



Compilation of all submissions



Child  
Friendly  
Cities  
Initiative

unicef   
for every child



Delegates from Vinnytsia, Ukraine, receiving the award for Meaningful child participation.

# Introduction

Organized to mark the [Child Friendly Cities Summit](#) in 2019, the [2019 Child Friendly Cities Initiative \(CFCI\) Inspire Awards](#) celebrated good, innovative and inspiring solutions or projects that foster child rights at the local level and improve the daily lives of children and young people in the cities and communities where they live.

More than 200 projects were submitted to the six Awards categories, namely non-discrimination and equity; meaningful child participation; child-friendly social services; safe, secure and clean environments; family life, play and leisure; and child-friendly governance.

The entries were then reviewed by technical panels consisting of UNICEF experts. The highest-ranking entries were presented for a public vote on the [CFCI website](#). The winners of each category were defined by public vote.

This publication features all Inspire Awards submissions that met the technical requirements.



Entries with a bronze badge passed the initial review of the expert panels.



Those with a silver badge made it to the shortlist for public vote.



Finally, those with a gold stamp were awarded with the CFCI Inspire Awards trophy at the Child Friendly Cities Summit in October 2019.

This booklet is not a blueprint for best practices but a celebration of commitment to child rights globally that hopefully will inspire other local governments and actors to action.

Cities and communities around the world are taking steps, both big and small, towards becoming more child-friendly. We hope that you find this compilation of submissions inspiring and encouraging, as you, too, work towards making cities and communities fit for children.

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...е было выстроено  
...ев и кустарников

# Category 1.

# Non-discrimination and equity

Every child and young person is valued, respected and treated fairly within their cities and communities and by local authorities.

35 entries

## 1 Belarus, Grodno: Together Inclusive Dialogue Initiative

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes

### Goals, strategy and results

The Together Inclusive Dialogue Initiative brings students facing various challenges together with volunteers to develop skills, overcome barriers and strengthen their resilience and self-confidence. Participants include children with disabilities or developmental challenges, living in care or facing difficult life situations. The initiative includes a cycle of lessons aimed at developing positive life courses, focusing on subjects such as capabilities, personal interests, dreams and goals, and relationships. Participants organize activities and events, allowing everyone to find something they would like to try.

The programme has allowed children with disabilities and others facing difficult life situations to challenge themselves in various social situations on equal terms. The open nature of the educational space allows for successful integration of students into the society and has widened educative options for children who are not in formal education. It has also facilitated exchanges between various actors locally, such as the Day-care Centre for Children with Disabilities and the Grodno City Hospice.

### Lessons learned

- When initiatives rely heavily on the support of volunteers, it is important to scrutinize their level of engagement and interest.
- The remoteness of some of the partner institutions limited the participation of some children. In the future, some of the events could be organized on-site.

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**Further information:** [Photos](#) and [Facebook group](#)

## 2 Belarus, Novopolotsk: From Inclusive School to Inclusive City

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes

### Goals, strategy and results

The main goal of 'From Inclusive School to Inclusive City' is to provide integrated, equal and non-discriminatory opportunities for children and young people with disabilities, especially in their access to education and leisure. The project, led by the local government, spans sectors and builds the capacity of various departments on inclusive approaches.

The project has successfully integrated inclusion into several workstreams of the local government. The city started by analysing the mobility infrastructure and concluded that it was not fully accessible to children with disabilities. Following the analysis, the public transport system was upgraded, routes rethought and bus drivers trained on inclusion. One of the local schools has piloted integrated classes, distance learning options and a barrier-free environment, with an aim to develop a territorial network of schools with inclusive education. Seminars and a wide-ranging public awareness campaign were conducted for school personnel and parents to combat common misconceptions and prejudices related to disability.

### Lessons learned

- The project shows that promoting inclusion, even when starting at the level of one school, requires a multi-sectoral approach that goes beyond the school to consider issues such as mobility.

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# 首届全国儿童早期阅读发展与教育峰会

National Early Reading Development and Education Research Conference

## 早期阅读与更好的未来

Early Reading, Better Future

首届全国儿童  
早期阅读发展与  
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National Early Reading  
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### 3 China, Shenzhen: Reading Start

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Candidate

*This project was also submitted to category 3.*

#### Goals, strategy and results

The Reading Start programme, launched in 2015, is an early education intervention programme that provides parent-child reading resources for children aged 0–6. It is the first early childhood reading project in China that is promoted by the local government (government agency) in conjunction with civil society organizations, including foundations. The aim of the project is not only to support the early vocabulary development of children, but also to support early childhood development by promoting positive parenting skills.

Reading Start includes a free reading package divided into two categories, one for children aged 0 to 3 and one for children 3 to 6 years old. As of July 2019, 90,000 copies of the Reading Start package had been distributed in Shenzhen and 834 parent-child reading clubs and lectures had been held, serving more than 24,000 parents and children. The project has also provided scientific early reading content and services for more than 300,000 parents through the Reading Start app and WeChat official account. Apart from providing resources, the project aims to promote a positive reading culture through related events.

#### Lessons learned

- The participation of a wide range of partners, including government, the private sector, social organizations, foundations, individual citizens and other stakeholders has been a key success factor of the project.
- The reading project is not just the distribution of school bags, but the simultaneous establishment of a complete early reading service system. Since the beginning, there has been a strong focus on brand building to ensure Reading Start is recognized by the public.

- Promoting the importance of early learning is a long process, especially among the most vulnerable. Many low-income parents are struggling to find the time to work with their children in reading. Therefore, other avenues, such as activities organized in public libraries, should be explored.

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### 4 France, Beaujolais-Pierres Dorées: Municipal Youth Council Day

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes



#### Goals, strategy and results

In 2019, the municipality of Beaujolais-Pierres Dorées organized the third Municipal Youth Council Day. More than 100 children from over a dozen smaller community youth councils within the municipality met and presented their projects to each other.

The principle of the day is to allow children to discuss actions, modes of operation, projects, experiences and ideas, and to encourage exchanges between participants. Following introductions of each council, children work on topics derived from the Convention on the Rights of the Child together with adult facilitators. The focus in 2019 was on role play, with children presenting legislative proposals on topics such as child rights, animal rights, culture, gender-based discrimination and the environment. At the end of the day, children replicate democratic decision-making processes by voting the proposals into law.

## Lessons learned

- As the municipality of Beaujolais-Pierres Dorées consists of independent communities, the Municipal Youth Council Day allows young people from different communities to listen to each other, discover and discuss together, and share ideas and practices.

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## 5 France, Clichy-La-Garenne: 56 middle-school pupils of the Clichy Communal Youth Council take an interest in the right to an identity

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes

*This project was also submitted to category 2.*

## Goals, strategy and results

After having worked on child rights with UNICEF, 56 middle-school students of the Clichy Communal Youth Council decided to take an interest in the right to an identity. They met with residents whose family history helped them to understand the tragedies caused by the denial of this right, including residents marked by the Holocaust, the Armenian Genocide or slavery.

Every month, students provided testimonies on the importance of an identity by sharing the residents' stories. To mark the 30th anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, they organized an exhibition on the right to an identity, bringing together all the information they had collected and highlighting the importance of understanding history and identity.

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## 6 France, Elancourt: Online tutoring

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes

## Goals, strategy and results

To promote equal access to educational resources, the City of Elancourt offers online tutoring to students facing learning challenges, accessible throughout their studies. The online tutoring, available on a tablet, offers students a variety of resources (audio, video, exercises) that allow students to choose the method most adapted to their needs. The resources are also available to teachers, who can make recommendations and track students' progress online. Personalized coaching on the platform is also available for middle-school and high-school students ahead of national exams. With individual tablets offered by the city, all students can use the platform at home, thus reducing inequalities in academic success.

## Lessons learned

- By offering a variety of methods, the platform is adaptable to the needs of each student.

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## 7 France, Elancourt: Inclusion of children with disabilities

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes

*This project was also submitted to category 5.*



### Goals, strategy and results

Families of children with disabilities lack suitable childcare solutions. Therefore, the City of Elancourt has appointed a coordinator to support families with children with disabilities along the educational continuum. The city has created partnerships with childcare facilities, physiotherapists and psychologists to help include children with disabilities in regular childcare. In addition, the city has implemented a multi-year training programme for professionals to strengthen their knowledge and skills in supporting children with disabilities.

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## 8 France, Elancourt: Gestural communication

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes

*This project was also submitted to category 4.*



### Goals, strategy and results

To help young children who have not yet learned how to speak to communicate with those around them, the City of Elancourt has deployed a method of sign language communication in support of speech learning in all local nurseries. The methodology is also available to parents.

Sign language communication strengthens communication between toddlers and adults and allows children to communicate their needs

to childcare professionals. It also increases the child's desire to communicate, thus facilitating language learning.

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## 9 France, Elancourt: Educational boxing project

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes

*This project was also submitted to category 5.*



### Goals, strategy and results

The aim of the 'Educational Boxing Project' is to offer access to sports activities to disadvantaged young people between the ages of 10 and 25, while providing an accessible entry point to municipal support structures and resources. The project reaches out to and follows up with young people who are in little contact, if at all, with municipal services.

The boxing workshops are moved around in different parts of the city and are led by a certified sports educator. The workshops are often on offer during events, such as neighbourhood parties, to reach a larger number of young people of different ages.

### Lessons learned

- Propose a sports activity directly in the heart of the neighbourhoods.
- Make young people aware of the benefits of sports.
- Create a low threshold activity to bring young people into the relevant institutions or associations that can support them.

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## 10 France, Elancourt: Payment by income

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes

*This project was also submitted to category 3.*



### Goals, strategy and results

The City of Elancourt offers a wide range of social, leisure and after-school activities for all children and young people, including school meals, after-school childcare (also offered during school holidays), sports and music activities, and childcare for children under the age of 3. To promote equitable access to these activities irrespective of parents' income, the municipality has introduced a pricing scheme based on family income. This pricing policy makes it possible to offer children from low-income families the same leisure, sports and cultural activities as other families.

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## 11 France, Elancourt: Bridging the digital divide to increase equality of opportunity & Digital leisures

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes



### Goals, strategy and results

For many years, PISA rankings (OECD's Programme for International Student Assessment) have shown that French students are more anxious than the OECD average and 40 per cent of students leave primary school with fragile learning outcomes. At the same time, the gap in academic achievement is widening, as children from vulnerable

backgrounds do not have access to the support they need to reach their full potential.

To alleviate educational inequality, the City of Elancourt introduced a programme to promote access to digital tools that facilitate personalized learning and offer students the opportunity to develop 21st century skills. Each student has access to a personal tablet computer; all classrooms are equipped with an interactive screen; 1,200 students benefit from English online learning resources; 150 teaching robots have been introduced in kindergartens; and two training centres offer support to teachers and parents in the adoption of new digital technology. In parallel to digital educational tools, the city has developed diverse digital extracurricular activities in music, video production, robotics and visual arts.

The adoption of digital tools has allowed the city to provide more individualized, participative and collaborative learning opportunities adapted to the needs of each child (especially for children with disabilities). Since the adoption, the city reports children are more concentrated, speak more readily, collaborate more, and say they are more motivated to learn and have a better self-image.

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## 13 France, Erstein: Intercultural Project to promote the inclusion of Roma children

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes



### Goals, strategy and results

To bridge divide between the local Roma community and other residents, the Children's City Council organizes three annual events to strengthen the relationship with the local Roma community. Festivals,

cultural events or inter-generational projects organized in collaboration with the Roma community have developed mutual trust and fostered social inclusion.

The introduction of the cultural events more than 10 years ago has helped bring the Roma community closer to municipal services, which previously had been used by only a minority of the community. Families now have better knowledge of the available local institutions and services. For the past few years, the local Youth Office has also organized targeted activities such as homework and employment support for young people. Children in the local youth council have become ambassadors for social inclusion, promoting tolerance and mutual respect within the city.

### Lessons learned

- Respect for the cultural traditions of the Roma community and interest in learning from them has fostered a culture of mutual trust and understanding, which is essential to social inclusion.

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## 14 France, Nice: The Passerelle project

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes

*This entry was also submitted to category 3.*



### Goals, strategy and results

The Passerelle project for children with disabilities is the only one of its kind in France, developed by the City of Nice and Nice University Hospital. The city decided to offer an innovative service by annexing the early years medical and social support centre (CAMSP) at Archet Hospital to the state-run Les Iris nursery.

The aim of the project is to enable children supported by CAMSP to be cared for in accordance with their care plan while being included in mainstream childcare. This set-up combines the skills of both project

partners to help parents of children with disabilities to maintain a balance between their social and family life. Giving children with disabilities access to mainstream structures from the youngest possible age also helps to facilitate their integration into society and helps change society's views on disabilities.

### Lessons learned

- The project was built on pooling the skills and resources of two partners to set up a suitable facility and then to monitor, care for and support children with disabilities or special needs as they develop. The teams in the kindergarten and CAMSP also share some specialized rooms and equipment.
- The proximity of both the medical and care teams ensures that care can be adjusted swiftly to the needs of each child.
- Regular communication between professionals is important to ensure each partner has the same information. This helps to ensure the team works well together and can properly support the families of the children receiving care.

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## 15 France, Nice: Quality food for all children

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes



### Goals, strategy and results

In 2011, the City of Nice brought school catering back under local authority control, to improve the quality of meals served in canteens. In 2019, it opened a cutting-edge central kitchen. To protect the environment, the kitchen has banned plastic from the entire production process, right up to when meals are reheated in the canteens. A scientific advisory committee on nutrition was set up to oversee the nutritional value of the meals. The focus is on prioritizing locally sourced, organic and fresh produce.



The kitchen has adopted various innovative approaches to improving quality and has been designed to deliver considerable energy savings, with two independent cooking lines, a cogeneration unit to recover heat produced by the kitchen (creating up to 10 per cent of the electricity needed), a vegetable preparation facility, a baking area to increase the amount of homemade food on offer, an education centre and a herb garden. To ensure children with a specialized diet have access to the shared school meals, the kitchen includes a space and a team exclusively dedicated to preparing personalized meals for the 360 children with a 'personalized care plan' following a medical certificate from an allergy specialist. In total, 25,000 meals are provided each day to children in schools and the 27 state-run kindergartens, and over 90 per cent of diners are satisfied with the service.

### Lessons learned

- The midday meal provides 40 per cent of the daily nutritional intake. Therefore, it is important that this meal is healthy and balanced.
- The development of an on-site vegetable preparation facility meant that even more local and organic vegetables could be bought in bulk and cooked on-site.
- The city has successfully reduced food waste by placing a 'waste meter' in all school canteens to make students aware of it. Children can also choose the size of their portions based on how hungry they are.

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## 16 France, Toulon: Leisure activities for all

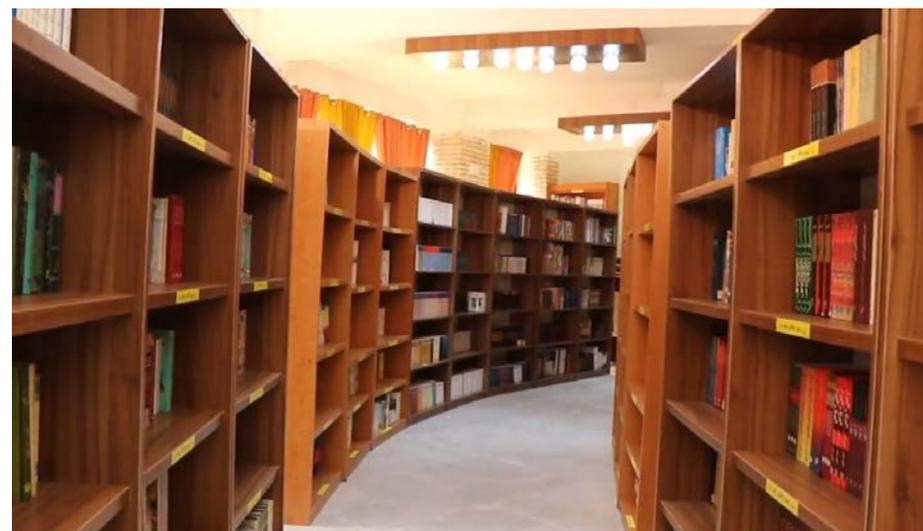
**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes



### Goals, strategy and results

To increase the accessibility to the city's leisure activities, the City of Toulon offers a pricing scheme based on family income for the city's 18 leisure centres. The centres also support access to children with disabilities during school holidays.

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## 17 India, Ahmedabad: aProCh (A Protagonist in Every Child)

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** No



### Goals, strategy and results

aProCh (A Protagonist in Every Child) is a community-based initiative born out of the need to create child-friendly public spaces in a city where space available for children is often limited and children's screen time has increased at the expense of outdoor play. The initiative was launched by the Riverside Education Foundation in 2007 and has since expanded to include many of the local government departments and other local actors. To date, the approach has been scaled up to 10 cities in India, benefiting around 6 million children.

Over the years, aProCh has launched a variety of programmes, and the core principal behind each is to improve the experiences of children and the community. aProCh seeks to provide programmes in which safety, curiosity, exploration and community become part of the child's everyday experiences. Different participatory programmes are organized to fulfil this vision, such as Street Smart, where busy streets are closed from traffic for play; Parents of the Park, in which inclusive activities for socializing and developing skills are organized in parks every fortnight; Moving Experience, which offers visits to recreational spaces for all children; City on Cycles, which promotes cycling and reclaims spaces for children; and City as My Landscape, which engages children in the design of the public space.

### Lessons learned

- Collaboration and ensuring the buy-in from all stakeholders has been crucial to create large-scale impact. The initiative has been successful, because it can be implemented by any partner, ranging from a local vendor to a school or government agency.

- Quality documentation is crucial for scale-up. Each aProCh programme is documented in both written and video format for easy replication elsewhere.

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**Further information:** [Video](#)

## 18 Iran, Semnan: Semnan Municipality Rangin Kaman (Rainbow) phone library collection

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** No

### Goals, strategy and results

To expand children's access to cultural and social services in a fast, easy and inclusive way, Semnan's specialized children's library was established in 2009. Children can order books through the library, on their mobile phone or on the free mobile app and have them delivered home for free. The library's services include book lending, training courses, cultural camps and cultural activities and citizenship education. The library also hosts a Green Landscape Club, which educates children to preserve the urban environment.

### Lessons learned

- It is good to align services with other child-related organizations. The Green Landscape Club is one example of such collaboration with a local NGO and local government departments.
- A library can offer services beyond lending books. The Rainbow Library offers storytelling and painting workshops, social skills trainings, crafts, cultural education, and more. Both parents and children are involved in the library's cultural and educational programmes.

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تأاحیه  
آموزش  
پسماند  
کسبیه  
رای طرح  
فندماه ۹۶

## 19 Iran, Tabriz: Supporting educationally deprived children of Tabriz (HEKMAT – Nikan e Ayandeh schools)

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** No

### Goals, strategy and results

In its attempt to become more child-friendly and better coordinate services targeting the most vulnerable groups of children, the City of Tabriz has mapped the diverse actors working with children within the municipality. The Nikan e Ayandeh institute is one of these service providers, aiming to eliminate discrimination against educationally deprived children and to equip the children with the skills they need to reach their full potential. The institute offers education, welfare, entertainment, life-skills training, creative activities, medical and nutrition services, parenting courses and public transportation for the most vulnerable groups of children, including those growing up without parental care.

The municipality supports institutions like Nikan e Ayandeh by granting required operational permits and licenses for free in areas of municipal authority; creating green areas accessible to these institutions; and permitting the institutions to use the city's facilities. By working closely with local NGOs, charities and other organizations, the municipality can help fill in gaps in services and ensure all children have access to the services they need to thrive.

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## 20 Iran, Yazd: Dakh Ban project

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** No

### Goals, strategy and results

The Dakh Ban project aimed to foster social inclusion of migrant children in the Yazd community, many of whom were not in education. The city established painting workshops that relocated to different public spaces in the city to be available to all children, irrespective of status, for free. The project also aimed to foster children's empathy, creativity, teamwork and management skills through art. Children's toys were sold at the workshops to raise funds to cover the costs of the art supplies. The open-access workshops successfully created a culture of acceptance and mutual support among participating children. It also increased their self-esteem and trust in their own talent.

### Lessons learned

- The workshops were held in open spaces, such as public parks, where they could be easily found by children.
- A new method was introduced at the beginning of each workshop. Children also suggested ideas, which were used to develop lessons.

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## 21 Poland, Gdynia: Listen and believe in their words

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Candidate



### Goals, strategy and results

As part of the family-friendly Gdynia project, the City of Gdynia implements an annual campaign on World Children's Day (20 November) on a selected topic with the primary goal of building respect for others, especially children. Each campaign is preceded by focus group discussions and online surveys with children to identify areas where they do not feel listened to, respected or treated equally. Each year, the city works with a range of partners depending on the nature of the campaign. Campaigns have addressed issues such as road safety, relationships with siblings and parents, and parental alienation during divorce.

The annual campaigns have taken place since 2014 and have become a brand recognized and appreciated by residents. The city has gathered a group of partners, including businesses, that participate in the execution of the campaign annually. The yearly consultations also ensure that the city regularly checks in with its youngest residents on how they perceive their living environment.

### Lessons learned

- The yearly campaign has been an important vehicle for raising awareness on potentially sensitive topics that affect the lives of children and young people.

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## 22 Slovenia, Ljubljana: The International Festival Year 'Play with me'

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes



### Goals, strategy and results

As part of its Strategy for the Development of Education, the City of Ljubljana has committed to providing equal opportunities for children with special needs. The International Festival Year 'Play with me' is a measure to combat negative stereotypes and discrimination through educational, cultural, sports and other social events. It fosters mutual experiences and face-to-face interaction between children with special needs and other children and young people, especially through play.

During the past 13 years, the Festival Year has expanded its content and geography, and now includes more than 50 events attracting over 20,000 participants. The events are varied in theme and content to meet the diverse interests of participants and include activities such as art contests, sports competitions focusing on respect instead of results, and capacity-building events for students and teachers. The Festival Year is organized by the Special Education Centre Janez Levec Ljubljana and the Association of Inclusive Culture, in partnership with the city and a wide range of other sponsors. The involvement of decision makers has helped transfer the project's positive impact beyond the immediate results of the events. The festival concept has been successfully replicated in other Slovenian cities and abroad, including in Austria, Croatia, Italy, Norway, Poland and Serbia.

### Lessons learned

- It is important to involve a wide array of partners. Without the active participation of schools, students, experts, researchers and the local government, the project could neither exist nor expand as a good practice.
- To be truly transformative in changing mindsets, the event must expand beyond children to involve the public. To this end, the events

take place in the most frequented locations in the city, such as the main square, parks and cultural centres.

- Increasing popularity of the festival led to lower quality of some events, as all visitors were not able to participate in some activities. As a solution, scheduled attendance for schools and other organizations was introduced in 2019.
- The involvement of decision makers is vital to the long-term continuation of projects such as 'Play with me'.
- Children with special needs are actively participating in the creation of the festival. They bring in their personal experiences and insights, and they gain valuable work experience for the future.

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## 23 Spain, Azuqueca: Diversity awareness programme 'We All Play'

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes

### Goals, strategy and results

The 'We All Play' diversity awareness programme aims to foster social inclusion by improving access to the local summer school. Children from low-income families are prioritized by exempting them from the participation fee, and children with disabilities are secured access by training and recruiting staff to support them and by working with a local association of persons with disabilities. The programme was born out of a nutritional support programme to low-income families that provided free breakfast for students during weekdays. The summer school supports working parents during school holidays, while also providing an opportunity for children to socialize in mixed groups and to enhance their creativity through sports and games.



### Lessons learned

- When involving children with special needs, it is important to keep the programme flexible and adaptable to needs that emerge. Support to inclusion must be sufficiently financed.

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## 24 Spain, Cabanas: #CabanasDiversa

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes



### Goals, strategy and results

The objective of the youth-led #CabanasDiversa project is to empower young people to take an active and transformative role in their community, and to defend the rights of sexual and gender minorities. In this context, the local youth action group, Cabanas en Acción, launched a campaign with the local government during June (also internationally celebrated as Pride Month), with the aim of defending 'the right to be and to feel'. Together with the local government, the young people shared information on sexual and gender rights in schools, worked on diversity with children in the local kindergarten, created murals with supportive messages and painted benches in public areas with the recognizable rainbow colours.

The campaign acted as a starting point for collaboration between young people and the local government in a small, rural town, which sparked the interest of other young people. The campaign created a sense of pride over the local community in both campaign organizers and the target audience. Young people affirmed feeling more accepted by the wider community and, as a result, feeling more secure.

## Lessons learned

- The campaign was executed with a small budget, but it required personal initiative and mobilization from volunteers.
- In future campaigns, the wider community (e.g. local businesses and civil society organizations) could be more extensively involved.

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## 25 Spain, Cártama: Cártama Adapta

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes



## Goals, strategy and results

Since 2015, the City of Cártama (Málaga) has supported a sports programme called 'Cártama Adapta', aimed at promoting the practice of sports among children with disabilities. The main objective of the programme is to offer the same opportunities to everyone to practice sports. The participants receive specialized support and, depending on the nature of their disability, are guided to different activities that are adapted to their needs. In addition to traditional indoor sports, students have access to diverse outdoor activities such as hiking, skiing and golf.

Apart from providing access to physical activity, the project has helped children develop their motor and social skills, self-confidence and interpersonal relationships. The project has grown significantly since its launch, now providing adapted sports activities to children across the province of Málaga.

## Lessons learned

- Sports activities often exclude children with disabilities, as their needs are not considered in general sports activities available to children. This was also the case in Cártama, so municipality decided to develop a specialized programme to respond to the needs of children with disabilities.
- At the beginning of the programme, public awareness sessions were organized, but since then, information has spread effectively through parents.

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## 26 Spain, Oviedo: Local itinerary for adolescents' and children's participation

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes

*This project was also submitted to category 2.*



### Goals, strategy and results

The aim of the Local Itinerary for Participation is to focus on children's participation in the development and implementation of municipal plans so that children are recognized and taken into account by both the local authorities and the public. The philosophy behind the project is to work in a non-discriminatory way, focusing on the participation of the most vulnerable groups; to enhance the participation of girls in the development of the public space; and to work in a cross-cutting manner in all local government departments.

To ensure the participation of children and young people from diverse backgrounds and all parts of the city, the local child and youth council is divided into 16 groups in the seven districts of the city that meet approximately once a week. Instead of seeing children as a homogenous group, methodologies are adapted to the needs of each group and district. Projects are presented as 'pathways', or itineraries, which can be replicated in each district, taking into account the singularity and diversity of each area, while highlighting commonalities, such as a child-rights approach, involvement of local authorities and support from local institutions. A network of the different groups allows children to exchange experiences and participate in other projects across the city.

### Lessons learned

- It is important to develop a network supporting children's participation. The support from the local authorities, educational centres and different institutions working with and for children at the local level has made the participation groups popular.

- When participation is brought to the community level instead of being promoted at the level of the whole city, it is more inclusive, accessible and representative of the diversity of the city.
- When participatory groups are linked at the city level, children can exchange experiences and step out of their own community to participate in activities across the city.
- To have an impact, the groups are regularly in contact with the mayor and local decision makers.

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**Further information:** [Project video](#)



## 27 Spain, Oviedo: Mentoring project: 'The Journey to Equality'

UNICEF Child Friendly City: Yes



### Goals, strategy and results

The main goal of the mentoring project is to involve children and young people in the prevention and detection of gender-based violence. The project aims to create a long-term, sustainable solution that could be integrated within the existing offer of programmes and resources that address gender-based violence at the local level; to bridge the gap between young people and the local services; and to empower young people to become active agents in the elimination of gender-based violence in their environment, whether among their peers or within their family or community.

To this end, Oviedo has established a group of young mediators that act as a link between public resources and their peers (and, additionally, their families). The future mediators were sensitized in participatory sessions to topics such as gender stereotypes, inequality in the daily environment, violent dynamics in romantic relationships and where to seek help if needed. A range of participatory activities (small group activities, group discussions on topics and examples from videos, texts or practical cases, anonymous cards, etc.) were used alongside presentations. All participants also received an accompanying booklet, which was further updated based on their feedback.

The project is still in its pilot stage. Sixteen students have undergone the training. The long-term aim is to create a ripple effect among young people.

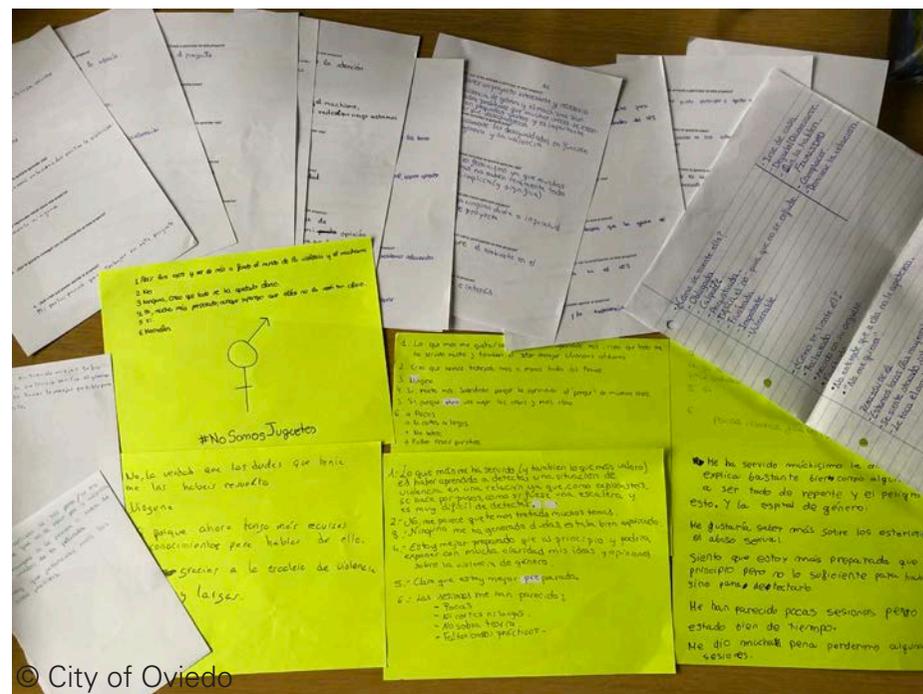
### Lessons learned

- Support young people's empowerment by giving them a purpose (to help other young people in their communities by preventing, detecting and acting on gender-based violence), knowledge (young people explicitly called for solid, serious and technical information by

reliable experts) and entitlement (trust in the learning process and the ability to apply it in practice).

- Share supporting material in advance, so that face-to-face training sessions can be used more efficiently for debate and dialogue instead of presentations.
- Organize trainings at a time of year when students are not too burdened with school-related responsibilities.
- Integrate participants into the network of existing local resources by meeting with local authorities and professionals, allowing them to meet the people behind the policies, and showing them how what they are doing fits within the bigger picture.

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## 28 Spain, Torrelodones: Grants for families

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes



### Goals, strategy and results

To ensure equal access to education, leisure and other activities for low-income families, the municipality of Torrelodones started providing financial grants to families in 2013. Each year, the municipality publishes a guidebook that explains in detail the purpose of the grants, the amounts, requirements of applicants, supporting documentation, and other details. Four types of grants are available to families: for textbooks and supplementary teaching materials; for school meals; for scholarships for kindergartens; and for participation in municipal activities, workshops or services. An average of 200 families benefit from this financial support annually.

### Lessons learned

- The process needs to be continuously assessed to ensure it is accessible.
- The transparency of the grants has been important to enable adjustments to the amounts allocated in relation to the total grant amount.

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## 29 Spain, Torrelodones: Sports for children with disabilities

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes



### Goals, strategy and results

The sports and disability project started as a programme of sports activities designed for a group of children with disabilities, most of whom were members of local associations. The initial idea (to benefit a group of children with disabilities) is evolving towards full inclusion: progressively, regular sports courses or clubs are increasingly adapted for children with disabilities. The local government supports the training of teachers and additional specialized support to be able to respond to the needs of children with disabilities.

Together with the association of children with disabilities – Asociación por la Inclusión (ASÍ) – and the Madrid Autonomous Administration, the programme created a promotion group, inviting new public and private partners to organize inclusive activities. Each inclusive sports session is carefully designed by municipal sports teachers, a local group of experts in sports and disability, and ASÍ volunteers. Sports that children can later practice within the city for free are prioritized, but children are also invited to test their limits by trying out new and challenging activities. Following the successful increase of inclusive sports activities, the local government is expanding these efforts to create inclusive social and cultural activities.

### Lessons learned

- Building on the expertise of specialists working with children with disabilities has been invaluable in designing sessions that make children feel comfortable and protected in a new environment.
- The aim should be to further increase the participation of children with disabilities in regular sports activities instead of creating segregated programmes. Groups must become inclusive, with the necessary adaptation and resources, which should be part of public expenditures.

- The sports sessions were designed to take maximum advantage of existing local resources that children can use for free. Many participants were not aware of these opportunities.

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### 30 Sweden, Karlskoga: Dansa Pausa – ‘Dance and pause’ intervention for girls’ mental health

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes



#### Goals, strategy and results

The aim of Dansa Pausa is to offer girls a tool for achieving better mental health through physical activity. The project was developed with eight adolescent girls, following consultations and dialogue with local children. Dansa Pausa is available to children and young people aged 10 to 18 years old who might be suffering from symptoms such as stomach aches, high personal expectations, stress or anxiety. The methodology is based on a research project led by the University of Örebro.

Dansa Pausa is free and offered twice a week. Undemanding dance is all that is required. Each class follows the same structure: warm-up, dance and relaxation. The teacher regularly checks in with participants who miss a class to check how they are doing. Participants report feeling less anxious and more confident.

#### Lessons learned

- Working with the University of Örebro allowed the municipality to assess the effectiveness of the intervention, with positive results.
- The project had also tried to attract boys but did not succeed. Researchers and psychologists recommended not creating mixed

groups of young people who are facing mental health difficulties.

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**Further information:** [Website](#)



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## 31 Switzerland, Geneva: Awakening to languages

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes

### Goals, strategy and results

The 'Awakening to languages' (Eveil aux langues) project aims to recognize the linguistic plurality of Geneva in early childhood education (ECE) settings, in collaboration with ECE professionals and public libraries. Children's primary language is valued and recognized, while simultaneously highlighting the role of French as the common language.

Through playful activities, the project familiarizes children with the linguistic diversity of their city. These different activities are divided into six groups: making languages visible (documents and posters in multiple languages, different ways of learning each other's language); making languages heard (songs and rhymes in different languages); singing (learning common songs in different languages); storytelling; writing; and sharing (e.g. making books and CDs available in different languages). The Department of Early Childhood Education has developed a set of tools for different institutions working with children to use the methodology.

### Lessons learned

- Cross-sectoral collaboration between the municipality, ECE institutions, professionals, municipal libraries and parents is an important component of the project.
- A working group leads the implementation and monitoring of the project and continues to revise it according to needs.

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**Further information:** [Website](#)

## 32 Switzerland, Geneva: Petits:pas/Geneva

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes

### Goals, strategy and results

Free and confidential, Petits:pas is a programme for children from 1.5 to 4 years old, who come from socially underprivileged families marked by social isolation. Often, these families are not in contact with the traditional municipal services or childcare institutions. The main objectives are to support the child's development by improving parenting skills, to integrate the family within the society, and to ensure families have access to the services they need.

These goals are reached through two strategies: 1) social workers, who have experience in working with children and preferably speak the language of the family, visit them at home two to four times a month; and 2) all families participating in the programme are reunited in a meeting group, organized in a park, game library or other space where parents can later return with their children. While children socialize, parents can discuss.

The project is run by a:primo, a national association that has adapted the programme to the Swiss context. It is operated under [Ecole des Parents](#) (School of Parents), a local organization that supports families. Scientific evaluations have proven that the programme has successfully supported the social, cognitive and emotional skills of children; supported positive relationships and parent-child interaction; facilitated access to local services; and supported the early detection of developmental challenges or difficulties within the family.

### Lessons learned

- Collaboration with the Ecole des Parents offers parents the opportunity to continue engaging with the association once the programme has ended.

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**Further information:** [Website](#)



## 33 Ukraine, Novoukrainka: Opening of the municipal institution 'City Inclusive Resource Centre'

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Candidate



### Goals, strategy and results

The aim of the City Inclusive Resource Centre is to be a one-stop shop for education and psychological and pedagogical assistance to children with disabilities. By integrating the resource centre into a local school, children with special needs are integrated into the regular education structures while still receiving the support they need.

In addition to supporting students, the centre offers counselling and support to parents. The process has included re-planning the curriculum and school activities to promote integrated learning opportunities for students. Teachers have been trained to adapt their methodology to children with special needs. The school infrastructure has been adapted to be accessible, and accessible transport by bus takes children and young people to the school.

### Lessons learned

- Offering all support services for children with disabilities at a school reduces the stress on parents while ensuring children have the support they need for successful integrated education.

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## 34 Ukraine, Lviv: Bullying STOPs here

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Candidate



### Goals, strategy and results

Following a proposal from the city's Children's Advisory Board, the City of Lviv decided to create a youth-led campaign, 'Bullying STOPs here', to tackle bullying in schools. The campaign started with a video highlighting the impact of bullying, developed by the Advisory Board. Subsequently, children in schools participating in the campaign were invited to create their own short videos on bullying. The videos were presented to all students and complemented with presentations by the Lviv City Council's Child Affairs Service or the local Chief Territorial Department of Justice. The campaign, which has been rolled out to all schools in Lviv, has sparked dialogue on bullying among students and fostered a culture of understanding and tolerance.

### Lessons learned

- Giving children and young people an active role in implementing the campaign in their school ensures that the campaign is tuned to their needs and ideas.
- Children need more attention and warmth so they feel needed.

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**Further information:** [Campaign video](#)

## 35 United Arab Emirates, Sharjah: Sharjah child-friendly music video

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes

### Goals, strategy and results

Sharjah Baby-Friendly Office – the entity charged with implementing and overseeing Sharjah's Child Friendly City project – launched a music video production to mark the first anniversary of Sharjah being named a child-friendly city. The song aimed to demonstrate Sharjah's achievements as a child-friendly city and highlight that every child and young person in Sharjah is valued, respected and treated fairly, regardless of race, ethnicity, nationality, religion, gender, age or ability. The film also spotlights several of Sharjah's leading child-friendly and family-friendly destinations and the various activities in which children can participate.

From the lyrics to the cast of actors and film shooting and production, every element of the video contains messages about a friendly and equitable city for children in all aspects. The child actors represent actual children living in the UAE from diverse backgrounds, languages, abilities and nationalities.

Sign language was incorporated by inviting a hearing-impaired child to be a part of the film. The music video also highlights several concepts of children's rights using simplified language that is easily understood by all children. While the song was written and performed in Arabic, English subtitles are available on the entire video for non-Arabic speaking children.

### Lessons learned

- Inclusion of sign language and subtitles in English helped reach all children.
- Powerful lyrics discuss the aspects of a child-friendly city in a poetic, rhyming style that is catchy and easy to memorize.
- Launching it on Ramadan, a prime time for TV, helped to boost views.

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Put some COLOR In

# CAB

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Don't Be A Bully instead Be A Hero

Say NO to Bullying  
NO One has the right to bully or mistreat

Be THE DICE

# FUNDAY 2018

# Category 2.

## Meaningful child participation

Every child and young person has their voice, needs and priorities heard and taken into account in public laws, policies, budgets and decisions.

57 entries

## 1 Austria, Seiersberg-Pirka: It's your turn!

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes



### Goals, strategy and results

The participation project 'It's your turn', run since 2017, consists of workshops, or conferences, in schools to motivate children and young people to participate in local decision-making processes. Once a month, the open conferences invite children and young people to express their needs and wishes regarding their living environment. The proposals and projects developed at the conference are regularly published in the local newspaper and in a dedicated Facebook group. Local decision makers attend the conference periodically to maintain a communication channel between children and local decision makers. Once a year, children present at City Hall the most important issues discussed during the conferences. In addition, the local youth centre organizes a regular 'youth café' that promotes dialogue between children and political representatives. As a result of these efforts, children have, for example, taken part in the design of a local park.

### Lessons learned

- The conferences are aimed at a large age group (9 to 18 years) that has diverse needs. Therefore, a narrower age range could be justified.
- More focus on social media would ensure that the initiative effectively reaches children and young people.

**Contact:** UNICEF Austria | David Hagen (david@unicef.at)

**Further information:** Website "Seiersberg offen fuer alle(s)" (SOFA)



## 2 Belize, various cities: Using Evidence to foster participation and inclusion – Belize’s Child Advisory Bodies

**UNICEF Child Friendly Cities:** Yes



### Goals, strategy and results

The Sustainable and Child Friendly Municipalities Initiative (SCFMI) is a certification process to institutionalize and sustain a child-friendly environment and support governance by promoting, protecting and fulfilling children’s rights at the municipal level.

As part of the SCFMI, cities in Belize have promoted the participation and inclusion of children and young people through child advisory bodies (CABs). A CAB is a municipal-level child participation mechanism that provides space, a voice and an audience to children and ensures they have influence on all matters that concern them. Technically and logistically supported by the municipal council, the CAB advises the council and technical steering committee on all matters impacting the lives of children and adolescents living in the municipality, while being autonomous in its decision-making process. Through the CAB, children are given the space to identify, describe and present issues affecting them within and across the municipalities.

The set-up and operation of CABs is tracked using seven indicators as part of the SCFMI recognition process, which is closely monitored by UNICEF to ensure that participation is representative, inclusive, meaningful and influential. So far, the initiative has been successful in ensuring children have a voice in local decision-making processes. Across all nine municipalities, 75 per cent of the requirements of the CAB has been met.

### Lessons learned

- It is important to ensure that adult stakeholders truly understand what meaningful child participation entails, and that tokenistic participation is avoided. Some solutions to this could be capacity building efforts and municipal resolutions.
- Limited access to sustained child participation mechanisms in the past has created a lack of confidence from many young people to participate in the CAB. This could be complemented by creating other participation opportunities outside the formal mechanisms to lower the threshold for participation.
- To promote transparency and accountability in decision making, the CAB dialogues with municipal councils can be recorded or broadcast on social media.

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## 3 Canada, Toronto: Child Friendly Participatory Design on School Grounds

**UNICEF Child Friendly Cities:** No



### Goals, structure and results

Evergreen's goal is to embed a child-friendly approach to creating more resilient school grounds in educational systems across Canada. The organization's design and education team partnered with the Toronto District School Board, the largest school board in Canada, to pilot this approach for 2018–2020.

The approach was divided into four steps: 1) plan for participatory design; 2) gather information and interpret ideas; 3) develop visions and concepts; and 4) refine and finalize. Evergreen trained teachers and groups of student facilitators in child-friendly and age-adapted approaches. After experiencing the approaches, the students refined the activities to suit various ages and stages of students, and then facilitated them throughout the school. The data and proposals collected from the consultations were collated into a master plan, which will be implemented in 2020 following a participatory budgeting process.

Evergreen worked with the school to designate a temporary design studio on the school grounds while the design process was ongoing. This allowed for the project to be accessible to the whole school community at any time. The project has helped students to improve their listening skills and empathy by ensuring that the master plan reflects the needs of all children, regardless of age or physical abilities.

### Lessons learned

- A traditional approach to school grounds design usually does not allow enough time for child-friendly processes. Therefore, the timeline needs to reflect child participation and inclusion.

- Awareness-raising for the benefits of co-creation processes with children is very important to help educators and other partners understand child-friendly projects.
- Involve children, parents and local indigenous communities in the early planning stages.
- The student design team should have a stronger role in not only gathering data, but also in interpreting it. Interpreting data can be ingrained in many curriculum topics and spark discussions and ideas among students.
- Commit to teacher contacts. Their support in participatory processes in schools is crucial, especially since a participatory process is often lengthier than a traditional approach to designing school grounds.
- Be flexible and responsive to the needs of children to ensure the process is inclusive.

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**Further information:** [Website](#)



## 4 China, Changsha: Growth and future

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Candidate

### Goals, strategy and results

Since 2015, Changsha's social security system for children has formulated a three-year action plan focusing on three broad goals, divided into 42 specific actions, towards creating a more child-friendly city:

- 1. Child-friendly policies:** Building a child-friendly policy framework that encourages children's participation
- 2. Child-friendly spaces:** Implementing child-friendly urban planning with a focus on creating fun, fair and safe public spaces and mobility
- 3. Child-friendly services:** Improving children's access to social services, including health care and education, and their participation in planning and decision making

To standardize and scale up many of the good practices piloted in the context of the CFCI, the city has published numerous guidelines on child-friendly urban planning and design. The city has sought to engage children both offline and online through the WeChat platform, drawings, pin maps or wish boxes.

Following the implementation of the action plan, Changsha has successfully improved, for example, the screening rate for neonatal diseases to almost 100 per cent and improved access to child-friendly facilities by setting up more than 200 mother-and-child-friendly rooms in public places.

### Lessons learned

- It is important to do a good job on all-round publicity to mobilize the enthusiasm of the whole society and to mobilize functional departments and local governments to participate in child-friendly policy formulation and implementation projects.

- Establishing child-friendly city construction standards and a distinctive child participation mechanism has been challenging.

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## 5 China, Shenzhen: Shenzhen Big Dreamers

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Candidate



### Goals, strategy and results

Shenzhen has undergone tremendous change in the past few decades with a rapidly growing population. Although children constitute one of the largest demographic groups in the city, their needs have not been considered enough in the process of rapid urbanization, and urban planning often lacks their perspective (e.g. road hazards, pollution resulting from traffic and lack of access to spaces for play). The 'Big Dreamers' project, initiated by Vanke Urban Planning and Design Institute and the Shenzhen Women and Children's Development Foundation, is a child-friendly city solution promoted by enterprises, research institutes and non-profit organizations to enable children to speak out, express their opinions on the urban space and make Shenzhen more liveable, inclusive and child-friendly.

The three-month project consisted of three stages:

- 1. City walk:** Under the guidance of 40 professional tutors from different backgrounds, 330 children conducted field research in the city on four thematic topics, identified challenges and non-child-friendly places, and created six proposals for urban solutions (e.g. park and shopping mall renovation, water resource protection scheme).
- 2. Workshop:** Thirty-six children participated in a month-long training on urban planning topics, including on environmental protection, transportation, public space and business, and in-depth data collection.



大梦想家  
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**3. Children's creative forum:** On World Children's Day 2018, a forum was held at Shenzhen Grand Theatre, with 220,000 people watching online. Six groups of children presented their proposals to make Shenzhen more child-friendly. Through interaction with government officials, businesses, international organizations and research institutions, the proposals resulted in a white paper that will guide the development of the city. The admission fee for the forum has been donated to Shenzhen Women and Children's Development Foundation and will be used to carry out projects related to public participation and child-friendliness.

#### Lessons learned

- The human, material and financial resources required to undertake this project were challenging for building a long-term child-participation mechanism.
- It was difficult to reach the most vulnerable children due to a lack of access to information or commuting inconveniences for children with disabilities. Next time, more diversity will be sought (e.g. age, physical condition, economic status) to give all children a voice.
- Although the project strove to make children's ideas come true through a white paper and links to government resources, some proposals could not be realized, which hampered the children's enthusiasm. For similar projects, a transparent feedback mechanism should be established.
- The city would like to deepen its connection with other child-friendly cities to let the project become a platform for international exchange and knowledge sharing and to better advocate and promote child-friendly urban planning.

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## 6 Croatia, Opatija: Children's City Council Opatija

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes



### Goals, strategy and results

The Children's City Council of Opatija is one of the first local children's councils in the Republic of Croatia, serving as an example of child participation in decision making at the local and national level since its establishment in 2001. The main goal of the council is to promote child rights and active and meaningful child participation in the city, guided by its own statutes and the city's standards of child participation.

The council consists of 14 councillors that have been elected among 400 school children. The council makes recommendations on the allocation of the city's budget and has its own mini budget for public tenders that improve children's quality of life, based on proposals made by children themselves. The council is led by a child mayor, who participates in all official events related to children alongside the city's mayor. All council sessions are recorded, and local politicians are obliged to respond to all questions and remarks made by the council during these sessions. Every 2–3 months, the council has a meeting with the mayor of Opatija and the city's professional services to discuss proposals on how the city could be made more child-friendly.

The 20 years of collaboration between children and the city council have resulted in the creation of 29 playgrounds, a new sports centre, measures to improve traffic safety for children, the organization of a children's day, and many other activities.

### Lessons learned

- Child participation is a continuous process that requires continuous promotion and follow-up. The council's statutes and the child participation standards provide a legal basis and clear procedures for the council sessions and create mutual respect between children and political decision makers.
- Certain proposals of the child councillors could not be realized, so it is important to manage the high expectations of the participating children.
- Raising awareness on the importance of child participation is essential, as some adults do not understand or acknowledge children's views, needs and wishes.
- Both political will and dedicated support (e.g. mentors) to involve children and young people in making decisions and policies that concern them is crucial.

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**Further information:** [Video](#)



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## 7 Denmark, Billund: Children's Advisory Board

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Candidate

### Goals, strategy and results

Equal co-creation with children is at the heart of the Capital of Children (CoC) Playful Minds, an organization located in Billund, a small but international city with children of more than 80 nationalities. The organization's vision is to make Billund the capital for children in Denmark and beyond. CoC established the Children's Advisory Board in June 2019 with an aim to include children in the development of Billund and to give them the opportunity to express constructive criticism and share ideas. Whenever suggestions are realistic and fit for context, CoC will help children realize them. CoC Playful Minds and the Advisory Board hold monthly meetings to together develop an agenda on different topics and small games for fun. The Children's Advisory Board is a platform where all children are welcome to raise their voices, share their opinions and suggest changes to make Billund a better place to live for children.

The Advisory Board is working on designing a free skate park. Further ideas are being discussed and include a public chess area, cultural integration initiatives, and initiatives to improve pedestrian safety.

### Lessons learned

- To not lose contact with the Child Advisory Board, parents could be included in the project from the beginning.
- As most children on the Advisory Board go to the international school in Billund, the main language is English, which makes it difficult to include Danish-speaking children in the project. To solve this problem, it would be advisable to have a more diverse group of children from the beginning.
- It is important to establish a clear structure of the Advisory Board that all participating children and adults are aware of.

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**Further information:** [Video](#)

## 8 Finland, Hämeenlinna: The Youth Summit and the V-day

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes



### Goals, strategy and results

Every spring since 2004, the youth office in Hämeenlinna has organized a 'V-Day' for all 8th graders in the city. The main goal of the V-Day is to teach young people different ways of influencing politics and how to be a conscious, responsible and cooperative citizen. In the lead-up to the V-Day, students generate ideas to be published on the school's website so other students can comment and vote for them. During the V-Day, students learn about the different channels to participate and influence democratic processes and present the most favoured ideas and initiatives to decision makers and city officials.

A city-wide Youth Summit, organized in schools, takes place following the V-Day. Each secondary school sends one of their initiatives developed during the V-Day to the Summit, during which youth representatives decide which initiative will be granted 30,000 euros earmarked by the city for young people's initiatives. After the Summit, a city council representative visits the schools and informs the students on how the decisions made during the Youth Summit will be implemented. As the V-Day is incorporated into the school curriculum, all young people in the city have an opportunity to raise their voice in a meaningful way and feel encouraged that their opinions matter.

### Lessons learned

- As the V-Day is held in all schools across the city, it is difficult to ensure every student's opinion is heard in such a large target group.

- A feedback form has been developed to improve the V-Day and the Youth Summit each year.
- Information and trust among all stakeholders (students, teachers, youth workers, politicians) are key to make this project successful. In particular, it is important to keep the young people updated on the developments of their ideas after the V-Day. That way, the students are ensured to have a meaningful experience and get to see that their decisions are turning in to action.

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## 9 Finland, Lahti: Public participation planner

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes



### Goals, strategy and results

The City of Lahti aims to promote both sustainability and child rights. The city has been awarded for its environmental efforts and nominated as European 'green capital' in 2021. One of the projects in the intersection of child rights and sustainability is the creation a permanent position for a public participation planner within the local government.

The participation planner provides information and opportunities for political participation to all Lahti residents, including children. The work involved, for example, the organization of workshops and resident town halls, and online interaction. The planner also works with children on a variety of engagement, environmental education and development projects. Currently, the city's participation planner is piloting two new methodologies:

- [The City Game](#), a wooden game originally developed by the Sykli Environmental School of Finland. In the City Game, children learn

urban planning principles in a game-like setting under the guidance of experts.

- [The Time Out method](#), developed by the Finnish Innovation Fund Sitra to facilitate constructive dialogue.

As the focal point for all participatory activities within the city, the planner enables the creation of a cooperation network and facilitates the testing of new participatory methodologies.

### Lessons learned

- Meaningful participation opportunities for all citizens, including children, require sufficient resource allocation. Since the appointment of the planner, the city has gathered more information and data from children and young people and collected their ideas for city development projects.
- The public participation planner is the central focal point for other city employees.

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## 10 Finland, Lahti: Collecting and utilizing spatial data of children's experiences and use of the environment in urban planning

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes



### Goals, strategy and results

The City of Lahti has developed a system that allows all city employees, especially urban planners, to use the spatial user experience data from residents, including children, to guide their work. Resident user experience data have been collected through surveys in various projects using Mapita's [Maptionnaire](#) software. The final material is distributed using Trimble's [WebMap](#).

One of the related projects has been to map children's use of green areas in a collaborative project with schools and early childhood education institutions. A comprehensive survey of early childhood education professionals regarding children's use of nearby nature areas was conducted in 2014–2015, followed by a similar survey in primary and high schools in 2016–2017. The aim of the survey was to map which areas were used by both children and educators and which routes they used to move around during the day. This up-to-date information on nearby nature areas informed the reformulation of the city's master plan and environmental strategy, and enabled city planners to better consider the areas that are important to children and young people.

### Lessons learned

- Collecting and using spatial data of children's experiences and use of the environment in urban planning ensures that children's needs are reflected. However, information should not only be collected for the sake of collecting it, but it should also be used to inform planning decisions.

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## 11 France, Conflans Sainte-Honorine: Visit to the Presidential Palace

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes

### Goals, strategy and results

The objective of this project was to enable the representatives of the Municipal Council for Children of Conflans Sainte-Honorine to understand the functioning of governmental institutions and the role of the President of the Republic and ministers, and to exchange views with the Head of State on national or local issues. During the visit, children submitted a request to the President to financially support a project improving road safety around local schools. The Municipal Council for Children is a participatory body composed of 24 children elected from the eight local schools.

Before visiting the Elysée Palace, the children visited the National Assembly and were introduced to the mission of the Parliament and the functioning and procedures for passing laws. In addition, a preparatory meeting was held in the town hall to inform children about the role of City Hall and the different functions in the Presidential Palace. The children also decided on the ideas that should be presented to the Head of State and prepared a letter to request support, which was handed to the President's staff during the visit.

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## 12 France, Herouville St. Clair: Citizenship in action – Commitment to everyday common spaces

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes



### Goals, strategy and results

The objectives of the 'Child citizenship in action' initiative are to stimulate civic awareness, prevent violence in schools and give children, especially the most vulnerable, a space and a voice in co-creating their school environment. The initiative has been implemented through four projects: giving children the decision-making power in determining the name of their school; engaging with children on the design of their schoolyard; improving road safety around a local school following requests from students; and empowering children with disabilities to become ambassadors for recycling in their school.

The school climate has significantly improved through the children's increased autonomy. Participation at the school level has offered a platform for further engagement with local authorities, which have been involved in many of the projects.

### Lessons learned

- The time needed to execute some of the ideas sometimes seems long for children. Therefore, children need to be informed about the timeline beforehand and kept updated about the developments of their ideas. Children can also be involved in determining criteria for evaluating and sustaining their projects.
- Giving children the authority to bring forward their own proposals instead of engaging on projects proposed by adults requires some adaptation from the local government officials.

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## 13 France, Les Pennes Mirabeau: Creating a Junior Association

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes

### Goals, strategy and results

The National Junior Association Network in France is a flexible volunteer organization which enables young people, aged 11 to 18 years old, to implement projects with the goal to promote their autonomy in the city. Les Pennes Mirabeau has a Junior Association called 'Zap'Ados', which enables young people to co-create the city. The target for Les Pennes Mirabeau is to help young people to become autonomous citizens. The town provides technical equipment and communication with a focal point in City Hall. When members of the association reach the age limit, they leave the group and new ones join. The turnover is every three years.

In 2018, Zap'Ados wanted to make the inhabitants of Les Pennes Mirabeau aware of the problem of an uncontrolled landfill in their city and to call for better environmental protection by launching the project 'Mieux vivre dans sa ville' ('Live better in your city'). For this purpose, the young people created a short film for which they prepared reports and conducted interviews.

### Lessons learned

- Through the Junior Association, the members of Zap'Ados learned about each step to build their projects.
- They also learned to control their impatience and to help each other.

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**Further information:** [Zap'Ados TV News](#)



# ÉCOLE PRIMAIRE CLAUDIE HAIGNERÉ



## 14 France, Lille: Pratiques Restauratives

UNICEF Child Friendly City: Yes



### Goals, strategy and results

Students and teachers work best in a school environment in which they feel safe, supported and accepted. Therefore, the City of Lille is part of the European project 'Restore', which works on restorative practices that makes schools a safer place to learn. Within a 36-month time frame, the project assists primary and secondary schools in developing, experimenting and evaluating a generic programme and coaching framework that can be reproduced in schools all over Europe. Together with local authorities and certified trainers, Restore designed the transnational 'restorative school change programme' that consists of a theoretical framework (vision) with a definition of a restorative school; strategic guidelines and an implementation model; and training for using restorative practices and methodologies.

The schools involved work together on common tools to allow the entire education community to restore the link between children or with adults after a conflict. The practices aim at learning from one's mistakes, taking responsibility and restoring trust at three levels: personal, interpersonal and collective. The project has helped improve the school climate in the pilot school, and children have learned to resolve conflicts through different techniques. Lille aims to implement this project in schools all over the city from 2019 onwards.

### Lessons learned

- Children learn to explain themselves and to express their emotions.
- A change of habits is never easy and takes time.
- It is important to involve parents in this project and to involve them in the restorative approaches.

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**Further information:** [Video](#)



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## 15 France, Sarreguemines: Youth councillors

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes

### Goals, strategy and results

Since 2018, the City of Sarreguemines has regularly organized children's elections in every neighbourhood of the city to create a multicultural and diverse youth council representing the interests of the youngest citizens. The youth councillors work on projects of their choice and implement partnership projects with the city department or other child associations. One project resulted in the organization of an inter-generational show about child rights, which involved the participation of 200 young people, including children with disabilities. This project gives a voice to all young people living in the city, regardless of culture, age or how they express themselves.

### Lessons learned

- The mobilization of young people and the enthusiastic response of all generations are a proof that the involvement of children in society is important.
- It was a challenge to find a date.

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## 16 France, Toulon: Children's world

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes

### Goals, strategy and results

Since 2015, Toulon's recreation centres have organized yearly elections for child representatives who represent their peers in the city council. Their best proposals are implemented and highlighted by the city. Examples of projects include:

- An exhibition on sustainable development in the town hall showcasing sustainable city models designed by children
- Posters created by children to raise awareness of tourists on sea protection
- An 'Animal Guide' for children published on the city website

Through the elections and discussions with city councillors, the children are empowered to shape the city according to their needs. More than 700 children have participated in the programme and have combined learning and project development with fun.

### Lessons learned

- It is difficult to find children's projects that are also of interest to the councillors and partners that are willing to implement the suggested projects.
- This programme requires a lot of preparation time and an active partnership. It is developing and receiving more funding over the years.

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Umwelt & Nachhaltigkeit



## 17 Germany, Cologne: Child and youth office

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes

### Goals, strategy and results

In March 2019, the City of Cologne opened the Cooperative Child and Youth Office, with the civil society organization Kölner Jugending e.V. as a cooperation partner. The Office is an important and accessible point of contact for young people, where they can inform themselves about their rights, raise concerns and discuss important projects to make Cologne more child- and youth-friendly. For ease of access, the office is centrally located at the street level, opposite City Hall. The Office aims to:

- Promote independent youth policy and activate democratic participation processes with children and young people in Cologne
- Advocate for a child- and youth-friendly framework for growing up in a big city
- Raise awareness on child rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child
- Function as specialist office for child and youth participation
- Create interfaces between young people, the local administration and local politics

The Child and Youth Office is also responsible for implementing the measures, reporting and updating an action plan for the Child Friendly Cities Initiative.

### Lessons learned

- As a central point of contact, the Office connects children and young people with other services (local administration, child and youth institutions and associations).

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## 18 Germany, Cologne: KidS Parliament

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes

### Goals, strategy and results

The child and youth education institution of the City of Cologne (abbreviated: KidS) established a complaints procedure for children and young people living in care. To ensure long-term participation of children and young people, the aim was to inform them in a sustainable and age-appropriate way about the complaints procedure and how they can get involved. The aim is to ensure children and adolescents know their rights and how they can stand up for them when they see their rights violated within the care system.

Since November 2018, the KidS Parliament has met at least twice a year. In the meetings, children and young people are given the opportunity to submit their complaints and to participate in decision-making processes. The KidS Parliament currently consists of 24 children and adolescents, who are acting as spokespersons for their respective age groups and present the concerns and complaints of children and adolescents. A child participation specialist supports the activities of the Parliament. The specialist acts as the contact person for all fundamental concerns related to children's rights, participation and complaints, and is responsible for the running of the KidS-Parliament.

### Lessons learned

- Lack of time for reflection and professional preparation is often a challenge.
- Setting up a specialized unit/staff position is very advisable.

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## 19 Germany, Regensburg: Youth participation in the district (YouPDI)

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes



### Goals, strategy and results

Successful participation secures the future of democracy. Hence, Youth Participation in the District (YouPDI) gives children and youth the opportunity to voice their opinions and to talk directly to the mayor and professionals in the different departments of the city administration. Twice a year, Regensburg organizes YouPDI for a district of the city, during which all young people living in that district are invited to meet with the mayor and professionals working for the city. The young people address topics they are concerned about and share complaints and suggestions to improve their districts.

An important part of the YouPDI concept is the selection of 'youth ambassadors' at the end of the event. Within six months of the event, these ambassadors are invited to meet with the mayor at the town hall to follow up on the matters that were discussed. The mayor provides feedback on how their concerns and suggestions have been received and what measures have been implemented. This feedback ensures that the concerns of young people are purposefully pursued and that an interim report is available within six months.

About 40 YouPDI meetings have taken place since 2001. As an example of action taken following young people's recommendations is that all the city's youth centres have been made barrier-free and accessible to persons with mobility restrictions.

### Lessons learned

- Follow-up on the demands of young people needs to be persistent. Unfortunately, not all demands can be realized for financial, legal or personnel reasons. If this is the case, it is important that children receive a comprehensive explanation.

- To boost the number of participants, cultural elements were added to the event (e.g. band or dance performance). Digital engagement platforms (e.g. digital bulletin board, online platform for suggestions ahead of the meeting) have also been considered.

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## 20 Hungary, Zalaszentgrót: "Anthill Camp" - One week as an adult

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes



*This project was also submitted to category 5.*

### Goals, strategy and results

The Anthill\* Camp (Hangyaboly Tábor) is organized every summer as a joint effort between the City of Zalaszentgrót, the city's youth council and the Homecoming Association. The camp was launched as a European Union project in 2010. Its main aim is for children from 1st to 4th grade of elementary school to learn about life in the society.

The camp is an opportunity for children to learn and develop skills that will support their engagement in society later in life, such as teamwork, public speaking, simulated campaigns and voting. During the camp, children try out an adult profession, and they receive a wage in fictional money that they can use in the camp shop. The camp also replicates many of the decision-making structures of the city, such as the election of a child mayor. Former camp participants often continue as volunteers, and the camp was instrumental in establishing the city's first youth council in 2016.

### Lessons learned

- When establishing the camp, the Homecoming Association had little experience of working with younger children. Therefore, the organizers worked with teachers to ensure that the methodology was adapted to their capacities.



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**Further information:** [Video](#)

*\*The name comes from a comparison, because children are like little ants: small, fast, hard-working and busy.*

## 21 India, Surat: Child Friendly Smart City Knowledge Centre

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** No, but UNICEF is supporting the project



### Goals, strategy and results

The Child Friendly Smart City Knowledge Centre, launched in 2017, is a joint initiative of the Local Self Government in Surat and UNICEF Gujarat. The aim of the centre is to facilitate multi-stakeholder action for children and inclusion of child-friendliness in the local governance agenda, offer a platform for dialogue with children, and foster evidence-based advocacy for child rights and children's participation.

The centre has established a multi-sectoral group of 45 key institutions working directly or indirectly on child rights, e.g. government departments, educational institutions, academia, civil society organizations and volunteer groups. Together, this group co-created a conceptual framework, identified local indicators and prioritized key actions for children. The work of the group is coordinated by the Knowledge Centre.

The Centre has already conducted a consultation process to collect proposals from 480 children from different socio-economic backgrounds, compiled into a 'Children's Charter', which was handed over to the local government on World Children's Day in 2018. The centre, together with its partners, is carrying out activities related to child-led research; life skills training for adolescents; piloting and documentation of innovative interventions for child well-

being; networking; and integration of child-friendliness into existing government policies and programmes.

### Lessons learned

- Inter-sectoral coordination among different government departments is important to ensure all aspects of child well-being are covered. A coordinating body such as the Knowledge Centre can facilitate this.
- In a multi-stakeholder setting, not all partners have experience of working with children or thinking through a 'child lens'. Cross-learning workshops are a good opportunity for them to learn about child rights from other, more child-focused partner organizations.
- Innovative communication methods beyond posters and pamphlets, such as creative and artistic methods, social media campaigns, competitions or pledges, are often more effective in transferring knowledge.

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**Further information:** [Website](#) and [video](#)



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## 22 Iran, Mashhad: A logical framework for the implementation of meaningful child participation (Case of Kouhsangi Complex and Mashhad CFC act)

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** No



### Goals, strategy and results

Improving a city requires a conceptual framework and gradual improvement. Therefore, the City of Mashhad developed in 2017 a framework based on the UNICEF CFCI Handbook and the concept of a 'theory of change'.

The first step was to analyse the situation of children and define an ideal situation. The second step was to define the root causes of the current situation, and to define ways to solve them through participatory processes.

As a result, the city has organized multiple participatory events and programmes, ranging from brainstorming sessions to start-up weekends dedicated to urban development. All events aim to create a reciprocal interaction between children and the city's decision makers. At the centre of the programme is the city's 'Children and the future' cultural centre, which hosts educational, recreational and participatory activities fostering young people's skills, with more than 500 events held in the past years. The centre also hosts the city's Urban Innovation Centre, which helps place children further at the centre of urban development.

### Lessons learned

- Creating dedicated but free areas and events for children makes them feel valued.
- Focusing participatory efforts in one place can be exclusive, as it is not always accessible from remote areas with weak infrastructure. Mobilizing and localizing efforts helps to include children from more vulnerable backgrounds.

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## 23 Iran, Tabriz: Children's participation in the process of urban planning for local parks

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** No

### Goals, strategy and results

The main objective of the participatory planning project was to engage children in the planning of urban spaces, change the attitude of city planners and executives, and create a sustainable partnership between children and the city administration. As a first step, the city engaged with a group of 28 children and representatives from the Urban Planning and Architecture office to design a park. Following an on-site visit to a local park, children were invited to paint their ideas on ceramic tiles using acrylic paint. The paintings were analysed and the results used by the urban designers and the executive team in implementing the redesign of the park. The ceramic tiles were displayed on a park wall to showcase the children's contribution to its development.

### Lessons learned

- Considering that this was the first project of its kind in Tabriz, the coordination between urban planners, executive bodies and children required some effort.

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**Further information:** [Video](#)

## 24 Iran, Teheran: School Mayor Project

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** No



### Goals, strategy and results

The school mayor project has been implemented since 1993 and has been expanded to 440 middle and high schools in Teheran. It was recognized as a 'successful Citizenship Education experience' by UNESCO in 1997. At the beginning of the school year, elections are held in 20 schools from each of the city's 22 districts to select students to participate in the programme. Six to ten student volunteers are elected as school councillors and one of them as 'school mayor'. A formal mayor's decree is signed by the head of the Citizenship Education Council and the head of the local city council. Each school mayor chooses eight deputies among the members of the school council, each of whom has a focus area: Academic Affairs, Culture and Sports, Security and Health, Planning and Logistics, Social and Recreational Services, Infrastructure and Traffic, Local Activities and School Services, and Environment.

Among all school mayors, the best three (chosen using a set of criteria) act as advisers on student affairs to the Mayor of Tehran. Each school mayor receives 3 million rials (US\$90) per year to use for student projects.

This project intends to enhance the practical learning of skills necessary for team work, politics and social integration by moving away from theoretical education systems and focusing on providing opportunities to involve students in identifying issues regarding society, pursuing their solutions and preparing them for a complete understanding of participation as a citizen. This way, students are empowered and have a strong sense of belonging to their school and the city.

### Lessons learned

- The success of the project is based on enough budget for improvements and specialized human resources for guiding and

leading the project, and preferably the support of central government agencies such as the Ministry of Education.

- The project should be reviewed regularly and improved based on lessons learned.
- Children spend most of their time in school, so it is important to promote active citizenship and participation within the school environment. This will have a resonating effect on the wider society as well.

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## 25 Iran, Yazd: Citizenship training campaign for waste management of Yazd shopkeepers

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** No



### Goals, strategy and results

The Waste Management Citizenship Training Project was implemented in February–March 2019 on two selected streets of Yazd in collaboration with the Gandomak Nature School and the municipality's Urban Services. The objectives of the project were to familiarize and raise children's awareness of recycling and the city's waste management system, and to raise their interest in improving urban conditions. The aim of the project was to train child facilitators to lead a 10-day awareness-raising campaign among local shopkeepers. After an initial call for interest, children were trained on municipal waste management and met with the local Deputy Mayor to discuss the process and the role of the local government. Together with an adult facilitator, children visited local shops to train shopkeepers on separating waste.

The programme raised a lot of interest among children: almost 80 per cent of the targeted age group participated. Together, children reached more than 350 local shops, contributing towards more sustainable waste disposal practices.

### Lessons learned

- Family support is important for children's participation. The families could be further engaged in the project by organizing a session about the project's benefits during the preparation phase.
- Project methodologies need to be adapted to children's needs: the intensity of the work and the tight time frame were sometimes too burdensome for them.
- Local shopkeepers could be better informed about the project and the visit of the training teams. More awareness raising on the

importance of child participation is also needed. At times, adults did not take the child facilitators seriously.

- There needs to be a clear line of communication to the city to address other issues raised during the project. For example, children reported a shortage of trash bins on the streets.

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## 26 Liechtenstein, Ruggell: Pump track with lounge area and a skatepark

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes



### Goals, strategy and results

Ruggell is a small village of 2,300 inhabitants, but one that is quickly growing. With its fast growth, the community wanted to increase the offer of leisure activities. Following an intense preparation period with experts, the community organized a conference for children in February 2018. The more than 70 participating children were asked what they would like to change in the city.

For the category 'Family life, play and leisure', children presented the idea of a pump track facility with a lounge area and a stand for watching. A month later, the children interested in the idea visited the site that would be available for the track and discussed its features with planners. Rules for the use of the facility were defined together, so that everyone could use it without causing arguments or accidents. Trees, benches with tables and a water fountain were added to ensure the place would be enjoyable for the whole family.

Based on the children's proposals, the planners created a design that was approved by the municipal council. The project was a first collaborative project between civil society organizations, teachers, members of the local school council and local government officials. Following the inauguration of the facility in May 2019, the community invited all children and young people who participated in the project to a training course.

### Lessons learned

- Well-organized cross-departmental coordination provides the best basis for the targeted participation of children and young people in community projects.
- In addition to the children's conference, it was important for the community that the children were kept up to date during the construction phase.
- The mayoress and members of the local council regularly visit the pump track and ask the children and young people how they are doing and if they are enjoying the new facility.

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## 27 Nepal, Sunwal: Child Clubs

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** No



### Goals, strategy and results

The aim of the Child Clubs project is to address problems such as child marriage, child labour, gender inequality, violence and high-school dropout rates through meaningful child participation. Efforts to promote children's participation through the clubs was preceded by several efforts by the city to promote children's participation, including by appointing child representatives to local government discussions affecting children, appointing a child rights focal point, and promoting children's participation in a city-level action plan. Children are also represented in the city's Child Protection, School and Health Management committees.

To promote children's participation throughout the city, more than 200 Child Clubs were established in each ward of the city. These clubs meet once a month and organize at least three events every year. To promote children's participation within the home as well, parents are regularly invited to take part. Through the clubs, children are involved in deciding how the city's budget for children (15 per cent of the total budget) is allocated. The clubs have successfully promoted the involvement of children from the most marginalized communities and contributed to the decline of child-related well-being issues.

### Lessons learned

- Child participation needs to start at home and in school. Therefore, it is important to train parents as well as teachers on child-friendly concepts.
- The support of volunteers is very important to the success of the clubs.

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## 28 Portugal, Cascais: Youth Participatory Budget

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes

### Goals, strategy and results

The Youth Participatory Budget (YPB) of Cascais involves students under 16 years old in political decision making and gives them a voice on how public investments should be spent. Furthermore, it is a pedagogical project that aims to train students on their rights and to promote civic participation of the younger generation in all decisions that affect them. The pilot project started in the 2016–2017 school year through the foundation of a multidisciplinary team in the city council, with representatives from different departments (education, communication, youth, etc.) and the selection of four schools from different districts. One class in each school acts as 'participation ambassadors' who are responsible for implementing and facilitating the YPB.

From September until December, students and teachers participate in trainings on collaborative democracy. In January, sessions are held in each school to make decisions on how the budget should be spent. The ambassadors moderate round tables where students discuss ideas, vote for the three best proposals to be implemented in their school and agree on one proposal for the whole community. Subsequently, the ambassadors check the feasibility of the ideas and organize a meeting including teachers, the project team and the school director to make a final decision on which proposal(s) will be implemented. Since 2016, the project has grown to include 15 schools in the city. The budget allocated for each school has increased from 2,500 to 10,000 euros per school. In 2018, the YBP won the [Good Citizenship Practice Prize](#) of 2017.

### Lessons learned

- Children are fully in charge of leading the project. Adults are only mentors; however, the process must be carefully managed so that adults do not seek to influence children with their own proposals.
- An external group of evaluators would be beneficial to continuously evaluate and improve the process. Children and young people could be further engaged in the final execution of the selected proposals.

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**Further information:** [Video](#)

## 29 Portugal, Cascais: (H)Ora Bem! Digam lá

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes

### Goals, strategy and results

Since 2018, '(H)Ora Bem! Digam lá' has been promoting the democratic participation of children from 3 to 10 years old by giving them an active voice, advocating against issues that hinder their development and well-being in school or in the community, and establishing links with local governance mechanisms by promoting interaction between schools and the municipality. The objectives are achieved by organizing regular class and school assemblies where children can voice their ideas throughout the school year. Teachers only function as facilitators and remain in the background. The creation of common guiding principles (freedom, democracy, participation) helps to ensure that the assembly sessions are run smoothly.

### Lessons learned

- Capacity building and buy-in of teachers is crucial to successful child participation in schools. A participatory process with the whole educational community, with time for sharing, reflection and teamwork, enhances their sense of ownership.
- School directors should be committed to promoting child participation, e.g. through a written commitment or pledge.

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## 30 Portugal, Funchal: Municipal Youth Assembly

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes



### Goals, strategy and results

The Municipal Youth Assembly project is part of a municipal strategy to promote participatory citizenship of children and youth in the management of the local territory. This project started in 2014 and targets children between 13 and 15 years old. The Youth Assembly simulates the Municipal Assembly: students from different schools develop and present proposals of interest to the municipality by playing the role of deputies. After feedback from the municipal executive, students vote for the most feasible proposals. The municipality then implements the projects within a set budget.

The Municipal Youth Assembly, along with other projects, aims to raise awareness of what it means to be a citizen by consolidating young people's knowledge of local, regional and national authorities. It also aims to promote participatory citizenship, by facilitating the development of children's critical thinking and creative problem-solving skills, and by involving them in decision-making processes about which projects to implement in the city. So far, the Municipal Youth Assembly has resulted in four major projects that address topics such as social inclusion, environment, sustainable development, education and culture.

### Lessons learned

- In 2015, the project received an allocated budget and the municipality's formal commitment to implement the winning proposal. This ensured that children's proposals had a concrete impact on decision-making, but also allowed children to develop skills in project and budget management.
- As the Assembly can only welcome a limited number of children, it is recommendable to complement it with other participatory activities.

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## 31 Portugal, Porto: Politicians for one day

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes



### Goals, strategy and results

The 'Politicians for one day' project has been implemented for 20 years and has reached more than 3,000 children. The goal is to create conditions and opportunities for children to be heard and considered in the analysis and improvement of the policies affecting them, while also educating them about the functioning of participatory democracy.

At the centre of the methodology of the project is the continuous interaction (including meetings) between children and the Municipal Executive Board, which is divided into three phases. First, students debate the thematic focus of their proposal and conduct background research on the topic. They also study the functions of the different local government departments. Second, students gather information from their surroundings through exploratory city walks and observing their environment to identify and better understand an issue they want to focus on. Third, the class comes together to debate the problem and identify potential solutions.

Afterwards, the students prepare and present the outcomes of their work in an open dialogue at the Municipal Assembly, in the presence of local decision makers. In this context, children take on the role of elected representatives and follow the rules of participatory democracy. The most voted on proposals are developed into a project that is presented to the mayor in a final debate by children representing the participating schools.

### Lessons learned

- Through close interaction with schools and other learning spaces, the



project is not only a participation platform, but also serves to educate students on citizenship skills.

- Evaluation after each cycle is important to improve the project each year.

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**Further information:** All activities carried out in the scope of the project “Politicians for one day” are registered on [an online platform](#).

### 32 South Korea, Dobong-gu, Seoul: Encouraging child participation through child rights education (CRE)

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes



#### Goals, strategy and results

As part of its efforts to become more child friendly, the City of Dobong-gu has taken several steps to raise awareness on child rights and children’s participation. Firstly, the city created a textbook on child rights education and organized trainings for teachers on how to use it successfully. After launching the training programme, 38 instructors were equipped as official community trainers and over 2,600 children in 137 classrooms of 18 schools received child rights education during the 2018–2019 school year.

Secondly, the city established a Youth Council and supported its activities, and an annual child and youth festival was organized. The Youth Council and Dobal, the local youth festival, play a central role as channels for child-led participation in vitalizing the local community.

Thirdly, to ensure children truly have an influence on local decision making, the city committed to thoroughly reviewing and providing feedback on all proposals from children. All proposals are directed to the relevant local government department for an official reply. In 2019,

the city further strengthened this commitment by providing the Youth Council with a budget to allocate to youth-led projects. This provides children a more substantial experience than allowing them to only make suggestions.

#### Lessons learned

- When child participation is new to the local government, it is recommendable to make the building of participatory structures a long-term process, gradually building capacity to support meaningful participation. Start with spreading knowledge of rights, move on to building the institutional framework, and finally safeguard the effectiveness and meaningfulness of the existing processes.
- Aside from the Youth Council, the City of Dobong-gu has several other participatory structures in place. Therefore, child participation could greatly benefit from building stronger networks between the existing structures, some of which have only weak ties to the local government.
- The institutional framework is a stepping stone for participation, but it needs to be complemented by policies ensuring that children and young people are heard on all decisions affecting their lives.

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### 33 South Korea, Wanju: Child and Youth Parliament

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes



#### Goals, strategy and results

Wanju County’s Child and Youth Parliament is a representative body of children’s voices. It has been established to provide participation opportunities for young people in various fields and to listen to their opinions. In August 2015, the local government enacted an ordinance to strengthen the Child and Youth Parliament’s authority as a representative body for children, which enabled the Parliament to

develop strategic policies and allocate budgets by itself.

The members of the Parliament are elected at the beginning of each year, and they invite local government officials to attend the Parliament's opening session in March. Based on a community-needs survey, the members set up different thematic sub-committees to develop project proposals submitted for a final vote in September. All children in the city are invited to make proposals through the Parliament's website. Once the final proposals have been selected, the Parliament meets with government officials to discuss budget requirements. At the end of the year, a child rights festival is organized to celebrate the newly implemented ideas and to raise awareness on child rights.

Since its establishment in 2016, the Parliament has held discussions on 36 policy cases, 16 administration cases and 16 free-speech cases. Implementation results have been the remodelling of bus stops, a new play group, lower hanger bars installed in school bathrooms, a youth sports plaza, improved traffic safety measures for children, and many more initiatives.

### Lessons learned

- To make the Child and Youth Parliament successful, a training programme for children was developed.
- All activities of the Parliament are led by children, but child policy experts and public services directly consult and help children implement its agendas.
- To operate successfully, participatory mechanisms needs to be institutionalized and resourced accordingly.
- Special consideration in the member election process should be given to a fair representation of gender, geographical balance and minorities.

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## 34 Spain, Alcala de Henares: Play & Respect

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes



### Goals, strategy and results

The 'Play & Respect' project aims to defend the right of all children to have rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate for their age, and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts. Children in the city felt they were not equally welcome in public spaces due to signs forbidding ball games in those areas. Following their suggestion, the plates have been replaced with signs designed by children that welcome play, while considering neighbours' right to relaxation. Citizens, especially children, are invited to submit requests to replace all signs in the city by email or WhatsApp or in an official form. So far, 100 signs have been replaced.

To further promote peaceful, inter-generational co-existence, the city has organized debates on balancing children's right to play with the needs of neighbours. The initiative has had a positive impact on securing children's right to play and has been replicated in other cities across Spain.

### Lessons learned

- Sometimes a small change can bring about a great transformation in the use of public space.

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## 35 Spain, Daganzo del Ariba: ESPACIO-CIJ (Consejo de Infancia y Juventud/ Child and Youth Council), PEQUE CIJ & Municipal plenary

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes



### Goals, strategy and results

The Child and Youth Council – Consejo de Infancia y Juventud (CIJ) – is a participation space for children between the ages of 10 and 17. The Council’s main aim is to offer children and young people a space where they can gather suggestions and ideas with the support of adults. The CIJ promotes child participation throughout the municipality, acts as a channel of communication between children and the local government and supports children in developing initiatives based on their needs and interests. The CIJ is supported by the Department of Youth and Social Services, and municipal representatives regularly attend meetings.

In addition to establishing the Council, Daganzo has carried out other activities, such as certifying public spaces as ‘child-friendly’ by child auditors (five-year-olds) and organizing municipal plenaries.

### Lessons learned

- When children are given the space to come up with topics themselves, they can innovate actions and activities that improve the whole community.
- It is recommendable to have one professional adult dedicated to supporting the Council, and to provide an accompanying budget

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Baños y duchas

Merendero

Piscina y zona infantil

## 36 Spain, LAVIANA: Third Children's and Adolescents' Plan 'from global to local'

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes



### Goals, strategy and results

The overall objective of the Third Children's and Adolescents' Plan 'from global to local' is to implement activities that contribute to improving the well-being of children and adolescents in Laviana, and at the same time form the groundwork for progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. In setting up this Third Plan, an in-depth study was carried out with contributions and input not just from politicians and representatives of the local administration, but also from families, teachers, health service representatives and others in the spheres of culture and sport. The inputs of children and adolescents were gathered through participation groups, meetings and surveys. Contact with these groups is ongoing and meetings are held weekly, with the mayor regularly participating to discuss the projects and monitor actions taken.

The evaluations of the two previous plans has been positive with considerable impact on the town, including: increased awareness of the needs and vulnerabilities of children; review and increase of financial support to low-income families; solidarity events; meetings and workshops. The current plan aims to promote healthy lifestyles, prevent abuse and bullying, and increasing awareness of sustainable development and practices.

### Lessons learned

- By adapting the local plan for children to the Sustainable Development Goals, the city has ensured that it adopts a long-term and complementary vision in both areas. This has been beneficial in raising awareness of the SDGs.
- Good oversight of the project is important to ensure responsibilities for implementing the plan are equally distributed.

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## 37 Spain, Madrid: Network of self-managed leisure spaces for teens, 'El Enredadero'

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes



### Goals, strategy and results

The 'El Enredadero' project was initiated in 2016 in response to a request from a group of young people made during the 4th Children's Plenary Session of the Madrid City Council. Following a successful pilot, six centres have been opened, with an aim to establish one in all 21 districts of the city. El Enredadero are open spaces, managed by children themselves, which are adaptable to different activities. In this process, children are supported by a group of social educators who act as facilitators to achieve the proposed objectives.

The aim of El Enredadero is to improve peer relationships, promote young people's participation in social life and in decisions that affect them, strengthen tolerance and self-esteem, offer free access to healthy leisure activities, and to support young people in managing the space and the activities practiced in it. Through the project, young participants have been exposed to different cultural, leisure, sports and educational resources as well as the services of the local administration. The sharing of spaces with other young people has led to a climate of collaboration and tolerance, generating synergies between different projects on the same premises.

### Lessons learned

- Despite being self-managed centres, it is necessary to consider the different days of the week and the convenience of planning tasks and activities according to the needs of young people. Therefore, from Monday to Thursday, the focus is more on the internal organization and operation of the centres as well as on the planning and design of

the activities to be carried out during the weekend.

- The participation of social intervention professionals, who act as facilitators and channel the proposals of the participants, has been crucial for the proper functioning of the centres.
- Allowing teenagers to take ownership of the space makes it easier for them to become advocates of the activities they wish to carry out.

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### 38 Spain, Madrid: Child and youth participation - a local compromise

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes



#### Goals, strategy and results

The municipality of Madrid is composed of 21 districts. According to regional legislation regarding child participation, every district must establish a Commission of Child Participation, a formal structure recognized by the local government in which children and young people can participate in advocating for changes concerning city services, budget allocation and other public policy issues. Considering that these structures might be too rigid and formal to attract children and young people, 'Child Participation Points' have been identified and established in schools, associations and informal groups that gather in public spaces. After an initial identification and awareness-raising phase, these groups are registered as 'Child and Youth Participation Points'. These points can have a dual configuration, depending on age: a Child Participation Point for ages 6 to 12 years old, and a Youth Participation Point from ages 13 to 17 years old. Representatives of such groups in every district are then appointed to the district's Commission for Child Participation (COPIA, the formal child participation structure recognized by regional law).



**enredaderocentro**  
Parque de Emir Mohamed I



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By the end of 2018, 189 Participation Points were registered across Madrid, reaching 2,276 children, and 410 children were participating in the 18 COPIA created by the end of 2018. Every year, these COPIA celebrate a plenary session in every district with the participation of their district elected authorities, including local government and opposition representatives. As a result of recommendations from children, the city has, for example, created El Enredadero, youth-managed spaces for youth participation and leisure, and engaged children and young people in the design of public spaces.

### Lessons learned

- Traditional participatory structures, such as youth councils, might be too rigid and formal for children to feel at ease to share their opinions and proposals. Therefore, it is advisable to think of other, bottom-up ways of reaching them through already existing groups.
- The creation of participatory mechanisms at different levels (city, district, neighbourhood) enables the city to reach a wider group of young people. From a child-focused perspective, it became evident that children want to engage in decisions affecting their immediate living environment, thus it was necessary to establish participatory structures below the district level.
- The City of Madrid has appointed a focal point for child participation to facilitate the creation of a wide range of options for participation.
- Children's participation creates a multiplying effect by also raising the interest of parents and other community members in local policy making and holding local decision makers accountable.

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**Further information:** [Child and youth participation in Madrid; Pleno Infantil 2018](#); [Pleno Infantil 2017](#); [Pleno Infantil 2016](#); [Pleno Adolescentes Junio 2018](#)

## 39 Spain, Navia: Project to prevent alcohol consumption among adolescents 'No Te Consumas'

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes



### Goals, strategy and results

The 'No te consumas' project aims to prevent adolescents from consuming alcohol in their leisure time. Young people were actively involved in the development of the campaign from the outset, to ensure it was effective and responded to their needs. Following initial youth-led research to better understand the issue (including surveys and informative discussions with health professionals), young people developed new resources such as posters, videos, documents and logos, and materials have been developed to be handed out in educational settings, health centres and other places to raise awareness about the risks of alcohol consumption.

### Lessons learned

- In addition to the awareness-raising resources, educational materials for teachers, families and professionals could be developed.
- Parents and the wider community should be more involved in the project in developing processes that support the health of children, taking into account their conclusions, contributions and proposals.

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## 40 Spain, Torrelodones: Council Plenary of Childhood and Adolescence

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes



### Goals, strategy and results

The council plenary of childhood and adolescence is the main children's participation body of the City of Torrelodones. Since 2014, an annual session has been organized to commemorate World Children's Day. On this day, 5th grade students and different educational centres of Torrelodones hold a meeting at the plenary room of Town Hall. In the month leading up to the event, students in each school or educational institution focus on a thematic topic and develop proposals to be brought to the table during the meeting. The mayor, local government representatives, local government officials from different areas, guests from UNICEF and tutors from the education sector also attend the sessions.

Following the submission of proposals and after a debate in the plenary, participants vote to select the winning proposals. After the process is concluded, the Department of Social Services writes a detailed report of each plenary session. Many actions in favour of children and adolescents have been implemented in the municipality because of the proposals and needs identified in this council. The plenary is accompanied by other actions promoting child participation, including open suggestion boxes for children, participatory budgeting, school forums and child participation training sessions for children.

### Lessons learned

- Support from local government officials in the selection of the yearly thematic topics and coordination of preparatory work within schools is very important. These focal points are familiar with both child participation and the operations of the local government, which allows them to develop child-friendly methodologies and turn children's suggestions into practice.

- Teachers and tutors play a key role in disseminating the records of the plenary sessions to all students and ensuring students are aware of the participatory structures as well as the results achieved.

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## 41 Switzerland, Arlesheim: Youth Centre

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes



### Goals, strategy and results

In the context of the Child Friendly Cities Initiative, the civil society organization Verein Freiraum (leading the implementation of the CFCI locally), local associations, the local government, churches, politicians and other social partners organized a 'Talking Children's Day' where children could put forward their proposals on how to improve their village. Over 160 children contributed their concerns and suggestions, one of which was to increase access to free space for undirected play and leisure.

This idea was developed into a full-fledged concept of a low-threshold, free and supervised place to move, be creative and feel safe, with activities co-developed with children. The focus of the space would be for primary school children, including children with disabilities and special needs. After a two-year pilot phase, the children's space Kindertreff is now used by 15 to 30 children every afternoon. Two trained educators accompany the children in developing their own programmes, such as markets and sports activities.

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## 42 Switzerland, Bern: The KiPa-postulat & the Youth motion

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes



### Goals, strategy and results

The Children's Parliament – Kinderparlament (KiPa) – of Bern gives children the possibility to contribute to direct democracy and provides a channel to approach the local government directly with their ideas. The city government must consider each proposal and provide a qualified answer within six months, whether or not a wish or an idea can be realized. The KiPa is central to the city's 'regulation on participation for children and youngsters', passed by the city parliament in 2003. The KiPa is open to all children in the city aged 8 to 13, regardless of legal status. A similar Youth Parliament is available for older children and young adults.

In parallel to the Children's and Youth Parliaments, the city offers the opportunity for young people to pass youth motions to the local government. The motions are often first discussed in the Youth Parliament. After a first consideration and a round of feedback from the government, it is forwarded to the city parliament. There it is discussed in the presence of youth representatives. If the motion is endorsed by the city parliament, it must be implemented within the next year. If not, the government will further consider its feasibility, and must provide an answer within six months.

Since 2003, the local government has received 22 proposals from the Children's Parliament and 9 through the youth motion, including greener schoolyards; a forest pump track; better information to avoid bullying in schools; and a declaration of a climate emergency in the City of Bern. The most successful ones were a proposal for longer green lights at crossings in 2016 and one for legal graffiti walls in 2008. Green lights were prolonged at six traffic lights on busy streets or

junctions, and graffiti was made legal on walls designated by the local government.

### Lessons learned

- It is important to develop a clear vision and strategy for meaningful child participation and involve children in the planning processes to avoid goodwill but redundant adult work.
- A strong legal framework with a yearly budget allocation and clear competences create a strong basis for child participation. This requires strong support from the city's leadership.
- The inclusion of migrant children and children with disabilities requires careful planning and expertise.
- Constant marketing and promotion of participation possibilities (Children's and Youth Parliament, youth motions, yearly prizes for child-friendly behaviour given by the Children's Parliament) help create a 'culture of participation'.

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## 43 Switzerland, Geneva: Appel à idées (Call for ideas)

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes



### Goals, strategy and results

In the context of the implementation of the city's action plan for children, the 'Call for ideas' aimed to test a participatory process with students from the district of Eaux-Vives. It encouraged children to come up with ideas to improve the quality of life in Geneva. In collaboration with the school directorates of the district, 637 children between 8 and 12 years old in 31 classes were solicited. Participating children received a booklet entitled 'My Idea for Geneva' in which they described their ideas for the city. The ideas were organized by

categories and themes and then submitted to a jury composed of representatives of the municipal departments, the schools involved and children. The ideas retained were studied by the local government, presented to the Administrative Council and translated into concrete projects. The children were regularly informed of the progress of the work.

Out of the 467 ideas expressed by the children, 14 were selected by the jury: create a multicultural museum, expand the opening hours of libraries, create a sub-lacustrine observatory, take measures to improve cleanliness, plant edible vegetables in the city, increase measures towards sustainable development, create shelters for low-income families, set up sports fields in the parks, organize inter-generational sports tournaments, create a zip line to visit the city, create a pirate ship on the lake, create bike paths in parks, close some roads on Sunday, and create an animal park. Six ideas have been realized by various city departments, four were deemed unachievable, and four others are in progress.

The children were able to provide feedback on the refined ideas proposed by the city or propose alternatives to ideas deemed unachievable. Children were involved at all stages of the process, from formulation of ideas to selection and execution.

### Lessons learned

- A good partnership between the administration and schools is important for effective implementation – all departments of the city need to be involved. It is recommendable to include the project in school planning well in advance.
- Although the decision on the ideas to be realized can be challenging, a limit to the number of ideas is recommended to increase the chances of seeing them implemented and avoid creating frustration among children.
- Feedback to children/young people is very important and was much appreciated.

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**Further information:** [Website](#)

## 44 Switzerland, Wauwil: Visionary classroom and playground project

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes



### Goals, strategy and results

The 'Visionary classroom and playground' project started in 2016 with the redesign of the playground and classrooms of the municipality's new school building. The participation project was planned in detail with the help of the association Drumrum Raumschule. Children took part in initial brainstorming sessions to put forward their ideas of what the new schoolyard should look like. After prioritizing the resulting list of ideas, the results were presented to the construction commission and the playground project group. The prioritized topics were then worked on in architectural-cultural workshops, where participants built models of their ideas. Children's ideas were implemented in the design of the classrooms, two of which were completely developed based on their ideas. Children were also actively involved throughout the construction, including digging the first holes during the groundbreaking ceremony and decorating the construction site.

Participating students reported feeling a sense of achievement, and children report being happy with the resulting school building, which is more responsive to their needs. The schoolyard playground serves not only the students, but also children from the wider community outside school hours. Initial concerns of the architect regarding the effects of a participatory process on the final budget were proven to be unfounded, as the project was completed both within the financial limit and the set time frame.

### Lessons learned

- Through participation, children create a stronger sense of ownership of the school space and develop a stronger feeling of belonging and identification with the school community.

- Participation should be clearly stated in the public tender process to ensure the company chosen to execute the project is aware of children's role in the design. Planning of the participation process must be closely linked to the planning of the construction process.
- An open attitude towards participation must be worked on and developed over time. In addition to project-based initiatives, it needs institutionalized, permanent mechanisms.

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## 45 Switzerland, Wettingen: Creativity pot

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes



### Goals, strategy and results

The 'Creativity Pot' is a project executed in the context of the Child Friendly Cities Initiative, which allows children and young people between the ages of 8 and 25 to submit their creative ideas. The local government financially supports non-commercial, non-professional ideas that are developed and run by young people for young people. To receive the funding, children and young people must fill out an entry form describing the project and the required budget in detail. The proposal is then reviewed by a jury of seven adults, including two municipal council members and representatives from different departments of the local government working with children (education, youth organizations, street works, public administration and culture). Wettingen has developed a simple guideline and criteria for the projects.

In the past years, projects such as a soccer tournament, a trampoline for children, a skate ramp and an outdoor weekend camp have been selected for implementation, with a small but relevant budget. The Creativity Pot offers children an accessible way to execute their own

ideas. By managing the project themselves, children develop skills in project management.

### Lessons learned

- The requirements for receiving money need to be clear and simple.
- The entry form should be available online to make it accessible to everyone, but it needs to be complemented by several different communication channels to raise awareness on the opportunity.
- Even though the number of ideas can be overwhelming, the local government can make costs predictable by defining in advance the amount of money to be distributed every year.

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## 46 Turkey, Istanbul: City Detective

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** No

### Goals, strategy and results

'City Detective' is an urbanism initiative that focuses on children's right to the city. The strategy is based on three action areas: collecting scientific data, community building, and children's participation through play. Through this initiative, the city has worked with over 100 children in Istanbul's disadvantaged neighbourhoods, often with a high number of refugee and migrant families. Through play workshops – where children build 3D models, mark their favourite or least favourite places on maps or explore their neighbourhood through Google Earth – children are actively assessing the public space in their immediate living environment and creating solutions based on their needs.

Through the workshops, the city has deepened its understanding of these areas and especially the conflicts between local and refugee and migrant children. The workshops have created common ground and facilitated open discussions about discrimination between the groups. Children feel taken into consideration, while urban planning professionals have a better sense of their needs when making decisions.

### Lessons learned

- Bullying and discrimination can make effective participation challenging for vulnerable groups. Play can act as a 'bridge builder' and facilitate their engagement.

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**Further information:** [Videos](#) and [website](#)

## 47 Ukraine, Kharkiv: Portal of Kharkiv Citizens

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Candidate

### Goals, strategy and results

The 'Portal of Kharkiv Citizens' is a site and mobile application for urban initiatives. Every resident can submit an idea or project, influence the development of the city by voting on the initiative or by setting up a poll, evaluate the most important news and find interesting activities. Gamification of the participation of residents in community life facilitates the involvement of young people who otherwise might not be interested in such initiatives.

The Portal was initiated by Kharkiv's Youth Council. The application functions on two operating systems, iOS and Android, and will soon be available for free download in the Apple Store and Google Play. The site can be used in Ukrainian, Russian and English. In addition, the Portal is available on Facebook, Instagram and Telegram. Registered users can mark interesting polls or events as favourites and follow their development. The site also has a calendar of city events and can be used for innovative initiatives, such as the first city-level crowdfunding platform. A participatory news platform features articles by local young journalists and bloggers. The platform has been successful, especially in engaging citizens in making decisions regarding public budgeting, and it has successfully engaged 19,000 unique users.

### Lessons learned

- Collaboration with civil society and media was crucial to the success of the platform. Approximately 100 organizations are contributing to the content of the platform with their events and other initiatives. Collaboration with the local media resulted in almost 300 publications in print and online, which raised awareness of the initiative.
- Direct interaction with the public is also important; 16 public meetings were organized in relation to the participatory budgeting project that was run on the platform, and the platform was promoted at 21 city events. These efforts reached more than 20,000 citizens.

- Forms of engagement for children and young people should be designed in a way that is interesting and relevant for them. Feedback systems, such as rewards, create direct incentives and raise interest. This in turn creates a habit of participating and following activities in the community and the public sphere.

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## 48 Ukraine, Kharkiv: AVA – Active Volunteer Association of Kharkiv

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Candidate

### Goals, strategy and results

The aim of the Active Volunteer Association is to promote and develop the volunteer movement in the City of Kharkiv, promote children's participation and develop children's leadership skills. The association's main activity is a volunteer training, which consists of three stages: 1) an eight-week programme to develop volunteer skills such as first aid, action in emergencies and leadership; 2) a four-week programme focusing on volunteering in sports, social activism and events; and 3) a practice-oriented training abroad. All participants receive a certificate at the end of each stage of the course.

So far, more than 200 volunteers have completed stages one or two of the training and have helped to organize 175 events in the city.

### Lessons learned

- Through an overarching volunteer organization, all youth-friendly volunteering opportunities are gathered in one place, making them more accessible.

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## 49 Ukraine, Lviv: How to plan cities together with kids?

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Candidate



### Goals, strategy and results

The main goal of this project is to embed child participation into urban planning practices. The project is a product of collaboration between the Lviv Youth Centre, the City Institute, the Institute for Spatial Development and UNICEF.

The main project result is the reconstruction of public spaces on H. Khotkevych and M. Skrypnyk streets together with local children, the help of 15 urban planners from different regions of Ukraine and German urban expert Christian Gundlach. The result of this work, including children's recommendations, was published as a report that informs the local authorities' work on developing the area.

### Lessons learned

- The project was a first of its kind in involving children and young people alongside adults in urban planning processes and can serve as a first step towards more long-term collaboration. Such projects demand strong collaboration between city authorities, NGOs, educational institutions and society at large.

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## 50 Ukraine, Novoboriv's'ka: "University" of Personal Networking

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Candidate



### Goals, strategy and results

In January 2018, a series of lectures on the basics of youth policy (e.g. youth activities, youth social entrepreneurship) was conducted with young people and adults between the ages of 14 to 35, followed by the establishment of the village's first Youth Council. The Youth Council consists of 20 youth deputies, who hold sessions, draft decisions and coordinate the implementation of the Child Friendly Cities Initiative. As a follow-up, the local government decided to set up a department that specifically focuses on young people. With UNDP funding, deputies from the Youth Council are offered internships in the village council and the youth department to develop skills in project management.

The Youth Council has implemented a number of actions, including events, donations of furniture to educational institutions, the establishment of a new youth centre in the village of Kropyvnyia, environmental actions, financial literacy sessions for children, video lectures and courses on violence, and the establishment of a support centre where the police and young volunteers provide psychological, material and social support to children in difficult life situations.

### Lessons learned

- Children and young people set up working groups independently and searched for organizations to collaborate with on the different initiatives.
- The local youth coordinator has been instrumental in winning over the support of local decision makers and the local business community, who initially were sceptical of child participation.

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## 51 Ukraine, Shyroke: Promoting youth volunteer movement in Shyroke village community

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Candidate



### Goals, strategy and results

Shyroke is a rural community of 28 villages that aims to promote the participation of children and young people by consolidating the capabilities of the local government, local businesses, volunteers and NGOs under one approach. From a project aiming to support a particular volunteer group (Volunteer SOS) providing support to villagers in need of special assistance (awarded the best volunteer programme in Ukraine in 2018), the project has grown into supporting youth engagement more widely. More concretely, the project: supports non-formal education programs for young people; encourages young people to volunteer for social projects; and encourages residents to initiate local projects related to environmental protection, social inclusion, and community interaction (e.g. through participatory budgeting, educational events for different audiences, community work, volunteering, etc.).

To further facilitate young people's engagement in all decisions affecting them, their participation is reflected in the community's long-term strategy. A youth worker has been appointed to support the collaboration between different groups. The community has established a Youth Council and regularly conducts consultations among young people on decisions affecting their lives.



### Lessons learned

- The isolation of the rural villages, lack of informal spaces for youth activities, psychological barriers and young people’s migration away from rural communities pose significant challenges to inclusive participation. To overcome some of these barriers, it was important to assign a dedicated youth worker and to create a local NGO for young people’s activities to attract external funding for the creation of spaces for participation.
- It is important to identify all stakeholders involved in youth policy and establish collaboration between these diverse parties from the beginning. Intersectoral collaboration between the local government, small and medium businesses, NGOs and informal groups of active residents strengthen the community’s capacity to create opportunities for young people.
- Youth participation should be reflected in the local strategy as well as personnel to ensure that is properly resourced and supported.
- It is important to build on appreciate existing, even if small, initiatives that engage young people, such as the ‘Volunteers SOS’. These projects enable children to see themselves as active agents of change.

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### 52 Ukraine, Vinnytsia City: Budget for School Projects

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Candidate



### Goals, strategy and results

Many cities in Ukraine are allocating a budget for participatory projects; however, the existing system often only targets the participation of people who are 18 years and older. That is why the City of Vinnytsia introduced a new mechanism that engages younger children and

supports them in advocating for their needs and priorities, empowers them to identify challenges in their school communities and inspires them to find innovative solutions to address them.

To this end, the city ran a call for proposals from children aged 10 to 18. Children were invited to develop projects that improve their school environment. A local NGO, with extensive experience in project management, helped to develop a contest framework and supported the project evaluations. Public awareness-raising sessions were organized, and a coordination committee was established with representatives from local children's councils, NGOs and the local government. Fifty-three potential student participants took part in a training on project management that covered project design, budgeting and presentation. Eighty-three projects were submitted at the school level, 23 of which were selected for the city-level competition through a vote. Finalist projects were presented to the coordination committee, which selected 11 projects for funding from the local budget. More than 9,000 children participated in the different stages of the project.

The contest empowered students to generate creative and innovative solutions for improving school environments according to their needs and priorities. Among the winners, eight projects proposed to improve the school infrastructure (five projects on art and leisure spaces in schools, two projects on leisure spaces in preschools, one project on bicycle parking). The other three projects focused on informal education, such as the basics of emergency medical assistance, fighting bullying in schools and developing public speaking skills.

### Lessons learned

- Children's enthusiasm to participate in the contest and their high level of involvement made the contest a fun and engaging project. It proved that children are eager to contribute to the sustainable development of educational facilities and the city in general.
- The municipality supported cooperation between local authorities, NGOs and educational institutions, which ensured the successful implementation of the project at all levels.
- A lack of national legislation concerning children's participation in local

budget allocations renders children invisible for local governments. Sometimes children are involved in consultations, but they are rarely granted an impactful role in budgetary decision-making processes.

- Students often need better support in project management, especially in the preparation of project documentation (i.e. developing proposals, budgeting), and in translating ideas into feasible projects. The contest should include an additional series of training for children and teachers on how to develop a competitive project proposal and estimate a project's costs.
- It is recommendable to set up a wide range of partnerships with student organizations and NGOs and use different channels to spread the information regarding the contest.
- Due to the age range of the contest, very few projects addressed the needs of younger children. Therefore, the scope of the contest could be expanded.

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**Further information:** [Video](#)

## 53 United Arab Emirates, Sharjah: Sharjah First Child & Youth Carnival

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes



### Goals, strategy and results

The Sharjah Child Friendly Carnival was held on 19 November 2018, to mark World Children's Day and Sharjah's Child Friendly City recognition. A festive, one-kilometre-long parade included entertaining shows, performances, live music and activities organized by the government and children themselves. Local child and youth centres, centres for children with special needs, public and private schools, girl guides and boy scouts were all encouraged and invited to participate and perform. A media campaign was launched to invite participants, with success:

over 5,000 visitors joined the event.

### Lessons learned

- The safety of all participants is key at such big public events. Community police helped keep participants safe, traffic police rerouted traffic around the area, safety kits were placed along the route and volunteers helped guide and direct visitors.
- Through private-sector sponsorships, the city was able to offer free meals and drinks to all participants.
- Rehearsals can be challenging to organize with hundreds of child participants. However, for future events, the city would further emphasize children's role in the parade and not include professional entertainers.

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## 54 United Arab Emirates, Sharjah: Sharjah Youth Parliament

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes



### Goals, strategy and results

The Sharjah Youth Parliament consists of 80 members aged between 13 and 16 years old. The programme opens for registration in September every two years. The dedicated programme team visits all schools in the Emirate to raise awareness of the initiative and invites young people to join. After that, an online registration for nominations is opened for voting. Once the vote is consolidated, 40 boys and 40 girls are elected members.

Once elected, the parliament members undergo a set of training and capacity-building activities. They attend two official parliament sessions to discuss various issues affecting children and young people in the Emirate.

### Lessons learned

- The second year of tenure could be opened to new participants to ensure the transfer of skills and knowledge from one cohort to the next.

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## 55 United Kingdom, Leeds: Voice, Influence and Change in Leeds

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** No



### Goals, strategy and results

As part of its overarching Children and Young People's Plan, the City of Leeds has established a 'Voice, Influence and Change' team that champions the right of children and young people to have their voices heard and influence decisions that affect their lives. The team does this by providing support, training, encouragement and opportunities for children, young people and families to get involved. The team also provides training to local government staff on how to embed children's views into their work.

Voice, Influence and Change work in Leeds encompasses both universal opportunities for all and more specific work for groups of young people such as looked-after children and care leavers. Universal opportunities include facilitating campaigns and ballots for the Children's Mayor, involving 50 primary schools across the city; the annual Make Your Mark ballot run by the UK Youth Parliament members in Leeds, where young people can vote on the issues that are most important to them; and city-wide Youth Voice Summits for primary, secondary and special school students representing over 50 youth groups and schools. Children and young people with particular life experiences are supported to take part in relevant recruitment and commissioning panels, as well as in the well-established Have a Voice and Care Leavers Councils for looked-after children and care leavers.

### Lessons learned

- Strong commitment to participation throughout the city leadership is crucial to ensure participation is prioritized and there is commitment to acting on what children, young people and families tell them.
- By building on existing youth groups, the Voice, Influence and Change team can maximize its capacity and minimize duplication.

- To reach a wide number of young people, it is important to establish effective and multiple communication mechanisms, including a website, social media, e-newsletters, videos and events.
- To make participation truly meaningful and effective, there needs to be consistent and extensive capacity building of local government staff. Participation can also be supported by making it a mandatory part of staff evaluation and appraisals in sectors such as social work.

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## 56 United Kingdom, Liverpool: Children impacted by parental imprisonment speak in Westminster.

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Candidate



### Goals, strategy and results

Currently, the UK Government does not provide specialized support to or keep track of children affected by parental imprisonment. Often, these children face discrimination and stigma and are more likely to develop mental health issues due to the trauma they have experienced. To address this issue, the 'Our Time to Be Heard: A Children's Voice Conference', organized in June 2019, aimed to bring forward the voices of children affected by parental imprisonment. The conference was child-led and supported by MyTime, a Liverpool-based voluntary agency that organizes support groups for children with a parent in prison.

The idea for the conference came from the children themselves, who wanted to raise awareness of the issue, especially among political decision makers. To that end, the event was hosted in the Parliament with the participation of 36 children with a parent in prison. As a result of the event, BBC ran a feature of the support group in the news, and there has been a surge in referrals to the MyTime service. In addition, a Parliamentary Steering Group is being set up to address the children's calls to action. The children who have participated in the project report

feeling a great sense of pride from being able to speak out, be heard and help other children suffering the same trauma as they have.

### Lessons learned

- Due to the stigma and discrimination children with incarcerated parents face, it has not been easy to fundraise for their plight.
- Due to a rescheduling, the event was moved to a Friday, a day when most members of parliament are in their constituencies. Therefore, it is recommendable to host the event on a day of the week that attracts more political decision makers. When the event includes the participation of children, it is advisable to organize it during school holidays to avoid absence from school.
- The event included child-led interviews of adults. However, in these instances, it is important to also have the support of an adult moderator to ensure adult speakers give children the space to express themselves.
- When children are speaking in a public event that is going to be recorded, it is important to allow the children to stay anonymous if they wish to. Lanyards in different colours are useful in identifying which children can or cannot be photographed or recorded.
- It is also important to pay attention to reaching out to children who do not wish to speak in public. In planning for child-led events, facilitators should think of ways to bring forward the voices of those who do not want to participate as speakers.

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**Further information:** [Blog](#)

## 57 Viet Nam, Ho Chi Minh City: Children Innovate

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Candidate



### Goals, strategy and results

'Children Innovate' is a co-creation platform in which companies and organizations invite their young workers and children to propose new Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) solutions for their existing problems. At the core of the programme is a playful five-day, step-by-step design thinking process, in which children are helped to develop their solutions in 3D prototypes. Along the process, the children practice and sharpen their creativity, understanding of the SDGs, design thinking, innovation capacity and 21st century skills. They go on field trips, meet experts, design multiple prototypes and receive insightful feedback. Prototypes are tested by the organization if proven to have potential. The programme, run in collaboration with UNICEF Viet Nam, the Saigon Innovation Hub and the local government, is developed by Arkki School Creativity for Future Innovators, a Finnish STEM education programme for children and young people aged 4 to 19 years old.

In 2018, Arkki collaborated with UNICEF Viet Nam, innovation and urban planning agencies of Ho Chi Minh City and the Saigon Innovation Hub to run 11 programmes for 269 marginalized children, who proposed more than 20 smart and child-friendly solutions for the city. In 2019, Arkki is expanding the programme to develop planet-friendly products and fashion designs with local companies in Bangkok and Ho Chi Minh City.

### Lessons learned

- A playful step-by-step process and collaborative language played a crucial role in encouraging children to think out of the box, express their ideas and turn those ideas into concrete proposals. By turning ideas into concrete prototypes, they developed skills in design thinking and prototyping, which they can use in their daily life.

This hands-on and playful approach is also useful for peer learning, with the potential of spreading across the community.

- Facilitating children's success through a playful process and allowing them to work on real-life problems developed their sense of self-esteem and capability, potentially supporting them in overcoming challenges in real life. The participation of a private-sector host that proposed problems to be solved was important to increase the educational value of the programme.
- Though organizers can see a clear, positive impact of the programme on children, it is difficult to measure their development and the impact of the programme. Engaging closely with adults who work with the children, such as social workers, can be useful in tracking the children's development.
- Choosing a more product-focused topic (such as fashion design) provide children with more action-oriented learnings that they can apply in their daily lives, ranging from inventing new products on their own to using existing products in more sustainable ways.

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**Further information:** [Video](#)





# Category 3.

## Child-friendly social services

Every child and young person has access to quality essential services, including health care, education, nutrition support, early childhood development, education and family support

20 entries

## 1 Bangladesh, Dhaka: Deyalkotha – An interactive platform for empowering underprivileged children

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** No

### Goals, strategy and results

Deyalkotha is a social project started in 2015 to empower underprivileged children and their families living in informal settlements under an overpass in Dhaka, the capital of Bangladesh. Previously an area used to dump debris and park cars, the area now includes improved amenities for the community. Designed together with the community, the space was transformed from a neglected public space into a community area using affordable local materials. The environment is designed to promote learning: for example, the walls are painted with alphabet trees, maps and chalkboards for writing and drawing. Movies, cartoons, live sports and educational films on topics such as child marriage and healthy hygiene are projected on the empty walls. Children's films, cartoons and live sport shows are also projected.

Deyalkotha provides a wide range of volunteer-based services: health check-ups, immunization, nutrition supplements, learning support (including for children with special needs), cultural events, awareness-raising sessions and skills training to promote women's economic empowerment. The space has received recognition from Architecture Sans Frontières and Walk 21.

### Lessons learned

- Deyalkotha is an example of how unused space can be rethought to benefit a whole community, even in densely built cities with little access to green space. However, as Deyalkotha is built in a public space, it is not protected. Therefore, it is important to engage the local community in the maintenance of the space.

- Building a relationship with the local community takes years, so results are not immediate. Investing in issues that have a long-term effect on the well-being of children, such as economic resources and education, has improved the opportunities for children in the community.

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**Further information:** [Video](#)

## 2 Belarus, Novogudrok: 'Course' adolescent district club

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes

### Goals, strategy and results

The aim of the adolescent district club is to support young people who have had challenges that have led to, for example, crime, substance abuse or other delinquent behaviour. The club brings together several agencies within the local government that work for children, the education sector and the local Youth Parliament. Members of the club include children and young people from diverse backgrounds. Club meetings are organized once a month, and the adolescents plan every meeting in partnership with adult representatives from the local agencies. Adolescents choose the theme of the meeting and suggest a format, which can be open dialogue, joint social action, sports, theatre, a training or interactive actions on the street. Every session includes a section on theory followed by exercises, putting adolescents newly acquired knowledge to test.

The club helps prevent young people's social exclusion, which is often a prime cause of delinquency. However, to create a friendly and trust-based atmosphere, the status of the participants is not emphasized in the meetings. If participants are not ready to engage, they are offered different roles to ensure they feel comfortable yet still have an opportunity to participate.





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The club provides adolescents with the assistance they need in a participatory manner, while building their trust in adults and confidence in their ability to speak up and be active.

#### Lessons learned

- The club provides a platform for engagement between young people of different backgrounds and a wide range of government agencies, civil society organizations and other partners working with children. At-risk adolescents participate on an equal footing with others.
- The club is run by volunteers, but it would benefit from a full-time project coordinator. The support of a full-time educational psychologist could also be useful.

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### 3 France, Elancourt: Child-Parent Reception Centres

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes

*This project was also submitted to category 5.*

#### Goals, strategy and results

The Child-Parent Reception Centres (Lieux d'Accueil Enfants-Parents) are spaces where parents or prospective parents, grandparents and children under the age of 4 are welcome to spend time together with the support of social workers. Open two mornings per week, the space offers opportunities for children to meet other children and learn to interact with each other in play, while parents can exchange experiences and thoughts with other parents and hosts. The space aims to prevent the isolation of new parents and provide support to families that might be facing difficulties.

#### Lessons learned

- As the space is for everyone, it provides a low-threshold venue for parents and families who might be facing difficulties in seeking assistance and advice.

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### 4 France, Mouans-Sartoux: Organic School Canteen and Local Food Project

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes



#### Goals, strategy and results

Since 2012, the City of Mouans-Sartoux has offered fully organic and healthy meals in schools and kindergartens, with almost all vegetables for the canteens grown in the municipal farm, the first of its kind in France. The aim is to respond to growing environmental concerns, with



the amount of red meat reduced and the amount of vegetables and plant-based proteins increased. The cost of the school meal is set low, proportionate to household incomes. Alongside the school meals, the city runs an educational programme that promotes healthy and sustainable eating among children and their families. The programme is held in a specialized venue with a meeting room, a kitchen and an educational garden. The city organizes workshops and cooking and gardening classes there for the beneficiaries of the city's social grocery store, where families with limited means can buy groceries at a reduced price.

Today, 97 per cent of children in the municipality eat at school canteens. Food waste has been reduced by 80 per cent. The city's child council reviews the meals on offer regularly and proposes thematic menus. Eighty-seven per cent of parents have reported that they have changed their eating habits following the programme. The municipality is supporting six European cities and nine French communities in introducing the programme.

### Lessons learned

- Changing attitudes towards healthy eating takes a long time. Therefore, the municipality has taken a gradual approach, introducing new elements to the project over a long period.
- It is important to engage staff from schools and kindergartens in the project from the beginning, as they are key to its success.

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## 5 Guinea, Baro: Integrated monitoring of interventions using information technology

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes



### Goals, strategy and results

The aim of the project is to improve the monitoring of community workers' interventions through a real-time monitoring platform. By developing an integrated database for all social services with a unique number to identify each beneficiary, the Municipality of Baro aims to reduce fragmentation in interventions, ensure collaboration in the delivery of social services and foster universal coverage, especially to populations living in the most remote and hard-to-reach areas. With the creation of a systematic database and an internet-based questionnaire, community workers assigned to each sector of the community can easily track, using a smartphone, the use of different services based on the age of the beneficiary.

The project has improved the planning of and budgeting for services within the municipality. To create the database, the municipality conducted a census, which revealed inaccuracies in previous population estimates used to plan service delivery. Improved monitoring has, for example, allowed the municipality to issue birth certificates to all children who had not been registered at birth. The close presence of community workers has also established a relationship of trust, whereby parents are more receptive to messages and advocacy.

### Lessons learned

- In developing contexts, there is often a discrepancy between reality and official administrative data. Improved data allow for better planning and budgeting of services.
- The same community worker is responsible for tracking the delivery of all social services to the community, which creates strong and trusted relationships over time.

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**Further information:** [Video](#)

## 6 Guinea, Koba: Youth volunteering for children

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes

### Goals, strategy and results

The idea of a youth volunteering programme stemmed from an analysis that showed that the Municipality of Koba lacked adequate human resources to advance its agenda for children. With the support of UNICEF, the ministry in charge of youth affairs set up a database of young university graduates who would be interested in volunteering in local communities. The selected volunteers participated in a two-week introductory course facilitated by the National Scouts Association, after which volunteers were deployed to 40 communities in the country, including Koba.

The two volunteers deployed to Koba have made significant contributions to birth registrations by setting up and managing a database of all children under the age of 5 within the municipality. In 2019 alone, the birth registration rate rose from 10 to 60 per cent. In collaboration with local health workers, the volunteers sensitize parents on health-related issues. Next, the volunteers will commit time to immunization efforts.

### Lessons learned

- The fact that the volunteers live within the community helps to build a relationship of trust between them and the local personnel and beneficiaries.
- Even in low-resource contexts, results for children can be achieved by building partnerships with non-traditional actors.

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## 7 Iran, Isfahan: Mother-and-baby room

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Candidate

### Goals, strategy and results

With an aim to promote child-friendly public spaces and easy access to breastfeeding and childcare facilities, the City of Isfahan established a pilot mother-and-baby room in one of the city's bus terminals. In addition to providing a place for breastfeeding, the space has a staff member present in the mornings and afternoons and available to consult on diverse issues related to child health. With the success of the pilot, these rooms will be expanded to other public transport terminals, where they will be easily accessible to mothers and children throughout the city. The hope is that the presence of a dedicated area for mothers and babies in public spaces will increase their sense of security, inclusion and participation.

### Lessons learned

- An easily accessible location was crucial to the success of this project.
- Setting up a pilot room enabled the city to assess public reception and the use of the room for subsequent scale-up.

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## 8 Iran, Yazd: Gandomak Nature School

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** No

### Goals, strategy and results

Many of today's urban environments provide limited access to nature and green areas. The dense urban space, combined with increased traffic and increasing use of technology, means that children and young people are spending less time outdoors and leading increasingly sedentary lives. It was also perceived that parents and caretakers in Yazd emphasized formal education at the expense of informal learning and interactions between children and other members of the community. The Gandomak Nature School was established to provide a space for undirected play and exploration in a natural environment for children aged 3 to 12 years old.

The school, built in a 150-square-meter garden, is led by facilitators who do not have a teaching role, but facilitate the play and exchange and encourage children's discovery and curiosity. The space offers a variety of activities that children can take advantage of freely, as well as activities such as neighbourhood tours for children and families to familiarize themselves with the surrounding city. The school also collaborates on educational and cultural projects with departments of the city on issues such as waste management and intergenerational communication.

### Lessons learned

- Children's empowerment and acquirement of social skills is best supported in a child-friendly environment.
- Parents and families need support to pay more attention to relationships and interaction with their children, and to understand the importance of undirected play. Their participation in the development of the project contributes to its success.

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## 9 Liechtenstein, Ruggell: Contact point for child and youth issues

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes

### Goals, strategy and results

The child and youth contact point was established in 2018 to provide information on the services in the community and help with questions related to family, children or young people, as part of the municipality's early intervention programme. At the time, there was no overview of services provided for children and young people in the community, and no direct point of contact within the local administration. In addition to providing information and promoting opportunities for children and young people online and in the local newspaper, the contact point directs visitors to the right service when necessary.

The aim of the contact point is to facilitate access to the right services. Current support will be extended with easily accessible community services designed to improve early intervention. First of these will be regular family meetings to facilitate communication within and between families.

### Lessons learned

- It is important to work together to establish an overview of all available services and to ensure everyone knows what support is available. A clear focal point for children and families within the local government helps them to find the right services.

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## 10 Portugal, Gondomar: Routes Gold

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes

### Goals, strategy and results

To create a bridge between the local community and the education system and to promote creative learning, the Municipality of Gondomar has established eight educational 'routes' within the community in collaboration with a multitude of local partners, such as cultural attractions and educational facilities. School classes can sign up for these guided routes throughout the year and learn about local culture, political institutions, professions and nature. The aim of the routes is to deepen the connection between the community and the education system, strengthen a sense of belonging among students, develop skills and offer young people the opportunity to explore local job opportunities. Interest in these visits is growing, with 110 guided tours completed in 2019.

### Lessons learned

- The most popular routes are the most practice-oriented ones, such as the introduction to City Hall and the departments of the local government, or the introduction to the local jewellery industry. The programme could be expanded to include a larger number of participatory activities to offer more opportunities for students to actively participate.

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## 11 Spain, Mejorada Velilla: Programme for childhood

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes

### Goals, strategy and results

The Commonwealth of Social Services of Mejorada Velilla created an umbrella project for children and youth that integrates prevention, support services, child participation and promotion of child rights into one approach. The project includes a project supporting young adults at risk of social exclusion; four child participation organs; a project supporting children and young people in creating leisure activities in schools run by the children themselves; a scholarship system for children in vulnerable situations to fund school books and meals; and a support programme for children and families that includes mediation services, therapeutic intervention programmes and a Family Meeting Point.

### Lessons learned

- The process integrates child participation into all projects falling under this umbrella approach. Starting from their needs has been a success factor of the initiative.

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**Further information:** [Website](#)

## 12 Spain, Torrelodones: Social education for children and adolescents

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes



### Goals, strategy and results

As part of the Child Friendly Cities Initiative, the Municipality of Torrelodones has developed a set of social education programmes to support adolescents in situations of risk or vulnerability. The aim of the programme is to meet and support children and young people in spaces where they spend their time. Street educators meet children and young people in leisure spaces to discuss their needs, identify adolescents in situations of risk for individual support, and organize workshops for young people to develop social skills.

Interventions are done at three levels: individual, group and open space. The 'Let's take off playing' initiative targets younger children in situations of risk with playful workshops that support their development of social and emotional skills. An open space intervention programme targets certain public spaces and times where risks, for example for substance abuse, seem to be higher. As a result of this work, a discussion group for vulnerable young people has been set up and meets weekly.

As a result of the programme, children and young people are more actively engaged; for example, a group of children and young people involved in the programme publish their own newspaper. Overall, more than 2,000 children and young people have benefited from the programme. The educators work in close collaboration with other sectors within the local government to ensure children and young people receive specialized support if needed.

### Lessons learned

- Meeting children where they spend time, in open spaces without the presence of strict rules, has been essential to the success of the programme. Educators have become trusted reference people for

children and young people, which allows them to establish rules and propose alternatives.

- When interventions are organized in groups, it is important to give children and young people a lead role so the intervention is meaningful to them.

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**Further information:** Website

## 13 Switzerland, Geneva: Emergency housing for migrant families and unaccompanied minor migrants

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes

### Goals, strategy and results

Despite being a relatively wealthy city, Geneva has many homeless people. Among them are unaccompanied minor migrants and migrant families with children, whose accommodation falls between the cracks of government responsibility due to their status (not asylum seekers, who are the responsibility of the Canton). To resolve the problem, the City of Geneva went beyond its legal obligations to provide emergency housing during the winter together with the local Salvation Army and another civil society organization, Paidos. The emergency housing offers meals, a shower, parenting support and social security support. In this arrangement, the aim is to pay particular attention to the needs of children and young people.

### Lessons learned

- Even when cities are not legally required to provide housing, they can still go beyond their legal mandate to offer practical solutions to problems affecting the most vulnerable groups of children and young people. Partnerships with civil society organizations and other actors can support these efforts.

**Contact:** Patricia Briel, City of Geneva | patricia.briel@ville-ge.ch

## 14 United Arab Emirates, Sharjah: Ithmar programme

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes

### Goals, strategy and results

Recognizing the importance of journalism in a technologically changing world and with the decline in young people's interest in pursuing careers in journalism, the Sharjah Press Club and Sharjah Government Media Bureau launched the Ithmar programme to build young people's skills and understanding of journalism, media, ethics and safety in different media channels. Following a selection process, 20 applicants from diverse backgrounds were chosen for the first round of the initiative, which included a comprehensive programme of interactive workshops led by industry experts, visits to media institutions and practical experience. At the end of the programme, the participants produced a short film. Following the first successful round of Ithmar, the programme will be rolled out to local schools to reach a wider group of children and young people.

### Lessons learned

- A combination of methodologies creates an engaging and child-friendly learning environment.
- From ideation to execution, the programme must build on cross-sectoral collaboration among multiple partners.

**Contact:** Asma Al Juwaied, Sharjah Government Media Bureau | asma.aljuwaied@sgmb.ae

## 15 United Arab Emirates, Sharjah: Sharjah Baby-Friendly City project

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes



### Goals, strategy and results

The Sharjah Baby-Friendly City project was established to promote and facilitate breastfeeding across the Emirate. In parallel to introducing the UNICEF and WHO-led Baby-Friendly Hospitals Initiative, the programme was expanded to include the accreditation of breastfeeding-friendly nurseries, workplaces and public places based on a set of criteria. The project team assesses, evaluates and awards institutions in each category with a renewable award for child-friendliness for three years. The institutional recognition process is accompanied by awareness-raising activities and the capacity building of medical and non-medical professionals. The project has contributed to a significant increase in breastfeeding rates (from 18 per cent in 2011 to 57 per cent in 2018), and 2,500 health professionals have been trained in breastfeeding-friendly practices.

### Lessons learned

- Institutional support to the project was just as important as public awareness-raising. Therefore, the initiative was developed to be implemented at multiple levels (individual, communal, institutional and governmental) simultaneously.
- Focusing disproportionately on women and mothers risks limiting the scope and impact of the initiative. Therefore, the initiative will be widened in scope to include the entire family, including fathers, more equally.
- Strong support from influential figures (in this case, the ruling family) brought visibility to the initiative. Other cities can replicate this by seeking the support of influential public figures that are deemed 'true supporters' of the cause.

**Contact:** Hamda Al Abdouli, Sharjah Baby-Friendly Office | hamda.alabdouli@scf.shj.ae

**Further information:** [Website](#)

## 16 Ukraine, Kharkiv: Giving joy to children

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Candidate

### Goals, strategy and results

Recognizing that a strong, supportive and safe family environment is crucial to children's well-being, the NGO 'We are not different' established a Family Social Centre to work comprehensively with families needing help or advice in difficult life situations. The centre conducts social and educational work with families, children and young people, the elderly and internally displaced persons, regardless of their social status. The focus of the work is to improve relationships within the family through initiatives targeting different age groups, including a counselling point for victims of domestic violence; clubs and leisure activities for children and young people; group sessions with psychologists; work with out-of-school children; and various trainings.

### Lessons learned

- The centre provides multidisciplinary support to the whole family, regardless of their status or income, which lowers the threshold of seeking help and support.

**Contact:** Christina Cherkasova | christina.cherkasova@gmail.com

## 17 Ukraine, Lviv: Home visit service for families raising children at risk

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Candidate

### Goals, strategy and results

The main goal of the home visits is to help families create the conditions in which children with disabilities can fully grow, develop, reach their potential and overcome the constraints caused by their disability. The project is the product of collaboration between the Dzherelo Rehabilitation Centre, the Lviv City Council and the European Association on Early Childhood Intervention. Thanks to a mobile team, children with disabilities receive professional medical and psychological support and develop their communication skills together with a team of specialists, preparing them for integration into society. The team also provides parents with the skills and knowledge of raising a child with a disability. Instead of visiting a specialized institution to receive these services, children and their parents are supported at home.

More than 50 families in Lviv have received the project's services since it was launched in 2017. The project contributes to the implementation of the Convention for the Rights of the Child at a local level, ensuring that disabled children have effective access to education, training, health-care services, rehabilitation services and recreation opportunities.

### Lessons learned

- As families receive the support at home, it is also an opportunity to influence their understanding of how to best support their child in day-to-day life. However, parents are often used to seeking support outside their homes and need convincing to see the practical value of the project.
- The support of the local public authorities is crucial to the success of the project, and it is important to ensure communication between all parties involved.

**Contact:** Dzherelo Rehabilitation Centre, Zoreslava Lyulchak |  
z.liulchak@dzherelocentre.org.ua



## 18 Ukraine, Novoukrainka: Opening of the Novoukrainka City Council Preschool Education Centre 'Zernyatko'

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Candidate

### Goals, strategy and results

Children in one district of Novoukrainka had not had access to early education since the shutdown of the district's preschool in 2000; instead, many had to travel a long distance to downtown schools. Finally, in 2017 the Ministry of Capital Construction and Regional Development agreed to use the state budget to co-finance the building of a new preschool for 110 children.



Attention was paid to inclusion and accessibility. Children with and without special needs attend together, with therapy and special assistance available to children with special needs. In the construction phase, attention was paid to road safety, energy efficiency and accessibility for children with restricted mobility. The new school has also created employment opportunities for young people, with over a third of the 40 staff members being under the age of 35.

### Lessons learned

- Local community activists and parents were crucial to the success of the project, e.g. by participating in the process of constructing the preschool.

**Contact:** Stratonova Tetiana Ivanivna, tastrat2008@ukr.net

## 19 Ukraine, Shyroke: Socially responsible hromada: Free daily meals for children in educational institutions

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Candidate

### Goals, strategy and results

Shyroke, a local government area (hromada), decided to offer free daily meals to all students attending the local schools, following the observation that more than 60 per cent of children in the area are from vulnerable families that cannot cover the cost of the daily school meals. To avoid creating divisions between children receiving meal support and those that do not, the municipality decided to offer the free meals to all children. As the cost of this was to be covered by the public budget, it was important to ensure transparency in the quality of the food and accountability in the use of the funds. The community decided to do that by creating a public Facebook page, where schools publish daily reports with photos. This increased interaction and oversight between parents, the education department, the school board and local authorities.

### Lessons learned

- Providing free meals to all students can be costly. Therefore, the municipality conducted a cost analysis and transferred the responsibility of purchasing the food to a catering service.
- Parental involvement in the process is key to its success and should be part of the process from the start.
- Social media proved to be an efficient platform for increasing public oversight.

**Contact:** Stavvytska Olha | shyroke.soc@ukr.net

## 20 Viet Nam, Ho Chi Minh City: Increase accessibility and love of books – A way to build a knowledgeable and child-friendly city

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Candidate

### Goals, strategy and results

The aim of this project, implemented in 2017, is to encourage children and young people to read and develop their skills and creativity, especially in the most vulnerable and marginalized groups. Several initiatives have been introduced, including setting up a 'Book Street'; mobilizing communities to donate books to create community libraries; creating child-friendly libraries together with children and young people; promoting a reading culture in creative ways, such as through theatre, poetry clubs and debate contests; developing innovative, technological solutions such as online libraries; and establishing book exchange platforms and events for children and young people both online and in public spaces, such as bus stops. A Smart Library for Children, funded by Samsung, has been established in the city's General Science Library, with a science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) academy supporting students in the development of 21st century skills.

### Lessons learned

- Cooperation between the government and the private sector has contributed to the success of the project.
- Innovative methodologies are needed to promote reading in the most vulnerable and marginalized groups of children and young people.

**Contact:** Nguyen Ngoc Nhung | nguyennhoc\_nhung@yahoo.com





# Category 4. Safe, secure and clean environment

Every child and young person lives in a safe, secure and clean environment, including protection from exploitation, violence and abuse, access to clean water, sanitation and hygiene, safe and child responsive urban design, mobility and freedom from pollution and waste

14 entries

## 1 Belarus, Grodno: Working Together Towards Sustainable Development – Clean Affair inclusive quest

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes

### Goals, strategy and results

The aim of the 'Working Together Towards Sustainable Development' quest was to raise awareness among children and adults on the reuse of materials as a personal contribution towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. The project consisted of several activities, including public awareness raising campaigns in schools and social networks; 'Second Art' sustainable development workshops; an exhibition of products made by children and adults using recycled materials; cleaning of a suburban forested area in the Lososno neighbourhood; 'Our Footprint on Earth' environmental readings; and sustainable development training sessions, a market and a wall of prospects for open reflections from residents.

At the heart the programme was collaboration between children and adults. Approximately 600 participants (including 400 children and young people) joined the quest and were informed of the importance of the Sustainable Development Goals, the harms of excessive consumption, waste disposal and ways of saving natural resources through secondary use. The programme contributed to children's feeling of being important actors who can contribute to a more sustainable community.

### Lessons learned

- The weather was not always suitable for outdoor activities, which meant adjustments to the timeline and agenda. Alternative indoor activities should be planned beforehand to avoid changes.
- Workshops should be on offer over a longer period to allow for as many participants to join as possible.
- More time should be dedicated for participants to talk about their experience.

- Efforts should be made to communicate about the event to media to ensure a wider reach.

**Contact:** Project Coordinator Halina Bohdan | +375 297819044

**Further information:** [Project report](#)

## 2 Belarus, Novopolotsk: Novopolotsk Ecological Recovery and Improvement Plan

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes



### Goals, strategy and results

The City of Novopolotsk is one of the most polluted cities in Belarus, and the largest petrochemical cluster in the country since the Soviet period. Due to the high level of pollution, the numbers of allergic, cardiovascular, skin and respiratory illnesses are high. To tackle this issue, the city's Adolescent Parliament developed the Novopolotsk Ecological and Improvement Recovery Plan, which aims to reduce harmful emissions and transform the city and its transportation system to align with global green trends.

The project focuses on three main areas: creation and expansion of parks and public spaces; construction of houses with terraces and functional rooftop areas; and a gradual replacement of worn-out public buses with electric ones. The proposal, building on extensive research of the history of the problem in the city and public demand for change, has been approved by the city government, and awaits the approval of higher authorities. Some activities, such as the revitalization of parks, are already underway. Citizens have also filed a petition to fund electric buses in the city.

### Lessons learned

- Existing public demand, links with global sustainability trends and support from the local authorities contributed to the success of the project.

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ОЗДОРОВЛЕНИЯ И ОБЛАГОРАЖИВАНИЯ  
НОВОПОЛОЦКА

Парламент детей и молодежи / ПГУ

План экологического  
облагораживания П

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План экологического оздоровления и  
облагораживания Новополюца

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- Some parts of the project are expensive to execute; approval times for public budgets and projects are long.
- It is recommended to gather even more information through public consultations to strengthen the justification of the project.

**Contact:** Alexander Kozlov, aliaksandarkazlou@gmail.com

### 3 Germany, Regensburg: Spielleitplanung

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes

*This project was also submitted to category 4.*



#### Goals, strategy and results

‘Spielleitplanung’ is an urban planning and development project that facilitates children and young people’s participation in urban planning processes. It was used to improve the Kasernenviertel neighbourhood with many underprivileged children living in conditions characterized by overcrowded housing, little recreational greenery, few places for play and noisy streets. The main goal was to improve the existing neighbourhood, and to build new parts of the area in a child-friendly way.

A team of professionals and supporters from different departments (e.g. urban and traffic planning, social work, youth and family services, landscape architecture) conducted neighbourhood strolls with nine groups of children, during which the children pointed out their favourite places, places they were scared of and places where traffic was unsafe. Everything was documented on a map with photos and statements from the children. In addition, students (up to 17 years old) from the neighbourhood completed a questionnaire in which they wrote down and marked on a map the meeting points they frequented, their school routes and their wishes for improvement. Based on this data, a group of young people developed suggestions for improving the neighbourhood that were presented and approved by the city council. The task team meets regularly to make sure the measures are implemented.

The project has resulted in the child-friendly renewal of a neighbourhood with over 20,000 inhabitants and the building of a new area with around 1,400 affordable apartments for low-income families. Based on the inputs from the children and young people, a big park with inclusive playgrounds for handicapped children has been created. Several sidewalks have been made wheelchair accessible and so-called ‘student pilots’ have been recruited to escort students as they cross the street on their way to school.

#### Lessons learned

- The endorsement and support of the city council is crucial to open doors to the different departments within the local government. The project requires the expertise of multiple sectors (e.g. urban planners, landscape architects, computer and data experts, pedagogical staff).
- Local decision makers’ participation in the neighbourhood strolls is beneficial to improve their understanding of children’s realities.
- It is important to ensure diversity among children to get a coherent picture of their needs.

**Contact:** City of Regensburg, Anna Schledor | anna.schledorn@regensburg.de

**Further information:** [Video](#)

## 4 Iran, Shiraz: More and more friends with nature

UNICEF Child Friendly City: No



### Goals, strategy and results

Children grow and develop in interaction with their environment. Due to rapid urbanization, lack of access to green space is a challenge faced by many cities. Following consultations with children, the City of Shiraz identified the lack of green space and access to nature as an issue that they wished to tackle to promote undirected and creative play.

To make this a reality, the city proposed several steps, including to establish community gardens and nature schools to provide access to inter-generational activities (such as farming, feeding animals and planting trees) that promote children's connection with nature; develop child-friendly infrastructure together with children, with an emphasis on natural shapes inspired by animals; encourage children to plant trees in their neighbourhoods; and refine guidelines regarding the development and expansion of green areas within the city together with children. The aim of involving children in the process of developing public spaces is to raise their awareness and sense of responsibility over the shared public space. These spaces are designed to be multifunctional and to provide activities for different age groups.

### Lessons learned

- Involving children and young people in the design process ensures that the space responds to their needs.
- Community gardens are often used by different age groups, thus enhancing inter-generational relationships and interaction.
- Community gardens can be built in vacant or underused areas. They should be planned to be multifunctional and usable in different weather conditions.

**Contact:** Mohammad Hossain Shaterpoori | farascw@gmail.com



## 5 Spain, Mislata: I'm City

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes



### Goals, strategy and results

'I'm City' is a project developed by the City of Mislata to link urban and social development to prevent insecurity and promote equal use of public space, with a special attention to the needs of children and adolescents. The process consisted of several phases: an initial research phase to identify the needs of inhabitants and to develop an action plan; a public awareness-raising phase with different target groups using a variety of media; a visibility phase to convince inhabitants of the benefits of the programme; and an execution phase, where four different focus areas were chosen for implementation. The areas are:

- Safe roads are marked with signposts and elements placed along school itineraries and a selection of volunteers help with initial escorting along the new routes.
- 'Friendly shops' are mobilized to become places of support for children and young people. They are marked with a badge in the window and receive regular control visits by the local child and youth council.
- Adaptation of public spaces (such as parks, squares, youth centres and urban infrastructure) is done to meet the needs of children and young people.
- 'Play and respect' is an initiative to foster inter-generational coexistence in public spaces and guaranteeing children's right to play in the public spaces.

To date, the project has improved traffic safety and the accessibility and child-friendliness of public spaces. The spaces are used more frequently, especially for play. The local Children's Council has played an advisory role in all phases of the project, which has fostered an inter-generational working culture within the local government.

### Lessons learned

- The participation of children, young people and the wider community was important to ensure that the project was pragmatic and responded to the needs of different age groups.
- Strong partnerships with the support of the political leadership were crucial to the success of the project. Without established alliances, it would not have been possible to cover such a wide range of actions.
- The project could have been linked more strongly to other areas of improvement, such as public health.
- Communication of the inter-generational vision for the city could have been improved. More efforts to raise awareness among some groups would have been beneficial.

**Contact:** City of Mislata, Daniela Martínez Gómez | infancia@mislata.es

**Further information:** [Video](#)



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## 6 Spain, Quer: Brigada Quer, 5.0

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes

### Goals, strategy and results

The village of Quer identified dog excrement in public spaces as an issue. To raise awareness on the problem, the municipality developed a campaign video together with children and young people. Following a casting at the municipal pool for different roles ranging from actor to screenwriter, a group of children and adults created a fun short film involving a 'brigade' of children chasing after irresponsible dog owners. The film was aired in a festive ceremony replicating the Oscars, in which all participants were awarded a prize.

The project created an opportunity for inter-generational participation

for a joint cause. Awareness of the problem was increased within the municipality with the streets becoming cleaner. The film was followed by a commitment from City Hall to increase free-of-charge bags for collecting dog excrement.

### Lessons learned

- Children, when given the opportunity, can be powerful in advocating for behaviour change.

**Contact:** Municipality of Quer, Veronica Jofre | [veronicajofre@ayuntamientodequer.es](mailto:veronicajofre@ayuntamientodequer.es)

**Further information:** [Film](#)

## 7 Spain, Torrelodones: School paths project

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes



### Goals, strategy and results

Children's decreased independent mobility on the way to school has been identified as an issue in Torrelodones, where the number of cars in the proximity of schools has increased. This also has an overall effect on the city's pollution levels, road safety and children's health and level of physical activity. The municipality launched a multi-level approach to tackle the issue, recognizing that it is driven by a multitude of cultural, social and economic factors. The aim of the project is to reduce traffic around schools, increase children's independent mobility and ensure safe routes to schools.

The project emphasized collaboration between the local government's technical experts, school directorates and parents' associations. The project began in 2012 with an analysis of school itineraries, along with an awareness-raising campaign. This was followed by physical improvements of pedestrian access around schools, including widening and protection of routes, creation of play areas and establishment of pedestrian itineraries known as '[Pedibus](#)', where children are accompanied by municipal staff on their routes to school. Parents can

follow the staff's routes using the free software [Trazeo](#).

The project has managed to increase children's independent mobility on the way to school, and has been [recognized by the Ministry of Environment](#). The municipality's efforts for pedestrian mobility has also been recognized by the [Spanish Network of Cities that Walk](#) (Red Ciudades que Caminan).

### Lessons learned

- The involvement of, awareness of and support from children and their families have been important to the success of the project.
- Schools are strategic centres for motivation and awareness raising on issues concerning children. They also constitute major bottlenecks for traffic during peak hours, and thus are a strategic point of intervention on issues related to traffic congestion.

**Contact:** Municipality of Torrelodones, Angeles Barba | [concejala-educacion@ayto-torrelodones.org](mailto:concejala-educacion@ayto-torrelodones.org)

**Further information:** [Website](#)

## 8 Spain, Vicar: Education in justice

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes



### Goals, strategy and results

Since 2012, the Municipality of Vicar has brought the judiciary and child protection systems closer to children and young people through yearly interventions in schools, focusing on 14-year-old students who are reaching the age of criminal responsibility. The focus of these interventions is to deepen the children's understanding of the systems, especially in relation to their rights. During the interventions, community social workers elaborate on children's right to protection and how the municipal social services act to protect this right. Representatives from the police department explain their role in the child protection system, and representatives from the civil guard

explain the role of children in the juvenile justice system.

Based on the evaluation forms following these sessions, the interventions have improved children's understanding of the justice system: more than 90 per cent of participants have said the sessions have improved their knowledge. The sessions have also been important in building trust between young people and professionals – young people are now more likely to report problems.

### Lessons learned

- The fact that the trainings were conducted by the same professionals that the children would encounter at the municipal services created a greater sense of trust.
- Greater involvement of representatives from the juvenile justice system would further strengthen the trainings. It is important for different agencies in charge of children's protection to act in coordination.
- Creating greater awareness among teachers and parents would be important.

**Contact:** Municipality of Vicar, Carmen María Valdivia Ruiz | [cvaldivi@vicar.es](mailto:cvaldivi@vicar.es)

**Further information:** [Website](#)

## 9 Switzerland, Grenchen: Road safety education

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes



### Goals, strategy and results

To improve road safety, especially for children and young people, the City of Grenchen has invested in measures in close cooperation with the police, the construction department, the urban planning unit, schools and parents. This collaboration includes improving the safety of crossings, such as adding new signposts and lamps; introducing a road safety education programme for schools and kindergartens, with new topics related to road safety each year adapted to their age and needs; and bringing the police and the urban planning department together to discuss any new construction projects through the lens of road safety. One contact person is appointed for each school area. School roads are also regularly monitored by the city.

The programme has led to a reduction in traffic accidents in the city. In recent years, no accident has been recorded at pedestrian crossings.

### Lessons learned

- Interdepartmental cooperation regarding traffic and transportation projects and inclusion of the police have been key contributors to the success of the project.
- Integration of road safety into the school curricula from kindergarten to secondary school has improved children's awareness of road safety and prevented accidents.

**Contact:** Municipality of Grenchen, Mike Brotschi | [mike.brotschi@grenchen.ch](mailto:mike.brotschi@grenchen.ch)

## 10 Ukraine, Biloziria: Biking to school

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Candidate



### Goals, strategy and results

Following discussions with the mayor and the village's student parliament, a decision was made to improve the biking conditions in the village of Biloziria. This included instalment of bike parking facilities at the school and construction of bike lanes on the main street. To execute these projects, the student parliament and the local government sought funds from the Association of Cyclists in Kyiv and from the State Fund for Regional Development. Both applications were successful. These improvements were accompanied by trainings (led by the local government and a local NGO) on biking and road safety for children and young people.

In addition to leading to improvements in the village's biking infrastructure, the project helped establish bilateral communication and cooperation between the student parliament and the community's executive committee.

### Lessons learned

- Although the local government did not have the funding to resource these improvements, they successfully applied for external funding to make these agreements possible.

**Contact:** Nataliia Valantyrets | [bilozir\\_osvita@ukr.net](mailto:bilozir_osvita@ukr.net)

## 11 Ukraine, Lviv: Safe parking spots for families with young children

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Candidate

*This project was also submitted to category 3.*



### Goals, strategy and results

Parents of small children in the City of Lviv identified a lack of safe and accessible parking spaces as a challenge in the city's car parks. The civil society organization 'Parents in Action' approached the City Council with a proposal to design special signs (like signs for parking spots for persons with disabilities) to indicate wider, accessible parking close to the entrance for families with children under 5. Following the City Council's approval, [a campaign video](#) was created and circulated on social media to raise awareness on the issue.

The success of the project depends on the support of local businesses that operate most of the city's car parks. Together with the City Council, Parents in Action continue to advocate for the implementation of these safe parking spots, which have been added successfully in some of the city's commercial centres.

### Lessons learned

- Despite growing interest from business to contribute to the communities in which they operate, convincing them to take action has proven challenging. The campaign would need to be supported by legislative reform, which would make the creation of such parking spaces mandatory.

**Contact:** Khrystyna Shabat | Khrystyna.tuziak@gmail.com

**Further information:** [Adoption of the proposal by the City Council](#)



## 12 United Arab Emirates, Sharjah: Campaign to stop children from falling from balconies

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes

### Goals, strategy and results

In the past, Sharjah has witnessed incidents of children falling from balconies and windows of residential buildings due to many reasons, including the negligence of parents. To understand the issue better, the Emirate analysed statistics and reports from the police, the municipal hotline and media.

An awareness raising campaign was then launched, urging parents to place home furniture so it does not pose a risk to children, to refrain from using balconies for storage, to not leave children home alone, and to always keep balcony doors closed. The campaign, 'My Safety Is Your Responsibility', was launched at a big commercial centre, at the Municipal Service Centres and in public parks. Several means of communication were used to deliver the message: radio, TV, social media, email, SMS, billboards, animated short films and brochures. Several steps were taken to improve building safety. Minimum requirements for balcony height were increased and the municipality offered parents the opportunity to install additional acrylic protections. Suppliers of window safety locks took part in the campaign to demonstrate how additional locks can be installed. Since the launch of the initiative, falls have been on the decline.

### Lessons learned

- By analysing the problem carefully, the Emirate was able to detect that the problem was not only caused by unsafe buildings, but also by parents' lack of awareness.
- Regulations might not be enough on their own. Sometimes, they need to be complemented with behaviour-change campaigns.

**Contact:** Sharjah Baby Friendly Office, Hamda Al Abouli| hamda.alabdouli@scf.shj.ae

## 13 United Arab Emirates, Sharjah: Child safety in cyberspace

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes

### Goals, strategy and results

'Child Safety in Cyberspace' is a project launched by the Child Safety Department, an affiliate of the Supreme Council for Family Affairs in Sharjah, to raise awareness on safe internet and social media use by children. The project targets children, parents, educators, caregivers and experts, and it focuses on the important role of community organizations, not just parents, in ensuring a safe and nurturing digital environment for children.

The project started with a series of 300 highly interactive educational workshops for children, parents and trainers in areas across the city – in schools, childcare organizations and parent councils – on various topics such as virus protection, cyberbullying and stalking, hacking, solicitation, activating parental controls, exposure to harmful content, and tactics of social engineering and deception that can be used to target children online. Training was also provided for supervisors and employees at childcare centres and organizations on how to deliver cyber-safety-awareness workshops to children in their respective institutions.

To better understand the issue, two research studies on cyber safety awareness were conducted: one in households and another in schools. They were followed by awareness-raising workshops and activities in schools. A peer education initiative, 'Cyber Safety Ambassadors', was launched for 10- to 18-year-olds to deliver awareness-raising workshops to their peers. Younger children were educated through a storybook about safe internet use (available also in Braille).

## Lessons learned

- All activities were designed to be interactive and engaging to ensure participants would not become passive recipients of information.
- Partnerships with eight strategic partner organizations and support from corporate partners helped the project reach a wider audience and gave it more authority.
- Peer training schemes ensure that the project is sustained in the long term.
- Targeting a wide audience risks project messages becoming too generic to suit any particular group.
- Trust between children and parents is a key factor to success, but difficult to influence institutionally. Many parents intrinsically agree and subscribe to the project goals, but they fail to implement them.

**Contact:** Sharjah Baby Friendly Office, Hamda Al Abouli | hamda.alabdouli@scf.shj.ae

## 14 Viet Nam, Ho Chi Minh City: Social Innovation Clubs Project

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Candidate

*This project was also submitted to category 3.*



## Goals, strategy and results

While most young people in Viet Nam complete mandatory education, there is a significant skills gap, with many companies and young people reporting that they lack both job-specific technical skills and life skills such as problem solving, critical thinking, creativity and communication. Especially marginalized adolescents have little resilience and are largely unprepared for the unpredictable future they face. At the same time, as a mega city with a population of more than 10 million people, Ho Chi Minh City deals with many complex urban issues, such as air pollution and municipal waste management. These challenges call for multi-

stakeholder approaches that promote the participation of children and young people who are heavily affected by these problems.

As a response to this challenge, Saigon Innovation Hub (under the City's Department of Science and Technology) launched the Social Innovation Clubs in April 2018. These clubs build the capacity of 14- to 18-year-olds to tackle challenges in their communities by equipping them with 21st century skills, innovation competence and human-centred design. These clubs are an extracurricular educational activity that takes place over 12 weeks (3h/week) and can be introduced in schools, universities, colleges and social protection centres that support vulnerable children. Facilitators, who are often teachers or social workers, are trained and supported by mentors who have experience in social innovation projects. To date, over 300 children have participated in the project, generating over 40 ideas. A fourth of these ideas have been tested or implemented.

## Lessons learned

- The model has successfully brought innovation and design-thinking to vulnerable children, who are often excluded from such activities.
- The model supports the learning of facilitators. Facilitators attend other clubs as observers and are encouraged to work together across different innovation clubs. Feedback is collected from participants at the end of each session, so facilitators know how to improve the next session. Facilitators meet regularly.
- A more robust results and skills assessment framework is needed, but it is challenging to make it simple and easy to track.
- As children have different needs and abilities, facilitators should customize the curriculum in terms of language and time frame to suit different groups of children.
- It is crucial to establish an environment conducive to youth-led innovation to turn ideas into reality.

**Contact:** Saigon Innovation Hub, Han Nguyen | maihan@sihub.gov.vn

**Further information:** [Video](#)



# Category 5.

## Family life, play and leisure

Every child and young person has opportunities to enjoy family life, play and leisure, including social and cultural activities and safe places to meet their friends and play.

26 entries

## 1 Brazil, São Paulo/SampaPé!: Paulista Aberta

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes



### Goals, strategy and results

The Paulista Aberta project is a civil society initiative to reclaim the streets as a safe place that guarantees equal opportunities to enjoy public spaces, irrespective of age, ability or social class. The plan of the initiative was straightforward: to close off Paulista Avenue, one of São Paulo's most important avenues, from motorized transport one day a week and turn the eight traffic lanes into recreational space. The open street offers children a safe, car-free space for play, and provides countless more possibilities for creative activities than a private playground does.

The success of the project is the result of collaboration between residents and elected representatives. An important strategy was to conduct tests on Sundays to experiment and prove the potential of the project, to gain the support of the public and to collect important data to counter opposition to the proposal. The aim of the initiative was to turn the open-street programme into law and formalize a partnership with the government. The initiative has led to the creation of an open-street public policy that has spread to other districts of the city. It has transformed the dynamics of Paulista Avenue, bringing cultural and educational spaces and arts to the street.

### Lessons learned

- It would have been good to include children in the claim process as experts on their own needs with important voices and ideas, not only as beneficiaries of the project.
- A diverse counselling group should have been established from the start as advisers and mediators of conflicts of interest.

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**Further information:** [Website](#)

## 2 France, Cholet: The Game Library, a challenging game for all ages

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes

### Goals, strategy and results

The new game library opened to the public in May 2019. As play is central and essential to optimal child development, one of the main goals of the project is to allow every child and young person to have fun while developing social, intellectual, emotional and physical skills through play. With over 7,000 games in its collection, which is enriched each year with new additions, the inter-municipal game library of Cholet is one of the largest in France. The new venue offers long opening hours, a large area and additional staff along with nearby affordable parking. The game library also offers a wide range of activities and special events on the principle of accessibility to all, realized through an affordable pricing policy based on family income and its location in the heart of town.

### Lessons learned

- The relevance and attractiveness of the chosen location for the new game library was important to reach key audiences.

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### 3 France, Clermont-Ferrand: Mille Formes

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes

#### Goals, strategy and results

The project 'Mille Formes' is the first permanent art initiation centre that invites children to participate in the experience of art in all its forms. Through a programme designed and produced specifically for children aged 0 to 6 years old and their families, Mille Formes offers its young public the opportunity to dream, create, 'do together' and explore all fields of creativity.

Developing curiosity about the world, the ability to be enthusiastic and the desire to be open to different horizons is essential for children's development. The proposed activities, therefore, allow the child to become involved as an individual. Children can choose to, for example, interact with the elements in the gallery zone, take part in a group or with their parents in a culinary design workshop, immerse themselves with their family in the cinema zone, or simply sit, lie down or walk around and observe the unfolding creative process. Mille Formes is a 'multi-layered' space that provides children and their parents with a multitude of choices and possibilities.

To assess the needs of the project and participants and to improve the project, the city ran two successful test phases. Mille Formes opened permanently in December 2019.

#### Lessons learned

- Work on hands-on experimentation.
- Guide adults and create a parent-child bond.
- Initiate reflection with contemporary artists on the creation of experiences for the very young.
- Train mediators to provide individualized and caring support.

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### 4 France, Montpellier: Provide access to arts and cultural education for all children, from 0 to 18

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes

#### Goals, strategy and results

Art and culture are essential to develop creativity, understanding and tolerance, and to acquire knowledge and skills. Art encourages people, especially the young, to express themselves and contributes to the reduction of inequalities.

The City of Montpellier, in partnership with the state services (National Education, Cultural Affairs and Social Cohesion) and the Montpellier Metropolitan region, is involved streamlining arts and culture education. The three partners work together to set up an innovative system to promote access to art, culture and heritage for children from 0 to 18 years old, with particular attention to younger children and to groups isolated from access to cultural activities. The main goal is to develop a policy that ensures equal access for all to art and culture.

The programme relies on the many partnerships (with museums, the opera, local festivals, neighbourhood libraries, etc.) that are already in place to encourage access to culture for the youngest. For example, the city is partnering with local kindergartens and schools to organize activities such as dance workshops, adapted visits to local cultural institutions, access to practicing musical instruments and child-focused film festivals. The overall programme is constantly monitored to map which areas of the city are under-resourced in access to culture.

#### Lessons learned

- It is essential that the initiative builds on consistent and institutionalized partnerships. It is based on a national framework of cultural education adapted to the local context and is closely linked to other cross-cutting structural policies such as the Territorial Education Project and the Arts and Cultural Education Pathway.

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## 5 France, Toulon: Teenagers architects of their lives

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes

### Goals, strategy and results

The aim of the cross-cutting 'Teenagers architects of their lives' programme is to promote young people's social inclusion by providing access to information related to local services for young people, access to educational culture activities and support on career development and employment.

As part of this overarching initiative, the city has implemented several activities, such as a local Youth Information Centre that guides more than 10,000 young adults a year (physical reception, documentation centre and a website), and career forums to find summer jobs or employment information. The initiative also provides a free Youth Card (Carte Jeune) for 11- to 25-year-olds that offers discounts from retailers and public institutions, the possibility to win tickets to cultural events and information about leisure activities and cultural events, and Toulon Destination Ados, a pool of educational leisure activities for young people during school holidays.

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## 6 Germany, Regensburg: Mini Regensburg

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes

### Goals, strategy and results

'Mini Regensburg' is a big, inclusive gaming event, organized every two years, in which children aged 8 to 14 can spend up to three weeks of their summer vacation. During the event, children familiarize themselves with adult professions at different 'play stations' set up in an imaginary play city built in a local school. The children can explore their talents and interests, and they can build their self-esteem and feeling of self-worth. The event focuses on learning how society works and emphasizing that everyone – regardless of good or bad grades in school – has something valuable to contribute to society. Children run the play city themselves. They decide and deal with the consequences,



which helps them to form and voice their own opinions. One of the aims of the project is also to learn about child rights.

The project is run by the Department of Municipal Youth Work and supported by approximately 150 volunteers every year. In 2017, more than 3,300 children from varied backgrounds and with different abilities participated in Mini Regensburg. In past years, following requests from participating children, the event has increased its focus on the inclusion of children with disabilities through specialized activities and tailored to reach out to civil society organizations and families of children with disabilities. Participation in the event is affordable (15 euros for three weeks), but free access passes are provided to children from very disadvantaged backgrounds.

### Lessons learned

- Only well-rested and relaxed adults can work effectively with children. Therefore, it is important to provide regular breaks in a quiet space (such as a separate break room) for the supporting adults.
- When they first come to the event, children are not always prepared to make decisions. Therefore, it is important to train the staff on how to support children to build their self-confidence.
- Children with disabilities and children from vulnerable backgrounds face many barriers to participate and therefore must be specifically identified and invited.

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**Further information:** [Website](#)

## 7 Iran, Evaz Fars: Mother and Child Section, Andisheh City Library

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** No



### Goals, strategy and results

One of the main strategies of creating a more child-friendly city in Evaz has been to engage citizens in the improvement of the existing facilities for children. Noting that the City Library was not regularly used by children, it was proposed in 2011 to establish a Mother and Child Section in the library. The city created a dedicated space for children with daily activities such as book readings, storytelling, play and arts and crafts. More than 70 children, accompanied by family members, benefit from the space daily. The activities have now been extended to take place outdoors in an adjacent park, and the library is being expanded. Some of the activities have been replicated in surrounding rural areas.

### Lessons learned

- The central location of the library provides easy access for children and families. In addition, the adjacent park attracts a lot of children.
- Naming the section 'Mother and Child' discouraged fathers from participating. Learning from this experience, the new extension will be named 'Parents and Child'.
- The library needs more learning materials for children with intellectual or physical disabilities and to apply more innovative ways to attract migrant children.

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## 8 Iran, Yazd: The Qiam Street family walking project

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** No

### Goals, strategy and results

The Qiam Street family walking project, organized during Ramadan in 2019, closed off one of the main historic streets of the city from traffic to create a safe and enjoyable public space for families. The programme offered more than 50 activities, including street theatre, live music and participatory workshops on topics such as robotics, games, books and storytelling. The aim of the project was to create an open, non-discriminatory space for children and families to enjoy community life and to include the migrant communities living in the city.

### Lessons learned

- The programme was organized on 25 consecutive nights, which required a suitable management and coordination team and coordination between several city authorities.
- For future events, children should be part of the design process to define what activities they would like to include.

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## 9 Iran, Zarand: Dyarino, a city for childhood dreams

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** No

### Goals, strategy and results

Dyarino is a cross-cutting project to improve the quality and accessibility of services for every child, with a focus on:

- Capacity building for strengthening inter-agency synergies, with focus on both governmental and non-governmental organizations;
- Developing the capacities of professionals working with children;
- Upgrading and developing the quality of kindergartens and early childhood education facilities;
- Empowering parents as a prerequisite of children's growth;
- Improving the learning environments at home.

A longitudinal study has been set up to measure the impact of the project. Following the implementation, the project has significantly improved availability of different services and facilities, including child centres (from 60 to 110), child-friendly parks (from 0 to 7), participatory organizations (from 4 to 25) and children's festivals (from 0 to 16). Early childhood education coverage in the city has improved from 70 to 96 per cent. More than 4,000 parents have been trained in parenting skills. Following interest from other communities in Iran, some of the activities have been replicated in other cities.

### Lessons learned

- Training community facilitators and providing the opportunity for local organizations to partner on projects for children have been important contributors to the success of the initiative.

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## 10 Lebanon, Bar Elias: Co-designed child-friendly infrastructure

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** No

### Goals, strategy and results

The intervention in Bar Elias was the result of a British Academy-funded research project led by Professor Henrietta Moore at the Institute for Global Prosperity, University College London, and her team, which includes local collaborators and researchers at the American University of Beirut and an NGO, Catalytic Action. The city has been highly affected by the Syrian crisis and the influx of migrants, which has compromised access to public spaces for the most vulnerable groups. Through a participatory process involving locals and refugees from Syria and Palestine, the lack of safe public spaces was identified as an issue that needed to be addressed. The project was implemented in May 2019 in collaboration with University College of London and the American University of Beirut. The project recruited local researchers (citizen scientists) of both local and refugee background who were trained on social research, research methods, ethics and data, participatory research, design thinking and human centred approach, and public engagement.

The space for the intervention, the entrance road to Bar Elias, was chosen in a participatory workshop with the local community. Through different participatory methodologies, the citizen scientists worked together with residents to develop solutions to some of the problems identified. The interventions were spread along the road and aimed at making the street accessible for all and providing safe spaces for children and families. Ramps to access sidewalks were added, along with floor games, playful seating and shaded areas. Part of the intervention also consisted of rehabilitating a dilapidated public park adjacent to the street. Whenever possible, children participated in the implementation of the project.

The spatial outcomes of the project have been highly appreciated by the local community. By using local materials and skills, the outcomes can be easily maintained and replicated in other areas nearby.

### Lessons learned

- The use of local materials and skills to build the spatial intervention was very important to ensure that the local community would not feel the project is detached from the local context.
- Participation needs to be highly valued and adequate time and resources must be allocated to it. A lot of time and resources are needed to ensure all groups participate.

**Contact:** Catalytic Action, Riccardo Luca Conti | riccardo.luca.conti@catalyticaction.org

**Further information:** [Video](#) and Catalytic Action website

## 11 Portugal, Fundão: Territory Houses – Sense Places

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Candidate

### Goals, strategy and results

The objective of the concept of ‘Territory Houses – Sense Places’ is to highlight the value of traditional knowledge, ancient traditions and local customs. These houses, or cultural monuments, are designed to facilitate community development, as well as conserve and disseminate the cultural heritage and history of Fundão and the Beira Baixa region.

The Territory Houses are part of the Educational Visits Network, which was set up five years ago by the Municipality of Fundão with the support of the Parish Councils and other institutions of the region. This network provides children and young people with the opportunity to combine playful and informative education with the cultural environment. Buildings (e.g. schools) were rehabilitated and restored

in the various parishes, and different thematic tours were organized to familiarize children with local culinary traditions, local crafts, local history and poetry.

### Lessons learned

- The Territory Houses serve as an introduction and training for new audiences, raise interest in preserving local cultural traditions and create a strong sense of belonging.

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**Further information:** [Video](#)

## 12 Republic of South Korea, Gunsan City: Children’s Rights Plaza, Playground Improvement Project – Development and operation of ‘play activists’

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes

### Goals, strategy and results

The City of Gunsan has engaged in several projects under the umbrella of children’s right to play and leisure. Breaking out of the stereotype that ‘children play on the playground and adults play on the plaza’, the Susong Neighbourhood Park was remodelled with the help of the Municipal Government and experts from nearby universities to become the first plaza celebrating child rights in Korea. Through a consultative process with children and young people, a cafeteria for youth activities (with flea markets, discussions), the ‘Gunsan History Road’ and various architectural structures for all age groups to rest and play were established. Ten children and young people operate as the steering committee for the Plaza.

Together with academics, teachers, parents and children, the municipal government also developed the first playground environment checklist



to refurbish and reactivate the city's often neglected playgrounds. The city evaluated 74 playgrounds, and 10 were remodelled to reflect the needs of each age group or enabling thematic play, including adventure, ecology and hill-climbing. Additionally, Kunsan National University trained 50 'play activists' whose role is to support children's play and creativity in these playgrounds.

### Lessons learned

- It is important to ensure that adult stakeholders truly understand what meaningful child participation entails. A solution would be to create more opportunities for capacity building at the municipal level and to draft resolutions.



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- Partnerships with a wide range of stakeholders, such as academia, the private sector and civil society organizations, were key to the success of this project.
- Training accompanying adults, such as mothers, grandmothers or adults working with children, to become play activists was an asset in the development of a new play culture in the city.

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**Further information:** [Video](#)

## 13 Spain, Fuenlabrada: Fuenlicolonias Project from the perspective of children's rights

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes



### Goals, structure and results

The Fuenlicolonias project was developed by the Fuenlabrada City Council and has been operating for more than 15 years. The project opens schools during school holidays, so parents can enrol their children in socio-educational activities and facilitate their balancing of family, work and personal life. To ensure equal access, the venues for Fuenlicolonias are distributed across the city, low-income families' participation is supported financially, methodologies are adapted to different groups of children, and access is open to children with disabilities, who are ensured specific support.

Through games and play, children learn about child rights, to express their ideas and listen to others, and to strengthen their interpersonal skills in a spirit of non-discrimination and solidarity. Participants have the opportunity to engage in recreational and educational activities, or in excursions to nature, a swimming pool or other municipal services. In addition, workshops that promote social values and peer relationships are organized. All Fuenlicolonias have a yearly theme

related to life in the city. All activities are needs-based and open to suggestions and the active engagement of all participants. At the end of each day, participants are invited to reflect on and evaluate the day, thus constantly improving the programme to be most relevant for children.

### Lessons learned

- Flexibility in the registration process, the cost and payment policy and the development of the programme has been crucial to be able to respond to the needs of different families. Digital registration tools should be developed further to facilitate the process.
- A relationship with the different departments of the local government is essential to involve a multidisciplinary team of professionals.
- It is crucial to develop a sound child-safeguarding policy and standard operating procedures for emergencies.

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**Further information:** Website



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## 14 Spain, Madrid: 'Casa Grande' play and parenting spaces

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes



### Goals, strategy and results

Play is crucial for children's cognitive and social development, and emotional bonds created in the early childhood are crucial for their future well-being. Therefore, the Casa Grande project in Madrid provides four welcoming and stimulating spaces where families with children under the age of 4 are invited to play freely, discover, experience, learn, create, express, relate and socialize. The Casa Grande project is built on the belief that public efforts are needed in the early stages of life to support parents in building interpersonal connections with their children to support children's learning, autonomy and resilience.

The centres opened with very basic equipment to allow families to be involved in the creation of the spaces and to enhance their feeling of ownership and being 'at home'. The centres provide an easily accessible space where parents feel supported and accompanied in overcoming challenges such as loneliness, but where they also can develop their parenting skills. The facilities are open to everyone and require no registration. The project has been very well received: participation has been growing from 1,639 families in 2018 to more than 2,400 in the first half of 2019. Citizens have requested the opening of 16 more Casa Grande centres throughout the city.

### Lessons learned

- The presence of a team of professionals is of great importance to the families. Expertise in early childhood development (e.g. midwives or lactation consultants) has been well received.
- The proximity of the facility is crucial to its use: 80 per cent of families that use Casa Grande lives nearby. Therefore, there is a need to build a bigger network of facilities across the city. Ideally, some of

the centres would be increasingly run by parents themselves.

- Opening hours need to be adjusted to the needs of families.
- Securing the participation and involvement of male parental figures is challenging (although their participation is increasing).
- Spreading the information about the facilities should be targeted to the neighbourhood. Word of mouth is often the best strategy.
- The network of facilities could be strengthened, whereby they share information, resources and activities with each other.
- Families of the neighbourhood should be involved earlier in the design and implementation process.

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**Further information:** [Website](#)



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## 15 Switzerland, Arbon: Celebrating the 30th anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes

### Goals, strategy and results

In cooperation with interested organizations, associations and private persons, the Society Department (Bereich Gesellschaft) of the City of Arbon launched a series of child- and youth-friendly events to mark the 30th anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. They included educational offers, games and leisure activities, and attractions in public spaces. Each activity focused on a specific child right. This way, the city raised awareness of children's rights in general, while also allowing for in-depth discussions and debate about individual rights. The 30th anniversary of the Convention was the ideal starting point and had the potential to unlock unused resources. It strengthened the cooperation between a wide range of actors who all work with or for children and young people.

### Lessons learned

- Coordinating and keeping project partners motivated and involved throughout the project, while adapting to changing expectations and resources, can be challenging.
- An event such as the 30th Anniversary of the Convention can be a great starting point for strengthening cooperation between different stakeholders.

**Contact:** Municipality of Arbon, Noe Rottmann | noe.rotmann@arbon.ch

## 16 Switzerland, Kriens: Creating a leisure facility together with children, young people and adults

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes



### Goals, strategy and results

When planning a new leisure facility, the City of Kriens decided that the planning and set-up of the park should be developed from the beginning in a participatory way with all relevant interest groups and most importantly children, adolescents and parents. To allow for the interests of different groups to be considered and implemented quickly, the park area was divided into sectors and a consultative process was organized for each sector based on its planned use.

To facilitate children's participation, offers were requested from different playground equipment companies. Based on these plans, three model playgrounds were built. During an on-site planning day, 70 children discussed in groups what equipment they would like to have included. Following these preliminary wishes, children assessed the three model playgrounds, chose their favourite option and made improvements to the winning plan. The project was executed within a timeline of five months from the initial planning day.

The final park has been well received and is very popular, well looked after and handled with care, which considerably eases its maintenance. The project's success was based on a clear mandate from the city council for a participatory planning and implementation process and fast implementation, which allowed children and others involved to see the results within a short time frame, and on the involvement of the community association, which plays an important role in maintaining the park.

Additionally, the City of Kriens used the opportunity of creating the leisure facility to introduce a professional safety management system for playgrounds. Since the park's opening, specialists are inspecting and monitoring all publicly accessible playgrounds and facilities regularly and systematically.

### Lessons learned

- The short time frame between planning and implementation made children feel that their inputs were respected and allowed them to enjoy the results of their contributions.
- The community association is very involved in the maintenance of the park, which builds local ownership. The community association meets every four months to develop new ideas and raise potential concerns. Additionally, children, parents and residents participate in an annual maintenance day.

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**Further information:** [Video](#)

## 17 Switzerland, Kriens: Schappe Kulturquadrat – A lively place of culture and encounters

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes



### Goals, strategy and results

The Schappe Kulturquadrat (cultural centre) is a lively venue for cultural encounters in a former silk spinning mill in the heart of the City of Kriens. The aim of the centre is to make culture accessible to children and young people. In addition to offering cultural activities such as concerts, performances, exhibitions and music classes, the venue hosts a youth club and a youth information desk during the week. The different cultural actors operating in the centre, including children and young people, collaborate to organize events such as an annual children's festival. Many rooms at the venue are also available for all citizens to rent for their own activities.

### Lessons learned

- Cultural centres are kept alive through close collaboration and co-creation with their users. Therefore, the city is constantly collecting feedback and open to new ideas.
- To facilitate the participation of different groups, the centre has an on-site contact person who can be reached easily.

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**Further information:** [Website](#)

## 18 Switzerland, Reinach: Mischeli inter-generational park

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes



### Goals, strategy and results

In 2010, the local government of Reinach approved a land use plan for the Mischeli neighbourhood. The plan included the development of an inter-generational park to provide an environment that welcomes people of all ages and backgrounds, to foster respect and acceptance and to combat loneliness and isolation. Following the land use planning process, a task force consisting of civil society organizations, youth workers and residents was established to coordinate and develop the services for the area. The public, including children, were consulted throughout the renovation process.

The renovated park includes a community centre with a café, a youth centre, rooms for events and offices, a public marketplace and a playground with equipment for children, young people and the elderly.

The park facilitates exchanges between children and adults, such as the 'internet café for the elderly', where children teach internet use to adults. During a moderated workshop, children, residents, the municipal police and the local children's office developed a joint code of conduct for the park.

### Lessons learned

- The park was developed in multiple steps, which allowed for improvements based on feedback from residents. A newsletter on the progress was circulated regularly, which allowed residents to follow the development and informed them on who to contact regarding their concerns.
- Engaging and motivating residents was important to develop a sense of ownership and alignment with the expectations of users.

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## 19 Switzerland, Wettingen: Wettingen kids are playing outdoors

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes



### Goals, strategy and results

To encourage families to spend more time outdoors and meet with other families, the City of Wettingen published a playground map (both online and in print) with all public playgrounds of the city. In consultation with the department of construction and planning, 17 playgrounds were chosen. The map is available in public places, such as local libraries, and shared in local print and social media.

### Lessons learned

- The playground map is a simple project but can potentially have a positive effect in encouraging families to make better use of existing play facilities. The playgrounds are open for all and suitable for families of all income levels.

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**Further information:** [Website](#)

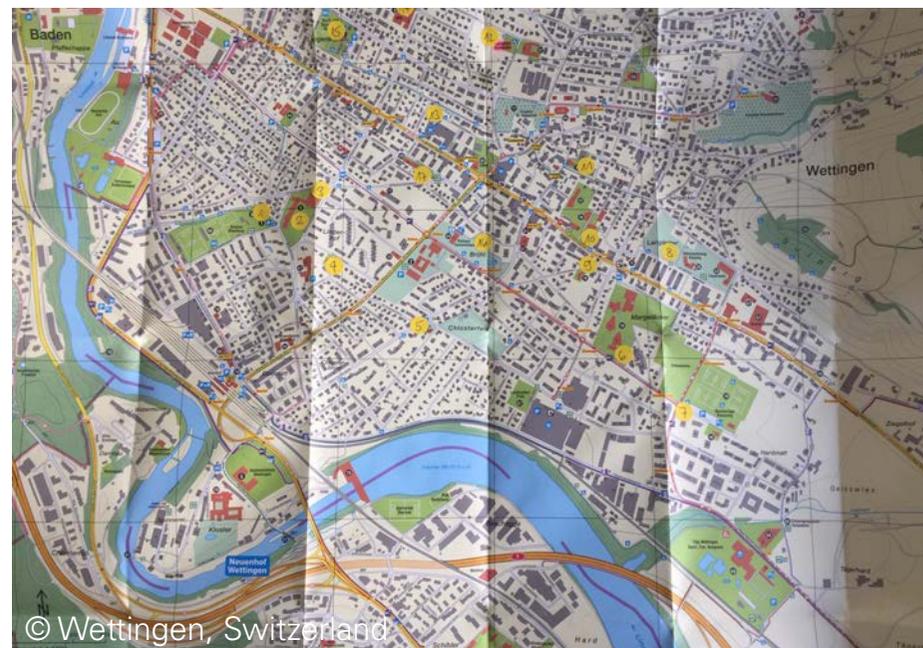
## 20 Ukraine, Lviv: National youth event 'MoloDvizh'

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Candidate



### Goals, strategy and results

On the occasion of Lviv being named the 'Youth Capital of Ukraine' in 2018, the city organized the first national-level and youth-led event on youth policy. The idea was to offer an alternative platform to share experiences, discuss current issues affecting young people, build the capacity of the youth sector and make recommendations to the



national youth strategy. More than 1,500 participants from Ukraine and Europe participated in the event to discuss formal and non-formal education, entrepreneurship and employment, mobility and migration, and youth participation in local governance. The event was successful in raising the issue of youth engagement in the development of Ukraine and has now become an annual event. The event resulted in recommendations on key topics that are now being implemented nationally.

### Lessons learned

- Indifference and reluctance to change create a challenging environment for advocacy, but young people's creative ideas, new outlook and desire to change the established order of things can become a driving force for the overall development of society. Listening to them is especially crucial when society is undergoing change, like in Ukraine.

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**Further information:** [Website](#)

## 21 Ukraine, Shyroke: Together we can more

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Candidate



### Goals, strategy and results

The goal of the 'Together we can more' initiative was to mobilize young people to become active members of their communities by establishing a youth volunteer team in each community of Shyroke to organize leisure activities for children. The aim was also to provide young people with meaningful activities and opportunities for recreation even when the community had limited resources. Financial



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support for the volunteer activities was sought from foundations and non-governmental organizations. With the collaboration of volunteers and external sponsors, the community has been able to organize several children's camps and leisure activities for hundreds of children.

### Lessons learned

- Reaching out to young people through social media proved effective.
- Volunteer work needs to be supported and coordinated by an adult.
- Children often know best what they need. Therefore, it is good to involve them in the running of leisure activities.
- Even when available resources are limited, children's access to leisure activities can be through improved alternative sources, such as foundations or volunteer work.

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## 22 United Arab Emirates, Sharjah: Sharjah Children

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes

### Goals, strategy and results

Since 1985, the Sharjah Children's centres have brought together a wide range of actors working with and for children in the Emirate. The aim of the centres is to design and deliver programmes, activities and events to unleash the potential of children and young people, in collaboration with local and international partners. In addition to offering various activities related to self-development, the arts, sports, media, computer science, theatre and music, the centres run the Sharjah Children's Parliament, organized every two years with the participation of children from children's centres across the Emirate; the Arab Children's Forum, held every two years with the participation of children from Arab countries; and the Sharjah Children Biennial, an international children's art exhibition.

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## 23 United Arab Emirates, Sharjah: Afaaq Leadership Camp

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes

### Goals, strategy and results

The Afaaq Leadership Camp was launched to empower young women, focusing on girls aged 14 to 17 years. The programme includes training on topics such as leadership, self-esteem, problem solving and team building. One day of the camp is dedicated to volunteer work. Participation in the camp is free and open to participants with disabilities, whose needs are accommodated. Following their participation, many camp graduates have become committed to reaching their goals and engaging in community volunteering.

### Lessons learned

- It can be challenging to encourage participants to go out of their comfort zone in a community that promotes the opposite.
- To ensure the results of the training are long-lasting, it is recommended to organize follow-up training.

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## 24 United Kingdom, Leeds: Child Friendly City Centre

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** No

### Goals, strategy and results

Leeds's ambition to be a Child Friendly City began in 2012. One of the 12 wishes developed by children and young people was to make the city centre welcoming and safe, with places to have fun and play. A competition for under-18s to suggest ways to make Leeds city centre more child-friendly attracted over 350 entries. Ten winners were chosen, and the local authority worked with city centre partners (public, private and third sector) on developing the winning ideas and making them a reality. Projects included a children's festival, an indoor play space, a peace garden and roller discos.

The main task for the project was to translate the children's ideas into events and activities that were deliverable and affordable, for both the local authority and families. Partners made significant contributions in terms of staff time and event space, and activities for all the winning suggestions were successfully delivered and well received in the summer of 2018. Partners saw the benefits of bringing children, young people and families into the city centre, and have continued to fund similar events beyond the life of the project. The ongoing legacy of the project is strong relationships with city centre partners and city development colleagues who now have the needs of children and families at the forefront of their thinking about the development and design of Leeds city centre.

### Lessons learned

- The project demonstrated that where partnership work is strong, a small amount of investment can deliver an impressive range of activities. Articulating and demonstrating the benefits of the project also brings in private sector partners who are interested in investing locally.

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**Further information:** [Video](#)



## 25 USA, Boulder: Child-friendly city map

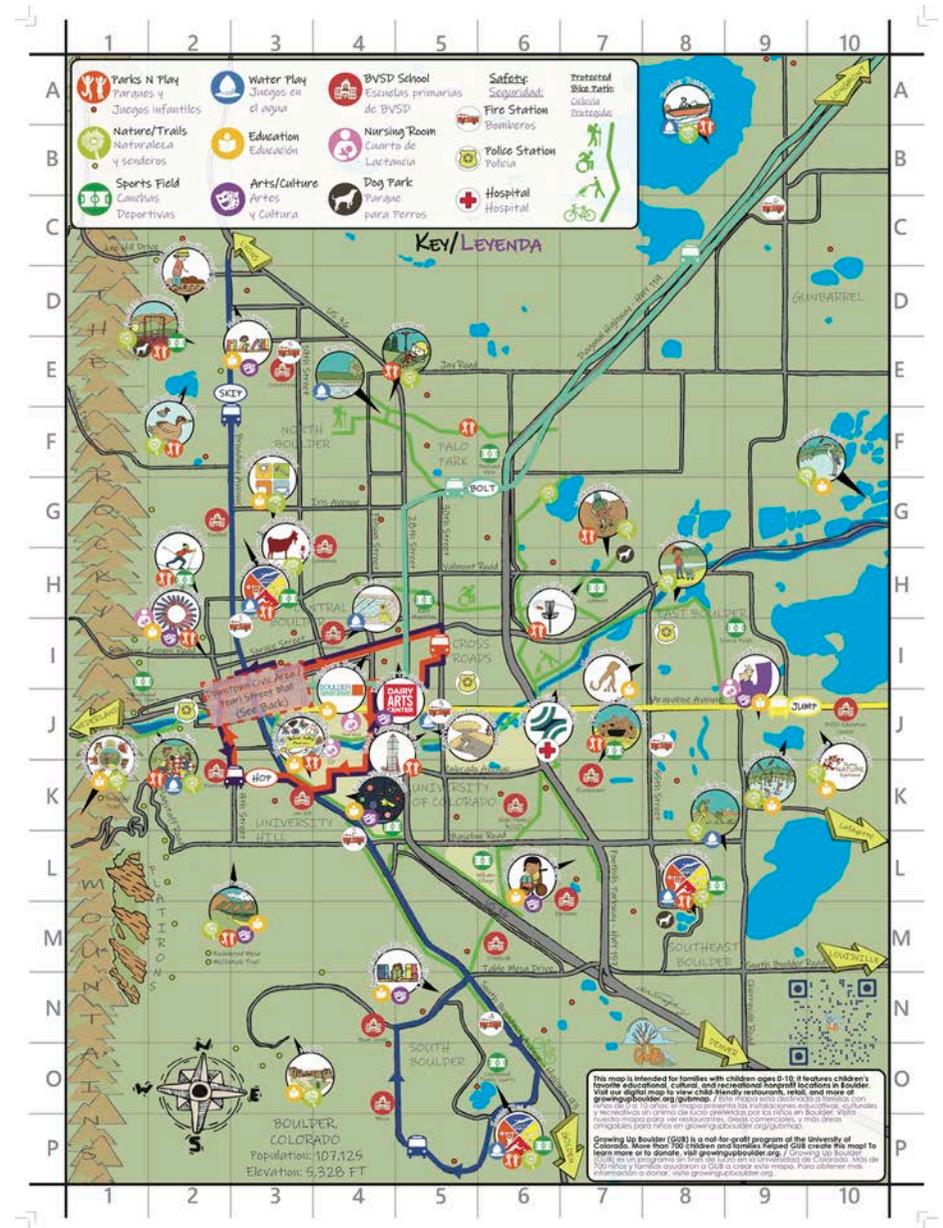
UNICEF Child Friendly City: No

### Goals, strategy and results

Growing Up Boulder (GUB) worked with nearly 1,000 children, parents and caregivers to co-create the country's first printed child-friendly city map. GUB partnered with 42 stakeholder groups in Boulder, including city departments, non-profit organizations and schools, to design a bilingual map anchored in the values of diversity, inclusion, community engagement, collaboration and celebration. It featured low-cost cultural, educational and recreational activities and locations. Extensive outreach through in-person engagements and online surveys involved many young people and families, 52 per cent of whom were from marginalized communities. An iterative process collected feedback for 27 drafts of the map before 10,000 maps were printed in April 2019.

The map was sponsored by the Boulder Library Foundation and Boulder Community Health, and the Boulder Jewish Community Center donated its space for the GUB celebration. The free, bilingual map was sent home with all students in the Boulder Valley School District (BVSD) public elementary schools and preschools before summer vacation, distributed to non-profit map partners, and made available in public spaces throughout the city.

Based on the positive responses of children, parents, city staff, community organizations and academia, the map tapped an unmet need. The map project has received acclaim both nationally and internationally. The Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) of San Francisco is considering creating a child-friendly transit map, and the City of Denver is hoping to create a child-friendly bike map. In addition, the Transportation Department in Boulder's school district will use the map to further the work they already do on active transport. The undergraduate students who designed the map won the 'People's Choice Award' from the University of Colorado's Environmental Design Program.



### Lessons learned

- Children appreciate child-friendly, fun and creative methods; therefore, GUB used art, poetry and field trips in its consultative process.
- Reaching out to vulnerable communities requires extra effort. Children should be proactively contacted in places where they spend time, instead of expecting them to come to the project leaders.
- A short time frame is especially important when working with children, to allow them to see and enjoy the fruits of their contributions.
- The creation of a child-friendly map can serve as an entry point to discuss barriers to access, such as entrance fees, transit challenges or safety concerns.

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## 26 Viet Nam, Ho Chi Minh City: Playtime Festival

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Candidate

### Goals, strategy and results

With the Support of the Institut Français in Viet Nam, the Playtime Festival brought together government partners, architects, urbanists, students and residents to discuss diverse issues affecting an increasingly urban environment. The festival consisted of temporary playgrounds, co-designed by French and Vietnamese architects and built using local materials. Partners, such as artists, teachers and entrepreneurs, were invited to organize panel discussions, creative workshops, film screenings, boat tours, sketch/photo/poem tours and flea markets for children and families, on topics such as nature and the environment, sustainable architecture and urbanism.

### Lessons learned

- Involving the community and people from different backgrounds in the creation of the festival ensured that the programme was diverse and reached a wide audience. It also strengthened community ownership.

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# Category 6.

## Child-friendly governance

Includes the implementation of a situation analysis, collecting data and ensuring strategic planning and budgeting for children

18 entries

## 1 Bangladesh, Dhaka: Pro-children urban liveability – Interactive mapping and app for data-driven decision making

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** No

### Goals, strategy and results

Dhaka, the capital of Bangladesh, is a megacity with almost 9 million inhabitants. The fast pace of urbanization is causing many challenges. Along with other problems such as traffic congestion, deteriorating living conditions and pollution, the child-friendliness of Dhaka has been questioned by different stakeholders. This project aims to assess Dhaka's child-friendliness in detail and represent how different parts of the city are performing, focusing on children under the age of 5 and pregnant women.

The project, implemented by the Development Initiative for Social Advancement (DISA) and Creative IT Limited, aims to create an interactive web page and mobile app to visualize the performance of the entire city, taking into consideration different indicators related to health care, education, nutrition, early childhood development, leisure facilities, parks, playgrounds, cultural activities, security and mobility. The map will consider the child-friendliness of infrastructure and the portion of the budget specially directed to children. The platform will also provide a situation analysis for different parts of the city and explore possible interventions in each area.

To establish an understanding of the living conditions for children and parents in Dhaka, the team has surveyed almost 400 children and parents and around 50 city officials, policy makers and concerned authorities. The project team has mapped all facilities available for children in the inner and outer city to collect information on those facilities, including information on entry fees, accessibility, security and child-friendly infrastructure.

### Lessons learned

- The project engages the community in assessing living conditions and provides accurate, timely information.
- Disaggregation of data by area enables decision makers to identify interventions for each area of the city.

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**Further information:** [Website](#)

## 2 Brazil, Sao Paulo: Technical mission to Germany

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes

### Goals, strategy and results

The technical mission carried out by the Alana Institute's 'Criança e Natureza' programme is a study trip to Germany, designed for government managers to understand measures conducive to creating a child-friendly city, with a focus on children's connection to nature, outdoor play and independent mobility. The programme offers an opportunity for local government representatives to learn about the urban policy and design of two German cities, Freiburg and Griesheim.

The visits have already proven to be effective in promoting child-friendly policy. Following the first technical mission, a partnership was formalized between the city of Jundiaí and Alana Institute's programme, with the objective of supporting public policies that favour the transformation of the city into a more child-friendly environment focusing on mobility, public spaces and access to green areas. With the leadership of the city's mayor, a working group was created, composed of members of 13 local government departments. The city's Early Childhood Plan and Master Plan were reformulated to be more sensitive to children's needs. The collaboration with the city of Jundiaí has also sparked interest from other Brazilian cities.

### Lessons learned

- It is challenging to establish collaboration between different sectors of the local government, to change the mentality of the wider public and to secure financing alternatives.
- Organizing a technical mission does not require a lot of resources but is effective in changing the mindset of local government officials.

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**Further information:** [Website](#)



### 3 Croatia, Zagreb: Breastfeeding-friendly city programme

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes



### Goals, strategy and results

Zagreb's breastfeeding-friendly city programme was launched in 2015 to coordinate numerous activities to promote and improve breastfeeding practices following in the footsteps of the Baby Friendly Hospitals Initiative, a joint World Health Organization and UNICEF initiative. The objective of the programme is to increase the percentage of children who are breastfed up to 6 months of age or more by promoting the benefits of breastfeeding to pregnant women during pregnancy and following childbirth, strengthening cooperation with other stakeholders in providing support to mothers, and improving the availability of services in support of breastfeeding.

Several activities have been introduced in cooperation with the media, NGOs and local health-care institutions. The implementation activities focused on four areas: 1) improving awareness of the benefits of breastfeeding through posters and flyers, social media, a video campaign, expert meetings and public debates, and a campaign logo; 2) advancing breastfeeding in communities by establishing breastfeeding support groups and courses for pregnant women and increasing the number of counselling centres; 3) training professionals; and 4) improving access to breastfeeding facilities in public spaces.

Following the implementation of the programme, the city has established six counselling centres for breastfeeding and childcare and a specialized Lactation Counselling Centre in the Sveti Duh Clinical Hospital, where mothers can seek assistance on any breastfeeding-related health issues. A breastfeeding guidebook has been published and is available to all women in Croatia.

The programme involves several partners, including local health centres, professionals such as nurses, paediatricians, neonatologists,

gynaecologists and psychotherapists, and civil society organizations that support breastfeeding. The city financially supports organizations that focus on breastfeeding. The programme has received positive reactions from citizens and improved breastfeeding rates (the percentage of children breastfed between 3 to 6 months of age increased from 49 per cent to 61 per cent between 2014 and 2016).

#### Lessons learned

- By working with a wide range of partners and using a variety of methodologies, the city has been able to approach mothers and their partners more effectively.

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## 4 France, Elancourt: The power of a City Hall serving children

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes

#### Goals, strategy and results

In implementing the Child Friendly Cities Initiative, The City of Elancourt has emphasized the importance of involving the entire city hall in the process, to ensure wide political and administrative buy-in and a comprehensive approach. When the initiative was launched, all local government departments were invited to develop projects that contribute to the well-being of children. This has helped local government departments to identify their added value to the well-being of children, bringing them a sense of meaning and improving their motivation.

The CFCI has become a collaborative effort between all local government departments and an integral part of yearly planning and budget discussions. Continued meetings between departments and the appointment of a CFCI focal point in City Hall has led to the creation of new, cross-departmental projects.

#### Lessons learned

- Ensuring the commitment of City Hall and the local leadership is crucial to the success of the CFCI.
- Involving different local government departments is important to create innovative, cross-sectoral projects to benefit children and young people.

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## 5 Germany, Regensburg: Jugendhilfeplanung – Planning local youth services with child participation

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes

#### Goals, strategy and results

As part of the Child Friendly Cities Initiative, the Department of Municipal Youth Work of the City of Regensburg undertook a process called 'Jugendhilfeplanung' to develop a multi-year strategic plan to improve the city's child-friendliness. The main goal was to involve children and young people in identifying issues of importance and, together with professionals, turn the findings into a strategic plan. The aim was to move from daily evaluation of the work to a more strategic approach that looks at the bigger picture of child well-being.

A situation analysis was done combining existing data and statistics, questionnaires to children aged between 8 and 14 during the 'Mini Regensburg' event (190 respondents), a survey to professionals working with children and young people, and a youth survey developed together with the local youth council (1,249 respondents). The CFCI project team, the local youth council and different departments of the local government were involved in turning the findings and recommendations of the analysis into a strategic plan that includes an insight into the living conditions, needs, strengths and weaknesses of Regensburg. This plan, and the associated budget, was approved by the City Council in 2019.

The analysis gave good insight into the living conditions of children and young people in Regensburg. For example, the findings highlighted the need to better include children from vulnerable backgrounds. To tackle the issue, the action plan proposes several measures, such as establishing new youth centres and services in parts of the city that have least access; more discounts to services and leisure activities for low-income families; and efforts to better include children with disabilities in municipal youth work.

### Lessons learned

- Support from community organizations and other networks was important to mobilize children and young people to fill in the survey. Schools (headmasters and teachers), social workers and members of the youth council were all important in advocating for the importance of taking part. Local businesses donated gift certificates to a prize draw for all survey respondents to give young people an incentive to participate.
- Involving different partners in the design of the survey was important to ensure different viewpoints and perspectives were included.

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**Further information:** [Website "Seiersberg offen fuer alle\(s\)" \(SOFA\)](#)

## 6 Iceland, Kopavogur: Dashboard for monitoring children's quality of life

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Candidate



### Goals, strategy and results

The municipality of Kopavogur, in cooperation with UNICEF Iceland and the Ministry of Social Affairs and Children, has developed an index to monitor children's quality of life in the municipality. The project was sparked from the notion that international indicators to monitor

children's health and well-being are not always adapted to the needs of high-income countries: child mortality rates are usually low, and most children have access to clean water, but children are increasingly dealing with emerging challenges such as mental health and increased screen time.

The aim of the dashboard is to provide systematic, timely and holistic data about children's well-being, which would help the local government to decide where to focus efforts and to assess whether interventions are creating the desired impact. The Child Friendly City Index is based on the four core principles in the Convention on the Rights of the Child and has four sub-indexes: equity; education; health and well-being; and security and protection and communal participation. Each sub-index consists of 5–11 indicators that can be examined individually and be tracked over time. Data are being collected by a private company, but the project will compile the existing data into an interactive dashboard and convert numerical data into an index to help monitor children's quality of life. This information will be made available to everyone in the municipality.

The dashboard has already sparked a lot of interest. The World Council on City Data and the OECD have expressed an interest in using the dashboard. Thus, it has the potential to become a widely used comparable index on children's quality of life in high-income countries.

### Lessons learned

- International data on children's well-being and quality of life are not always adapted to challenges of high-income countries.
- By using already existing data in innovative ways, local governments can monitor both the needs of children and young people and the effectiveness of their interventions.

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## 7 Iran, Yazd: First short film festival for world heritage cities

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** No

### Goals, strategy and results

The historical city centre of Yazd was recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2017. In 2019, the city took part for the first time in the international short film competition hosted by the Organization of World Heritage Cities. Two categories of this competition were specifically targeting children and young people between the ages of 14 to 17 and 18 to 21 years of age, with the theme 'One day in a World Heritage City'.

In this context, the City of Yazd (in collaboration with the Yazd Youth Cinema Association, General Bureau of Cultural Heritage and General Bureau of Islamic Culture and Guidance) opened a public call for submissions for children and young people, boosted by advertisements. Local cinema masters offered support and mentoring to children and young people, and a one-day training was organized. Forty short films were submitted, one of which was selected to be presented to the international jury. The project had the important role of offering children and young people the opportunity to introduce their city to the world. It was also an opportunity for them to be better acquainted with the history and cultural heritage of their living environment, and thus to feel more connected to the city they live in.

### Lessons learned

- Culture can be used to enhance the feeling of ownership and belonging.
- Activities and training should be free and accessible to everyone.
- Coordination and support from leadership are important to ensure successful collaboration.

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## 8 Nepal, Biratnagar: Child Friendly Local Governance programme

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** No

*This project was also submitted to category 2 and 3.*

### Goals, strategy and results

Launched in 2007, the aim of the Child Friendly Local Governance programme is to ensure that every mother and child has the right to a healthy and safe birth; every child is registered at birth; every child has access to adequate nutritious food, health care, family life, a safe and healthy environment, opportunities for education, sports and entertainment; every child is protected from violence and abuse; and every child has opportunities to participate meaningfully in family, social and institutional activities and express themselves freely.

To this end, the City of Biratnagar introduced several strategies to improve the living conditions for children and families by establishing regular coordination mechanisms to support collaboration between local government departments and other stakeholders; developing an overarching strategy for child-friendly local governance; allocating budgets and resources to projects related to children and young people; establishing participatory mechanisms; establishing monitoring and evaluation structures to track the progress; and raising awareness about the programme.

The Child Friendly Local Governance Programme has achieved promising results. For example, as of May 2016, all children below the age of 1 received a complete dose of immunization (up from 83 per cent); all children below the age of 4 years are enrolled in and regularly attend early child development centres (up from 79 per cent); all children of grade 1 schooling age are enrolled in a school (up from 89.25 per cent); and children are represented in all City Council meetings of children's interest.



© Biratnagar, Nepal

One of the major successes of the initiative was the reduction of child labour, rescuing 10,000 children and young people from hazardous work.

### Lessons learned

- Inclusion of neighbourhood organizations ('tole') was crucial to the success of the initiative. They not only implemented projects at the community level and ensured the participation of all households within the city, but also raised awareness about the programme.
- Paying attention to the needs of minorities was an important factor contributing to the success of the initiative. For example, engaging Muslim communities helped to increase their schooling rates.

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## 9 Nepal, Sunwal: Child Friendly Local Governance – Children decide for children

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** No

### Goals, strategy and results

The overall goal of the Child Friendly Local Governance programme was to make Sunwal more child-friendly by improving access to and the child-friendliness of services; institutionalizing child participation into public decision-making; establishing a committee in the local government to coordinate child-friendly action and children's participation; setting up a desk and suggestion box in all private and public offices related to children; changing the practice of unplanned budget allocation and expenses; making child-friendly strategies, investment policies and a periodic plan; and improving infrastructure to be more child-friendly.

As a first step, the city prepared a report on the status of children's well-being by consolidating existing data based on national indicators. This was followed by the development of an investment plan, a child protection plan, a strategic plan and a children's emergency fund to support the most vulnerable children. A children's council was established, and focal points were appointed in all wards to ensure children and their communities were regularly informed and consulted. To achieve the programme's vision, the local government worked with civil society organizations, schools, teachers, parents, politicians and UNICEF.

As a result, the city has successfully combatted child marriage and child labour and increased resources for children in the local government's budget. Most importantly, it has brought children's voices into local decision-making processes and increased collaboration between different government sectors and other stakeholders, to the benefit of children.

## Lessons learned

- A commitment to child-friendliness is not enough; it needs to be followed by a clear strategy.
- Children's participation and commitment from the whole community are crucial to the success of the initiative.
- A good understanding of needs and the situation of children is important to achieve productive results.

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## 10 Philippines, Zamboanga: Break the Silence – END Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation!

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes

*This project was also submitted to category 4.*



## Goals, strategy and results

Child sexual abuse and exploitation is a global and national problem. As it is considered a taboo in most communities, the majority of cases often go unreported as victims and families choose to keep silent. The aim of the project Break the Silence is to end sexual abuse and exploitation of children in the City of Zamboanga by developing the capacity of stakeholders, key child protection players and community volunteers to prevent sexual abuse and exploitation and effectively manage cases. The project also raises awareness of the issue among the public through innovative, artistic advocacy using film animations and storytelling.

To address the issue, the city formed a multi-stakeholder group consisting of civil society organizations, government line agencies, faith-based organizations, children's groups and individual advocates. The aim was to bring the issue into the open, thus 'breaking the silence'. In addition, together with local Muslim community leaders, the group developed a culturally sensitive manual specifically adapted to the local Muslim communities, where the issue is often considered taboo and thus not reported.

The programme has successfully raised awareness and increased reporting on abuse and exploitation. Between 2013 and 2016, the number of reported cases rose from 197 to 596. The programme was effective in bringing about behavioural change in an innovative and creative way.

## Lessons learned

- Consolidated data on the issue would have been useful for tracking the implementation of the programme.

- Strategic partnerships and collaboration with other stakeholders, government agencies and non-governmental organizations would have been useful to avoid duplication.
- Regular multi-stakeholder meetings of case management teams are very effective in consolidating efforts and to identify potential gaps.

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**Further information:** [Video](#)

## 11 Portugal, Guimarães: Eco-Parlamento

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes

*This project was also submitted to category 2.*



### Goals, strategy and results

The Eco-Parlamento (Eco-Parliament) of Guimarães is promoted by the City of Guimarães and the Landscape Laboratory and is aimed at elementary and middle-school students. The programme is based on the concept of participatory democracy to promote reflection on the Sustainable Development Goals and the involvement of children and young people in environmental decisions concerning the city and country in which they live.

Students participating in the Eco-Parlamento are divided into teams, in which they have to develop proposals to tackle sustainability issues that they have identified in Guimarães, in line with the SMART principles (specific, measurable and attainable, realistic/relevant and time-bound). These proposals are then developed in three sessions with the support of technical experts and presented for a final vote in front of a jury consisting of children, representatives from the city and academia. The project builds children's and young people's soft skills in collaboration and democratic participation and increases their sensitivity to environmental and sustainability issues.

### Lessons learned

- Participation in democratic projects enhances soft skills and complements skills developed in formal education.
- As the competition does not include an elimination round, proposals can be continuously revised and improved, thus contributing to the learning of the participating children and young people. The voting mechanism could be improved to dissuade the sense of competition often arising between teams.

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**Further information:** [Landscape Laboratory website](#) and [video](#)



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## 12 Portugal, Lisbon: Participatory budgeting in schools

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes

### Goals, strategy and results

The City of Lisbon is introducing a model of participatory budgeting into local schools with a pilot started in 2019 and closing in 2020. An annually defined budget will be given to projects prepared and voted on by children and young people. The aim of the project is to increase understanding of participatory budgeting and active citizenship, increasing participation and engagement within the school environment and increasing dialogue between the school community, children and young people and the City Council.

Every school can nominate a maximum of five classes between grades 5 and 9 to work on proposals focusing on environmental sustainability put forward by the City Council. The participating classes will then work on further refining and adapting the proposals that will be subject to a vote within the school. The winning proposal of each school will receive a budget for implementation (10,000 euros for the first cycle). The project is still being implemented, but it is expected to raise awareness of sustainability issues among children and young people.

### Lessons learned

- Schools are often considered poorly equipped to tackle issues related to sustainability. This project provides a participatory and innovative way of raising awareness on sustainability.
- The financial commitment from the City Council is important to ensure the proposals put forward by children and young people are implemented.

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## 13 Korea, Wanju: CFCI strategic planning project development

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes

### Goals, strategy and results

As part of the Child Friendly Cities Initiative, the County of Wanju started a process to develop a strategic plan to improve the well-being of children and young people. The aim of the process was to strengthen partnerships between the public and private sectors and academia, develop policies together with children and young people, and engage the wider community in the development of a child-friendly city.

The process started with an analysis of the current child-rights situation, including an analysis of existing statistical data, budget allocations for children, child-related business, existing regulations and facilities. Surveys and a call for child-friendly policy recommendations were sent out to local schools, parents, civil society organizations and professionals working with children. Based on the results of the analysis, the city organized a round-table discussion with children and adults (50 participants from each group) to recommend priority areas for action. Local government departments turned the recommendations into a plan of action, which was subject to public feedback online. The final action plan will be implemented for the next three years.

### Lessons learned

- By focusing on a participatory process and partnership building, the process brought a wide range of stakeholders to work together on a shared vision and a joint plan.
- Engaging children and young people from the beginning of the process ensures that the plan is built on their needs, but their participation must be supported by training and enough time to be effective.



- Engaging the wider public in the process increased awareness and recognition of child rights among the wider community and stakeholders working with children (parents, teachers, public servants).

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## 14 Switzerland, Geneva: Action plan for promoting the rights of the child

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes



### Goals, strategy and results

The City of Geneva has developed a five-year childhood policy to improve the quality of life for children, ensure the inclusion of all children and increase children's participation in the development of the city. The process started with an analysis of all services provided by the city to children under the age of 12 and assessing them in relation to legislation, including the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The results of this analysis were published in a report called 'The Rights of the Child in the City of Geneva'. This analysis was followed by a survey of 1,000 children between 10 and 12 years of age and group discussions about their rights and obligations. The consultations, led by the Centre of Child Rights Studies of Geneva and the International Institute for the Rights of the Child in Sion, were also published as a report.

Based on the two reports, the Geneva Administrative Council adopted a multi-year action plan to promote the rights of the child in which it identifies commitments, objectives and priority actions. A committee consisting of representatives from all public services of the city oversee the plan to ensure its strategic and transversal implementation. On the operational side, a coordination group has been established to monitor the implementation of the plan.

### Lessons learned

- The plan could be expanded to include a wider age group of children. Integration and accessibility to all groups of children is important.
- Instead of proposing a wide range of actions, it is recommended to focus the administration's efforts on some major priority projects.

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## 15 Switzerland, Thun: Child and youth participation in the local planning revision of the City of Thun

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes

*This project was also submitted to category 2.*

### Goals, strategy and results

In 2017, the City of Thun decided to engage children, young people and parents in the process of revising its building regulations and master plan. The aim of this process was to give children, young people and parents the opportunity to express their views on the development of the city and their living environment, and to collect statements on the defects and improvements of the urban space and individual neighbourhoods as part of the Child Friendly Cities Initiative.

Two rounds of consultations were organized. First, an online class survey on leisure activities was conducted in four elementary schools during lessons. The students were able to use a city map to make suggestions on how to develop and organize leisure activities in the city. Second, children and parents from the Dürrenast neighbourhood were interviewed on their living environment using different, age-appropriate methods, such as subjective maps, neighbourhood inspections with guided interviews or questionnaires. The results of the consultations were consolidated into two reports, with recommendations for improvement that will be incorporated into the city's local planning revision. This guarantees that the knowledge collected will be used.

### Lessons learned

- Due to the cooperation of two local government departments (Planning Department and the Child and Youth Office of the Department for Education and Sport) made it possible to gather group-specific information on the needs of children, young people and parents for the future design of urban spaces. It also helped to avoid duplication in areas of shared interest.

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## 16 Ukraine, Kharkiv: Participatory budget

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Candidate

### Goals, strategy and results

The proposal to initiate a participatory budgeting process in Kharkiv was put forward by the city's youth council and has been implemented since 2017, with a dedicated budget of 50 million Ukrainian hryvnia (approximately US\$2 million). The process is managed through an online portal. The project is led by a working group, which includes six members from the public selected through a public online vote.

Citizens can submit their project proposals to be funded from the public budget during a specific time frame. For the 2018 round, 304 proposals were submitted. The proposals were reviewed by technical experts in the relevant local government departments before being subjected to public voting. Almost 20,000 citizens voted on the 167 projects that were posted online. Out of these projects, 80 were selected for implementation. These projects were then approved by the City Council for funding.

Based on results of this first round of implementation, the working group has formed a pool of best practices to inspire citizens and organizations to implement. The process also resulted in a revision of administrative processes, for example to reduce barriers to participation for internally displaced persons. Children and young people were very active in the process and the main beneficiaries of the winning projects.

### Lessons learned

- Involving the public in solving problems and deciding on the spending of a share of the public budget creates a sense of responsibility and ownership of the city's future.

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## 17 Ukraine, Novoznamianska: Creation of a space for children's and young people's development and recreation

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Candidate

### Goals, strategy and results

The primary aim of the project was to create a public space for children, young people and families to play and enjoy family and community life. Secondly, the project was developed in a collaborative way that would bring together children, community members and other local actors and make the voices of children heard by local authorities. Following informal interviews with community members to assess public opinion, the community worked with the local children's council to decide how the area should be developed. Children made creative suggestions on how to improve the area and make it suitable for sports, play and family life. They also decorated old infrastructure with paintings. All the children's suggestions were incorporated.

Around 50–60 children attend the family space daily, which is a good turnout for a small village. The project has helped to establish collaboration between different stakeholders and the children's council, paving the way for future collaboration.

### Lessons learned

- Involving children and the public in the design of a new leisure space ensures that it meets the needs of everyone in the community.

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## 18 United Arab Emirates, Sharjah: Early detection and screening programme

**UNICEF Child Friendly City:** Yes

### Goals, strategy and results

One of the most important goals of the Sharjah City for Humanitarian Services and the Centre for Early Intervention is to raise awareness of the importance of early detection and intervention of disabilities and manifestations of delayed development in children at an early stage. This ensures the children receive the support they need and potentially prevent developmental challenges.

In addition to screening to allow for early detection using the ASQ-3 Ages and Stages methodology, the Humanitarian Services provide therapeutic, educational and rehabilitative services, support and advice to parents and caregivers, and support to inclusive education and advocates for the rights of persons with disabilities. Through the early screening programme, more than 2,000 children and young people have been identified with potential developmental challenges.

### Lessons learned

- A specialized team was appointed for the programme, which was important given the large number of children and follow-up.
- Building partnerships with institutions working in early childhood development has been crucial to the success of the initiative.
- Parents often have doubts or reservations about early screening. Explaining clearly the benefits and the functioning of the screening is important.

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