

Project Review: Ciudades Amigas de la Infancia, Spain (Child Friendly Cities, Spain)

1) Basic Data

Project Title: Ciudades Amigas de la Infancia (Child Friendly Cities)
Country: Spain
Initiators of the project: The Federación Española de Municipios y Provincias - FEMP (The Spanish Federation of Municipalities and Provinces), UNICEF Comité Español (UNICEF Spanish National Committee)

Project focus:

Focus areas	emphasis		
	low	—————>	high
Situation Analysis		•	
Child and Youth Participation			•
Cross-Sectoral Approaches		•	
Strategic Partnerships			•
Attention for Disadvant. Groups	•		
Linkages with CFC Networks			•
Advocacy Strategies			•
Resource Mobilisation		•	
Institutional and Legal Reforms		•	
Capacity Building			•
Monitoring & Evaluation			•

Target group: Children and youth in cities that have joined the Spanish Child Friendly Cities Network; Municipalities: Mayors and City Counsellors

Starting / ending date: Begun in 1993, this is an on-going project.

2) Background

Situation of the target-group

According to the 2002 UNDP (United Nations Development Programme) Human Development Report, 77.6% of the total Spanish population of 39.9 million people live in urban areas (based on data for 2000). Of the total population, 14.7% is under the age of 15 years. The unemployment rate among youth aged between 15-24 years is 25.5%.

Political context

The origin of this programme goes back to 1993 when the initiative Mayors, Defenders of Children started. The initiative was reconfirmed during meetings in Pamplona, and Sabiñánigo, Bilbao and Lleida during the period 1998-99. The Federación Española de Municipios y Provincias - FEMP (The Spanish Federation of Municipalities and Provinces) and the Spanish Committee for UNICEF signed an agreement on 13 February 2001 in which

they expressed their will to collaborate within the framework of the Child Friendly Cities Programme.

Justification of the Initiative

Although these initiatives were the beginning of a long-overdue promotion of policies on children's rights within the municipal context, it was only from 2000 onwards that this process attained an interdisciplinary, holistic approach. A transparent, logical, administrative framework was established and clear objectives defined. The original Child Friendly Cities (CFC) programme was redirected into a programme that promotes the implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) at the municipal level and politically sensitises mayors to take initiatives that promote children's rights. This redirection was guided by experiences in Italy that started in the mid-1990s.

3) Description of the Initiative

The main goals of the initiative

- To boost the implementation and application of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) within the municipal context.
- To create and to consolidate a child friendly cities network.

Objectives of the initiative

- To stimulate policies that promote the rights of the child in a municipal context.
- To develop sustainable networks for child participation in the municipality.
- To involve regional committees, and regional and local delegations, in the development of the programme.
- To mobilise representatives of civil society organisations involved in child rights.

Strategies

- Annual activities, such as an international competition for child rights and municipal policies;
- Annual collection of 'best practices' within Spain;
- Annual certification process for cities that involves a competition based on established indicators; from this process, the best experiences by municipalities within Spain are drawn;
- Regular, regional meetings examining the progress of the programme.

Methodology

The methodological approach to building up child friendly cities is to see the child as a citizen with full rights; to encourage child participation in the management of the local political environment; to see the municipality as the environment for socialisation; to work for an integrated vision of municipal policies related to children.

Roles of the different stakeholders

UNICEF Spanish National Committee: Initiators of the project.

FEMP Federación Española Municipios y Provincias (Spanish Federation for Municipalities and Provinces): Initiators of the project. www.femp.es

Ministerio de Trabajo y Asuntos Sociales (Ministry of Work and Social Affairs): Programme partner. www.mtas.es

IUNDIA Instituto Universitario de Necesidades y Derechos de la Infancia y la Adolescencia (University Institute for Needs and Rights for Children and Youth): Programme partner. www.uam.es/iundia

Red Local a Favor de los Derechos de la Infancia y la Adolescencia (Local network in favour of children and youth rights): Programme partner. <http://www.redinfancia.org>

Marsical, publicity studio: Private firm, ally in the programme.

Time-frame and planning cycles

The Ciudades Amigas de la Infancia (Child Friendly Cities) programme in Spain, previously known as Mayors, Defenders of Children Programme, was redesigned in 2000. The programme continues with activities based on an annual cycle.

4) Strategies

Situation analysis

The nation-wide situation analysis is being developed through another UNICEF Spanish National Committee project called: Seguimiento de la Aplicación de la Convención sobre los Derechos del Niño en España (*CRC application follow-up in Spain*).

Children and Youth participation

One of the selection criteria for choosing cities certification in the annual competition of Child Friendly Cities is 'Promotion of child participation'. An experience in Malaga was selected for certification in 2003. This experience consisted of establishing entities and local infrastructures that encourage participation by children in the workings of the city of Malaga, promoting a change of attitude among adults towards children's opinions on their total environment, as well as advocacy concerning children's participation among children and youth. Encouraged by the regional committees of UNICEF Spanish National Committee, there is growing support for the creation of Children's Councils in different municipalities.

Cross-sectoral approaches

One of the selection criteria for the cities considered for certification in the annual competition to select Child Friendly Cities is the 'Promotion of integrated child rights policies'. An experience in Vitoria-Gasteiz, Alava, was selected for certification in 2002. This initiative focused on child protection issues. There is also support in various cities for the creation of a Local Children's Plan that would be developed through UNICEF regional committees.

Strategic Partnerships

One of the strengths of this programme is that it creates a strong alliance among the main players interested in the problems addressed. In addition to UNICEF, this alliance consists of representatives from the local and national governments, municipal organisations, universities and the private sector. A local network of groups working for the rights of children and youth, Red Local a Favor de los Derechos de la Infancia y la Adolescencia (Local network in favour of children and youth rights), was established. It forms a consortium of more than 25

municipalities that work actively together to promote child rights. The main objectives of the network are to develop initiatives that promote the awareness of child rights among citizens, and to promote children's participation in the social life of a community.

Linkages with CFC-networks

The Spanish Ciudades Amigas de la Infancia (Child Friendly Cities) programme is in close cooperation with the UNICEF International Child Friendly Cities Secretariat based at the UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre in Florence, Italy.

Special attention for disadvantaged groups

No information is available on this aspect of the programme.

Advocacy and awareness-raising

One of the objectives of the programme is to stimulate policies that promote the rights of the child in a municipal context. This has been accomplished up until now through the establishment of a network of municipalities and the alliance that implements the programme.

Institutional and legal reforms

No information is available on this aspect of the programme.

Resource mobilisation

The Ciudades Amigas de la Infancia (Child Friendly Cities) programme is linked to other programmes supported by the UNICEF Spanish National Committee through fundraising activities. UNICEF and its partners promote a common approach to the concept of Decentralized Cooperation (this relates to the budgets that the municipalities dedicate specifically to cooperation projects); because of this work, a network of contacts in the municipalities has been created to organize funds for UNICEF emergency campaigns.

Capacity building activities and methods

Regular regional meetings are being organised for participating municipalities. Those meetings aim to be platforms for information exchange and capacity building.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The annual certification activities check and measure the progress of municipalities in achieving the goals of the programme. In order to do this, a list of indicators has been established to measure the following parameters.

- Basic, general data on the municipality.
- Health indicators.
- School and education indicators.
- Culture, leisure and free-time indicators.
- Indicators for a sustainable environment.
- Family related indicators.
- Indicators on development cooperation.
- Indicators on participation rates.

5) Activities

The Spanish Ciudades Amigas de la Infancia (Child Friendly Cities) programme involves the following activities:

Review of Child-friendly City Projects

- An annual contest promoting child rights and the best practices by municipalities.
- Data collection on the best practices by Spanish municipalities which is then published by the Spanish Ministry of Work and Social Affairs.
- An annual certification process that is based on established indicators.
- Regular regional meetings on the progress of the programme.
- Thematic field trips are associated with the annual contest: the awarded municipalities are invited to participate in field trips to visit other child friendly city projects conducted by other offices of UNICEF, e.g. in the Dominican Republic and Brazil.
- Child Friendly Cities Programme website: www.ciudadesamigas.org
- The creation of a database on municipal work in favour of children.

The annual certification competition uses the following indicators to assess how seriously municipalities have promoted:

- Integrated child rights' policies.
- Child participation.
- Children's health.
- Children's education.
- A healthy environment for children.
- Children's leisure and free-time activities.
- International activities for developing cooperation at the local authority level.

Activities in 2003

- Support for the implementation of Local Children's Plans and Local Children's Participation Institutions.
- Support for municipal implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) using the agreed indicators.
- Child Friendly Cities approval.
- Conferences organized at the local level on different issues, such as participation or decentralised cooperation, for the benefit of municipal politicians and professional staff. Data collection on Spanish best practices. Field trips organized for Spanish municipal staff and professional staff to other UNICEF Country Offices to observe their Child Friendly Cities programmes. Website design still in the process of development.
www.ciudadesamigas.org

6) Conclusions

Highlighting of good practices and opportunities for replicability

- The strength of the programme is the nation-wide network that has been established for the implementation and guidance of the programme.
- The network of municipalities is a strong framework for information exchange, advocacy, and capacity building.
- The annual competition among municipalities stimulates cities to improve their performance in favour of children.
- The established system of indicators give a clear monitoring and evaluation tool by which to measure progress within the programme. No clear situation analysis on children in Spain has yet been developed.

Future challenges and problems

- More realistic objectives need to be set when designing the activities of a programme.

Review of Child-friendly City Projects

- The programme should be expanded to all Spanish municipalities.
- The international cooperation component of the programme needs to be strengthened.
- The direct impact of the programme on the lives of Spanish children needs to be more fully assessed.
- The special needs of disadvantaged children, those with disabilities, homeless children, asylum seekers, children under special care, and children in contact with justice need to be addressed.
- The sustainability of the programme and resource mobilisation within the programme must be further developed.

7) Consulted Documentation

- ✎ FEMP, UNICEF, *Ciudades Amigas de la Infancia (child friendly cities)* 2002
- ✎ IUNDIA, UNICEF-Co Spanish National Committee, FEMP, local network in favour of children and youth rights, Ministry of Work and Social Affairs, *indicadores municipales de aplicación de la convención sobre los derechos del niño (municipal indicators for application of the CRC)*, 2003
- ✎ UNICEF Spanish National Committee, *Red Local a favor de los derechos de la infancia y la adolescencia (local network in favour of children and youth rights)*, 2003
- ✎ UNICEF Spanish National Committee, *Fundamentos del Programa- Ciudades Amigas de la Infancia (programme concepts- Child Friendly Cities)*, 2002
- ✎ UNICEF Spanish National Committee, FEMP, Ministry of Work and Social Affairs, *I Certamen sobre Derechos de la Infancia y Política Municipal (1st contest/certification on Child Rights and Municipal Policy)*, 2003
- ✎ UNDP, *Human Development Report 2002*, New York, Oxford University Press, 2002, ISBN 0-19-521915-5

Websites:

www.ciudadesamigas.org

www.unicef.es

www.mtas.es

www.femp.es

www.uam.es/iundia

www.redinfancia.org

International Child Friendly Cities Secretariat
UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre –
P.za SS. Annunziata, 12 - 50122 Florence - Italy
Tel: +39 055 20330 - Fax: + 39 055 244 817
E-mail: florencecfcsecr@unicef.org
Web site: <http://www.childfriendlycities.org>

