular card labelled ‘communication’, one long rectangular shaped card labelled ‘communities and families’, and a heart-shaped card labelled ‘internalisation’. Write

one human rights principle on each rectangular card. Use the picture of the complete tree in Appendix 10 to check how these cards should be prepared.

What to do

If possible, hand out the briefing document in the previous meeting and either ask participants to read it before the session or allow time for reading at the beginning of the session. You can read out the declarations of rights like an announcer or a preacher to get everyone's attention – even if some participants have already read the document.

Making the tree

You have a colour picture of a completed tree, but don't show it to the participants yet – you can use it to guide you if the process becomes confusing. Right at the end you can show everyone the colour picture and put it next to their own tree, just for comparison.

Place the large tree (without any labels) where everyone can see – on the floor or the ground or the wall.

Work out your own way to guide participants to understand the rights framework and put the tree together. Take them through a series of questions and prompts (to identify human rights, human rights principles, the legal instruments, rights-holders and duty-bearers).

- Start with human rights: Use round cards to show rights as fruits. Hand out the round cards and ask participants to work in groups and write one right on each card. Ask them to place the rights on the tree like fruits. Place the same ones together or if you have too many, remove duplicates. Check if all rights have been included and add any that might have been left out.
- Human rights goals: Oval cards are used to look like 'clouds' that represent the vision or goals of society. Ask: *What kind of society do we want?* Write one goal on each oval card and place above the tree.
- Human rights principles: Give each group three rights from the tree. Ask them to talk about the three rights and arrange them in order of priority. Invite everyone to join the big group around the tree and place their rights back on the tree. Take feedback from the groups. Ask questions that clarify that no one right is more important than the other. Place the rectangular card marked 'interdependent' on the trunk of the tree. Explain that one rights principle is that all rights are interdependent. No right is more important than another. All rights must be protected. Discuss each of the other principles as you place that card on the tree.

- Rights-holders: Add paper people (a few adults and children under the tree; most far from the tree). Explain that people's rights are not always protected. Remind them of the Power Walk activity (page 81). Some people enjoy more rights than others. Most people enjoy very few rights. Their rights are not protected and fulfilled; they are far from the 'tree'.
- Use rectangular cards for the SA Constitution and all other human rights instruments that protect rights: South African Charter on Rights of the Child; the Freedom Charter, the Constitution as the foundation for all rights in South Africa. Place rectangular cards with these instruments above the tree but under the oval cards.
- Regional and global instruments: Add the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the African Charter, the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, on rectangular cards also in the space between 'clouds' and the 'tree'.

Why is communication important for rights?

Ask: *Can you see which rights-holders don't enjoy their rights because there isn't good communication? (Some people are under the 'tree' and know about their rights but most are far away and don't even know they have rights. Even those under the 'tree' don't always know how to claim their rights.)* Place a triangular card labelled 'communication' next to the tree.

What makes it difficult for some people to claim their rights?

Explain: *Not all rights-holders are equal. People are in different positions. Some carry 'heavy baggage' (e.g. apartheid legacy) and some don't – add 'baggage' to some rights-holders, a bit of prestik or a small stone on a paper person.*

How do rights-holders get up the 'tree' to the 'fruit'?

Lean the ladder on the tree. Add people so that they are climbing up the tree as you talk about how to access rights and the role of champions and development workers who help people to organise together so they can access their rights. Explain: *The first step is knowing the laws and policies that give us rights.*

What are duty-bearers and rights-holders?

Ask: *Are there people who can help us up the steep 'ladder'? What are they called?*

Ask participants to discuss in pairs: *Who is a duty-bearer?*

Who is a rights-holder? Highlight: We are all rights-holders and duty-bearers: as parents, community members, employees of government or NGOs. A child cannot be a duty-bearer. Highlight responsibilities that go with rights. Explain that: Rights-holders have needs and duty-bearers have responsibilities.

What are the roots that make the Rights Tree strong?

Explain: The Rights Tree needs strong roots (e.g. strong families and communities). Add card labelled 'communities and families' to the base of the tree.

How shall we define human rights?

Add card with a definition of human rights and invite a brief discussion.

What does it mean if we say: We need to internalise human rights principles?

Invite a brief discussion (in pairs). It means that we need to have them in our hearts and minds so we can live by them. They should guide everything we say and do. Add a heart-shaped card labelled 'internalise human rights principles' to the scene. Explain: It is important to internalise the human rights approach and integrate it into all aspects of our work and lives.

Variations

There are different ways to guide participants to understand the rights framework and put the tree together:

You can place the cards in the right places and ask them to explain what the cards represent and why you are placing them where they are.

Participants can call out their answers or you can ask them to talk in pairs first.

Or participants can write their answers on cards and add the cards to the picture.

Or you can call out the answers and ask them to place already labelled cards in the picture.

SUMMARY OF CHAPTER SIX

This chapter explored a right-based approach, starting with famous declarations of children's rights, and tried to apply those principles in complicated real-life situations. Key questions are: who needs what, what is the difference between 'needs' and 'rights', who are rights-claimants and who are duty-bearers?

CHAPTER SEVEN

WRITING THE STORIES: KEEP WRITTEN RECORDS

**(to learn from your experience; to be accountable to the community;
to access services and resources)**

Many champions for children do good work but keep no record of what they do. Chapter Seven focuses on why and how to keep a portfolio of written and other records of your work. For the sake of convenience, this chapter includes some ideas about writing and record-keeping that you have already considered in other chapters, along with new ideas.

In this chapter we discuss:

- Keeping and using written records
- Free writing at any time
- Free writing to rediscover your spirit as a champion for children's rights
- Writing/collecting personal stories
- Writing/collecting community stories
- Collecting and analysing information

Keeping and using written records



You need to keep records that can help you:

- identify individual children who need help, refer them to the services they need and track their progress
- remember the details of what you have done and what worked well and what did not work well
- see how well you are doing to support the **well-being** of children
- tell the story of your **school community**
- publicly support and defend children's rights
- account for the time and **resources** you have used
- get more support to access services and to raise funds.

Many of the participants in your caring school project will need to do some writing as part of their work. This includes the **community-based facilitators**. Writing helps to capture evidence about the process of building a **caring school community**. It helps participants to reflect on what you have done and realise what you have learned; it can guide your **planning** and help you decide what to do next.

Writing helps to involve more people and enables people to tell their stories. It brings in different perspectives and voices and stories apart from your own, e.g. stories about specific children and situations (with the names changed). You need to write the story of what you are planning and doing: when people read about it, it encourages them to support the work or get involved.

Writing helps you to be **accountable**. Being accountable means giving a clear and honest report of what you have done and how you have used money and resources. Your records need to be open to the community, funders and others so that they can check the evidence.

Information generated at the local level is urgently needed to inform government **policy** and to inform decisions about where and how resources should be allocated. The key challenge is developing accountable strategies for **communities** to access resources to fund local solutions in response to the specific circumstances of children in that area. If school communities are to play a role in the care and support of vulnerable children, they must be able to access the resources they need to realise their vision of a better future.

School communities need systems to identify, refer, support and track individual children and to make sure they don't fall through the cracks. Barriers must be reported to more senior government officials who can resolve problems and remove obstacles to service delivery. Monitoring and evaluation **indicators** are also needed to track progress of interventions, action plans and long-term impact. Good documentary records are essential to this. However, you need to act ethically and protect the identity of individual children and their **families** in all public documents.

You need human resources as well as material resources to support your plans. Some resources you can get from your local community and community-based organisations. Writing stories in local newspapers and magazines and talking on community radio stations can help with this.

Some resources – training, support services and funding – you can get from government, at local, district, provincial or national level.³⁶ You may need to find out how to write a business plan, how to access a grant for small business development from the Department of Trade and Industry, or how to apply for the school feeding programme.

Many medium and long-term plans will not be possible without extra funds. Funders may be government departments and projects, NGOs, business people or private individuals. Funders want to know the strengths and the needs of the community; they want to know who is giving support to the community at the moment, and what plans you have made for action. It will help if you have evidence to show how you have already

³⁶ See Appendix 7 for information about different spheres of government. See the *Resources* section on page 125 for information on how to apply for government funding.

started to make a difference in the lives of children. Funders also want to know about your informal and formal **leadership** structures. They want to make sure their money will be accounted for.

When you write to **duty-bearers** or to funders, you can draw on the stories you write or collect about individual children, stories of your community and stories of the phases of your journey towards a caring school community.

If some participants are not literate or if they struggle to write, you need to come up with creative ways to record their insights. It is important to appreciate their experience and insights – including their experience of coping without being literate. Someone can be asked to make a written record of the discussion in paired interviews or small focus groups. Or someone could act like a radio or television interviewer and tape-record responses. If participants are literate in another language but not in the main/dominant language of meetings and the project, encourage them to write in the language of their choice and if necessary, someone can translate.³⁷

Your portfolio

Think of your **portfolio** as a ‘safe place to keep valuable evidence’ that you are collecting – evidence to show the situation of children in your school community and what you and others have been doing to champion the rights of all those children, including the most marginalised and vulnerable.

Your portfolio is also a ‘memory box’ to remind you of stories and other information you and others have collected, ideas you had along the way, details of actions you have taken, and what worked well and what didn’t.

The portfolio can be a ring file or folder or a cardboard box. Organise your portfolio so that it’s easy to see what is in it. On each document make a note of the date, who wrote it and what it is about. It’s useful to have some plastic sleeves and folders so you can file the records in separate sections (e.g. dreams; plans; reports of action to protect children’s rights):

- Keep creative exercises, e.g. community mapping, Dream Triangle, Rights Tree.
- Keep information collected from interviews and focus groups – but remember to change the names of all children and of adults who have not given permission for their names to be used. Keep **consent forms** signed by interviewees.
- Keep statistics from schools, e.g. numbers of children, numbers receiving school feeding.
- Collect information about the area: map, employment statistics, stories from local newspaper, pamphlets about campaigns.

³⁷ See Chapter Two (page 13) for guidelines for facilitators on ‘Dealing with diversity’ and ‘Communicating in a multilingual group’.

- Keep any questionnaires you use (questions and answers filled in on same piece of paper).
- Keep your information about children needing and receiving help in a separate safe place, where only those people who are directly involved in the care and support system, such as the school-based support team can see it. See Appendix 11.

◇ **Using free writing at any time**

Free writing is a good way to start writing – any kind of writing. Free writing means writing non-stop for a set time or a set number of pages and not censoring what you have written in any way. What you write is for your own eyes only. Nobody else reads it. Free writing is personal and private but you can use it to **inspire** and **inform** other writing that you do.

Anybody can do free writing – you don't have to be a 'good writer'. Free writing, even just for five or ten minutes, can achieve a lot. It frees the mind from clutter and connects you directly with the creative part of the brain, the right side of the brain.

You can use free writing for yourself:

- as a warm-up when you are preparing to write your own story and you don't know where to start
- to get your ideas flowing without worrying about 'mistakes'
- to explore how you really feel about an event or issue
- to get going when you don't want to write
- as a preparation for writing something more formal
- when you are trying to write something but you feel stuck.

You can use free writing with others for all the same reasons – but remember their free writing is not for you to read.

◇ **Guidelines for free writing**

- Use your own language or any language/s you feel free in.
- Write only for yourself – nobody else will read what you write.
- Keep your hand moving. Don't stop writing, write as fast as possible, and if you get stuck, write your topic title over and over and another idea will come.
- Don't stop to reread. Don't cross out. Don't worry about spelling, punctuation and grammar. Be free.
- Don't think. Don't get logical. Don't try to control what you write. Just keep writing!
- There is no such thing as going off the topic – go wherever your spontaneous thoughts take you.
- Go for the jugular – if you feel proud write proud, if you feel excited write excited, if you feel angry write angry, if you feel violent write violent.
- You are writing for yourself – write however and whatever you like.

You can use free writing to explore and express feelings, and feelings generate energy. If people feel strongly enough about something it can give them the energy needed for action and **change**.

For example, during the Caring Schools Project participants in one school community were asked to think about a time when there were 'strong feelings' in the project – anger, joy, excitement, frustration, any strong feeling. It could be a time when the participant felt very strongly or a time when he or she witnessed someone else's strong feelings. Participants were asked to free write without stopping (for three A4 pages) about how they felt at that moment – to go wherever the writing took them. The exercise had a powerful impact on most participants.

Comments from participants

- I'm not much of a writer and I was surprised how easy the free writing was and how useful: it helped me to process an event, gave me some distance.
 - The free writing was like a little fire being lighted.
 - I really didn't want to do the free writing exercise – it seemed childish at first, a bit mechanical, but the middle of the second page I felt I was getting somewhere new. I think it's a useful discipline for people who don't like writing – a way to capture events when they are fresh and to reflect on the work being done. We need to use it regularly, maybe in every meeting, just for a couple of minutes?
 - It released a lot of emotions and allowed me to move on. I was surprised that writing three pages seemed to make a space for healing inside and helped me to focus on what needs to be done.
-

Free writing to rediscover your spirit as a champion for children's rights

We need to stay motivated and maintain our energy for the work we do. We need to get in touch with our feelings and we need to trust our feelings. This free writing activity is a good way to reconnect with your feelings about your school community.

Time: 1 hour

You could do this as a free writing activity or use oral work in pairs instead.

Outcomes

- Participants connect with their feelings about the work they are doing for children.
- They connect with themselves as **champions for children**.
- They share stories to encourage and inspire each other as champions.
- They have a shared understanding of what it means to be a champion.

What you need

- Put the guidelines for free writing (page 94) where everyone can see them.
- Participants sit comfortably so they can write.
- Everyone needs at least three sheets of blank paper, a pen and a surface to lean on (table or clipboard).

What to do

Explain to participants that they will be doing a free writing activity and go through the guidelines for free writing.

Read to participants: *Clear the space in front of you. You need pen and paper to write on. This is a writing exercise but don't worry about it. You will be writing for your own eyes only. To help you relax we will start with a meditation. Sit comfortably in your chair with both feet on the floor and relax. Take your shoes off if you want to. Close your eyes. Breathe in slowly – in... and... out... in... and ... out. Feel yourself relaxing with every breath you take. Feel the clean air. Breathe in deeply through your diaphragm – in... and... out. Carry on breathing deeply. Move your focus to your feet. Relax your toes. Relax your feet. Feel the soles of your feet relaxing. Feel your calves relaxing, feel your knees, your thighs and your buttocks. Squeeze your muscles and relax. Squeeze and relax. Pull in your stomach muscles – pull your tummy in and relax. Feel your neck and your back relaxing as you let go of all the tension and the*

stress. We carry a lot of stress on our backs, just let it go. Feel your chest relax. Make fists of your hands and then relax your hands. Your arms – let them drop like a puppet’s arms. Let your shoulders drop as well. Move your neck gently from left to right and relax. Give a wide smile and then relax your face. If you feel tension in any part of your body, focus on that part of your body, tense it and relax it.

Now think about a time in your life when you felt very strongly about a situation. You were forced to do something about the situation – as a student or a parent or a member of the community, or in a group working to build your caring school community. It was a time when you felt moved and motivated to take action. Think about that spirit of activism. Remember yourself at that time. Imagine it like a video clip. Where are you? How old are you? What clothes are you wearing? Who are the people around you? What are you feeling? What action do you want to take? You are that person right now in this room. Stay with that person for a while: what do you feel passionately about, what do you desire? Stay with those feelings. You will take those feelings into the writing session. Slowly open your eyes, keep silent and keep your feelings.

Now write without stopping for 10 minutes. Remember, what you write is for your eyes only. Start with the sentence, ‘I am a champion/activist because...’ and write without stopping.

After 10 minutes, ask participants to share something from the experience of writing but not to read what they have written. Write their responses on the newsprint.

Group activity 22

Comments from participants

- Through the free writing I saw how I had helped someone change his life and how I could do it again.
- One reason why we are in this Caring Schools Project is that we want to discover or rediscover the activists in ourselves. We don’t just want to be people who see things, make comments, criticise. We want to be social and political activists – continuing to discover that energy and passion in ourselves.
- Part of our role as activists is to inspire others to discover the activists in themselves and to take action on issues. Connecting with ourselves as activists helps us to see how others can be activists.
- The free writing allowed my anger to come out and helped me to deal with a painful event. I couldn’t discuss this but it helped to write just for myself.

Writing/collecting personal stories

For convenience, this section from Chapter Four has been repeated, with some changes. Chapter Four explores ways of collecting stories and other information for your **portfolio**: from interviews, focus groups, storytelling sessions and so on.

It is important to write and collect stories of people's personal experiences. You may hear very moving stories of how champions have worked for the well-being of children and helped vulnerable children, even in difficult contexts. You may hear stories that show clearly the **risk factors** that make children vulnerable and **protective factors** that help them to become more resilient.

- ◇ Ask the storyteller if she or he is willing to share the story. Explain how you will change names and place names and how you plan to use the story. You can record the story as she/he talks and then transcribe it, or he/she can write the story for you. Go through the 'Informed Consent' form together before he/she signs. (See Appendix 6 on page 143 for the form). See also the section on 'Ethical Guidelines' in Chapter Two, on page 15.) Keep the story and the signed consent form in a safe place where only those who have permission may access the story.

Later you can use the information (with names and place names changed) with different groups so that they can learn about other perspectives and check these against their own experience. You can also use the stories as evidence about the situation of children in the community and what is being done or what should be done to protect their rights.

Writing/collecting stories of school communities

Writing up our stories and findings is very important so that we can make the knowledge public and access services and resources to improve the situation of children. We need an ongoing process to write and rewrite the story.

In 2005/6, school communities were asked to write their own stories of the Caring Schools Project as a kind of case study. They were encouraged to collect a **portfolio** of evidence to document the participatory process in each school community. They were given a framework for writing the story and writing training, including free writing exercises.

Participants sat together in groups according to the school communities in which they were working. They had an hour to begin writing stories about their school communities and changes in their school community. The questions on page 99 were used as a framework.

Framework for a case study of your school community



- Describe your school community as if you were describing it to a stranger who has never been in your community. Describe the children, educators, support services, the place and the conditions.
- How and why did you get started?
- What did you learn in the Phase 1: Understanding?
- What is your school community doing well?
- What are your dreams – what do you want to happen in your school community? Describe the different dreams of the different groups.
- What plans have you made in your community to realise these dreams?
- What actions have you taken to date to implement your plans?
- What changes have happened – or are starting to happen – as a result of the project?
- What successes – small or big – have you celebrated to date?
- What have you done to establish and/or strengthen community structures?
- How wide and how good is community participation? (Please give examples.) How do you plan to strengthen community participation in the future?
- What have you done to identify and track children at risk? Include some stories of individual children but use fictitious names. What have you learned about identifying and tracking vulnerable children that you could teach others who might be trying to establish a caring school community?
- Discuss some of the ways in which members of the school community understand risk and protective factors. What have you done to deepen that understanding?
- What have you done to engage government and non-government **role players** in care and support of children? What have you learned from those efforts?

You can use these questions above to start writing the story of your school community.

Separating facts and opinions

In one writing workshop in 2006 every participant was asked to write on a blue piece of paper just one 'fact' about the school community he/she is working in, and on a pink piece of paper one 'opinion'.

Some facts which participants came up with:

- We are helping learners to get birth certificates.
- Drug abuse and teenage pregnancy are common.
- Lusikisiki has orphans.
- Our school community needs help for needy children.
- All parents want the best for their children.
- Poverty, crime and drugs affect the lifestyle and behaviour of our children.

Some opinions participants came up with:

- Learners are careless.
- Learners don't care about education.
- Lots of parents are living in poverty and have given up hope for the future.
- The only thing to do is build homes for orphans.
- We need an inter-departmental approach to assist Rouxville.
- The school communities are in lower income areas.

Use this activity with your group. Ask participants to write one fact on one piece of paper and one opinion on another. Stick all facts on one side of the wall and opinions on the other. Ask everyone to come up to the wall and read the facts and opinions. Ask them to find any that are not on the correct side. Place these in the middle and discuss them. Put each one where the group agrees it should be.

Explain: *In writing community stories you need both facts and opinions. When you state a fact like 'We are helping children with birth certificates,' it is important to state when and where and to give evidence for what you say. (e.g. Describe the process you have in place and say how many children have been helped.) Justify everything you write. When you write an opinion, state whose opinion it is but be careful about confidentiality. (e.g. Instead of giving the person's name you can say: 'a caregiver, aged 60, believes that....')* In some situations you need to use a name. For instance, if you quote from the SADTU general secretary use his name if it was a public statement. If you want to quote what was said at a private meeting, ask permission first.

Collecting and analysing information

This sorting exercise should be done in silence. Divide participants into groups and ask each group to sit around a table. On each table is a 'mystery box'. Ask them to 'sort out what is in the box' without talking and without using body language. Ask them to stay in the group and complete the task.

The boxes contain an assortment of items, more or less the same in each box, with just one or two differences. For example:

- A bangle
- A balloon
- A peg
- A drawing pin
- A name badge with a safety pin
- A leaf
- A piece of lavender
- A paper clip
- A piece of polystyrene
- A birthday candle
- A match
- A pipe cleaner
- A 'get well soon' sticker
- An ear bud
- A cotton swab
- A plaster
- Three pieces of pasta
- An elastic band
- A shoelace A stone
- A tea bag
- A plastic lid
- A marble
- A cigarette
- A sweet
- A shell
- A condom
- Some tinsel
- A plastic teaspoon

The group sorts the items at their table into categories. Then one member of each group moves to another table. The newcomer can make a few changes to the sorting done by the original group but doesn't have to make changes.

The facilitator then poses a series of questions to draw out what participants can learn from this activity. Use the questions below as examples. In a box below each question we have given some examples of participant responses. They will differ with each group.

Group activity 24

How did you sort the items?

When the exercise was used with a group in 2005, participants explained why they sorted things into:

- home use or office use
- things to eat
- things that connect things together
- party things
- decorative things
- natural things
- metal things
- health and safety things
- different textures OR materials
- the drawer that has miscellaneous useful things.

Each group fitted things into more or less the same categories. Some things fitted into more than one category. They sorted things according to:

- what they are used for
- what they are made of
- how similar they are
- how they relate to each other.

What helped you work as a group, when you couldn't speak or use body language?

In the 2005 group one or two individuals made a start by putting a few things together. Other group members tried to understand the thinking of the 'sorters' by watching them. When they worked out what they were thinking they could build on what they had started. They watched how others reacted to sorting actions and could see the connections they were making.

Did you make changes and why?

In the original group, some members made changes to things that had already been sorted to show a different way things could be sorted and to bring another perspective to the way things were sorted, or to be provocative. But the biggest changes were made by the newcomers.

How did you feel when the newcomer made changes?

Responses in the 2005 group included withdrawal ('reluctant to accept change'), tension and irritation ('Who do you think you are?' and 'She's coming to move things around again when we've arranged everything'). Participants reported that after a little time they were more open to the new ideas but did not 'own' the new sorting as much as the sorting they had done. The facilitators commented that the newcomers were told they could either change things or sit down passively but everyone chose to make some changes at the new table ('Making changes is a natural human thing but it is often unsettling for others.')

How did you as newcomers feel about making changes?

One newcomer said she came in 'quite gently' and looked at the group's categories before 'tentatively moving something across and waiting for a reaction - I saw my role as bringing a different perspective'. Another newcomer said that when she saw her new table she thought that 'no work had been done' and confidently began rearranging the table with the feeling that she 'had gained a lot and could lead the group'. The third newcomer commented that she was not the type to sit back and she expected to be accepted by the group. She found a cigarette on the new table and picked it up and pretended to smoke so everyone laughed and the ice was broken.

How can we use this sorting exercise in our work?

The exercise is a simple way to:

- start critical and creative thinking
- illustrate to groups their own dynamics, how a new element in a group changes the dynamics, and how the group deals with change and conflict
- illustrate that every group and every person has unwritten rules about resolving conflict. In every work situation there is someone who objects and in every work situation there are people to sit back passively and say: 'I'll just let you mess it all up.'
- open leaders to critical feedback so that they realise theirs isn't always the right way or the only right way.

Group activity 24

What can we learn from this exercise for our future work in the project?

We need to make sure that each group member feels included and able to participate equally. It's important not to give newcomers the feeling that we are allowing them in. We need to recognise that all people have a role to play and allow for new perspectives and ideas as new people come into the project. It's important to let other people take the lead sometimes and share their ideas. Communication is very important to build shared understanding of the motivations and values behind actions. There are no absolute rights or wrongs – you can't impose your own value system in a group situation.

Comments from participants

- We have gathered lots of information, a portfolio full, and it looks a little like the jumble of things that were on the table but at least it's all there. Now we have to sort all this information into categories and start labeling them.
- When we sort out all the information, some may fit into more than one category.
- As a group we need to draw on our understanding of information that comes from outside the group, e.g. the policy environment, the **rights-based approach**, or the knowledge we have from having lived in the community all our life.

SUMMARY OF CHAPTER SEVEN

In Chapter Seven we learn why it is important to keep written records. We introduce activities that encourage writing and use free writing to rediscover your spirit as a champion for children's rights. We understand more about how to collect personal and community stories and deepen our understanding about analysing information. We start keeping a portfolio and recording the story of our own community's journey toward well-being.

CHAPTER EIGHT

MAKING PLANS AND TAKING ACTION TO CREATE A CARING COMMUNITY

Phase 3 gives guidelines for moving from the dreaming and imagining of Phase 2 to planning and action. Many dreams have already been generated by activities in the earlier phases. Use the energy you have gathered and the relationships you have formed to bring together as many people as possible, especially people who can take the lead to make things happen.

In the planning phase you look at what you need to do to make your dreams come alive. You need to work with other role players to develop your dreams into practical plans. The group activities will take you through each step of your planning. Modify the activities using your own experience and what you learn from others.

As plans take shape start taking action in the school community to make a difference in the lives of children. You do not have to wait till you have a comprehensive detailed set of plans before taking action.

Keep building teams and partnership to ensure there is a motivated group of champions willing to take the process forward. You might need different co-ordinating structures at different levels, for example the school governing body (SGB) and school management team (SMT) will need to co-ordinate the plans for one school, but the ward committee might take responsibility for co-ordinating planning for the cluster of all school communities in the ward. Detailed plans with time-frames and allocated responsibilities help with co-ordination and keeping everyone on track. Decide on the indicators you will use to track progress of individual children and community action.

'Never doubt that a small group of committed citizens can change the world. Indeed it is the only thing that ever has.'

Source: Margaret Mead

Outcomes

Building a co-ordinating team or structure for creating your **caring school community**. You may begin this phase with a small group of champions who have shared dreams or you may have a team ready to co-ordinate the process. By the end of this phase you need to:

- form interest groups and action teams
- form co-ordinating teams to consolidate and expand on the **planning**, make sure all the plans are carried through, and report back to the broader group of **role players**
- include children in the planning process at school and in the community so that they take some responsibility for delivery³⁸
- include the Learner Representative Council (LRC) and other children and youth groups so that they champion their own needs and **rights**
- prioritise bigger dreams that will require help from outside
- allocate tasks and decide on time-frames
- decide on how you will monitor and track progress.

The co-ordinating team (and possibly other teams) can do more detailed planning afterwards and give feedback to the key role players.

Making plans and taking action

There are many different ways to help the **school community** turn their dreams into reality. The nine important strategies below can help. There are three activities below on pages 112, 114 and 117. You can choose strategies and activities that are helpful for your group and add your own.

◇ 1. Celebrate small successes

Start by reporting back on any actions that have already been taken. It is important to **celebrate small successes**.

◇ 2. Collect information and ‘tools’ for your planning

In the understanding phase you identified plans that schools, government departments and other community organisations have already made. See where your plans can link up with or become part of existing plans for the school community. Look at how you can all work together to achieve the same goals.

All groups within the community have started to share their dreams for a better future and some have already started to take small steps. Look at these dreams and actions and see how you can build on what has started.

See if you can make use of the whole school development process in planning. Schools make strategic plans every year as part of their whole school development. When the school management team

³⁸ See Chapter Two (page 13) for guidelines for facilitators on ‘Dealing with diversity’ and ‘Communicating in a multilingual group’.

assists with an annual whole school review, they should include reflection on how to improve care and support for children. The school development plan should include plans to make the school health promoting and safer for all, to care for vulnerable learners, and to care for the **well-being** of educators. When schools review these plans they should focus on how to promote wellness of the learners, staff and the broader community. This will help the school to function as a caring school community.

Ask participants to share any planning processes and templates they have used that could be useful for the planning. For example, you can use the format below to guide the group to make clearer plans.

Example of a planning template

Goal: Improving parental involvement	
What do we want to see? (outcomes)	
What do we need to do? (plans/strategies)	
By when? (time-frame)	
Who is responsible? (leadership)	
What resources are needed? (resources)	
How will the community know?/How will you track progress or measure success? (indicators)	

3. Get a large, diverse group of role players together to start planning through a series of group activities



When you start your planning it is important to bring together a large, diverse group of role players from school and community. Participatory planning takes time. How long it takes depends on how many people are **involved** and how big the plans are. People have to agree on what needs to be done; by when; by whom and with what resources. They need time to feel comfortable working with others and taking on leadership roles and responsibilities.

Involve as many people as possible who were part of the dreaming process, especially people who will be leaders in making things happen. If you have done the Dream Triangle activity with separate groups of role players, make sure that the different role players in the community come together to speak about their dreams, to see where their dreams are similar and different, and to plan joint action. You may need to do this a number of times in different forums. This way, people will develop a shared understanding about a vision for a better future and what needs to happen for the dreams to become a reality, and leaders will emerge.

Group activities

- 25 Review your dreams in your diverse group.
- 26 Do some initial planning about the best way to achieve your goals.
- 27 Review your plans and get community support and any permission you may need.
- 28 Identify group leaders and negotiate workloads.

Group activity 25***Review your dreams in your diverse group*****Time:** 2 hours**Small groups and the big group****Outcomes**

- A large group of role players share one Dream Triangle (see page 75).
- They agree about which dreams are most urgent.
- They agree on a time-frame for making dreams happen.
- They are excited and motivated to move from planning to action.

What you need

- Dream Triangle/s and slips of coloured paper to add more dreams (see page 75)
- Newsprint and koki pens
- Red pen or dots to mark the most urgent dreams.

What to do

Get participants to work in small groups:

- Make sure everyone participates.
- Choose one person to guide the discussion.
- Choose one person to take notes and one person to report to the whole group.
- Listen to one another.
- Review the dreams on the Dream Triangle to identify key areas (for example: improving security; improving care and support to learners; educating parents; improving parental involvement).
- Identify dreams that people would like to tackle in the short, medium and long term.
- Allow time for participants to review their dreams – with time-frames.
- Ask them to discuss in pairs the most urgent and critical dream. Each person gets one or two dots to place on what she or he thinks is the most important dream. Then see which dreams have the most dots.

- It is possible to tackle many different dreams at the same time but it is important to have a way of deciding fairly how to use the money raised and which dreams at the top of the triangle to tackle first. Link decisions to the understanding of child rights and protective and **risk factors**. Listen to all the different perspectives so that the most outspoken and powerful people don't dominate.

Variations

Use pictures or symbols for people who cannot read. Place the dreams on the floor and give each person one stone to place on the dream that she or he thinks is most urgent or important.

Do some initial planning about the best way to achieve your goals

Time: 2 hours

The Dream Triangle (see page 75) shows key areas for action that participants have agreed on and discussed. The next step is to begin planning in more detail. Include as many people as possible who have been involved in the dreaming and re-dreaming process. It is important to involve people who will take the lead in making things happen.

Outcomes

- The group identifies clear goals and actions to reach those goals.
- They set a time-frame for each goal and action.
- They know what resources are needed for actions.
- They know who is responsible for carrying out actions.

What you need

- Dream Triangle
- Newsprint and koki pens
- Planning template for small groups.

What to do

- Use the planning template as a framework to guide planning and proposals by each group.
- Get participants to work in small groups and in plenary to complete the next steps.

Steps in the process

- Group the dreams into themes or areas, such as safety, health, parental involvement or teacher support.
- Turn dreams into goal statements: identify key goals under each theme. (e.g. Turn the dream of increased parental involvement in the school into a goal statement: 'Each class invites parents to a class meeting once a term.')
- Ask small groups to discuss and propose smaller plans and strategies to reach each goal. (e.g. 'Educational programmes are provided for parents'; 'class teachers visit every child's home once a year'; 'parents come to class meetings once a term'; 'we find out how parents can support the school'.)
- Check where people have put their ideas on the Dream Triangle. Give each idea a time-frame. Ask clarifying questions.

Examples

- 1) Class meetings for parents once a term:
 - Set dates for meetings for the year.
 - Decide who will be responsible for organising these meetings – the same person/group to organise all the meetings or a different organiser for each term?

 - 2) Educational programmes for parents offered by the school and NGOs:
 - Are there any programmes already happening or is there a new programme that can start immediately or start soon?
 - What is the programme?
 - Who will be responsible?
 - What programmes can start later?
 - What planning is needed?
 - Who will be responsible?
 - What resources are needed?
- Identify leaders and co-leaders for the different goal areas to take the planning process forward and to represent the goal on the co-ordinating team. It is helpful if leadership is given by a pair or a small group. Then the leaders can support each other and if one leader cannot attend a meeting, the co-leader can represent the group.
 - Plan how to keep a record of ideas and plans and how to co-ordinate.
 - Clarify the next steps in the planning process and negotiate these steps with participants.
 - Ask the group what they feel still needs to be done. Add your suggestions for the way forward.
 - Encourage everyone to share their proposals with their organisation or school and to get approval where necessary and more suggestions. (For example, adults sometimes need to check with children if they think a particular plan will work and children need to check with adults; educators might need to check with the **school governing body** or district education department; an NGO representative might need to check with the director.)
 - Try to leave the meeting with a clear date, time and venue for the next meeting.

Variations

- **The best advice is to plan for and celebrate small successes!** Planning takes time and a lot of negotiation so there may be quite a delay between the initial planning and the next step: putting plans into action. In your planning set some goals and activities that make an immediate difference in the lives of children – and keep your big, long-term plans in mind while you carry out the small plans. Champions from successful caring school community projects say the success of a small initiative encouraged them to start bigger and bolder programmes. Focusing on small goals gives the opportunity to polish skills, capacity and relationships for the bigger plans. When people see something changes for the better, it gives them energy and **inspires** them to carry on.
- **To make dreams real you need to keep unpacking dreams into smaller steps** that are as specific and detailed as possible. While you are planning the small steps to get to specific dreams, keep your big vision to be realised later.
- **One person or a small group can develop small focused plans** – like planning to meet with the ward councillor – where there is no need for negotiation or planning before taking action. But a plan like ‘reduce teenage pregnancy’ in a school community obviously requires many co-ordinated actions by many different people and organisations.
- Remind everyone that many of our key goal areas are linked to children’s rights and existing government policies, so when you plan action steps, you need to engage with **duty-bearers** and government programmes. We need to understand the root causes for the current situation before we can plan how to remove barriers to child well-being.

Planning the 'Proudly Manenberg' campaign

Russell Dudley worked with the City of Cape Town in the urban renewal sector. This is what he learned when the Manenberg community mobilised to support social change.

'For **community-based facilitators** the key issue is: How good is your contact with the people in the community? In the urban renewal programme we had another challenge: What is the best structure to lead things? People are represented in different structures and they get tired and they fall down. We decided that things will not work unless we get certain important things in place:

- Residents must be deeply involved.
- We must have mass meetings.
- The community must mobilise around their own issues.
- To make smart communities we must get people to support **families** and communities.
- We need to build something positive that people can see makes a difference.
- Start with small local initiatives where people feel they can take control and take action to make a difference.'

Review your plans and get community support and any permission you may need

Time: 2 – 6 hours

Include as many people as possible who have been involved in the dreaming and re-dreaming process. The main aim is to get approval and support from the group to go ahead and to decide who will do what and how people will be **accountable**. It is worth spending time to make sure people are clear about what they need to do and who will do what.

Outcomes

- Participants draw on what they have learned from planning so far, for more planning later.
- They take their plans back to their organisations and review their plans accordingly.
- Participants are clear about who is leading in each goal area and how everyone will be accountable.

What you need

- Dream Triangle
- Picture of the Busometer activity (see page 54) or role player analysis (see page 48) if that was done with this group

Group activity 27

- Newsprint and koki pens
- Proposed plans from each small group.

What to do

- Get participants to work in small groups and then in the big group to complete the steps.
- Encourage them to talk about what helped and what hindered the planning.
- Write on newsprint what the group have learned about how to motivate others and how to lead a new initiative.
- Make some short-term plans to improve your planning process.
- Invite groups that have been working on the initial proposals to report back and share ideas. Have a discussion and include new ideas and make changes to the planning templates from the group activity, 'Initial planning in goal areas' (see page 114). This could take a number of hours depending on the group dynamics and issues that need to be clarified.
- Participants choose the goal area they are most interested in and join the discussion at that table.
- Use the planning template on page 114 to help the group review their plans and resources (including budget and leadership).
- Compare your plans with local, provincial and national plans: You don't want to duplicate what others are already doing or planning, you want to see where the gaps are.

Use the 'SMART' guidelines to review your planning:

Are the plans Strategic?

Are the plans Manageable?

Are the plans Achievable?

Are the plans Realistic?

Are the Time-frames realistic?

- Plan for an immediate short-term result, a success that people will be able to see.
- Don't spend too much time and energy making plans or people may feel overwhelmed – be realistic with your time and resources.
- Decide on priorities.
- Identify competent and motivated people to lead and co-lead goal areas.
- Each group should present their proposal for discussion and agreement.
- You can use the group activity below to negotiate workload and responsibilities.
- If youth are involved in the planning process, it is important to give them time to gain confidence in forums with adults. Listen to their needs and encourage them to

participate in planning. In schools, encourage the Learner Representative Council and youth forums to participate in planning.

- Ask participants: *What do you need to do to put the plans into action; what do you need from each other and what additional support do you need?*
- Discuss and clarify who will lead and co-lead in each of the goal area groups.
- Identify a co-ordinating group in the school community (such as a local network of care or the school management team) to ensure that the work of each small group gets monitored and supported.
- Agree on a way for groups to report on activities at least once a month.
- Agree who is responsible for putting draft plans into a combined planning document and who is responsible for circulating this to participants.
- Get group co-leaders to set a meeting date for their next meeting with interested participants.
- Set a date for the co-ordinating group to meet.
- Encourage people to talk about what helped and what hindered the planning. You can gather valuable information on how to improve the planning process and to encourage more role players to get involved.

Variations

‘Since we talked about all these dreams and plans, we have more direction. There is a sense of light at the end of the tunnel. There is a sense of how we can get there... When people have planned what they need to do, when they have direction and leadership and feel strongly about a cause, such as improving the well-being of children, they often feel a sense of hope.’

Identify group leaders and negotiate workload

Time: 1 hour

All planning participants

Outcomes

- Participants have a clear understanding of what their role is in the project and how that role might shift.
- Participants have helped to identify potential leaders and co-leaders of groups and are clear who the leaders are.
- Participants are able to negotiate their workload in the project.

What you need

Past records from Busometer activity (see page 54).

What to do

You need to motivate others to take on leadership. Go back to your records of the Busometer activity to identify people who could take more responsibility in helping to 'drive the bus'. Make it clear that everybody 'on the bus' needs to make a difference in the lives of our children. Passengers who were in the middle seats may now be ready to take the lead in putting plans into action. Passengers who were in the back seats may be feeling too overloaded or depressed to help.

The group can help to identify potential leaders and co-leaders of groups. Ask people where they see themselves on the bus and if their circumstances have changed. Are they taking on more of a leadership role?

Ask people to speak about how they are feeling. This activity could help people to negotiate their workload openly with each other.

Keep a record of all the plans you have made to use in funding proposals later. Give all role players a copy of the plans for their own records and ask them to report back in their respective forums to present the plans.

Variations

Both the small and the large groups need leaders if they are to put plans into action. Groups can elect co-leaders to share responsibilities and to ensure that meetings continue if the leader cannot be present. Experience as a co-leader helps to build leadership capacity.

4. Ensure that everyone has access to information



In order to plan properly and take action, people need access to data from a community mapping exercise (see page 17) and a community database such as a public library, a school or a NGO, to get key information about:

- other role players in the community to link with
- relevant **policy** information and other key documents to support a **rights-based approach**
- planning documents so they know where to get involved and whom to contact.

It is essential to identify what resources exist for getting information (e.g. the Internet) and how new information is documented and distributed.

Comments from participants

‘We can only move forward if there is commitment and understanding. Uncertainty can be a major obstacle... people need to know what’s going on and what they are supposed to be doing. Motivation is important.’

5. Create opportunities for public discussion and planning



Give community members time and space to get together to review their progress and change strategies if necessary. Create public forums for sharing information and **monitoring progress**: this builds public participation and raises awareness of issues. In every local community there will be civic structures as well as a ward councillor who can assist in creating and supporting public forums. Make sure that meetings happen at times when people can attend them and that these meetings are publicised in time. Some communities have established structures (such as a Local Network of Care for Children and Youth) to help co-ordinate planning, networking and information sharing at the local level.

6. Provide leadership and keep on reflecting on your role



As champions in your community you have learned important lessons about good leadership.

Comments from participants

A caring schools co-ordinating committee commented in 2006:

- Good leaders have courage and the ability to inspire others to act according to their values and their purposes, and to match their words with their deeds.
 - Leaders empower others to take the lead in their lives.
 - Leaders acknowledge the effort and commitment of others in making a difference in the lives of children. This motivates people and builds morale.
 - Leaders need to co-ordinate planning and access human and physical resources to support planning. This is hard work and often thankless, but it's essential.
-

- ◇ You need to ask yourself these questions and raise the questions in group discussion:
 - *What are we doing well and how can we build on that?*
 - *Where do we need to improve?*
 - *What helped and what hindered the planning process?*
 - *What can we do to work together better to carry out our plans?*
 - *What would we do differently next time?*
 - *What new insights do we have?*
 - *How can we document what we have learned?*

◇ **7. Monitor progress**

You need to make sure that progress is monitored to allow co-ordination and problem-solving. Monitoring may mean, in practice:

- Leaders give support to the co-leaders of specific action committees or groups.
- The school management team give support to sub-committees in the school.
- In the community the leaders of a reference group or a local network of care put 'monitoring progress towards caring school community' on the agenda in their monthly meetings.

Individuals and working groups need to be clear how they must account for their progress and to whom. For example, this may mean writing monthly reports for the co-ordinating committee or reporting back at community meetings.

Comments from participants

What we mean by ‘**monitoring and evaluation**’:

- There has to be a balance between quantitative and qualitative data.
 - Monitoring and evaluation helps the project see where it is going.
 - It is difficult to measure psycho-social support.
 - Save the Children UK have tools that track progress of individual children.
 - Measuring of impact is an ongoing **conversation** with no easy answers.
-

See Appendix 11 (page 150) for more ideas about monitoring and evaluation.

8. Network ◇

You need to build formal and informal links with individuals and organisations doing similar work. You can share expertise and ideas and identify ways to pool resources. The local network of care brings together different organisations in the community to share resources and ideas. Explore ways to jointly track progress.

9. Document your learning ◇

You need to ensure that not only dreams and plans but also key insights and learning are recorded. Share what you have learned with others to help their progress.

For example:

- You learn in a meeting about an excellent system for tracking and monitoring vulnerable children that an NGO has developed. Contact the NGO to ask if they have written about this system. Other NGOs and schools could use these ideas.
- You learn from stories how a rights-based approach has assisted children to get social assistance grants. Get people to write about these successes and share them to help other people improve what they are doing.

Many people have a hard time writing things down, especially if they have to write in their second language. It is a good idea to include a short (10 minute) writing session in every meeting. Ask everyone to write about something that has been working well. Explain that the purpose of the writing is to make sure that good practice is not lost. Make it clear that this is not free writing (which would be private and confidential). Collect all the sheets and file them in your **portfolio**, making a note of the date.

SUMMARY OF CHAPTER EIGHT

In Chapter Eight a diverse group have worked through a careful process of making plans and beginning to take action – Phase 3 of the cycle, following on from Phase 1: Understanding, and Phase 2: Dreaming and imagining a caring school community.

We hope some of your immediate plans have been carried out in the community and that there is evidence that some children are benefiting. We hope this success has built trust and enthusiasm across the school community so that people are motivated to start the next cycle of understanding, dreaming, planning and taking action to create a caring school community.

RESOURCES

Sometimes the main work of champions is to connect people with the rights resources at the right time.

This section lists a range of organisations, help-lines, networks and resources to help you build and strengthen your caring school community. Some of the contact organisations will direct you to locally-based services, others can help with information. This list is just a start and we plan to update the information and add new information in 2009.

The Children's Institute (CI) based at University of Cape Town aims to contribute to policies, laws and interventions that promote equality and realise the rights and improve the conditions of all children in South Africa, through research, advocacy, education and technical support.

Contact: 46 Sawkins Road, Rondebosch, 7700, Cape Town:

Tel: 021 689 5404 or 021 689 8343, Fax: 021 689 8330,

e-mail: info@ci.org.za, website: www.ci.org.za

South African Democratic Teachers' Union (SADTU)

SADTU is the largest teachers' union in South Africa, with 220,000 members out of 360,000 teachers in the country. It is the third largest in South Africa, with members organised across all provinces in 21,000 sites, 500 branches and 50 regions. A monthly newspaper goes to every member. SADTU has considerable influence amongst learners, parents and the education authorities, as well as expertise in collective bargaining and education policy development. The union is in a strong position to influence policy and implement effective strategies to respond to the AIDS pandemic and support infected and affected learners and educators. For more information about SADTU, contact Shermain Mannah, Tel: 011 334 4830, e-mail smannah@sadtu.org.za, website: www.sadtu.org.za

Look out for the Soul City directory of services and check the Caring Schools Network (CASNET) website www.caringschools.co.za for information about member organisations.

NGOs and private sector organisations

Absolute Return for Kids (ARK) is an international charity transforming children's lives. Fewer children are orphaned by keeping primary caregivers (often mothers) alive through its HIV treatment and adherence programme. In the last two years 11 760 children have benefited directly from ARK's child services programme in the form of grants, nutrition, immunisation, greater access to health care and other social services and child care problem solving.

Contact: Mokgadi Malahlela, Unit 4 & 5 Green Square, 37 Hares Crescent, Woodstock, Tel: 021 447 0822, Fax: 021 448 6157, e-mail: mokgadi.malahlela@arkonline.org

Alliance for Children's Entitlement to Social Security (ACCESS) issues up-to-date leaflets on how laws affect children and how to apply for grants (e.g. the child support grant for caregivers; the foster child grant; the care dependency grant for a child who is severely disabled or very ill and cannot be left alone).

Contact: Sharon September, Tel: 021 761 0117 or 021 761 4938,
e-mail: sharon@access.org.za, website: www.access.org.za

Adopt a School Foundation mobilises individuals and companies to adopt schools. The main focus of the project is to make sure that schools have basic facilities to enable good quality learning and teaching to happen.

Contact: Tel: 011 305 8900, Fax: 086 605 2831, website: www.adoptaschool.co.za

AIDS Consortium offers information on different organisations that work with children in the context of HIV and AIDS in Gauteng Province.

Contact: Tel: 011 403 0265, website: www.aidsconsortium.org.za

AIDS Helpline (24 hours, 7 days a week) offers phone counselling and information about HIV and AIDS.

Contact: Tel: 0800 012 322

Big brothers and big sisters of Africa is a non-profit organisation mentoring children at risk, aged from six to 18. It matches youth in need with carefully selected and trained adult volunteers in one-to-one relationships.

Contact: Tel: 021 551 6996 and 021 551 7379, website: www.bbbssa.org.za

CANSA (Cancer Association of South Africa) gives information about how to become a Sun Smart School and protect children from skin damage that can lead to skin cancer later in life.

Contact: Tel (toll free): 0800 226 622, websites: www.cansa.org.za;
www.doh.gov.za/docs/sunsmart.pdf or www.sunsmartschools.co.nz

Caring Schools Network (CASNET) works in all nine provinces: Convened by Save the Children Fund, 60 member organisations meet four times a year (including NGOs, government departments, United Nations agencies, private sector organisations supporting education and donor organisations). CASNET works with and supports government departments and other institutions to benefit vulnerable children in schools by building and nurturing partnerships and linkages among child care service organisations and communities; creating forums for learning, sharing experiences, good practice and resources; generating and sharing knowledge; lobbying and advocacy.

Contact: Lynette Mdekunye, Tel: 021 430 7775;

e-mail: lmdekunye@savethechildren.org.za, website: casnet.x10hosting.com/casnet

Catholic Institute for Education aims to strengthen the Catholic education network to enable Catholic schools to offer values-based, quality education to learners in an environment that is conducive to their physical, emotional, moral, intellectual and spiritual development as national and global citizens.

Contact: Kevin Roussel, Tel. 021 461 1417 or 021 461 6961, e-mail: kevin@cie.org.za

Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention (CJCP) develops, informs and promotes evidence-based crime prevention practice in South Africa through research, training and specialised projects, focusing on youth. In 2005 the CJCP entered into partnership with the national Department of Education (DoE) and developed the *Hlayiseka Early Warning System Toolkit* to help schools identify record and respond to crime and violence. The DoE adopted the toolkit at the end of 2006 and the project is being extended to schools in other provinces.

Contact: Head office in Cape Town: Tel: 021 687 9177, Fax: 021 685 3284; Regional offices in Johannesburg and Grobelaarshoop (Northern Cape). Hlayiseka project co-ordinator: Renald Morris, Tel: 079 878 3157; Fax 086 673 1912;

e-mail renald@cjcp.org.za; website: www.cjcp.org.za. Siham Gallo,

Tel: 021 687 9177, Fax: 021 685 3284, Cell: 073 259 6944

Checkers-Shoprite, Pick 'n Pay, Woolworths foodstores

You can approach local shops for food that is about to reach its 'sell-by' date but is still good to eat and can be distributed to children and their families in your school community.

Children's Rights Centre (CRC) offers training, provides information on request and works with partners to promote and protect children's rights. Available publications include: *The Peace Star*, *Children's Rights Resource Manual*, and a series on *Children Living Positively*.

Contact: Noreen Ramsden, Tel: 031 307 6075 or 031 307 6074, e-mail: info@crc-sa.co.za,
website: www.crc-sa.co.za

Childline for 24-hour tollfree helpline; counselling and support services; Sunlight Safe House Project; and information on child rights and responsibilities.

Contact: 0800 055 555; national office e-mail: childlinesa@iafrica.com; website: www.childlinesa.org.za

Provincial offices:

Eastern Cape Tel: 041 453 0441, Fax: 041 453 0446, e-mail: pechild@worldonline.co.za, website: www.pechildline.co.za

Gauteng Tel: 011 645 2000, Fax: 011 645 2020, e-mail: infogauteng@childline.org.za, website: www.childline.org.za/start.htm

Limpopo Province Tel: 015 291 3019, Fax: 015 291 3019, e-mail: childlinelimpopo@mweb.co.za

North-West Province Tel: 018 297 4411, Fax: 018 294 5735, e-mail: alicecarnell@telkomsa.net

Free State Tel: 051 430 3311, Fax: 051 447 4264, e-mail: bfchild@internext.co.za

KwaZulu-Natal Tel: 031 312 0904, Fax: 031 312 6008, e-mail: childlin@global.co.za, website: www.childlinekzn.org.za

Mpumalanga Tel: 013 752 2770, Fax: 013 755 2705, e-mail: childlineadmin@xsinet.co.za

Western Cape Tel: 021 762 8198, Fax: 021 762 7467, e-mail: childline@iafrica.com, website: www.lifelinewc.org.za/ childline/services.htm

Children in Distress Network (CINDI) for information on different organisations working with children in the context of HIV and AIDS in the Western Cape.

Contact: Yvonne Spain, Tel: 033 345 7994 or 033 345 7272, e-mail: yconnespain@cindi.org.za, website: www.cindi.org.za

Children's HIV/AIDS Network (CHAIN) for information on organisations working with children in the context of HIV and AIDS in the Western Cape.

Contact: Menaka Jayakody, Tel: 021 461 7348 or 021 461 7953, e-mail: chain@wc-nacosa.co.za, website: www.wc-nacosa.co.za/chain

Dancing Pencils Writing Clubs allow children to develop their creative writing craft, share life experiences and express their feelings in a nurturing environment. Stories are written, shared and the best ones selected for publishing by Umsinsi Press. Mentors trained in the right-brain method of creative writing facilitate groups of about 20 children.

Contact: Felicity Keats-Morrison, Box 28129 Malvern 4055, Tel: 031 4641556, Fax: 031 4641556, e-mail: felicity@dancingpencils.com or lesley@chorms.com

Disabled Children's Action Group (DICAG) parents promote and protect the rights of children with all forms of disabilities, with the special emphasis on: Prevention, Rehabilitation, Social Integration, Mobilisation of Parents, and Empowerment of children, siblings and parents.

Contact: Tel: 021 797 5977 or 021 797 5077, e-mail: dicagct@iafrica.com

Food and Trees for Africa contributes to greening, sustainable natural resource management and food security. You can get free trees with information on how to plant and maintain them. The schools food gardening and greening programme promotes and supports schools in the growing good food in a sustainable, natural way through permaculture, which is a radical approach to food production and urban renewal, water, energy and pollution, integrating ecology, landscape, organic gardening, architecture and agro-forestry in creating a rich and sustainable way of living which produces more energy than it uses and recycles all nutrients and waste.

Contact: 8 The Firs, 5 Humber Street, Woodmead, Gauteng 2128, Tel: 011 803 9750 or 011 803 9604/6708, website: www.trees.co.za/index.php?option=com_contact&Itemid=3

Giving Exchange expos are held in September to showcase the inspiring work of South African non-profit organisations, their requests for volunteers, their wish lists and their projects. Non-profit organisations, individuals and businesses meet and explore new ideas for working in the development sector.

Contact: Website: www.GreaterGoodSA.co.za

Grants for Children booklet produced by Soul City in partnership with the national Department of Social Development and ACESS (Alliance for Children's Entitlement to Social Security). For more information on how to apply for grants, contact the Department of Social Development on their toll free helpline 0800 601011.

Health promoting schools network, Western Cape, sends out an informative newsletter.
Contact: Estelle Lawrence, Tel: 021 460 9141, Fax: 021 460 9185, e-mail: ellie@ananzi.co.za or hps@uwc.ac.za

HIV-911 help-line for better health for information on HIV and AIDS related services and organisations working in this field.
Contact: HIV-911 helpline on 0860 HIV 911 or 0860 448 911, e-mail: webmaster@hivan.org.za, website: www.hivan.org.za.

Human Sciences Research Council's Child, Youth, Family and Social Development (CYFSD) research programme contributes to the development of a knowledge base to inform policies and programmes aiming to strengthen schools as centres of care and support for vulnerable children. CYFSD documented the Caring Schools Project in the Free State, actively participates in CASNET, and participated in Nelson Mandela Caring Schools Dialogue. The HSRC and Save the Children Sweden have in 2007 published *Monitoring Child Well-being, A South African Rights-based Approach*, edited by Andrew Dawes, Rachel Bray and Amelia Van Der Merwe. It is available as a free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za
Contact: Vuyiswa Mathambo; Child, Youth, Family and Social Development; Human Sciences Research Council; Private Bag X07, Dalbridge, 4014; Tel: 031 242 5400; e-mail: vmathambo@hsrc.ac.za;

Infinite Family is an American not-for-profit organisation that connects adult mentors in the US and South Africa with South African youth to help them develop academic, technology and life skills. Using video conferencing and a password protected, interactive internet platform, mentors and children can see and speak to each other weekly and send e-mail. Mentors provide ongoing financial support for the children's immediate needs and future dreams, such as a college education or business start-up. Additional information is available on the website: www.infinitefamily.org and in the short video that can be viewed on: website www.youtube.com/watch?v=YZnt4zt780U

Lawyers for Human Rights' Child Rights Project and HIV/AIDS Project, based in Pietermaritzburg, KwaZulu-Natal, assists children and their caregivers, especially those made vulnerable by HIV/AIDS, to access their legal rights. The projects focus on access to government services, rights awareness and information dissemination, public interest litigation and advocacy work.
Contact: 4th Floor ABSA Bldg, 30 Timber Street, Pietermaritzburg, 3201 or PO Box 388, Pietermaritzburg, 3201, Tel: 033 342 1130, Fax: 033 3949522, e-mail: nesira@lhr.org.za or varshi@lhr.org.za

Media in Education Trust (MiET) Africa seeks to 'improve the lives of our children' through: education resourcing and service delivery; and school-based care and support. Request a copy of their *Toolkit for 'schools as centres of care and support'* from Head Office on 086 110 6562.
Contact: Cheron Verster, 086 110 6562 or 031 261 3440, e-mail: cheron@miet.co.za; Richard's Bay office: 035 789 1124; Mafikeng office: 018 381 6157/6038

National Association of Child Care Workers (NACCW) provides SAQA-accredited professional training and infrastructure to promote healthy child and youth development and improve care and treatment for troubled children and youth at risk in family, community and residential group care settings. Offers SAQA accredited training and Isibindi model.
Contact: Head Office: PO Box 36407, Glosderry, 7702 or Office No. 9, 220 Ottery Road, Ottery, 7800, Tel: 021 762 6076 or 021 762 5352, e-mail: headoffice@naccw.org.za, website: www.naccw.org.za

Persona Doll Training (for human rights, inclusion and diversity in practice) offers a classroom manual, DVD and training to educators, community facilitators and others.
Contact: Carol Smith, PO Box 91, Kalk Bay, 7990, Tel: 021 788 4365 or 082 565 5552, Fax: 088 021788 4365, e-mail: personadolls@jaywalk.com, website: www.persona-doll-training.org

Resources Aimed at the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (RAPCAN) offers training and materials for adults and children on child abuse prevention strategies (including positive discipline; resilience training for boys at risk).
Contact: Stephanie, Tel: 021 712 2330 or 021 712 2365, e-mail: Stephanie@rapcan.org.za or info@rapcan.org.za, website: www.rapcan.org.za

Reach for a Dream Foundation works with terminally ill children across South Africa to make their dreams come true (e.g. meeting a sporting hero; taking a ride in a helicopter).
Contact: PO Box 1570, Cresta, Johannesburg, 2118, Tel: 011 781 0131, Fax: 011 781 0136,
website: www.reachforadream.org.za

REPSSI is a regional capacity-building organisation working in 13 countries in East and Southern Africa to improve the provision of psycho-social care and support to children affected by HIV and AIDS, poverty and conflict.
Contact: Atlas Office Park, 1st Floor, 372 Oak Avenue, Ferndale, Randburg; Box 1669, Randburg, 2125,
Tel: 011 998 5820, e-mail: info@repssi.org or admin.srcsouth@repssi.org, website: www.repssi.org

Save the Children fights for children's rights worldwide: 'We look forward to a world which respects and values each child, listens to children and learns, and where all children have hope and opportunity.'
Contact: Lynette Mdukekunye, Tel: 012 430 7775 or 012 430 7776,
e-mail: lmudekunye@savethechildren.org.za

Soul Buddyz Clubs, a joint initiative of Soul City: Institute for Health and Development Communication and SABC Education in collaboration with the Department of Education, followed the success of Soul Buddyz children's TV series. Children from 8 to 12 are exposed to positive peer interaction, information about their health and rights, fun and adventure to stimulate their growing minds, and practical opportunities to develop leadership skills and other life skills. The Clubs focus on active learning and problem-solving; create a forum where children's needs and voices can be heard and where children develop as responsible members of the community and agents for change; promote values of non-discrimination and gender sensitivity, respect for, exploration and interaction with the environment. Soul Buddyz Clubs have been established in over 3 500 primary schools and public libraries across South Africa, with over 60 000 children involved. Soul City has produced a manual for school governing bodies to strengthen school-based support.
Contact: P.O. Box 462, Douglasdale Johannesburg, 2165 Tel: 0860 283399 or 011 643 5852,
website: www.soulcity.org.za

South African Society for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (SASPCAN) provides information and training in the field of child abuse and neglect, and creates opportunities for sharing knowledge; identifies gaps in services and influence laws and policies to promote the rights and well-being of children. Tel: 011 339 5741 or 011 481 5145, website: www.saspcan.org.za

The Training for Transformation Programme is based on the action and reflection methodology developed by Paulo Freire, a Brazilian educator. Training for Transformation has published an excellent series of development handbooks (*Training for Transformation*). You can get copies and further information about the programme and available training,
Contact: The Grail Centre, PO Box 80, Kleinmond, 7195, Tel: 028 271 4887,
e-mail: grailoff@mweb.co.za

Transforming Institutional Practices (TIP) works in the education sector and the public sector to enhance the ability of individuals and organisations to bring about social change. Key areas are leadership and management, enabling change, mentorship, networked learning, facilitating learning processes and organisational development.
Contact: Karen Collett, Tel: 021 959 2435 or 021 9593630, e-mail: tip@uwc.ac.za

Woolworths 'My School' card: If you register for a 'My School' card at Woolworths (this is free and it is not a credit card), 0.5% of what you spend will go to a school of your choice or to the Woolworths Trust which supports under-resourced schools. You can also approach Woolworths to get your school listed with the Woolworths Trust.

Government departments, organisations and resources

National Department of Social Development offers information about getting different government grants.
Contact: Masote Kay, Tel: 012 312 7389, 012 312 7500 or 086 615 5446,
e-mail: kaym@socdev.gov.za

National Department of Education offers information on education policy and programmes including: how to get a school fee exemption and how to find out about 'No Fee' schools. Contact your provincial or local education offices or call 012 312 5911.

National School Nutrition Programme (Department of Education)

National Co-ordinator: C Mpati, Tel: 012 312 5081 or 012 324 0260

Provinces:

Eastern Cape Co-ordinator: M Gaca, Tel: 040 608 4232 or 040 608 4627

Free State Co-ordinator: P Mabaso, Tel: 051 404 8166 or 051 404 4416

Gauteng Co-ordinator: N Rakwena, Tel: 011 355 0556 or 011 355 0565

KwaZulu-Natal Co-ordinator: M Khubeka, Tel: 031 274 4045 or 031 205 1704

Limpopo Co-ordinator: M Zitha, Tel: 015 290 7600 or 015 297 6920

Mpumalanga Co-ordinator: J Moya, Tel: 013 766 5458 or 013 766 7229

Northern Cape Co-ordinator: M Jacobs, Tel: 053 839 6328/9 or 053 839 6580

North West Co-ordinator: K Mpshe, Tel: 018 381 1580 or 018 384 3316

Western Cape Co-ordinator: P Swart, Tel: 021 467 2297 or 021 425 7465

Office on the Rights of the Child in the Presidency (ORC)

National office: Mabel Rantla, Tel: 012 300 5501 or 086 683 5501,

e-mail: mabel@po.gov.za,

website: www.info.gov.za/aboutgovt/contacts/min/presidency.htm

Provincial offices:

Eastern Cape: Gladys Manolo, Tel: 040 609-6063 or 040 609-6079,

e-mail: gladys.madolo@otp.ecprov.gov.za or mantsundu@webmail.co.za

Free State: Lineo Toolo, Tel: 051 405 5424 or 051 405 4021,

e-mail: mfecanes@premier.fs.gov.za

Gauteng: Dumisani Hlophe, Tel: 011 355 9836 or 011 355 6019,

e-mail: hlophe@gauteng.gov.za;

KwaZulu-Natal: Ms Nomusa Kunene, Tel: 033 341 3530/48 or 033 342 6130,

e-mail: kunenen@premier.kzntl.gov.za or mncubesa@premier.kzntl.gov.za

Limpopo: Winnie Mailula, Tel: 015 287 6477, 015 287 6179 or 072 765 0411,

e-mail: mailulaw@premier.norprov.gov.za

Mpumalanga: Elsinah Mhlongo, Tel: 013 766 2335 or 013 766 2484,

e-mail: elmhlongo@prem.mpu.gov.za

Northern Cape: Daphne Mandabane, Tel: 053 830 9315/16 or 053 831-5275,

e-mail: bscott@oldleg.ncape.gov.za

North West: Susan Thlagaswane, Tel: 018 387 3379 or 018 387 4177,

e-mail: stlhagaswane@nwpg.gov.za

Western Cape: Derrick Schroeder, Tel: 021 483 4004 or 021 483 2698,

e-mail: dmschroe@pgwc.gov.za

Gauteng Programme of Action for Children (GPAC)

Contact: Margot Davids, e-mail: Shereen.Botha@gauteng.gov.za

Red Ribbon Resource Centre offers information on grants, HIV and AIDS, healthy eating and lots more.

Contact: Tel: 011 880 0405

Safer Schools Project provides information about the Western Cape Safe Schools programme and health promoting schools from the Cape Gateway website at www.capegateway.gov.za

UNICEF South Africa works closely with the government to implement the Child-Friendly School (CFS) framework and to apply the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) to school management and classroom practice. A child-friendly school is rights-based, gender responsive, health-seeking and health-promoting, safe and secure, and builds partnerships.

Contact: Andries Viviers, UNICEF Education Section, 6th Floor, Metro Park Building, 351 Schoeman Street, P.O.Box 4884, Pretoria 0001, Tel: 012 354 8201 or 079 4984991, Fax: 012 3548293/4, e-mail aviviers@unicef.org,

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Appendix 1: Imagine Chicago's Key Organising Principles

We work in partnership with local individuals and organisations, encouraging participants to find ways to connect their particular gifts to the community where they live. When projects build the capacity of both individual and institutional participants, an innovation can begin to change the whole system.

We build where life and energy are already at work, involving people who want to make a difference. We use positive questions to help them identify the foundations in their own experience upon which even greater possibilities can be built.

We create opportunities for constructive interactions across boundaries. This expands the community to which people belong and are accountable. Not only can more be accomplished, new ideas can arise out of uncommon partnerships.

We identify individuals who are committed to being change agents in their organisations and communities, and help them make a difference by connecting them to opportunities and effective tools. These resources emerge from socially constructive processes and questions that enable people to share and leverage their commitment and experience.

We keep the whole in view, intentionally building an intergenerational and intercultural network of individuals and organisations committed to developing a vital citywide community and a positive future for Chicago's children.

We expect the best from everyone and hold them accountable. When dreams are shared, and ownership of action steps claimed, the likelihood increases that the imagined dream will come to birth.

Source: www.imaginechicago.org/home.html

Appendix 2: How teachers can apply for grants to make their dreams for children come true

This initiative allows teachers to place their dreams on the internet so that people from all over the world may think about helping. Many people have money they want to give but prefer to give directly to a school rather than through an organisation where their money may go to administrative costs. The teacher can ask for up to R5 000 and the proposal must follow this format:

1. Your name.
2. The name of your school.
3. The address of your school.
4. The telephone number of your school.
5. The fax number of your school.
6. The e-mail address of your school.
7. 150 words or less describing your teaching experience.
8. What your present position is at your school and what learning areas and grades you teach?
9. 400 words or less to describe your dream.
10. How will your dream benefit learners?
11. What learning area is involved and what grade will participate in your dream?
12. How many learners will participate in your dream?
13. What RNCS/FET phase learning outcomes can be achieved by your dream?
14. What resources do you need to fulfill your dream and what will this cost? Give detailed costs (up to a maximum of R5 000).

For more information, contact GreaterGoodSA.

Source: www.GreaterGoodSA.co.za.

Appendix 3: The right to food

(from an article by economist Margaret Legum)

The right to work in South Africa is closely associated with the right to survive – to buy the basic food, clothing, shelter and energy needed to carry on living. Since few have access to land for subsistence, the only way to survive is to go out and get a job. Only there are not enough jobs to go around: everyone knows that, but we persist in advising job-seeking as the gateway to life.

Suppose we said everyone has a right to eat enough food every day... What would it take to make the right to food an automatic right? First, it would take a decision to give it top priority – higher than our obligations under the World Trade Organisation, higher than the economic principle that the market shall determine all prices and therefore who can pay them, higher than the ideology that food must be produced, like all other goods and services, as cheaply and profitably as possible everywhere; higher than the opinions of wealthy potential investors.

Second, we would need to recognise that food must be subsidised. As an industry agriculture has a range of unpredictable challenges from the weather and pests and changes in climate. It can give a sustainable livelihood only if the price at least is predictable...

Third, we would shift the problem focus from the bottom end of the income hierarchy – poor people and their presumed ‘culture of entitlement and dependence’ – to the top of the income triangle. There the rich feel entitled to a regular stream of passive income from their investments – for which they have not lifted a finger. That entitlement, and its regular enhancement with free perks, parties and holidays, funnily enough, does not apparently encourage a new culture of dependence, as it is presumed to do for poor people.

Source: Adapted from a *Cape Times* article, ‘Our children are dying for a want of a basic human right’, by economist Margaret Legum, 22 June 2006.

Appendix 4: Introduction to a rights-based approach

Contents:

- Rights give protection to needs under the law
- What governments have promised
- Claiming our rights
- Holding ourselves and others accountable
- Making rights real
- Summary of children's rights

Rights give protection to needs, under the law

A rights-based approach focuses on realising human rights. All human rights are based on needs. For example, everyone needs food and has a right to enough food to be healthy, productive and to live with dignity. International governing bodies like the United Nations recognise a set of universal human needs and by making them rights, agree to protect them. Governments of different countries also recognise needs and make them rights that are protected by the country's laws.

Constitutions, laws and regulations clarify the nature of different rights and who is responsible for protecting and fulfilling each one. A person who has a duty to respect, protect and fulfil a specific human right is called 'duty-bearer'. A person who has a legitimate claim for a specific human right is called 'rights-claimant' or 'claim-holder'.

There is a complex interconnected relationship between claim-holders and duty-bearers throughout society. For example, a child has a right to education; some person or institution (usually government) has the duty to develop an educational system with curriculum, books, educators, schools, and provide that education. Parents have the duty to ensure that children are registered and attend school. The parents and the principal are duty-bearers. However, if the parents cannot afford to pay fees, they can claim their right to school-fee exemption. The principal can also claim the right to have enough money to run the school efficiently. The parents and the principal are also both claim-holders.

What governments have promised

All governments that signed the United Nations Convention on Human Rights committed themselves:

- to respect human rights: the government may not interfere directly or indirectly with the enjoyment of the right
- to protect human rights: the government must take measures to prevent third parties from interfering with the enjoyment of the right
- to fulfil (facilitate) human rights: the government must adopt legislative, administrative, budgetary, judicial and other measures to realise the right
- to fulfil (provide) human rights: the government must provide direct assistance and services for the right to be realised.

A rights-based approach means we are always guided by the key principles underlying human rights: we respect human dignity and we strive for equal opportunities for all and equal treatment for all.

Claiming our rights

A rights-based approach means we hold ourselves and others accountable, we claim our rights and we empower others to claim theirs. Rights are shaped through actual struggles informed by people's own understanding of what they are entitled to.

Level 1: The first level of claiming rights is understanding the complex pattern of duty-bearers and legal obligations. Once the rights-claimants and duty-bearers understand their rights and duties, it may be possible to remove the barriers through dialogue.

Our main focus in the Caring Schools Project is to help identify children whose rights are not being protected and to help them to access the services to which they are entitled by law. In many cases this might be all that is needed. Sometimes it is necessary to claim rights through the courts, for example if a duty-bearer does not accept responsibility or claims not to have the necessary resources.

Level 2: A rights-based approach also involves identifying where laws, policies and programmes are not adequate and need to be changed. A rights-based approach exposes the root causes of vulnerability and poverty in the way the system works and in the structures of society. To change laws and policies we need to get involved in public processes to change or make new laws, such as the Children's Bill. Research can provide evidence to advocate for change.

Level 3: Sometimes to change laws and policies people need to get together or organise to advocate (or *toyi-toyi* or fight) to have their needs recognised by the government, as was necessary to stop apartheid.

Holding ourselves and others accountable

A rights-based approach means that we are all responsible for respecting and helping to protect and fulfil rights. Those with duties or responsibilities must be held accountable. It is important to understand how much they can be held accountable. For example, can parents be held accountable for a hungry child if the parents are both unemployed without any means of support?

Before duty-bearers can be held accountable, they need to have the capacity to undertake their duty/responsibility. There are different types of capacity that a person must have to carry out his or her duty:

- Responsibility: Does the person accept the responsibility?
- Authority: Does the person have the authority or does someone else hold the power in that situation?
- Resources: Does the person have the resources he or she needs to carry out the responsibility (e.g. money, transport, information, skills, understanding of the language, channels of communication)?

In other words, someone can only be held accountable if he/she feels that he/she should act; is allowed to act; and is able to act.

Making rights real

In the Caring Schools Project, actions to protect child rights include:

- affirming people's right to participate in decision-making processes that affect their lives
- strengthening the ability of local communities to access resources and services for children
- supporting local solutions to ensure child well-being
- looking for the root causes of poverty, vulnerability and suffering
- holding government, private sector institutions and civil society to account
- understanding power relationships and how they impact on the rights of children.

SUMMARY OF CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

All children have the right to:

- food and clean water
- a home
- health care (curative and preventative, e.g. adequate sanitation, immunisation)
- the love and support of caring adults
- protection from abuse, discrimination and exploitation
- schooling
- identity (including a birth certificate that enables them to claim other rights).

These rights cannot be taken away.

Sources

CARE website at http://www.careinternational.org.uk/cares_work/how/rba.htm

CARE International (2008) What we do. Viewed 23 January 2008: <http://www.careinternational.org.uk>.

UNICEF (2002) *Human Rights Approach to Programming (HRAP): A workshop guide for facilitators, contextualised to South Africa*. Unpublished draft compiled by a national facilitator working group.

Appendix 5: Evaluation form to use after meeting or workshop

Please give us your comments on this meeting or workshop.
Please complete this form and hand it back to the facilitator before you leave.

Date

What did you learn?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

What did you like?

.....
.....
.....
.....

What did you not like?

.....
.....
.....
.....

Name three things that have helped you to understand better what you can do to build a caring school community.

.....
.....
.....
.....

Is there anything else you think we should know to make the project stronger?

.....
.....
.....
.....

Thank you for participating!

Appendix 6: Informed consent form

Title of study:

Local research organisation:

(for example, the Children's Institute, University of Cape Town)

Good day, my name is I am a researcher working with the approval of the We are working on a study about building caring school communities in South Africa. We will be interviewing adults and children in selected wards in order to better understand their perspectives on the risk and protective factors impacting on children and strategies for protecting child rights. We would like to learn about children and their families' experiences in accessing services. We also want to understand the experiences of those who provide the services.

We want to be sure that you understand the purpose of this study. We would also like to explain your responsibilities in the research. Then you can decide if you still want to participate. Please ask us to explain any words or information that you may not understand.

If you decide to complete this interview:

Your participation in this interview is completely voluntary. Whether or not you decide to participate in this interview will not affect your access to any service. We will ask you questions for about minutes today.

All the information that you provide will be completely confidential. The information will only be viewed by the researchers working on this project. The school you/your child attend/s will not be told who gave the information.

We will protect information about you and your part in this research to the best of our ability. We will not use your name in any reports that we will write from the information that you give us.

You have the right to decide not to participate, to refuse to answer any question, or to withdraw from the interview at any time without any penalty.

We believe you will face no risks by participating in this study.

There is no direct benefit to you as a participant in this study. You will not receive any payment or any other compensation for participating in the interview.

There will possibly be a benefit to children and families in this community through improved access to services. The information you provide may help us to improve well-being for children in other communities.

Do you have any questions for me? Yes..... No.....

If yes, write down the question.

.....

Thank you for volunteering to complete this interview. You may ask questions at any time

during the interview. If you have any questions after you have left, please contact the study's principal investigator:

PARTICIPANT AGREEMENT

The above document has been read and explained to me. I have been given an opportunity to have any questions about the research answered to my satisfaction. I agree to participate in the interview/focus group.

Printed name of participant

Signature of participant

Date

If participants cannot read the form themselves, a witness must sign here:

I was present throughout the entire informed consent process with the participant. All questions from the participant were answered and the participant has agreed to take part in the research.

Printed name of witness

Signature of witness

Date

I certify that the nature and purpose, the potential benefits, and possible risks associated with participating in this research have been explained to the above individual.

Printed name of person who obtained consent

Signature of person who obtained consent

Date

Appendix 7: Know how local government works: municipality, ward councillors and ward committees

There are new laws to ensure that every municipality gives priority to the basic needs of the community and promotes the social and economic development of the community. By law every municipality must have a five-year Integrated Development Plan (IDP) and a Performance Management System (PMS) to monitor progress of the IDP. You can ask your Municipal Manager or the IDP (Integrated Development Plan) Manager for copies or ask your ward committee and ward councillor to get them for you.

The new local government laws set up structures for service delivery and explain the role of municipal officials, ward councillors, how to become involved in ward committees and how to participate in drafting budgets. You can download these laws from www.dplg.gov.za, quite a user-friendly website. The Municipal Structures Act of 1998 explains how Ward Committees and Municipalities should work, the Municipal Systems Act of 2000 explains how communities should participate in planning local development and the Municipal Finance Management Act explains how communities should participate in drawing up the municipal budget.

You can get a free copy of *Learning about Local Government: A first step towards active engagement*, from the Good Governance Learning Network, in English, Afrikaans or Xhosa. Either download it from the website www.fcr.org.za or contact the Foundation for Contemporary Research, Tel: 021 418 4173, Fax: 021 418 4176, for copies. Contact the Good Governance Learning Network for information about capacity building in lobbying and advocacy in your area, and how to get training about legislation, budget and Integrated Development Plan processes (e.g. IDP Citizen Participation Training). Check the website www.ggln.org.za or contact the co-ordinator, Terence Smith, at 084 8888 664 or terence@fcr.org.za.

Source: Adapted by Carohn Cornell from minutes of the Social Change Assistance Trust (SCAT) Conference, July 2007.

Appendix 8: How different sectors of government should work together for children’s rights

Diagram 1 shows the vertical levels of government (top down and bottom up).

Resources

Level		
5	National	South Africa
4	Provincial	Gauteng
3	Region/District/City	Sedibeng/Mogale City
2	Ward	
1	Neighbourhood/Block/Street	

Decisions

Diagram 2 shows the horizontal sectors of government (departments all on the same level)

Health
Education
Social Services
Conservation, Land Affairs and Agriculture
Water Affairs
Labour
Safety and Security
Art, Culture, Sports and Recreation
Justice
Development Planning and Local Government

We have a complex structure of government. To access services, communities need to understand how the structure works.

We have three spheres of government (national, provincial and local) with elected and appointed government officials within each sphere. There are also NGOs and community members who interact at each level. The diagram above shows five vertical levels within these spheres.

We have many horizontal sectors of government and these different departments/sectors frequently work separately without communicating with their counterparts in other departments.

The well-being of children requires integrated service delivery. This means that all the levels of government (the vertical structure) and all the different departments (the horizontal structure) need to co-operate. The main challenge is how to facilitate communities being more actively involved in decision-making as they are in the best position to identify their own strengths and needs. At the same time, government needs to allocate resources so that the action priorities that communities identify can be implemented at community level.

Integrated service delivery

Too often, government makes policies in isolation at the top and these policies cannot be implemented because they are not relevant to circumstances on the ground. To implement government policy, resources need to come down from the top to the street level and needs and priorities of communities need to be communicated to the top. Government has an Integrated Development Plan (IDP) to integrate the work of different government departments at community level, but unfortunately this is not yet working well in most wards. At this stage, workers from different sectors or departments of government are generally not working together in communities. We need to build partnerships between government and communities to implement an integrated, comprehensive and holistic approach to service delivery. In practice, this means building multi-skilled teams from across departments to work together.

Building effective multi-skilled teams

To develop multi-skilled teams we can start with Appreciative Inquiry – an approach which is new to most people. Officials from all levels of government need to be trained to apply Appreciative Inquiry so as to identify best practice for managing and co-ordinating multi-skilled teams. We need to broaden the competence of individual officials and at the same time build effective teams of officials from different levels and departments, with different levels of skill, who can communicate with each other and with communities and work together.

Source: Compiled by Norma Rudolph.

Appendix 9: Community-based facilitators and youth care facilitators

Each school community in the pilot phase of the Caring Schools Project in 2005/6 was invited to identify two people living in the community, one man and one woman, to be trained as community-based facilitators (CBFs) to strengthen links between the school and the local community. CBFs receive a monthly stipend. Members of the school management team and the school governing body (SGB) play a key role in selecting CBFs.

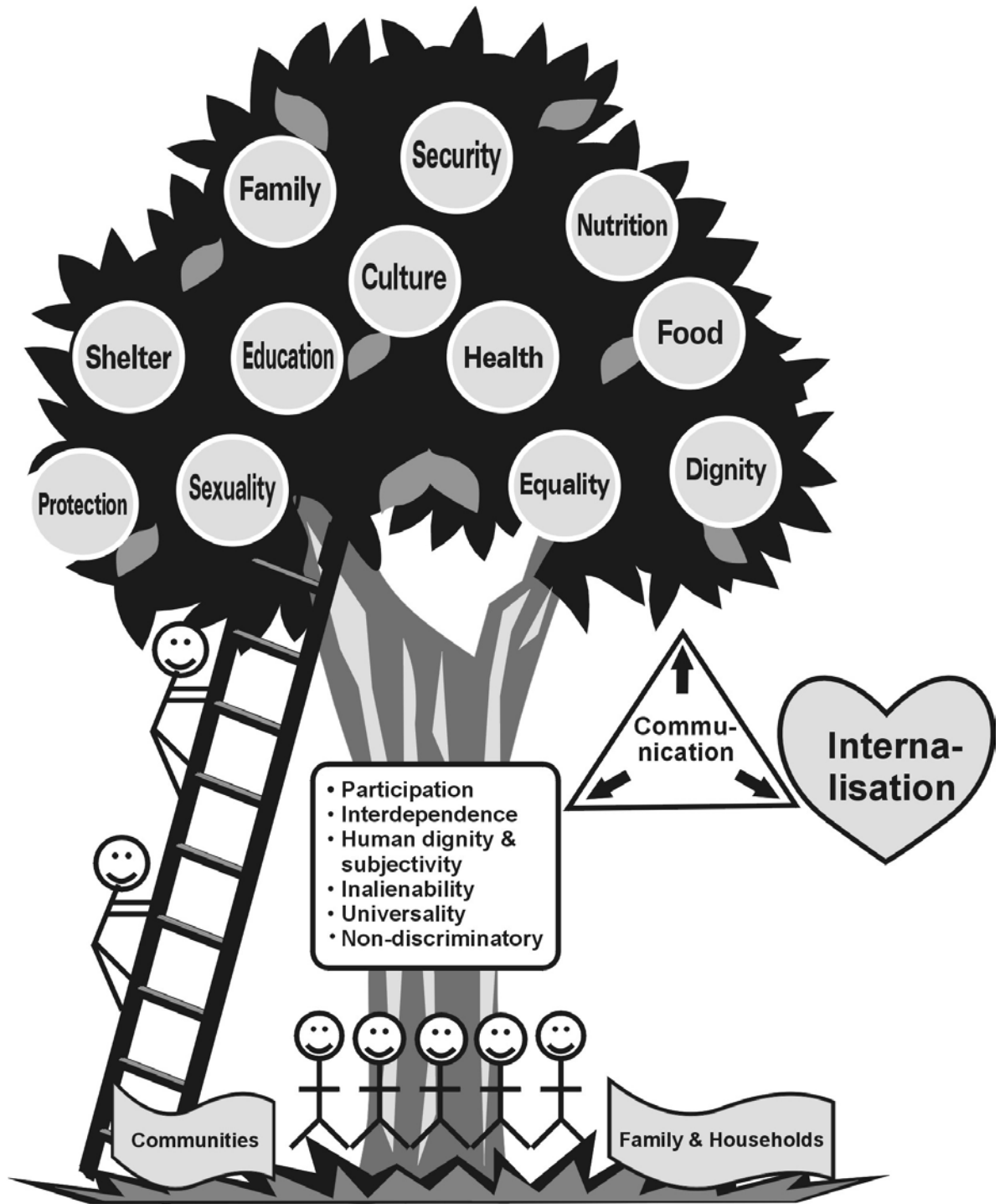
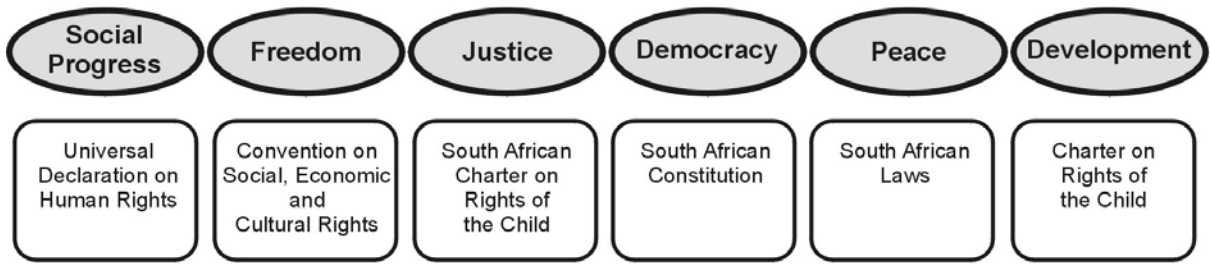
Selection criteria include:

- good standing in the community
- a connection with the school, as a past pupil, parent or SGB member
- involvement in community work
- good communication and organisation skills
- Grade 12 pass
- ages 18 to 25 (in some school communities; in others age is not a criterion).

CBFs proved very useful in the Caring Schools Project and they themselves benefited from capacity building and work experience. Several NGOs and schools have recognised the valuable role that local community members can play as a link between school and community and most have highlighted the special advantage of having young people in this role. CASNET and SAN! are exploring appropriate accredited training and campaigning for funding and support for youth care facilitators. Issues include job security, career paths and accreditation.

Source: Compiled by Norma Rudolph.

Appendix 10: Rights Tree



Appendix 11: Learning and accountability or monitoring and evaluation

Data collection

As soon as you get started, you need to begin collecting and recording information. The purpose of collecting and analysing data is to learn and be accountable. Cycles of action and reflection provide opportunities for collecting useful information for measuring change and tracking progress. Decide on indicators you will use to track your progress. Local data can be compared with national data. This data can be used to mobilise services and resources and to inform policy.

Key questions

- What do we mean by ‘monitoring and evaluation’?
- What information is already available (e.g. school collect data through attendance registers)? What studies have already been done?
- What information do we need to collect?
- How will we collect the information we need? Who will be responsible for what?
- How will the data be used?

Start by collecting data on the ward in which you are implementing.

Useful websites

www.demarcation.org.za

www.demarcation.org.za/MunicProfileOnline/stats_ward.aspx?code=41601002&type=WARD

www.ci.org.za for ‘Children Count – Abantwana Babalulekile’ data on the Children’s Institute web site, University of Cape Town.

www.dplg.gov.za

The table below sets out the broad data categories and some examples of kinds of data, collection strategies and data sources.

Context (where)	Partnership and participation (who)	Children (for whom)	Activities & community responses (how & what)
Demographics (e.g. poverty indicators, services available, etc.) Community mapping of ‘points of light’, services and dangers	Number and kind of meetings; numbers of participant in each category (balance between quantitative and qualitative data)	Well-being of children (risk and protective factors; rights that are protected and fulfilled; causes of rights not being protected and fulfilled)	Number and kind (what are they, what was motivation, what happened, etc.)
Systems (in terms of referrals, school based support, Child Care Forum, community systems etc.)	Attendance registers (very important)	Information about individual children who need and received help	Dream and design process (shared vision of a better future used to prioritise and implement action)

Context (where)	Partnership and participation (who)	Children (for whom)	Activities & community responses (how & what)
School (enrolment, attendance, fees charged, no-fee school, how many children are entitled to exemption, teacher to child ratio, teacher attendance)	Stakeholder analysis (to show change over time in terms of scope and quality of participation) Track awareness of key stakeholders over time	Track change over time	Track change over time

Decide on indicators to measure progress

HSRC and Save the Children Sweden have in 2007 published *Monitoring Child Well-being, a South African Rights-based Approach*, edited by Andrew Dawes, Rachel Bray and Amelia van der Merwe. It is available as a free download from www.hsrcpress.ac.za

Chapter 2 in the above publication is a good place to start reading. They offer a framework that is ‘conceptually driven, but with an acute awareness of data availability’. (2007:45)

‘Child rights and legal instruments together with information on factors that promote child well-being plus existing policies, goals and service standards inform five indicator types:

Type 1: Child status (realisation of child rights and well-being. Children survive to be healthy, happy, economically secure, cared for and protected to develop appropriate skills and capacities, and to participate in society;

Enabling inputs for realisation of rights and well-being:

Type 2: Family and household environment

Type 3: Neighbourhood and surrounding environment

Type 4: Service access

Type 5: Service quality

(Adapted from diagram on page 45 – take a look!)

Chapter 8 in this handbook discusses indicators for ‘Monitoring children’s right to education’.

Source: Adapted from report of Stop Aids Now! (SANI) Networks of Care introductory meeting, May 2007.

Appendix 12: Finding your own picture of a better future

This handbook asks people to get in touch with their own deep feelings and ideas. This is an example of a visualisation used by one facilitator in the Journey of Hope activity. See page 27.

I want you to sit comfortably with your feet on the ground. We are going to do a visualisation. If you don't feel comfortable, it helps to close your eyes. I want you just to follow your breathing in and out of your body for a few minutes ... breathe in ... and out ... and in ... and out ... feel your body relaxing.

Sometimes it helps to get participants to relax each part of their body: toes, feet, calves, legs, stomach, arms, hands, fingers, shoulders, neck, eyes, head. As you read through the visualisation, soften your voice, and pause between sentences.

Now ... Imagine 5 years from now. You are walking in your community. Imagine that all the children in your community are safe on that dry land. You live in a community where all children are safe and healthy and supported to develop their full potential. What do you see as you walk around your community? What are the children doing? Who are the children with? What expressions do you see on their faces? What are they wearing? What are the adults in the community doing? What kinds of things do you see in your community? Is there a park, or a community centre, or football grounds, trees, flowers or gardens? As you walk around, notice what you see.

Now, what are you hearing? What sounds do you hear around you? Can you hear children playing or birds singing? ... What are the children saying to each other? What are the adults saying to the children? As you walk past groups of children just pause for a minute and notice what you hear ...

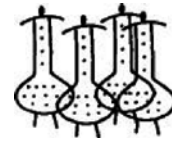
Now as you walk around ... what are you feeling? Notice how it feels for you to walk around this community. How do you think the children are feeling? Just enjoy being in that community for a few more minutes, seeing what you see, hearing what you hear and feeling what you feel ... and now when your ready you can slowly come back to the room.

Give each participant a piece of A4 paper and ask them to draw what they saw when they imagined the future. They can then discuss in groups or draw a group picture. They can then invite other groups to visit them in their community and describe what they will see, hear and feel there.

Source: Adapted from Sally Price.

Appendix 13: Posters

This series of four posters (on pages 154 to 157) to get children talking about caring school communities was created by Carol Liknaitzky for a project undertaken by Vuk'uyithathe Research and Development (originally created for Save the Children Sweden).



Vuk'uyithathe Research and Development

Description of posters

The following description can help the facilitator look carefully at the posters before asking children what they see in the picture. The children can talk about whatever they see. There are no 'right' or 'wrong' answers. The list of points can help the facilitators ask questions to encourage children to observe more carefully if they seem to miss things.

Home

House with books and old couch. Atmosphere – peaceful, loving, caring and everyone who is old enough is taking responsibility for something or someone. Constructive and engaging activities taking place. Father gently sitting reading with child and toddler on lap looking kindly across at mother in doorway with baby in arms. Granny/aunty /family member feeding child. Two teenagers sitting on floor peeling vegetables, preparing for meal. Young man/son/relative/good friend bringing disabled child/old person back home. Young girl playing with baby with blocks.

School

Basic room with some nice pictures on the wall and water in the classroom. Atmosphere is one of joy and co-operation and freedom. Children engaged in meaningful and creative activities: drawing with crayons; putting up their work; cleaning brushes. Teacher helping and encouraging someone at the blackboard. Assistant teacher/parent/student helping with documents. Parent confidently bringing in 2 children, who look happy and free.

Community

Busy street with a park in the distance and a clinic across the road. Note the accessibility of both the park and clinic. An atmosphere of safety with responsible caregivers. Children are together with someone who cares. Traffic cop stopping the car/taxi to allow children and people cross the road safely – either going to the park or the clinic.

Children playing soccer with supervisor keeping watch. Vendor with fruit and own child who is watching the traffic cop. Children and families playing in the park which has a little fence for safety. Guard at the door of the clinic with friendly gesture. Nurse inside clinic with friendly face.

Institutions and justice system

Three scenes:

Right foreground

An orphanage of sorts with caregivers/volunteers looking after babies in cots, caring for them, touching them, feeding them, putting them to sleep. Toys in the corner.

Left side

Juvenile at a police office with police officer writing document, with another police officer by his side giving support, his parents / family / caregivers are giving support and are involved in the process. It represents a justice system where there is care, involvement of the relevant duty bearers (which, most importantly, include his primary caregivers), whether the young person is a victim of crime or a perpetrator of crime.

Background

Person in uniform indicating to some young people, a diagram on the board, of a person going his/her path of life towards the sunrise with "My life" written above and "My Choice" written underneath. This scene represents the supportive and rehabilitative aspect of a justice institution.