Children as active citizens:
Addressing discrimination against children's engagement in political and civil society processes

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"States Parties shall respect and ensure the rights set forth in the present Convention to each child within their jurisdiction without discrimination of any kind, irrespective of the child's or his or her parent's legal guardian's race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status")
(Article 2, paragraph 1 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989)

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that the child is protected against all forms of discrimination or punishment on the basis of the status, activities, expressed opinions, or beliefs of the child's parents, legal guardians, or family members."
(Article 2, paragraph 2 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989)

"States Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child."
(Article 12, paragraph 1 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989)

"States have the right and the duty to formulate appropriate national development policies that aim at the constant improvement of the well-being of the entire population and of all individuals, on the basis of their active, free and meaningful participation in development and in the fair distribution of the benefits resulting there from."
(Article 2, paragraph 3 of the UN Declaration on the Right to Development, 1986)

This discussion paper argues that discrimination against children's engagement in political systems and processes continues to impede full access to their rights and that excluding (older) children from political participation constitutes discrimination against states' younger citizens on the ground of age. To encourage States Parties to address causes and consequences of age discrimination, this paper calls for renewing the international commitments made tens years ago as well as integrating lessons learnt over the course of the past decade from working with children as political and civil society actors drawing upon Plan's own programmatic experiences in West Africa and Latin America.

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1. Introduction: Renewing an old commitment to support children's active citizenship

Ten years ago, on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the Convention of the Rights of the Child (CRC), the Committee endorsed a detailed set of recommendations from a workshop organised in collaboration with High Commissioner for Human Rights about children's active participation as citizens. These recommendations included the following:

- Prioritising a comprehensive general comment on child participation…bearing in mind that participation includes, but is not limited to, consultation and proactive initiatives by children themselves;
- Ensuring that schools as well as other bodies providing services for children, establish permanent ways of consulting with children in all decisions concerning their functioning, the content of the curriculum and other activities;
- Increased consideration of the creation of space, channels, structures and/or mechanisms to facilitate the expression by children of their views… This requires investment to institutionalize effective spaces and opportunities for children to express their views and to engage with adults, especially through schools, community organizations, NGO and the media; and
- Encouraging and facilitating the creation of structures and organizations run by and for children and youth.

Although having concluded that the Committee on the CRC would "give careful consideration to the need to ensure the most appropriate approach to the participation of children in its own work", few tangible efforts have been made to this end since. [1]

2. Children's Civil and Political Rights – An overview

Children's civil and political rights are protected worldwide by a number of international and regional human rights instruments, including - but not limited to - the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Convention on the Discrimination against all Women, the International Convention against all Forms of Racial Discrimination, the Convention of the Rights of the Child (CRC). Children's civil and political rights are also enshrined by non-binding instruments such as the Declaration on the Rights to Development or the International Declaration of Human Rights or for example the European Declaration on Education for Democratic Citizenship.

In distinction from international human rights instruments, those responsible for upholding the CRC have the difficult task of weighing up *children's right to (political) participation against their evolving capacities and right to protection*. In other words, children should have the ability to take part in political processes, if they are interested in doing so and have been appropriately prepared, whilst still being protected from any potential harm from any political engagement[2].

Literature on the Child Rights Convention refers to the exclusion of younger age groups from political processes as "legitimate forms of discrimination". For example, the Handbook on the Implementation of the Rights of the Child states that, "…the bar of discrimination of any kind does not outlaw legitimate differentiation between children in implementation" – as exemplified by the "evolving capacities" of the child.[3] Thus, there is wide recognition of legitimate forms of discrimination in assessing participation in political processes based on the evolving capacities of children.

However, in most countries, the age of active political participation starts between 18 and 21 years old, which effectively excludes children younger than this from all forms of formal political participation. While it is evident that younger children can hardly be expected to fully exercise their active political rights, older children and youth are very well capable of forming their own political views and often engage actively to defend their political rights and pursue desired changes.

3. Discrimination on the basis of age

It is important to note that discrimination on the basis of age is not spelled out as one of the (most common) types of discrimination in the CRC – or the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights - which refers only to "race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status" as the main forms of discrimination. Most of the work of the human rights community concentrates on the discrimination of adults and thus tends to exclude children and their specific situation; equally, it leaves children sidelined from participating in international human rights policy debate and making.

The Child Rights Convention's reporting guidelines do not make any specific recommendations with regards to reporting discrimination against children as a group on grounds of age. They merely refer to age differentiation of children in different situations, and by sex[4]. However, a more nuanced approach is fundamental to understanding the social factors and prevailing attitudes that discriminate against children and impact on their ability to fully enjoy and exercise their rights. This is even

1   UNICEF, Implementation Handbook for the Convention of the Rights of the Child (2002)

2   UNICEF, Roger Hart, (1997): Children's Participation: "It is particularly risky to involve children in political campaigns. … children are readily available "army" of concern that can be easily seduced into involvement in a movement which is really not "their own"… Ideally, children's involvement in a political campaign will emerge quite naturally out of their own research"

3   UNICEF (2002): Implementation Handbook for the Convention on the Rights of the Child

4   CRC reporting guidelines, section 12: " Definition of the child: " States parties are requested to provide relevant information, pursuant to article 1 of the Convention, concerning the definition of a child under their laws and regulations. In particular, States parties are requested to provide information on the age of attainment of majority and on the legal minimum ages established for various purposes, including, inter alia, legal or medical counselling without parental consent, end of compulsory education, part-time employment, full-time employment, hazardous employment, sexual consent, marriage, voluntary enlistment into the armed forces, conscription into the armed forces, voluntarily giving testimony in court, criminal liability, deprivation of liberty, imprisonment and consumption of alcohol or other controlled substances."

more pertinent given the general exclusion of children from societal processes, as this discrimination will rarely allow for a more holistic understanding for how other types of discrimination, such as disability, impact on children's lives.

A survey of countries' initial reports on the implementation of the CRC surfaces a broad variety of discrimination-related issues[5] - though not a single report cites age as a factor for exclusion. This limited view often leads to the development of programme responses that target single groups of children, such as "AIDS orphans", rather than ensuring a more comprehensive response that takes into consideration general exclusion factors of children from society, which are aggravated by other factors such as gender or health status, for example.

Despite previous and repeated commitments to involve children actively in the work of the CRC committee, children's participation has not yet been formalised and ensuring their active involvement in CRC monitoring and reporting remains largely a domain for International Non-governmental Organisations (INGO)s. *States Parties need workable models for children's political participation – national as well as international ones.*

4. Adult attitudes on children and childhood – causes of discrimination

A wealth of programme documentation and research on childhood poverty indicates that children's experiences of poverty are deeply shaped by their feelings of exclusion from decision making and not being recognised as equal citizens. *Perceptions of children and childhood* differ largely from society to society. In some societies (mostly in the global south), it is expected that children will embrace a strong sense of responsibility and obligation to their families and community. Thus, it is through the fulfillment of their duties that children develop into adults and become accepted members of society[6]. Children are, in many southern environments, for example not expected to speak to adults without previous invitation. Thus, societal norms and role expectations of children often diminishes the role of children in decision making and excludes them from political processes.

Predominantly, in northern societies, personal autonomy, competitiveness and self-sufficiency are valued qualities in children, and families and public education systems aim to prepare children for an autonomous adulthood. These social norms influence children's and adults' perspectives alike and foster a greater sense of equality amongst youth and adults in political processes[7]. Common views on children and childhood are reflected in public institutions and their leaders' willingness to create spaces for children to discuss and participate in political processes that are of relevance to them.

> **Changing adult attitudes, expanding young peoples' access to political processes:**
> **The Young Peace Builders Project in Colombia**
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> In 2006, Plan Colombia initiated a six year project intending to create broader societal change through developing young people's life skills and enabling them to reduce violence and conflict in their families and communities. It also encouraged adult caretakers to view adolescents as a solution to widespread problems such as violence, rather than as a cause of the problem. Between 2006 and 2008, 3,500 adolescents,120 teachers and 300 parents participated in orientation and training sessions to increase their understanding on issues of gender, violence, social inequality and sexuality as well as the development of young people's potential.
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> Using creative forms of communication, the project provided adolescents with the opportunity to express themselves in different settings and through different channels such as through a youth magazine titled "Magic Box" (Caja Magica). The project included designated days to celebrate and strengthen the relationship between children and their parents, facilitating inter-generational discussions on domestic conflicts and violence and helping parents and children to develop cross-generational solutions.
>
> As a result of this work, young people were given the opportunity to contribute to the formulation and implementation of public policy issues concerning them. Boys and girls participating in the project took part in a "The Young, Potential for Development" policy-making programme. Three project participants have since taken part in a national working group formed to promote the implementation of the government youth policy. Another key success indicator of the project was the increased and improved participation of adolescents in the development of communal development plans, which makes up the foundation of the States' regional development plan.

5. Children's evolving capacities as citizens and children's political agency

Childhood is a very dynamic and formative phase in life. *Children are in a process of continuous development and* – with the right support – have the opportunity to develop to their full potential as engaged and active citizens, i.e. having acquired the necessary competence to fully participate in family and society, take decisions and take part in decision-making processes that concern their well being. However, the support that children receive varies significantly depending on their family and community environment, the emotional, social, cultural, economic and political factors as well as their personal agency[89].

5   UNICEF (2002): Implementation Handbook on the Convention of the Rights of the Child
6   Christian Children's Fund (2003): Children and Poverty – Shaping a Response to Poverty
7   Plan West Africa: Child Advocacy – supporting children to step up for their rights
8   Children's Agency: The state of exerting power as an individual.
9   Much can be learnt from gender advocacy approaches for this purpose

Children's development is not a linear process and earlier theories focusing on the biological development of children with universal process with universal goals, are being challenged by theories attributing greater importance to the cultural factors influencing it. Today, child development theory no longer views adulthood as a normative standard for defining children's developmental progression. Instead, it is understood that physical and social settings such as family and the way children's daily lives are organized - as well as traditional child-rearing practices - including attitude to play, training and discipline - largely influence the way that children develop. Moreover, parents' beliefs and personal goals for their children's development play an important role as well. [10] It is thus fair to say that the space given in any society that allows children to engage in policy making and other political processes will largely depend on the political, social and cultural environment he/she evolves in.

Yet, **age** remains an important factor to consider when working with children. It is important to understand and acknowledge the limits of age categorization[11]. For example, a five year old growing up in rural Africa will generally be equipped with a completely different set of skills and knowledge than a five year old growing up in Europe or North America. Children's personal experiences influence their capacities to make informed choices and, like adults, children will demonstrate different levels of competence in different contexts. Children's communication skills, for example, differ when interacting with peers or with adults, such as teacher, and are also variable in different environments, such as the home or at school. Understanding children's evolving capacities is essential for acknowledging their political agency and ability. An understanding of children's evolving capacities will also help with **identifying if and when children are being discriminated against on the ground of age.**

Acknowledging the limits of age categorization, the table in Appendix 1 attempts to provide a broad overview on children's ability to participate in political processes and makes recommendations on how to support the development of their political consciousness and agency. The table illustrates that associating children to political processes is a complex issue and raises the question of capacities and budget resources of state agencies to facilitate it. However, it should be highlighted here that the implementation of articles 2 and 3 of the Convention must not be "made dependent on budgetary constraints" as the CRC committee has emphasized.

6. Spaces for children's democratic participation in different types of democracy

The opportunities for children to participate in political processes at country and international level will largely depend on the political systems and processes in place in any given country or region. Governments with representative democracies do not provide many channels for direct participation of its citizens, be it young or old. This form of government largely confines citizens participation to voting, transferring their power to govern to politicians. However, in many countries, participatory democratic practice exists at community and even municipality level in many different forms.

Plan's own programmatic experience shows that initiatives to strengthen children's life skills and abilities to participate have an important impact on adults' willingness to create spaces for children's participation at all levels - most efficiently though it appears at community level. In Togo, for example, young members involved in a project focused on strengthening children's abilities to understand and claim their sexual and reproductive health rights, have subsequently been invited to take part in their local village development committees (an elected entity in charge of planning and monitoring village development). In Ecuador, a project following a similar approach of systematically organizing children and youth and strengthening their life and participation skills, has produced similar results with increased appreciation of the participating children as active citizens. Or, as a community leader from Ecuador observed: "It is important that youngsters participate and devote (time and energy) to the community and keep away from bad habits. Youngsters must participate so that adults give them space in different (decision making) processes".

Evaluations from Plan's child participatory media work in all South America, West Africa and Asia have also demonstrated that giving children the power to analyse their environment and to effectively communicate on issues concerning them and their rights is critical to helping shape adult attitudes towards children and addressing discrimination against children purely on the basis of age and for various other socio-cultural reasons.

> **Child Media as an efficient strategy to strengthen children's participation and communication capacity**
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> A very powerful example for how life skills strengthening can change adult attitudes' towards children is Plan West Africa's Kids' Waves program, which involves thousands of children in 10 countries in the region in participatory radio making, strengthening their capacity to communicate and to organize in groups.
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> Project evaluations in participant countries have demonstrated that the project [in operation since 2004] has contributed to significant increase in awareness-raising on child rights amongst adults and young populations in the target areas. The project has produced over 1,500 radio shows on child rights since its inception, thanks to an established partnership with about 110 media partners in the region. These figures represent a substantial increase on reporting on children's rights in the West African media scene. While increased awareness and an increase in the number of broadcasts on children's issues are two important achievements, the most impressive results of the project are evident in talking with the young participants who reported an increase in their ability to communicate, strengthened confidence and ability to stand up in public as part of the evaluation. Adults confirmed these impressions and reported they had increased respect and a different view on children's abilities after having witnessed (their) children in the recording and broadcast activities.

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10 Save the Children/Unicef: Innocenti Insight: "The Evolving Capacities of the Child"
11 4 Plan West Africa: "Child Advocates"

7. Formalizing children's political participation: children's parliaments

Formalizing children's political participation opportunities can take various forms – the most common examples include: adolescent and youth chapters of political parties or the creation of children's representative bodies at school and national level.

Plan's experiences with children's parliaments in West Africa

Children's parliaments have been established in a various countries in West and Central Africa, including Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, Gambia, Guinea, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Senegal, Togo. In Sierra Leone, a structure called the "National Children's Forum" has also been established. Most children's parliaments fall under the responsibility of Ministries of Social Affairs / Ministry for women and children and electoral processes are mostly organized in partnership with decentralized ministry offices and NGOs/INGOs such as Plan.

Electoral and democratic practices of children's parliaments

There is no standard practice for election processes of children's parliaments in the region. In most countries, elections appear to depend heavily on schools to reach young voters, which excludes out of school children. There are also varying practices with regards to voter eligibility, often drawing on children's school performance. In Guinea, for example, children's ability to read and write (in French) is a key eligibility criteria to stand for election, whereas, in Mali, it is children's school performance and good conduct. Relatedly, in Niger, the national youth parliament is not elected at all, but members of parliament are selected by school authorities based on students' school performance.

Age ranges for active and passive rights to vote in children's parliaments also vary significantly, though an active right to vote seems to be mostly determined by age 16 and above. Efforts have been made in most countries in West Africa to ensure an equal number in boys and girls are elected into office. In Senegal, for example, the participation criteria for the children's parliament requires a broad representation of all categories of children, including children in and out of school with disability, affected by HIV, etc. However, this appears to be the exception to the rule, as few parliaments in the region have children with disabilities as members. That said, a few countries in the region, such as Sierra Leone and Cameroon, have made laudable efforts to include children with disability to the electoral process through associating shelters and institutions working with children with disability.

Children's Parliaments and National Policy making

Plan's offices supporting children's parliaments in numerous countries in West Africa report varying degrees to which children's parliaments have been seen to influence national policy and decision making. Determining factors for this included the capacity level of parliamentarians to influence decisions as well as the space provided by government to allow political participation of youth. Several countries noted the importance of children's civic education to improve the knowledge of the young parliamentarians on local, national and international democratic processes, structures and legal frameworks. Several countries reported perceivably high levels of influence of children's parliaments on national policy making concerning children.

For example, the governments of Guinea and Liberia have adopted a national children's code thanks to the continuous advocacy efforts of the children's parliament. In Cameroon, the parliament advocated successfully for the eradication of compulsory fees for primary education and a raise of salary for government employees. Many countries reported the participation of young parliament members in international conferences – providing them with the opportunity to influence international policy debate - as main achievements of the their respective parliaments

Children's Parliaments and Civil Society/INGOs

Electoral processes for children's parliaments are supported by NGOs and INGOs or UNICEF in several countries. In the case of Plan, several countries also have associated children's parliaments actively to the development of their country programmes or other programme development processes. Often it seems, children's parliaments are rather seen as a civil society partner for development agencies rather than a political body with a democratic mission. Children's parliaments have, for example been associated to the development of programme strategies by Plan offices or in child rights awareness raising programmes.

Burkina Faso – Evolving democratic practices

One of the longest and most successful initiatives of partnering with children's parliaments in the region is that of the Children's Parliament in Burkina Faso, which Plan has supported since its inception five years ago [2004]. The election process of Burkina Faso's children's parliament is managed by the Ministry of Social Affairs as well as its decentralized representations around the country, which have been largely responsible for mobilizing children at school level to vote. Cooperation with INGOs like Plan has made it possible to expand the electoral process to out of school children as well.

Today, an estimated 80% of children members of Burkina Children's Parliament are pupils in school, whereas nearly 100% of members were comprised of students initially, which means that 20% of children's parliament members are now non-students. While this is certainly progress, it still shows the challenges of ensuring the inclusion of more marginalized groups of children in establishing their representative bodies. Work with the Burkina Children's Parliament has also demonstrated that INGOs and civil society can play an important role in developing governmental staff capacity to interact with children, as child participation is a new area of expertise in this region. INGOs and other civil society organisations also act as ally to the children's parliaments when their space for decision making is infringed by adult facilitators, who often reluctantly give up the lead, especially if where budgetary decisions are concerned.

There are several lessons that need to be learnt from the experiences with children's parliaments in West Africa: Children's parliaments can be important spaces to allow children to practice democracy and political participation. However, more care should be given to establish sound and non-discriminative processes for elections and enable children to fully exercise their rights without becoming prey to adults' political agenda. Even though children's parliaments can act as consultative body for governmental decision making or actively influence governmental policy and practice, much more needs to be done to formalise their political contribution. This needs to go hand in hand with clarifying their role and purpose and the nature of relationships they should have with civil society, INGOs, UN institutions and government. Additionally, education for citizenship and democracy is essential for the young members of parliament to ensure their ability to engage effectively with adult institutions as well as local, national and international policy processes.

8. Children's civil society and its role to influence government

Supporting the establishment of children's groups and organizations at community, municipality and national level – with a specific focus on out of school groups like the African Movement for Working Children and Youth – can be seen as a key factor fostering the development and functioning of regional and national democratic representative bodies for children. Capacity development efforts should also include training to children's organization on advocacy, to systematize their efforts to influence government institutions. Together with Save the Children Sweden, Plan in West Africa has implemented a project training youth groups from seven countries to follow up the UN Study on Violence against children with advocacy action from community to national/international level, for example.

Strengthening the emergence and functioning of a vibrant young civil society is important to increase children's influence on and their active participation in political decision making and the systematic inclusion and association of children into established government processes. This becomes an even more important strategy for addressing children's exclusion from decision making in democratically challenged states or in states with a weakly developed decentralized system or lack of decentralized representation of ministries in charge of child participation and protection. The support to children & youth civil society is also important to create partners for development agencies, who truly represent the interest of children, not deformed by an adult lens.

It should however be noted that international mechanisms and tools to assess civil society often ignore children and adolescents and their organization. It is important to develop international thinking around children's organizations and their role in civil society further for this purpose.

9. Children's Advisory Boards – INGOs creating space for children to shape their views

An interesting example for efforts of international non-governmental organizations to ensure equal participation of children in programme and policy development is the practice of establishing children's advisory boards. In Plan, for example, 10 West African offices have established children's advisory boards, the youngest of which Plan Liberia, whose Children's Advisory Board (CAB) serves the purpose of organizing other CABs in districts where Plan is working and actively participate in planning and decision making about Plan's programme interventions in Liberia. Its members have since inception in March 2009 organized a series of practical community development activities and capacity development initiatives to enable them to fully participate in regular programme review meetings and programme planning processes. Children's advisory boards can be efficient channels for making children's voices heard at policy making levels from which they are excluded and legitimize NGOs to speak on their behalf. It is crucial that organizations, who speak on behalf of children remain in constant contact with a broad range of children from different social sectors to ensure that their activities and advocacy efforts remain pertinent. However, as for children's parliaments, care should be given that (s)election criteria for CAB members don't discriminate and give all children equal opportunities to participate.

10. Recommendations to end children's exclusion from political decision-making:

For State Actors:

 I. Make civic education programs at school compulsory. These need to include crucial citizenship skills such as political and legal analysis skills, communication and problem solving skills, and to provide practical opportunities to analyse and address community problems

 II. Invest in the development of ministerial agencies' capacity to facilitate child participatory processes; especially social service agents with the mission to facilitate children's participation or to interact frequently with children should receive training on theory and practice of child development and participation

 III. Establish sound electoral processes for children's parliaments in collaboration with a diversity of partners that reach all children, including most marginalized groups such as children with disability, out of school children, girls

 IV. Introduce and revise legislation, regulations and administrative instructions to ensure that the right of the child to express his or her views is fully reflected in - and included at all levels of relevant government, parliament and judiciary decision making. *(Based on draft GC on article 12, §31, iv; CRC/GC/2003/5, §12)*

 V. Designate, establish or strengthen relevant governmental structures for children, including, where appropriate, ministers in charge of child issues and independent ombudspersons for children, to designate a coordinating authority and to ensure that such entities establish direct contact with children, youth, as well as child and youth led organisations in order to engage with them *(Based jointly on CHR 2005/44, op5; HRC, 7th session, resolution 7/29, §4; Recommendations DGD/ 2006, §26; CRC/GC/2003/5, §12)*

 VI. Partner with civil society organizations including child and youth-led organizations and the media, in order to raise awareness about the benefits of child participation in a democratic society and in a society that wants the best interest of the child, and to inform children, parents, families and the general public about children's rights while being attentive to their influence on children and children's protection *(based on WFFC §32.8; CRC/GC/2003/5 §59 and 70)*

 VII. Introduce legislation and regulations which enable and support children and youth to form and register their own associations and other child and youth- led initiatives.

For the CRC Committee:

 I. Review the guidelines for country periodic reports to include "age" as a discrimination criteria

 II. Continue to support the establishment of an international communication /complaint procedure

 III. Establish a mechanism to systematically include children in the work of the committee

 IV. Re-emphasize the need to ensure age dis-aggregation in CRC Monitoring and reporting

 V. Dedicate a Day of General Discussion to the topic of children's participation in political processes

 VI. Collaborate with other UN bodies and with regional child rights mechanisms to address the issue of children's participation in political processes

For Civil Society:

 I. Invest in the formation, strengthening of children's civil society organizations and their ability to advocate and network

 II. Develop theory and tools for assessing children's participation in and attitude of civil society on children further (such as the Civil Society index) unclear!!

 III. Develop international /regional standards for the establishment of children's parliaments

   a. invest in research on children's political ability and agency and on age as a factor for discrimination
   b. developing tools and facilitation methods to help children understand and comment policy making processes and content

Approx. Age range	Children's Needs and Deeds	Children's ability to participate in political processes	Recommended Initiatives to support the development of Children's political consciousness and agency
0-1 year	Love Security Physical contact Bonding Soiling Crying Irritability	**none**	-
1-5 years	Approval Attention Safe boundaries/support Opportunities to explore Independence Temper tantrums Disobedience – test boundaries Fears of dark, animals	**Very Limited**	Early Childhood Care iniatiatives should include work to help children understand concepts such as "just/unjust", "fair/unfair" and gradually introduce them how to work together in groups, Consulting with children possible to a limited degree and with skilled staff
6-10 years	Mastery Recognition Perseverance Competition Fighting with friends and siblings Appearance Instant gratification	**Limited**	Participatory research with children Consulting with children Helping children to understand "just/unjust", "fair/unfair", support children to organize in groups Teaching democratic decision-making in class/group Child and Human Rights education From about 8 years on – communication training Promoting children's participation in groups and clubs
11 - 12	Mastery Recognition Appearance	**Emerging**	Participatory research and development of action plans to contribute to change Consulting Education for democracy and citizenship, Child and Human Rights education Civic Education Work with children's groups Life skills training: Communication, conflict resolution, problem analysis School parliaments Democratic organization of class Promoting children's participation in groups and clubs **Risks:** Manipulation through adults Parental resistance Easily discouraged as impact of advocacy might not be immediately visible Lack of capacity or opportunity to follow things through Children's charged agenda Ability to fully understand consequences of action

13-18 years	More freedom Direction to future life Finding own values compared to parents' values Rebellion/rejection of parental values Defiance Idealism/new ideas Experimentation (drugs, crime)	**Developing to developed**	Help adolescents finding own values through discussing human rights and justice at home and groups/clubs/school Education for citizenship and democracy Civic and political Education Organization of children in school and children's parliaments Encouraging children's participation and organization in groups and clubs Capacity building to children & youth organizations Development of (advocacy) action plans at school, community, regional level, participation in international advocacy initiatives Participatory Human Rights Monitoring and Reporting with children & adolescents Association of children to formal political processes **Risks:** Manipulation through adults Youth more oriented towards peers as role models than adults, Parental resistance Conflict with parents/family as own values and opinions evolve Peer Pressure Children's charged agenda Ability to fully understand consequences of action Risky behavior

Appendix 2:

Children's Civil and Political Rights:

Acknowledging the indivisibility and inter-relatedness of all rights, the Convention of the Rights of the Child primarily takes the political and civil rights of under 18 year olds into account in its paragraphs

- 1 (Definition of the Child), 2 (non-discrimination)
- 5 (parental guidance and the child's evolving capacities)
- 7 (birth registration, name, nationality and right to be cared for)
- 8 (preservation of identity)
- 12 (respect for the views of the child)
- 13 (right for freedom of expression)
- 14 (right for freedom of thought, conscience and religion)
- 15 (right to freedom of association and peaceful assembly)
- 16 (child's right to privacy)
- 17 (Access to appropriate information)
- 40 Administration of Juvenile Justice

Appendix 3:

Further Reading

Plan West Africa: "Child Advocates – Supporting Children to stand up for their Rights" http://plan-international.org/where-we-work/africa/publications/child-advocates

Plan West Africa's Children and Media Website: www.plan-childrenmedia.org

Plan: "Turn up the Volume: Children advancing their rights in the media" http://plan-international.org/about-plan/resources/publications/participation/turn-up-the-volume-children-and-youth-advance-their-rights-in-media

Inter Agency Working Group on Children's Participation: "Children as Active Citizens" http://www.iawgcp.com/publications.html

Christian children's fund: Children and Poverty Working Paper http://www.google.com/search?q=ccf+child+poverty&rls=com.microsoft:en-us:IE-Address&ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8&sourceid=ie7&rlz=1I7GPEA_enSN300

Garison Lansdown: "Children's Evolving Capacities" http://www.scslat.org/pdf/109eng.doc ; http://www.acdi-cida.gc.ca/INET/IMAGES.NSF/vLUImages/Childprotection/$file/CAPevolvingcapacities_0%5B1%5D.pdf

Michael Wyness, "Childfriendly Cities: Children, Childhood and Political Participation": http://www.childfriendlycities.org/pdf/youngcouncils.pdf