

For group work – session 7:

Risk and Protective Factors Focus Group Discussion Guide

(Adapted from [Identifying and Ranking Risk and Protective Factors: A brief Guide](#))

Aims:

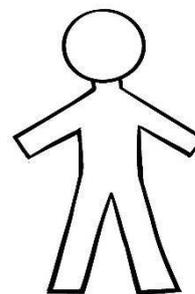
- To identify the risk factors associated with [harmful outcome] and the protective factors that exist in context
- To rank the risk and protective factors that will contribute to the design of prevention strategies

Sample of focus group discussion composition:

# of FGDs in each location	Focus Groups	# Males	# Females
1-2	Children (aged 8-11)	7-10	7-10
1-2	Children (aged 12-14)	7-10	7-10
1-2	Children (aged 15-17)	7-10	7-10
1	Parents/Caregivers/Foster parents	7-10	7-10
1	Community members	7-10	7-10
1	Other sector staff and CP practitioners	7-10	7-10

Materials:

- Flip chart paper
- Markers
- Sticky notes (2 packs)
 - Yellow: risk factors
 - Green: protective factors
- Tape
- 2 cut outs of a human figures (see the example right)
- Small soft ball for the closing activity



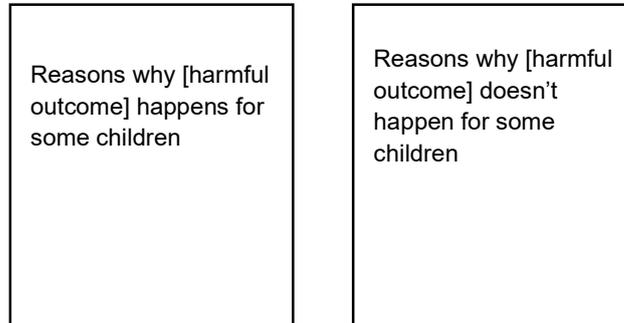
Roles:

- Facilitator 1 (leads the discussion using the facilitation guide)
- Facilitator 2 (writes risk and protective factors on the sticky notes and posts them on the two flip charts)
- Note taker (writes notes using the note taking guide)
- Interpreter (if needed)

Preparation:

- The gathering should be held in a private, comfortable, safe, welcoming, accessible, confidential space
- Arrange the seating in a circle, and the facilitator should sit at the same level as the participants
- Procure refreshments to be distributed to participants
- Arrive an hour early to set up the room. This allows time to deal with unexpected room scheduling, and to set up materials and refreshments.

- Prepare two flip charts (see example below)
 - Risk factors flip chart- title “Reasons that lead to [harmful outcome] in our community ” (yellow sticky notes go here)
 - Protective factors flip chart- title “Reasons why [harmful outcome] doesn’t happen for some children” (green sticky notes go here)



Steps for the FGD:

1. Welcome
2. Icebreaker
3. Introduction and explanation of the FGD activity
4. Confidentiality and informed consent
5. Discussion of risk and protective factors
6. Break
7. Ranking risk factors
8. Ranking protective factors
9. Closing

**Risk and Protective Factors Focus Group Discussion
Facilitation Guide**

Welcome

Hello, and thank you for joining us today. My name is [name] and this is [name]. We are from [name of organisation] (an organization that is supporting children here in our community), and today we are here to talk to you about few issues affecting children and young people.

Ice-breaker

Before we start, we want to spend some time having fun and getting to know each other. We are going to begin with a game.

Introduction

We are speaking with girls and boys, caregivers, community leaders, and organizations in our community to learn more about the lives of children and how to try to help children to be healthy and safe. It would be very helpful for us to understand the reasons for [harmful outcome] in the community.

Your views and knowledge are important because you are experts in your communities. By sharing your ideas and opinions, you are participating in a process and this discussion is only the first step. From these conversations, we will create a project for children with the community. We will come back to the community to share what we learned and to present our ideas for the next steps.

Explanation of the FGD activity

- *This discussion should take about 1 to 1.5 hours including a short break.*
- *We would like to encourage everyone to share their views if they feel comfortable to do so. This means we would like to ask you all to listen to each other and be respectful when someone is talking. If you disagree with someone's answers or thoughts, please do so in a way that is kind and respectful.*
- *If you do not understand a question, please ask me to explain it.*
- *There are no wrong answers and we are eager to hear your ideas.*

Obtaining Consent and Assent

Explain confidentiality

- *What you will tell today, me will not be shared with anyone in your family or community. Only [name of organisation] staff will have access to this information, but nobody will know that it is you who said it.*
- *We would like to ask you to not share information about what other people in this group has said.*
- *Do all of you agree to keep the information shared by others confidential?*

Explain consent

- *It is completely your choice to take part in this discussion. It is okay if you do not want to participate.*
- *Your participation and your comments are confidential. That means that I may share details of what you have told me so that we can improve our work, but I will not tell anyone who told me these things.*
- *It is important that you feel safe and free to talk.*
- *You do not have to answer any question you do not want to.*
- *You are free to leave now if you do not wish to take part in this discussion.*

Explain note taking/ recording

- *In order to remember the ideas you share with us today, [Note taker's name] will be writing down your views, opinions and other observations, but we will not use your name.*
- *We would also like to record the conversation to make sure we remember what you share with us.*
- *Is that okay with you?*

Best Interests and referrals

- *It is very important to us to keep children and young people safe. If you are worried about your safety or the safety of someone else, please tell us in private and we can connect you with people who can help (with your permission.)*
- *If you feel uncomfortable at any time, please feel free to take a break or step out of the meeting. You can come to me or any other [name of organisation] staff member after the discussion if you would like to talk to get support. You also don't have to answer all the questions. You can just say Pass. It is also ok if you don't know an answer to the question.*

Consent/ Assent

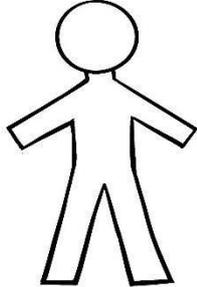
- *Do you have any questions for us at this time?*
- *Do you want to stay and talk with this group?*

Discussion of Risk and Protective Factors

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this discussion. I now want to spend more time listening to you than talking.

A child who is doing well in our community

We are now going to imagine a child in our community. Imagine that this (hold up the cut-out figure) is a child in our community



Let's give our child a name.

- Now, let's think about [child's name] being really happy, and doing well in this community.
- How would we know that she/he is doing well and supported? (facilitator- write on sticky notes these protective factors)
- What are things that would make her/him very happy? (facilitator- write on sticky notes these protective factors)

Identifying risk factors (to be written on sticky notes).

(Facilitator- use the figure when you are leading this discussion.)

We are going to continue following the life of [child's name]. She/he has experienced [harmful outcome]

What are some reasons that will make [child's name] experience [harmful outcome]?

- Are there personal issues/problems that [child's name] might have (like getting poor marks at school, or having an illness)?
- Are there issues/problems in her/his family? (like parents getting divorced or separated, parents not supporting him or her, living with another family or not having work?)
- Are there possible issues/problems in the community? (like not having access to the health center or living in an IDP camp?)
- Are the possible issues in the society (like certain beliefs or customs?)

Identifying protective factors (to be written on sticky notes)

Meanwhile, [child's name] has a friend who did not experience [harmful outcome]

Hold up a second figure and give him/ her a name.

What are of the some reasons that made [child's name] not to experience [harmful outcome]?

- Are there personal characteristics (like being healthy, being good at making friends, and a good student) that [child's name] might have protected her from child labour / child marriage?
- Are there issues in his family? (like parents having jobs or believing in the importance of education?)
- Are there things in the community that might have prevented child labour/ child marriage?
- Are the possible things in the society (like certain beliefs or customs) that might have prevented child labour/ child marriage?

Apart from our child here, Which children in this community are most affected by [harmful outcome]? (for example- adolescents, children with disabilities). What are the risks or problems they face when they experience [harmful outcome]?

Are there specific issues or problems specific to girls and boys? If Yes, which one is specific to girls, and which one are specific to boys? (How are issues different for boys and girls?)

Who is least affected, tell us your reasons?

For adults only

Before the [insert humanitarian situation] when a child experienced [harmful outcome], what happened? Who helped him/her, and the family? (e.g. received medical support, specific service providers were consulted, etc.).

These days, what happens when a boy or girl experiences [harmful outcome]? What happens? Who helps the child and the family?

10–15-minute break

Offer refreshments to the participants

During the break, the co-facilitator should put sticky notes on the two flip charts and title them as follows:

1. Risk factors flip chart- title “Reasons why [harmful outcome] happens for some children”
2. Protective factors flip chart- title “Reasons why [harmful outcome] doesn’t happen for some children”

Reasons why [harmful outcome] happens for some children

Reasons why [harmful outcome] doesn't happen for some children

Ranking risk factors

Welcome the participants back to the discussion. If needed, do a quick icebreaker.

I learned a lot from all of you in the conversations we've had, thank you for what you have shared with us. We are going to now discuss some of the ideas that you came up with that might cause [harmful outcome].

In our last discussion, you came up with a lot of ideas of why [harmful outcome] happens for some children.

Read all of the risk factors listed on the flip chart out loud to participants (especially slowly, and possibly more than once, for those who cannot read).

*From all of these, which one do you think is **the top reason** why [harmful outcome] happens for some children?*

Move the top reason sticky note to the top of the flip chart.

What else do you see on the list that also is one of the most important reasons why [harmful outcome] happens for some children?

Move other reason sticky notes to the top of the flip chart. Rank the top 5 risk factors 1-5.

Now, we will move to our other list.

Ranking protective factors

In our last discussion, you also thought of many ideas of why [harmful outcome] doesn't happen for some children.

Read all of the protective factors listed on the flip chart out loud to participants (especially slowly, and possibly more than once, for those who cannot read).

*From all of these, which one do you think is **the top reason** why [harmful outcome] does not happen for some children?*

Move the top reason sticky note to the top of the flip chart.

What else do you see on the list that also is one of the most important reasons why [harmful outcome] does not happen for some children?

Move other reason sticky notes to the top of the flip chart. Rank the top 5 risk factors 1-5.

Summarizing

Thank you for these interesting insights! Let me make sure that I have this correct, you told me that the top things leading to [harmful outcome] in the community are (list factors 1,2,3,4,5).

And, you told me that the top things that prevent [harmful outcome] from happening are (list factors 1,2,3,4,5).

Do I have this right?

Is there anything else you'd like to add?

For adults only

Prevalence of risk factors

I have one last question from this list of the top things that cause [harmful outcome].

Looking at this list, which of these issues are most common in our community (for all children and families)?

Facilitator, circle the top issues that are most common for children in the community are facing with a colored marker.

Closing

Thank you very much for your excellent contributions today, we learned a lot from you, as experts in your communities.

Review some of the key points shared by participants.

From this conversation, as well as the others we will have with other children and adults, we will work together to create a project for children.

In about two weeks, we will come back to the community to share what we learned and to present our ideas for the next steps

Are there any questions that you have, or points you'd like to add as we come to the end of our conversation?

Before we end, let's all stand up in a circle and do a closing activity

Use a ball or something else that can be tossed such as a ball of paper. Toss the ball so that each participant receives it. When each participant receives it, ask each participant to say either one thing they like about their family or community or one thing they liked about the consultation activity.

Thank you very much and we look forward to seeing you soon!