

Phase 4: On-site assessment

Step 4.2: Things to consider during on-site consultations

What needs to be considered during consultations with children?

Selection of interview participants

For many businesses, children are a priority stakeholder group. However, as they are often the most vulnerable, special attention is needed to guarantee respect for their human rights in the context of their consultation. The incorporation of children's rights into corporate due diligence processes is most often limited to child labour. Yet the impacts of business on children extend to other issues, as listed under important topics for focus group consultations below.¹

Legitimate representatives

Engaging with children requires careful preparation and it is very important that consultations with them ensure children are not put at risk as a result of their participation. In some communities, direct engagement with children can be a contentious process that might challenge and alter traditional power dynamics. In these cases, you should consider engaging with legitimate representatives to understand the impacts on children more accurately. Representatives could be government agencies, youth organisations, children's organisations and other non-governmental organisations (NGOs).²

Interview process

When organising focus group interviews with children to assess the impact of the tourism industry on their lives, we recommend collaborating with UNICEF or other organisations specialised in children's rights to develop an appropriate methodology. The Children's Rights and Business Principles (CRBP) developed by UNICEF, Save the Children and the UN Global Compact provides companies with a set of guiding principles on how to prevent and address risks to children's rights.³

Ideally, these focus groups should be conducted in collaboration with local NGOs who already have a relationship with children in the area and with whom e.g., UNICEF partners.⁴

Important topics for the focus group interview could be:

- Working parents and the impact on children
- Child labour
- Product design and advertising
- Community resettlement
- Relocation of schools
- Pollution of water
- Scarcity of food
- Behaviour of staff/subcontractors toward children⁵

¹ UNICEF & Danish Institute for Human Rights (2013): Children's Rights in Impact Assessments. A guide for integrating children's rights into impact assessments and taking action for children, <https://www.humanrights-in-tourism.net/sites/default/files/media/file/2021/rc162childrens-rights-impact-assessments-1723.pdf>, p. 6.

² *ibid.*, <https://www.humanrights-in-tourism.net/sites/default/files/media/file/2021/rc162childrens-rights-impact-assessments-1723.pdf>, p. 14.

³ UNICEF (2012): Children's Rights and Business Principles (CRBP), <https://www.humanrights-in-tourism.net/sites/default/files/media/file/2021/rc166childrens-rights-and-business-principles-1731.pdf>

⁴ Kuoni (2014): Assessing Human Rights Impacts. India Project Report, <https://www.humanrights-in-tourism.net/sites/default/files/media/file/2020/rc016-assessing-human-rights-impacts-india-project-report-february-2014-1166.pdf>, p. 29.

⁵ Danish Institute for Human Rights (2020): Human Rights Impact Assessment. Guidance and Toolbox, <https://www.humanrights-in-tourism.net/sites/default/files/media/file/2022/rc220danish-institute-hria-toolbox-and-guidance-2020-2009.pdf>, p. 143.