# Action Step: CSTL Pilot Project

basic education
Department:
Basic Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

CSTL
CARE AND SUPPORT FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING
SOUTH AFRICA

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# Acknowledgements

ISBN: 978-0-620-47984-4

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Suggested citation: Department of Basic Education and MIET Africa. 2010. *National Support Pack*. MIET Africa. Durban

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The *National Support Pack* has been adapted from the Care and Support for Teaching and Learning Programme (CSTL) SADC *Regional Support Pack* in consultation with directorates within the national and provincial Departments of Basic Education. It is a guide for implementing the CSTL Programme in South Africa which is aimed at mainstreaming care and support programmes in the education system. This is an ongoing process and as such, the *National Support Pack* is a working document that will require amendment over time. Any comments or suggestions for improving the *National Support Pack* are welcomed. Please send your comments or suggestions to the Director-General: Basic Education for the attention of the Health Promotion Directorate; Private Bag X895; Pretoria; 0001.

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This publication was made possible with the generous funding of the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

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start of a new section

a tool for use by a CSTL Task Team

a reference to another section of the *National Support Pack*



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# Action Step Card

## CSTL Pilot Project

### Background

A CSTL Pilot Project affords you a useful test of your tools, materials, training, structures and procedures, at the school, district and provincial levels. It provides important information to inform scale-up and sustainability of the programme.

The pilot project is implemented for a minimum period of one academic year and provides the Department of Basic Education with the opportunity to revise the model of CSTL prior to implementation at a larger scale. Between 20 and 50 schools are selected for a pilot project, and usually these are a mix of primary and secondary schools. Piloting also provides an opportunity to learn more about effectively mobilising communities, children and educators.

Because extensive piloting has already happened in various projects across the country, you may decide it is unnecessary to identify a pilot group of schools, and instead choose to implement the CSTL Programme on a much larger scale from the start. But even if you decide against a formal test of your materials, it usually easier to start your roll-out with a smaller number of schools..

### Activities

This Action Step requires you to:

- identify and secure the buy-in of a small number of schools for the CSTL Pilot Project;
- conduct a capacity and environmental audit in participating schools;
- ensure regular monitoring and evaluation at pilot project schools so that there is learning and reflection;
- develop strategies to build up the participation of communities, children and educators in care and support activities;
- revise the model, tools and training for the CSTL Programme where necessary at the close of the pilot project period.

For additional information, refer to the following sections in the ***Background***:

- ***Finding and Growing Champions for Care and Support***, which describes the qualities needed by individuals for care and support work;
- ***Committing to a Developmental, Disability, Gender Sensitive and Rights-based Approach***, which provides a useful list of practical ways to think about child participation.

Before you embark on this Action Step you will find it helpful to read:

- ***Action Step: National Model;***
- ***Action Step: Situation and Response Analysis.***



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# The Purpose of the CSTL Pilot Project

This section discusses the purpose of the CSTL Pilot Project. It also discusses what is usually piloted and why it is important to document the lessons learnt. Finally it describes the activities that need to take place at the end of the pilot project period.

**What is the CSTL Pilot Project?**

**What needs to be piloted?**

**Why document lessons learnt?**

**What happens after the pilot project?**

## What is the CSTL Pilot Project?

Countries that have already embarked on the road to mainstreaming care and support have usually started with a pilot project. By this we mean they have selected a small number of schools and provincial areas in which to start implementing care and support activities. The CSTL Pilot Project affords a useful test of tools, materials, training, structures and procedures at the local level. It provides valuable information that informs scale-up and sustainability.

The pilot project is implemented over a minimum of one academic year and gives the Department of Basic Education the opportunity to make revisions prior to implementation at many more schools. Between 20 and 50 schools, or alternatively a representative sample of schools, are selected for a pilot project and usually these comprise both primary and secondary schools. Planning and resourcing for a CSTL Pilot Project takes place at the national and provincial levels..

**Find out more about programme planning in the *Action Step: CSTL Programme Plans*.**

Because extensive piloting has already happened in various projects across the country, you may decide it is unnecessary to identify a pilot group of schools, instead choosing to implement the CSTL Programme on a much larger scale right from the start. A pilot project is inevitably more demanding as it involves testing all the elements and materials, and has a greater focus on monitoring.



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## What needs to be piloted?

The CSTL Pilot Project offers a valuable opportunity to test the key materials and other tools that support implementation. The key components for piloting are:

- advocacy materials, a CSTL Programme manual or any other materials developed for use in schools;
- training programmes and training materials;
- monitoring tools.

In addition to these three items, the CSTL Pilot Project should test the structures and procedures that make up the national model, such as:

- structures in schools, school clusters and districts;
- the system for accessing additional services for children in need of support;
- the different roles and responsibilities of all the role-players contributing to care and support.

## Why document lessons learnt?

The feedback from the experience of implementation is valuable. The higher the quality of information coming from the site, the more valuable the process of piloting will prove to be. The lessons learnt should be captured in a user-friendly format that promotes the sharing of information at all levels of the CSTL Programme and with sectors and organisations outside the Department of Basic Education.

To test each of the different areas it will be necessary to develop monitoring and evaluation activities. A CSTL Task Team and other key role-players should regularly review information from the pilot project site.

At the close of the pilot project period, evaluation should provide information so that conclusions can be drawn about:

- the outcomes of the pilot project with respect to quantity and quality of care and support given to vulnerable learners;
- its impact on educational outcomes;
- the costs associated with the implementation of the CSTL Programme;
- the success, challenges and sustainability of the roles played by key role-players, especially community volunteers and educators;
- the level and type of community participation;
- the success of integrated service delivery;
- the role of school management and Department of Basic Education officials in ensuring care and support for teaching and learning activities.

## What happens after the pilot project?

Once the pilot project is concluded, the following activities should take place:

- revision of all advocacy and print material;
- revision of training programmes and materials;
- revision of the monitoring tools and monitoring system;
- a review of the findings of the pilot project site evaluation report;
- a review of the costs of the pilot project site;
- a review of the national model for care and support for teaching and learning;
- a costed plan for scaling up the CSTL Programme.



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Before the pilot project period is complete, sustainability planning is essential at the pilot project site to ensure that schools participating in the CSTL Pilot Project are able to sustain activities. Sustainability planning should take the following into account:

- ensuring supervision and sufficient management support;
- securing relevant resources;
- ensuring monitoring;
- providing ongoing training when needed;
- advocating to ensure adequate levels of buy-in and support;
- communicating with all stakeholders about the post-pilot-project period.

*Sustainability planning should include planning to secure required resources like computers, projectors and other equipment and materials*



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# The Selection of Pilot Project Schools

This section describes the criteria that can be used to select schools to participate in the CSTL Pilot Project. It also introduces a capacity audit tool that you can use to inform implementation and strengthen school buy-in.

**How are pilot project schools identified?**

**How can a capacity audit strengthen school buy-in?**

## How are pilot project schools identified?

Usually the selection of pilot project schools is done at national or provincial level. Selected schools must be representative of the target population that the CSTL SA Programme wishes to reach. You may wish to list the criteria for how schools should be selected. Relevant criteria could include any of the following:

- strong school leadership;
- active involvement of the local community in school governance;
- strong parent involvement;
- educators that express an interest in being involved with care and support work;
- levels of vulnerability experienced in the school or community.

It is essential that principals of participating schools and Department of Basic Education officials at all levels be committed to the pilot project. In some areas it is also important that local community and traditional leaders are consulted about the possible pilot project.

Ideally, schools should be selected so that they can be clustered together. This allows you to pilot how schools can work together for support and how a cluster can be linked to the district and provincial levels. For example, the South African Schools as Centres of Care and Support (SCCS) pilot project involved the appointment of a community member to act as the child-care coordinator for the cluster. It is often easier to facilitate training when schools are clustered. Where possible, visit schools to check the location, resources and commitment.

It is not always possible to select schools in one area, and the pilot project may be structured across districts and even provinces.

## How can a capacity audit strengthen school buy-in?

To avoid over-burdening schools, conduct a capacity audit or environmental assessment in a sample of schools participating in your pilot project. It is a helpful process through which to begin engaging schools in the pilot project and reveals important information about schools, such as whether they have existing resources, both human and physical (including infrastructure), that can be accessed to support vulnerable learners. It identifies the strengths and weaknesses in the existing system that impact on delivery. It also reveals which organisations presently provide support and services to schools and vulnerable learners. Having this information allows you to work more realistically within the capacity of schools and avoids only learning about significant capacity gaps halfway through the process of implementation!

A capacity audit is conducted using a standard tool in a small number of representative schools. There is an example capacity audit tool in *Tools, Templates and Examples* in the *Appendix* (and *Capacity audit tool for*



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*use in schools*, Appendix 1 at http://www.hda.co.za/project_cos.html[1]. You could customise this tool or use an existing Department of Basic Education capacity audit tool.

Once the audit is completed, the information will need to be analysed and conclusions drawn about the present strengths and weaknesses. The case study that follows highlights the conclusions of the capacity audit conducted in the COS pilot project schools during the set-up.

## Case Study

### Conclusions of the Capacity Audit Conducted in COS Pilot Project Schools[2]

The COS capacity audit conducted in three SADC countries (Swaziland, Namibia and Botswana) found the following:

- There was an absence of school-level policies and guidelines for comprehensive support of vulnerable children.
- Where school fees were charged or where there was no fee exemption policy, significant barriers to school access were created for vulnerable children.
- There was limited access to materials on vulnerable children in schools.
- There was limited use of records that are kept at school, e.g. attendance, drop-out rate and grade repetition, which could be used to manage a response to vulnerable children.
- While there was evidence of numerous potential points of support for vulnerable children, there were several factors that impeded networking opportunities, such as poor communication systems, and lack of time, resources and transport.
- There were gaps in incentives, supervision and management of teachers willing to help support vulnerable children – one of the key gaps was the lack of time available for COS activities, given that most teachers were already over-extended.

The information collected in a capacity audit allows you to predict during the planning and design phase of the pilot project where difficulties in implementation are likely to be encountered. For example, because educators reported in the capacity audit that they were over-stretched, the COS project ensured that community members at each school were trained to support vulnerable learners to ensure that the programme was not wholly dependent on educator input. The project also prioritised making awareness posters available to schools to address the information gap at schools about child vulnerability.



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# Start-up Activities at Pilot Project Schools

This section summarises important start-up activities that are needed at the pilot project site for implementation to happen.

**Who is your audience for school- and district-level advocacy?**

**How do you create a vision for care and support in a school?**

**How do you conduct start-up training?**

**How do you identify vulnerable learners for support?**

**How do you develop a local resource directory and referral system?**

## Who is your audience for school- and district-level advocacy?

It is essential that pilot project schools hold advocacy meetings with members of the school and local community to talk about the CSTL Programme and the role of the school in care and support. Meetings with the following groups/people should take place:

- school management;
- school governance structures;
- educators;
- parents and caregivers;
- learners;
- local community leaders;
- members of local community organisations;
- other government departments;
- district officials.

You could develop advocacy materials, such as posters and pamphlets, to create awareness about the CSTL Programme, and you may find it helpful to develop different sets of advocacy materials for different audiences e.g. primary or secondary schools.

**You can find out more about advocacy and communication in the *Action Step: Advocacy and Communication*.**



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## How do you create a vision for care and support in a school?

Developing a vision of a school as a centre of care and support is a very powerful activity for a school at the start of the pilot project. The following activity can be done in a workshop with a wide range of representatives from the local school and community or in smaller meetings with different target groups, such as learners, educators and community members

### Tool: Develop a Vision for your School as an Inclusive Centre of Learning, Care and Support [3]

#### Instructions

This tool can be used to develop a vision for a school as an inclusive centre of learning, care and support. It is best employed at a meeting of educators, parents and local community members. The tool requires that the meeting discusses each issue listed below. You can adapt this list for your own context with helpful questions that will encourage a school to arrive at its own vision.

Think about how you would like your school to be in two years' time. Now describe this school under each of the following headings:

- **Community links and involvement**
  - How you would like parents to be involved in the school;
  - In what ways you would like other community members to be involved in the school;
  - How you would like parents and other community members to use the school resources.

- **Environment (including toilets, water, litter, methods of disposal of rubbish, plants, play areas, etc.)**
  - What you would prefer the toilets and water supply to be like;
  - What attitudes towards litter you would like;
  - What you would prefer the environment to look like;
  - What play and sports areas you would like there to be.

- **Inclusivity (i.e. dealing with factors that keep some learners out of school, for example disability, poverty, HIV and AIDS, etc.)**
  - How you would like the school to be to ensure that all learners can attend.

*Schools need to ensure that all learners can participate effectively both inside and outside the classroom*



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**Tool** continued

- **Learner participation (in and out of the classroom)**
  - How you would like the school to encourage learners to participate in classroom activities;
  - How you would like the school to encourage learners to take part in other aspects of school life.
- **Organisational structures**
  - What organisational structures (teacher, parent/caregiver, learner) you would like there to be.
- **Safety**
  - How you would like the school to ensure the safety of all members of its community.
- **Poverty alleviation and food security**
  - How the school and the community can contribute to food security and the alleviation of poverty.

## How do you conduct start-up training?

Short training programmes are used when setting up care and support activities at the local level. Your human resource audit and training plan will identify the individuals to be targeted for training. Usually, training involves both educators and community members. Where possible, involve a member of the school management team in start-up training. This helps establish leadership for the CSTL Programme at a local level.

Training is usually conducted at the local level and may involve more than one school. Start-up training should last a few days only.

### Start-up Training

The start-up training for the COS pilot project was $3^{1}/_{2}$ days. During this training the following modules[4] were taught:

- Understanding children's lives
- Talking and listening to children
- Setting up a COS support group to help children stay in school
- HIV and AIDS
- Knowing the community your school serves
- Knowing who to ask for help and support
- Finding ways to get financial or other material support
- Deciding what action to take to help children
- Basic counselling skills
- Setting up a community network



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**The *Action Step: Capacity for Implementation* focuses on conducting a human resource audit and developing training interventions.**

## How do you identify vulnerable learners for support?

Educators and relevant community members should be trained in identifying vulnerable learners. You need a **Vulnerability Assessment Form** to suit your context and you should test it for appropriateness during the pilot project.

The SCCS pilot project programme developed a **Vulnerability Assessment Form** for educators to complete. You will find a copy of this form in the *Appendix*. The form collects information about school attendance, the primary caregiver, and the appearance and nutritional state of each child in the class. If you don't already have one, you could amend this form to suit your situation. You also need to decide when this form is to be completed. For example, it could be completed for each learner on admission to the school and at the start of the new school year or term.

The assessment of vulnerability supports the implementation of care and support activities in schools, as vulnerable children need to access appropriate support.

The experience of implementing the SCCS model in 750 schools in South Africa has shown that vulnerable learners should, where possible, be identified by both school and community members. This is because vulnerable learners may be attending school erratically or have dropped out of school, and their home circumstances are better known to the community. Home visits can be useful when completing a vulnerability assessment.

A completed vulnerability assessment is a valuable school-based record that can be used to monitor progress.

You can also involve children themselves in the identification of needs. The box below provides some innovative ideas about how to involve children. These activities can supplement the more formal vulnerability assessment. However, although this approach to working with children is more informal and creative, this does not undermine the value of the information gathered in this manner.

*It is a good idea to involve children themselves in the assessment and identification of their needs*



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### Ways of Involving Children in a Needs Assessment[5]

1. **Drawing**: Ask children to draw trees. The roots should be what the learners think they need to give them opportunities and protection in life. The trunks should present the issues that are presently facing them. The leaves and fruit should show the ideal situation they would like for themselves. The landscapes around the trees should suggest what they can do to make their ideal situation a reality.

2. **Drama**: With the children, identify issues that are important to them. Choose an issue the children want to focus on. Together, develop a drama based on this issue. Perform the drama for an audience. Discuss the issue raised by the drama with the children and the audience.

3. **Walk around the community environment**: Children can take adults on a walk around the community environment and show them:
   - what they think is important, and why;
   - what they are afraid of, and why;
   - what they would like to change;
   - what they like and do not like about the community;
   - where vulnerable children live.

4. **Mapping**: Ask children questions and get them to each draw a map in response to the questions. Examples of questions are:
   - Where do children go every day?
   - Where do children come from?
   - What are the positives and negatives about living in this community?
   - What places are important to you?

5. **Ranking**: Ask children to rank, for example, the negative and positive features that they have identified in the community.

6. **Daily activity chart**: Ask children to make a chart of their daily lives. They should record what they do on a typical day and how much time they spend on each task.

## How do you develop a local resource directory and support system?

Providing timely and appropriate support to vulnerable learners will depend on the development of a local resource directory and support system. Each school needs a list of names and contact details of individuals and organisations able to offer support to vulnerable children locally. A school may use a letter of introduction for a learner approaching an outside service provider for the first time.

**For more information about the development of a resource directory and support system, read the *Action Step: Multi-sectoral Network of Services*.**



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# Building Participation in the CSTL Pilot Project

This section discusses strategies to build the participation of community, children and educators in the CSTL Programme. It also includes a discussion on the role of leadership for the CSTL Programme.

**How do you develop leadership?**

**How do you mobilise the community?**

**How do you work with community volunteers?**

**How do you build children's participation?**

**How do you sustain the roles and interest of educators?**

## How do you develop leadership?

**Read *Finding and Growing Champions for Care and Support* in the *Background* for a description of the qualities needed by individuals for care and support work.**

One of the most effective mechanisms to build participation is to secure and grow good leadership for the CSTL Programme in schools and districts. A school principal is ideally placed to offer leadership for the CSTL Programme. This is because the principal has access to both educators and the local community. The principal can chair the school support team (Institution-level Support Team), and an appointed CSTL coordinator at a school can also provide leadership. Coordinators are usually individuals who are able to devote a lot of time to care and support, and therefore one of their critical roles is to mobilise others to get involved. Department of Basic Education officials can also offer leadership at the district level.

One of the best ways to foster leadership is to involve the relevant individuals in training programmes. The COS pilot project in Botswana specifically chose to include school principals in the $3^{1}/_{2}$ day start-up training for members of the COS group at each school. Community volunteers and CSTL coordinators should be selected because of their strengths in leadership.



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## How do you mobilise the community?

Vulnerable learners require support, both at school and in the community. This is because sometimes children are attending school erratically, have dropped out of school or haven't enrolled at school. During school holidays and at the weekends, vulnerable learners may also need support, such as being given extra food and meals, help with looking after younger siblings and caring for a sick parent or caregiver. Community participation is considered essential to care and support for teaching and learning. Your CSTL Pilot Project provides an opportunity to find methods to mobilise the local community.

To build participation at your pilot project site, ensure that:

- your planning process is participatory; this creates a firm foundation for participation during implementation;
- community members are selected to participate in care and support for teaching and learning activities;
- community members have the opportunity to play leadership roles when participating;
- regular meetings are held with community members to discuss the needs of vulnerable learners, the activities of the CSTL Programme and to provide feedback;
- the CSTL Programme creates opportunities for more and more community members to get involved in giving support to vulnerable learners (read the COS pamphlet Setting up a Circles of Support in the Appendix);
- schools create networks with local community organisations and leaders;
- your CSTL Programme keeps both the school governing body and parent-teacher association informed of and involved in activities;
- you encourage home visits to create a presence in the local community.

## How do you work with community volunteers?

Supporting vulnerable learners often requires time from educators and community members. The latter are often a very important resource but ensuring the sustained involvement of these volunteers can be a challenge.

Community volunteers need to be supported in this role. Consider who in your structures at a local level can support community volunteers, such as the Cluster Child-Care Coordinator appointed in the SCCS South African pilot project. A local care and support coordinator can help focus the work of volunteers. For example, volunteers can take responsibility for different things, like food gardens, home visits and after-school care. A local care and support coordinator can provide an opportunity for volunteers to talk through challenges and emotional issues that may arise through the work of supporting vulnerable children, and can support the monitoring of activities.

Formal identification (through items such as name tags, T-shirts, caps) often assists community volunteers carry out activities like home visits effectively.

Volunteers who are to play a significant role in the CSTL Programme should be carefully selected. It is also important to consider the role of men and women volunteers. Traditionally, care and support work is considered women's work. However, in order to promote gender equality, it is important to build the participation of men in your pilot project.



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*Volunteers could take responsibility for initiatives like food gardens*

## Community Volunteers

The COS Project lists the following selection criteria for community volunteers or "neighbourhood agents" living in the local community;

- able to read and write;
- have leadership qualities;
- demonstrate personal commitment to address the needs of vulnerable learners;
- able to work with limited supervision and incentives.

Other ideas from the COS pilot project about managing volunteers are to:

- place a time-limit on voluntary participation of one or two years;
- give regular training to draw in other volunteers;
- offer ad hoc refresher training to sustain momentum and interest;
- hold "competitions" and build incentives and recognition of hard work into the annual activity plan, for example allow volunteers to take a share of the vegetables grown in the school garden, or assign a piece of land at the school on which volunteers can grow their own vegetables;
- reduce the number of household visits.[6]



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## How do you build children's participation?

Getting children to participate in the programme involves including them in decision-making processes and activities that directly impact on their lives. There are different levels of child participation, ranging from partial participation (where children are sometimes consulted about important matters) to full participation (where children are actively and appropriately involved in the decisions that impact on them).

Involving children in care and support work can be sensitive and demanding work. As such, it involves careful planning. Further on, we outline a code of conduct for work with children. The first step is to listen to the views and ideas of children. Make sure that you listen to the ideas of both girls and boys.

*Involve children in care and support work and in activities that impact on their lives*

**Use the ideas in the *Background* to guide your child participation activities.**



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## Code of conduct for adults

**Rules for keeping children safe during child participation[7]**

- Adults must be aware of situations that may be risky for children and must plan how to deal with the risks.
- Adults must be visible to others when working with children whenever possible.
- It is not appropriate for an adult to spend a lot of time alone with a child.
- It is usually not appropriate for adults to take children home with them.
- It is not appropriate for an adult to sleep in the same bed or in the same room as a child with whom the person is working.
- Adults should never hit or otherwise physically abuse a child.
- Adults should not take part in children's activities if it is illegal, unsafe or abusive to do so.
- Adults should not discriminate against a particular child.
- Children should know the impact of their disclosures on decision-making, and know who will make the final decisions.
- Roles and responsibilities for all involved must be clearly outlined, understood and agreed on.
- Children must be given enough information and time to decide whether they want to participate or not.
- Participation is voluntary and children should be able to withdraw whenever they want to.
- Adults working with children must be accountable to the children for commitments they make to them.
- A child's (other) time commitments (at home and at school) must be respected and accommodated.
- Children must know that they have the right to be safe from abuse and where they can go to for help if they need it.
- Children must be supervised at all times.
- If there are any risks associated with a child speaking out, steps must be taken to keep the child safe.
- No photos or videos of the children should be taken without written permission from the children or their caregivers.
- No one should be able to trace an opinion or information back to an individual child or a particular group of children.

The child participation guidelines that are part of the COS Toolkit[8] outline six ideas for building child participation in care and support. These are:

- building child advisory teams;
- setting up children's discussion groups;
- establishing a school council;
- running clubs;
- offering lifeskills and HIV and AIDS training;
- running a school competition..

Another important activity is commissioning research that addresses children's ideas and perspectives of care and support and teaching and learning. The COS project commissioned research that recorded children's voices.

You can find the research report and the COS Toolkit at www.hda.co.za

The following tool can be used to check on the level of child participation in your pilot project initiative. It can be used during planning, implementation and monitoring.



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# Tool: Child Participation Checklist

## Instructions

This tool is to be used when planning, implementing and monitoring the CSTL Programme.

The purpose of the tool is to assess the scope of child participation by answering the listed questions. Decide when – during planning, implementation or monitoring – to use the checklist. Constitute a small team of CSTL Programme staff from various disciplines. Discuss each point and review the effectiveness of your programme's commitment to meaningful child participation. Keep records to refer to when next using the checklist, to monitor progress. Adapt and add questions as you think necessary.

CSTL Task Teams should write down a list of all the matters that need follow-up for child participation. Keep this list so that you can refer to it again at your next review of the level of child participation in the pilot project.

**Questions to assess child participation**

- Do the children have an understanding of, and commitment to, participation?
- Do they have clear reasons for participating; and do they understand the possible adverse consequences of participating?
- How broad is the range of roles and responsibilities available to enable all children, of differing capacities, to participate?
- What preparation have they had?
- How broadly or narrowly is "matters affecting the child" defined?
- How free are children to express their views; in what ways are children encouraged to express their views, and what efforts are made to ensure a supportive environment for their expression?
- How much power or authority do children's views have in decision-making processes, and to what extent are children working in equal partnership with adults?
- What is the process that determines the "due weight" accorded to children's viewpoints, and to what extent are children in charge of their own initiatives?
- To what extent do child representatives have opportunities to consult with their constituency and ensure meaningful participation of this constituency?
- Do they have the support of parents, guardians or others who are important to them, and what long-term follow-up support has been arranged for them afterwards?

**Additional questions to include in a child participation checklist for the CSTL Programme**[9]

- What are the children's perceptions of the care and support services?
- What are the children's relationships with, and their perceptions of, service providers and caregivers?
- What are children's experiences of services, including access to services and communication with service providers?
- What are the strengths and weakness of services – according to the child?
- What are children's perspectives and understanding of their rights related to these services?



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## How do you sustain the interest and role of educators?

The mainstreaming of care and support is an opportunity for your Department of Basic Education to designate roles to educators, for example, class teachers identifying and assessing vulnerable learners, talking to vulnerable learners about the challenges they face, conducting home visits where necessary and informing the ILST of specific help needed by individual learners. By integrating care and support into the routine functions of educators, it is possible to avoid educators having to volunteer their time.

The COS project capacity audit found that prior to implementation, teachers at COS pilot project schools already felt "over-extended". The following recommendations were made at the close of the pilot project to support the sustained role of educators who volunteer time in care and support:

- educators' participation in the project is time-limited to one or two years;
- ad hoc or refresher training is held to sustain motivation and interest;
- the workload of teachers involved with COS is reduced in other areas;
- a full-time COS convenor is appointed at each school.

The SCCS pilot project, conducted in the Ugu District in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa, found that a full-time convenor for care and support activities was also needed at the district level.

Many educators who do get involved in care and support activities report a big change in their relationships with their learners. This in itself can provide job satisfaction, as educators may feel less overwhelmed by the challenges they face in the classroom.

"In all my meetings with parents and students where a student had done something wrong, it always came out that the student was at fault or had lied. However, after this (COS training) session, I now realize that in all these occasions I was wrong because I never took the time to listen to those children because I was biased as I thought what they told me was lies."

COS school convenor (educator), Swaziland Pilot Project.[10]

## References


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5. Adapted from Stephenson, P., Gourley, S. and Miles, G. *Child Participation*. TearFund and from information on the website of the Children's Rights Centre.
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