



# **WRITING CHILD-FRIENDLY VERSIONS OF RESEARCH AND EVALUATION REPORTS**



# Why do we need child-friendly versions of research and evaluation reports?

Article 13 of [The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child](#) asserts that children should have access to information and materials. This means that information should be easily accessible in formats and languages that are easily understood by children in diverse settings.

Additionally, children have a right to express their views and have those views taken into account on matters affecting them. We at TdH NL recognise that children are important change agents in the fight against exploitation and are committed to engaging them in research and evaluations. Consequently, having access to research and evaluation reports in child-friendly formats ensures that their expertise is recognised, and that children have knowledge about child exploitation in their own contexts.



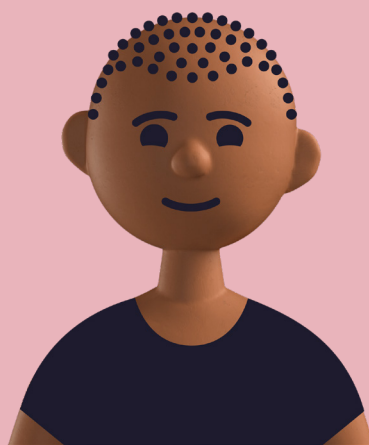
## Who is this document designed for?

This cheat-sheet has been developed to provide guidance and tips to TdH NL teams on how to develop child-friendly research and evaluation reports. It is designed as a simple prompter with questions to help you remember the most important things or processes when developing a child-friendly report.

TdH NL has a commitment to ensure that from 2023, all research is disseminated in child-friendly versions in the contexts where we work (Intermediate Objective 3.1 of our Listen Up! Strategy, 2023 - 2030). The child friendly versions can be in different formats (written documents, short videos, cartoons/animations, comic booklets, etc), which should be applied contextually (meaning, that images and language used are relevant and relatable to your audience).

### Children are unique!

They all have diverse needs and it's impossible to create one-size-fits-all child-friendly versions. Yet, it's crucial to acknowledge and accommodate these diverse needs. When planning, think about the target group of children and their context.

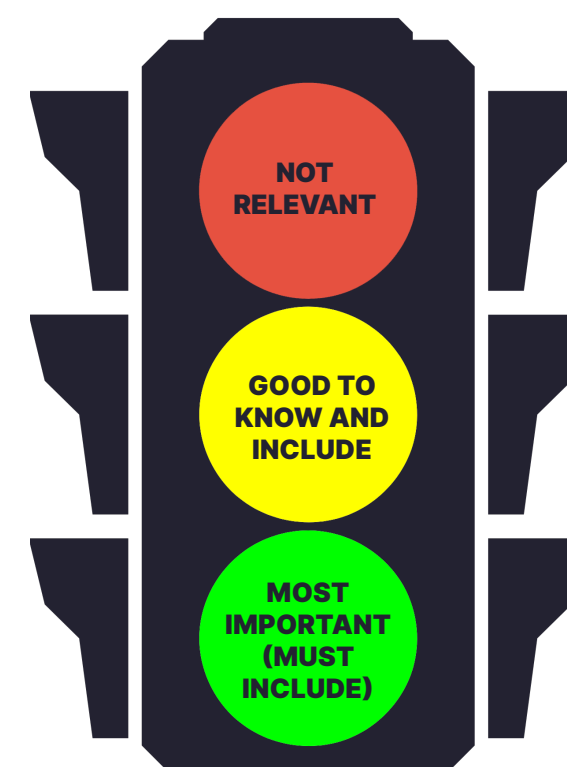


# How do you go about developing a child-friendly report?

Creating a child-friendly version of research/evaluation findings or reports requires careful planning and consideration of the audience's age and comprehension level. There are two options you can choose from:

## 1. Co-producing a child-friendly version together with children

Co-producing a child friendly version together with children is recommended. It allows children to prioritise the key messages from research and evaluations, simplify language and create appropriate images easily understood by children. Depending on the ages of children, ability, comprehension etc, present the main highlights of the report in simple language. Alternatively, have a simplified version of the Executive Summary that children can read (make sure you know their comprehension levels before doing this); this will be useful for older children 12-18 years that are in school. Facilitate a ranking activity to determine the focus of the child-friendly report by providing children with post-its/ sticky notes in traffic lights colours and ask them to stick them on the research or evaluation findings in order of priority for them:



As the child friendly report will also need to have images, you can also choose to facilitate a drawing session with the children, capturing some of the findings in pictures/images. This activity allows them to contribute to development of images that are relevant and easy to understand in the context of the research and for use in the child friendly version. If drawing is not possible, facilitate a session that allows children to suggest/propose images they think would be appropriate to communicate the research findings with other children. Have these sketched and use these in the child friendly version.

## 2. Adult-developed in consultation with children

If co-production with children is not possible, then an adult can make a summary of the main report, picking the key highlights from the research or evaluation reports (use the guiding questions under section 3 of the cheat-sheet). Use simple language and examples to explain concepts and findings, and put these in a short and simplified document with appropriate images for consultation with children (between 6 to 8 pages).



Children in Ethiopia use a six-page Amharic version of the Place of Intersections study, which is over 100 pages long in English.

### Use simple language

There are many words that adults use that children do not use or understand. Use the simplest words that you can and break down a complicated topic or words into simpler forms.

- Communicate → tell/say
- Consult → ask/talk to
- Disseminate → share
- Ensure → make
- Participate → take part
- Strategy → plan

**Children's rights:** the promises that governments made so that children can have a good life.

**Bullying:** when children are mean and unkind to each other, not just once but again and again.

Source: [How To Write A Child Friendly Document](#)

# CHILDREN ARE THE FUTURE



# THINGS to remember

Here is a simple checklist to help researchers and teams produce a child-friendly version.

## 1. Consider co-producing a child-friendly version with children:

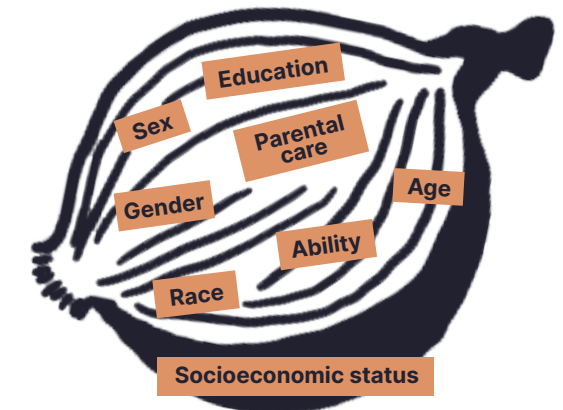
If you pick this approach, here are some considerations you must make.

- ☐ Is it possible to plan and budget for research projects to be implemented with children, and include validation and child-friendly version design workshops?
- ☐ Is it possible to pilot the child-friendly version with children in the intended age group to gather feedback and make improvements?
- ☐ Is it possible to have the child-friendly version reviewed by educators, child psychologists, or experts in child communication, disability specialists? Planning for this beforehand is advised as it may have a budget implication.



## 2. Consider your target audience: Keep in mind intersectionality

- ☐ How old are the children?
- ☐ What language do they speak?
- ☐ What is their level of reading?  
(e.g. cognitive impairments, visual/auditory impairments)
- ☐ Do they have other needs that might impact how you present the findings?  
(e.g. cognitive impairments, visual/auditory impairments)
- ☐ What cultural and social factors might affect how the content is received by children from different backgrounds?  
For example, are there some religious or cultural expressions, dressing or symbols that have different meanings that might influence the perceptions of children?



Check the use of words, language, symbols and images ensuring you explain and simplify words, concepts and phrases accordingly.

## 3. Identify the most important lessons from the research that need to be communicated:

These considerations are especially useful when an adult is developing the simplified version for consultation with children.

- ☐ Why was the research done?
- ☐ What was the research question?
- ☐ How was the question answered (methodology)?
- ☐ What are the most important research findings and key messages relevant to children? Have these been presented in simple language, images and examples that children can easily understand? Is it possible to present the research findings as a story or narrative to engage young readers?
- ☐ Are relatable examples and scenarios included to explain concepts?
- ☐ Are direct quotes of children's voices included?
- ☐ Is a glossary of terms needed or a text box needed to explain key concepts or tricky terms?



#### 4. Edit language for effective communication and understanding:

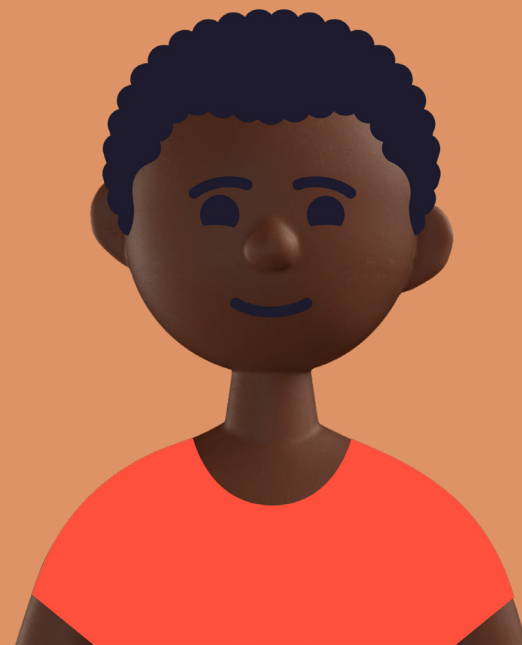
- ☐ Is language straight-to-the-point, using as few words as possible, without compromising depth required for the target audience?
- ☐ How age-appropriate are the words used? Use simple words and where possible, use examples to explain terminologies.
- ☐ Have jargon, acronyms, technical terms and long words been edited out?
- ☐ Is all text in size 12 or larger?

#### 5. Use design and visual methods to supplement text:

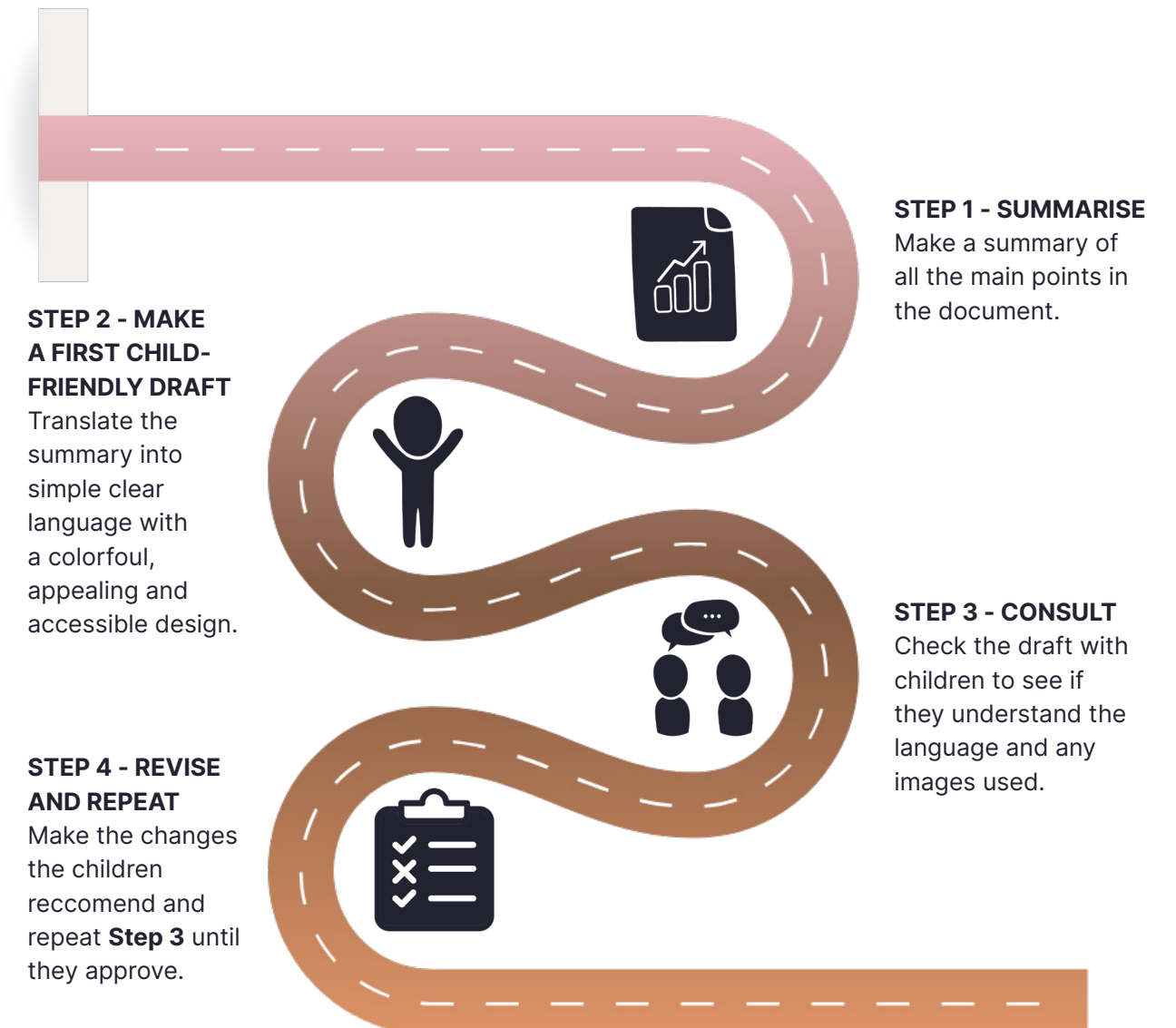
- ☐ Can the information be presented in bite-sized chunks, using text-boxes, subheadings, infographics and bullet points to break up the text?
- ☐ How can colourful and engaging visuals like illustrations or drawings, diagrams, photographs be used to complement the text? Could [Alternative and Augmented Communication](#) tools be useful, especially for children with disabilities? [Open Symbols](#) is a useful place to find AAC symbols.
- ☐ [Might a video or multimedia version](#) be more accessible? Maybe interactive activities or quizzes could help children understand and apply the research findings?
- ☐ Do images or graphics used take into safety, dignity and ethical considerations?
- ☐ Is the design and layout compliant with [TdH NL branding guidelines](#)?
- ☐ Is a link or QR code to the full report included?

### Making Complex Research Accessible for Children

Remember that creating a child-friendly version of research findings is valuable and does help children gain insights into complex topics. Tailoring the content to their needs and comprehension level is key to making the information accessible and engaging. These versions are also often useful to a wider audience, because they clearly and quickly communicate the insights gained without reading long, text-heavy reports.



## Writing a Child-Friendly Report The Process



## Useful Resources

- [How To Write A Child Friendly Document](#)
- [Child Friendly Document](#)