



BỘ KẾ HOẠCH VÀ ĐẦU TƯ



# CHILD RIGHTS-BASED SOCIAL AUDIT MANUAL

**A SOCIAL AUDIT TOOL TO MONITOR THE  
PROGRESS OF VIET NAM'S SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT PLAN**





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## ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CFCI	Child-Friendly Cities/Communities Initiative
CFS	Child-Friendly Schools
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CRC	Citizen Report Card
CSC	Community Score Card
DOLISA	Department of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs
DPI	Department of Planning and Investment
EC	European Commission
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GSO	General Statistics Office
KII	Key Informant Interview
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey
MOLISA	Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs
MPI	Ministry of Planning and Investment
ODI	Overseas Development Institute
PETS	Program Expenditure Tracking Survey
PRS	Poverty Reduction Strategy
PSIA	Poverty and Social Impact Assessment
SEDP	Social and Economic Development Plan
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund



# **CHILD RIGHTS-BASED AUDIT**

Detailed Methodological Description, including Report Guidelines and Feedback Mechanisms

## INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

### Social Audit Approach in Viet Nam

The Social Audit Approach functions as a management and accountability mechanism that offers a range of methodologies, tools and techniques which are used to assess, understand, report on and improve the social performance of an organization, a plan or a policy. Key features which systematically characterize the practice of social audits include: a focus on stakeholder participation and accountability. The participation of rights holders ('people') and duty-bearers ('government' or 'service providers') is critical for the success of a social audit. It facilitates transparency (availability and accessibility of information), knowledge generation (by bringing on board people's opinions, perceptions and experiences) and accountability (for the delivery of quality public services and policies). Strengthened transparency, participation in the decision making process, and duty-bearer accountability are major conditions for the improved performance of public policy and are thus not only goods in themselves but a means to an end in improved performance. Social audits are therefore not only assessments of performance, but also of the integrity of the process that leads to the performance and the impact of such performance.<sup>1</sup>

As a pragmatic management tool in line with principles of good governance, social audits aim not only at revealing the normative 'good' but at providing essential information and feedback for improved management decision-making, allocations, and service delivery overall. Social performance can be measured and improved in a number of ways:

- Through analysis of the degree of focus on social issues in plans and policies;
- Through analysis of the degree to which this translates into action (including the scope and quality of indicators that measure progress in stated priorities);
- Through assessment of the social impact of plans and policies; and
- Through generation of information through participatory methods that can complement existing information.<sup>2</sup>

The social audit approach is particularly relevant in the current policy environment in Viet Nam, where ongoing 'Doi Moi' reforms aimed at creating a socialist oriented market economy bring both opportunity and challenges for social policy. Policy discussion highlights a need to improve accountability and transparency and the government recognizes the importance of enhanced citizen participation in policymaking and implementation. Recent decisions on planning reform in Viet Nam's Social and Economic Development Plan (SEDP) for 2011-2015 reflect these priorities.<sup>3</sup>

In the context of SEDP, social audits can help in assessing the extent to which social goals are prioritized, relevant indicators are included in the monitoring and evaluation framework, and progress in these realms is comprehensively captured, including through participatory and qualitative methods that can complement existing reliance on quantitative measures. In this way, the social

1 MPI/UNICEF (2011) Making Social Audit Work for Viet Nam

2 Thapa, Samman J. (2011) "The Social Audit Approach in Viet Nam: Its Value Added to SEDP PM&E and an Introduction to the Tools" PowerPoint presentation, Hanoi, November

3 United Nations in Viet Nam (2010) "UN's Synthesis Analysis of Viet Nam's Development Situation and Medium-term Challenges in Preparation of the UN One Plan 2012-2016," Draft Version of August 25th 2010



audit approach can contribute to improving social performance in response to a number of challenges identified in the monitoring and evaluation of the social dimensions of SEDP.<sup>4</sup>

A capacity-building project was designed as a means of contributing to the integrated monitoring and assessment of SEDP and to the strengthening of mechanisms to channel the results of monitoring and evaluation into the social policymaking process.<sup>5</sup> As part of this project, four social audit tools have recently been piloted in Viet Nam: Citizen Report Cards (CRC) piloted in HCMC and Dien Bien provinces; Community Score Cards (CSC) and Gender Audits piloted in HCMC and Quang Nam provinces; and a Public Expenditure Tracking Survey (PETS) piloted in Tra Vinh, HCMC and Dien Bien provinces.

Among the key findings and lessons learned, it has been observed that all of the piloted tools showed substantial potential as an additional means of assessing the social performance of SEDP based on the views of those to whom the programs are directed as well as the government officials responsible for planning and assessing program effectiveness.<sup>6</sup> The positive nature of the experience was confirmed by participants at a recent workshop on opportunities and challenges in the reform of SEDP's planning, monitoring and evaluations, who concluded that social audits are a powerful tool to collect people's feedback and assessment of service providers' performance, which can be an effective method for measuring the impacts of SEDPs in a more participatory and comprehensive manner. Introducing the social audit approach has been seen as a process to empower the poor and marginalized people in particular.<sup>7</sup>

At the same time, it has been observed that none of the social audit tools piloted in Viet Nam to date were designed with a child focus and that the views of children on key issues of concern to them – including, for example, health service delivery and gender equality – were not solicited in the application of the tools. It was accordingly suggested that a specific audit tool be developed to respond to this gap.

## Development and Use of the Child Rights-Based Audit Tool

Drawing on lessons from the existing pilots and taking into consideration observations on the need for a more specific focus on children, this current tool has been developed to contribute to the overall 'tool-kit' aimed at strengthening social accountability in national and sub-national planning processes, policies and program. It is designed to add value to current efforts to assess and improve social policies and programs underway by applying a 'child-rights' analytical lens and involving children themselves and their caregivers as key stakeholders in participatory processes of assessment. It seeks in this way to provide insights and information that will be useful for improving the positive impact of policies and programs on children.

The intended users of the methodology are government officials, particularly officials from the Ministry and Department of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs

4 Thapa, Samman J. (2011) "The Social Audit Approach in Viet Nam: Its Value Added to SEDP PM&E and an Introduction to the Tools" PowerPoint presentation, Hanoi, November)

5 MPI and UNICEF (2009) "Capacity Building for Social Audit of the National Socio-Economic Development Plan 2006-2010: Detailed Project Outline 2009-2010"

6 MPI/UNICEF (2011) Making Social Audit Work for Viet Nam

7 MPI/UNICEF (2011) "Summary of Workshop Proceedings: Reforming the Socio-Economic Development Plan's Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation – Opportunities and Challenges" 2-3 November 2011.

(MOLISA/DOLISA) and the Ministry/Department of Planning and Investment (MPI/DPI), but also other government officials and partners as well as representatives of the People's Committee and the People's Council. Its intended application is to the Social and Economic Development Plan (SEDP) overall as well as to particular sectoral policies, both child-focused and general. It aims at policies and programs at both national and provincial level. While the initial emphasis may be on the use of the tool to assess programs and policies which have an explicit or implicit focus on improved child wellbeing ('child-focused' policies or programs in health, education, social protection, etc.), guidance is also provided on its potential application to more general policies and programs (for example agricultural or industrial development) which have a significant impact on child wellbeing through the broader social and economic processes and conditions they establish for development overall. All policies and programs, therefore, need to have some degree of 'child-sensitivity' in the sense of mechanisms that will both monitor potential impacts on children and strengthen intersectoral linkages to ensure positive outcomes.

The tool builds upon the gender audit tool and methodologies already piloted in Viet Nam, but adapted to the particular needs of a child rights-based assessment. Just as a gender audit is "a tool for evaluating the degree to which gender issues are mainstreamed (systematically integrated) into a given policy, program or organization.... to ensure that outcomes and policies align with higher level objectives on gender" <sup>8</sup>, a child rights-based social audit is a tool for evaluating the degree to which child rights principles are effectively integrated into policies, plans and programs and their implementation. In adapting the gender audit methodology for the purposes of a child rights-based assessment, the tool draws on the excellent work already undertaken on 'Making SEDP monitoring in Viet Nam Child- Sensitive' <sup>9</sup> and on child friendly provinces and communes fit for children, <sup>10</sup> as well as the conceptual thinking around child-sensitive monitoring in Viet Nam.<sup>11</sup> It also draws on existing tools and methodologies that are increasingly available at international level for application in a variety of settings (detailed in Module 2).

The manual was presented and reviewed at a consultative workshop in February 2012 drawing together both national officials and key provincial level policy planners from the Department of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs and the Department of Planning and Investment, as well as representatives from the Provincial Statistics Offices, the People's Committee and the People's Council. The workshop was followed by an information-sharing consultation with a variety of stakeholders at national level, including government, research institutions and partner organizations.

Participants at these consultative gatherings confirmed the importance of such a tool as well as their interest in conducting a child-sensitive audit in Viet Nam. They also offered useful comments and inputs to strengthen and enrich finalization of the draft manual as well as suggestions for potential next steps, which include consideration of further planning needed for the preparation and implementation of a pilot audit to test and refine the approach.

8 "Gender Audit Methodology: A Tool to Assess the Performance of Viet Nam's Socio-Economic Development Plan" Draft, January 2012.

9 UNICEF Viet Nam (2011) "Making SEDP Monitoring in Viet Nam Child Sensitive: A Concept Paper"

10 MPI/UNICEF (2011) "Manual- Application of Children's Rights Issues in Local SEDP Planning" (Draft).

11 UNICEF Viet Nam (2011) "Making SEDP Monitoring in Viet Nam Child Sensitive: A Concept Paper"

## Importance of a Child Rights-Based Social Audit in Viet Nam: The Big Picture

The Government of Viet Nam is actively implementing its commitments and obligations under international agreements such as the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and Viet Nam Agenda 21. Such commitments have and are being integrated into overarching development strategies (including integration of some child-specific and related development targets into SEDP at different levels, and identification of children as key beneficiaries of social protection measures) as well as being translated into specific plans and programs (including the National Plan of Action on Children 2001-2010, development of the Child Protection Strategy for 2011-2020 and the draft National Program on Child Protection for 2011-2015, and various sector strategies and policies including free health care for children under six years of age and school-fee exemption policies for poor children in remote, mountainous and island areas).

The five-year plan of MOLISA for the period 2011-2015 includes both specific and cross-cutting measures for children among the tasks and measures established for nine key target areas.<sup>12</sup> Commitments to children are also being translated into legal documents (for example, the Law on Child Protection, Care and Education passed in 2004 which institutionalizes five clusters of children's rights). And to make sure such national commitments are applied at local level, the Government has also issued Decision No.37/2010/QĐ-TTg on 22 April 2010 to define standards for child-friendly communes.<sup>13</sup>

Vietnam is currently renewing its planning process (development, monitoring and evaluation of plans) towards more strategic, sustainable and results-based development in the context of a transition towards a market economy and global integration. This presents both opportunities and challenges in efforts to safeguard, promote, and advance children's rights so that all children in Viet Nam have the opportunity to survive, thrive and grow up to their full potential as active citizens contributing to the ongoing development of the nation. As in other countries, transition to a globalized market economy brings with it unanticipated consequences and difficulties including growing disparities and greater risks of certain populations groups being left behind. Children and particularly children in poverty are among the most vulnerable groups. In the context of existing budget constraints and the broad structural reforms that are being put in place to stimulate and promote the market economy, heightened efforts are needed to ensure that children's particular vulnerabilities as well as their potential are recognized and addressed through specific measures set out in plans and policies, and effectively implemented from the macro-level right through to the communal setting.

The needs of poor or marginalized children in particular will call for renewed attention so that the equitable fulfillment of children's rights proceeds in tandem with the country's socio-economic transformation and development. Strengthened national efforts will also be needed to contend with growing negative environmental conditions associated with climate change, whose risks are particularly acute for children.

A child rights-based social audit tool can help the Government and its partners to take such issues into account, through guidelines on how to take stock of the

<sup>12</sup> MOLISA (2010) Five-year Plan for Labor, People with Merits, Society Development (2011-2015) (Draft dated 10/7/2010)

<sup>13</sup> MPI/UNICEF (2011) "Manual- Application of Children's Rights Issues in Local SEDP Planning" (Draft)

degree to which children's rights are integrated into national plans and policies, and their implementation. The participatory nature of the methodology ensures that children's voices are heard and contribute to national planning and implementation processes. By highlighting areas where there is room for improvement, it can help policymakers as well as program implementers and service providers to enhance the effectiveness of their work so as to ensure positive outcomes for children. The multi-sectoral nature of the approach, calling for inputs from all key stakeholders at different levels can help to reinforce integrated policy, plan, and program development, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation. And finally, while the tool itself does not provide for detailed evaluation or impact assessment per se, its application can identify areas where further assessment, evaluation and analysis is required to more fully understand and address the real and potential impacts of development policy implementation, macro-economic transformation, and environmental change on children.

## Organization of the Manual

The first two sections are of an introductory and conceptual nature.

- **Module 1** sets out the introduction and background to the social audit approach in Viet Nam; describes the development and potential usages of a child rights-based tool within the overall approach; and highlights the importance of such a tool in the current development planning context of the country.
- **Module 2** outlines in more detail the definition, rationale and aims of a child rights-based audit; sets out some general parameters that can guide its development (including consideration of scope, key domains, principles and criteria of assessment) and identifies key entry-points for integration of more focused attention to children's issues in national planning processes. It also offers some examples of existing international experience with child-focused assessment approaches, including indications of how criteria for assessment have been established and applied in different domains.

The next two sections are more methodological in scope and contain the proposed methodologies for use in the application of the child-sensitive audit.

- **Module 3** provides a brief outline of the primary methodologies to be utilized in a child rights-based audit, including documentary review, key informant interviews, and focus group discussions, as well as additional participatory processes with children. It also notes the importance of adapting the generic tool for specific purposes.
- **Modules 4-8** presents the generic tool and methodology for a child rights-based audit, building on and adapting the gender audit tool already introduced in Viet Nam. This section sets out guidelines and methodologies for the overall process, from (i) preparation and planning; (ii) application of key methodologies; (iii) analysis and reporting on results; (iv) communication and dissemination; and (iii) development of an action plan for a strengthened child rights focus.

The final section is forward-looking.

- **Module 9** summarizes some of the main guidelines in the manual and offers some suggestions for consideration on the way forward in planning processes for eventual application of a child rights-based social audit in Viet Nam.

Reference material and technical annexes supply information useful in the design of a Viet Nam-specific audit instrument.

- A list of references includes links to other existing assessment tools. Annex 1 provides an overview of key issues discussed in the national consultations that were held on the proposed tool in February 2012 in Ho Chi Minh City and Hanoi. Annex 2 offers inputs to help guide efforts to tailor the generic tool presented in the manual to the needs of particular programs, policies or plans in Viet Nam, based on three examples. It sets out key question guides and issues that might be useful to consider in a child rights-based audit of (i) the 5-year Plan of MOLISA; (ii) selected SEDP components and (iii) Decree 67 (2007) on Support Policies for Social Protection Beneficiaries. These checklists were reviewed with national and provincial participants at the consultative workshop in Ho Chi Minh City, whose comments were integrated. Annex 3 presents selected examples of existing child-sensitive tools and checklists based on the CRC.

#### Key Points to Retain

- The social audit approach has been piloted in Viet Nam as a management and accountability mechanism to assess and improve social performance. Key features include stakeholder participation, transparency and accountability.
- The social audit approach is particularly relevant in the current policy environment in Viet Nam, where ongoing 'Doi Moi' reforms bring both opportunity and challenges for social policy.
- A child rights-based social audit has been developed to contribute to the overall 'tool-kit' aimed at strengthening social accountability in national and sub-national planning processes, policies and programs.
- This new tool is designed to add value to current efforts to assess and improve social policies and programs underway by applying a 'child-rights' analytical lens and involving children themselves and their caregivers as key stakeholders in participatory processes of assessment. It seeks in this way to provide insights and information that will be useful for improving the positive impact of policies and programs on children.
- The intended users of the tool are government officials and partners as well as representatives of the People's Committee and the People's Council.
- Its intended application is to the Social and Economic Development Plan (SEDP) overall as well as to particular sectoral policies, both child-focused and general. It aims at policies, plans and programs at both national and provincial level.
- The proposed tool and manual were discussed and reviewed at consultative meetings at both provincial and national level. The current manual incorporates comments and inputs received.

## WHAT IS A CHILD RIGHTS-BASED SOCIAL AUDIT AND WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

### Definition, Rationale and Aims

A child rights-based social audit can be defined as *a specific social auditing tool which aims to maximize opportunities and development outcomes for children by assisting governments and their partners to take stock, in a participatory fashion, of the degree to which children's rights, needs and interests are taken into consideration in national policies and programs at different levels; to identify potential gaps in both plans and their implementation; and to discern priorities for action to improve performance.*

Drawing on existing international examples, lessons learned, and best practices, the methodologies developed and applied in a child rights-based social audit can also help national authorities to recognize the need for strengthened monitoring and evaluation of the impacts of key policies and programs on children. A focus on children in national development plans and policies is critical in view both of their particular vulnerabilities and risks as well as their potential as the future leaders of the country. The rationale for such a focus embraces a number of dimensions which child rights-based audits seek to address:

### A matter of rights

Viet Nam was the first country in Asia, and the second in the world, to ratify the CRC in 1990, demonstrating strong commitment to its principles, and it has continued to demonstrate visible and forward-looking leadership for its children, as evidenced in a variety of policies, plans and programs as well as key legislation. Child rights-based social audits can support the government in fulfilling its obligations under the CRC, by enhancing capacity to discern the degree to which the Convention's principles are applied such that children's rights, needs, and interests are taken into account in national and sub-national planning processes, policies and programs.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) sets international standards stipulating that all children have the right to a core minimum level of wellbeing, including the right to health and nutrition, basic education, protection, and participation, as well as the right to grow up in a family. Guiding principles of the Convention include the definition of the child as all persons under the age of 18; the principles of non-discrimination; primary consideration for the best interests of the child in decisions that affect them along with respect for the views of the child; and the basic right of all children to life, survival and development. States that ratify the CRC have the obligation to ensure that these rights are realized by even the most vulnerable children. General measures of implementation require that national laws are compatible with the Convention, that comprehensive national strategies for children are developed and appropriately financed within available resources; that effective institutional coordination takes place around child rights at both national and sub-national level; and that systematic data collection, monitoring and evaluation of child rights and wellbeing is undertaken.



## A matter of numbers

Viet Nam has a young population, with more than half of its people under the age of 25; this in itself poses new challenges for sustainable national development. In 2007, children under 16 years of age in Viet Nam (numbering approximately 30 million) accounted for nearly a third (27.7 %) of the total population. Child rights-based social audit methodologies can strengthen the government's efforts to ensure that the needs of this important and growing segment of the population are taken into account in national programs and policies and can assist in efforts to ensure that their views are heard.

Globally, children and adolescents are a numerically significant population group (32.6% of world population and one third to half of the population of most countries,<sup>14</sup> particularly in many developing countries where the numbers and proportion of children and youth are steadily rising). It is estimated that, by 2050, the number of youth (aged 15-24) will have risen by 38% since 1950 and that 9 in 10 youths will be in developing countries. This burgeoning demographic necessitates that the needs and concerns of this social group are adequately incorporated into national planning documents and programs.<sup>15</sup>

## A matter of poverty reduction and development

Globally, it has been observed that a strong child rights focus within national plans and programs is essential to address child poverty in its multiple dimensions and to prevent the intergenerational transmission of poverty from poor parents to their children. Children and adolescents are uniquely vulnerable to even short periods of deprivation, which can have lifelong and intergenerational effects. A strong policy and programmatic focus on children's development and wellbeing can help break cycles of poverty inherent, for example, in processes that deprive children of their rights to education and health, which then become lifelong obstacles to development.<sup>16</sup>

In Viet Nam, high economic growth has been accompanied by significant improvement in people's welfare and recorded poverty has declined sharply over the last decade (from nearly 60% in the early 1990s to an estimated 14% in 2008, according to the 2008 Viet Nam Household Living Standards Survey). This, in turn, has greatly contributed to improved child welfare and wellbeing. Nevertheless, according to the government's recent report on multidimensional child poverty in Viet Nam, monetary poverty continues to affect around a fifth (20.7%) of the child population under the age of 16, while an even higher proportion (28.9%) suffer from multidimensional poverty, which affects about 6.34 million children. Of the multiple dimensions of poverty affecting children, the two domains that revealed the highest levels of deprivation were health care (52.9%), and water & sanitation (42.9%). Deprivation levels were lower for shelter (17.4%), education (16.1%), child labor (9.8%), and social inclusion & protection (8.8%). Child rights-based social audits of key national policies and programs can help identify areas for heightened investment in sustainable poverty reduction measures seeking to break the inter-generational transmission of poverty in its multiple dimensions and ensure that both short and longer term development processes are established on a sustainable basis.

14 UNICEF and World Bank (2011) PSIA Guidance Note

15 UNICEF/EC Child Rights Toolkit. Component 3 (Draft 2010)

16 UNICEF and World Bank (2011) PSIA Guidance Note UNICEF/EC Child Rights Toolkit. Component 3 (Draft 2010)

## A matter of equity

Globally, while overall progress towards the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) is promising, evidence and analysis clearly point to the existence of wide disparities both between and within countries and indicate that such disparities are, in many cases, widening.<sup>17</sup> Intensified efforts to reach those marginalized and excluded from the benefits of development are urgently needed. Programs and policies developed with a heightened attention to equity are critical to these efforts.

Vietnam has made significant achievements in implementing the Viet Nam Development Goals – its national adaptation of the MDGs – and in eliminating extreme poverty. However, the decrease in poverty and improvements in the standard of living are unequally spread over different parts of the country and equitable achievement of the MDGs is recognized as a key challenge. Moreover, recent data suggests a slight tendency towards increasing levels of inequality in all regions of the country, driven, to a large extent, by inequalities in access to decent employment and income-generating opportunities, with women, ethnic minorities and disadvantaged people (e.g. people with disabilities, the elderly, etc.) often faring below average. In terms of children, according to both monetary and multi-dimensional measures, child poverty is highest in the Northwest region, among ethnic minority groups, and in rural areas. The recently released MICS report confirms persisting disparities in the lives and well-being of children and women in Viet Nam, across regions, by gender, area of residence, wealth, and ethnicity. SEDP recognizes the importance of addressing inequality and specific efforts are underway to address the needs of the most disadvantaged children.

Child rights-based social audits designed with a specific focus on equity can help identify gaps and direct attention to the need for stronger measures to be put in place to ensure the rights of all children throughout the country. Such audits can serve as a key input into rights-based, equity-focused situation analysis that can in turn inform national development planning processes.

## A matter of urgency

In the current global context of rising food and commodity prices, economic and financial uncertainty, heightened vulnerabilities to the effects of climate change, growing urbanization and ever-present situations of insecurity around the world, a focus on children is particularly urgent to ensure their rights and wellbeing are protected through specific measures put in place through national policies and programs.

17 UNICEF (2010) “Progress for Children: Achieving the MDGs with Equity



In Viet Nam, while the effects of the global downturn have so far been muted and development prospects remain strong, future socioeconomic development is likely to be heavily shaped by global economic trends, including in particular through their impact on trade and exports and on ODA flows. Viet Nam is also particularly vulnerable to the impact of climate change, recognized as a key challenge for sustainable development. Child rights-based social audits can help the government gauge whether specific mechanisms to monitor child outcomes are foreseen and enacted; can ascertain whether children's special vulnerabilities are recognized and interests are safeguarded in social protection policies or emergency responses, and can also trigger recognition of the need for more in-depth analyses and assessments of the effects and impacts on children of macro-economic trends and reforms.

## Examples of Child-Focused Assessment Tools in International Practice

There is currently no single standard tool for a child-focused assessment of national policies, programs and practices, and no internationally available 'child rights-based social audit tool' per se; however, a variety of instruments have been developed for a number of different purposes (including planning, assessment, analysis, mapping and monitoring). While the gender audit methodology remains the frame of reference, a number of these other instruments have been drawn on in the development of the current tool. These provide useful insights and guidance for the adaptation of a child rights-based social audit tool for the needs of assessment in particular sectors as well as for broader social and economic or poverty-related analysis.

Below is a brief presentation of some of these tools, with links provided for further information. As can be seen from the examples presented, there are certain common elements informing each of the tools, but also much scope for differentiated detail in terms of the types of information and criteria for assessment most relevant for the different sectors or macro-environments being assessed. This is important to keep in mind as a rule of thumb in the development and application of a child rights-based social audit tool in Viet Nam.

### Child-Friendly Cities Assessment Methodology and Toolkit<sup>18</sup>

The Child Friendly City Initiative (CFCI) aims to guide cities and other systems of local governance in the inclusion of children's rights as a key component of their goals, policies, programs and structures. Basic criteria have been developed to define child friendly communities as ones which reflect overall government commitment to children; children's active participation in decision-making processes; and fulfillment of children's rights within specific sectors, but the precise indicators needed to monitor and assess these efforts need to be reviewed and adapted to each local context. A toolkit has been developed with a number of assessment tools designed for application in a diverse range of cities and communities. These include: self assessment tools (for children, adolescents, pre-school, primary-school and secondary school parents, and community service providers); tools for dialogue and analysis of governance for children (including a child-friendly governance checklist, discussion guide and scenarios tool); and comprehensive reporting tools.

<sup>18</sup> <http://www.childfriendlycities.org/en/research/final-toolkit>

The child-friendly governance checklist in particular identifies key domains to explore to assess the nature and degree of overall government commitment to children (in terms of municipal policymaking; coordination; budgeting; data; plans of action; public and professional awareness; advocacy and community partnerships) as well as the degree of recognition of children's rights within particular sectors (including social services and protection; juvenile justice; education; play, recreation and sports; transportation; environmental health; public health; urban planning and public works; emergency preparedness and response). (See check-list in annex). Additionally, nine 'building blocks' have been identified for the development and monitoring of a child-friendly municipality. These include: children's participation; a child-friendly legal framework; a city-wide children's rights strategy; a children's rights unit or coordinating mechanism; a child impact assessment and evaluation; a children's budget; a regular State of the City's Children Report; mechanisms for making children's rights known; and independent advocacy for children. Evidence-informed advocacy and mechanisms for systematic learning and knowledge management would be equally important.

Country examples of the CFCI include, in the East Asia and Pacific region, Indonesia (15 cities involved as of 2008), Malaysia (where a community-based initiative developed a 'children's report card'), the Philippines (promoted by a nation-wide inter-sectoral partnership, with a pilot study of the assessment tools conducted in 2009 – see annex) and Viet Nam (the child-friendly provinces program).

### **Policy Templates for UNICEF Global Study on Child Poverty and Disparities<sup>19</sup>**

Over 50 countries around the world have participated in the UNICEF-initiated Global Study on Child Poverty and Disparities, including Viet Nam. For the purposes of the Global Study, a policy template was created to:

- collect core information on macroeconomic policies, public budgets and development collaboration as they impact on the broader context of social policies and/or child and family poverty;
- create a standard inventory of the laws and public policies (strategies, legislation and national programs) in the particular country that most closely impact child poverty and disparities in household income; child nutrition, health, child protection, and education; and
- identify linkages between the economic and institutional context and
- identify the key actors in terms of service providers and decision-makers of child rights and wellbeing in different country contexts.

While designed specifically as a basis for an in-depth study, the template can be adapted for use as a 'lighter' assessment tool for key areas of child and equity outcomes, drawing on some of the key domains categories identified for assessment.

A number of national child poverty studies have also incorporated participatory approaches with children to complement information acquired through other means with insights from the 'lived experiences' of children. This has been

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<sup>19</sup> <http://www.unicefglobalstudy.blogspot.com/>

highlighted in the case of Viet Nam for the initial child poverty and deprivation analysis which was enriched with analysis from the 'Young Lives' cohort which uses a holistic approach and inclusive methods of mapping outputs, hence providing a framework for visualizing the complexity and causality of child wellbeing.

### **Integrating a Child Focus into Poverty and Social Impact Analysis (PSIA)<sup>20</sup>**

UNICEF and the World Bank have developed a Resource Pack and a Guidance Note on Integrating a Child Focus into Poverty and Social Impact Analysis (PSIA). PSIA involves the analysis of the distributional impact of public policy reforms on the wellbeing of different stakeholder groups, with a particular focus on the poor and vulnerable. The Guidance Note:

- outlines some of the potential poverty and social impacts of common economic and social policy reforms on children and the pathways through which they arise, with suggested indicators to monitor various dimensions;
- gives an overview of existing tools and methods, both quantitative and qualitative, that can be used to analyze these impacts;
- outlines some approaches for mitigating negative and enhancing positive effects on children; and
- discusses how children's perspectives can be included in a PSIA.

Among other things, the guide outlines some of the main age-specific vulnerabilities of children; identifies key channels of transmission through which reforms may impact children (including employment and wages, prices, transfers and taxes, access to goods and services, assets and authority), and maps out the potential short-, medium- and long-term effects on children of policy reforms. It also presents a number of different data collection techniques, both quantitative and qualitative (including participatory research methods with children) and provides guidelines for decision-making on action needed to address the effects of policy reforms on children.

The Guidance Note includes a Checklist with a consolidated set of key questions for child-focused PSIA; child wellbeing indicators and possible data sources; examples of sector reform impacts on children; and rapid assessment of potential impacts on children (see annex for some of these). The Guidance Note is complemented by a Resource Pack, which guides users to additional relevant resources on methodological issues, data sources, policy approaches, and ways of including children's perspectives.

### **Mainstreaming Child Rights in Poverty Reduction Strategies & National Development Plans<sup>21</sup>**

Developed as part of an EC-funded, UNICEF-coordinated toolkit to make child

<sup>20</sup> <http://www.childimpact.unicef-irc.org/documents/view/id/130/lang/en>

<sup>21</sup> UNICEF/EC Child Rights Toolkit. Component 3: The Visibility of Child Rights in Poverty Reduction Strategies (ODI Social Development Programme, Draft 2010)

rights visible throughout the national policy process, the objectives of this component are fivefold:

- To highlight the importance and relevance of integrating human rights, especially child rights, approaches into poverty reduction strategies (PRS), including national development planning (NDP) documents and planning cycles;
- To provide guidance on how best to integrate child rights into PRS/NDP mechanisms being developed;
- To provide tools and techniques that promote the translation of child rights commitments into programming realities;
- To provide tools that enable the monitoring of this translation;
- To highlight other relevant sources of information and guidance in relation to the incorporation of child rights into PRS/NDP processes.

Among other things, the toolkit provides a rationale for the inclusion of child rights in national policy and planning processes (which is drawn on extensively in this current document); identifies the policy implications of the key child rights principles set out in the CRC; reviews experiences and provides evidence of the impact of integrating a child rights-based approach into PRS/NDP processes (with country examples from Rwanda, Nepal, Brazil and Honduras); presents tools, techniques and explicit guidance on how to program for child rights in PRS/NDP processes ; identifies entry points for the different processes (also drawn on in the current document); and provides information on the results of the piloting of the tools in Nepal and Uganda. It also offers guidance on advocacy work; identifies the important role of partners; and provides useful checklists of enabling factors for child rights implementation (See annex) as well as an indicator checklist.

Among the lessons learned from a review of children's visibility in PRS/NDP processes, the following needs were identified (all of which have relevance for the current exercise):

- Greater awareness and understanding of child rights on the part of all program planners and policymakers;
- Greater availability and use of disaggregated data to respond to CRC principles of universality and non-discrimination;
- Stronger coordination between actors responsible for PRS/NDP and for those responsible for specific child rights-related sectors ('child-focused' programs);
- Increased attention to participation and protection rights (to supplement current tendencies to focus primarily on service delivery for survival and development);
- Stronger connections and continuities between agenda-setting, budgeting, implementation and monitoring;
- More broadly shared accountability for child rights outcomes, stronger accountability mechanisms, wider information-sharing and broader partnerships

## Diagnosing Child Friendly Social Protection

With the purpose of undertaking an analysis of child-sensitive social protection in five West African countries, commissioned by the UNICEF West and Central Africa Regional Office (WCARO), ODI developed a series of draft qualitative research instruments based on key informant interview methodologies exploring different aspects of social protection policies to assess the extent to which each of these incorporated analytical insights and priorities in relation to child poverty and vulnerability to ensure children's visibility.<sup>22</sup>

Key domains covered in the assessment included the overall political economy; institutional arrangements for social protection and programs in place; targeting issues; fiscal space and financing of social protection for children; and the linkages between social protection and child protection.

The research was informed by a growing international consensus on key principles for the development and assessment of child-sensitive social protection and resulted in a series of five regional thematic reports and five country case studies on social protection and children in West and Central Africa.<sup>23</sup> It also served as the basis for and stimulated work on the development of child-sensitive social protection policies, strategies and programs in a number of countries in the region. In Niger, for example, building on the child-sensitive social protection assessment, the government has established a multi-sectoral national policy on social protection, with current efforts underway for the development of action plans for each of its 5 strategic pillars.<sup>24</sup>

## Child Friendly Schools Quality Assessment Criteria: Manual for CFS

Child-friendly schools (CFS) embrace a multidimensional concept of quality and address the total needs of the child as a learner. The CFS manual offers a comprehensive guide to the approach, with general criteria defined for the assessment of 'child-friendliness' in schools, and examples drawn from a number of countries. The manual provides an introduction to the child-friendly concept, its underlying ideology and the key principles from which the main characteristics of a child-friendly school can be derived in different contexts and circumstances.

<sup>22</sup> Nicola Jones and Rebecca Holmes, 2009 (draft working documents).

<sup>23</sup> See, for example, the overview report: UNICEF WCARO and ODI (2009) Strengthening Social Protection for Children in West and Central Africa (February)

<sup>24</sup> République du Niger, Ministère de la Population, de la Promotion de la Femme et de la Protection de l'Enfant (2011) Politique Nationale de Protection Sociale

**Key principles for child-sensitive social protection**

- Policies and programs **avoid adverse impacts** on children, and reduce or mitigate social and economic risks that directly affect children's lives.
- Measures are effectively designed to **intervene as early as possible** where children are at risk, in order to prevent irreversible impairment or harm.
- Programs **consider the age- and gender-specific risks and vulnerabilities** of children throughout the lifecycle.
- Interventions aim to **mitigate the effects of shocks, exclusion and poverty on families**, recognizing that families raising children need support to ensure equal opportunity.
- Special provisions are in place to **reach children who are particularly vulnerable and excluded**, including children without parental care, and those who are marginalized within their families or communities due to their gender, disability, ethnicity, HIV and AIDS or other factors.
- Interventions are designed to **take into account the mechanisms and intra-household dynamics that may affect how children are reached**, with particular attention paid to the balance of power between men and women within the household and broader community.
- The **voices and opinions of children, their caregivers and youth are included** in the design of social protection systems and programs.

*Source: Developed from Joint statement on child-sensitive social protection (2009)*

The CFS manual offers 'pathways' to quality education rather than proscribed blueprints and provides practical guidance on the design, construction and maintenance of child-friendly schools as safe, welcoming environments in which children can learn, emphasizing links with the community, the influence of pedagogic considerations, cost effectiveness and sustainability. Specific domains covered include: the role of teaching aids and materials; the interaction between teacher and learner; the pedagogic process; school community relations; and school construction as part of the protective environment for children.

**Example of principles for assessment of quality education for child-friendly schools**

- How well boys and girls are prepared to start and continue school;
- How well they are received by schools and teachers prepared to meet their needs and uphold their rights;
- How far their general health and well-being are addressed as an integral part of promoting learning;
- How safe the schools are as places for learning and how completely they provide an overall gender sensitive environment that is conducive to learning;
- The extent to which schools and teachers respect the rights of children and operate in the best interest of the child;
- The extent to which child-centered teaching methods are embraced as good practice and standard methodology by teachers and the school;
- How far child participation is encouraged as standard practice in classroom interaction as well as in the broader operation and management of the school;
- The extent to which effort and resources are invested in creating stimulating classrooms that support active learning for all;
- The availability of adequate environmentally sustainable facilities, services and supplies that support the needs of the whole child and also of all children;
- The use of pedagogy that challenges and dismantles discrimination based on gender, ethnicity or social background.

Source: UNICEF (2009) *Manual: Child-Friendly Schools*

The CFS model has influenced numerous quality improvement programs in countries throughout the world, including in Viet Nam, where the Child-Friendly Learning Environment project placed particular emphasis on the development and application of a community-based monitoring and program assessment system (COMPAS) to enhance and facilitate child rights approaches and outcomes in education.

**Child Protection System Mapping and Assessment Toolkit<sup>25</sup>**

A Child Protection System Mapping and Assessment Toolkit has recently been developed as “an analytic tool for mapping and assessing existing child protection policies, laws and services for adequacy and to identify obstacles and opportunities in implementation, especially in reaching vulnerable or excluded groups.” Drawing from a wide array of materials representing the latest thinking in child protection from around the world, and tested in seven countries, its tools aim to help develop a system overview; assess resource mobilization and fiscal accountability; assess the protective environment for children; guide overall strategy development; and collect specific information on a number of key program and policy domains. These include: birth registration; child work/labor; harmful traditional practices; children without adequate family care or alternative care; psychical, sexual and psychological abuse and neglect; child mobility and trafficking; commercial sexual exploitation; children and justice; child protection in emergencies and armed conflicts.

25 [http://www.unicef.org/lac/Child\\_Friendly\\_Schools\\_Manual\\_EN\\_040809\(2\).pdf](http://www.unicef.org/lac/Child_Friendly_Schools_Manual_EN_040809(2).pdf)



A Comprehensive Toolkit and a Core Toolkit, accompanied by a Users' Guide provide for different degrees of mapping of national child protection systems, leading to a clearer picture of the strengths and gaps in those systems. The Toolkit contains twenty tools divided into five sections, all of which offer a potential template for adaptation at country level. The intent is to help users to identify and prioritize actions which will contribute to building an integrated and strengthened child protection system. The ultimate aim is to support the development of comprehensive effective and efficient child protection systems, appropriately structured and resourced, to reach and cater to children and their families.

This toolkit offers further insights and guidelines on how to identify the main country-specific child protection risks within the rights framework, and to examine the scope and capacity of the existing child protection system (ranging from formal to informal), accountability mechanisms, and resource mobilization approaches. According to this approach, a successful mapping and assessment should fulfill the following:

- Provide key stakeholders with a clear picture of the structure and functions of the current child protection system;
- Describe the current legal and normative framework, noting strengths as well as outlining the country's future policy agenda in child protection;
- Highlight the key risks facing children, and prioritize data requirements for monitoring and evaluating child protection in the country; identify additional data needs on less visible themes.
- Drawing on global best practices, assess the capacity of key formal and informal structures (ministries, agencies, partners, communities, etc.) to develop, administer and implement effectively, monitor and evaluate their child protection responsibilities;
- Identify and prioritize opportunities to improve service delivery;
- Bring key players together to support the development of the child protection system; and
- Establish the financial and human resources required to implement the program.

Specific questions are developed around each of the seven major elements that have been identified as the building blocks of an effective child protection system (see Table 1). Users of the toolkit are asked to identify their priorities for systems-building, and then apply the methodology in each of the selected domains. Additional attention may be needed to analyze important political economy and power dynamics, as well as incentive structures for the design and effective implementation of child protection systems.



**Table 1 Child protection system building priorities: Key elements and themes for assessment**

Elements of a child protection system	Themes for information-gathering
1. Laws, Policies, Standards and Regulations	(i) birth registration; (ii) child labor; (iii) harmful cultural practices (e.g., female genital mutilation/cutting, child marriage, discrimination); (iv) physically, sexually, and psychologically abused and neglected children; (iv) children without adequate family care or alternative care, (vi) child mobility and child trafficking; (vii) commercial sexual exploitation; (viii) children and justice; and (ix) child protection in emergencies/armed conflict.
2. Cooperation, Coordination and Collaboration	
3. Capacity Building	
4. Service and Service Delivery Mechanisms	
5. Communication, Education and Mobilization for Change	
6. Financial Resources	
7. Accountability Mechanisms	

Source: UNICEF 2010

Taken together, these examples provide extremely useful frameworks, guidelines, tools and principles for the development of a basic child-sensitive audit tool that is flexible enough to apply and adapt to a variety of programs and policies in Viet Nam.

## General Parameters to Consider in a Child Rights-Based Social Audit

### Scope

In line with the growing international experience accumulated in child-sensitive assessment methodologies, it can be seen that child rights-based audits can be conducted to assess both (i) overarching legal and policy frameworks, institutional structures and capacities, resources and planning processes (as is the case, for example, in the governance assessment tool developed for the Child-Friendly Communities Initiative, or the Policy Framework developed for the Global Child Poverty Study), as well as (ii) the particular content of policies and programs (as for example, is the case for Child-Friendly Schools which develop particular criteria for quality education against which assessment is made; or the mapping tool developed for assessment of child protection systems). It can also be used to assess, through its participatory processes, the degree to which (iii) stated program and policy goals and objectives for children are experienced on the ground (as, for example, suggested through qualitative methodologies proposed in the poverty and social impact assessment (PSIA) tool and specific participatory work with children). In each case, of course, the methodology needs to be adapted to include specific questions relative to the focus of assessment.

A child-sensitive audit can be conducted on policies and programs at both national and sub-national level and can be tailored to particular needs. It can

furthermore be applied to: (i) child focused policies and programs (for example, education, child protection, nutrition); (ii) broader social policies and programs with key child components (for example, health; social protection; training and employment promotion); (iii) other sectoral programs that may not have specific child components but that have a significant effect on children's wellbeing in households (agriculture, industry, environment, urban development); and (iv) macro-economic reforms; trade liberalization; fiscal policies, etc. which, though usually presented as 'child-neutral', can also have a significant impact on children.

While the principles of a child-rights-based social audit remain the same for all types of policies, its particular application requires in each case the development of nuanced sets of specific questions, may favor particular methodologies of assessment, and will involve different sets of participants.

It must also be recognized that the application of additional tools may be required to complement the information that it is possible to gather through the proposed child rights-based social audit methodology (for example standard impact assessments or evaluations demand rigorous quantitative data collection and analysis techniques that are beyond the scope of the current tool).

### **Over-arching principles, domains for analysis and criteria for assessment**

The Convention on the Rights of the Child provides an over-arching framework from which principles and criteria for a child rights-based social audit can be derived. The four core principles of the Convention are non-discrimination; devotion to the best interests of the child; the right to life, survival and development; and respect for the views of the child. In programmatic terms, the universal rights set out in the Convention are often clustered in terms of rights to survival (through health, nutrition, safe water and sanitation, adequate standard of living), development (education, training, leisure), participation (through consultative structures and processes), and protection (from violence, abuse, neglect). The notion of rights is accompanied by the notion of accountability, with responsibility for the realisation of child rights shared by 'duty-bearers' at different levels. From these rights and principles, policies, programs and institutional frameworks can be assessed according to a number of basic criteria, as illustrated in Table 2.

Table 2. Key CRC provisions and criteria for assessment

Key CRC principles/provisions	General Criteria for Assessment
<b>Non-discrimination and universality</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Disaggregated data systems used to identify disparities</li> <li>Universal service provision and special measures to address needs of disadvantaged children</li> </ul>
<b>Best interests of the child</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Policies/programs designed to foster positive outcomes for children and avoid harm (including mechanisms to identify and respond to potential negative impacts of broader national policies)</li> </ul>
<b>Respect for the views of the child</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participatory planning and M&amp;E processes with children</li> <li>Mechanisms to promote children's voice and representation</li> </ul>
<b>Rights clusters:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Survival</li> <li>Development</li> <li>Participation</li> <li>Protection</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existence, content, scope and quality of specific sectoral programs (health/nutrition/social protection education/training; child participation/protection, etc.) in line with international standards and national commitments;</li> <li>National development plans/policies/systems and structures that uphold and promote these rights</li> </ul>
<b>Accountability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mechanisms to expand awareness of the responsibility of duty-bearers; to enhance and evaluate performance; and to strengthen the capacity of rights-holders to hold duty-bearers to account for the realisation of child rights</li> </ul>

Obviously, such general criteria need to be adapted, refined, and detailed into particular sets of questions for the purposes of assessment, and linked as well to the specificities of national commitments as reflected in program and policy documents. For this, determination of the desired domain of analysis is required.

Table 3 below offers an example of how basic general parameters and criteria for assessment can be translated into specific questions that might be applied in a child rights-based social audit at the level of over-arching frameworks, processes and institutions (in overall development plans as well as for particular policies and programs). These are adapted from Child Friendly Cities assessment tools designed to monitor overall government commitment to children (in the manner of gender audits that seek to evaluate the degree to which gender issues are mainstreamed (systematically integrated into a given policy, program or organization). The general domains that are identified for assessment can be adapted, with some modifications, to both over-arching frameworks as well as particular sectors, policies or programs.

While such basic general parameters might apply to child rights-based social audits at the level of overarching frameworks or processes, individualized sets of standards or criteria against which to assess particular programs or policies need to be further developed and tailored in a manner similar to the development of specific monitoring indicators reflecting intended child outcomes in different domains (as in the examples given in the previous section of child friendly school criteria; or basic principles for child-sensitive social protection).

Table 3 Key assessment domains and basic criteria for assessment

Over-arching frameworks: Current situation	Particular sectors/policies/programs: Current situation	Progress towards meeting child-friendly criteria
<b>Disaggregated data collection and analysis (national/provincial/communal/sectoral levels)</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are mechanisms in place for data collection around children and young people?</li> <li>Are household data sets and routine administrative data systematically disaggregated by age (and gender)?</li> <li>Are disparities in child outcome indicators systematically captured and monitored?</li> <li>Is data on children and young people systematically analyzed, reported on and disseminated?</li> <li>Is available data used for planning purposes?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do such mechanisms exist for the particular policy/program?</li> <li>Do such data systematically capture sector-specific age and gender-disaggregated data?</li> <li>Are disparities in sector-specific child outcome indicators systematically captured and monitored?</li> <li>Is sector-specific data on outcomes for children and young people systematically analyzed, reported on and disseminated?</li> <li>Is available data used for planning purposes in this sector/program area?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are measures in place to establish and/or strengthen such mechanisms for disaggregated data collection?</li> </ul>
<b>Participatory planning and policymaking processes (national/provincial /communal/sectoral levels)</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are participatory planning processes and consultations in place for agenda setting and program development for children and young people?</li> <li>Are children and young people included in these planning processes?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are participatory planning processes and consultations in place for agenda setting and program development for children and young people in this particular program/sector?</li> <li>Are children and young people included in these planning processes?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are measures in place to establish or strengthen such participatory planning processes and consultations? In general? For children and young people specifically?</li> </ul>
<b>Enabling legal framework and strategy for child rights</b>		

Over-arching frameworks: Current situation	Particular sectors/policies/programs: Current situation	Progress towards meeting child-friendly criteria
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is there an overall strategy or plan in place and implemented to address child rights, development and wellbeing?</li> <li>Is a child law in place in conformity with CRC?</li> <li>Have national laws been revised with a review to harmonization with CRC?</li> <li>Are effective mechanisms and processes in place to enforce such laws?</li> <li>Is there systematic CRC monitoring &amp; reporting?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does this program/policy follow rights-based strategies with linkages to the CRC?</li> <li>If a child law is in place, is this program/policy in conformity with it?</li> <li>Are measures foreseen in the policy/program enforceable by law?</li> <li>Is information on this program/policy systematically integrated into the reporting on CRC implementation?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are measures in place to strengthen the overall legal framework for children?</li> <li>Are measures in place to review and harmonize sectoral programs with CRC principles and provisions?</li> </ul>
<b>Enabling institutional framework (national/provincial levels/communal/sectoral levels)</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are there specific ministerial departments, councils, commission or other bodies responsible for planning, implementation and monitoring of child rights?</li> <li>Are public officials and their partners systematically trained on child rights issues?</li> <li>Is there a specific structure with a mandate and resources for coordination around child rights?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is there a linkage between the ministerial department responsible for this policy/program and child rights bodies?</li> <li>Are the public officials responsible for this program systematically trained on child rights issues?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are measures in place to create or strengthen institutional frameworks for children and systematically build child-rights capacity?</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is there a mechanism to systematically allocate resources for children and young people out of the overall budget?</li> <li>Is there a mechanism to monitor expenditures for children?</li> <li>Are there effective processes in place to share information on the budget, and specifically on the portion allocated for children and young people?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is there a mechanism to ensure an appropriate level of resource allocation for children and young people in this sector/program?</li> <li>Is there a mechanism to monitor expenditures for children in this program/sector?</li> <li>Are there effective processes in place to share information on the budget for this sector/program, and specifically on the portion allocated for children and young people?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are measures in place to strengthen budget planning and allocation and implementation processes to ensure effective investments in child rights?</li> </ul>
<b>Child rights and wellbeing monitoring, evaluation and accountability (national/provincial/communal/sectoral levels)</b>		

Over-arching frameworks: Current situation	Particular sectors/policies/programs: Current situation	Progress towards meeting child-friendly criteria
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have specific indicators been developed to monitor trends on key child rights and wellbeing issues?</li> <li>Are such indicators included in regular monitoring exercises and used for program/policy review and revision?</li> <li>Do monitoring exercises take special consideration of disparities in child rights trends and indicators (by gender, location, disability, socio-economic status, ethnicity or social category?)</li> <li>Are mechanisms in place to monitor the effects and impacts of key national policy reforms or macro-economic conditions?</li> <li>Are mechanisms in place to take course corrective measures in case monitoring reveals negative outcomes for children as a result of key national policy reforms or macro-economic conditions?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have specific indicators been developed to monitor trends on key child rights and wellbeing issues in this sector/program?</li> <li>Are such indicators included in regular monitoring exercises and used for program/policy review and revision?</li> <li>Do sector/program monitoring exercises take special consideration of disparities in child rights trends and indicators (by gender, location, disability, socio-economic status, ethnicity or social category?)</li> <li>Are mechanisms in place to take course corrective measures in case monitoring reveals negative outcomes for children as a result of sector processes and/or program/policy implementation?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are measures in place to strengthen existing data collection, monitoring and evaluation efforts around child rights and wellbeing?</li> </ul>
<b>Advocacy efforts and partnerships (national/provincial/communal/sectoral levels)</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are there efforts to raise public awareness of children's rights and the responsibilities of duty-bearers?</li> <li>Is there a special advocate or ombudsperson for children?</li> <li>Are community groups, private organizations, faith-based organizations and others included and supported in efforts to advance child rights?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are there efforts to raise public awareness of children's rights and the responsibilities of duty-bearers in this particular sector/program?</li> <li>Are there key personnel within the sector with special responsibility to advocate and uphold the rights of children?</li> <li>Are community groups, private organizations, faith-based organizations and others included and supported in efforts to advance child rights?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are measures in place to enhance advocacy and communication around children and to strengthen and expand partnerships?</li> </ul>

Source: Adapted from Child-Friendly Cities assessment criteria and other materials

For any child rights-based social audit that is to be conducted on a particular policy or program, therefore, there are a number of key steps to consider. Figure 1, drawn from the child-friendly schools manual, illustrates in the example of education, the basic process that is needed to go from 'first principles' of the CRC and national planning priorities to the identification of desired features, the development of standards, and the analysis of gaps.

**Figure 1 Developing assessment criteria from key principles of the CRC**



*Source: UNICEF (2009) Manual, Child friendly schools*

### **Entry points for integration of a child-sensitive audit in national planning processes**

The recent work discussed above on integrating child rights into national development processes and poverty reduction strategies has identified a number of entry points in the planning cycles that are critical to consider so that child rights are reflected throughout the process.<sup>26</sup> These entry points have equal relevance for child-sensitive audits. A five-point framework has been developed which links the main phases of national planning processes to particular actions that can be taken to ensure that child rights remain fully visible and integrated (see Table 4 below).

<sup>26</sup> UNICEF/EC Child Rights Toolkit. Component 3 (Draft 2010)

**Table 4 Entry points for integration of child rights into national plans and planning processes**

Phases of national planning	Measures to integrate children's rights, interests and concerns
1. <b>Agenda-setting and development of a policy framework</b>	Identify evidence on children's experiences of poverty and wellbeing (e.g., via a child rights situational analysis); use this evidence as an advocacy tool; make the evidence policy-friendly
2. <b>Consultation and participation (and subsequent prioritisation/target setting)</b>	Identify child rights stakeholders and duty-bearers for systematic consultation on the planning and policy document; facilitate children's safe and effective participation
3. <b>National/sub-national budgeting</b>	Undertake child rights budgeting analysis (look at allocations to policies and programs with a bearing on children but also conceive of budget allocations in terms of rights outcomes rather than outputs); ensure that policies pledged in the national plans are realisable according to the budget
4. <b>Implementation (strategies and rollout plans): national, sector and sub-national</b>	Identify child rights advocates within the various implementation mechanisms and provide guidance on how these mechanisms can utilise child rights planning principles in the delivery of plans, programs and services
5. <b>Monitoring and evaluation</b>	Ensure that indicators are sensitive to child rights (including through disaggregated data covering key child rights domains) and based on outcomes rather than outputs; feed the evidence generated back into subsequent planning processes; harmonise the evidence captured by non-governmental agencies; involve children in M&E exercises

Source: Compiled from UNICEF/EC Child Rights Toolkit. Component 3 (Draft 2010)

Child rights-based social audit tools can be applied for effective contributions at each phase of the planning cycle, with each phase reinforcing and contributing to the next. In agenda-setting, the literature review and policy assessment offered by a child rights-based social audit could help uncover gaps in existing policies and identify priorities for attention. The child rights-based social audit methodology includes extensive processes of consultation with key stakeholders, including children, which would reinforce participatory planning processes around children's issues. During the implementation phase, an audit of key policies could help uncover the distance between what is on paper and what is happening on the ground. As such, the audit methodology contributes key insights into the overall M&E efforts, including helping to identify key domains that require intensified analysis and evaluation.



### Key Points to Retain

- A child rights-based social audit is a specific social auditing tool that aims to maximize opportunities and development outcomes for children by assisting governments and their partners to:
  - take stock, in a participatory fashion, of the degree to which children's rights, needs and interests are taken into consideration in national policies and programs at different levels;
  - identify potential gaps in both plans and their implementation; and
  - discern priorities for action to improve performance.
- Such a tool is important in Viet Nam as a matter of rights, of equity, of poverty reduction and development and of urgency in response to key development challenges.
- As there is no one standard, internationally available child rights-focused social audit approach, the current tool builds on diverse existing child-sensitive assessment approaches and both draws on and adapts key methodologies utilized in the gender audit tool already piloted in Viet Nam.
- The Convention on the Rights of the Child provides an over-arching framework from which principles and criteria for a child rights-based social audit can be derived according to its core principles and provisions of non-discrimination; the best interests of the child; the right to life, survival, development and protection and respect for the views of the child as well as its emphasis on accountability.
- Child rights-based social audits can be applied for effective contributions at each phase of the planning cycle, from planning and agenda-setting, to implementation, monitoring and evaluation. They can also be applied to the overall institutional framework.

## OVERVIEW OF METHOD- OLOGIES

### Key Methodologies

The generic tool proposed for use in a child rights-based social audit is adapted from the gender audit tool which is already familiar to government officials in Viet Nam. As set out in the gender audit tool-kit prepared for Viet Nam, “Gender audits are a tool for evaluating the degree to which gender issues are mainstreamed (systematically integrated) into a given policy, program or organization. Through a gender audit, the facilitators of the audit will examine all facets of a given subject – be it a program, office, or institution – in order to determine whether gender is adequately and appropriately incorporated into objectives and targets, project design and implementation, as well as monitoring and evaluation (M&E), to ensure that outcomes and policies align with higher level objectives on gender.”<sup>27</sup> This is the same approach that can be applied to the assessment of program alignment and implementation according to the degree to which they take into consideration children’s interests, needs and rights, according to principles of the CRC and national commitments.

The gender audit tool proposes a primarily ‘qualitative’ approach and sets out three main methods of data collection:

- (i) document review;
- (ii) key informant interviews (KII); and
- (iii) focus group discussions (FGD).<sup>28</sup>

The child rights-based tool builds on and adapts these same methodologies, with the inclusion of children and their caregivers in focus group discussions and key informant interviews, and with

- (iv) a proposed fourth methodology focused on participatory processes with children.

It is widely recognized that such qualitative methodologies offer a valuable complement to more quantitative methods derived primarily from administrative data or surveys; as such, qualitative methods are a key ingredient of the social audit approach. The following provides an overview of the key methodologies proposed for a child rights-based social audit.

### Document review

This is an essential first step for any research or assessment process and critical as a means of both (i) reviewing any previous work or assessment that has been carried out in a given area, and (ii) linking analysis of the goals, strategies and

27 Gender Audit Methodology. A Tool to Assess the Performance of Viet Nam’s Social Economic Development Plan” (Draft, January 2012).

28 It should be noted that the gender audit methodology also makes use of individual self-assessment questionnaires which, as survey instruments, seek in some sense to quantify the degree to which gender mainstreaming is integrated across government. The child-sensitive audit approach proposed here does not include such questionnaires. This is primarily because the mandate for and knowledge of the need for integration of child-specific issues into national development plans and programs may not be as widespread across government as is the case for gender mainstreaming. It is felt, therefore, that a more qualitative ‘collective’ approach through focus groups coupled with selected key informant interviews and document reviews would provide the most pertinent results, sufficient for highlighting gaps and offering concrete indications for the way forward.

objectives set out in national plans, policies and programs, with implementation on the ground. It represents, in a sense, the required 'homework' that is necessary to undertake before the design of other data collection instruments, as it provides a basis for the development of concrete questions for further exploration.

It is important to identify at the outset all of the key documents that are imperative to consider for the analysis, while at the same time leaving room for ongoing analysis of others that may come to light in the course of the assessment, audit or review. It is also important to establish some sort of framework to organize, classify or otherwise tabulate the results of the analysis as well as to record qualitative assessment.

An initial review of documents can generate a number of key questions or critical topics to examine according to the content set out. Some of these questions may help identify the need for additional documents to review; others might guide the development of focus group discussions or key informant interviews. Taken together, these questions will also help in developing the precise framework for documentary analysis against the criteria set out.

### Focus group discussions (FGD)

A focus group is a group interview of approximately six to twelve people who share similar characteristics or common interests. A facilitator guides the group based on a predetermined set of topics. The facilitator creates an environment that encourages participants to share their perceptions and points of view. The group dynamic can provide useful information that individual data collection does not provide. Focus groups are a qualitative data collection method, meaning that the data is descriptive and cannot be measured numerically. Focus groups are, however, often designed as part of mixed-methodologies (both quantitative and qualitative). They are particularly useful : (i) in generating more in-depth information on perceptions, insights, attitudes, experiences, or beliefs; (ii) In gathering additional information as an adjunct to quantitative data collection; and (iii) in fostering participatory process of research and consultation.

The questions and the manner in which the focus group is facilitated will vary based on the type of participants. Planning for a focus group for children, for example, will be different than planning one for government officials and may require a facilitator skilled at working with children. Gender and other social considerations may need to be taken into account when structuring a focus group, to ensure that participants feel comfortable in expressing themselves.

#### Important:

In terms of stakeholder involvement, it is important to ensure adequate representation of both men and women in social audits so that the views of both sexes are reflected in discussions and proposed solutions.

It is possible to hold 'mixed' focus groups, made up of heterogeneous categories of people if, for example, the aim is to confront different perspectives and views on a particular issue, or to communicate the results of earlier homogeneous group discussions. In such cases, it is important to establish non-threatening conditions where representatives of each group can feel free to air their views without embarrassment, anger, humiliation or fear of reprisal. If such conditions cannot be assured, the results of individual group discussions can rather be communicated to other groups by the facilitator.

## Key Informant Interviews (KII)

Key informant interviews are qualitative, in-depth interviews of people selected for their experience and first-hand knowledge about a topic of interest. The interviews are loosely structured, relying on a list of issues to be discussed. Key informant interviews resemble a conversation among acquaintances, allowing a free flow of ideas and information. Interviewers frame questions spontaneously, probe for information and take notes, which are elaborated on later. This method is useful in all phases of development activities—identification, planning, implementation, and evaluation. Key informant interviews can provide information that can help interpret or provide explanations for the results of quantitative data collection measures or surveys; they can also generate recommendations for further research and issues to explore. A key advantage of this method is that it provides flexibility to explore new ideas and issues not anticipated during planning. It also supports consultative processes that are important in approaches seeking to foster participation and build consensus around particular social issues.

**A number of steps are important in preparing, conducting and analysing interviews. These include:**

- (i) selection of knowledgeable persons;
- (ii) preparation of key question/issue guides;
- (iii) establishment of rapport (explaining purpose, intended use of information, issues of anonymity or not, etc.);
- (iv) sequencing of questions starting (with factual questions before questions requiring opinions and judgments; current issues before past or future);
- (v) careful phrasing of questions to elicit detailed information and minimization of translation difficulties;
- (vi) use of probing techniques building on initial responses with follow up questions to gather more specific information;
- (vii) maintaining a neutral, non-judgemental and sympathetic attitude;
- (viii) appropriate note-taking (may or may not require the use of recordings);
- (ix) immediate analysis of results (using common categories for interview summary sheets); and
- (x) interpretation, write-up and presentation of findings (including use of direct quotations).

## Participatory exercises with children

Participatory research with children draws on existing qualitative methods (such as focus group discussions and others) and often adapts or expands them in ways most appropriate for eliciting children's views and perspectives. The most

creative approaches often involve games (including drama, role play), visual techniques (for example children's drawings, and photo or video reporting); and story-telling, among other things. As with all research, it is important to keep in mind age groups, gender, and other sources of differentiation in the design of the research. Participatory

Participatory research with children presents specific ethical issues for the consideration concerning consent, confidentiality and protection from harm. Key principles, in addition to basic research ethics, include obtaining consent from both the child and the parent or guardian; seeking the child's assent; informing children that, where information concerning risks to themselves or others emerges, confidentiality cannot be guaranteed; and building methods of providing support to children into the research proposal. Qualitative researchers should adhere to existing guidelines on these topics<sup>29</sup>.

International promotion of participatory research with children has been growing, with strong roots in child rights approaches that aim to fulfill and enhance children's right to participation and allow their voice and perspectives to be heard on the issues of greatest concern to them. Integrating the views of children is important because children's own experiences (of poverty, deprivation, exclusion, wellbeing, etc.) are critical and their perspectives are different from those of adults. A number of recent experiences have been supported by UNICEF. These include involving children in child poverty and disparity analyses through a combination of focus group discussions, in-depth interviews and other techniques (numerous examples from different regions, including experiments with children making videotapes of their environment in Uganda); drawing on children's views as part of situation analysis processes (recent examples of Zambia 2008; Algeria 2011); focus groups with children as key stakeholders in the design of national social protection programs and strategies (for example in Kenya and Mauritania); and involvement of children in social monitoring and evaluation (including evaluation of a cash transfer impact assessment in Malawi and recent efforts to involve children and young people in 'real-time' monitoring in Uganda).

It has been noted that Viet Nam, as a country involved in the ongoing longitudinal 'Young Lives' cohort study and research program, has been able to draw on results of a number of different research exercises with children and also to compare results over time.

## Adaptation for specific purposes

The questions provided in the proposed tool in Modules 4-8 are generic, developed as guidance for conducting a child rights-based social audit at various stages of the planning and implementation process, outlining key steps along the way. But, as noted above, these questions should be adapted and refined according to the subject of the audit. An analysis of policies would require a slightly different approach to an analysis of programs, just as an analysis focusing primarily on the integration of objectives related to children in planning documents would be different from an analysis focused more particularly on program implementation or, even more complicated, impact.

A particular distinction might also be made between analysis of policies, plans and programs (and institutional arrangements and capacity for their implementation) in "child-focused" sectors (e.g. child protection, education, health) and a

29 For example: Neill, Sarah (2005) "Research with children: A critical review of the guidelines," *Journal of Child Health Care*, 9 (1), 46-58.

child-sensitivity analysis of “non-child-focused” sectors (e.g. rural development, social protection, others). The scope of questions in the latter case is likely to be more limited since sector policies/plans/programs and government officials working in them do not necessarily have a mandate to promote child rights or incorporate such a lens into their work, although it would be very relevant for them to do so to achieve positive outcomes for children. The questions asked through the different instruments should reflect this understanding.

A significant conceptual matter that may therefore need to be defined collectively at the outset of the exercise is the difference between the requirements for ‘child-focused’ programs and the importance of ‘child-sensitivity’ in broader development plans, policies and programs. In part, the distinction is one of ‘direct’ or ‘indirect’ beneficiaries: In ‘child-focused’ programs, such as education, child health, nutrition, child protection, etc., children are targeted as the direct intended beneficiaries while in broader sectoral programs, children may not be targeted at all or may simply be assumed to benefit as indirect beneficiaries of measures designed to benefit their households or communities. Such distinctions should be discussed at the outset and will be an important factor in guiding the development of specific questions on ‘child-sensitivity’.

## Preparation and Planning

A key step to start the audit process is to identify exactly what is being audited (e.g. a plan, a policy, a program?); of which broad type (i.e. 'child-focused' or broader?) and at which stage (during planning? implementation? evaluation?). Geographic considerations and level (national or sub-national program) should also be identified. A 'concept note' should be developed at this stage, outlining the overall purpose and intent of the audit, articulating its objectives, and explaining its potential uses and users.

The team that is to conduct the review and provide oversight for the process must be established, with clear identification of roles and responsibilities between the government (at different levels), national and/or international partners, internal or external expertise (as required). Normally some sort of a steering committee is created for overall guidance, direction, management and oversight of the process, anchored in the ministerial department that is commissioning the exercise. This body will have oversight responsibility for planning and implementation of the audit, as well as for communication of its results and development of an action plan to follow up on audit recommendations.

A technical team for implementation of the audit must also be established, with key decisions to be taken by the steering committee on the mix of technical expertise and skill sets required; on whether the team will be an internal or external body, or perhaps mixed; and on how it will report to the steering committee. For a child rights-based social audit, experience and skills in qualitative assessment techniques, research with children, gender analysis and child rights are key considerations. Sector-specific knowledge might also be important, depending on the domain to be explored. Determining what internal and /or external technical expertise and assistance may be required, developing Terms of Reference and undertaking competitive bidding processes as necessary for its procurement will be key tasks of the steering committee.

Steps in the preparatory process thereafter include:

- Identifying the key documents that need to be collected and reviewed: These will, of course, depend on the domain being assessed.
- Identifying the key stakeholders who need to be contacted for interviews and consultation (which 'categories of stakeholders are most important - for focus groups, for interviews?); and
- Determining the locations where these consultations and interviews will occur (in the capital? in the regions? which ones? what are the criteria for selection?)
- Establishing a budget covering all steps of the process and line item inputs: These include, for example, staff time, technical expertise, travel budget, cost of materials, field assistance, orientation or training, local transportation, meals and refreshments etc. ;
- Developing and maintaining an overall timeline and implementation plan: This should take into consideration scope and extent of the audit; government planning and policy cycle; the availability of public officials and local populations; logistical issues linked to access if field work is to be conducted in remote zones, etc.

## CONDUCTING A CHILD- SENSITIVE AUDIT: KEY STEPS AND METHODO- LOGIES



It is important at the outset to decide on the desired scope and degree of 'representativeness' of the audit: although based primarily on qualitative methods, it is good to try as much as possible to gather views from as wide a range of sources as possible (from different settings, different ministries, different regions, etc.) in order to construct as complete a picture as possible of the policy/plan or program under assessment. If resources are limited, of course, the scope will necessarily need to be scaled down, but efforts can still be made to get as broad a cross-section as possible.

#### Who Will Facilitate Focus Group Discussions?

Identifying appropriate facilitators for the focus group discussions is critical.

When the facilitator is someone from a government agency, people can feel hesitant to speak their minds, even if he or she is a "neutral" agency not directly connected with the service provider, such as the Ministry of Planning.

People may feel more at ease if government officials do not participate in the focus group discussions and instead, the facilitators come from research institutes, NGOs, local committees or community-based organizations.

In addition, staff of the service provider and other government officials should not normally be present participating in or observing the community focus group discussions.

This preparation process should be given adequate time in the overall timeline that is established for the project. Procuring any needed external expertise, for example, is often a very time-consuming exercise and needs to be done well in advance of actual implementation. Identifying experienced field researchers may also take time and field workers may require additional orientation and/or training on the tool. Locating key documents such as reports or data on programs can be surprisingly difficult, demanding time and effort for the ministries, departments or research bodies involved. It is important, therefore, to clearly identify which documents are essential for the analysis and communicate this with the appropriate authorities as early as possible.

Permits or authorization to speak with government personnel from different departments and local community members may also need to be arranged in advance through the appropriate channels, often by written letter or administrative instruction (depending on the local context) from the lead ministry or head of the steering committee to other departments and regional or communal branches. It is useful, in such written communications, to attach the concept note outlining the overall purposes of the exercise. A preliminary workshop (even half a day) with key ministry officials might also be useful as a communication method to brief others on the plans for the audit.

Once the above is underway and plans defined, the following steps should take place:

- Developing a draft methodology and tools: These include a document review matrix, elaboration of specific question guides for focus groups and key informant interviews, and design of any additional participatory methods with children that may be identified as useful. All of these should be aligned to the policy/plan/program to be analysed, as well as to the structure in place for its implementation (at the national or local level) (see Table 4). Potential translation issues should be considered and addressed at the outset in the case of multi-lingual environments.



- Piloting the approach: Given that this is a new approach and the concepts and issues presented might be unfamiliar to both auditors and participants, there should be a pre-test of interview guides in the design stage, particularly for lower level officials/staff and with the different line ministries involved. Likewise, it is important to pilot focus group discussion to ensure that questions are not too broad and that they are well understood. It is important to share and discuss focus group questions with concerned government departments in the design stage to ensure that questions are focused and that the language is clear.

Once the tools have been developed and – ideally – pre-tested, a more detailed implementation plan could be developed, reflecting, for example, any changes in approach that might have resulted from the pre-tests, and establishing concrete dates for field work, accompanied by a final detailed description of the research protocol, and finalization of all tools and required documentation. It is crucial to maintain clear documentation of the process both for replication purposes and to ensure rigorous implementation. Regular meetings of the audit team or steering committee should be planned at various stages of implementation, to guide and provide feedback on processes underway, address potential constraints that arise, determine potential modifications to the plan, etc.

**Table 5 Overview of Child-Sensitive Audit: Key Categories, Questions, Methods and Criteria for analysis**

Some Key Audit Categories and Questions	Primary Methods	Criteria for Analysis
<b>Planning Processes and Analysis</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are plans based on disaggregated data that identifies potential disparities in the situation of children?</li> <li>• Are planning processes inclusive, transparent and participatory?</li> <li>• Are adequate financial resources allocated in the plan?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document review (situation analysis, data and indicators)</li> <li>• Focus group discussions with planners and beneficiaries</li> <li>• Key informant interviews with planners and beneficiaries</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Existence of a child rights situation analysis</li> <li>• Availability of disaggregated data to identify disparities (age, gender, locality, ethnic group, socio-economic status, disability...)</li> <li>• Use of disaggregated data and information from a child rights situation analysis to inform policy development and program plans</li> <li>• Participatory planning processes undertaken with involvement of key stakeholders (including caregivers)</li> <li>• Special mechanisms and processes to engage participation of children and solicit their views on plans that concern them directly</li> <li>• Specific budget allocations for activities designed to achieve child related outcomes (child-sensitive budgeting)</li> </ul>

Some Key Audit Categories and Questions	Primary Methods	Criteria for Analysis
<p><b>Objectives, Strategies and Agenda-Setting</b></p> <p><b>How well / to what extent do policies, plans and programs reflect overarching national commitments to children? (i.e. CRC, national legislation)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>In child-focused programs:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Are there child-specific objectives which capture the different needs of girls and boys across their lifecycle?</li> <li>○ Do these objectives reflect national commitments to the CRC?</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>In non-child-focused programs:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Is there a mechanism for consideration of potential effects or impacts on children?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document review (of plans, policies, programs)</li> <li>• Focus group discussions with policymakers and planners</li> <li>• Key informant interviews with policymakers and planners</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Specific policies, legislation and decrees that reflect and promote the core principles and specific guarantees of the CRC</li> <li>• Specific reference in program design and objectives to child-sensitive goals, indicators and objectives spelled out in higher level policies/legislation</li> <li>• Objectives for children derived from key priorities identified in the situation analysis</li> <li>• Specific objectives and strategies to address disparities in the situation of children (based on gender; urban/rural; regional; ethnic; socio-economic status; disability....)</li> <li>• For non child-focused programs: Mechanism for consideration of potential impact of programs on the wellbeing of children</li> </ul>
<p><b>Program implementation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>To what extent are program, plan and policy objectives for children being followed through in practice and implemented on the ground?</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document review (of program assessments, evaluations, project reports, etc)</li> <li>• Key informant interviews with policymakers / implementers</li> <li>• FGD with implementers and with children</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Program activities specifically designed to improve child wellbeing effectively underway according to plans</li> <li>• Continuous use of data and information from child rights monitoring and assessment to inform program implementation.</li> <li>• Views of program beneficiaries (including children) systematically consulted during implementation phase to monitor degree of satisfaction with program activities/ services</li> <li>• Specific considerations during program implementation of ways to maximize benefits / minimize negative impacts on children</li> </ul>

Some Key Audit Categories and Questions	Primary Methods	Criteria for Analysis
<b>Monitoring and Evaluation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do monitoring indicators adequately reflect objectives related to child rights and needs?</li> <li>Do data systems provide regular, reliable and timely information on children (disaggregated by age, gender, locality, ethnic minority, disability, ...)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Document review (M&amp;E plans ; monitoring reports; evaluations)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existence of program indicators to monitor nationally-established child-related objectives (in national development programs, laws, policies)</li> <li>Degree to which indicators and data collection are disaggregated (age, gender, locality, ethnicity, socio-economic status, disability)</li> <li>Degree to which program monitoring of beneficiaries is disaggregated</li> <li>Improvements registered in children's wellbeing (as revealed through evaluations/assessments as well as the views of beneficiaries)</li> </ul>
<b>Institutional environment and capacity</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is there political will at different levels of government to make children's issues a priority?</li> <li>Is there the technical capacity to raise the visibility of children's issues in policy and programming?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Key informant interviews (policymakers and program implementers)</li> <li>Focus group discussions (policymakers and program implementers)</li> <li>Document review (primarily for training plans, staff profiles, accountability mechanisms, etc.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clear understanding amongst policymakers/program implementers (at different levels) of what it means for a policy/program/project to be 'child-sensitive'</li> <li>Clear understanding amongst policymakers/program implementers (at different levels) about why it is relevant to ensure that policies/programs are child-sensitive</li> <li>Accountability mechanisms for achieving results that are favourable for children</li> <li>Staff knowledge and skills to reflect child relevant issues in programs (assessed through both 'objective' measures - level/type of training - and subjective measures, including staff perceptions of capacity)</li> <li>Existence of plans to reinforce staff capacity and understanding</li> </ul>

## DOCUMENT REVIEW

As outlined above, this is an essential first step for any research or assessment process and critical as a means of both (i) reviewing any previous work or assessment that has been carried out in a given area, and (ii) linking analysis of the goals, strategies and objectives set out in national plans, policies and programs, with implementation on the ground. It represents, in a sense, the required ‘homework’ that is necessary to undertake before the design of other data collection instruments, as it provides a basis for the development of concrete questions for further exploration. Its value-added is inestimable for it anchors the assessment in the clear ‘black and white’ of written information, ready for the later colours to be added from stakeholders’ views.

In this phase, key documents (such as the over-arching national development plan at the national and provincial levels, and key policy/program documentation) are assembled and reviewed, according to the criteria defined in the matrix presented below, to determine the extent to which policies and programs, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation are child-sensitive.

When identifying policies and programs for a child rights-based social audit, it might be important and appropriate to include both those that are child focused and those that might not be, but that can have direct or indirect impacts on children (depending on the scope and the depth of the audit). It is thus important to clarify that the likelihood of finding explicitly articulated child-related concerns will be greater in documents related to child focused sectors than in those that are not. This needs to be reflected accordingly in the audit’s conclusions and recommendations.

It would be useful to be clear about the documents required for the audit so as not to over-burden the Department participating in the audit and to allow sufficient time for government authorities to locate relevant documents.

Documents reviewed should include all key program documents, broader strategy documents, mid-term reports, M&E frameworks, impact assessments, mission reports etc.

Documents can be scored on key criteria from 0-3, across several indicators. An average across documents can be calculated, but a narrative analysis of strengths and weaknesses is invaluable. A brief guidance for this narrative analysis is provided below.

The following worksheet is an example of the type of assessment worksheet that can be developed to explore the extent and manner in which child-sensitivity is treated in program documents. Depending on the type of documents being analyzed, this table may be used in part or in whole, as applicable, and should be modified based on the type of project documents being evaluated. The worksheet provides examples for assessment of 1) objectives and strategies; and 2) monitoring and evaluation as set out in program/policy documents. Additional worksheets would need to be developed for specific assessment of other domains of analysis as identified above (planning processes and analysis; program implementation; institutional environment / capacity, etc.)

### Document Assessment Worksheets

For each document, fill in the document assessment worksheet below, scoring criteria on a scale of 0-3, and providing comments as necessary. Fill in the score in the middle column and record more explanations, details, quotes and page numbers in the column on the right. For ease of use the worksheet is divided into

“objectives and strategies” and “monitoring and evaluation”. They can be joined if a document contains both “objectives and strategies”, as well as “monitoring and evaluation”.

- The worksheet can be modified if needed or adapted to use a set of criteria that apply to the type of documents reviewed.

Document Assessment Worksheet – Policy, Planning or Program Documents

0 – Statement is not reflected at all in the document

1 – Statement is reflected in a limited fashion

2 – Statement is reflected adequately

3 – Statement is reflected very well (or extensively ) in the document

Criteria	Score (0 1 2 3)	Comments (explain scoring – give examples or quote – include page number)
<b>Objectives and Strategies</b>		
Child rights concepts are used to analyze or inform the situation presented in the document		
National policy goals towards progressive realisation of child rights are clearly reflected or indicated in program design		
Policy/program objectives specifically address and promote child rights and welfare		
Objectives for children are derived from key priorities identified in a rights-based situation analysis		
Objectives are disaggregated by gender, age, and other key criteria that may be a source of disparities		
Document includes specific objectives and strategies to address disparities in the situation of children (based on gender; urban/rural; regional; ethnic; socio-economic status; disability....)		
Documents use child-sensitive language that promotes awareness of children as rights-holders		
Programs are designed with the participation of children's groups/care-givers.		
(For non child-focused programs) Program includes mechanism for consideration of the potential impact on the wellbeing of children		
Total score for document - Add up scores =		Average Score for the document : total /number of assessment criteria =

## Document Assessment Worksheet – Policy, Planning or Program Documents

0 – Statement is not reflected at all in the document

1 – Statement is reflected in a limited fashion

2 – Statement is reflected adequately

3 – Statement is reflected very well (or extensively ) in the document

Criteria	Score (0 1 2 3)	Comments (explain scoring – give examples or quote – include page number)
<b>Monitoring and Evaluation (i.e. plans, frameworks and reports)</b>		
<i>Note: If the planning or program document includes an M&amp;E framework, analyse as part of same worksheet.</i>		
Programs include disaggregated monitoring of beneficiaries (by gender, age, locality, etc.).		
For adult beneficiaries information is included about whether they have children		
There are child-relevant indicators and objectives outlined in the document		
Data-collection systems and strategies include sex- and age-disaggregated indicators		
Indicators address children's age-related development needs		
There is a baseline against which to measure progress on child wellbeing		
Children's voices/participation are included in M&E frameworks (e.g. participatory social audit methods including children)		
Mechanisms are in place to utilize M&E to inform policy and program design or adjustment		
Total score for document - Add up scores =		Average score for the document: total / number of assessment criteria =

## Qualitative Assessment

The document review should be accompanied by a narrative outlining the strengths and weaknesses found in the document with regards to the inclusion of child-sensitive issues, using the document review criteria as a basis. The narrative may include missed opportunities in terms of analysing or taking into account children's rights / needs or impacts, or suggestions on how to strengthen child-sensitivity.

Example of narrative:

*"The provincial education program planning document does not address the drop-out ratio for female and male students. It does not disaggregate drop-out rates for boys and girls. While the primary school female students' drop-out rate has been reduced in recent years, securing the attendance of students and preventing drop-outs is something that still needs to be addressed by schools, families and communities with effective strategies. The document does not analyze the underlying causes for girls dropping out, or why girl's drop-out rates are higher than boys', such as girls having to do more housework than boys; and in the case of poor families, boys are often given higher priority. It also does not analyze drop-out issues of boys and girls for ethnic communities."*



## FOCUS GROUP DISCUS- SIONS

Focus group discussions (FGD) are useful for gathering qualitative information about the extent to which policy and program design and implementation is child-sensitive, including at the service delivery and beneficiary level. They are also useful for gathering additional information about the overall institutional environment and staff capacity for child-sensitive program/policy planning and implementations. In order to best serve these different purposes, separate FGDs should be planned for at least the following categories of people:

- Key officials and program officers/ staff and service providers (in charge of design, planning or implementation/service delivery) at both the national and local levels, as appropriate. It is important to ensure that FGD participants are grouped according level or function (for example planners; M&E staff; health service providers, etc.) in order to generate data that is not too general. Community-based organizations and private service providers should also be included if active in the domain.

### Important:

It is important to ensure, as much as possible, a balanced representation of both men and women / (or boys and girls in the case of children) in all FGD. In some contexts, gender-specific FGDs may be required as the most appropriate means of eliciting open discussion and sharing of views. Other socially pertinent categories such as language group, ethnicity, urban/rural residence, etc. should also be considered in the planning of FGD.

- Children's caregivers: This is particularly important to assess perceptions and experiences of programs designed for the youngest age groups of children (health and nutrition programs, early child development, etc.) as well as to gather information on the child-sensitivity of broader programs for which children may be indirect beneficiaries (such as household social protection allowances, etc.)
- Children themselves: For some specific issues / areas of analysis, FGD should be undertaken with children – particularly as primary beneficiaries of programs – in order to elicit children's opinion about the extent to which specific programs address their needs or reflect their priorities. FGD with children should be age-appropriate and conducted by researchers with experience working with children to ensure they are encouraged to participate in a non-threatening environment, respecting principles for ethical research with children. They can be accompanied by other child-appropriate participatory research techniques as outlined above.

The following 'templates' are provided to illustrate the overall approach as well as to identify the different kinds of questions important to take into consideration for different groups of people. These templates would need to be further modified or adapted for the particular needs of the audit being planned.

## Questions for Officials in Charge of Planning and Implementation

Facilitators should introduce themselves, and provide participants with the objectives and background of the study. It is ideal to have at least two facilitators, one to ask questions and guide the discussions (including through additional 'prompt' questions to stimulate discussions); another to record responses, taking care, as much as possible, to write down the precise wording of particular responses, and to get consensus on the overall response (i.e., 1, 2, 3, 4, don't know). Facilitators should stress that this is not in any way an examination; there are no wrong answers, and no one's answers will be reported or attributed without their explicit permission

### A. Overview questions: objective-setting/planning/institutional mandate

- 1) Are child-centred outcomes part of your program and planning process?

0 Not at all	1. To a limited extent	2. To a moderate extent	3. To a significant extent	4. Fully	Don't Know
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- a) If so, which are the most important ones?

- b) If not, have these been discussed?

- Facilitator: Record key points of the discussion

- 2) Do you consider how your policy and program work links (directly or indirectly) to children's wellbeing and fulfilment of their rights?

0 Not at all	1. To a limited extent	2. To a moderate extent	3. To a significant extent	4. Fully	Don't Know
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- a) If so, can you describe those links?

- b) If not, what do you think the reasons are for the lack of links?

- Facilitator: Record key points of the discussion

- 3) Are there institutional requirements to reflect child rights related goals (or MDG goals and targets that link to children, or high level policy goals related to children at the national level) in planning tools / road maps?

0 Not at all	1. To a limited extent	2.To a moderate extent	3. To a significant extent	4. Fully	Don't Know
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- Facilitator: Record key points of discussion

- 4) Are there challenges in informing specific stages of planning and programming with child-sensitive awareness and objectives?

0 Not at all	1. To a limited extent	2.To a moderate extent	3. To a significant extent	4. Fully	Don't Know
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If so:

- Are these challenges in understanding? (E.g. concepts of child rights, need for child-sensitive aspects or how to include this)
- Are they challenges related to turning concepts into concrete actions? (give examples)
- Are they challenges related to data and information? (give examples)
- Do you have suggestions to overcome these challenges?

- Facilitator: Record key challenges

5. Please describe the processes (e.g. reporting responsibilities and budget allocations for children's programming) and systems (e.g. knowledge sharing mechanisms among staff, mentoring, training, etc.) to ensure that child-centred outcomes are reflected in the programs.

- How are these processes communicated to office/program staff at all levels?
  - b) What concrete actions, if any, could be taken to strengthen the way in which child rights objectives are made visible in programming and implementation?
  - Facilitator: Record key points of discussion. Try to get participants to prioritize actions to be taken.

## B. Existing competencies and training

6. Are planning/program staff (including new staff) provided with any training or expected to have any knowledge about child-rights related issues?

0 Not at all	1. To a limited extent	2.To a moderate extent	3. To a significant extent	4. Fully	Don't Know
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- a) If so, what are the mechanisms for training and capacity-building?
- b) If not, what kind of training do you think would be most important?
- Facilitator: Record key points of discussion

7. Are there support mechanisms (e.g. guidelines, advice, competence development, analysis tools, knowledge sharing networks, etc.) to ensure that you can conduct child-sensitive analyses and incorporate the conclusions of these analyses into your work?

0 Not at all	1. To a limited extent	2.To a moderate extent	3. To a significant extent	4. Fully	Don't Know
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- a) If so, can you provide details and examples?
- b) If not, what concrete action, including training, could be taken to improve skills and knowledge in relation to child rights?
- Facilitator: Record key points. Try to get participants to prioritize of actions to be taken.

## C. Monitoring and Evaluation

8. Are child rights-related results measured for relevant policies and programs in line with indicators developed for this purpose (including through age and gender-specific data collected for this purpose and through other kinds of disaggregation)?

0 Not at all	1. To a limited extent	2.To a moderate extent	3. To a significant extent	4. Fully	Don't Know
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- a) If so, what are some of the key indicators that are used?
  - b) If not, what do you think are the main constraints?
  - Facilitator: Record key points of discussion.
9. Are expenditures on child-focused program implementation tracked in your program?

0 Not at all	1. To a limited extent	2.To a moderate extent	3. To a significant extent	4. Fully	Don't Know
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- a) If so, what are some of the key indicators that are used?
  - b) If not, what do you think are the main constraints?
  - Facilitator: Record key points of discussion.
10. Please describe data collection and analysis processes and systems in place to track and record child rights results and expenditures (and the type of indicators used)?
- a) If needed, what concrete action could be taken to strengthen these processes and systems?
  - Facilitator: Record key points of discussion.

## D. Coordination, Collaboration, Integration

11. Do you consider that you and your colleagues have sufficient authority and capacity to play an effective role in coordinating efforts to help reflect the different / multiple dimensions of child wellbeing in programming in different sectors / programs when working with partners (e.g. other ministries which share responsibilities for a program or programs with which it has synergies, external partner agency)?

0 Not at all	1. To a limited extent	2.To a moderate extent	3. To a significant extent	4. Fully	Don't Know
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- a) If so, can you describe the mechanisms through which coordination takes place?
- b) If not, what are some of the key challenges and how do you think these can be overcome?

- Facilitator: Record key points of discussion.
12. What child-related functions are the responsibility of local governments and how are these coordinated between central and local authorities?
- Facilitator: Record key points of discussion
13. How does your policy/program connect to higher and lower level plans (e.g. National plan or strategy (SEDP or others), sector plan (e.g. education, health, social protection, child protection or other), provincial plan (e.g. provincial SEDP)
- Facilitator: Record key points
14. Do you have further suggestions or recommendations to increase the capacity of program implementers to integrate children's issues into programming or monitoring and evaluation to improve child rights results?
- Facilitator: Record key points and suggestions. Try to get participants to prioritize actions to be taken.

### Questions for Budget Planners/Financial Management Personnel

1. Are resources allocated in the budget (organizational or policy/program) to adequately finance identified priority issues for children?

0 Not at all	1. To a limited extent	2. To a moderate extent	3. To a significant extent	4. Fully	Don't Know
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- a) If so, could you provide some details or highlight some of the priorities that are given to children in budget allocations?
- b) If not, are there specific challenges that prevent this (e.g. current planning, management and financial processes and systems, insufficient knowledge about child-sensitive budgeting, insufficient demand for it across the organization and from senior management, resource constraints etc.)?
- c) Can you suggest measures for improvement?
- Facilitator: Record key points made during the discussions.
2. Have you participated in training on child-sensitive budget analysis (when, where, outcome of that training)?

0 Not at all	1. To a limited extent	2.To a moderate extent	3. To a significant extent	4. Fully	Don't Know
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- a) If you have not, how familiar are you with child-sensitive budget analysis concepts and tools?
- b) How confident are you in applying these tools and budgeting for child-centred outcomes?
  - Facilitator: Record key points made during the discussion.
3. Are there specific mechanisms available that enable you to track implementation of budget allocations (i.e. expenditure tracking) for children?

0 Not at all	1. To a limited extent	2.To a moderate extent	3. To a significant extent	4. Fully	Don't Know
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- a) If so, can you describe these mechanisms and provide examples?
- b) If not, can you suggest ways this might be improved?
  - Facilitator: Record key points made during the discussion. Try to get participants to prioritize actions to be taken.

### Questions for Children's Caregivers

These can accompany FGDs for all children, but are particularly useful for perceptions of policies/programs/services targeting the youngest cohorts, or for perceptions of how children might be benefiting (or suffering) from programs that do not target them specifically (for example, social protection programs targeting households, or community development initiatives targeting adult producers). The questions in either case follow along the main lines of the questions that would be asked of children themselves.

### Examples of questions (the same types of 0-4 scoring could be used as above)

1. Are you familiar with this program/service (indicate which one in concrete terms)?
2. Do you think this program/service is important for children? Why or why not?



3. Does this program/service reach your household or your children directly?
4. Does this program/service address some of your children's needs? If so, which ones?
5. If not (or if not completely), how do you think it could be improved so that it does?
6. If you were a government official, what would you do to better measure or get information about children's needs so that this program/service is improved?
7. Have you ever been consulted by government officials or local authorities (e.g. school authorities or others) about whether this program/service is useful for you and your children and how it should be planned?
8. Do you think this program/service impacts your daughters and sons differently or in the same way? Can you explain?
9. If you wanted to express your thoughts about things that are going well or not well with this program/service, how would you go about it?
10. Do you have any further thoughts, questions or suggestions about this program/service?

## Questions for Children

### ***---on child-focused programs/services (children targeted as direct beneficiaries)***

These questions should be very specific, focusing on program planning and implementation in the form of service provision rather than on broader policy issues which children might not be familiar with. Questions should be framed concretely and facilitated in a way that children (particularly in an older age cohort, from 10 or 11 years of age onwards) can discuss. Children participating in the research should be familiar with the program or service being discussed, ideally because they benefit from it (e.g. children might be familiar with a cash transfer program that is part of the social protection policy – Decree 67 – because they or their household benefit from it).

Alternatively, research among children who may be excluded from a particular child-focused program or service (such as education, health services or social welfare) would need to focus more particularly on children's experiences of the issues under discussion (what do they do instead of going to school, for example; what do they think some of the advantages or disadvantages of education are; what are some of their suggestions for improvement of the situation? etc.). Research on actual or potential impact on children of more macro-level policies – for example, trade liberalization, market reforms, etc. would need to use slightly different methodologies and approaches (see for example approaches discussed in poverty and social impact assessments described above).

### Examples of questions (the same types of 0-4 scoring could be used as above)

Facilitators should introduce themselves and explain the purpose of the exercise in simple terms that the children will understand. They should assure children that their views are welcome and explain how important it is for adults to listen to children about issues that concern them. Warm-up exercises should be planned as a means of putting children at ease. A relaxed and informal atmosphere should be maintained and the discussions held in a setting where children are comfortable.

1. Are you familiar with this program/service (indicate which one in concrete terms)?
2. Do you think this program/service is important for children? Why or why not?
3. Does this program/service reach your household or you directly? If your household, how does it benefit you?
4. Does this program/service address some of your needs? If so, which ones?
5. If not (or if not completely), how do you think it could be improved so that it does?
6. If you were a government official, what would you do to better measure or get information about children's needs so that this program/service is improved?
7. Have you ever been consulted by government officials or local authorities (e.g. school authorities or others) about whether this program/service is useful for you and your family and how it should be planned?
8. Do you think this program/service impacts girls and boys differently or in the same way? Can you explain?
9. If you wanted to express your thoughts about things that are going well or not well with this program/service, how would you go about it?
10. Do you have any further thoughts, questions or suggestions about this program/service?

### Additional participatory exercises with children

In addition to including children in focus group discussions, supplementary exercises building on participatory techniques adapted to use with children could be conducted as a means of further eliciting their views. Such exercises could potentially include the following:

- Drawings/photography: Provide children with appropriate materials, such as drawing paper and crayons or disposable cameras and ask them to draw or take pictures of what they see as key improvements in their situation or condition as a result of a particular programs (for

example, a new school building; school materials provided through a social protection grant; household improvements due to a particular development program, etc.). Alternatively, ask children to draw or take pictures illustrating what remain as key problems for them (for example, poor water and sanitation facilities; dilapidated houses or schools, etc.).

- **Patterned sentence completion:** Have children reflect on what they appreciate about a service/program and what they see might still need improvement through a brainstorming to complete the following phrases as many ways as possible: I am happy because.....I am sad because.....Alternatively, have children reflect on changes brought about in their lives (either good or bad) as a result of a particular service/program through a brainstorming to complete the following phrases as many ways as possible: I used to be (i.e. before the program)..... but now I am (i.e. after the program)..... Use their responses as a means of stimulating further discussion, drawing general conclusions.
- **Role play and scenario development:** If the context is suitable, and with care not to provoke sensitivities against the children, various role plays could be conducted around different scenarios that children may have experienced, or service providers that they encounter, for example: (i) being turned away from health services, or received rudely because they cannot pay; (ii) the good and bad school teacher, etc.
- **A children's 'scorecard':** Borrowing techniques from the community scorecard methodology, children could be organized in broad-based groups to evaluate key services for children in their communities. Themes could relate to the particular social policy or program being assessed and could include, for example, the quality and extent of health care provision, children's experiences of schools, issues related to the receipt of social assistance benefits, or opportunities for children's participation. Such an exercise could be led as part of a specific child-rights-based audit, or could be linked to a broader community scorecard.

## SEMI-STRUCTURED KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS

Key informant interviews are an important additional source of information and can be used to gain important insights on programs and policies, fill in any missing narrative information, understand accountability and reporting structures, understand program sensitivities and other issues which may not come out in group settings, etc.

Key informants should be selected from as diversified a population as possible and should include (i) relevant senior officials; (ii) program and administrative staff; (iii) service providers; (iv) local authorities; (v) children and their caregivers; as well as (vi) other community members, selected on the basis of their knowledge and experience. The following provide two general templates of the types of questions that could be asked of (i) program/policy officials and (ii) children and their caregivers. Both of these would of course need to be further adapted and refined according to both the particular program/policy being audited and type of informant being addressed.

### Questions for Officials

Facilitators should introduce themselves, and provide interviewees with objectives and background of the study. Interviewees should be reminded that there are no 'wrong' answers and that their answers will be kept confidential and anonymous. The basic characteristics of interviews (gender, age, locality, function, etc.) should be recorded on the interview sheet, but real names should be coded to ensure anonymity. Ideally, as with the focus group discussions described above, facilitators should include both the interviewer (to ask the questions) and the recorder (to note down the responses as completely as possible, including quotes to denote the exact words of the respondents, as appropriate).

### General questions/overview

1. What is your role/area of expertise/function and how long have you been in this position?
  2. Do you consider that there has been progress / achievements over the past x years (period depends on the program) in terms of fulfilling child rights through policy and program actions in the area in which you work? (specify accordingly)
    - a) If so, what have these been?
    - b) If not, why not?
    - c) Are there areas that present particular challenges?
  3. Are child-specific outcomes part of your program?
    - a) If so, can you identify them and do you know what proportion of the program is allocated to achieving child rights related outcomes?
    - b) If not, are there plans to develop these and integrate them into some of the program areas in which you work?
- Strategic Orientation and Accountability

4. How do you think children's issues are perceived by national policy-makers in general?
  - a) Are goals and objectives for children considered to be among priority national development goals?
  - b) What issues are given particular importance and what issues seem to be less emphasized?
  - c) Are children's issues of equal concern to all officials and in all sectors?
  - d) What are the key sectors or domains that seem to focus the most on children's issues?
5. Are there any processes (e.g. reporting responsibilities and budget allocations for children's programming) and/or systems (e.g. knowledge sharing mechanisms among staff, mentoring, training, etc.) to ensure that children's issues are reflected in the policy /program area in which you work?
  - a) If so, how are these processes communicated to program staff at the different levels (provincial / local)?
  - b) If not, how do you think the situation can be improved?
6. Do you consider that the existing processes and systems to ensure child-sensitivity in policies and programs are adequate and effective?
  - a) If not, what concrete actions could be taken to strengthen them and make them more effective to ensure that children's issues are reflected in policy/program development and implementation?
7. Are there any government focal points who provide support to raise awareness amongst officials in other ministries or program areas (particularly those that don't have child related mandate) about assessing child-sensitivity in policies and objectives?
  - a) If so, do these focal points have adequate capacity (technical, financial, political) to carry out their functions?
  - b) What other institutions within the government (national / local) are important child-rights advocates?
8. Do you consider that you are expected to incorporate children's issues in the areas under your responsibility (e.g. policy, programming, advocacy, competence development, your work with partners)?
9. How does the policy/program you work on connect to higher and lower level plans (e.g. National plan or strategy; sector plan (e.g. education, health, social protection, child protection or other), provincial plan)?
10. What child-related functions are the responsibility of local governments and which need coordination between central and local authorities?
11. Are sufficient resources transferred from the national level to finance local level child-related responsibilities and is the number/capacity of

functionaries in charge of the implementation of plans and programs adequate?

Existing child-rights-based policy / programming expertise and competence

12. What key competencies do staff in your area of responsibility need to develop to ensure the full integration of children's issues in all aspects of the program/office's activities?
  - a) What specific needs have you identified for yourself?
13. What support (e.g. guidelines, advice, competence development, knowledge sharing networks, etc.) is available to senior/junior officials (in charge both of planning and implementation) so they can apply child-sensitive analyses and incorporate the conclusions of these analyses into their area of responsibility?
14. Have you participated in child rights/mainstreaming training or capacity building? Or training on child rights analysis? Through what office/organization/job?
15. What would you consider the most effective methodologies (e.g. training, guidelines, and formats (e.g. group, individual, workshop, website, etc.)) to enhance understanding and application of child rights mainstreaming concepts?
16. What type of knowledge/evidence is needed to improve child-sensitivity in policy advocacy and program design? (e.g. child rights situation analysis, program evaluations, international evidence, local evidence, etc.)
17. Are you aware of organisations which can provide support or guidance in addressing child-related concerns in your work?
  - a) If so, have you worked with these organisations? Why, or why not?
  - b) Have these organisations been useful? Why or why not, and how might this interaction or support be more effective?

## Monitoring and Evaluation

18. Are child rights wellbeing results measured in the programming area you are involved in?
19. Are there child-specific indicators for measuring success in the programs on which you work?
  - a) If so, are they adequate to measure progress on results?
  - b) If not, how do you monitor progress in your program implementation?
20. Are you required to report on achievements/ progress and challenges in terms of implementing programs that impact directly and indirectly on children?

- a) If so, where/how? (Annual report? Indicators? Other type of reporting?)
- 21. Do children and young people participate in monitoring and evaluation of the programs you are involved in?
  - a) If so, what mechanisms are used to facilitate this participation, and are these systematized?
  - b) If not, are there any other more general processes of consultation with children that are undertaken?

## Financial Management

- 22. Are children's issues included in budget planning and auditing processes? Please provide examples.
  - a) Have you or other staff in the office participated in training on child-sensitive budgeting (when, where, outcome of that training)?
  - b) How familiar are you with child-sensitive budgeting concepts and tools?
- 23. Do you have any other comments that you think would be useful for the child-sensitive audit?

## Questions for Children and their Caregivers

- 1. How are you familiar with this program/service (indicate which one in concrete terms)?
- 2. Do you think this program/service is important for children? Why or why not?
- 3. Does this program/service reach you/your household/your children directly?
- 4. Does this program/service address some of your needs/the needs of your children? If so, which ones?
- 5. If not (or if not completely), how do you think it could be improved so that it does?
- 6. If you were a government official, what would you do to better measure or get information about children's needs so that this program/service is improved?
- 7. Have you ever been consulted by government officials or local authorities (e.g. school authorities or others) about whether this program/service is useful for you/your household/your children and how it should be planned?
- 8. Do you think this program/service impacts men and women/girls and boys differently or in the same way? Can you explain?



9. If you wanted to express your thoughts about things that are going well or not well with this program/service, how would you go about it?
10. Do you have any further thoughts, questions or suggestions about this program/service?

## ANALYSIS, DISCUSSION, AND REPORTING ON RESULTS

The information gathered through the various methods should be analysed and organized by audit topics, e.g. objectives and planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, staff, budgeting, etc. Assessment criteria drawn from the over-arching principles of the CRC and adapted for the particular sector r domain of analysis should be applied.

Based on an initial analysis of findings from the child-sensitive audit, key findings should be discussed with policymakers/implementers participating in the auditing process, as well as planners with interest in strengthening the child rights focus in policy and programming. This can be done in the form of a small briefing session called by the Steering Committee, or, for example through a workshop with visual presentations of the key findings that can be discussed with selected participants.

Written reporting on the audit findings and the action plan should include both a detailed report and a shorter resume that will highlight the key findings and recommendations for key decision makers as well as the broader public. The shorter report in particular should be attractively presented (with pictures, charts, illustrations, etc.) and widely disseminated (including in different languages in multilingual environments) with care to ensure that it reaches the primary stakeholders and participants.

Depending on the nature and scope of the findings, preparation of a series of short information sheets or policy briefs could also be considered.

### Communication and Feedback to Stakeholders

For all written reporting, translation issues must be appropriately addressed to ensure transparency and the widest possible dissemination. As in all exercises that draw and depend on the participation of stakeholders, an appropriate means should be found to feed back results of the audit to those involved in focus groups and key informant interviews, in both written form and through oral presentations and consultations.

This phase of communicating on results is often neglected but is actually one of the most important steps, as it i) demonstrates commitment to a 2-way process of communication and transparency; ii) contributes to capacity-building of stakeholders to hold duty-bearers to account; and iii) establishes a firm basis for local level monitoring of action and follow-up on recommendations and commitments. It is particularly important to develop an appropriate means of keeping children informed of the results of the exercise, as a means of retaining their active awareness of and engagement in the realisation of child rights.

### Development of an Action Plan

An action plan based on the analysis and recommendations of the audits to improve policies that impact children (both directly and indirectly) should be derived from the audit findings and the feedback sessions that are held to discuss them. The plan itself should be based on the audit findings, but it will not take hold without the support, and assured accountability of both senior and junior policymakers and program implementers; hence the importance of their contributions to the process. The steering committee in charge of the audit should take oversight responsibility for the development of the action plan, with the lead ministry for the audit responsible for follow-up.

The output of this stage should include an action plan agreed by senior decision-makers and promoted with relevant program staff at the national and local level, outlining key actions to be undertaken to improve the way in which child-sensitivity is incorporated in policy and planning, from design to implementation, including the development of relevant indicators, providing training and sensitization and financing.

The action plan should be presented to the whole department or unit responsible for the program and disseminated to all concerned stakeholders, including service providers (e.g. in health centres, schools).

It is possible to promote support for the monitoring of the action plan by developing a small set of simple indicators to measure progress and generating buy-in among relevant stakeholders to do so while at the same time working to develop more rigorous monitoring tools institutionalized within national data collection and analysis systems.

Key results from the audit and lessons learned (including challenges encountered as well as improvements made) during implementation of the action plan should feed into planning processes for the next phase of policy or program development.

#### Key Points to Retain

Key steps in conducting a child rights-based social audit include the following:

- Planning and preparation: Establish scope and objectives; Identify what is being audited and why (concept note); Establish an audit team (steering committee and implementing body); Identify and assemble necessary resources (human and financial) and timeline (budgeted workplan); develop draft methodology and tool
- Application of methodologies: On a pilot basis at the outset; methodologies include document review, focus group discussions, key informant interviews, and participatory processes with children
- Analysis, discussion and reporting on results: Includes written reports (both full report and briefer summary of key findings and recommendations) as well as briefings and workshops. May include elaboration of a number of policy briefs
- Communication and feedback to stakeholders: An important but often neglected step; critical in terms of engaging stakeholders in ongoing processes; demonstrates commitment to transparency, communication and stakeholder participation
- Development of an action plan for improvement: Based on gaps identified and recommendations formulated; should include basic monitoring plan with a few key indicators to strengthen accountability

## Summary of the proposed tool

This manual has emphasized the importance of including a child rights-based social audit component as part of the overall social audit approach being piloted in Viet Nam as a means of improving government's social performance and accountability within SEDP. It has provided an overview of the aims of such a component, outlined the rationale for its use, and set out a number of basic parameters to consider in its development. In providing examples of existing child assessment tools and methodologies developed at international level, it has noted that there is – to date – no one standard form of child-sensitive audit. Viet Nam, thus, has an opportunity to be a pioneer in piloting such a child-sensitive audit.

The proposed tool builds upon the gender audit tool already piloted in Viet Nam as part of the overall social audit approach, and draws as well upon elements of existing child-sensitive assessment tools. It makes use of four main methodologies: document review; focus group discussions; key informant interviews, complemented by additional participatory exercises with children. The importance of including children and their caregivers among key stakeholders for discussions and interviews was emphasized, and a number of suggestions for participatory processes with children were put forward.

## Key steps in the process of applying the tool include:

1. planning and preparation (including establishment of a steering group for determination of the desired scope, focus, timeline, and resource demands of the exercise as well as the development of a concept note to communicate intent; selection of a technical team with required expertise to conduct the audit; development of the methodology and testing in the field before finalizing the instruments);
2. implementation (document review; focus group discussions; key informant interviews; participatory exercises with children) ;
3. analysis and reporting on results;
4. feedback and communication of results back to stakeholders; and
5. development of an action plan to improve child-sensitivity, based on audit recommendations.

## Further considerations for a potential pilot

Consultations at both national and provincial levels have confirmed the interest in piloting a child rights-based social audit in Viet Nam. As thinking moves forward on this, it will be critical to identify the particular policy, plan or program that is to be audited. Factors to take into consideration in mind in this decision-making process include:

- The **importance and relevance** of the issue for Viet Nam (in the context of SEDP)

## CONCLUSIONS AND WAY FORWARD

- Existing **gaps in knowledge** about the issue that a child rights-based social audit could potentially fill
- Choice of domain where **stakeholders are already informed** about the tool and approach
- The potential for a child rights-based social audit to contribute to ongoing **disparity reduction** efforts in children's conditions of life or access to services
- The potential to address a **known or recognized problem** in some phase of the planning/implementation/M&E cycle
- The opportunity to foster **intersectoral collaboration** around an issue that might have both social and economic dimensions and to involve **people's councils and other mass organizations**
- For the pilot in particular, a theme or domain that is **realistically manageable** and conducive to learning lessons for the refinement of the tool.

Experience with the social audit approach in general is slowly building up through the piloting that has been done on the other instruments, and other capacity-building is equally underway in the eight 'child-friendly provinces' supported by UNICEF (HCMC, Dien Bien, Lao Cai, Ninh Thuan, Kon Tum, Gia Lai, Dong Thap, An Giang). Such support has focused on (i) results based planning and monitoring address children's issues under the framework of broad and sectoral policy frameworks such as SEDP as well as sector plans) (ii) quality improvement of integrated services for children, particularly the most vulnerable; (iii) improved knowledge and skills for caregivers to protection children from abuse and exploitation and to realize their rights. Most of the eight provinces have had experience in conducting consultations with children, taking their inputs into account when developing local plans and actions. All of this would provide a strong foundation on which to build a pilot around the child-rights social audit in one or two of the selected provinces.

Annex 1 presents the main results of a national consultation on the proposed manual while Annex 2 offers inputs to help guide efforts to tailor the generic tool presented in the manual to the needs of particular programs, policies or plans in Viet Nam, based on three examples. It sets out key question guides and issues that might be useful to consider in a child rights-based audit of (i) the 5-year Plan of MOLISA; (ii) selected SEDP components and (iii) Decree 67 (2007) on Support Policies for Social Protection Beneficiaries.

## Viet Nam-Specific Materials

- Decree No. 67/2007/ND-CP of April 13, 2007, “On Support Policies for Social Protection Beneficiaries”
- General Statistics Office (2011) *Report on Multidimensional child poverty in Viet Nam* (September)
- General Statistics Office (2011) *Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey Viet Nam 2010-2011: Key Findings*
- “Gender Audit methodology. A Tool to Assess the Performance of Viet Nam’s Social Economic Development Plan.” Draft, January 2012
- Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs (2010) “Five-Year Plan for Labor, People with Merits, Society Development (2011-2015)” Draft dated 10/7/2010.
- Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs (2010) *Social Security Strategy Period 2011-2010*, Hanoi, April 2010
- Ministry of Planning and Investment and UNICEF(2011) “Summary of Workshop Proceedings: Reforming the Socio-Economic Development Plan’s Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation – Opportunities and Challenges” 2-3 November 2011.
- Ministry of Planning and Investment (2011) Draft Five-Year Socio-Economic Development Plan 2011-2015 – extract of SEDP 2011-2015: Part II (pages 27-91) (unofficial translation) October 2011.
- Ministry of Planning and Investment and UNICEF (2009) “Capacity Building for Social Audit of the National Socio-Economic Development Plan 2006-2010: Detailed Project Outline 2009-2010”
- Ministry of Planning and Investment and UNICEF (2011) “Manual - Guidelines for results-based monitoring and evaluation of local annual and five-year plan implementation” (Draft for Comments) Hanoi, October
- Ministry of Planning and Investment and UNICEF (2011) “Manual-Application of Children’s Rights Issues in Local SEDP Planning” (Draft for Comments). Hanoi, October 2011
- Ministry of Planning and Investment and UNICEF (2011)” Guidance on five year and annual local development planning” (Draft for comments) Hanoi, October
- Ministry of Planning and Investment and UNICEF Viet Nam (2011) Making Social Audit work for Viet Nam key Findings and Lessons Learned from a Pilot of Four Social Audit Tools
- Prime Minister Decision No: 37/2010/QD-TTg “On the Issuance of Communes Fit for Children criteria”
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- UNICEF Viet Nam (2011) "Making SEDP Monitoring in Viet Nam Child-sensitive: A Concept Paper for the 2012-2016 UNICEF Country Cycle," Version 30/05/2011
- UNICEF Viet Nam (2011?) "Looking into the future: UNICEF's observations and recommendations on MOLISA's 2011-2015 Plan" (PPT presentation)
- UNICEF WCARO and ODI (2009) Strengthening Social Protection for Children in West and Central Africa (February)
- United Nations in Viet Nam (2010) UN's Synthesis Analysis of Viet Nam's Development Situation and Medium-term Challenges in Preparation of the UN One Plan 2012-2016 , Draft Version of August 25th 2010

### Technical documents

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- CDC (2008) "Data collection methods for program evaluation: Focus groups" Evaluation Briefs, No 13, July. Dept. of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <http://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/evaluation/pdf/brief13.pdf>
- Concepcion, M., C. Guevara, AM Felisa, G. Mayor, and M. Racelis (2009) "The Philippine Pilot Study of the Child Friendly Community Participatory Assessment Tools"
- Harland, Charlotte (2009?) "Understanding child poverty: The application of qualitative research methods to policy analysis" (UNICEF Zambia)
- "Joint Statement, Advancing Child-Sensitive Social Protection" (2009) (DFID, HelpAge International, Hope & Homes for Children, IDS, ILO, ODI, Save the Children UK, UNDP, UNICEF and World Bank
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The child-rights based social audit tool was presented and reviewed at a consultative workshop in February 2012 drawing together both national officials and key provincial level policy planners from the Ministry and Department of Labor, Invalids and Social Affairs (MOLISA/DOLISA) and the Department of Planning and Investment (DPI) from eight provinces, as well as representatives from the Provincial Statistics Offices, the People's Committee and the People's Council. The workshop was followed by an information-sharing consultation with a variety of stakeholders at national level, including government, research institutions and partner organizations.

Participants at these consultative gatherings confirmed the importance of such a tool as well as their interest in conducting a child-sensitive audit in Viet Nam. They also offered useful comments and inputs that have been taken into consideration in the finalization of the draft manual as well as suggestions for potential next steps, which include consideration of further planning needed for the preparation and implementation of a pilot audit to test and refine the approach. It was agreed that information would continue to be shared with a network of participants who might constitute a 'community of practice' to accompany this process as it moves forward.

Participants at the provincial workshop in particular offered useful insights on potential adaptation of the generic tool for the specific purposes of a child rights-based social audit in Viet Nam. These comments were obtained through a participatory exercise looking at proposed checklists of key questions and critical issues to consider in the potential development of a child rights-based audit of three different policy areas with different implications for a child rights-based audit:

- **MOLISA 5-year plan (as an example of an over-arching departmental plan):**<sup>30</sup> DOLISA/MOLISA participants reviewed a proposed checklist of key questions and critical issues that could be considered in a child rights-based social audit of the MOLISA 5-year plan. DOLISA workshop participants agreed that such a checklist could indeed be useful, and offered additional elements to consider. They suggested that such a check-list could be even further adapted for application at district and commune level under the guidance of the provincial authorities. They felt that an independent social audit team should be established and reflected in a legal framework to guide its work. Among the priority issues identified for in-depth analysis were child protection, poverty reduction and gender.
- **SEDP (as an example of an over-arching national plan):**<sup>31</sup> DPI/MPI examined another proposed checklist of key questions and critical issues, but this time in consideration of a child-sensitive audit of the SEDP as a whole. Such questions aimed at guiding efforts in documentary review as well as focus group discussion and key informant interviews, but this time with the exercises conducted with officials responsible for the different components of the plan – both child-focused and non-child focused. As with the MOLISA checklist, after preliminary application in focus group discussions, these questions would need to be further refined and detailed to reflect more specific aspects of the component policies, plans and programs subsumed

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30 Ministry of Labor, Invalids and Social Affairs (2010) "Five-Year Plan for Labor, People with Merits, Society Development (2011-2015)" Draft dated 10/7/2010.

31 Ministry of Planning and Investment (2011) Draft Five-Year Socio-Economic Development Plan 2011-2015 – extract of SEDP 2011-2015: Part II (pages 27-91) (unofficial translation) October 2011

## NATIONAL CONSUL- TATIONS ON THE MANUAL

within SEDP. DPI/MPI participants felt, however, that such detailed questions might be difficult to apply, particularly in non child-focused programs and suggested ways of distinguishing between approaches for child-focused and non child-focused areas.

- **Decree 67 (as an example of a particular social policy):**<sup>32</sup> Other workshop participants focused on a set of critical issues and questions about social assistance drawing on Decree 67 (2007) on support policies for social protection beneficiaries. Participants agreed that a child rights-based social audit of such support policies would be very relevant and useful. They emphasized that since Decree 67 is an intersectoral policy under coordination of MOLISA, the steering committee for a potential pilot around this policy would need to include representatives from a number of different sectors. Participants also observed that information may not be easily obtainable on a number of the questions and that, as with the other examples, all of the questions would need to be further reviewed and refined in preparation of the specific tools (document review; focus group discussion; key information interview; participatory processes with children) needed for implementation of a child rights-based social audit in this domain.

### The checklists, integrating participant comments, are presented in Annex 2.

Participants at the consultative workshop in Ho Chi Minh City offered a number of suggestions on priority thematic domains for consideration of a child rights-based social audit. These related primarily to social protection and child protection, with varying emphases by province.

- Decree 13/67 in Dong Thap, An Giang, Gia Lai
- Child protection (for example in private kindergartens and other service institutions) in Ninh Thuan and Lao Cao
- Free health care for children under six in a number of provinces

There was also a strongly voiced interest in linking the child rights-based social audit to the mid-term review of SEDP, with much discussion, as above, centring on the differing approaches that would need to be taken for the more child-focused social sectors and the broader economic development sectors. For the pilot, it was suggested that the more child-focused sectors, such as health or education, might be more suitable.

Participants from the provinces are already able to identify current practices that conform to general criteria for assessment of key CRC principles and provisions, as well as ongoing challenges which a child-rights based social audit could also help to address (see Table 6).

32 Ministry of Planning and Investment (2011) Draft Five-Year Socio-Economic Development Plan 2011-2015 – extract of SEDP 2011-2015: Part II (pages 27-91) (unofficial translation) October 2011

**Table 6. Application of CRC assessment criteria: Current practice and challenges in the eight ‘child-friendly’ provinces**

Key CRC principles/provisions	General criteria for assessment	Current practice	Challenges
Non- discrimination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Disaggregated data systems used to identify disparities</li> <li>Universal service provision and special measures to address needs of disadvantaged children</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data on children integrated in other surveys such as survey on poverty, decree 267, disability</li> <li>Try to ensure relevant interventions and social assistance to vulnerable children (smile operation, textbook provision)</li> <li>Some services only provided in the areas where development partners support</li> <li>Diversified forms of care and support – institutionalized and community based, public and private</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Low level of education</li> <li>Limited resources (both human and financial)</li> <li>Difficult geographical conditions</li> <li>Limited staff capacity, especially in data analysis</li> <li>Increased number of children due to free migration</li> <li>Inconsistencies in children’s database</li> <li>Data on children is fragmented with limited disaggregation</li> </ul>
Best interests of the child	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Polices/programs designed to foster positive outcomes for children and avoid harm (including mechanisms to identify and respond to potential negative impacts of broader national policies)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop provincial plans of action for children, and plans of action for the child protection program</li> <li>Ensure the implementation of policies that have significant impact on children (such as free health care provision for under 6 children, policies to support poor and ethnic people including children, ECD universalization for under 5 children policy)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mainly dependent on central budget that restricts implementation of the policies (to fully meet local needs)</li> <li>Limited public awareness about the policies, particularly among people from remote areas</li> <li>No incentives to keep staff working on children’s issues</li> </ul>
Respect for the views of the child	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participatory planning processes with children</li> <li>Mechanisms to promote children’s voice and representation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Organize children’s forum and dialogue with local policymakers</li> <li>Organize contests for children to learn more about CRC</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Limited participation of children from remote and difficult areas</li> <li>Limited attention from leaders</li> <li>Not yet reflected in local budget</li> <li>High staff turn-over resulting in fluctuating political commitment</li> <li>Most of child participation activities organized on an ad hoc basis</li> </ul>

Key CRC principles/provisions	General criteria for assessment	Current practice	Challenges
Rights clusters: survival, development, participation and protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existence, content, scope and quality of specific sectoral programs in line with international standards and national commitments; national development plans/policies/systems and structures that uphold and promote these rights</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Based on central policies, the provincial authorities produced relevant guidance or enforcement for implementation</li> <li>Rights to health, nutrition, social protection have been observed following national standards</li> <li>Right to participation still limited</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There are still many limitations in current policies (conflicts, unclear central guidance)</li> <li>Difficulties with migrant children who don't have permanent registration status (no health care cards)</li> </ul>
Accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mechanisms to expand awareness of duty-bearers; to enhance and evaluate performance; and to hold duty-bearers to account</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased oversight of elected officials</li> <li>Strengthened linkage between national and sub-national levels in program/project formulation and implementation</li> <li>Increased the participation of children in different settings: family, school and society.</li> <li>People's committee assigned coordinating agencies</li> <li>Public hearings organized by people's council to hold government agencies accountable</li> <li>Public awareness-raising to mobilize support to address child rights</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Limited capacity and understanding on CRC among staff (both elected and government officials) who undertake oversight and monitoring.</li> <li>Weak mechanism for clear division of responsibilities among related agencies</li> <li>Lots of work for agencies responsible for intersectoral coordination</li> <li>Lack of tools for CRC monitoring</li> </ul>

Among the next steps proposed by workshop participants:

- Finalization of the manual based on inputs from the workshop
- Selection of policy/program and province (s) for the pilot
- Continued guidance from MPI
- Continued technical and financial support from UNICEF

## QUESTION GUIDES/KEY ISSUES FOR FURTHER ADAPTATION IN VIETNAM – 3 EXAMPLES

This annex provides inputs to help guide efforts to tailor the generic tool presented in the manual to the needs of particular programs, policies or plans in Viet Nam, based on three examples. It sets out key question guides and issues that might be useful to consider in a child rights-based audit of (i) the 5-year Plan of MOLISA; (ii) selected SEDP components and (iii) Decree 67 (2007) on Support Policies for Social Protection Beneficiaries.<sup>33</sup>

**Table 7. Three national plans/programs/policies for potential application of a child rights-based social audit**

National plan/program/policy	Characteristics
MOLISA 5-year plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Multi-sectoral plan under responsibility of lead ministry/department</li> <li>Social policies – both child-focused and non child-focused</li> <li>Critical importance of child-rights focus</li> </ul>
SEDP selected components	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Overarching national development planning framework</li> <li>Multiple responsible ministries/departments and component policies/programs</li> <li>Both national and provincial level SEDPs</li> <li>Both child-focused and non child-focused; social and economic; sectoral and macro</li> </ul>
Decree 67 – Support policies for social protection beneficiaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Particular social policy</li> <li>Some child-focused components (children direct beneficiaries)</li> <li>Important for other non child-focused components to consider implications for children</li> </ul>

### A. MOLISA 5-Year Plan

The Ministry of Labor, Invalids and Social Affairs (MOLISA) is responsible, among other things, for developing and implementing child welfare and development programs as well as for encouraging broader coordination around critical issues of importance to children. The guide developed below is intended as a potential tool to help MOLISA develop a child rights-based audit for its 5-year plan for Labor, People with Merits and Society Development (2011-2015).

A checklist with key questions has been developed on the basis of the draft plan and is structured closely around the categories, objectives, tasks and measures set out in that plan. It is intended primarily as a tool for document review, i.e. analysis of the plan itself, as well as the accompanying policies, programs and laws to which the document refers (though more specific questions could also be developed for these supplementary documents). It is recommended for use as a collective instrument of reflection on the plan, leading to suggestions for further action, as well as the design of more specific focus group or key informant

<sup>33</sup> These checklists were reviewed with participants at the consultative workshop held in Ho Chi Minh City in February 2012 whose comments were integrated.

interviews both internally within MOLISA (at different levels) as well as with other government departments.

The questions are phrased in terms of Yes/No, but respondents should also be asked to provide specific details to support their responses. Under the guidance of a trained moderator, MOLISA officials responsible for the different domains could collectively work together to answer the questions in their specified domains.

Follow up whole-group discussions could then be undertaken to present findings and discuss their implications in terms of identification of gaps and suggestions for further action that may be needed to strengthen child-sensitivity, including development of monitoring indicators, baseline data collection, capacity development, mechanisms for cross-sectoral coordination around children, etc.

Based on the results, an action plan should be developed to set out the key steps that are needed to fill in the identified gaps. The action plan should include key tasks and processes; identification of the responsible actors; a timeline; and considerations such as budget, logistics, supplies, etc. Periodic reviews should be planned, as necessary, to monitor and guide implementation of the action plan and make any adjustments as necessary.



**Table 2. Child-Sensitivity Audit Check-list and Guide for MOLISA 5-Year Plan (2011-2015)**

Plan	Critical questions/issues	Specify	Identification of Gaps and Suggestions for improvement (action plan)
<b>OBJECTIVES AND OBJECTIVE-SETTING</b>			
1. General Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do general objectives specifically mention children or young people?<sup>35</sup></li> <li>Are baseline data and specific indicators available to measure progress against objectives for children or young people?</li> <li>Process question (for Key informant interviews): Were children or young people involved in the development of general objectives?</li> </ul>		
2. Key Targets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are children or young people identified as key targets of the plan?</li> <li>Are children or young people likely to be affected by targets that do not mention them specifically?</li> <li>Process question (for Key informant interviews): Were children or young people involved in the development of key targets?)</li> </ul>		
<b>OBJECTIVES, TASKS AND MEASURES BY AREA</b>			
1. Job creation, labor structure transformation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are young people identified as a specific target for employment creation?</li> <li>Are age- and gender-disaggregated data available on labour statistics and are there plans to strengthen and improve this?</li> <li>Are specific targets for quality vocational training of young people established?</li> <li>Are measures to guard against exploitative child labour established?</li> <li>Are measures in place to monitor the impact on families and children of labour exports?</li> </ul>		

<sup>34</sup> Note: all references to children and young people entail a specific focus on girls/boys

Plan	Critical questions/issues	Specify	Identification of Gaps and Suggestions for improvement (action plan)
2. Improvement of industrial relations and working conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are the specific hazards of workplace environment on the health of young workers considered and addressed in the National Program on labour safety and hygiene (2011-2015)?</li> <li>Do capacity-building programs for labor inspection officers include specific attention to child labour issues?</li> </ul>		
3. Vocational training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are there specific measures in place to strengthen and expand vocational training opportunities for young people?</li> <li>Do key national programs (such as the National Target Program on Education and Training; the Project on Vocational Training Innovation and Development 2008-2020; the Project on Vocational Training for Rural Workers up to 2010) include clear targets and strategies for vocational training for young people? Additional questions for Key informant interviews in the Education Sector)</li> <li>Are school-children provided with appropriate guidance and orientation on vocational training options after school-leaving?</li> <li>Do schools include knowledge and skills-training linked to employment needs and opportunities?</li> </ul>		
4. Care for people with merits (Need more info to understand this category)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are the specific needs of children taken into account in programs for people of merit?</li> </ul>		

## ANNEX 2

Plan	Critical questions/issues	Specify	Identification of Gaps and Suggestions for improvement (action plan)
5. Poverty reduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are multi-dimensional indicators of child poverty developed, available, and taken into account in poverty reduction programs?</li> <li>• Does the National Target Program on Poverty Reduction include specific targets and programs to address child poverty?</li> <li>• Does the Program on Sustainable Poverty Reduction in 62 poor districts include specific measures to address child poverty?</li> <li>• Do labor export measures in poor provinces (Decision 71/2009/QSTTg) identify specific precautions to safeguard against child labour export and to monitor impacts on families of adult labour export?</li> <li>• Does the policy on supporting poor households on housing (Decision 167/2008/QSTTg) include specific reference to children?</li> <li>• Does the policy for ethnic minority population (Decision 134/2004/QSTTg) include specific reference to children?</li> </ul>		
6. Social protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does the Law on the Disabled include reference to and measures to address the needs of disabled children and young people?</li> <li>• Does the existing social welfare policy take into account the particular needs of children of policy beneficiaries without income?</li> <li>• Do efforts to encourage non-governmental social welfare work include support for child-welfare agencies?</li> <li>• Are children and young people included among the intended beneficiaries of care-taking consultation centres for socially protected people such as the chronically mentally ill?</li> <li>• Do plans for strengthened training of professional social workers include particular training in child welfare and protection issues?</li> <li>• Do projects that deal with street people and beggars take into account the specific needs of children?</li> <li>• Do measures to address natural disasters and crop failure take into account the specific needs of children and draw on children's participation as a resource?</li> </ul>		

Plan	Critical questions/issues	Specify	Identification of Gaps and Suggestions for improvement (action plan)
7. Child care and protection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are mechanisms in place to consolidate, improve and monitor the system of child care and protection at all levels?</li> <li>• Are mechanisms in place to monitor and enforce the law and policies on child care and protection?</li> <li>• Are mechanisms in place to guide improvements in the Child Protection Fund system?</li> <li>• Does the national database system include a means of periodically collecting, analysing gender- and age- disaggregated data on children in all domains?</li> <li>• Are processes and mechanisms in place to include consideration of children in all socio-economic development plans (at all levels) and to monitor progress?</li> <li>• Are mechanisms in place to monitor the situation of children in poor rural areas, mountainous areas and ethnic minority populations?</li> <li>• Are mechanisms in place to identify children at risk or in special circumstance and to facilitate access to services?</li> <li>• Are evaluations of models of community-based child care and protection available as a basis for scaling up at national level?</li> <li>• Are baseline data and indicators available to monitor implementation of the National program on child care and protection (2011-2015)?</li> </ul>		
8. Gender equality and women's advancement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does the National Target Program on Gender Equality (2011-2015) include specific measures for children (boys and girls)?</li> <li>• Are all national data systematically disaggregated and analyzed by age and gender?</li> <li>• Does the gender equality database, criteria, monitoring and evaluation system include a focus on children?</li> <li>• Does the gender training provided for state officers include specific components on gender issues in relation to children?</li> <li>• Are there mechanisms in place for the coordination of government action around women's advancement and the care and protection of children?</li> </ul>		

## ANNEX 2

Plan	Critical questions/issues	Specify	Identification of Gaps and Suggestions for improvement (action plan)
9. Detoxification and prevention of prostitution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are children included in detoxification policies, programs and regulations?</li> <li>• Do data collection and monitoring mechanisms include age-disaggregated data?</li> <li>• Are special measures and mechanisms in place to prevent and respond to child prostitution and child trafficking?</li> <li>• Are children and young people targeted and empowered as both participants and beneficiaries of communication campaigns around drug use, prostitution and HIV prevention?</li> <li>• Are state officers responsible for these programs trained in child-sensitive approaches?</li> </ul>		
<b>GENERAL MEASURES</b>			
1. Improving the quality of planning and investment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are children's concerns systematically taken into consideration in development planning projects?</li> <li>• Do investment regimes take into account criteria related to children, particularly those in greatest need?</li> <li>• Is a 'children's budget' in place or being developed?</li> <li>• Is budget development and execution information publicly available and monitored, including through mechanisms for monitoring by children and young people on issues affecting them?</li> <li>• Does mobilization of local resources include allocation targets for children?</li> </ul>		
2. Disseminating information and propaganda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is information on children's situation as well as the number and effectiveness of programs concerning them available and widely shared and discussed on a systematic basis?</li> <li>• Is information on children's rights and resources translated and transmitted into locally appropriate materials?</li> <li>• Does the Society-Labor Magazine contain regular features on children and young people?</li> </ul>		

Plan	Critical questions/issues	Specify	Identification of Gaps and Suggestions for improvement (action plan)
3. Acceleration of socialization and active international integration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do non-state training centres include training for children and young people?</li> <li>Do resource mobilizing mechanisms include mobilization of funds for children?</li> <li>Does research forecasting the influence of international integration on various sectors of the economy include ex ante impact assessments on children?</li> </ul>		
4. Administration reform, thrift practice, waste prevention and corruption prevention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do administrative reform measures identify and address issues of cross-sectoral coordination and collaboration around children (in policies, plans programs, and structures of the state)?</li> <li>Are mechanisms in place to monitor irregularities and abuse by state officers responsible for children's programs?</li> <li>Do government staff receive appropriate training on issues related to children in their respective areas?</li> <li>Are children or their care givers empowered to report potential abuses or irregularities by government staff (via, for example, a hotline, or other mechanisms)?</li> </ul>		
5. Renewing and developing administrative agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are vocational training centres for young people designed and run according to quality standards?</li> </ul>		
6. Improving the quality of scientific research and drawing experience from reality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is research on children conducted systematically, and are the results widely available (both centrally and at local level)?</li> <li>Are statistical agencies and research centres mandated and trained to collect and analyse data and information on children?</li> <li>Is there an overall plan for research on children (including identification of key issues/ localities, time frame, responsibilities, and budgets??</li> <li>Is ex-ante research conducted to measure the potential impact on children of implementation of various macro-level policies, plans or reform programs?</li> <li>Are program evaluations conducted regularly on issues of relevance to children and are there mechanisms in place to apply the results for program modification?</li> </ul>		

## ANNEX 2

Plan	Critical questions/issues	Specify	Identification of Gaps and Suggestions for improvement (action plan)
7. Inspection, thrift practice, waste prevention and corruption prevention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do state inspectors include in their inspection programs of particular relevance to children, as beneficiaries?</li> <li>Do children (beneficiaries or non-beneficiaries) of particular programs have a means of reporting potential abuses or exclusion from program benefits?</li> </ul>		
8. Continuing the renewal of management activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are responsibilities for children's issues clearly defined (including cross-cutting responsibilities and coordination)?</li> <li>Are staff empowered to fulfill their responsibilities (at all levels)?</li> <li>Are internal mechanisms in place at all levels for identification, discussion and resolution of bottlenecks related to programs to advance children's issues?</li> <li>Are monitoring mechanisms for staff performance in place at all levels and corrective measures available?</li> </ul>		
9. Developing patriotism competition movement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is civic education included in the school curriculum?</li> <li>Are prizes available for innovative and successful projects that safeguard and promote child rights?</li> </ul>		

### B.Selected SEDP Components

The following components from SEDP (2011-2015) were selected to demonstrate key issues around which a child rights-based social audit could potentially be conducted of plans and programs in both child-focused and non child-focused sectors. As such, it could provide a useful starting point for MPI/DPI in coordination with MOLISA/DOLISA to promote, on the one hand, synergies between economic and social development processes, and on the other hand, to foster inter-sectoral coordination around key issues for children. SEDP components are indicated in orange; followed by a check-list of key questions and critical issues to consider in a child-sensitive audit in green italics.

As with the proposed guidelines and check list of child-sensitive audit of the MOLISA 5-year plan, the questions are couched in yes/no fashion, but intend to establish discussion to provide specific details and suggestions for each issue. Such a checklist is by no means complete: for each SEDP component, the contributing policies, programs and plans would need to be reviewed in more detail. It is also important to note that all questions need to take into consideration different groups of children who may be affected differently (by gender, ethnic group, rural/urban locality, and disability, as well as by age).

The questions presented below could potentially contribute to broader exercises intending to analyse the real or potential socio-economic impact of particular policies through, for example, a PSIA. Alternatively, key components of SEDP could be identified for more specific assessment through a child rights-based social audit.

**Table 9. Key questions for a detailed child-rights based audit of SEDP**

**V.1. Priorities in inflation curbing and macro-economic stabilization to ensure sustainable growth**

1. Manage monetary policy to ensure the target of inflation curbing and macro-economic stabilization
2. Improve efficiency of public financial resources, implement a transparent fiscal policy, ensure maintenance of national financial security
3. Implement pricing policy consistent with the market institutions and economic management requirements
4. Strengthen macro-economic analysis and forecast
5. Enhance coordination among macro-economic policies

**Key questions/critical issues for child-sensitive audit**

- *Are there mechanisms in place to monitor short and long-term effects of fiscal policy reforms on social wellbeing, with particular attention to children in the poorest and most vulnerable households?*
- *Do measures to improve the transparency of public finance management and expenditure include participatory consultation processes with communities, including children and young people?*
- *Does tax system reform provide for progressive rates depending on income levels?*
- *Do processes for the elimination of price subsidies take into consideration and offer measures to compensate for the possible short term effects on the social welfare of consumers, particularly the poorest and most vulnerable?*
- *Do macro-economic forecasts include 'poverty and social impact analysis' (PSIA), in particular to model ex ante impacts of economic reforms on children?*
- *Do efforts to strengthen policy coordination include coordination between economic and social policy sectors?*

**V.2. Restructuring the economy to link to innovation of growth model towards raising quality, efficiency and competitiveness**

1. Restructure public investment and State budget
2. Restructuring of state-owned enterprises
3. Restructuring commercial banks and financial institutions



### **Key questions/critical issues for child-sensitive audit**

- *Are there mechanisms in place to monitor short and long-term effects of fiscal policy reforms on social wellbeing, with particular attention to children in the poorest and most vulnerable households?*
- *Do measures to improve the transparency of public finance management and expenditure include participatory consultation processes with communities, including children and young people?*
- *Does tax system reform provide for progressive rates depending on income levels?*
- *Do processes for the elimination of price subsidies take into consideration and offer measures to compensate for the possible short term effects on the social welfare of consumers, particularly the poorest and most vulnerable?*
- *Do macro-economic forecasts include 'poverty and social impact analysis' (PSIA), in particular to model ex ante impacts of economic reforms on children?*
- *Do efforts to strengthen policy coordination include coordination between economic and social policy sectors?*

### **V.3 Development of economic sectors and industries**

1. Comprehensively develop agriculture, forestry and fisheries towards industrialization and modernization in connection with better solving issues related to farmers and rural areas
2. Develop industry and construction towards modernization to create a foundation for an industrialized country, and improving the independence and autonomy of the economy
3. Develop strongly service sectors, particularly services having high value-added, high potential and competitive capacity

### **Key questions/crucial issues for child-sensitive audit**

- *Do programs for agricultural development, livestock raising and fisheries oriented towards modernization and efficiency take into consideration current household production systems and how these may be affected (either negatively or positively)?*
- *Is information available, and monitored, on the role of children in existing agricultural production systems, livestock raising and fisheries?*
- *Are safeguards in place to prohibit the use of child labor in large-scale agricultural production systems livestock-raising and fisheries?*
- *Are there measures in place to enhance training and extension services in agriculture, livestock herding and fisheries to women (including women heads of household) and young people seeking rural employment?*
- *Are children and young people mobilized around forestry preservation (for example, tree-planting campaigns) and other environmental concerns linked to forests?*
- *Do plans for industrial development include measures, on the one hand, to safeguard against child labor and, on the other hand, to promote appropriate vocational training for young people seeking employment?*

- *Are safeguards in place to prohibit the use of child labor in large-scale agricultural production systems livestock-raising and fisheries?*
- *Are there measures in place to enhance training and extension services in agriculture, livestock herding and fisheries to women (including women heads of household) and young people seeking rural employment?*
- *Are children and young people mobilized around forestry preservation (for example, tree-planting campaigns) and other environmental concerns linked to forests?*
- *Do plans for industrial development include measures, on the one hand, to safeguard against child labor and, on the other hand, to promote appropriate vocational training for young people seeking employment?*
- *Are industrial labor standards developed and enforced to ensure decent working conditions in factories and the like, including in coastal economic zones, industrial zones and border-gate economic zones?*
- *Are the potentially adverse environmental health effects of increased industrialization taken into account and addressed through appropriate standard-setting and other measures?*
- *Do plans and programs aimed at developing the service sectors include, on the one hand, measures to safeguard against child labor and exploitation (for example in the tourist industry) and, on the other hand to offer appropriate vocational training and skills-development programs for young people seeking employment in these sectors?*

#### **V.4. Enhance the quality of education, training, and human resources; enhance the development of scientific, technology and intellectual economy**

1. Enhance human resources quality, all-sides renovation and enhance the rapidity of education and training development
2. Develop science and technology to become the principal motivation of development process

#### **Key questions/crucial issues for child-sensitive audit**

- *Are reliable educational statistics regularly collected and monitored to identify potential disparities in key educational indicators and their trends (e.g. enrolment, attendance, performance, completion, etc.)?*
- *Is quality pre-school education available to all children according to accepted standards of early child development?*
- *Are appropriate measures in place (including plans, programs and investments) to address educational disparities for particularly disadvantaged groups (for example, children of ethnic minorities, children with disabilities, orphans, girls, etc.)*
- *Do educational policies and programs include child-friendly quality measures for planning, monitoring and assessment (see child-friendly schools checklist) and are these effectively applied?*
- *Are active teaching and learning models effectively promoted in teacher training institutes and schools?*

- *Are communities actively organized and involved in school management processes (for example through parent-teacher associations, school committees, etc.)?*
- *Does the Master Plan for Human Resources Development (2011-2020) provide for appropriate vocational and technical training opportunities for young people and do schools foster appropriate orientation for the transition from school to work?*
- *Do literacy programs address the needs of out-of-school youth and are appropriate 'catch-up' programs available in cases of over-aged children who have missed out on formal education?*
- *Do programs of scientific research and development include a focus on technologies of importance to children (for example, information and communication technologies, among others) and promote their dissemination?*
- *Do research programs (sociological, medical, etc.) include components on key issues and trends affecting children and young people as an input into development planning and programming?*

### **V.5. Take good care of cultural development, make good progress in social equity and improvement, ensure social welfare in each development progress and policy**

1. Develop comprehensively cultural areas in harmony with economic development
2. Focus on addressing labor issues in relation to employment and income, improving physical and mental life of the people
3. Make significant progress in social equity and improvement, ensure social welfare, and reduce the percentage of poor households
4. Ensure the comprehensive development of Vietnamese children and youth
5. Ensure gender equity in all aspects of life
6. Ensure freedom of beliefs and religions
7. Gradually reduce social evils
8. Improve the quality of health care and people's wellbeing

### **Key questions/crucial issues for child-sensitive audit**

- *Are appropriate sports and leisure programs, including physical education programs, developed to include both boys and girls and are these available for all children?*
- *Are appropriate measures in place to, on the one hand, safeguard against child labor and, on the other hand, promote suitable employment for young people? (see also checklist for MOLISA 5-year plan)*
- *Do social equity and social welfare plans and programs and strategies include targets based on measures and analysis of multi-dimensional child poverty? (see also checklist for MOLISA 5-year plan)*
- *Do the social welfare strategies foreseen for the period 2011-2015 identify particular market economy and other social risks and vulnerabilities faced by children (in different localities, different groups, etc.) and foresee specific measures to address these? (see also checklist for MOLISA 5-year plan)*

- *Do measures foreseen for residential planning and housing for groups of ethnic minorities, mountain and border areas and islands, the rural and urban poor and those living in regularly flooded areas take into consideration the particular needs of children (for safe habitat, water and sanitation, access to services, etc.)?*
- *Are poor and vulnerable children and their households included among the key beneficiaries of social welfare programs and assistance including social insurance?*
- *Are the specific needs of disabled children taken into account in the Law on the Disabled?*
- *Are poor and vulnerable children a key focus of social mobilization and resource mobilization campaigns such as “All the people participate in kindness repaying activities”?*
- *Is the National Action Program for Vietnamese children (2011-2015) in place and operational (including through adequate resourcing), and does it link into and help to enforce measures for children within the different sectoral development plans and programs?*
- *Is a strategy of youth promotion (2011-2015) in place and operational (including through adequate resourcing), and does it link into and help to enforce measures for young people within the different sectoral development plans and programs?*
- *Do gender equality initiatives regularly take into account the needs and rights of both men/women and boys/girls?*
- *Do measures to prevent and respond to social ills such as drug abuse and prostitution take into account and address the special needs of children?*
- *Do national statistics regularly monitor the health and nutritional status of the population, with particular focus on children and women?*
- *Do health care and promotion plans and programs provide an appropriate level of quality services (both preventive and curative) for children and women?*
- *Are programs to enhance nutrition and ensure good hygiene adequately resourced and available to all?*
- *Are there specific programs in place to address children’s vulnerability to HIV and AIDS and to respond to the needs of those infected and affected?*
- *In the move away from free state provision of population and reproductive health services to a market-based system, are there safeguards in place to ensure access to quality reproductive health services for the poorest and most vulnerable women and girls?*
- *Do investments in the health sector continue to accord appropriate levels of resources to preventive measures and basic health services?*

**V.6. Protect and improve the environment, take an initiative to prevent natural calamities, effectively respond against climate change**

**Key questions/crucial issues for child-sensitive audit**

- *Are mechanisms in place to identify and monitor the adverse effects of climate change phenomena on children, particularly the poorest and most vulnerable children?*

- *Does the national program of response to climate change include specific measures to address children's vulnerabilities and needs?*
- *Are children and young people's roles in natural resource protection recognized and actively supported and promoted?*
- *Are children taken into consideration in measures developed to prevent, respond to and mitigate against natural calamities (for example, construction standards in place for schools and emergency preparedness and prevention plans in place)?*
- *Do plans and programs for the exploitation of natural resources (for example, in the mining industry) provide safeguards against the use of child labor and the potential negative environmental effects on children's health?*

### **V.7. Develop regions in harmonious and sustainable manner; build up urban areas and new rural areas**

1. General orientations
2. Orientations for regional development

#### **Key questions/crucial issues for child-sensitive audit**

- *Does a regional mapping of multi-dimensional child poverty exist as a basis for equitable regional development programs that take into consideration children's particular vulnerabilities and needs?*
- *Are statistics on key child welfare and development indicators (such as health, nutrition, education status and the like) disaggregated by urban/rural locality?*
- *Are children's issues specifically addressed in the decentralized plans and programs developed on the basis of the SEDP?*

### **V.8. Mobilize and effectively utilize resources; gradually build up modern infrastructure**

1. Mobilize and effectively use resources
2. Orientation of investment expenditure
3. Concentrate on construction, make a breakthrough in economic infrastructure to meet national development

#### **Key questions/critical issues for child-sensitive audit**

- *Do investment decisions in socio-economic infrastructure take into account and prioritize children's specific needs and vulnerabilities in a manner that promotes equity?*
- *Are investments that are critical to children (for example in health, education, social welfare) safeguarded within the state budget and state service provision?*
- *Do social audit mechanisms such as program expenditure tracking systems (PETS) regularly monitor expenditures in critical domains for children and their impacts?*
- *Are mechanisms in place to ensure that private sector investments take into account priorities for children and safeguard their rights?*

**V.9. Complete socialist oriented market economy institution**

1. Continue to complete legal system, enhance the quality of legal document establishment, and implement legal regulations strictly and clearly
2. Develop all kinds of ownership, economic components as well as all kinds of enterprises
3. Improve business environment to motivate development of business sectors
4. Comprehensively develop market factors and different types of market

**Key questions/critical issues for child-sensitive audit**

- *Do all measures developed to support the transition to a socialist-oriented market economy take into consideration and address the possible effects on children (both positive and negative)?*
- *Are appropriate data collection and monitoring mechanisms (on the impact of market transition on children) in place to support this effort?*

**V.1. Priorities in inflation curbing and macro-economic stabilization to ensure sustainable growth**

1. Manage monetary policy to ensure the target of inflation curbing and macro-economic stabilization
2. Improve efficiency of public financial resources, implement a transparent fiscal policy, ensure maintenance of national financial security
3. Implement pricing policy consistent with the market institutions and economic management requirements
4. Strengthen macro-economic analysis and forecast
5. Enhance coordination among macro-economic policies

**Key questions/critical issues for child-sensitive audit**

- *Are there mechanisms in place to monitor short and long-term effects of fiscal policy reforms on social wellbeing, with particular attention to children in the poorest and most vulnerable households?*
- *Do measures to improve the transparency of public finance management and expenditure include participatory consultation processes with communities, including children and young people?*
- *Does tax system reform provide for progressive rates depending on income levels?*
- *Do processes for the elimination of price subsidies take into consideration and offer measures to compensate for the possible short term effects on the social welfare of consumers, particularly the poorest and most vulnerable?*
- *Do macro-economic forecasts include 'poverty and social impact analysis' (PSIA), in particular to model ex ante impacts of economic reforms on children?*
- *Do efforts to strengthen policy coordination include coordination between economic and social policy sectors?*

**V.11. Strengthen effectiveness and efficiency of state management**

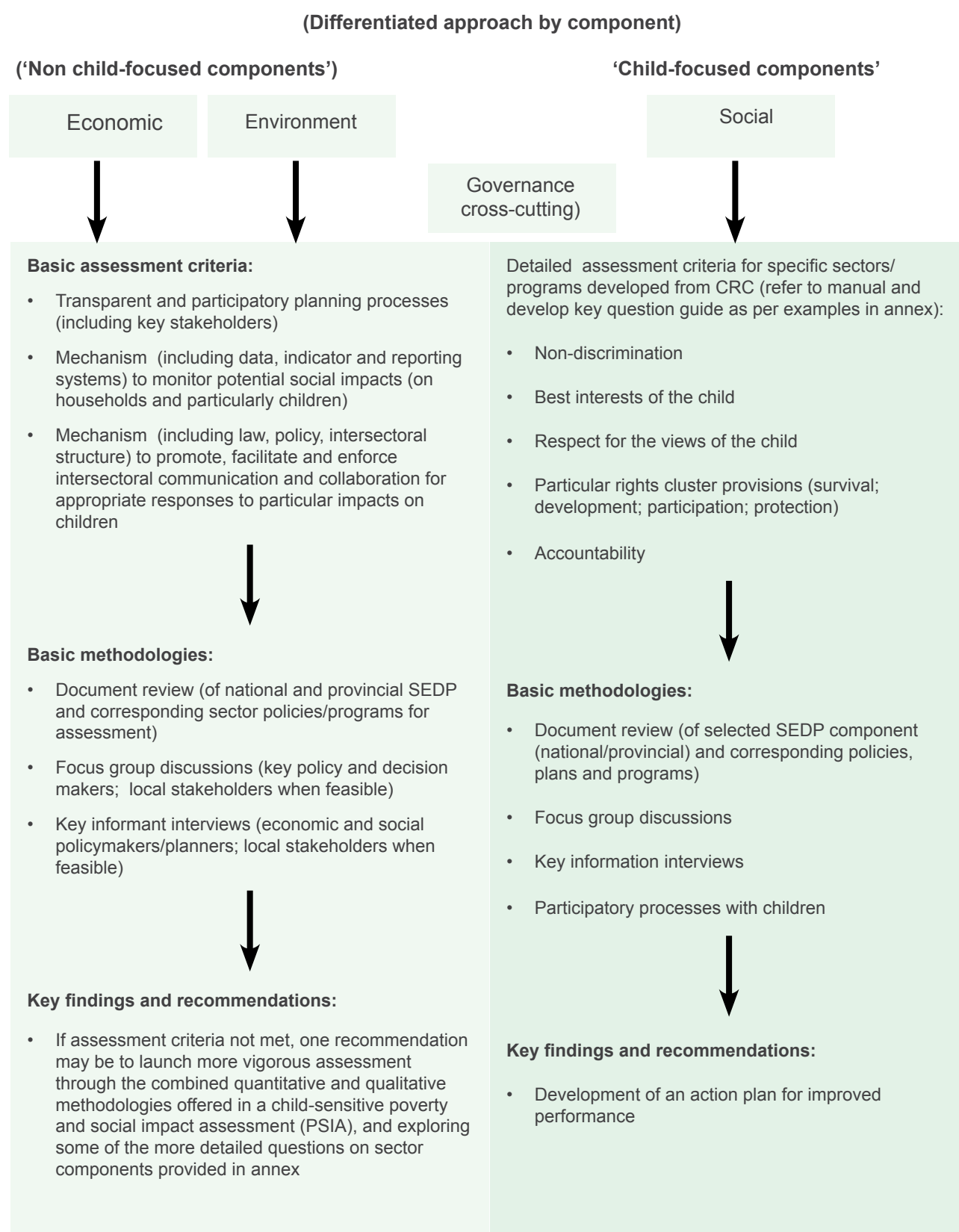
1. Enhance the reform of public administration and strengthen the effectiveness and efficiency of state management
2. Strengthen the fight against corruption and wasteful spending
3. Strengthen information delivery and propaganda; strengthen public, transparent and duly delivery of official information

### **Key questions/critical issues for child-sensitive audit**

- *Do public sector administrative reforms include a focus on those areas of administration that directly touch the lives of children (through provision of education, health, nutrition services, for example)?*
- *Do the monitoring activities of the National Assembly and People's Councils take regular account of issues affecting children? Are there specific bodies established within these structures to do so?*
- *Are there opportunities for children and young people to provide feedback on administrative processes or civil servant behaviors that directly affect them and their families (through schools, hospitals, social welfare agencies, child protection bodies, etc.?)*
- *Do civil servants in the relevant social sectors receive appropriate training and guidance on child-sensitive policies and child rights?*
- *Do judicial reform processes take into consideration particular issues around juvenile justice?*
- *Are appropriate communication campaigns and information dissemination efforts designed and implemented for and about children and young people?*

Some of the above questions may be too detailed to answer, given the current state of data collection and analysis mechanisms in the country. Moreover, the SEDP is a very large framework with multiple pillars and component programs which might be too broad to monitor – as a whole – for child-sensitivity. In this case, a simplified conceptual framework with a few key criteria could also be applied for assessment of the more 'macro' framework and non child-focused domains of the SEDP, complemented by more specific assessment questions for the more child-focused domains (See Figure 2).

**Figure 2. Conceptual framework for initial steps in a child-sensitive audit of SEDP**





## C.Social Protection Policy (social assistance)

Decree 67 (2007) on support policies for social protection beneficiaries in Viet Nam establishes (i) general provisions for support policies and regimes for disadvantaged persons, referred to as social protection beneficiaries; (ii) criteria for the identification of beneficiaries entitled to either monthly allowances or 'extraordinary support' (assistance in the face of natural disasters or force majeure); (iii) a framework for the determination of minimum levels of support and details on categories of support for both monthly assistance and disaster relief support; (iv) regulations on funding sources for implementation; (v) roles and responsibilities of ministries and branches in implementation of the policy; and (vi) provisions for commendation and handling of violations. Renewed efforts around social protection are foreseen in the national Social Security Strategy 2011-2020, pending final approval.

Since Decree 67 has been operational since 2007, application of a child-sensitivity audit in this area can include a focus on issues of implementation and monitoring (in contrast to the first two examples above which focused primarily on inclusion of critical issues for children within the plans themselves). Through examination of the social assistance pillar within the national Social Security Strategy (2011-2020) the child-sensitive audit can also look forward into the planning process to determine how children are or not specifically targeted and conceptualized within ongoing plans. It thus provides a case for a more complete application of the child-sensitivity tool than was possible in the two cases above. In all cases, however, the methodologies would be the same:

- Document review: Decree 67 and relevant MOLISA review reports; Social Security Strategy; poverty reduction papers; and other relevant documents
- Focus group discussions: Program planners and implementation officers (MOLISA and other departments, national and sub-national levels); staff of community-based social protection establishments; participating beneficiaries (including children and their caregivers representing participation in different programs, for example education benefits, orphan support, etc....); eligible beneficiaries (including children and their caregivers) who meet criteria but are not participating in any programs
- Key informant interviews: Selected from program planners and implementation officers (MOLISA and other departments, national and sub-national level); staff of community-based social protection establishments; participating beneficiaries (including children and their caregivers) and other community members.

Key questions/critical issues to guide the above exercises are presented below (questions would need to be adapted for each exercise):

## Key questions and issues for a child rights-based social audit of Decree 67

### Data collection/analysis, targeting and identification of beneficiaries

- Who (which department) is responsible for identifying/targeting households and individuals eligible for the program?
- How are eligible beneficiaries identified/targeted? On the basis of which criteria and through which data sources and systems?
- Is there a national poverty monitoring data collection and analysis system in operation that produces timely, reliable and disaggregated data?
- How in particular are eligible children identified for assistance? On the basis of which criteria and through which data sources and systems and by whom?
- Do multi-dimensional poverty assessments contribute to the targeting of beneficiaries, including multi-dimensional child poverty assessments?
- Have child-specific vulnerabilities (by different age groups, localities, ethnic minorities, gender, etc.) been analyzed and taken into consideration in the identification of child beneficiaries and their households?
- Is there a national database of beneficiaries that has been established and is functioning? If so, does it include a particular focus on child beneficiaries? If not, are there plans to establish one?
- Are there any mechanisms in place for community-based targeting processes, including participation by children in the identification of needs and potential beneficiaries?
- How are children identified for participation in community-based child protection establishments?
- Are there any overlaps in the targeting and identification of beneficiaries (including children) for different benefits?
- Has there been any analysis of errors of omission or errors of inclusion in the targeting of beneficiaries, including direct child beneficiaries?
- Can you identify any particular weaknesses in the existing system for data collection and analysis relative to the targeting and identification of beneficiaries, and more particularly children?
- Do you have any suggestions for improvements in the existing system of identification and targeting of beneficiaries, particularly for children?

## Nature and determination of benefits

- How are the kinds and amounts of benefits determined (for example, monthly allowances; education or vocational training exemptions or subsidies; disaster relief)?
- Are there mechanisms in place to assess whether these benefits are appropriate to the needs of beneficiaries? With particular reference to direct benefits for children?
- How are differences related to locality (urban/rural), region, ethnicity, gender, etc. taken into account in the determination of benefits – in general? – for children in particular?
- Have there been any overlaps in the determination of different benefits for beneficiaries?
- Is there any responsibility to ensure equity in the determination of benefits either within or among different categories of eligible groups (For example: Is the proportion of children receiving benefits equivalent to their proportion with the poor?<sup>35</sup> Within the child population receiving benefits, are there particular proportions for children of ethnic minorities, children of migrants, children in remote regions, etc.)
- In the case of orphan children in particular, do both the orphans themselves and their host families or community social protection establishments receive direct benefits?
- How are the needs of disabled children taken into account in the program and what benefits accrue directly to them?
- How are the particular needs of children affected by natural disasters or ‘force majeure’ taken into account in the program?

## Communication and awareness

- How are the benefits available under this policy communicated to the people?
- Who is responsible for this communication, and at which level?
- Are there particular efforts to communicate around benefits for children, including directly to children and their caregivers?
- Are all eligible groups and individuals aware of the benefits for which they are eligible and about how to obtain them?
- Can children claim benefits independently of adult caregivers?
- What measures can you think of that might improve communication around the social assistance benefits available?

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<sup>35</sup> According to the Bureau of Social Protection, MOLISA only 7.6% of benefits go to single parents raising children, while direct benefits for children make up less than 5 %. So too, UNDP calculated that 40% of the social protection fund is spent for the richest quintile, compared to only 7% for the poorest quintile....(cited in MOLISA 2010 Social Security Strategy)

## Implementation, budgeting and coordination

- Are existing staff sufficient and sufficiently trained to effectively implement the program?
- Do staff have any particular training on child rights/child protection or child poverty and development issues?
- Are budgets sufficient for implementation of the programs? If not, why not? How are budgets determined and allocated?
- Are there effective mechanisms in place for coordination of efforts between MOLISA and other important actors (Ministries of Education, Health, Agriculture, etc.) at different implementation levels?
- How, in particular, does coordination take place around provision of education and training benefits for children (school fee exemption/subsidies; vocational education exemptions/subsidies)?
- How, in particular, does coordination take place around provision health benefits for children (national health insurance card; free medical exams/treatment; etc.)
- Are there any difficulties in such coordination?
- Do you have any suggestions about how such coordination could be improved?
- What do you feel in general are some of the most important challenges in implementation of the programs (for example amount or regularity of allowances? Coverage of all eligible beneficiaries? Coordination issues?)
- What do you feel in general are some of the most important challenges in implementation of programs specifically targeted to children?
- Do you have any specific suggestions on how the social assistance programs benefiting children might be improved?

## Supervision, monitoring, evaluation

- Who (which department) has responsibility for monitoring the effective implementation of the social assistance program(s)?
- How is this monitoring done? (e.g. through periodic field assessments from the center; on a decentralized basis through routine administrative reporting; a combination; other?)
- Are there specific indicators that have been developed and applied to monitor the impact on child wellbeing or household participation in the program(s)?
- Have there been specific program evaluations that have been conducted? If so, what were some of the key findings on the impact of the program on children?

- Has there been any comparative analysis of trends over time between children participating in the program and children who, while eligible, are not participating in the program (due to errors of exclusion/limited coverage and the like)?
- What particular measures are taken to ensure that household benefits for children (including education benefits, care of orphan or abandoned children, etc.) accrue to those children themselves (and are not used for other household needs)?
- How are the community-based social protection structures monitored (including both public and private structures)? Are there quality controls in place, particularly around the care and treatment of children?
- What measures are in place to (i) settle conflicts that might arise over allocation of benefits (ii) mismanagement of funds, etc.
- Do beneficiaries have a means of voicing concerns or complaints about the social protection programs? What about child beneficiaries in particular?

### Future planning/strategy development

- Has the social assistance program within the new social security strategy (2011-2020) been developed on the basis of an assessment of past performance? If so, what particular lessons were learned about social assistance for children and what are some of the key changes in orientation?
- Are data collection and analysis mechanisms being strengthened as a basis for expanding coverage (as foreseen in the strategy), including a move towards more multi-dimensional measures of poverty (including for children)?
- The strategy paper notes that multi-dimensional indicators on child wellbeing (such as water and sanitation, nutrition, etc.) had not been taken into account in previous programs; are there plans underway to address this in the new program?
- How is the strategy being designed to address the effects of chronic poverty on children and their households?
- The strategy paper identifies a number of weaknesses in past implementation of social protection measures for children: for example school fee exemptions or subsidies did not address other costs for schooling, accounting for only 30% of total household spending on schooling. What strategies are being considered to overcome such limitations?
- Have conditional cash transfer programs been developed for poor households and ethnic minorities sending children to school (as per decree 75/2006/ND-CP)?
- How are poverty reduction programs, social services and social assistance programs linked or coordinated – in general? – around

children in particular? What are some of the challenges in this and suggestions for improvement?

- What plans and mechanisms are being established to strengthen accountability and transparency, particularly in programs with direct impact on children?

## ANNEX 2

### EXAMPLES OF EXISTING CHILD- SENSITIVE TOOLS & CHECKLISTS BASED ON CRC

#### A. Child-friendly Cities Initiative: Government Checklist

	Yes	Planned or in process (please describe)	No	Possible action points for the future
<b>I. GOVERNMENT-WIDE COMMITMENTS TO CHILDREN</b>				
<b>Municipal Policy-making for children</b>				
Does a strategy exist to address children's rights at the municipal level?				
Is there a council, special commission or body that broadly debates and creates, or advises, on policies that concern children?				
Are children's views incorporated into the decision making of city council?				
Are all policymakers and elected officials trained on children's rights?				
<b>Coordination of Actions for Children across Government Agencies</b>				
Is there a specific body that facilitates coordination between all relevant agencies on issues relating to children?				
<b>Budgeting for Children</b>				
Is there a mechanism to systematically allocate resources for children out of the overall city's budget?				
Is there a process to share information on the city's budget, and specifically on the portion allocated for children?				
<b>Data on Children</b>				
Is all data concerning families and children in the municipality made available in a centralized repository?				

	Yes	Planned or in process (please describe)	No	Possible action points for the future
Does the municipality collect its own data on children and youth?				
Does any of the available data allow you to do comparative neighbourhood level analysis on the conditions of children?				
Is there household level data?				
Does the data include children who live in illegal settlements?				
Is there a city report with data on children that is made available to civil society/ the general public?				
<b>Plans of Action for Children</b>				
Do the municipal government's general plans of action typically include specific sections about children?				
Is there a specific municipal plan of action for children?				
Does the local plan of action include the assessment of impacts on children?				
<b>Public and Professional Awareness of Children and Children's Rights</b>				
Are there efforts to raise the public's awareness of children's rights?				
Are there training programs for all persons dealing with children? (Including teachers, doctors, nurses, lawyers, judges, police, psychologists, social workers, staff from juvenile detention centres, and staff working in residential care facilities)				
<b>Advocacy for Children</b>				
Is there a special advocate or ombudsperson for children?				
<b>Community Governance</b>				
Does the municipal government regularly work with community based organizations and community governance structures?				

Source: Castro Guevara et al (2009) Philippines Pilot Study of CFC participatory assessment tools



## B. CRC indicators used in the Philippine individual and group CFC assessment tools

CÁC QUYỀN CƠ BẢN	CHỈ SỐ VỀ QUYỀN TRẺ EM
Sức khỏe bà mẹ	<p>Các bang ... phải tiến hành các biện pháp thích hợp ... để đảm bảo chăm sóc sức khỏe trước và sau sinh của các bà mẹ (Điều 24, số 2d)</p> <p>Các bang ... phải tiến hành các biện pháp thích hợp ... để xây dựng các hướng dẫn cho cha mẹ và kế hoạch hóa gia đình và các dịch vụ (Điều 24, số 2f)</p>
Sức khỏe sơ sinh/trẻ em	<p>Các bang ... phải tiến hành các biện pháp thích hợp ... để giảm thiểu tỷ lệ chết sơ sinh và trẻ em (Điều 24, số 2a)</p> <p>Trẻ em phải được đăng ký ngay sau khi sinh và có quyền có tên từ khi sinh (Điều 7, số 1)</p> <p>Các bang ... phải tiến hành các biện pháp thích hợp ... để đảm bảo mọi tầng lớp xã hội nhất là cha mẹ và trẻ em được thông tin, tiếp cận với giáo dục và được hỗ trợ sử dụng các kiến thức cơ bản về sức khỏe và dinh dưỡng trẻ em, lợi ích của cho con bú bằng sữa mẹ... (Điều 24, số 2e)</p> <p>Các bang công nhận quyền của trẻ em được hưởng tiêu chuẩn cao nhất có thể về sức khỏe và các phương tiện trị bệnh hay ốm đau hoặc phục hồi chức năng. Các bang phải cố gắng đảm bảo không có trẻ em nào bị tước đoạt khỏi các quyền tiếp cận với các dịch vụ y tế đó. (Điều 24, số 1)</p>
Dinh dưỡng	Các bang ... phải tiến hành các biện pháp thích hợp ... để chống suy dinh dưỡng bằng việc cung cấp đủ lương thực dinh dưỡng... (Điều 24, số 2c)
Nước sạch	Các bang ... phải tiến hành các biện pháp thích hợp ... để chống bệnh tật bằng cách cung cấp nước sạch ... (Điều 24, số 2c)
Vệ sinh môi trường	Các bang ... phải tiến hành các biện pháp thích hợp ... để đảm bảo mọi tầng lớp xã hội, nhất là cha mẹ và trẻ em được thông tin, tiếp cận với giáo dục và được hỗ trợ... về vệ sinh cá nhân và vệ sinh môi trường. (Điều 24, số 2e)
Giáo dục và nuôi dạy trẻ em	<p>Các bang công nhận quyền đối với giáo dục của trẻ em (Điều 28)</p> <p>Các bang phải cung cấp giáo dục tiểu học bắt buộc miễn phí cho mọi người (Điều 28a)</p> <p>Các bang phải khuyến khích xây dựng các hình thức giáo dục trung học khác nhau ... (Điều 28b)</p>

CÁC QUYỀN CƠ BẢN	CHỈ SỐ VỀ QUYỀN TRẺ EM
	<p>Các bang phải có biện pháp khuyến khích tỷ lệ chuyên cần ở trường và giảm tỷ lệ bỏ học (Điều 28)</p> <p>Các bang phải nỗ lực tối đa để đảm bảo thực hiện nguyên tắc cả hai cha mẹ phải có nghĩa vụ chung với sự trưởng thành và phát triển của trẻ em (Điều 28, số 1)</p>
Bảo vệ	<p>Các bang công nhận quyền của trẻ em được bảo vệ khỏi bóc lột kinh tế, bị bắt làm những công việc nguy hiểm, bị can thiệp vào việc giáo dục của trẻ, hay bị xâm hại đến sức khỏe hay cơ thể, tâm thần, tâm linh, đạo đức hay phát triển xã hội (Điều 32, số 1)</p> <p>Các bang phải tiến hành các biện pháp pháp lý, hành chính, xã hội và giáo dục thích hợp để bảo vệ trẻ em khỏi mọi hình thức bạo lực vật lý hay tâm lý, thương tích và lạm dụng, bị bỏ rơi hay đối xử lạnh nhạt, đối xử tệ hoặc bóc lột, bao gồm lạm dụng tình dục, trong khi được cha mẹ, người giám hộ hay bất kỳ ai khác chăm sóc. (Điều 19, số 1)</p> <p>Các bang thực hiện các biện pháp để bảo vệ trẻ em khỏi mọi hình thức bóc lột và lạm dụng tình dục. (Điều 34)</p>
Vui chơi	Các bang công nhận quyền của trẻ em được nghỉ ngơi và rảnh rỗi, tham gia vào trò chơi và hoạt động giải trí thích hợp với độ tuổi của trẻ và tham gia tự do vào đời sống văn hóa và nghệ thuật (Điều 31, số 1)
Tham gia vào cộng đồng	<p>Các bang tôn trọng và khuyến khích quyền của trẻ em tham gia đầy đủ vào đời sống văn hóa và nghệ thuật (Điều 31, số 2)</p> <p>Các bang công nhận quyền của trẻ em tham gia các hội và tự do tụ tập (Điều 15, số 1)</p>

Source: Castro Guevara et al (2009) Philippines Pilot Study of CFC participatory assessment tools

## C. Enabling factors for child rights implementation

### Checklist of general opportunities:

- Political will is favorable to including child rights in PRS/NDP and their rollout in related policies and programs, including at different levels of government, despite competing political commitments, sensitivities and interests.
- Good understanding of the concept of child rights (including their different dimensions) by decision-makers and government officials in charge of the operation of programs.
- A policy orientation that looks at outcomes and impact, particularly in relation to achievements of the rights to survival, development and protection. Similarly, there are clear outputs and outcomes for children envisaged during the PRS/NDP cycle.
- Top-level political support of child rights objectives and a lead agency coordinating cross-sector policies and programs for children can hold agencies in charge accountable.
- Adequate organizational structure at the national and local level to make programs derived from child rights commitments operational. This includes clear lines of authority for the rollout of policy commitments are in place.
- Robust horizontal communication, coordination and networking within/ between government agencies in charge of child rights, NGOs, local governments, donors and other actors involved in groups working for child rights. This is particularly important in a cross-cutting issue such as child rights, which requires collaboration between agencies to enable child rights outcomes.
- Sufficient and effectively utilized resources to finance the implementation of child rights commitments.
- More flexible budget management frameworks that better reflect planning and are able to reallocate resources to child rights-related PRS/NDP priorities over the long term, as reflected in MTEFs.
- Stronger opportunities for citizens to input into policy implementation, particularly in relation to child rights and the participation of children.
- Effective accountability structures that uphold commitments on policy implementation in line with child rights commitments and stronger monitoring capacity by relevant government agencies.
- More comprehensive information systems, including the collection of sufficient (and adequately disaggregated data) and good reporting.

Source: Adapted from McGauran (2008).

Source: *Mainstreaming child rights into PRS/NDP*

## D. Enhancing child-rights indicators in national development planning

- Need to draw on disaggregated data (gender, age group, ethnicity, geographic location, disability)
- More comprehensive nutrition, education and health indicators, especially indicators of service quality and equity.
- Need for indicators to measure protection from abuse and exploitation, and look at intersections between survival, development and protection (indivisibility)
- Indicators to evaluate children's opportunities to voice their views and participate in their communities;
- Indicators to measure progress in child-focused social protection to cushion children from the negative spill-over impacts from rapid economic development and related policies.

Source: Author's compilation

*Source: Mainstreaming child rights into PRS/NDP*

## E. Qualitative Research Methods and their use with Children in a PSIA

PHƯƠNG PHÁP	KHẢ NĂNG ỨNG DỤNG TRONG PSIA	CẢNH BÁO/NHẬN XÉT
Bản đồ và biểu đồ	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Xác định việc sử dụng không gian, dịch vụ hay các quan hệ xã hội có thể thay đổi ra sao</li> </ul>	
Trình tự thời gian	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Xác định những thay đổi có thể trong việc sử dụng thời gian của trẻ em</li> </ul>	
Vẽ	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Xác định những thay đổi mà người nghiên cứu đã không tính đến, như chỉ ra những vấn đề về an toàn và an ninh, hình thức di chuyển, những khía cạnh đời sống trẻ em chưa được phát hiện mà bình thường không nhìn ra.</li> </ul>	<p>Chi phí, tác động môi trường</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cần diễn giải với trẻ em; sẽ không hữu dụng lắm nếu trẻ không biết vẽ</li> <li>Cần điều phối rất giỏi</li> </ul>
Đóng vai	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Xác định bằng hình ảnh những viễn cảnh trước và sau</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nguy cơ trẻ chỉ đơn giản diễn lại vở kịch hay bài hát mà chúng đã xem trước đó.</li> </ul>
Kịch bản	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Có thể phát hiện ra những hiểu biết quan trọng trong những thay đổi tiềm tàng</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dễ loại trừ trẻ em nhút nhát</li> <li>Cần phải lựa chọn kỹ lưỡng để có các kịch bản ưu tiên</li> </ul>
Phỏng vấn bán cấu trúc	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cung cấp nền tảng để thảo luận mà tránh được hỏi những câu hỏi riêng tư về các chủ đề nhạy cảm như tác động đối với thu nhập hộ gia đình trong bối cảnh làm việc nhóm.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tốn thời gian nếu làm diện rộng</li> <li>Mức độ tự chọn cao</li> </ul>
Thảo luận trên internet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hữu dụng nhất với trẻ không thoải mái khi tham gia vào nhóm hoặc các phương pháp trình diễn.</li> <li>Hữu dụng với thanh niên</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dễ chỉ phản ánh quan tâm của những nhóm kinh tế xã hội cao nhất</li> <li>Dễ thu được dữ liệu bị bóp méo nếu so với phương pháp gặp trực tiếp.</li> </ul>

Source: World Bank/UNICEF 2011



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