

Annex 23: Guiding steps and principles for addressing child rights (based on the Convention of the Rights of the Child)

For organizations focused on contributing to the improvement of the well-being of children the following guiding principles based on 54 articles in the CRC need to be considered:

- *Non-discrimination* (article 2): all children, no matter their background, race, religion, ability, sex or ethnicity, will be included in the programs.
- *Best interest of the child* (article 3): with everything we do we have to think: is this in the best interest of the child? We should think: how will children be affected by this decision? Is this the best for them?
- *Right to live, survival and development* (article 6): children have the right to live, to have access to a healthy environment in order to survive and develop to the full.
- *Respect for the view of the child* (article 12): if adults take decisions about children, children have the right to give their opinion. This does NOT mean that children can tell parents or other adults what to do. But adults should listen to the views of children and take it seriously. The level of the participation of the child should depend on the maturity of the child. This develops over age, so teenagers will have a greater say in issues than preschooler's for example.
- *Family is the best place* (articles 5, 9, 10, 20): a child has a right to grow up in a family. In principle this is the best place for a child to grow up, unless there are severe circumstances whereby this particular family is not the best place. In that case another safe place should be found, taking into account the best interest of the child.
- *A child has the right to be protected* (article 19): each child has the right to be protected from any harm, from physical, sexual or psychological abuse by any other person. The family, community, society and government should be doing everything possible to protect children and ensure appropriate support in cases of harm.
- *Do no harm*: any action done by civil society to help children should be checked on doing No Harm what so ever to this child or other children, in the present and in the future, taking into account all articles of the CRC.

