Child Friendly Places
Evaluation Results at a Glance

Child Friendly Places is an approach for integrating children’s rights into local development initiatives and educational programs through a participatory, intergenerational and child friendly assessment and planning methodology that empowers communities to improve their local conditions and environments with children, adolescents, families, educators, service providers and decision makers.

This methodology and its online child friendly resource kit of activities and tools are a result of five years of participatory action research coordinated by the Children’s Environments Research Group (CERG) of the City University of New York. Initially developed and piloted with UNICEF for Child Friendly Cities and Communities in 2008, the assessment and planning tools continue to be adapted, scaled and implemented around the world by a range of organizations interested in children’s rights. With support from the Bernard van Leer Foundation, CERG conducted a follow up evaluation of these pilot initiatives and of new initiatives using the resources from 2012-2014. The primary objectives of the evaluation were to identify and analyze the relevance of the approach, the effectiveness of different distributors of the tools, and to assess whether the conditions for children and adolescents in their schools, communities and cities improved as a result of applying the methodology.

Key Result #1 – The number of countries where the methodology has been/is being applied increased from 9 to 27 since 2008, with 54 confirmed case studies in every region of the world, representing more than 820 communities and over 64,000 participants.¹

Where is the approach being used?

54 completed/ongoing case studies

- 27 countries
- 820+ communities
- 64,000+ participants
- Wide income variation
- Diverse cultural contexts
- Urban and rural settings
- Informal settlements
- Emergency contexts

¹ The total number of communities and participants is likely significantly higher, as 10 of these case studies are ongoing and the data is not currently available. Each case study can be explored through an interactive online map. An additional 92 case studies are being planned or are under development. The evaluation is based on 44 case studies with comprehensive data on the process and outcomes.
Key Result #2 – The distributors of the methodology have expanded from UNICEF and academic researchers to include international and local NGOs, community based organizations and educational programs, child- and youth-led groups, schools, urban designers/planners and citizen councils. The high level of local ownership over the methodology will ensure its continued adaptation, scaling and sustainability for a variety of local development initiatives and educational programs.

Plan International’s *Because I am a Girl Urban Programme* recently adopted the methodology to improve girls’ safety in public spaces, their autonomous mobility in the city, and their active and meaningful participation in urban development in Kampala, Lima, Cairo, Hanoi and New Delhi.

Which groups are applying the approach?

Recent Adopters/Downloads:

- Child Rights Collective Gujurat (India)
- Plan International (8 countries)
- World Vision (Jordan)
- Save the Children (Somalia)
- Cipta Fondasi Komunitas (Indonesia)
- Youth for Unity and Voluntary Action (India)
- Fundação Tide Setubal (Brazil)
- Danish Refugee Council (Lebanon)
- International Medical Corps (Iraq)
- Corner Health Center (United States)
- Atlanta Taskforce on Play (United States)
- Action for Children’s Environments (India)
- MUDA Arquitectura (Spain)

Key Result #3 – Across all of the case studies, the assessment and planning process has privileged the participation of children and adolescents, as well as other marginalized groups traditionally excluded from community planning and urban development processes.

Who is involved?

Examples:

- Children ages 6 to 9 working on the streets
- Parents of infants in urban slums/resettlement areas
- Citizen councils of adults with disabilities
- Adolescent girls and boys residing in refugee camps
- Preschool children in emergency contexts

% of the 64,000+ identified participants

Key Result #4 – The methodology has been effectively and efficiently scaled; in Brazil, France, Turkey and India adolescents led the assessment and planning process in partnership with adults, including thousands of participants in numerous communities and cities.²

BRAZIL - The methodology was integrated into a UNICEF initiative, referred to as the Platform for Urban Centers, with more than 11,190 participants in over 200 poor informal communities in Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo. Adolescents were empowered to mobilize participants for the assessment, which gave them a high degree of ownership over the process and contributed to their success in scaling the tools with many community groups.

Rio de Janeiro Case Study
São Paulo Case Study

INDIA - The methodology was taken to scale by Shaishav, a child-led working children’s group, who conducted the assessment with more than 3,500 participants in 27 communities in Bhavnagar City in the State of Gujurat. Shaishav adapted the process using innovative approaches with computers on a mobile van to collect the opinions of children playing in public places or those not enrolled in school.

Bhavnagar City Case Study

TURKEY - UNICEF and the Youth for Habitat Association organized the process with citizen councils in 10 municipalities. A total of 60 representatives comprised of community volunteers of youth, women, and adults with disabilities from these councils implemented the methodology with more than 6,500 participants.

Adana Case Study
Çankaya Case Study
Denizli Case Study
Diyarbakır Case Study
Giresun Case Study
İzmir Case Study
Kocaeli Case Study
Maltepe Case Study
Ordu Case Study
Van Case Study

FRANCE - The methodology was applied with 34,545 children and adolescents ages 6-18 by UNICEF’s Child Friendly Cities network of 73 municipalities. Government representatives within each municipality were in charge of organizing the process, which generally was led by adults or adolescents in schools and community centers within each municipality. UNICEF also provided an online version of the assessment tool for young people or parents to take the assessment.

France National Case Study

² Other distributors in the Philippines, Morocco, Jordan, Turkey and Spain are in the process of scaling the methodology in over a dozen municipalities within each country.
Key Result #5 – The methodology contributed to a range of outcomes for children, adolescents and their families, by improving opportunities for their participation and political empowerment in local decision-making processes, enhancing the physical environment of schools, communities and cities to ensure safe and healthy settings for children’s development, and creating sustainable community-led assessment mechanisms important for monitoring children’s rights and urban policy making for children.

Example Outcomes from Applying the Methodology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Individuals / Families</th>
<th>Organizations / Groups</th>
<th>Schools / Communities / Cities</th>
<th>Local Systems / Policies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increased understanding of local governance structures and processes or how decisions are made on behalf of children</td>
<td>Improved or enhanced environments (such as):</td>
<td>Improved cross-sector coordination and planning for children and adolescents</td>
<td>Governance structures to address children’s issues are established or improved</td>
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<tr>
<td>Improved larger public awareness of children’s rights and concerns</td>
<td>• New schools</td>
<td>Improved child rights monitoring and reporting</td>
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<td>Increased participation in local development processes</td>
<td>• Pedestrian crossings</td>
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<tr>
<td>Empowerment to direct actions on behalf of children and families</td>
<td>• Access to electricity</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Waste removal</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Additional street lights</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• School infrastructure</td>
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<td>• Safe routes to school</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Community gardens</td>
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<td>• Community cleanliness</td>
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Improved intergenerational communication and empathy
Increased awareness of conditions for children and adolescents by age and gender
Opportunities for children, adolescents and adults to discuss their conditions in a safe space
Increased awareness of children’s rights as they apply to everyday experiences
Increased opportunities to voice opinions about school and community conditions
New or improved approaches for working with children, adolescents and families

Priorities of children, adolescents and adults integrated into existing local plans and/or policies
Improvement plans for schools, communities, organizations, sectors or municipalities

Data on the current conditions for children and adolescents (assets and challenges): 1) play and recreation, 2) nature and ecology, 3) participation, 4) housing/learning environments, 5) safety and protection, 6) health and social services

Two different types of outcomes were identified: 1) those outcomes that were possible from the direct application of the methodology (shown in purple); and 2) those outcomes that were possible because of the social networks, activities and processes associated with an existing initiative in which the methodology was integrated (shown in light green).

These outcomes represent the comprehensive range of results that are possible from applying or integrating the child friendly places methodology. Some organizing groups only achieved a particular set of outcomes, such as those at the individual or organizational level, while other groups were able to achieve many dimensions of the outcomes identified in this diagram. The breadth and range of outcomes depended in large part on the type of distributor involved in organizing the process.