Self-Assessment Checklist: Children and HIV

HIV and AIDS have had an enormous impact on children across the globe. Overall, 2.1 million children are estimated to be living with HIV and millions more are directly affected by HIV – for example, having lost a parent to an AIDS-related illness, are living with a sick family member or are in a household that has taken in orphaned children. Many more children are indirectly affected by HIV through its effects on the community; HIV has reduced the number of teachers and health workers, has affected the wealth of communities because of sickness amongst bread winners and, overall, has made it harder for children to survive and thrive.

Insufficient food, poor nutrition and lack of access to education and health care can be a serious issue for all children whose lives are affected by HIV. Many vulnerable children also experience discrimination, abuse and exploitation. Existing laws and policies do not sufficiently protect them, especially the millions who lack birth certificates or identity documents.

Significant social and cultural barriers impede the availability of appropriate sexual health and HIV information and services for young people. This makes it difficult for them to protect themselves from HIV. In most cases, children also have little voice in decisions that address their families' vulnerability to the impact of HIV, for example, decisions about whether they continue at school or play a role in contributing to household income. Yet boys and girls have shown immense resilience and creativity in responding to the impact of HIV on their lives, and they are too often an unacknowledged or untapped resource within households and communities.

The Code of Good Practice for NGOs Responding to HIV/AIDS (the 'Code') recommends that NGOs providing services and programmes for children affected by HIV follow the principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), and regional or national conventions where these exist, such as the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child. The CRC sets out a set of universal entitlements for children and young people below the age of 18 that encompasses what they need to survive, including the right to survive, to be safe, to belong, to be heard and to develop. All rights are considered to be equal in importance and to reinforce each other.

The Code identifies one key principle on children and HIV:

• Our programmes for orphans and vulnerable children affected by HIV and AIDS (OVC) are child-centred, family- and community-focused and rights-based.

This self-assessment checklist will help you assess the degree to which your organisation is successfully implementing these principles. The questions are designed to be thinking points / guidelines to help you identify areas that are already at a 'good practice' level, and areas that need to be developed and strengthened.

author

This checklist was developed by World Vision International.

Self-Assessment Checklist: Children and HIV

Self-Assessment Instructions

This checklist should be completed by a group of three to five staff members who are involved with programming for children affected by HIV at your organisation.

Please indicate your answer by marking the appropriate box.

- Y Yes, we undertake this work / activity
- I Insufficient, in preparation, or is not followed in practice
- No, we've not yet tackled this work / activity
- **NR** Not relevant to our work

Please be honest in completing this checklist! It is expected that your scoring will vary between modules, depending on your area of expertise.

There is no formalized scoring process for this assessment. Instead, we suggest that you look at the questions that you answered 'no' or 'insufficient' to, and then select areas that are most relevant for your organisation to improve upon in the short-term.

Action Plan

We challenge you to use this tool to identify areas that your organisation needs to strengthen in order to reach a 'good practice' level, and then develop a brief Action Plan that highlights examples of HOW you will improve your work on children and HIV over the next six months. You can use the Action Plan template provided at the end of this module or create your own.

There are eight Key Questions highlighted in the checklist in red. These

questions address fundamental issues that you need to consider first when assessing your organisation's programmes for children affected by HIV. As you develop your Action Plan, keep these questions in mind. If you have answered 'no' to any of them, addressing these issues is a good starting point for improving your programmes.

How to save the Action Plan:

Complete the self-assessment module and Action Plan electronically, save the file and submit it to the Code Secretariat by email. The Secretariat will credit all NGOs that submit Action Plans as 'Implementing' NGOs and full signatories of the Code. After the period of six months, we will ask you to measure your progress against your Action Plan.

the Code

The Code of Good Practice for NGOs Responding to HIV/AIDS (the 'Code') was created by a broad consortium of NGOs to provide a shared vision of good practice to which NGOs can commit and be held accountable.

The Code outlines principles and practices that are informed by evidence and underscore successful NGO responses to HIV. It identifies a series of areas that are key to HIV programming and articulates fundamental principles that should be applied to HIV programmes in each of these areas.

These principles are aspirational, setting out examples of good practice that NGOs can work towards over time.

For more information on the Code, go to www.hivcode.org

Checklist





Ensuring that children's issues are fully considered in the design and implementation of programmes requires that organisations take steps to include age-sensitivity and the needs of children in the way the organisation is managed.

A.1: Organisational Structure and Management

Systems and procedures for protecting children and providing a child-friendly environment

1. Does your organisation have a written child protection policy?
2. Do systems exist to ensure that your organisation's child protection policy is implemented and monitored, with an explicit procedure for reporting abuses? ²
3. Are all staff and volunteers obliged to adhere to a child protection code of conduct?
4. Have all staff members been trained on children's rights, including issues of gender and non-discrimination, and on children's participation?
5. Does your organisation have workplace policies in place that:
 recognise the childcare needs of staff and volunteers, and
 create an enabling environment that supports staff and volunteers with caring responsibilities to participate equally?
6. Does your organisation support the development of staff members as positive role models for children and caregivers?

^{2.} A useful resource for establishing a child protection policy is: Tearfund/National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, 2003, *Setting the standard: A common approach to child protection for international NGOs*

		Child participation
		7. Does your organisation involve children living with HIV (CLWHA) in its programmes and organisational structures in a way that:
○ ¥ ○ I		 allows their contributions to be given equal weight compared to the voices of others?
○ ¥ ○ I		 acknowledges their skills and experiences, that facilitates their role as decision-makers and active implementers within programmes?
○ Y ○ I		• advocates for CLWHA to be spokespeople for the organisation? ³
		For example:
○ Y ○ I	○ N ○ NR	• Do you ensure that behaviour change messages concerning HIV for children and youth are designed or co-designed by CLWHA?
○ Y ○ I	○ N ○ NR	8. Does your organisation have a mechanism for ensuring that the views of girls and boys (especially those most vulnerable or marginalised) are incorporated at a policy level and during strategic planning processes?
		For example:
○ Y ○ I	○ N ○ NR	 Do children and / or youth participate in your organisation's governing bodies?
○ ¥ ○ I		 Are there established systems at the community level where boys and girls can provide feedback on your work?
○ Y ○ I	○ N ○ NR	9. Are young people (both male and female) encouraged and provided with the opportunity to take on leadership roles within your organisation and programmes?
		For example:
○ Y ○ I	○ N ○ NR	 Does your organisation have a mentorship programme that enables peer educators to take up project management functions and become staff employees over time?
○ Y ○ I	○ N ○ NR	10. Does your programme support the participation of adult caregivers and other significant adults in programmes that care for children affected by HIV?

^{3.} It would be useful for your organisation to review the Code's self-assessment module on the Meaningful Involvement of People Living with HIV alongside this document.



Actions needed to support Section A.1:

Checklist

A.2: Programme or Project Design, Implementation and Evaluation

Programme or project design

11. Does your organisation analyse the impact of HIV on boys and girls of all ages, and on their caregivers and families, at the household, community and national level?
12. Does your organisation involve boys and girls of all ages and their families in exploring the issues affecting their lives?
13. Has your organisation assessed the varying forms of abuse, discrimination and exploitation of children with children, caregivers and communities? For example, have you considered:
• Are there children in the community who are exposed to exploitative labour?
• Are some children at high risk of physical or sexual abuse?
 Is there discrimination on the basis of HIV status, disability, ethnicity or religion?
14. Does your organisation include children, their families and community members in identifying potential solutions to these problems, in planning programmes and in evaluating the impact of programmes and activities?
15. Has your organisation conducted a stakeholder analysis to identify partners that represent a wide range of children's rights to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support?
16. Has your organisation and its partners undertaken a community analysis to discover existing coping mechanisms, strengths and capacities within the community?
17. Does the community analysis also examine what social, cultural, economic and environmental factors make children, particularly girls, more vulnerable to HIV infection and adverse impact of HIV? ⁴

^{4.} A useful resource to assist communities to identify their strengths and coping mechanisms and how these can support vulnerable children is: REPSSI, 2004, *Journey of Life: A community workshop to support children*

Y	I	N		18. Has your organisation considered the long-term nature of children's vulnerability and identified how to ensure that support is sustainable? For example:
Y		N		• Do your programmes strengthen the capacity of caregivers, families and communities to care for and support children?
``Y	OI	N		 Do your programmes increase access to essential government services for orphans and vulnerable children and their caregivers, such as education and health services?
○ Y	I	N		19. Does your organisation work towards a sustainable response that is capable of replication?For example:
○ ¥	I	∩ N		• Has your programme or project looked at ways of building the capacity (both materially and emotionally) of caregivers, families and community members to provide long-term care and support for children?
				Programme or project implementation
○ Y	I	∩ N	NR	 Programme or project implementation 20. Does your organisation undertake community awareness and education activities using a culturally-sensitive approach to children's rights, including the rights of boys and girls living with or affected by HIV?
○ Y) I	○ N ○ N	O NR	20. Does your organisation undertake community awareness and education activities using a culturally-sensitive approach to children's rights,
) I) I	0		20. Does your organisation undertake community awareness and education activities using a culturally-sensitive approach to children's rights, including the rights of boys and girls living with or affected by HIV?21. Does your organisation address the gender inequities that girls often face?
	 □ I □ I □ I □ I 	0		 20. Does your organisation undertake community awareness and education activities using a culturally-sensitive approach to children's rights, including the rights of boys and girls living with or affected by HIV? 21. Does your organisation address the gender inequities that girls often face? For example: Do you consider the rights of girls to have access to age-appropriate

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Checklist

Y	OI	N	23. Does your organisation advocate for improved policy and practice to ensure that effective support reaches as many children as possible?
			For example, do you advocate for:
Y	I	N	 monitoring the quality and impact of National Plans of Action on Children and / or OVC?
Y	I	∩ N	• ensuring that children's rights are fully reflected in national HIV and AIDS strategic frameworks and other key strategies (such as national poverty reduction strategies, education and health strategies)?
Y	I	N	 mobilising community support for HIV responses and providing sustainable sources of support for caregivers, families and communities?
			Monitoring and evaluation
Y	OI	N	24. Do your organisation's monitoring and evaluation tools assess age- and gender-related issues relating to HIV risk and vulnerability, and measure these changes over time?
Y	OI	∩ N	25. Does your organisation assess the impact of your programmes and activities on the quality of life of girls and boys of all ages and on children with specific vulnerabilities?
			For example, have you considered:
Y	I	N	 boys and girls with physical or mental disabilities or those whose caregivers live with disabilities?
Y	I	N	 children living in households that are marginalised (for example due to stigma and discrimination against drug users, sex workers, and ethnic or religious minorities)?
Y	OI	N	children living on the street?
Y	OI	N	26. Does your organisation include children, young people and their caregivers and households in your monitoring and evaluation (including processes that include the views of vulnerable or marginalised children)?
			For example, do you include:
Y	OI	N	• girls?
Y	\bigcirc I	N	children with disabilities?
Y	OI	N	child carers?
Y	OI	N	children living with HIV?

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	27. Does your organisation's monitoring and evaluation system take into account ethical considerations when collecting and managing information on children's programming?
	For example:
	• Have children been fully informed about the implications of giving information that may be documented and used and are they supported to provide safe and confidential feedback on programming?
	 Is information provided in a child-friendly way?
Actions needed to support Section A.2	:

				B
				Child Focus within Sectoral Programmes
				This section will help your organisation assess the extent to which your programmes and projects address boys' and girls' rights and HIV vulnerabilities.
				Humanitarian and/or development programmes (mainstreaming)
Y	I	N		1. Do your organisation's HIV programmes maintain strict adherence to the implementation and monitoring of guidelines to protect girls and boys from physical and psychological abuse, violence and sexual exploitation?
				2. Do your organisation's development and/or humanitarian programmes take into account:
Y	I	N		 the HIV-related vulnerabilities of all boys and girls within a household and
Y	OI	N		 how your activities mitigate the impact of HIV on children?
Y	I	N	NR	3. Have your organisation's humanitarian and / or development programmes considered HIV risk factors that affect children? Have you designed programmes in a way that reduces these risks?
				For example, in an emergency context:
Y	I	N		• Are staff and partners trained in the prevention of sexual abuse and exploitation of children?
Y	I	N		 Is a reporting system for abuses present and enforced?
Y	I	N		• Are children's perspectives on the risks that they face (for example, unsafe routes to school, lack of access to condoms) been sought and integrated into responses?
				For example, in a rural development programme:
○ Y		<u> </u>	NR	• Do livelihoods interventions take into account the HIV-related impact of the intervention on children? (For example, will a child have to leave school to look after cattle if the caregiver is too frail or elderly to do this him or herself?)
○ Y	I	N		 Do youth benefiting from improved livelihoods need HIV prevention information because greater income means more mobility and greater likelihood of finding sexual partners?

Checklist

	HIV programmes
	4. Does your organisation provide and / or advocate for voluntary counselling and testing services that are accessible to children and young people?
	5. Do your organisation's HIV prevention programmes enable both girls and boys to access information and services?
	6. Do your organisation's HIV prevention programmes build skills that enable children to protect themselves and others from HIV infection and sexual abuse and exploitation, according to their age- and gender- specific needs?
	7. Does your organisation provide and / or advocate for youth-friendly, confidential HIV and sexual and reproductive health services that can be accessed without the consent of parents or guardians?
	8. Does your organisation provide and / or advocate for children's access to HIV diagnosis and treatment from birth, including access for all women to prevention of mother-to-child transmission (PMTCT) programmes?
	9. Does your organisation provide and / or advocate for HIV-positive children and young people to live positively, access care and treatment and live free from discrimination and stigma?
	10. Does your organisation advocate for young people to express their sexuality in a non-discriminatory, non-judgmental way?
	 Does your organisation provide or advocate for skills-building of young people to equip them with the ability to negotiate safer sex?
	12. Does your organisation provide or advocate for training to young people on gender relationships?
	13. Does your organisation provide male and female condoms and lubricant, and instructions on their correct use to young people who request them?
	14. Does your organisation provide contraceptive information to young people who request it?
	15. Does your organisation provide or refer young people to post-exposure prophylaxis services in the event of rape?
	16. Does your organisation provide referrals for children and young people who are in abusive home environments?
Actions needed to support Section B:	

Actions needed to support Section B:

	C
	Programming for Children Affected by HIV
	This section will help you consider how well your organisation is addressing key programming and advocacy issues in support of children affected by HIV. ⁵
○ Y ○ I ○ N ○ NR	1. Does your organisation address the needs of all vulnerable children (for example, all poor children; or all children in abusive situations) to ensure equitable targeting of interventions and non-discriminatory support to all children?
	2. Does your organisation promote / participate in multi-sectoral partnerships that, through coordination and networking, are able to ensure holistic outcomes for HIV-affected children?
	For example, do you advocate for / support multi-sectoral coordination at the local level so that there are coordinated linkages between:
	 all local stakeholders (such as health workers, teachers, magistrates, police, social workers, farmers, business people, religious and community leaders) and,
	 people at community level who are able to identify vulnerable children and their caregivers (for example, community-based child protection volunteers)?
	 Has your project / programme facilitated linkages with the following core areas of service provision or support:
	• education?
	• health?
	HIV prevention?
	psychosocial support?
	 livelihoods and food security / economic strengthening?
	legal services?

^{5.} As outlined in the *Framework for the protection, care and support of orphans and vulnerable children living in a world with HIV and AIDS,* developed in 2004 and supplemented with a companion paper. Enhanced protection for children affected by HIV and AIDS, developed in 2007. These are available at www.unicef.org. The OVC support toolkit (www.ovcsupport.net) provides a summary of useful information on all aspects of programming for children affected by HIV.

Y	I	N		• protection services such as police and social welfare?
Y	I	N		• recreation and cultural support?
Y	I	N		• birth registration and other citizenship rights?
Y	I	N	4.	Does your organisation support vulnerable children's access to essential services directly or through networking with local service providers? For example:
Y	I	N		• Are vulnerable children being supported to remain in or return to school?
Y	I	N		• Are schools supported to be a source of care, protection and support for vulnerable children?
Y) I	N		• Do your programmes identify children with poor health and facilitate their access to health care? This includes support for common childhood illnesses (mobilisation for immunisation or safe water and sanitation) and for access to HIV prevention and treatment for children and their caregivers, including PMTCT for pregnant women?
Y	I	N		• Are you advocating for / facilitating access to birth registration for all children and identity documents for caregivers? Where available, is this being linked to support for access to income transfers?
Y	I	N		 Are you advocating for / providing legal services such as action against property grabbing?
Y) I	N	5.	Does your organisation provide, refer to and / or advocate for a package of material support that assists children living with HIV and affected by HIV to stay within their own families? For example, do you:
Y	I	N		• provide or mobilise livelihoods or food security interventions?
Y	OI	N		 provide legal assistance to prevent property grabbing and other assistance to protect against abuse and exploitation?
Y	OI	N		• support community efforts to improve shelter, water and sanitation?
Y	I	N	6.	Does your organisation facilitate access to / advocate for national social protection schemes that provide cash support for children or caregivers who are not able to be economically active?

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Y	I	N		7.	Does your organisation provide, refer to and / or advocate for health and nutritional care for children affected by HIV?
Y	OI	<u>N</u>		8.	Does your organisation strengthen the capacity of families and households to protect and care for HIV-affected and other vulnerable children through support to caregivers? For example, do you:
Y	I	N			 strengthen child caring capacities of caregivers, especially older caregivers or child carers?
Y	I	N			 provide / advocate for HIV-affected children to receive psychosocial support, early childhood care and life skills programmes?
Y	I	N		9.	Does your organisation advocate for / provide support to adults living with HIV to enable them to stay alive and healthy? For example:
Y	OI	N			• Do you improve access to health care, including antiretroviral drugs?
Y	OI	∩ N		10.	Does your organisation support community initiatives that care for children who have lost their parents and avoid referring children to institutions unless there is no alternative?
Y	I	N		11.	Does your organisation avoid referring children to institutions unless there is no alternative?
Y	OI	∩ N	∩ NR	12.	Does your organisation work with community-based responses that support children affected by HIV and other vulnerable children, in order to create an enabling environment within the community? Do you advocate for long-term and sustainable support to these community initiatives? For example:
Y	OI	⊖ N			 Do you support local already-existing support structures such as religious institutions and schools?
Y	I	N		13.	Does your programme address issues of abuse, exploitation and discrimination against children affected by HIV and other vulnerable children? For example:
Y	OI	N			 Have you provided child protection training and support to community initiatives in a culturally-sensitive way?
Y	I	N			• Do you support community initiatives that respond to issues of abuse (for example early forced marriage, domestic or sexual abuse of children and women)?

Checklist

Y	OI	⊖ N	14. Does your organisation advocate to ensure that national policies are based on an analysis of girls' and boys' vulnerabilities?
` Y	OI	∩ N	15. Does your organisation advocate to ensure that national resources are equitably channeled so that HIV-affected children and other vulnerable children receive an equitable share of resources?
○ Y		N	16. Does your organisation advocate for the elimination of stigma and discrimination against HIV-affected children and other vulnerable children in all of your programmes / projects? For example, do you:
Y	OI	N	• ensure equitable school or health care access for HIV-affected children?
Y	OI	N	 ensure that children receive HIV services appropriate for their age and needs?
Y	I	N	address abuse and exploitation of vulnerable children?
Y	I	⊖ N	17. Does your organisation advocate for the elimination of sexual violence and abuse of children?
Y	OI	N	18. Does your organisation advocate for the elimination of trafficking of children?
			19. Does your organisation link with other national programmes, local authorities and NGOs to ensure that:
Y	I	N	 your activities are coordinated and aligned with national policies and programmes, and
Y	OI	N	• your monitoring contributes to national monitoring and evaluation?

Actions needed to support Section C:



In completing this self-assessment checklist, you are likely to have identified some areas that are in need of improvement and some that are already at a 'good practice' level.

Please complete the Action Plan table on the next page and highlight examples of how

you will improve your organisation's work on Children and HIV over the next six months, thinking first about the Key Questions below. If you answer 'no' to any of these eight questions, it would be important for you to start here in improving your work!

Key Questions

- Do systems exist to ensure that your organisation's child protection policy is implemented and monitored, with an explicit procedure for reporting abuses?
- 2. Have all staff members been trained on children's rights, including issues of gender and non-discrimination, and on children's participation?
- 3. Does your organisation involve children living with HIV (CLWHA) in its programmes and organisational structures?
- 4. Does your organisation have a mechanism for ensuring that the views of girls' and boys (especially those most vulnerable or marginalised) are incorporated at a policy level and during strategic planning processes?

- 5. Has your organisation and its partners undertaken a community analysis to discover existing coping mechanisms, strengths and capacities within the community?
- 6. Do your organisation's monitoring and evaluation tools assess age- and gender-related issues relating to HIV risk and vulnerability, and measure these changes over time?
- 7. Do your organisation's development and / or humanitarian programmes take into account the HIV-related vulnerabilities of all boys and girls within a household, and how your activities mitigate the impact of HIV on children?
- 8. Does your organisation promote / participate in multi-sectoral partnerships that, through coordination and networking, are able to ensure holistic outcomes for HIV-affected children?

Please remember to save your completed action plan and email it to info@hivcode.org or send it to PO Box 372, 1211 Geneva 19, Switzerland.					
Name of Organisation	Contact Person	Email Address			
Signed		Date			



Action Plan: Children and HIV

Expected Outcomes (What do we want to achieve?)	Key Activities (What do we need to do?)	Action Points (What kind of support do we need to do it?)	Resources (What kind of support do we need to do it?)	Timeframe (When will we do it?)