

10 steps to stand up for your rights!

Your Advocacy Guide

full of ideas and experiences from children all over the world!



The Advocacy Guide for Children - by Children!

Advocacy means

about change.

standing up for something

that is important and

telling others about it so

that they can help to bring

You are holding something very special in your hands: a guide created by children from all over the world children just like vou!

decisions that affect children's lives.

shared their work and life experiences, ideas and dreams with each other. Together, they thought about how to make the world a better place for all children.

and practices for representing children's interests.

Whether you want to start your own project, join a group or are just curious, this guide will help you. It is full of real stories, clever tips and creative solutions from children like you.

From 2020 to 2024, hundreds of working children from 15 countries took part in the big project "Dialogue Works". They campaigned for children's rights especially the right to have a say when adults make

During these years, children from different countries

This advocacy guide brings together their best ideas Representing interests is also known as advocacy.

So keep reading, get inspired and remember: children have the right to represent their interests!



- 1. What are Best Practices? 4
- 2. Your Advocacy Guide: 10 Steps to Achieve Your Goal 5
- Step 1: Recognise a problem what are your rights? 7 Learn what rights you have and how to recognise problems that need to be solved. Examples from Ethiopia and Kenya will help you.
- Step 2: Formulate your message! 11 How can you explain your cause to others so that they listen to you? Be inspired by children from Tanzania and Kenya.
- Step 3: Safety first! 12 Before you start, think about how you can stay safe and be well prepared.
- Step 4: Take action! 14 Plan your next steps to make a difference - ideas from Rwanda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.
- Step 5: Stronger together find allies! 17 Who can help you? See how children in India and the Philippines found support.
- Step 6: Be creative! 19 Use art, writing, and other creative forms of expression to share your message - just like children in Nepal and Indonesia have done.
- Step 7: Create your advocacy plan! 21 Summarise your ideas and make a plan - with tips from Bangladesh and the Philippines.
- Step 8: Raise awareness and collect donations! 23 Learn from children in Peru and Guatemala how to get attention and support for your cause.
- Step 9: Use the media as an amplifier! 25 Use the media to make your voice even louder - with examples from Peru and Bolivia.
- Step 10: Write down your goals! 27 Write a letter to yourself to record your dreams and goals. Be inspired by children from Lebanon.
- 3. Acknowledgements 28

This guide shows you how to develop your own advocacy plan in 10 steps to make the world a little bit better. Are you ready? Let's go!



Breaks are important! Tick off the steps you have completed here. This way, you can pause your work on your advocacy ideas at any time and always know where you are.



Dialogue Works - Your Advocacy Guide Table of Contents

1. What are Best Practices?

Best practices are ideas and solutions that work really well. They are experiences that can help you achieve your goals.

The best practices in this booklet show how children can influence important decisions – both in their city and around the world.

The children have worked to ensure that:

- their voices are heard,
- safe places for children are created,
- and real **change** happens.

And you can try out these ideas too!

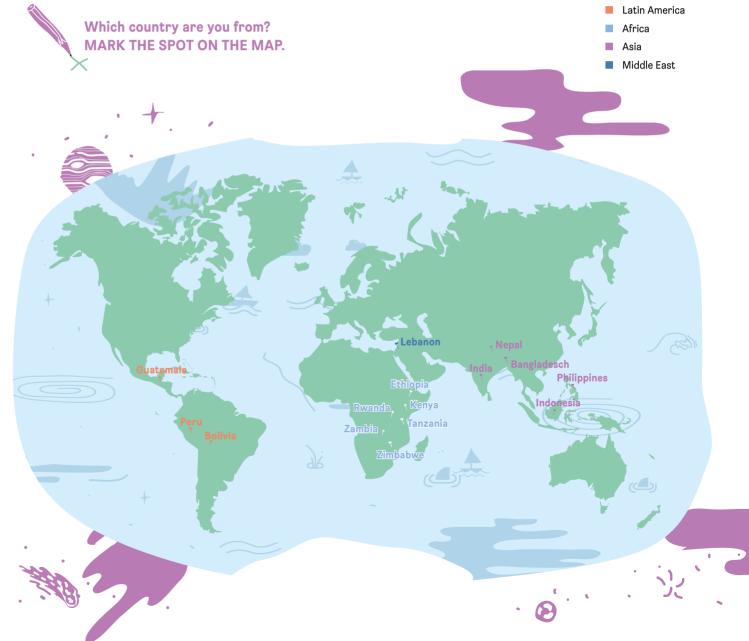


2. Your Advocacy Guide:10 Steps to Achieve Your Goal

Now that you know what best practices are, it is time to dive into the great ideas and experiences that children from all over the world have shared here!

Children from different countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Middle East have come together to ensure that their opinions are taken into account. They have found creative ways to make a difference in their schools, communities and countries.

You can see where these children come from on the map!



We are starting in Africa!



Our journey begins in Africa – a continent full of ideas, energy and courageous children who want to make a difference.

In big cities and small villages, children from Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe have joined forces. They are committed to ensuring that children's rights are respected and protected.

Country: Ethiopia

Partner organisation: Facilitator for Change (FC)



1. The problem:

In Ethiopia, many children in villages have to work hard, for example in the fields or doing household chores. They are often mistreated or neglected.

2. The advocacy plan:

On 10 December 2022, the children organised a meeting in the city of Debre Markos. They spoke to important government representatives, such as police officers and teachers, and demanded: "Stop child labour" and "Protect children from violence".



3. The result:

Government representatives signed a six-point agreement. They promised to address child labour, to better protect children and to ensure that as many as possible can go to school. They also want to inform more people about children's rights.

Country: Kenya

Partner organisation: Action for Children in Conflict (AFCIC)



1. The problem:

Children in Kenya wanted to talk about two important issues: how poverty and climate change affect their lives.

2. The advocacy plan:

The children organised workshops to gather their ideas. They then invited politicians and other important figures to meetings to present their proposals. They also explained to their teachers how important it is to listen to children and set up letterboxes in their schools where children can drop their ideas.



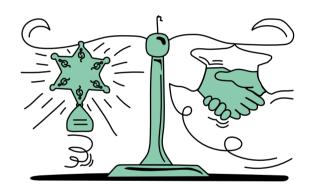
3. The result:

The local leaders decided to allow children to participate in their meetings. Together, they want to find solutions and establish rules that will help children suffering from poverty and climate change.

Step 1:

Recognise a problem - What rights do you have?

The children in Kenya and Ethiopia recognised problems in their communities that were making their lives difficult. But they did not give up – they worked together and made a difference!



NOW IT'S YOUR TURN:

What would you like to improve in your school or community?	

If you could start your own group, what would it focus on?

Which right would you like to strengthen?

Dialogue Works - Your Advocacy Guide

Step 1: Recognise a problem - What rights do you have?

What rights do you have?

In order to recognise a problem or a violation of your rights, you first need to know what rights you have!

Let's discover some of these rights together! Remember:

all rights are interconnected, and each one is important!

As a child, you have special rights. They protect you and ensure that you are safe, can develop freely and can express your opinion. These rights are set out in the **United Nations Convention on the Rights** of the Child (also known as the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child or UNCRC). They apply to all children around the world.



(Article 2, UN Convention on the Rights of the Child)

Every child is special and has the same rights. It does not matter what you look like, where you come from, what gender you are, what language you speak, what you believe in or whether you have different abilities.

The right to life and safety

(Article 6, UN Convention on the Rights of the Child)

Every child has the right to a happy and healthy life. You should be protected from illness and violence.

The right to protection from violence

(Article 19, UN Convention on the Rights of the Child)

No child should ever be hurt or mistreated. No one is allowed to hurt you or treat you disrespectfully.

Adults must do what is best for children

(Article 3, UN Convention on the Rights of the Child)

When adults make decisions that affect children, they must always consider what is best for children and take their opinions into account.







The right to freedom of expression and participation

(Article 12, UN Convention on the Rights of the Child)



Every child has the right to express their thoughts and ideas, and adults must listen to them and take them seriously. This is particularly important when decisions affecting children are made at home, at school or in other places.

The right to express one's opinion

(Article 13, UN Convention on the Rights of the Child)



All children have the right to express their opinions. Children have the right to receive information so that they can form their own opinions. Their thoughts are free and they can share them with others if they wish.

Freedom of assembly

(Article 15, UN Convention on the Rights of the Child)



Every child has the right to meet with friends, join groups and work with others to exchange ideas. You can express yourself publicly as long as you respect the rights of others.

The right to education

(Articles 28 and 29, UN Convention on the Rights of the Child)

Every child has the right to go to school and learn. At school, children should be treated kindly and their talents and abilities should be encouraged.



The right to protection from harmful work

(Article 32, UN Convention on the Rights of the Child)

Children must never be forced to do dangerous or harmful work. If children choose to work, their work must be safe and they must be paid fairly.

The right to a good life

Step 1: Recognise a problem - What rights do you have?

(Article 27, UN Convention on the Rights of the Child)

Every child has the right to what they need to grow up healthy and happy. If a family does not have enough money, they should receive help so that they can provide for their children.

Country: Tanzania

Partner organisation: Tanzania Women Leaders in Agriculture and Environment (TAWLAE)





1. The problem:

IIn Tanzania, many children work in tobacco fields, and violence against children is a widespread problem.

2. The advocacy plan:

On the International Day Against Child Labour (12 June), the children presented their messages with posters, songs and speeches. They spoke to village leaders, teachers, civil servants and the district commission.

3. The result:

The district commission promised to support the children's demands. The issue was included in the plan for future discussions to combat child labour and violence.



Country: Kenya

Partner organisation: Welfare for Children and Youth (WCY)



1. The problem:

In Kenya, many children who work on farms and in markets are exploited and underpaid.

2. The advocacy plan:

The children organised a 5-kilometre protest march with placards bearing slogans like "NO to child labour".

3. The result:

It was decided that children should not be exploited, underpaid or allowed to work during school hours. The government promised to support children during their school years through education and nutrition programmes.



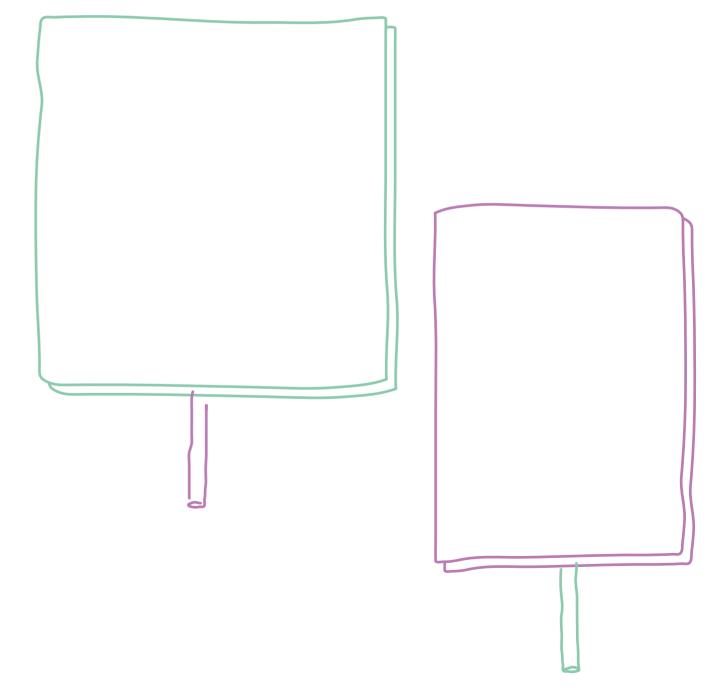


Formulate your message!

Imagine you are taking part in a protest march to fight for your rights or an issue that is particularly important to you.

WHAT WOULD YOU WRITE ON YOUR PLACARD?

- Think of a **short**, **memorable message** for your poster.
- It can be **serious**, **creative or even humorous** the main thing is that it attracts attention!

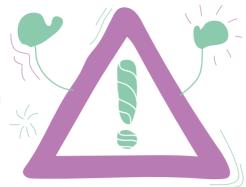


Dialogue Works — Your Advocacy Guide Step 2: Formulate your message!

Safety first!

It is great that you want to stand up for something that is important to you. But always remember: your safety is the most important thing!







1. Talk to adults you trust

Before you do anything, share your ideas with your parents, relatives, teachers or project leaders. They can help you make sure that implementing your idea does not involve any risks and give you valuable advice.



2. Think about your safety

Ask yourself, "Could this action put me in danger?"
If something seems unsafe, it is better to avoid it.
Your safety and your life are more important than any action!



3. Work with others

It is safer together – and more fun! Find friends, classmates or groups who share your goals and plan safe actions together. Always stay together when you are active in public.



4. Protect your personal information

Never give out personal information such as your full name, address, telephone number or the name of your school. If you have to give a name, use the name of your group.



5. Be careful when dealing with authorities

Some people, such as police officers or other representatives of the authorities, may disagree with you. Think carefully about how they might react. If you are unsure, talk to an adult you trust beforehand.



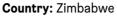
6. Take time to think

Do not rush! Think about your ideas calmly and discuss them with others. Often, a plan becomes better and safer if you take your time and plan carefully.



7. Trust your feelings

If something does not feel right or makes you uncomfortable, it is perfectly okay to leave the situation. Your safety is more important than anything else!



Partner organisation: Coalition against Child Labour in Simbabwe (CACLAZ)



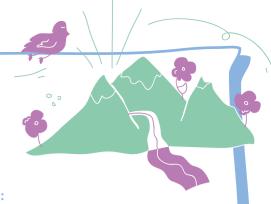
1. The problem:

Children in Zimbabwe have noticed that climate change is harming their community. In particular, the felling of trees to produce charcoal is destroying nature.

2. The advocacy plan:

The children organised a march through their community. They walked through the streets with community leaders and government representatives. They carried posters and explained why cutting down trees is a big problem.

They also collected rubbish and planted new trees to protect nature and raise awareness of climate change.



3. The result:

The government promised to establish a system that would better protect the environment.



Country: Zambia
Partner organisation:
Jesus Cares Ministries (JCM)

1. The problem:

Children in Zambia wanted to do something about poverty and at the same time support young people who are setting up environmentally friendly businesses. Their goal is for parents to have good jobs so that they can provide their children with food, education and security.

2. The advocacy plan:

The children discussed their ideas with important people, such as the district commissioner. They called for more jobs, help for families and support for young people with environmentally friendly businesses. They also showed how a boy makes furniture from recycled wood to demonstrate how young people can make a difference and support an environmentally friendly business.



3. The result:

The children's group was allowed to join the Chamber of Commerce, where families and young people are supported. The boy who makes the sustainable furniture received help from companies. In addition, those responsible listened more to the children's ideas. One child was even allowed to represent its province on World Children's Day (20 November)!



Dialogue Works — Your Advocacy Guide Step 3: Safety first!

Country: Rwanda

Partner organisation: Children's Voice Today (CVT)



1. The problem:

In Rwanda, many children have to do hard and dangerous work instead of going to school or playing. The children want to stop this child labour.

2. The advocacy plan:

The children educated parents, employers and their community about children's rights. They worked with local leaders and marked on a map where child labour was taking place. They also met with key decision-makers to gain support.

3. The result:

The children helped 13 children get out of dangerous work and developed a plan to help even more children. They made their community aware of the importance of protecting children's rights and worked with those responsible to bring about change.



Step 4

Take action!

The children from Zimbabwe, Zambia and Rwanda have shown that you can change the world with your own ideas – for example, by protecting nature or talking about children's rights.

WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

Draw a picture, write down your idea or think of a name for your campaign. What does your activity look like and what materials do you need for it?



Let's continue on to Asia!



Asia is an exciting continent with amazing inventions, beautiful landscapes and lots of creative children!

In countries such as Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Nepal and the Philippines, children have worked together to express their opinions and bring about change. Together, they have shown that even small actions can make a big difference.



Country: Philippines

Partner organisation: Christian Advocates for Justice and Development – Negros (CAJDEN)



1. The problem:

In the Philippines, many children experience terrible situations such as abuse, neglect or exploitation – at school, at home or online.

2. The advocacy plan:

The children organised a forum at school with their teachers and headteachers where all pupils could talk about their problems. Two children gave presentations on how to protect children from child labour, human trafficking and online abuse. They demanded that children should be involved in the creation and review of school rules.



3. The result:

The children decided to continue working together to protect children's rights and make schools and communities safer.

Their activities raised awareness and encouraged many adults to listen to the children's voices.

Dialogue Works — Your Advocacy Guide Step 4: Take action!

Country: India

Partner organisation: VIGYAN Vijay Foundation



1. The problem:

In India, many children have to work instead of going to school. There are not enough free schools where all children can learn.

2. The advocacy plan:

The children worked together and invited politicians, teachers and child protection officers to share their ideas. They also performed a play to show what life is like for children who work and do not go to school.

3. The result:

The children learned to speak up and talk to adults about problems. Civil society organisations joined forces to help the children and protect their rights.



Country: India

Partner organisation: National Institute of Women, Child and Youth Development (NIWCYD)

1. The problem:

Due to the COVID-19 lockdowns, many children were unable to learn properly.

2. The advocacy plan:

The children took part in a meeting, spoke to important people and gave presentations to explain why schools need to improve.

3. The result:

16

All parties involved decided to work together to improve the quality of education and create a safe environment for children.







Stronger together - find allies!

Did you notice that the children in this booklet do not work alone? Instead, **they formed groups called "children's advocacy committees" (CACs)**. There, the children **exchange ideas and plan actions** to stand up for their rights.

The children also receive **support from trusted adults** such as teachers and organisations. These **supporters are also called allies** – people who stand by your side!

WRITE IN THE HOT AIR BALLOON
WHO YOUR ALLIES ARE AND
WHAT YOU WANT
TO CHANGE TOGETHER:







Why allies are important:

Allies are people you can trust. They listen to you and help you, especially when things get difficult. They want to help you make a positive change!



Dialogue Works — Your Advocacy Guide Step 5: Stronger together - find allies!

Country: Indonesia Partner organisation: Pusat Kajian

dan Perlindungan Anak (PKPA)



1. The problem:

Many children are not safe on the internet.

There are no rules to protect them, and internet safety is not discussed in schools. This can put children at risk online.

2. The advocacy plan:

The children made a talk show and spoke to politicians, police officers and teachers. They explained their ideas with pictures in an exhibition. They also developed games and made videos to educate other children about online safety.



3. The result:

The government promised to work with the children to create rules for a safe internet.

The government also gave them advertising space to inform more people about internet safety. The children are now involved in the city's plans to make the internet safer.

Country: Nepal Partner organisation: Children Women in Social Service and Human Rights (CWISH)



1. The problem:

In Nepal, many children have to work instead of going to school. They are often treated unfairly and do not have a secure childhood. The children wanted all children to have the same opportunities and to promote the participation of children in decision-making.

2. The advocacy plan:

The children spoke to politicians, teachers and people in their communities about child protection. They formed groups in schools to have a say and worked with the media to raise awareness of child labour. They used newspaper articles and awareness campaigns to spread their message.



3. The result:

The children campaigned for better laws for working children. They convinced politicians to include children's rights in their plans.

They helped more girls to obtain scholarships for school and educated many people about child labour. They also helped children who had been treated unfairly.



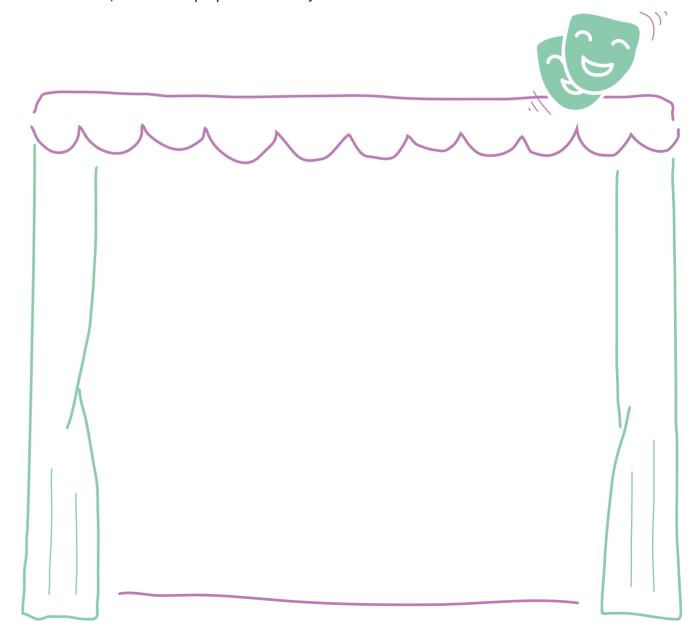
Be creative!

The children from Nepal and Indonesia had lots of creative ideas for expressing their opinions and bringing about change. They designed posters, made videos and even organised a talk show!

Use the stage to write down your ideas, draw pictures or invent a play. LET YOUR IMAGINATION RUN WILD!

- Write a song, a rhyme or think up a short play.
- Or imagine you are a superhero! What problems would you solve, and what superpowers would you have?





Dialogue Works - Your Advocacy Guide Step 6: Be creative!



Country: Bangladesh

Partner organisation: Centre for Services and

Information on Disability (CSID)



1. The problem:

It is dangerous for working children with disabilities to cross the busy roads in their city.

2. The advocacy plan:

The children spoke to the traffic police and explained how difficult and frightening it is for them to cross the road safely. A representative from the Department of Social Services supported their request.



3. The result:

The traffic police promised to pay more attention to working children with disabilities. **Now the police in the area helps these children cross the road safely.**

Country: Philippines

Partner organisation: Kaugmaon

1. The problem:

Child labour in the Philippines.





2. The advocacy plan:

The children spoke to government representatives about creating sustainable jobs for parents and scholarships for children to end child labour.

3. The result

The government promised to support parents in earning a living and to improve child participation in the government committees.



Create your advocacy plan!

You have read about children from all over the world who have stood up for their rights.

NOW YOU CAN CREATE YOUR ADVOCACY PLAN!

What is particularly important to you? And how could you achieve it?

Take a look at the examples in this booklet and the children's rights on page 8 – you will find an idea that inspires you!

	Your a	dvocacy pl	an			
Your goals						
Your allies						
Your strengths						
Challenges						
Risks						
Activities	What	When	Where	Who	Materials	Risk
1. Activity						
2. Activity						
3. Activity						

Dialogue Works – Your Advocacy Guide Step 7: Create your advocacy plan!

Off to Latin America!



Our next stop is Latin America – a continent full of diversity, impressive landscapes and creative ideas.

From colourful cities to green rainforests, children from Bolivia, Guatemala and Peru have worked together to shape their future. In doing so, they show how important children's ideas are – and that they can change the world!



Country: Peru

Partner organisation: Centro de Estudios Sociales e Publicaciones (CESIP)



1. The problem:

During the COVID-19 pandemic, many children were unable to learn properly. Some had to work, and many people knew little about children's rights.

2. The advocacy plan:

The children spoke to important people and told them how these problems affect their lives. They explained why good education is important and came up with ideas to improve the situation.

They developed games and distributed information sheets to raise awareness about children's rights.



3. The result:

Those responsible promised to improve schools and review laws. The children were invited to participate in the election of a new council where children can share their ideas.

Country: Guatemala

Partner organisation: Centro Ecuménico de Integración Pastoral (CEIPA)

1. The problem:

In Guatemala, many children have to drop out of school to work and support their families.

2. The advocacy plan:

The children met with government representatives to present their ideas. They showed **reports proving how many children are affected by poverty and explained how this affects their lives**. They also proposed giving working children **scholarships** so that they can continue going to school.



3. The result:

The government representatives want to support the scholarship programme. They promised to organise a meeting with the Minister of Education to discuss the scholarships and the financing of the programme.

Step 8

Raise awareness and collect donations!

Did you know that many projects need money and attention to make a difference?

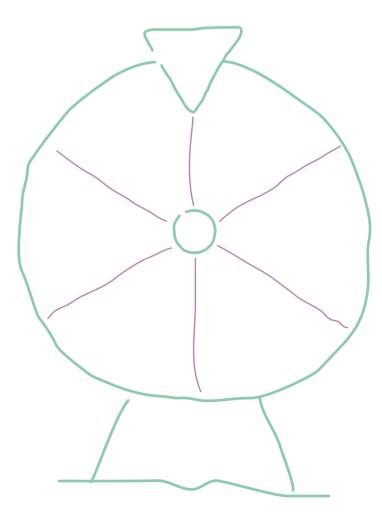
The children in Guatemala proposed a scholarship programme to pay for children to attend school, and in Peru, children used games to raise awareness about children's rights.

DO YOU HAVE AN IDEA ON HOW TO RAISE AWARENESS FOR YOUR CAUSE AND COLLECT DONATIONS?

Whether it is a bake sale with selfmade information posters, a run with entry fees or a play based on donations – anything is possible!



Something that is fun is always well received!



Dialogue Works — Your Advocacy Guide Step 8: Raise awareness and collect donations!



1. The problem:

school.

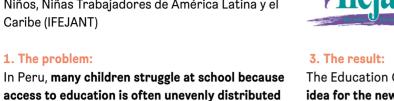
Partner organisation: Instituto de Formación para Educadores de Jóvenes, Adolescentes y Niños, Niñas Trabajadores de América Latina y el Caribe (IFEJANT)

access to education is often unevenly distributed

and it is difficult for some children to even get to



The Education Commission is reviewing the idea for the new law.



2. The advocacy plan:

The children met in groups, shared their stories and ideas, and presented them in the auditorium of the Congress of the Republic. They performed a play, wrote a letter to politicians, and presented an idea for a new law.



Country: Bolivien

Partner organisation: Pastoral Social

Caritas Potosí (PASOCAP)

1. The problem:

In Bolivia, there is a high level of violence against girls, young people and women. There is a lack of rules and support to stop this violence.



The children and young people joined forces, organised meetings and communicated their demands to the authorities in their city.

3. The result:

Those responsible have promised to establish new rules to combat violence in schools and families. They also want to do more to support working children.





Use the media as an amplifier!

Imagine you are a reporter: What would you report on? And what image would you use to illustrate your story?

WRITE YOUR NEWSPAPER ARTICLE:



Media such as newspapers. television and social media can highlight important issues and motivate many people to take action at the same time!

What happened?			
		Image description:	
Nathuria dhia impo andan			
Why is this importar	iti		_
			-
			-

Dialogue Works - Your Advocacy Guide Step 9: Use the media as an amplifier!

Last stop in the Middle East!



Our final stop is the Middle East – a region full of culture, courage and children who want to change the world.

From the sea to the mountains, children in Lebanon have raised their voices for a better childhood without work, for protection and the right to be children. They have shared their dreams and ideas and shown that young voices bring hope, change and strength.



Country: Lebanon

Partner organisation: Development action

without border (NABAA)



1. The problem:

In Lebanon, there are many children who have to work, experience violence or are unsafe.

2. The advocacy plan:

Children in Lebanon are demanding their right to play, safety and a happy childhood. They organised awareness-raising events for carers, managers and vulnerable children, explaining to them why child labour is harmful. They also designed posters and spread their messages via social media in order to reach as many people as possible.

3. The result:

The children's actions showed many people how children can be protected from child labour and abuse. Their social media posts reached many people and raised awareness about children's rights in Lebanon.







Write down your goals!

The children in this booklet have shown that even small steps can make a big difference.

Now it is your turn! Write a letter to your future self.

Imagine who you want to be in 10 or 20 years.

What do you want to achieve by then? What dreams do you want to realise?

What problems do you want to solve?

KEEP THIS LETTER SAFE. When you open it one day, you will see how far you have come.

Every big change starts with an idea – maybe the next one will come from you!

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	Open the letter in the year:		3	}
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Dialogue Works — Your Advocacy Guide Step 10: Write down your goals!



Members of the Asian CACs at the 2024 regional meeting in Kathmandu, Nepal



Members of the Latin American CACs at the 2024 regional meeting in Lima, Peru

3. Acknowledgements

A big thank you to all the children and partner organisations who contributed to this advocacy guide!

In the photos, you can see some members of the Dialogue Works Children's Advocacy Committees (CACs) at their regional meetings. There, children from different countries in their region shared their ideas and best practices.

They learned from each other how to best advocate for children's rights – and now you can learn from their experiences!



Regional meeting of the African CACs 2024 in Harare, Zimbabwe



Dialogue Works — Your Advocacy Guide 3. Acknowledgements

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Kindernothilfe is a German children's rights organisation that supports vulnerable and marginalized children and youth to develop their full potential. We partner with local non-governmental organisations in 33 countries and empower children to lead independent, self-fulfilled lives.

Terre des hommes International Federation is a network of ten national organisations committed to realizing children's rights and to promote equitable development without racial, religious, political, cultural or gender-based discrimination.

Sources

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https://www.unicef.org/child-rights-convention/convention-text-childrens-version

Concept & Design

mañana Designstudio, Düsseldorf www.maniana.design

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Photos

All photos provided by Dialogue Works partner organisations or Kindernothilfe

Supported by the

German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development



Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development

This publication is part of the global campaign "Dialogue Works". The views expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the financing bodies.

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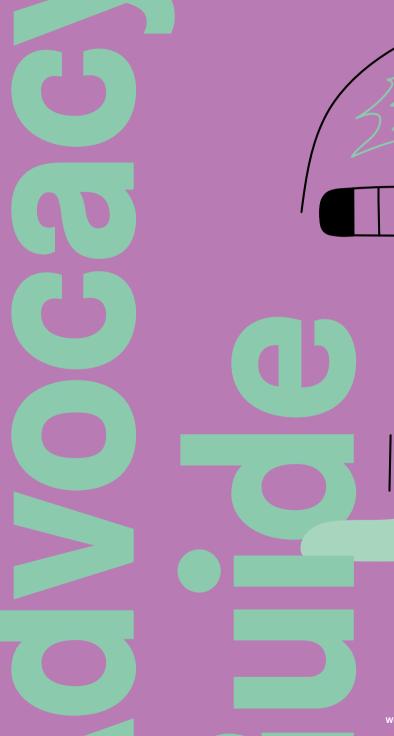


Terre des Hommes International Federation



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