User-Centred Community Engagement

Facilitation Guide: Children Co-Creation Session

This guide is for field staff who are responsible for running Co-Creation Sessions with children between 6 and 16 years old.

🕐 2hr 15 min (135 minutes)

👥 Number of participants: 10 children

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Detailed activities guide	3 - 17

Icons legend:

💡 Helpful tips or Examples

❗ Important information to remember

👥 Team members' roles

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Co-Creation Session agenda:

		🕐
1	Greetings and session introduction	5 min
2	'Bin bag throw' game	10 min
3	Groups break out	5 min
4	Problem tree	70 min
5	Snack break	10 min
6	Report back and Voting	15 min
7	Session closing	5 min
8	Session outputs	15 min
		2 hr 15 min **(135 min)**

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1. Greetings and session introduction

Purpose: To make sure that everyone understands what this session is about and what they can expect from participating in this Co-Creation Sessions.

Materials:

❏ Consent forms, if using

👥 Lead Facilitator

1. Introduce yourself and other staff present.

2. Introduce the *Aprendiendo Unidos* programme and explain why we're running the Co-Creation Sessions.

3. Explain how children's ideas will be used by the field team to make programme decisions.

4. Explain that today you will focus only on some aspects of the *Aprendiendo Unidos* programme:

   a. Tell the children that you will talk about problems that were discovered in surveys that you conducted with members of their community.

   b. Explain that if they tell you about unrelated problems during the session, you will not be able to address them today. However, you will write them down and share them with your team who will be able to help.

5. Explain that while you cannot promise that every idea and solution they propose will be used, your team will do your best to implement as many ideas as possible.

6. Explain that if the children don't understand something, they can ask questions at any moment during the session.

7. Explain that they can stop participating at any moment during the session and nothing bad will happen.

8. Ask if anyone has any questions and ask for consent if necessary.

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🕐 **10 min**

Purpose: To introduce children and staff to each other and makes children feel more comfortable in the session.

Lead Facilitator

Step 1: Introduce the activity

1. Invite all children and staff to stand in a circle and introduce the first part of the game. You can use the sample text below or explain it in your own words.

💡 **Sample game description:** *"Before we start, let's play a game and get to know each other. We're going to try and learn each other's names. I'm going to say my name* **[Lead Facilitator says his/her name]** *and then throw this bean bag to someone else in the circle.* **[Lead Facilitator throws the bean bag to one of the Co-Facilitator.]** *Once you catch it, you have to say your own name and throw it to another person. Try and remember as many names as you can!"*

2. As the activity goes on, keep track of the bean bag to make sure everyone in the circle has the chance to introduce him/herself.

Materials:

❏ At least 3 bean bags, soft balls or similar items that are easy and safe to throw around

❏ Name tags and markers (optional; see *Activity Alternatives & Tips* on p 6 for details)

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Lead Facilitator

Step 2: Now, the fun begins!

1. Once everyone says their name and throws the bag the first time around, take the bean bag and introduce the second part of the game. You can follow the example below or explain it in your own words:

> 💡 **Sample game description:** *"Well done, everyone! Now, let's see how well we can remember each other's names. I will throw this bean bag to one of you and as I throw, I will say the name of the person I'm throwing the bag to.* **[Lead Facilitator picks a child from the group, says their name and throws the bag to him/her.]** *Great, let's keep it going, and as we do, I will start throwing more bean bags into the circle. Try to keep up!"*

2. As the activity goes on, start throwing more bean bags, one by one, into the circle.

3. Let the game continue for a few minutes.

4. After a few minutes of fun and confusion, clap your hands to catch everyone's attention and finish the game.

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Activity Alternatives & Tips:

💡 **Younger children and children with hearing impairments may find it hard to hear or remember many names at once.**

In this case, you can ask everyone to wear name tags so that the main challenge of the game is just to throw and catch the bean bags. If using this option, ask children and staff to write down their name on name tags at the start of the session.

💡 **Some younger or visually impaired children may need larger, softer items to throw or for the items to be rolled or handed rather than thrown to them.**

💡 **If children find it very hard to throw and catch,** make the circle smaller or alter the game so they pass the bean bag around the circle instead of across it. You can still speed up the game and introduce more bags.

💡 **In sessions with older children,** you can make the game harder by asking children to say an interesting fact about themselves in addition to their name.

💡 **If you know another game** that also helps children to learn each other's names and get more comfortable with each other and that is better to play in your project context, you can use it instead.

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3. Groups break out

Purpose: Break up all participants into smaller groups.

👥 Lead Facilitator

1. Thank everyone for the warm up and ask the children to split into 2 even groups.

2. Invite the Co-Facilitator to join one of the groups, while you remain with the other group.

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Purpose: Each group will explore a key problem area related to the *Aprendiendo Unidos* programme to better understand the problems that children experience with this programme and come up with solutions to these problems.

Materials:
- ❏ 2 Problem Tree posters
- ❏ Colored markers, pencils or crayons
- ❏ Sticky notes
- ❏ Other craft materials as needed

👥 Lead Facilitator and Co-Facilitator in small groups

Step 1: Welcome children to the group and introduce the activity.

1. Explain the purpose of the activity:

   a. To better understand the problems that they experience with the *Aprendiendo Unidos* programme; and

   b. To come up with solutions to these problems;

2. Tell children which aspect of the *Aprendiendo Unidos* programme your group will focus on;

3. Ask the children to pick a name for your group and tell them that they can decorate the Problem Tree poster during the activity by drawing on the poster.

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Technical Staff

1. Move between the groups during the Problem Tree activity to observe the activity.

2. Where appropriate, you can participate by adding more ideas to the ones proposed by the caregivers.

❗ **Important:** Your role during this activity is to manage expectations while also allowing for the participants to be creative and to suggest a wide range of different ideas. If the participants are suggesting something that may be difficult to implement, you can tell them about it and explain why it may be difficult but **do not discard any ideas at this stage**. You can also suggest more feasible alternatives to the proposed ideas where appropriate.

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👥 **Lead Facilitator and Co-Facilitator in small groups**

Step 2: Discuss the problem areas on the Problem Tree poster:

1. Tell children that from the surveys we know what most children don't like about these problem areas: read the top problems in each problem area from the poster.

2. Then, looking at one problem at a time, start exploring the causes of this problem by asking children this question:

   - *Why do you think many children don't like this?*

💡 **Tip:** If children struggle to answer the initial question, help them out with other guiding questions. For example:

- *What do you think children might not like about this?*
- *Do you dislike anything about this yourself? Why?*
- *Why do you think you might dislike this?*

You can also use the *5 Whys* technique to explore the causes in more depth: see *Activity Alternatives and Tips* on p. 12 for details.

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3. Discuss answers to these questions as a group. If you as a group agree that something is a possible cause of the problem, add it to the poster. You can invite children to write or draw the causes of the poster or write them yourself.

4. Continue the exercise until you have discussed all problems on your poster and identified at least one possible cause for each.

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👥 **Lead Facilitator and Co-Facilitator in small groups**

Step 3: Discuss ideas

1. Ask the children to look over all the problems and causes that you identified as a group.

2. Ask them to think about what can be done to address some of the key problem causes they put on their poster.

3. Invite the children to suggest some ideas for solutions out loud and discuss these as a group.

4. Write down or draw each idea that you agree on as a group on a separate sticky note and place the ideas next to the cause(s) they relate to.

> 💡 You can ask the children to write or draw on the sticky notes and organise them on the poster. This can be especially fun for younger children.

5. Once you have discussed all ideas and solutions proposed by children in your group and placed them on the Problem Tree poster, the activity is finished.

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Activity Alternatives & Tips:

💡 **Try using the *5 Whys* technique to explore the problem causes in more depth.**

Sometimes a problem cause that can be easily identified is not the most important cause. If it makes sense, try using the **5 Whys** technique to get to the deeper cause of the problem. Once a child suggests a possible problem cause, ask them *'Why do you think many children might dislike this?'* or a similar Why question again, but now about the cause they suggested. Modify the Why question as necessary based on the discussion context. You may need to ask several Why questions, sometimes up to 5 times, to get to the real cause of the problem.

Example: Children say that they don't like that the programme location is far away from their home. When you ask them why the first time, they might say that it's because they don't like using the bus to get to the programme. If you then ask them a why question again - e.g., *Why don't you like taking the bus?* - they might say that it's because they feel scared. And if you ask them why a third time, they might tell you that they're afraid of getting lost, or that they're worried about criminals, or something else entirely. Their answers might really surprise you and highlight opportunities for interesting and creative programme improvements. Remember: there are no right or wrong answers!

💡 **If a child hesitates to speak out or if some children are speaking more than others,** you can call on children in your group one by one in a circle to make sure everyone has a chance to speak.

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5. Snack break

Purpose: Participants and staff get a short break.

👥 Lead Facilitator

1. Invite everyone to take a 10 minute break and give out some snacks and drinks.

2. Tell the children that they can keep decorating their posters or give them more paper and craft materials to create whatever they want.

> ❗ **Important:** Do not give out snacks and drinks before the end of the Problem Tree activity. If some children are still engaged in activity while others are starting to have snacks and drinks, they will be distracted and rushed.

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🕐 **15 min**

Purpose: Each group presents their Problem Tree poster to others. After the presentation, all children vote on their favourite ideas from the group's poster.

Materials:

❏ Post-it notes and markers to record additional ideas

👥 Lead Facilitator

1. Ask everyone to return to their seats after the break.

2. Invite one of the groups to the front of the room and ask them to present their Problem Tree poster.

3. Ask the group to say which part of the *Aprendiendo Unidos* programme they looked at, which problems they talked about, and what ideas they came up with.

4. Give the group 5-7 minutes to present their poster.

5. Once the group finishes their presentation, ask others in the room if they have any additional ideas for solving some of the problems on the presented poster. If they do, write the new ideas on sticky notes and add them to the poster.

6. Next, explain the voting rules: **each child can only vote for 1 idea per problem**.

7. Start reading ideas from the poster one by one, asking children to raise their hand if they like an idea.

8. Count and write down the number of votes next to each idea on the poster.

9. Once all ideas have been voted on, tell the children which ideas got the most votes.

10. Repeat the activity with the next small group.

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6. Report back and Voting (2 of 2)

👥 Technical Staff

1. Observe the activity.

2. If you see that an idea is may be difficult to implement in the project context, tell everyone why it could be difficult but **do not reject** the idea at this time. If possible, suggest a more feasible alternative.

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7. Session closing

👥 Technical Staff

1. Thank the children for their ideas and explains what will happen next:

   a. All ideas will be ranked by the number of votes and the most popular ideas will be prioritised for implementation.

   b. All ideas will also be rated by how easy or difficult they are to implement.

   c. The team will consider available budget, time, staff and resources when reviewing the ideas.

   d. The most popular and feasible ideas will be implemented.

👥 Lead Facilitator

1. Tell the children that this is the end of the session.

2. Remind them that while we cannot promise that every idea from today will be used, we will do our best to implement as many as we can.

3. Thanks the children for participating and helping the field team to come up with ideas for improving the Aprendiendo Unidos programme, and encourage them to engage in similar exercises in the future.

This is the end of the Co-Creation Session. Participants can now leave. Staff stay to complete Activity 8: Session Outputs (see next page).

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8. Session outputs

> **Purpose:** Collect session outputs to ensure all participants' ideas are recorded and can be used by the project team in the Decision-Making Session.

Lead Facilitator

1. Take photographs of all posters to keep a digital record.

   a. Share these with the Project Manager.

2. Write down all ideas from each Problem Tree poster in the Ideas Lists (one list per Problem Tree) and return the lists to the Project Manager. He/she will take the ideas into the Decision-Making session.

3. Collect all posters and give them to the Project Manager.

Lead Facilitator, Co-Facilitator and Technical Staff

1. Take 15 minutes to talk about the session as a team. Talk about:

   a. *What went well?*

   b. *What didn't go well?*

   c. *What could be done differently next time?*

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