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## Forced Child Begging

# Toolkit

for researchers

Emily Delap
Anti-Slavery International 2009

# Acknowledgements

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- Albania and Greece: Terre des hommes-Albania (Tdh-Albania) and their partner agencies Association for the Social Support of Youth (ARSIS) and Children of the World and of Albania (FBSH).[1]
- Delhi, India: The HAQ: Centre for Child Rights, and their partner agency Childhood Enhancement through Training and Action (CHETNA).
- Senegal: Tostan.

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[1] The NGO Amaro Drom did not take part in conducting the research in Albania as originally hoped because their representatives were unable to attend training sessions on the research methodology and techniques. However, they were consulted on the documents that resulted.

# Forced child begging:

## A toolkit for researchers

# Contents

# Introduction

## What is this toolkit and who is it for?

This document is a toolkit outlining qualitative methods for researchers interested in exploring the more exploitative and damaging forms of child begging, where children have been physically forced or coerced into their work. However, many of the tools and methods can be adapted to find out about the lives of other girls and boys living or working on the streets, and about other hard-to-reach and exploited groups of children.

All of the methods included in the toolkit are simple and easy to use, and the toolkit does not require extensive research experience or academic training. However, it is important that those using the toolkit have received some basic training in qualitative research methods and research ethics. A separate guide for training staff in such techniques, *Forced Child Begging: Tools for an introductory training course on qualitative research methods*, is available on the Anti-Slavery International website: **www.antislavery.org.**

## Why was this toolkit developed and how?

This toolkit was developed as part of a pilot research project on forced child begging, initiated by Anti-Slavery International in response to anecdotal reports of children being forced to beg in a number of different countries (see Part 1 below for more information on forced child begging). The pilot was thought to be necessary for two main reasons. Firstly, to find out if significant numbers of children are being forced by others to beg in order to determine whether further international work is required in this area. Secondly, to develop research techniques to examine the nature and causes of this challenging subject.

As highlighted in this toolkit, research on forced child begging comes with many challenges, including difficulties in locating and gaining access to children who have been forced to beg, and risks to research teams due to links between some forms of forced begging and criminal networks. The findings from the study have been written up in a separate report: *Begging for Change* which is available on the Anti-Slavery International website: **www.antislavery.org.**

The pilot project was initially developed in three countries: Albania, India, and Senegal. Additional research was also carried out with Albanian children who had travelled to Greece to beg. The countries were chosen as they offer contrasting perspectives on the issue. In Albania and Greece, children come primarily from the long established ethnic minority groups in Albania, the Roma and Egyptians, and beg on the streets with their families, with some evidence of migration and/or trafficking involving other individuals. In India, boys and girls beg at railway stations, temples and other religious sites, traffic lights and other busy locations, with some reports of the involvement of criminal gangs and links to drug abuse. In Senegal, boys, known as *talibés*, are sent from villages to the cities to learn the Koran with teachers known as marabouts. Marabouts are not paid to care for the children and send them out to beg to earn their keep.

The pilot research was conducted by several different partner agencies (see Acknowledgements at the beginning of this document for details). The size and scope of the research varied between the countries depending on the challenges faced in collecting the data, the time available and the capacities of the partners. In Albania and Greece, 15 researchers spoke to 162 children, and 90 adults. In India, a team of four adult and four child researchers interviewed 86 boys and 77 girls, and five adults in the research. In Senegal, information was collected from 116 boys and 116 adults.

## How to use the toolkit

Everyone using this toolkit **must** read Parts 1 and 2 first on ‘Why conduct research into forced child begging?’ and ‘Getting started,’ which follow this introduction. These will help you to decide the goals of the research and who is going to take part, as well as to choose the appropriate tools for gathering the information required. It will also enable researchers to think through the ethical considerations associated with research on this sensitive topic.

Once you have read the sections on ‘Why conduct research into forced child begging?’ and ‘Getting Started,’ you can use Part 3, ‘Tools,’ to develop a ‘handbook’ which is tailored for researchers to use when they are out and about actually collecting information. This toolkit is not appropriate for use in the field unless it is adapted in this way. So, each organisation using the toolkit **must**:

- Decide which tools they want to use, and take these tools from the toolkit to produce a much shorter document.

[2] The Egyptian community is an Albanian ethnic group whose roots historically may or may not be traced back to Egypt, but who are commonly described as “Egyptian” within Albania. Although commonly grouped together, the Roma and Egyptian minorities have distinct ethnic identities and perceive themselves to be very different.

- Adapt these tools to their setting (for example, change the wording of the questions to make sure that language is appropriate).

Systematically and correctly recording information is as important as actually collecting it. Data will be lost or forgotten without such careful documentation. Researchers should use Part 4 of the toolkit to develop processes for making sure that comprehensive and clear notes are taken and stored. Often, the information gathered will have to be translated, and this section of the toolkit also provides guidance to those translating material.

Research projects can generate a great deal of information which needs to be organised in a logical way and then written up and used. You should use Part 5 to help analyse the information researchers have gathered and produce useful research reports. Although much of this analysis and write-up takes place towards the end of a research project, it can be helpful to begin this process at an earlier stage. This enables you to identify gaps in information or interesting trends for further exploration, and thinking about the end use of the research at the start of a project can help you ensure that researchers are collecting relevant information. Analysis and report writing are also extremely time-consuming and this needs to be built into research plans. For these reasons, it is important to read Part 5 **before** data collection actually begins.

# Part 1: Why conduct research into forced child begging?

## What is forced child begging?

Unlike the wider problem of child begging, where boys and girls may beg in order to get money and food for themselves to survive, forced child begging involves children being forced to beg by others and hand over all or most of the 'income' they 'earn.' Children are forced to do this through violence or other forms of physical or psychological coercion.

**Types of forced child begging**
The research conducted for this pilot research project indicates that forced child begging can be split into two categories:

1. Children who are forced to beg by 'third parties.' This group includes boys or girls who have been forced to beg by individuals other than their parents or guardians. Such individuals may include: members of criminal gangs or networks, religious teachers, extended family members, family 'friends' or the children's own 'friends.'

2. Children who are forced to beg by their parents or guardians. Here, children are usually forced into begging through techniques which go beyond usual or acceptable means of family discipline, including the use of violence or threats of violence and psychological coercion.

## Why should we be concerned about forced child begging?

Children who are forced to beg suffer a number of violations. They are exploited by traffickers, religious teachers or parents, working for long hours with limited or no control over their incomes. Children are commonly beaten by those who are forcing them to beg, and experience physical and verbal abuse, and sexual harassment from those they encounter as they go about their work. Children who are forced to beg by individuals other than their parents are likely to be separated from their families for long periods and live in poor and dangerous conditions. Forced child begging can prevent children from getting an education.

### Box 1: Some definitions

**A child**
**In line with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, a child is defined as a boy or girl under the age of 18 years old.**

**Begging**
**"[A] range of activities whereby an individual asks a stranger for money on the basis of being poor or needing charitable donations for health or religious reasons. Beggars may also sell small items, such as dusters or flowers, in return for money that may have little to do with the value of the item for sale."[3]**

**Forced labour**
**According to the International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention No. 29 on Forced and Compulsory Labour, forced labour is defined as "work or service which is exacted from any person under the menace of any penalty and for which the said person has not offered himself voluntarily."**

**Worst forms of child labour**
**ILO Convention No. 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour encompasses the act of using a child for the purpose of begging in several possible ways: as slavery or a slavery-like practice; forced labour; the end result of child trafficking; and through the child's involvement in begging as an illicit activity. Some countries may also list begging and forced begging as "hazardous work" and so strictly prohibited for children.**

## How can research into forced child begging make a difference?

Good quality research into the nature and causes of forced child begging can be used to do many things. For example, it can provide evidence on the forms it takes in any given context and what impacts it has on the children involved. It can also identify a variety of responses needed to end this form of exploitation or at least improve the lives of girls and boys who are affected by it.

[3] ILO, A Rapid Assessment of Bonded Labour in Domestic Work and Begging in Pakistan, International Labour Office, Geneva, 2004.

What aspect of forced child begging you decide to focus on really depends on why you have chosen to conduct this research in the first place and who you wish to influence. For example, as practitioners, it may be that you wish to strengthen your own responses to the problem and want to know the best way to target your efforts to work most effectively. You may also wish to persuade your government to do something about forced child begging, such as amending legislation or carrying out a combination of policies and programmes, for example, to raise awareness among key groups and develop prevention strategies.

So, more specifically, research into forced child begging can be used to:

- Remind governments of their international and regional commitments to protect children (see Appendix 1).
- Prompt governments to adopt new laws or amend existing legislation to ensure that children who are forced to beg are protected in law, as well as make sure that laws are enforced so that third parties forcing children to beg for criminal profit are brought to justice and punished.
- Ensure that governments provide adequate social provisions to rescue children from forced begging situations and rehabilitate them.
- Identify strategies to prevent forced child begging, which deal with root causes, such as poverty and discrimination.
- Raise awareness among relevant actors, including:

  **Explaining to children and parents** what the short and long-term risks are to children's health, safety, development and prospects.

  **Helping police and other officials** who may come into contact with children forced to beg to understand that these are children in need of protection and not criminals.

  **Informing the general public** who give to child beggars that not all of these children will be able to keep the money they give to them, and perhaps suggest better alternatives to them for helping children.

## What is the current situation?

Before conducting any research into the nature and causes of forced child begging, it is important first of all to get an accurate picture of the current situation. For example, to influence your government to take action, you will first of all need to find out what relevant international and regional standards apply to your country (see Appendix 1). You will need to know about any existing national or local laws and policies that are relevant to forced child begging and whether they are being implemented. These may be child protection, begging and/or trafficking laws. It would also be helpful to understand what the prevailing attitudes are among those who come into contact with child beggars, notably families, police, social workers and the general public who give to children begging.

If you are trying to improve your organisation's own responses, it is particularly important to find out what other practitioners may know or be doing about the problem. For example, it would be useful to know what NGOs and community-based organisations or international agencies such as UNICEF are doing in relation to forced child begging or other related issues, such as homelessness, trafficking, street children and adult begging. Their experiences can help to inform you what works and what the biggest challenges or pitfalls are likely to be. Knowing what is already being done also helps to avoid duplication, as well as identify what the gaps are and so what further action is needed.

As will be discussed more fully in Part 2, it is a good idea to do this at the start of the research process. Research should begin with an examination of existing data (see page 18) and some key informant interviews (see page 27). This information can be used to inform the rest of research process. Think carefully about what you want to do with the research when deciding who you want to talk to and preparing the questions for these interviews.

## Should your organisation do research on forced child begging?

Before embarking on research into forced child begging, it is also crucial to consider carefully whether or not your organisation is best placed to carry out this research. Evidence from the pilot suggests that forced child begging is a highly exploitative activity that places children at great risk and deserves the attention of governments and the NGO community. However, research into forced child begging is challenging and not to be entered into lightly. So in addition to thinking about why you want to do this research and how you will use the information that you gather, other key questions to consider include:

- Do you have the resources, both human and financial, necessary for this research?
- Do you have existing contacts with potential research participants? If not, are you able to generate these?
- Can you cope with the ethical implications of this research, such as being able to provide follow-up and support to children who reveal situations of extreme abuse or exploitation?

Part 2 of this toolkit should help you to answer these questions.

Remember, if you are unsure whether you can adequately protect the children taking part or cannot use the information that you gather from them to try to help improve their lives, you should not continue.

# Part 2: Getting started

## Setting research questions

A first step in starting research on forced child begging is to think about exactly what it is that you hope to find out. This can be done as a series of 'research questions.' Research questions are not the questions that you will actually ask children and adults when you come to carry out the research. Instead, they are questions which you hope that the research will answer. It is important to choose a realistic set of questions that you will actually be able to answer given the time and resource constraints and the challenges associated with exploring this topic. Often you start off with a list of 'ideal questions,' which you then narrow down when you realise how many people you would need to speak to and the range of tools that you would need to use to get proper answers. Remember that it is better to answer a few questions well than a long list of questions badly. The list of research questions, which emerged from the pilot are included in Box 2. These questions were also broken down into more detailed sub-questions.

In developing the research questions, you will need to ask yourselves what you hope the outcomes of the research will be. Obviously, you hope that findings will show how to improve the lives of children who are forced to beg. However there are several different ways in which your research might achieve this. For example, it may be targeted primarily at your own organisation, with a view to improving the work that you do, or you may want the research to have a broader impact, on other NGOs or government. It is often hard, and even unwise, to make decisive choices about the direction of your work on forced begging before research takes places as the research is needed to inform this process. However, it is a good idea to think about the options, and the types of information that you might need to work on this subject in the future. For example, as an international advocacy organisation, Anti-Slavery International was very clear from the start that information was needed on: the scale of forced child begging compared with child begging in general; the nature and causes of forced child begging; and the effectiveness of government responses. Anti-Slavery International also wanted individual case studies that could be used to illustrate the problem. Other partners involved in the research prioritised more in-depth details on the causes of forced child begging in their localities to determine future prevention work in the communities in which they operate.

A key issue to come out of the pilot is how much research teams should focus on forced child begging, as opposed to begging in general. On the one hand, forced child begging has serious child rights implications, requiring more urgent responses than other forms of begging. On the other hand, we found that identifying children who are forced to beg was extremely hard in some cases. In India, Albania and Greece, for example, we had to speak to ten or twenty children who were begging before finding one child who could be defined as having been 'forced.' In general, unless forced child beggars can easily be identified from the start, it is probably best to encompass child begging more broadly in the research, with a particular focus on forced begging in the sorts of questions asked.

### Box 2: The research questions developed as a result of the pilot

- **What different forms does forced child begging take?**
- **What is the extent of forced child begging compared with child begging in general?**
- **Which children are engaged in forced child begging?**
- **Which children are engaged in child begging?**
- **What abuses do children who are forced to beg suffer? How does this compare with the abuses suffered by children who beg?**
- **Why are children forced to beg? How does this compare with children who beg?**
- **What are the effective strategies to prevent forced child begging or help children who are forced to beg?**
- **How does this compare with effective strategies to prevent child begging or help children who beg?**

## Selecting research teams

**Choosing research teams to interview children**
Our experience suggests that it is not necessary for researchers to have extensive research experience or even be highly educated to be successful at interviewing children. What is far more important is that they have, or can establish, a good relationship with the children. Begging, especially forced child begging, is a very sensitive and challenging topic to explore. In many countries it carries a lot of stigma; it may involve criminal gangs or networks; beggars are very mobile and can be hard to track down; and children tend to beg for long hours, leaving them little time to talk to researchers. For all of these reasons, having an established relationship with child beggars prior to the research is extremely helpful, both for finding research participants and for encouraging boys and girls to talk openly about their lives. In some cases, this relationship may not exist. Here it is very important that researchers have

had some past experience of working with children and know how to communicate effectively with them.

Depending on the group you wish to interview, some people are likely to have a greater ability to develop a rapport with children than others. For example, girls often find it easier to talk to women than men, especially about sensitive topics. Children may feel more relaxed talking to other children. Social workers, community outreach staff or youth workers often already have the necessary skills to build a relationship of trust with children.

However, choosing both children and NGO or government staff who already work with children to conduct research is not without its problems. Using child researchers can expose them to unacceptable dangers as there may be repercussions in their homes or communities that we do not fully understand, especially if there is a suspicion that criminal gangs or networks are involved in begging. Child researchers might also find it hard to remember questions or accurately record information, and children may not always be fully honest with other children, especially if they feel they are in competition with them for resources. Social workers and outreach workers can find it difficult to switch from providing guidance to children to listening to what they have to say and this can bias the research. These problems can often be overcome with careful handling. Box 3 provides experiences from India, Albania and Greece which illustrate these challenges.

Whoever is selected to conduct research among children should be aware that research done by NGOs or UN or government agencies often carries with it the expectation of handouts and follow-up support. These expectations may be enhanced by the extreme poverty faced by many children begging on the streets, who, as a result, may be desperate for some kind of assistance. Such expectations can bias the research as they can lead to children exaggerating their problems in the hope of receiving more help. As is discussed below, it is very important to be clear with children right from the start about the implications of the research for them personally, and for child beggars more generally. In India, the research team found that the use of child researchers reduced these expectations to a degree. In other countries, it was necessary constantly to reiterate the fact that, although it was hoped that the research would help child beggars generally, it would not necessarily directly benefit the research participants personally.

**Choosing research teams to interview other key informants**
As is the case with interviewing children, we found that researchers do not need to have extensive research experience to talk to other key informants such as parents, ‘employers,’ members of the public who give to child beggars, and NGO workers. It is more important that the researchers can build a rapport with the key informants that they are interviewing so they feel sufficiently at ease to speak honestly.

## Box 3: Involving children and social workers in carrying out research

### The involvement of child researchers

**In India, the research was carried out by a community-based organisation called CHETNA. CHETNA has extensive experience of using child researchers and was keen to do so in this research. The boys and girls who acted as researchers on this project were all in their late teens, and were fully trained in research methods. Owing to the risks associated with this research in India, particularly in relation to possible links between begging and organised crime, the children were accompanied at all times by adult researchers. Although this allowed them to operate safely and meant that adults could take notes, this did prevent children from talking more freely with the child researchers about their lives. Despite this, we found that the use of child researchers added greatly to the research in India. The children were particularly helpful in identifying children who begged and might be engaged in forced begging, and were able to reassure other children to trust the adult researchers. They also often had good background knowledge of communities and participants which helped to verify the information collected.**

### The involvement of social workers

**In Albania and Greece the research was predominantly carried out by social workers. These young men and women had good existing relationships with boys and girls begging or working on the street, and excellent skills in communicating with children. This helped us to make contact with children who were begging and pick out those who might be engaged in more exploitative and harmful forced begging. It also enabled us to explore sensitive topics, such as parents beating children to make them beg. Working with social workers had one main disadvantage. In their usual role, the social workers often tried to persuade children and adults to change their behaviour, for example, by encouraging parents to find work, or giving children the confidence to report particularly abusive family situations, which would result in moving these children to safer residential care. If social workers had slipped into this influencing role when carrying out the research, the participants would have known what they thought of their behaviour and it would have threatened to bias the results. However, in extreme cases of abuse, social workers found it impossible not to intervene, and, rightly, put the best interests of the children before any concerns about bias.**

When selecting who should interview more senior government officials, it is important to choose someone who feels comfortable in the more formal setting of government departments. Some government officials may genuinely want to discuss the problem and be happy to accommodate your request for interview, others, however, may view the research as a potential attack on the government and be defensive when talking to you. Either way, the researcher should be able to put the government official at ease and get across the message that the research will be unbiased and intended to generate information to help improve children's lives. The better the rapport you can build with government officials at this early stage, the better chance you have of getting them interested in the process, which will hopefully also encourage them to consider seriously your recommendations at the end.

## Training research teams

Whoever carries out the research, it is essential that they have been fully trained in research methods and ethical issues. For teams with little or no previous qualitative research experience, such training can be completed in around five days, with three days in the classroom and two days in the field. Key topics to be covered in the training include:

- The difference between quantitative and qualitative research
- Research skills: questioning, listening, observing, facilitating and recording
- Research techniques, for example, in-depth interviews, group discussions and the use of diagrams
- Research ethics
- The specific goals of the research project
- Research with children.

Teams who are already experienced in research are still likely to need to be briefed on the specific challenges and goals of research on forced child begging, and to have some refresher training on key research skills. All teams will need follow-up support during the research. We found that teams needed particular encouragement to record information comprehensively and systematically, and to ask detailed probing questions.

A three-day training course has been developed by Anti-Slavery International which covers all of the key topics which researchers will need to be trained in. The training manual, Forced Child Begging: Tools for an introductory training course on qualitative research methods, is available on the Anti-Slavery International website: **www.antislavery.org.**

Box 4 provides details of how the research team was trained in Senegal.

## Box 4: Training volunteers in Senegal

**The research team in Senegal consisted of some NGO staff and a number of volunteers who worked regularly with *talibés*. The volunteers were mainly educated up to secondary level, but had no prior research experience. The consultant spent three days training them in the classroom. This was followed by three days when the team used the techniques that they had learned to conduct research with children and adults. The consultant observed the teams during this time and checked and commented on their notes. The research team leaders then conducted a further two days of training with all of the research team to summarise and reiterate the training. This gave researchers time to reflect on what they had learnt and gave everyone the opportunity to ask further questions. The consultant also continued to provide detailed feedback by email and telephone on the notes that the researchers took in the field for around the first month of the research.**

## Choosing research participants and locations

Choosing who to speak to as part of your research into forced child begging will depend on the sorts of research questions that have been developed. In general, we found that it is helpful to get a range of different perspectives from individuals in a number of locations. Some different people you might want to include in your research are listed below:

- **Children who are forced to beg:** It is essential to get children's perspective on their lives to find out about their daily experiences and feelings. If possible, it is helpful to speak directly to children who are forced to beg to find out why and how this has happened. However, accessing these children can be difficult and it may be possible only to get information on them second hand from other sources. Remember that children are not a homogenous group. Girls are likely to have quite different experiences from boys, as are older children compared with younger children and disabled children compared with those who are not disabled.

- **Girls and boys who beg:** Girls and boys who beg may have information about forced child begging and may even be able to point researchers in the direction of children who are forced to beg.

- **Children who have been rescued or escaped from forced begging situations:** In some instances, it may be possible to find children who were forced to beg but have been rescued or escaped. In our research for example we were able to speak to boys who had been trafficked from

Albania to Greece but who had since escaped.

- **Children who are at risk of forced begging:** In some cases it may be helpful to speak to children who are at risk of begging or of being forced to beg but have not actually started begging. This group of girls and boys can help us to understand causes and effective responses as they can show us how children can stay out of begging. However, this group can be hard to identify unless you already have some information about begging and know which groups are likely to be at risk.
- **Parents of children who are forced to beg:** Parents provide valuable insights into why children may be forced to beg, as it is often parents rather than children themselves who decide that children should beg. In some cases, parents may also be responsible for more abusive forms of begging, 'selling' their children to traffickers, or themselves beating or threatening their children to make them beg. If at all possible speak to the parents of the children you interview, although matching them may be difficult, especially if children have migrated without their parents. If resources and time are short, it may be more realistic to get general perspectives from parents whose children beg or are at risk of begging.
- **'Employers' of children who are forced to beg:** 'Employers' are often reluctant to take part in research and should be approached with extreme caution to make sure that no harm comes to the children interviewed or the research teams. However, in some cases, 'employers' may be willing to talk to researchers. For example, during the pilot we spoke with marabouts (Koranic teachers) in Senegal, and with boys who used drugs as an incentive to force other children to beg in India.
- **People who give to child beggars:** All forms of child begging would obviously cease to happen if no one gave to beggars. Finding out how often and why people give can be helpful for developing appropriate responses.
- **Professionals who work with children who beg:** Social workers, NGO staff, the police, teachers, and the judiciary may all have insights into child begging and know something about forced begging. Talking to these 'key informants' can be especially helpful for thinking about how best to respond to forced child begging and child begging.
- **Policy makers who may have an impact on forced child begging:** As with professionals who work with children who beg, policy makers can inform us about the government's understanding of forced child begging and how it views it and begging in general, as well as any responses to the problem it may already be making or if there are plans to do anything more. These may include policy makers working directly on begging legislation or those engaged in related fields such as trafficking, labour laws or education.

It is often necessary to go to a number of locations to gain a range of perspectives on begging. You will almost certainly want to focus efforts in a town or city where child beggars are concentrated. You may choose several different towns or cities, as we did in Albania, or different locations within one city, as we did in India, to see how child begging differs from place to place. If begging involves migration, it may also be important to visit a rural 'sending' community to speak to parents and 'at risk' children, as we did in Senegal.

You will of course need to speak to more than one individual from each of the categories listed above to gain a convincing body of evidence. The scale of the research will depend on resources and time, but do remember that talking to all of these different groups in a range of locations is time-consuming and requires a large research team. A key lesson learned from the pilot is 'not to spread yourself too thin.' It is far better to get in-depth and detailed information from one city than poor information from several locations. Similarly, it is better to understand begging well from the perspective of three of four of the groups described above than badly from all of them. Remember also that once you have collected information from everyone, you will need to analyse it and this takes time too (see below for more details). Examples of the number of participants we spoke to in the pilot locations are included in Table 1 below.

**Table 1: Participants from the pilot locations**

| | Albania/Greece | India | Senegal |
|---|---|---|---|
| Boys | 77 | 86 | 116 |
| Girls | 85 | 77 | - |
| Parents | 72 | - | 76 |
| Other key informants | 28 | 5 | 40 |
| **Total** | **262** | **163** | **232** |

# Finding research participants

Once you have chosen who you are going to speak to, you will need to find the research participants. With some groups, such as professionals who work with children and policy makers, this is a relatively easy task. Other groups will prove a greater challenge. From the pilot, we found that using a technique known as 'snowball sampling' was particularly helpful for finding children who beg and are engaged in forced begging.

**'Snowball sampling'**
'Snowball sampling' involves using existing contacts with children who beg or work on the streets to put you in touch with other children who beg and, importantly, to identify children who may be forced to beg. Children can be asked about their friends or contacts, and can help you find certain types of children, such as girl beggars or younger children,

to ensure that you get a range of different children involved in the research. In using this technique, it is important that you put children's best interests first, and do not encourage children to approach any groups that may cause them harm. It may be that rather than actually speaking to other children, children simply tell you where you can find other child beggars or children who are forced to beg.

In using 'snowball sampling' it is very important that you do not stop at just speaking to children already in contact with your organisation. This is because your relationship with this group of children is likely to have had had an effect on their views, attitudes and well being, meaning that these children no longer represent 'typical' children begging on the streets.

In some locations, you will not have any existing contact with children already begging on the streets, as was the case in some parts of Delhi in India where we piloted the research. Here, we began by observing children who beg, then conducted rapid interviews with some of these children, and finally, once we had established a relationship and identified the children we needed to speak to in more detail, we did in-depth interviews with a selection of children. More details of these tools can be found in Part 3 of the toolkit.

It is important to note that 'snowball sampling' and the use of observations and rapid interviews are quite hit and miss in terms of finding children who are forced to beg. As mentioned previously, in India, Albania and Greece, we often had to speak to ten or twenty children before we actually found one who could be defined as having been forced to beg. In Senegal, several *talibés* live with their Koranic teachers in schools. This concentration of children, and the fact that most *talibés* are forced to beg in some way, made it much easier to find forced child beggars in Senegal.

# Selecting appropriate tools

Once you have decided on the research questions and have an idea about who you want to speak to, you can think about the tools that are most appropriate to use. The research methods used in the pilot are described in detail in Part 3. For now, table 2 on page 10, provides a brief description of each tool, and of its benefits and limitations. In general, we found that we got different sorts of information from different tools, so it is a good idea to combine a range of tools in your research.

# Developing a research plan

A research plan is a document which outlines:

- Why you are doing this research and what you hope to achieve
- The tools you are going to use
- The number of participants of different categories that you are going to try to reach using these tools
- A time-table for the research, which includes time for analysis and report writing.

An extract of an example of a research plan is included in Box 5. When developing the research plan, it is important to allow some room for flexibility as research on this challenging subject will not always go to plan. Two examples from India help to illustrate this point. In one location in Delhi, where we decided to do the research, we found that there were no girls begging, so we could not achieve our target of talking to an equal number of girls and boys. In another location, rival groups of boy beggars became quite aggressive, making it impossible for the team to conduct any interviews at all. As always, the safety of the research team and the well being of the participants are of paramount concern.

In developing the research plan, you will have to consider how much staff time and resources will be used in the various activities. Some points to remember are:

- Observations last for around one hour, and are best done in teams of at least two researchers.
- Rapid interviews take ten to 15 minutes each, and can be done by one or two researchers.
- In-depth and key informant interviews take about one hour to complete. These interviews require two researchers – one to ask questions and one to take notes.
- A group discussion takes one to two hours to complete. It requires one researcher to ask questions and one to take notes, but may also require a third researcher to act as a 'gate-keeper' stopping others interfering in the research process.
- Extra time is needed to identify and build rapport with research participants. How much time depends on how well you already know the groups taking part.
- Time should also be allowed for travel, for checking and adding to notes after each interview or group discussion, and for having these notes translated. In some cases notes will also need to be typed up. Typing up and translating notes can take as long as actually collecting the information in the first place.
- Before you start on the research proper, you will need to 'field test' the methods (described below). This can take up to a week.
- Once you have collected the information, each in-depth interview or group discussion can take two hours to analyse, with less time needed for rapid interviews and observations.
- Build in time for report writing - at least a week for developing a first draft, longer if you have complex information. Also allow time for comments and re-drafting.
- Allow for contingencies - changes in the weather, staff illness and holidays can all delay the research.
- Budget for materials needed during the interviews and group discussions (see Part 3 for details), venue and refreshments for participants if necessary, notebooks and pens for recorders, transport and translation.

**Table 2: Tools used and their benefits and limitations**

| Description of the tool | When should I use this tool? What are the benefits? | What are the challenges and limitations associated with this tool? |
|---|---|---|
| **Observations** Researchers spend around one hour in a location where children commonly beg, inconspicuously observing their activities and taking notes. Ideally these observations are repeated at different times of day/on different days of the week. | This tool is helpful when researchers have little previous knowledge of child begging to gain a very basic understanding of: how many children beg; which children beg; how they go about getting money from people; and their relationships with those around them. In a few cases, it can provide leads on children who are being forced to beg. Observations can also reveal behaviour that participants might be reluctant to talk about in interviews or group discussions such as aggressive tactics used to get money or abusive behaviour by parents or others towards children while out begging. | This tool provides only very basic background information. It is not always possible to trust what you see, and details may need to be verified through interviews. It can be very difficult to tell whether or not a child is being forced to beg just from observing them arrive at or leave a location or while they work. It is hard to get reliable estimates of the numbers of children who beg using this method as beggars work irregular hours and are very mobile. If the researchers are seen in their observations, 'employers' can get suspicious and the observations become risky. |
| **Rapid interviews** Usually following on from observations, researchers approach children not previously known to them for a ten to 15 minute interview. | This tool is helpful for establishing a relationship with children who beg who are previously not known to you. It enables researchers to start to get to know busy children who may not want to commit to a long conversation initially. It can provide very basic background information factors such as: the age, religion, and area of origin of the child; children's working hours, and children's income. It may provide leads on children who are being forced to beg. | The speed of the interview means that only very basic information can be found out about the child and it is often hard to verify this information. Children may be unwilling to open up during this short space of time, and although you may get leads on children who might be being forced to beg, it is unlikely you will get firm information on this. If children do choose to talk about upsetting issues, it can be hard to respond adequately to children's distress in a short space of time. |
| **In-depth interviews** Researchers spend around one hour with children or adults in a quiet location, with 30-40 minutes of this time spent asking detailed questions about their lives. | In-depth interviews enable researchers to get very detailed information about a particular individual. They can provide details on: whether or not children are being forced to beg; which children are forced to beg; the effects of forced begging on children's rights; and its causes. They give children the privacy to express their true feelings and tell their own stories. Interviews with children can be compared with interviews with their parents to verify information and compare perspectives. | Children may not like the intensity of a one to one discussion. They may get upset recounting difficult personal experiences. They may get bored and lose concentration. Children may lie because they fear repercussions from 'employers' or parents if they tell the truth about their lives. |
| **Group discussions** Common interest groups (for example, boys who beg or parents of beggars) of eight to ten individuals discussing begging and forced child begging for one to two hours. Diagrams and games can be used as part of a group discussion. | Group discussions stimulate debate and allow for interesting discussions, particularly on the causes and effects of forced child begging. They are less intense and more participatory and fun than in-depth interviews, and enable researchers to speak to many individuals simultaneously. Children can protect themselves in group discussions by talking about their experiences in a general way or referring to the experiences of other children, rather than discussing the specifics of their own lives. Group discussions often take place in an open setting, and can be a way of raising awareness about the research or the subject matter and stimulating debate in the wider community. | It is hard to get specific and in-depth details about an individual child or a child's life in a group setting, and it may not be possible to probe deeply into interesting topics raised as a result. Group discussions can be difficult to manage, especially if groups are large or diverse. Group discussions can generate conflict between individuals, with ramifications for future work. They require skilled facilitators and suitably quiet locations with enough space for all the participants to carry out the activities involved. |
| **Key informant interviews** Individuals with a particular knowledge of child begging, such as social workers, those who give to beggars or policy makers, are interviewed for 30 minutes to one hour. | Key informants are likely to have particular insights into the causes of forced child begging, and appropriate responses to it as they are often the decision makers who play an important role in shaping the lives of children who beg. Key informant interviews can be a good place to start as they can help identify existing data and set the 'scene' of the problem. Getting key informants involved in the research can help with networking and with later advocacy activities. | Key informants may view the research as a threat to their work or authority. They may have vested interests and not tell the truth. These interviews can be demoralising if you get negative feedback about the value of your research. |

## Box 5: An extract from a research plan

### Location 1 – Targets

**Observations:**

- 1 hour in the morning
- 1 hour in the afternoon
- 1 hour in the evening.

**Key informant interviews:**

- 3 with people who give to child beggars
- 1 with a social worker working in the location
- 1 with a policeman/woman working in the location
- 1 with an NGO director who works on the issue of child begging
- 1 with a school teacher.

| | Rapid interviews | In-depth interviews | Group discussions |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Girls who beg** | | | |
| Young girls (under 10 years) | 10 | 5 | 2 (16 participants) |
| Older girls (10 years +) | 10 | 5 | 2 (16 participants) |
| **Boys who beg** | | | |
| Young boys (under 10 years) | 10 | 5 | 2 (16 participants) |
| Older boys (10 years +) | 10 | 5 | 2 (16 participants) |
| **Parents of children who beg** | | | |
| Mothers | - | 3 | 1 (8 participants) |
| Fathers | - | 3 | 1 (8 participants) |

| **Time-table for data collection** | **Week one** | **Week two** | **Week three** |
|---|---|---|---|
| Observations | 3 | - | - |
| Key informant interviews | 4 | 2 | 1 |
| Rapid interviews | 30 | 10 | - |
| In-depth interviews | - | 13 | 13 |
| Group discussions | | 4 | 6 |

# Developing a researchers' handbook

A 'researchers' handbook' is the short document that researchers take with them when they go to conduct interviews and group discussions. This toolkit is not appropriate for this purpose for two reasons:

1. It is too long and is not properly formatted for use in the field. If you attempt to use it as it is, you will find yourselves frantically flicking through the pages looking for the right bit for the particular interview you are conducting!

2. The questions and tools need to be adapted to suit your setting. This process includes the following:

- **Building on what is already known:** Before starting your research on child begging, it is a good idea to find out what else has already been done and is known about the topic locally. That way, you can build on this information in the sorts of questions that you ask.

- **Thinking about specific issues you want to explore:** Thequestions and tools included in this toolkit are designed for use in a range of settings and so are broad in their scope as a result. There may be specific debates in your country around forced child begging or child begging in general that you would like to explore in more detail. For example, in India, we wanted to examine current policy discussions around begging legislation and juvenile justice law. These issues should become clearer once you have developed the list of 'research questions' described above.

- **Making up questions for particular 'key informants':** There may be particular groups or individuals who will know about begging, which have not been included in this toolkit as they are specific to your country. You will need to develop questions especially for these key informants. For example, in Senegal we wanted to speak to *marabouts*, who teach the Koran to *talibés* and send them out to beg. As this group does not exist in Albania and India, we had to make up a set of questions specifically for them for use in Senegal (see Part 3 for details). In each of the countries we had to think up particular questions for government officials as policies towards begging and forced child begging vary considerably between the countries.

- **Adapting questions to make them more relevant:** As an example, we wanted to find out about levels of poverty in the pilot. In India, we got this information by finding out about the materials used to build houses. In Albania, we decided that asking about access to electricity and the number of people who share a room was probably more appropriate.

- **Considering local sensitivities:** There are likely to be some topics included in any research on begging which are highly sensitive and which children and adults are reluctant to talk about. What these topics are will vary from setting to setting. You will need to identify these subjects, and think carefully about how to broach them. For example, in Albania we suspected that many children were being made to beg through violence or threats from their parents. Children were quite reluctant to talk about this, perhaps because they did not want to be disloyal to their families or feared repercussions. We found that an indirect approach worked best. Rather than asking: "Do your parents beat you if you don't go out to beg?" we asked: "What happens if you don't bring enough money home?" In some instances we also started off asking general questions such as: "What happens when children don't bring enough money home?" And then, if the child raised the topic of parents beating children we asked: "Does this happen to you?"

- **Translations and use of local terminology:** Often the tools will need to be translated into a local language. You also need to think about which terms or phrases to use to make the questions clearly understandable to those taking part, particularly to children. For example, in Senegal, rather than asking about 'forced child begging' we asked: Why do children become *talibés*? Why do *talibés* beg?

Some top tips for developing the Researchers' handbook based on our experiences in Albania/Greece, India and Senegal are included in Box 6 below.

## Box 6: Top tips for developing a researchers' handbook

- Develop a short (one page) summary of the goals of the research, which includes a list of key research questions. This will act as a constant reminder to researchers about what they are trying to find out.
- Use the tools section of this toolkit to produce clear, step by step instructions for researchers to use in the field. You can cut and paste these tools directly from this PDF if this helps, but remember to adapt the tools to your research and your setting in the ways described above.
- For each interview or group discussion, repeat instructions about how to introduce the interview and ideas for energisers and games as relevant, so that researchers do not have to search the toolkit for this information.
- Make sure that it is clear which forms or coversheets need to be used with the interview or group discussion (see Part 3 for more details of these).
- Include some instructions for recorders, either at the back of the handbook or as a separate document.
- Clearly format the handbook. Add page numbers and start each interview or group discussion on a new page. Include a clear contents page at the start of the handbook.
- Show the handbook to members of your team before you start using it to make sure that it is clear and easy to use. Take time to review the handbook from start to finish and allow time to make changes based on the researchers' feedback.

## Field testing the methods and handbook

Once you have selected and trained the research teams and developed the researchers' handbook, the next step is to field test the methods. This process involves trying out the handbook with a small selection of research participants, and then making any adaptations necessary. You may decide to make small changes, such as changing the wording used in some of the questions, or reformatting the handbook to make it more user-friendly. Or, you may need to make bigger changes, such as removing some of the tools altogether as you feel they simply do not work in your setting. This process can also be part of the training of the research teams, giving them the opportunity to try out their skills. If you do the field testing as part of the training, allow longer for it. This will give you time to distinguish between the tools not producing the sort of information you need because they are inappropriate, and the tools not working because research team members are inexperienced. During the pilot, we allowed around one week for field testing with inexperienced research teams, and around three days with more experienced teams. Remember to take proper notes during the field testing so that you can check that the researchers are recording information correctly. Taking proper notes also allows you to use any relevant information gathered during this initial phase when you come to analyse your findings for the final report.

## Conducting research with children

Many of the skills that researchers need to work with children are similar to the skills needed to work with adults: an inquisitive and probing mind, an ability to collect information carefully and systematically, and a capacity to respect and listen to participants. However, research with children requires additional skills. As adults, we have a particular responsibility to protect children, and these ethical considerations are included in more detail in the next section. Children also have different levels of comprehension and concentration from adults. Not all children are the same and it is important to remember to adapt the way we interact with them according to factors such as age and gender. Some top tips for working with children gained from the pilot are included in Box 7.

### Box 7: Top tips for working with children

- Be patient and develop a relationship of trust: Do not expect children to open up or tell the truth immediately. They will often have good reasons for this, such as fear of repercussions from parents and 'employers.' Respect children's need for self-protection, but get to know them a bit first and reassure them before you start asking research questions to encourage them to trust you.
- Discuss the research process: Talk to children about your plans for the research before you begin. Once the research starts, check with them how they are finding taking part and whether it is causing them any problems. If they wish to stop at any time, always respect this.
- Take time to find time to speak to children: Remember that children who beg are busy and will not always have time to speak to you at a time that is convenient for you. They may also have very little concept of time, and as a result be late for interviews. Children who are forced to beg may also be closely monitored by their 'employers' for much of the time or be fearful should their 'employers' find out that they have been speaking to other people. Be patient and build time for this into your planning.
- Choose suitable locations: Children may find it hard to relax or speak honestly if they are being overheard by parents, 'employers' or others. Working in a team can enable one researcher to interview the parent/'employer,' leaving others to talk to the children without risk of them being overheard.
- Do not make interviews last too long: We found that children can concentrate on answering questions for around 30-40 minutes. This will vary with the age of the child.
- Make language appropriate: Language will need to be adapted so that children can clearly understand what you are asking them. However, do not underestimate or patronise children. If possible, use researchers that speak the same language/dialect as the children.
- Include lots of games and breaks: Children who beg have a hard life and deserve a break. Make the research as much fun as possible for them, by including lots of games. This will also help children to relax and open up.
- Relax and have fun: It is much easier for children to enjoy themselves, if you enjoy yourself too.
- Avoid using diagrams with words if participants may be illiterate: Diagrams can sometimes be used to stimulate debate in group discussions. However, they can be intimidating or confusing for children who are illiterate.
- Respect children's views: It is important to recognise that children have valid points of view and may have compelling reasons for making the choices that they have made. Listen with respect and do not judge.

# Research ethics

The experience of the pilot suggests that those taking part in research on forced child begging may face several risks, which will vary from context to context. For example:

- Children may get into trouble with their 'employers' or parents for speaking to researchers, and may be punished.
- Criminal gangs or others, who are engaged in forcing children to beg may threaten or harm the research team.
- Communities may feel that they are being 'accused' of being involved in forcing children to beg and refuse to cooperate with those conducting the research in the future.

Before you start the research, it is vital that you consider these risks in full and work out strategies to deal with them. This risk assessment should be done in each different setting where the research is taking place in full consultation with individuals who have a good understanding of the context. It is essential to remember that, although we feel that finding out about forced child begging and ways to tackle it are very important, it is not worth taking risks which may threaten the well-being of children, other research participants or members of the research team. Children, especially exploited children, are extremely vulnerable and we must seek to **act in their best interests at all times.**

An example of a risk assessment that was carried out in Senegal is included in Box 8 below.

In addition to making efforts to protect children from risks, we must also work to protect their rights in the way that we conduct the research.

Some important guidelines commonly used in research with children are included in Box 9.

## Box 8: Example of part of a risk assessment carried out with the partner NGO, Tostan, in Senegal

### Risks

**Risks to *talibés*:**

- *Talibés* may be beaten or punished for taking part in the research (sent home, isolated from other *talibé*, humiliated, forced to work).

**Risks to Tostan and Tostan staff:**

- *Marabouts* and religious leaders feel upset about the research.
- Tostan seen as complicit with the enemies of Islam.

**Risks to *marabouts* taking part:**

- *Marabouts* may be seen as accomplices to Tostan.
- *Marabouts* could be rejected by other *marabouts*.
- *Marabouts* could be misunderstood by parents who do not like their involvement in the research.

### Ways to minimise risks

- Get permission from the marabouts first. Raise awareness and motivate the marabouts about the research.
- Raise awareness about what Tostan is trying to achieve through this research and other activities, for example, through discussions with marabouts and others, or in radio broadcasts.
- Work with *marabouts* to empower them to help themselves.
- Give proof on the ground of broader benefits of Tostan's work through highlighting the benefits of past projects
- Ensure that Tostan has an 'open-door' policy whereby anyone is allowed to come and ask questions.
- Clearly explain the goals of the research to the marabouts.
- Sensitise parents through, for example, the media.

## Box 9: Protecting children who take part in the research

**Assessing risks**

- Assess the risks to participants and research team in your particular context and take steps to minimise these risks.

**Consent and information about the research process**

- If children are living with their families, families should be consulted well in advance regarding the involvement of their children in the research. If parents are available, always ask their permission before talking with children.
- Where possible, seek the support of 'employers,' community leaders or others who play an important role in child participants' lives.
- Children (and adults) should always have a choice about whether or not they take part in research. To make this choice, they need to understand the purpose of the research and to what use the findings will be put. They must be aware that they can withdraw from the research at any time.
- Children's views about research methodology should be sought to ensure that their concerns and fears are allayed.
- Avoid raising expectations about the direct benefits of the research. Be honest and clear about how the outcomes of the research will affect those who are taking part. This can be extremely hard to do as poor communities may pin their hopes for a better future on the research. You may need to repeat messages.

**Timing and location**

- The time at which the research takes place should suit those who are taking part rather than the research team. Research should never interfere with children's need to eat or sleep or their schooling.
- Consider the impact of taking part in the research on children's work. Try and do the research at times when children are not working, or, if this is not possible, consider compensating for incomes lost.
- Never keep children (or adults) waiting. Their time is valuable.
- Where possible, discussions should be done in settings where children can speak freely and adults cannot interfere with the research process.
- It is preferable to speak to boys and girls separately, and use female researchers to speak to girls.

**Confidentiality**

- Views of children should be kept confidential. This includes changing the names of children in final reports so that they cannot be identified.

**Abuse by adults conducting the research**

- Where possible, check the records of all members of the research team for previous allegations of child abuse.
- Work in pairs to minimise the risk of child abuse and to protect researchers against false allegations of child abuse.
- All research team members should be familiar with the child protection policy of the organisation carrying the research or at least agreed procedures for reporting and responding to abuse.

**Food and transport**

- If children are being moved to take part in research to another community, transportation should be in place, especially if the distance to be travelled is over a mile.
- Children should never be moved from one location to another without two adults present (such as a parent, caregiver or NGO staff).
- Food should be prepared if children will be kept for long hours through lunchtime, and snacks provided for meetings of a few hours.

**Dealing with distress and issues raised**

- Forced child begging is a distressing subject and children may become upset when recalling some of their experiences. Before the research starts, discuss how to respond to situations where a child becomes distressed by the subjects being discussed. For example, you may want to change the subject, stop the interview or have a break from discussions to play a game or sing a song.
- Before the research starts, discuss how to deal with cases where a child reveals extreme forms of abuse or neglect in their current daily lives – what support can be offered?
- Do not push children into talking about distressing topics. Avoiding these subjects might be part of their coping strategies.
- During the period of the research, hold regular meetings to discuss any concerns and keep records of how these concerns have been dealt with.
- Remember that we are working with children whose lives are hard enough already - try to make the research as much fun as possible.

**Always seek to act in the best interests of the child.**

# Part 3: Tools

## Introduction

This part of the toolkit provides details of the following tools for gathering information from children and adults on forced child begging:

- Using existing data
- Observations
- Rapid interviews
- In-depth interviews
- Group discussions
- Key informant interviews.

The instructions on in-depth interviews include details of how to use daily activity charts and timelines to find out more about children's lives. The information on group discussions encompasses guidance on the use of problem trees to explore the causes and effects of forced child begging.

It is very important that all interviews and group discussions start with proper introductions about the aims and purpose of the research, and end with an opportunity for participants to ask questions or add further details. Suggestions for such introductions and closure are included at the start of this part of the toolkit, which also provides ideas for ice-breaking and energising games.

All of the tools included in this section of the toolkit will need to be adapted and re-formatted to suit your context before use. More details about factors to consider in adapting the tools are included in Part 2 of the toolkit which should be read by everyone before attempting to use the tools.

## Key components of all interviews and group discussions

**Introductions**
At the start of each interview or group discussion, it is very important that you introduce yourself properly, explain the purpose of the research, and give participants the choice about whether or not they want to take part. This helps to build a rapport with participants and also ensures that they can make informed choices about whether or not to participate. This is important even in rapid interviews when time is short. Use the checklist included in Box 10 to develop your own introductions with language and terminology appropriate to your setting. Add these introductions to the start of each set of instructions for interviews and group discussions that you include in the handbook that researchers take with them to the field (see Part 2 for more details).

### Box 10: What to include in introductions

- **Introduce yourself** and any other researchers present.
- **Explain what will happen today**, and the roles of the different researchers present.
- Explain **what the research is about** and **why you are doing it**. Remember to use words that the participant(s) can easily understand, and explain any terms such as 'forced' child begging.
- Make sure that they understand that the results will be anonymous. You will share the results with other people, but alternative names will be used to protect their identities.
- Be honest, and clear that **there will not be any direct benefits** to them or their families as a result of taking part in this research. It might help other children, but it will not help them directly.
- Explain why they have been selected to take part.
- Ask them if they have **any questions** about the research.
- **Ask them if they want to take part**, and make sure they know that they have a choice. If they say that they do not want to take part respect their decision.
- If you are taking **notes**, check that they are happy for the researchers to do this.
- Play an ice-breaking game or chat with the participants to make them feel relaxed.
- Fill out any necessary **coversheets** (see below and Appendix 2 for more details).

**Ice-breakers and energisers**
Ice-breakers are games to be used at the start of the interview or group discussion to make sure that everyone feels relaxed and happy, and to encourage participants to open up. Energisers are games to be used at any point during the interview or group discussion when participants look tired or seem to be losing concentration. Some ideas for ice-breakers and energisers are included in Boxes 11 and 12, but do add any songs or games you already know or use. It is a good idea to include a list of ice-breakers and energisers in the handbook that researchers use in the field.

## Box 11: Ideas for ice-breakers

**Balloon stories**

- Give each participant a balloon and ask them to inflate it and tie a knot in the end (or give them an inflated balloon to save time).
- Ask the participants to draw a face of a child they have seen begging on the balloon, and encourage them to imagine that the balloon is a child who begs in their area. Get them to give the child a name and age.
- Ask the participants to tell a real life story about the 'balloon child.' They could think about important things that happened in their lives, or about how they might spend the day.
- If you are doing this in a group, ask the participants to share the stories with their neighbour, and then ask for a few volunteers to share their stories with the full group.
- Remember to record this information as it could be a useful source of information about forced child begging.

**Paper tearing game**

This game is suitable only for groups.

- Give each participant a sheet of A4 paper.
- Ask them to close their eyes, and read out the following instructions:
  - Fold the paper in half
  - Tear a hole in the centre of the paper
  - Fold the paper in half again, and this time tear a hole in each corner
  - Fold the paper in half again, and finally tear a hole anywhere they like in the paper.
- If participants ask for further instructions, just ask them to do whatever they think is best.
- participants to open their eyes and open out their sheets of paper.
- Explain that although everyone was given the same instructions, the final results are quite different. This shows that we are all different and all have something unique to contribute. Emphasise the importance of remembering this during discussions.

**You can also ...**

- Sing a song.
- Chat to them about something neutral, such as their favourite sport or food.

## Box 12: Ideas for energisers

**The mirror game**

- Ask participants to work in pairs – if you are doing a one-to-one interview, they can pair with you or with the note-taker.
- Explain that they should face their pair and copy exactly what this participant does, as if they are in a mirror.
- After a few minutes get the pairs to swap roles.
- Encourage the participants to use lots of movement and to do many different actions.

**Fruit Salad**

This game is only suitable for groups.

- Make sure that there are only enough chairs in the circle for each of the participants.
- Ask participants to name three fruits. Allocate one of these fruits to each of the participants in turn.
- Shout out the name of one of the fruits and get all of the participants who have been allocated that fruit to swap places.
- Take the seat of one of the participants yourself, leaving one participant without a seat.
- This person should now call out the name of another fruit to repeat the exercise. When the 'caller' shouts out 'fruit salad' all of the participants have to swap places.

**The crocodile game**

This game is only suitable for groups.

- Place a large mat on the centre of the floor and ask all of the participants to walk around it slowly. Explain that the mat is a boat and that they are swimming in a river.
- When you shout 'crocodile' all of the participants must jump onto the mat. Any participant left in the 'water' is out of the game.
- Gradually fold the mat to reduce its size, making it harder and harder for participants to get onto the 'boat' until there are only one or two participants left.

**You can also...**

- Get everyone to dance to their favourite tune.
- Involve them in an action song, such as 'Head, shoulders, knees and toes.'
- Do some stretching exercises – try getting them to spell out the word COCONUT using their bodies.

**Closure**

It is very important that you end each group discussion and interview in the right way. Participants should not leave feeling frustrated that they have more to say, or confused about what has gone on. If upsetting topics have been explored, it is essential that participants do not go away feeling sad, and that you have agreed a strategy for appropriate follow-up if they have revealed extreme cases of abuse or exploitation. A checklist of issues to be covered at the end of each interview and group discussion is included in Box 13. Remember to adapt this to your setting, making language appropriate, and to add this checklist at the end of each interview or group discussion included in the researchers' handbook.

## Box 13: Checklist of issues to be included at the end of interviews and group discussions

- Explain that your questions are now over.
- Ask them if they have any comments to make about the research process (methods used, the timing etc.)
- Ask them if they have anything else that they would like to add.
- Ask them if they have any questions for you.
- Thank them for taking part.
- Agree a strategy for follow-up if issues of extreme abuse and exploitation have been revealed. For example, a further meeting with you or with others that might be able to help them.

# Using existing data

**Aims**
It is a good idea to start any research on forced child begging by reviewing existing material on the topic.
This will help you to:

- Identify what information already exists so that you can avoid overlap and use your research to fill gaps.
- Find information on the extent, nature, causes and consequences of forced child begging, and on appropriate responses, which can be used in the final report to back-up your findings.
- Get ideas for how to go about doing research on forced child begging in your setting.

**Time needed**
This will depend on the amount of information that already exists, but ideally allow around three to five working days for this process.

**Materials/resources**

- A computer and access to the internet.

**Forms and coversheets**

- None.

**Methods**

- Gather the following information:
    - Existing research on forced child begging or child begging in general or related topics such as child trafficking, street children or adult begging.
    - National and international legal frameworks on forced begging or related issues such as trafficking, as well as regional frameworks where relevant.
    - Background information on groups that commonly beg and could be forced to do so in some way, such as Roma and Egyptian communities in Albania included in this pilot.
    - Evaluations or reviews of interventions aimed at helping children who have been forced to beg or who beg, or on related issues such as trafficking.
    - Records on children living and working on the streets, where such records are available and you are permitted access to them. It is also important to consider the ethics of using such information.For example, does it break promises of anonymity made to children when the data was originally collected?

- This information may come from a range of sources:
    - Internet searches
    - Libraries
    - Leads offered during key informant interviews (see below)
    - NGO or government records.

- Carefully consider whether or not you can use this information. Think about:
    - What definitions are being used? Do they match your own understanding of the issues?
    - How many people are included in the research or record keeping (for example, it is hard to draw general conclusions from interviews with only ten children).
    - Did the organisation which gathered the information have the skills needed to do so? What is their reputation in this field?
    - Does the organisation have any hidden motives for exaggerating or denying the scale of the problem, or putting a particular slant on it? (For example, some governments may exaggerate problems to attract funding, and others may deny that it exists as it threatens their reputation).
    - Are there any ethical considerations related to our use of this data? (For example, protecting the anonymity of any children involved).

# Observations

**Aims**

Observations are useful if you have little or no existing knowledge of forced child begging in your setting. They are best used at the start of the research process to provide:

- A rough idea of the number of children engaged in child begging in the research locations at any one time.
- Information on the characteristics of children engaged in begging. For example, their age, gender, ethnicity.
- Some basic information on the nature of begging. For example, how children arrive at and leave the location, whether they are accompanied by other children or adults or not, how long children beg for, the methods they use to get money, and how children are treated by others around them.

**Time needed**

Each observation takes around one hour to complete. It is a good idea to repeat observations in each location at different times of the day and on different days of the week to get an idea of different begging patterns.

**Materials/resources**

- Notebook and pen
- Watch.

**Forms and coversheets**

- Remember to fill out Form 1 in Appendix 3.

**Methods**

- List areas in the town or city where you know that child begging takes place, and where the research will be conducted. Key informant interviews can help with this process (see below).
- Choose which areas you are going to focus on, trying to get a range of different types of locations (for example, some railway stations, some temples or churches, some tourist areas, some café/bar areas).
- Decide when you are going to do the observations, thinking about which times of the day or week are busier and quieter. It may also be good idea for the researcher to arrive at the location at times when children are likely to arrive at or leave a location to see if they are dropped off or collected by anyone. This will help us to get an idea of whether anyone is organising the children.
- Develop a timetable and allocate roles within the research team.
- Visit the location and record what you see. Form 1 provided in Appendix 3 can be helpful for this process. You may want to adapt this form for your setting. Only attempt to record very basic information on the form, write down longer observations in your note book and attach these to the form on a separate sheet after the observation.
- Remember to find an inconspicuous location from which to observe children begging. Be careful that your presence does not raise suspicions and put you or the children at risk. It is a good idea to work in pairs, both to help ensure that you are capturing everything you see, and to help ensure your safety.
- In some instances, it may be necessary to record information after you have left the area to avoid arousing suspicions. If this is the case, the researchers should state this clearly in their notes.
- You may choose to follow the observation with some rapid interviews (see below) with the children you have been watching.

# Rapid interviews

**Aims**
Rapid interviews can be used to find out very basic information on child begging in instances where very little is known about the topic. This includes information on:

- Basic characteristics of child beggars – such as gender, age, religion, area of origin and ethnicity.
- Working hours and income.
- Leads on whether or not this child or others the child knows may be forced to beg.

Rapid interviews can also help researchers to establish a relationship with children begging on the streets which can lead to more in-depth interviews later on.

**Time needed**

Each rapid interview should take about ten to15 minutes to complete.

**Materials/resources**

- Note book and pen.

**Forms and coversheets**

- Remember to fill out Coversheet 1 in Appendix 2.

**Methods**

- Approach children who have been observed begging on the streets. If you are conducting several rapid interviews, choose a range of different children (for example, some older, some younger, some girls, some boys, some disabled, some without disabilities etc.)
- Introduce yourself, explain the purpose of the research, and ask if they are willing to take part (see Box 10 for details).
- Ask the children a short list of questions from a previously developed question checklist. An example of a question checklist used in the pilot for rapid interviews is included below. You will have to develop your own checklist appropriate to your setting and include it in the handbook which researchers take with them to the field. In doing this, think about the sorts of questions it is appropriate and possible to ask children just after you have met them.
- If you have time, follow up any interesting issues raised by making up your own questions.
- Remember to end the interview by asking the children if they have any questions for you (see Box 11 for details).

**An example of a question checklist for rapid interviews**

- Do you come here every day?
- Does anyone bring you here each day?
- How long do you spend begging each day?
- What else do you do each day? Where else do you go?
- What do you do to get money from people?
- How much money did you earn yesterday?
- Is this a typical amount?
- What do you do with this money? Do you give the money to anyone?
- What happens if you do not get enough money?
- Who decided that you should beg?
- Where do you live?
- Who do you live with?
- Which part of the country do you come from?
- When did you come to this city?
- How did you get from your home village/town to here?
- Why did you come here?
- What is your ethnic/racial origin?
- What is your religion?

# In-depth interviews

**Aims**

In-depth interviews enable researchers to get very detailed information about a particular individual. They can be used with both children and their parents to provide information on:

- Whether or not a child who begs is being forced to beg.
- Which children are forced to beg (for example, their age, sex, religion, ethnicity, levels of poverty etc?)
- The effects of forced begging on an individual child's rights (for example, whether they suffer abuse or exploitation, can go to school, live with their family etc.)
- The reasons why a child is forced to beg.
- Existing strategies used to prevent or stop child begging and forced child begging, and for making life better for children while they continue to beg.

Interviews with children can be compared with interviews with their parents to verify information and compare perspectives.

**Time needed**

Children are likely to be able to answer questions for only 30-40 minutes (depending on age), but more time will be needed for introductions, ice-breakers and energisers. In total, allow around one hour per interview.

**Materials/resources**

- Notebook and pens.

**Forms and coversheets**

- Remember to fill out Coversheet 2 or 3 in Appendix 2, and
- Form 2 in Appendix 3 if you choose to use daily activity charts.

**Methods**

- Find a quiet location to conduct the interview, free from disturbances where participants can talk openly without fear of being overheard.
- Introduce yourself, explain the aims of the research, and check that the participant is willing to take part (see Box 10 for more details). Use ice-breakers to make participants feel more comfortable.
- Use pre-prepared question/activity checklists to gather information from participants. Examples of these checklists are included below. Remember to adapt these examples of suit your own setting, or to make up your own checklists as appropriate (see Part 2 for more details on how to do this). Adapted checklists should be included in the handbook which researchers take with them to the field.
- Listen to the answers provided by participants and follow up with your own probing questions on any interesting issues raised. You should always ask probing questions and never focus exclusively on the questions in the checklist.
- Remember to end the interview by asking participants if they have anything to add or any questions for you (see Box 11 for details).
- Use energisers if necessary to liven up sleepy or bored participants.

# 1. An example of a question/activity checklist with children who are forced to beg

### Complete coversheets

☑ Remember to fill out Coversheet 2 in Appendix 2.

### A day in the life

- Talk to the child about what they did yesterday. Start off in the morning when they woke up and go through the whole day until they went to bed. Try and get as much detail as possible about:

☑ Where they sleep/live, who they live with and where they beg?
☑ How they travelled from where they live to where they beg and how long it took?
☑ Whether they were accompanied to the begging site by anyone, and if so, who this person/ people are?
☑ When they started begging and when they stopped?
☑ With whom they begged?
☑ What other work, schooling, rest or play they did during the day?
☑ When they started and stopped this work, schooling, rest or play?

- Children may not know the time so you might have to get rough estimates, for example, was it dark or light? Was it before or after people were eating their lunch?
- Use Form 2 in Appendix 3 to record these daily activities. You can also use drawings or diagrams to start off the discussion. For example, get the child to draw their day, and then ask detailed questions about it.
- Ask the child if this was a typical day or if it varies? For example, are all of the days during the week the same? How does the way you spend your time change during the year?
- At the end, ask:

☑ How much did you earn yesterday?
☑ Is this a typical amount or does it varies? If it varies, how much by?
☑ How do you encourage people to give you money?
☑ What did you do with this money?
☑ What did you like about your day?
☑ What were some of the good things that happened?
☑ What did you dislike about your day?
☑ What were some of the bad things that happened?
☑ How do other beggars treat you?
☑ How do people who give you money treat you?
☑ How do others around you treat you?
☑ How much choice do you have over how you spend your day? Do you get to choose what you do? If not, who decides what you do and what happens if you do not do this?

- Remember to follow up any interesting issues raised with your own **probing questions**.

### A timeline of the child's life

- Develop a timeline of key events in the child's life. Start off with the present day and work backwards. Try to put a rough date on all key events. These dates do not have to be exact. You want to get an idea of how long children have spent living in a certain place, in school etc. Key events to find out about include:

☑ When they started begging?
☑ How they started begging? (The process involved in starting begging? For example, who decided? If they had any say in this decision? How they were informed of this decision? What they thought about this decision?)
☑ Any other work they have done?
☑ If they moved to live in a different location and if so, how they got there and with whom they travelled?
☑ Changes to the people they lived with? For example, separation from parents?
☑ Amount of contact they have had with their family?
☑ When they started or stopped going to school?

- An example of part of a timeline is provided in Box 14.

Questions on the causes of forced child begging and appropriate responses

- Talk in detail about how and why the child begs. **Ask:**

☑ Why did you start begging?
☑ Who decided that you should start begging?
☑ How did you feel about this decision?
☑ Could you choose to stop begging?
☑ What would happen if you decided to stop begging?
☑ What happens if you do not get very much money?

- Find out what can be done to help children who beg. **Ask:**

☑ What can be done to help children like you? What do you think can be done to stop children begging?
☑ Can anything be done to make life better for children while they continue to beg? If so, what sort of things?

- Remember to follow up any interesting issues raised with your own probing questions. This is especially important when trying to find out about causes. Try to get as close to the root of the cause as possible. For example, if the child says that he/she started begging because his/her mother does not work, ask: why does your mother not work?
- **Remember to probe about any information that emerges of forced child begging. If the participants provide examples of children who have been forced to beg, try and find out what makes life different for these children compared with other children who beg. For example:**

☑ Do they face different problems?
☑ Are the reasons why they beg different?
☑ Do they need specific kinds of help?

# 2. An example of a question/activity checklist with ex-forced child beggars

**Complete coversheets**

- Remember to fill out Coversheet 2 in Appendix 2.

**A timeline of the child's life**

- Develop a timeline of key events in the child's life. Start off with the present day and work backwards. Try to put a rough date on all key events. These dates do not have to be exact. You just want to get an idea of how long children have spent in school, living in a certain place etc. Key events to find out about include:

☑ When they started begging?
☑ How they started begging? (The process involved in starting begging, for example, who decided? If they had any say in this decision? How they were informed of this decision? What they thought about this decision?)
☑ When they stopped begging?
☑ How they stopped begging?
☑ Any other work they have done?
☑ If they moved to live in a different location and if so, how they got there and with whom they travelled?
☑ Changes to the people they lived with? For example, separation from parents?
☑ Amount of contact they have had with their family?
☑ When they started or stopped going to school?

- An example of part of a timeline is provided in Box 14.

**Questions on the causes of forced child begging and appropriate responses**

- Talk in detail about how and why the child started begging. **Ask:**

☑ Why did you start begging?
☑ Who decided you should start begging?
☑ How did you feel about this decision?

- Talk in detail about how and why the child stopped begging. **Ask**:

☑ Why did you stop begging?
☑ Who decided you should stop begging?
☑ How did you feel about this decision?

- Find out what can be done to help children who beg. **Ask:**

☑ What do you think can be done to stop children begging?
☑ What could be done to make life better for children while they continue to beg?

- Remember to follow up any interesting issues raised with your own probing questions. This is especially important when trying to find out about causes. Try to get as close to the root of the cause as possible. For example, if the child says he/she started begging because his/her mother does not work, ask: why does your mother not work?

- **Remember to probe about any information that emerges of forced child begging. If the participants provide examples of children who have been forced to beg, try and find out what makes life different for these children compared with other children who beg. For example:**

☑ Do they face different problems?
☑ Are the reasons why they beg different?
☑ Do they need specific kinds of help?

## Box 14: An example of part of a timeline:

2006 ➔ Stopped going to school, and found a job as a painter/decorator.

2005 ➔ Father died. Stopped begging some months later.

2002 ➔ Started elementary school, and continued begging in the afternoons only.

1999 ➔ Taken to Greece by his mother, and began begging some days later.

1997 ➔ Taken to Greece for the first time by atrafficker and forced to beg. Arrested by the police two weeks later and deported back to Albania.

1996 ➔ Sister taken to Italy, aged ten years old.

1989 ➔ Born in Tirana.

# 3. An example of a question/activity checklist with children who are at risk of forced begging

**Complete coversheets**

- Remember to fill out Coversheet 2 in Appendix 2.

**A timeline of the child's life**

- Develop a timeline of key events in the child's life. Start off with the present day and work backwards. Try to put a rough date on all key events. These dates do not have to be exact. You just want to get an idea of how long children have spent in school, living in a certain place etc. Key events to find out about include:

☑ Any work they have done?
☑ If they moved to live in a different location?
☑ Changes to the people they lived with, for example, separation from parents?
☑ When they started or stopped going to school?

- An example of part of a timeline is provided in Box 14.

**Questions on other children who may be forced to beg**

- Find out what they know about forced child begging or child begging in general. Ask:

☑ Do you know other children who beg? (probe on friends and family members)
☑ Do you know who decided that these children should beg?
☑ Why do you think these children beg?
☑ What do you think about this begging?
☑ Would you like to beg also? Why? Why not?

Remember to ask lots of probing questions about any information that emerges of forced child begging. If participants know about children who beg, but did not make this decision themselves, try and get as much information as possible about these children. For example:

- Who decided that these children should beg?
- How are these children made to beg?
- Where do these children beg?

**Questions on why children do not beg**

- Talk in detail about why the child does not beg. Ask:

☑ Why do you not beg?
☑ Whose choice was this?
☑ What do you do during a typical day (school, other form of work/occupation, play)?
☑ Whose choice was this?
☑ How did you feel about these decisions?

- **Remember to follow up any interesting issues raised with your own probing questions.**

# 4. An example of a question checklist with the parents of children who are forced to beg/are at risk of forced begging

**Complete coversheets**

- Remember to fill out Coversheet 3 in Appendix 2.

**Questions on children who are forced to beg**

For each child who is forced to beg:

- When did your child start begging?
- How did they start? (For example, how did they get to the town or city in which they beg? How did they find an 'employer'?)
- Who decided that they should start?
- Why did they start?
- What exactly do they do to get money? (For example, do they beg or perform tricks or wash car windows etc.)
- How much money does your child earn daily? How does this vary (over the year/week)?
- What happens to this money?
- How much contact do you have with your child?
- How do you feel about your child's life? What do you like about it? What would you like to be different?
- If you as parents are not happy with your child begging, did you try and do anything to stop them? What, if anything, could be done to stop them?
- Will they carry on begging forever or will they stop? If they will stop, when will they stop? How? Why?
- What do you imagine for your child's future?
- Remember to follow up any interesting issues raised with **your own probing questions**.

**Questions on children who are not begging**

For each child that is not begging:

- What does your child do? (Do they work? Are they in school?)
- Why does your child not beg? If other children in the family are begging, how were choices made between who should beg and who should not?
- Will they start to beg in the future? When? Why? Who will make this decision?
- How do you feel about your child's life? What do you like about it? What would you like to be different?
- How do you feel about your child not begging? Are you happy about this, or would you like them to start? Why?
- What do you imagine for your child's future?
- Remember to follow up any interesting issues raised with **your own probing questions.**

# Group discussions

**Aims**

Group discussions should stimulate debate between participants, making them think more deeply about the topics being explored. They can be used with children, parents, and other groups, such as groups of 'employers,' to explore a range of issues. They are especially helpful for finding out about:

- The causes of forced child begging.
- The effects of forced begging on an individual child's rights. For example, whether they suffer abuse or exploitation, can go to school, live with their family etc.
- Effective strategies for preventing or stopping forced child begging, or for making life better for children while they continue to beg.

**Time needed**

Each group discussion can take up to two hours to complete, allowing time for participants to gather, introductions, breaks and energisers. Do not expect child participants to concentrate on questions being asked for longer than 30-40 minutes at a time.

**Materials/resources**

- Notebook and pen
- Flipchart paper and marker pens.
- Suitable place to meet.

**Forms and coversheets**

- Remember to fill out Coversheets 4 or 5 in Appendix 2.

**Methods**

- Each group discussion should involve a minimum of five participants and a maximum of ten. Eight is the ideal number.
- Participants should be grouped according to common interests and experiences, and whether or not they will feel confident and happy talking together. Children and adults should not be mixed up, and nor should males and females. You may also want to have separate group discussions with older and younger children.
- Try to find a quiet location, where you will not be overheard, with enough space for everyone to sit in a circle. This is not always possible, and group discussions can be conducted successfully in open spaces, such as a park. However, it is helpful for a member of the research team to act as a 'gatekeeper,' talking to curious onlookers and preventing them from interfering with the research process.
- Once all of the participants have gathered together, sit them in a circle so that everyone is at the same level and you can maintain eye contact with all of them.
- Introduce yourself, explain the aims of the research, and check that the participants are willing to take part (see Box 10 for more details). Use ice-breakers to make participants feel more comfortable.
- Use pre-prepared question/activity checklists to gather information from participants. Examples of these checklists are included below. Remember to adapt these examples to suit your own setting, or to make up your own checklists as appropriate (see Part 2 for more details on how to do this). Adapted checklists should be included in the handbook which researchers take with them to the field.
- Listen to the answers provided by participants and follow-up with your own questions on any interesting issues raised. You should **always ask probing question** and never focus exclusively on the questions in the checklist.
- Try to stimulate debate between participants, by encouraging them to share and reflect on each others' experiences. Remember that a group discussion is not an opportunity for a series of one-to-one interviews. Ask questions to the whole group and try to get everyone involved. If one participant dominates, do not be afraid to politely cut them off – thank them for their insights and explain that you want to hear everyone's views.
- Diagrams and drawings, such as the problem tree described below, can be used to generate debate and discussion. However, not all participants will be happy using such diagrams. It is very important that participants have some ownership and understanding of the diagram. If the diagram includes words, illiterate participants may find them hard to follow. Either attempt to use symbols or drawings instead, or avoid the use of the diagram altogether.
- Remember to end the discussion by asking participants ifthey have anything to add or any questions for you (see Box 11 for details).
- Use energisers regularly to liven up sleepy or bored participants.

# 1. An example of a question/activity checklist for use with children or adults using problem trees (only suitable if there is a degree of literacy in the group).

**Complete coversheets**

- Remember to fill out Coversheet 4 or 5 in Appendix 2.

**Discussion about which children are forced to beg/attitudes towards begging**

- Try and find out which children beg and the extent of forced child begging. Ask:

☑ Roughly, how many children in this area beg?
☑ Which children beg? Is it all children from your community or just some? Which types of children beg?
☑ Why do some children beg and not others?
☑ Who decides whether or not children beg?
☑ Do children have any choice in whether or not they beg?
☑ Who do children beg for?
☑ What would happen if children did not bring back enough money?

- If the discussion suggests that some children may be being forced to beg, probe to get more details. Try and find out who they are being forced to beg by? (For example, by their parents? Other individuals?) How they are being forced? (For example, through violence? Or threats?) And if this is a widespread problem?
- Discuss attitudes towards begging. Ask:

☑ What do you think about child begging?
☑ Is this something you would want your son to do?
☑ What about your daughter?
☑ Is begging acceptable for children of all ages, or just for children of some ages?

- **Probe** on why they hold certain beliefs. For example, why would they be happy/unhappy for their son/daughter to beg? If beliefs are different for girls and boys, why?

**Problem trees**

- Ask one of the participants to draw a large tree on a sheet of flip-chart paper with space below and above. Make sure that they add roots below the tree and branches and leaves at the top. It is very important that the participants draw this tree. Reassure them that it does not have to be a work of art, and praise the finished drawing.
- Choose an appropriate term to place at the centre of the problem tree to describe children who are forced to beg. This term must be clearly understood by all participants. What this term is will depend on the context. For example, in Senegal, the term '*talibé*' was placed at the centre of the tree to describe children forced to beg by religious teachers. In other settings, it may be appropriate to talk about 'children trafficked into begging' or 'children who are part of begging gangs.' In some cases, forced child begging is so under-recognised that it will not be possible to come up with a widely understood term to describe this phenomenon. In these instances, it is better to talk about 'child begging' and then to probe on forced child begging when completing the tree.
- Place the chosen term to describe forced child begging/child begging at the centre of the tree, on the trunk. Explain that the roots relate to the causes of this form of begging, and the branches/leaves to the effects (an example of a problem tree is included in Box 15).
- Ask about the causes of the problem placed at the centre of the tree. Ask the participants to write the reasons at the root of the tree. If they cannot write, you can try and encourage them to draw or use symbols instead, but this does not always work as it can be hard to find appropriate symbols for complex causes.
- Probe to get as many causes as possible and find out more about each of the causes mentioned. For example,if they mention adult unemployment as a cause, ask: Does this affect many adults? Why can they not get jobs? Could they beg instead of the children? Why? Why not?
- Find out which causes are of greatest significance.
- Refer back to the earlier discussion on whether or not children are forced to beg. If it emerged from this discussion that some children are forced to beg, probe further about the causes of begging for these children.
- Ask about the effects of the problem placed at the centre of the tree. Are there benefits? Are there disadvantages? Ask the participants to write/draw the effects on the branches and leaves of the tree.
- Probe to get as many effects as possible and try and find out more about each of the effects mentioned. For example, if they mention that children who beg do not go to school, ask: Is this the case for all children who beg or do some combine school with begging? Are there any other reasons why they might not go to school?
- Refer back to the earlier discussion on whether or not children are forced to beg. If it emerged for this discussion that some children are forced to beg, probe further about the effects of begging on these children.
- Discuss strategies for stopping children from begging. **Ask**:

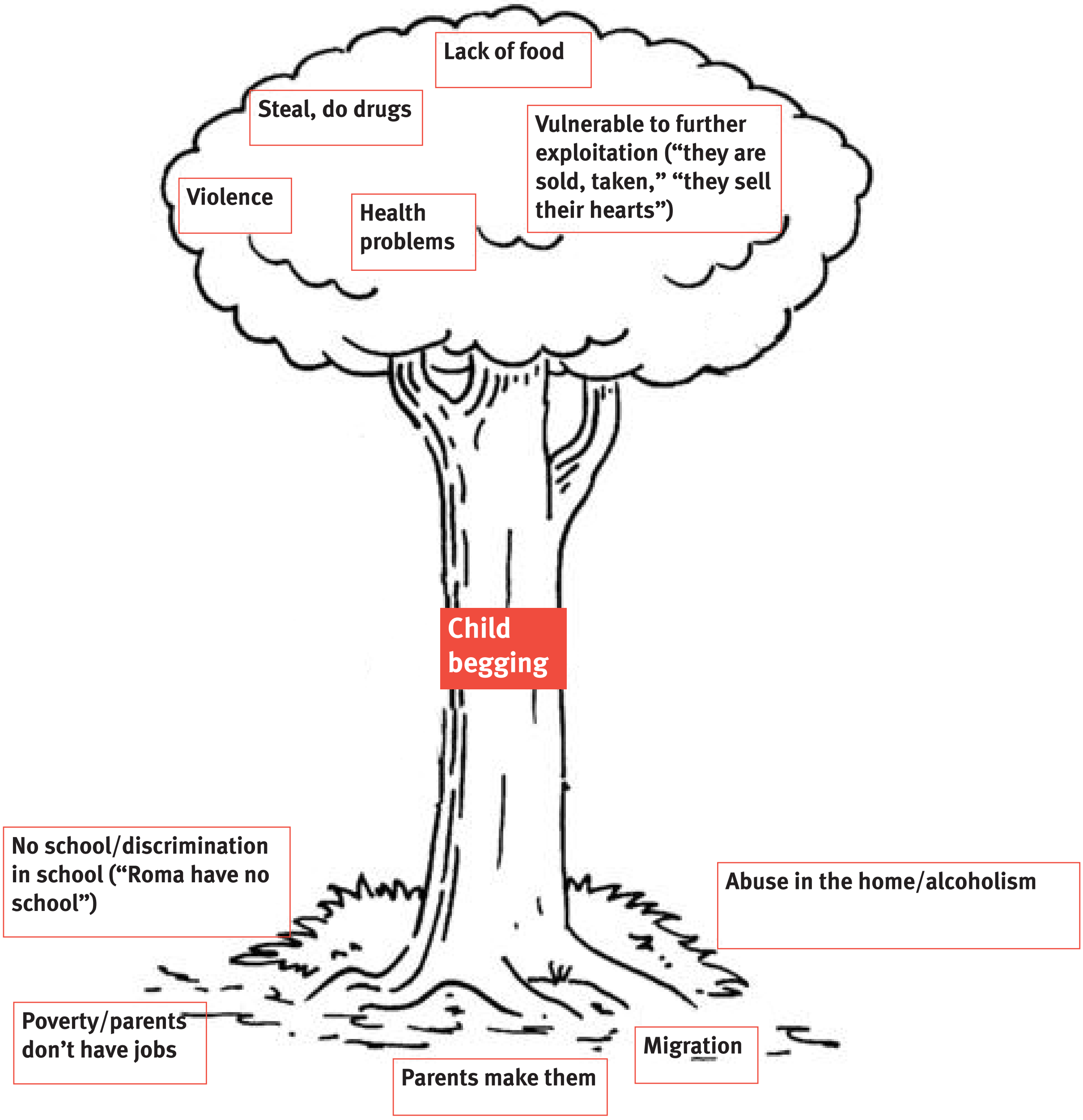
- ☑ What could be done to stop children from begging?
- ☑ What could governments do?
- ☑ What could parents do?
- ☑ What about children themselves?
- ☑ What else could governments, parents and children themselves do to stop children from being sent out to beg by others against their wishes?

- Discuss how life could be made better for children while they continue to beg. **Ask:**
- What could be done to make life better for children who beg?

- ☑ What help do girl beggars need?
- ☑ What about boys?
- ☑ Would anything else need to be done to make life better for children who are sent out to beg by others against their wishes?

- **Remember to probe on forced child begging to try and get participants to think about specific responses that relate to this problem rather than begging in general.**

## Box 15: An example of a problem tree[4]




[4] This example was taken from a group discussion with boys who had been rescued from forced child begging in Tirana, Albania.

## 2. An example of a question checklist for use with children or adults without using 'problem trees' (suitable for all groups).

**Complete coversheets**

- Remember to fill out Coversheet 4 or 5 in Appendix 2.

**Discussion about which children are forced to beg/ attitudes towards begging**

- Try and find out which children beg and the extent of forced child begging. Ask:

☑ Roughly, how many children in this area beg?
☑ Which children beg? Is it all children from your community or just some? Which types of children beg?
☑ Why do some children beg and not others?
☑ Who decides whether or not children beg?
☑ Do children have any choice in whether or not they beg?
☑ Who do children beg for?
What would happen if children did not bring back enough money?

- **If the discussion suggests that some children may be being forced to beg, probe to get more details. Try and find out who they are being forced to beg by? (For example, by their parents? Other individuals?) How they are being forced? (For example, through violence? Or threats?) And if this is a widespread problem?**
- Discuss attitudes towards begging. Ask:

☑ What do you think about child begging?
☑ Is this something you would want your son to do?
☑ What about your daughter?
☑ Is begging acceptable for children of all ages, or just for children of some ages? When is it/might it be completely unacceptable?

- **Probe** on why they hold certain beliefs. For example, why would they be happy/unhappy for their son/daughter to beg? If beliefs are different for girls and boys, why?

**Discussion on the causes of forced child begging**

- **Ask:** Why do children beg?
- **Probe** to get as many causes as possible and to find out more about each of the causes mentioned. For example, if they mention adult unemployment as a cause, ask:Does this affect many adults? Why can they not get jobs? Could they beg instead of the children? Why? Why not?
- Find out which causes are of greatest significance.
- If forced child begging emerged as an issue in earlier discussions, probe on specific causes that relate to this group.

**Discussion on the effects of forced child begging**

- Ask: What are the effects of child begging? Are there benefits? Are there disadvantages?
- Probe to get as many effects as possible and try and find out more about each of the effects mentioned. For example, if they mention that children who beg do not go to school, ask: is this the case for all children who beg or do some combine school with begging? Are there any other reasons why they might not go to school?
- **Refer back to the earlier discussion on whether or not children are forced to beg. If it emerged from this discussion that some children are forced to beg, probe further about the effects of begging on these children. For example, what specific problems do these children face?**

**Discussion on responses to forced child begging**

- Discuss strategies for stopping children from begging. **Ask:**

☑ What could be done to stop children from begging?
☑ What could governments do?
☑ What could parents do?
☑ What about children themselves?
☑ What else could governments, parents and children themselves do to stop children from being sent out to beg by others against their wishes?

- Discuss how life could be made better for children while they continue to beg. **Ask:**

☑ What could be done to make life better for children who beg?
☑ What help do girl beggars need?
☑ What about boys?
☑ Could anything be done to make life better for children who are sent out to beg by others against their wishes?

# Key informant interviews

## Aims

Key informants are individuals who are likely to have particular insights into forced child begging and who may be able to form part of the solution in tackling the problem. Who key informants are will vary from setting to setting, but may include: policy makers in related fields such as child rights or trafficking; NGO or government staff working directly with children on the streets; 'employers:' people who live and work in areas where beggars operate, such as waiters in cafes; community leaders or influential figures in the community; and people who give to beggars. The specific aims of each key informant interview will vary depending on the particular areas of knowledge of the individual. Aims of key informant interviews may include finding out information on:

- The extent of and trends in forced child begging, and how these compare with child begging as a whole?
- Which children are forced to beg?
- The causes of forced child begging?
- The effects of child begging/forced child begging on children's rights? For example, whether they suffer abuse or exploitation, can go to school, live with their family etc.
- Appropriate responses to forced child begging, including information on any existing government or civil society responses there may be, such as relevant legislation, policies or programmes in place, and how effective they are?

## Time needed

- Key informant interviews usually last between 30 minutes and one hour.

## Materials/resources

- Notebook and pen.

## Forms and coversheets

- Remember to fill out Coversheet 6 in Appendix 2.

## Methods

- Find a quiet location to conduct the interview, free from disturbances where participants can talk openly without fear of being overheard.
- Introduce yourself, explain the aims of the research, and check that the participant is willing to take part (see Box 10 for more details).
- Use pre-prepared question/activity checklists to gather information from participants. Examples of these checklists are included below. With key informant interviews it is especially important to develop your own checklists, which are appropriate to your setting (see Part 2 for more details on how to do this). Adapted checklists should be included in the handbook which researchers take with them to the field.
- Listen to the answers provided by participants and follow-up with your own questions on any interesting issues raised. You should always ask probing question and never focus exclusively on the questions in the checklist.
- Remember to end the interview by asking participants if they have anything to add or any questions for you (see Box 11 for details).

# 1. An example of a question checklist with government officials or NGO staff

**Complete coversheets**

- Remember to fill out Coversheet 6 in Appendix 2.

**Questions on the extent of forced child begging**

- Can you give us an idea of the scale of child begging in your community?
- Is there any organised or forced begging in your community? (Here it might be helpful to refer to the definition of forced child begging used in this research (see Box 1)).
- If so, what proportion of children do you think are forced or made to beg by others?
- Do you think this number is growing, reducing or staying constant? Why do you think this? What do you think are the reasons for this?

**Questions on the nature of forced child begging**

- Where do children beg?
- Where do child beggars come from? (Are they local? Or do they come from other regions in the country or abroad?) If they are not local, how do you think they travel from their place of origin and with whom?
- Who is in charge of these children while they beg?
- How are children forced or made to beg?

**Questions on the causes of forced child begging**

- What do you think are the causes of forced child begging? Are there any differences between this and children who beg but are not forced or made to do it by others? (Try and get as much detail as possible here).
- Who decides that children start begging?

**Questions on government responses to forced child begging, including in the wider context of child begging**

- What, if anything, is the government doing to respond to child begging?
- What, if anything, has the government done to respond specifically to forced child begging?

**Probe on issues such as laws and their implementation and other programmes and policies.** As discussed

**Questions on the responses of others to forced child begging, including in the wider context of child begging**

- What services/help do you provide for child beggars?
- What services/help are being offered by other agencies?
- What other services or help do you think child beggars need?
- How can child begging be prevented?
- If they have identified forced child begging as a problem, ask what kinds of help are these children receiving? What particular help do they need? How can forced child begging be prevented?
- What challenges do you face working with child beggars? (If they have identified forced child begging as a problem, probe here on particular challenges relating to forced child begging).
- Are there any strategies that have proved to be particularly successful for addressing child begging? If so, what did they achieve and how was this managed? If not, what were the main problems? (If they have identified forced child begging as a problem, probe on strategies designed to help children who are forced to beg).
- What are your plans for future work in this area?

**Access to other information**

- Who else should we speak to?
- Do you know of any research that has been done already in this or relevant areas such as trafficking or begging in general that might help us understand more about forced child begging?
- Do you keep records of children who beg? What about children who work on the streets?
- If so, what is included in these records? Can we have access to them? (Remember to consider the ethical implications of using such information and to discuss this with the participant).

# 2. An example of a question checklist with individuals who give to children

**Complete coversheet**

- Remember to fill out Coversheet 6 in Appendix 2.

**Questions on child begging**

- How often do you give to beggars?
- How much do you give?
- Where do you give?
- Why do you give?
- How do you choose who you give to?
- Do you think that some beggars are more deserving of your money than others? If so, which beggars? Why?
- What do you know about the lives of children who are begging?
- What are the good elements of their lives?
- What are the problems they face?
- Why do you think children beg?
- What do you think happens to the money that you give?
- Can you think of any reasons why you might stop giving to beggars?

# 3. An example of a question checklist for 'employers'

previously, many 'employers' will not be willing to speak to researchers or where their activities are criminal, it may be too dangerous for the research teams and children involved to try to talk to them. However, where this is possible, 'employers' should be approached as they can provide many useful insights.

This is a question checklist developed specifically for speaking to *marabouts* (Koranic teachers) in Senegal about *talibés* (their students), who are sent out to beg. *Daaras* are Koranic schools run by *marabouts* and where *talibés* live. Thiès is the town in Senegal, where the research was conducted in the pilot.

**Coversheets**

- Remember to complete coversheet 6 in Appendix 2.

**Questions about the *marabout***

- Where are you from?
- When did you come to Thiès?
- Why did you come to Thiès?
- Why did you become a *marabout?*
- How long have you been a *marabout?*
- What has changed in this time?
- What do you like about being a *marabout?*
- What do you dislike about being a *marabout?*
- What problems do *marabouts* face?

**Questions about *talibés***

- How many *talibés* do you have in your daara?
- How do the *talibés* in your daara come to you?
- Where are your *talibés* from?
- Would you like more *talibés?*
- How long do *talibés* usually spend with you?
- What do they do when they leave you?
- Why do children become *talibés?*
- How do *talibés* in your daara spend their day?
- Do *talibés* in your *daara* beg? If so, for how many hours each day do they beg?
- Why do they beg?
- Have *talibés* always begged?
- How much do you expect to receive from the *talibés* each day from their begging?
- What happens if they do not bring you enough money?
- What sort of things would you consider to be misbehaviour on the part of a *talibé?*
- What do you do if a *talibé* in your *daara* misbehaves?
- What do you do with the money that you get?
- What help do you get from the *talibés*' parents?
- What is good about being a *talibé?*
- What problems do *talibés* face?

# Part 4: Notes for recorders and translators

## Notes for recorders

### The importance of systematic and comprehensive note-taking

In all research, the researcher taking notes plays as important a role as the researcher asking questions. If you fail to take proper notes, you will lose much of the information that has been gathered, and all of the hard work of the research team will have been wasted. Note-taking is hard work as note-takers are expected to write down as much as possible of what is being said by both the researcher and the participants. This can mean up to an hour of constant writing and some sore hands as a result! It is always a good idea to work in teams of at least two, with one researcher asking questions and the other focusing exclusively on the note-taking. Some top tips for note-taking are included in Box 16.

### Deciding whether or not to take notes during the interviews/group discussions

It is always better to take notes while the interviews and group discussions are taking place rather than afterwards, when it will be very hard to remember all that has been said. Basing notes on memory can also lead to bias as you are likely to remember what is most important to you, rather than to the participants. It is important to talk to participants about the note-taking and try and put them at ease about this process. You can then ask their permission to take notes or use a tape recorder if conditions allow. If they still say no, or if you feel that note-taking will make the researchers too conspicuous, it is important to make sure that notes are taken as soon as possible after the interview or group discussion has taken place.

### Rules for note-taking

You must make clear who has said what by adding their name (or allocate a number to each participant and write down this number instead):

- **Saya: What a lovely day.**
  Or
  **2: "The sun is shining and the sky is blue."**

When you are writing a direct quote, use speech marks:

- **Saya: "Do children in this area beg?"**
  **Munir: "Many, many children here beg, I would say that most of the boys are out begging now."**

If you are not able to write down exactly what people have said, summarise, but do not use speech marks:

- **All: I wouldn't want my children to beg.**
  Or
  **Rezu and Lilly: I think it's OK for children to beg as long as they are not too big.**
  Or
  **Two or three people: We don't have a choice, our children have to beg.**

### Box 16: Top tips for note-taking

- Advise the participant(s) about the research process and ask permission to take notes. If the participant(s) agree(s):
- Fill out the relevant coversheet, including all of the basic information needed, such as time, date and place of the interview/group discussion as well as the names of the participant(s).
- Write down as much information as possible. Try to write down exactly what is being said, or as close to this as possible.
- Describe the research process as well as the research findings. Explain what the researchers are doing/saying as well as what the participants are doing/saying. Record any problems faced on the coversheets for the notes.
- Do not let the recording get in the way of the research process. For example, do not pause the research so that you can catch up with your note-taking or ask children to speak more slowly.
- Try and make sure that the note-taker is as inconspicuous as possible so that the participant is focusing on the person who is asking questions, rather than the person taking notes. In group discussions, for example, this might involve the note-taker sitting outside of the circle of participants.
- Try and take some 'interesting' direct quotes which record exactly, word for word, what has been said. These are for use in the final report.
- Remember to take copies of any diagrams or pictures that are produced and to write down descriptions of any plays performed.
- If you are finding note-taking tiring and are struggling to keep up during group discussions, try working in teams of three, with one person facilitating the discussion, and the other two taking it in turns to act as gate-keeper and note-taker.

Use **...** to indicate any gaps in your note taking.

When you are writing down something that you have seen, or something that you think, write it in brackets:

- **(Azad left the room for a cigarette, everyone seemed to be much more relaxed after he had gone).**

At the end of the notes, make sure that you add any information on the research process that you think is important:

- **(We could not find anywhere quiet to sit and everyone kept coming up and disturbing us).**

As soon as you have finished taking your notes, you must read through them to check that they are clear to you and to add any missing information. As soon as possible after you have written your notes, you must write them up neatly. If you leave this too long, you may find it hard to understand what you have written.

After you have written your notes, share them with other members of the research team to check that you have not missed anything important. Go through the question checklists to jog your memory. If there is any additional information that you have that can help answer these questions add this to the end of your notes even if you are not sure exactly who provided you with this information.

Always photocopy completed notes and keep the copies in a separate place. Keep notes well organised and labelled.

### Filling out the coversheets

For each of the group discussions and interviews, you will need to fill out the relevant coversheet provided in Appendix 2, and attach these coversheets to your notes. When filling out these forms it is important to try not to make the participants feel bored or intimidated by being involved in an official process. In group discussions, it may be a good idea to complete some of the form (for example, name and age) whilst the participants are all sitting together and the rest informally during breaks or at the end of the discussion. Remember, do not start to fill in the form until you have explained what the research is about and gained the participants' permission.

### Numbering the group discussions and interviews

You will need to number each of the group discussions and in-depth interviews so that the information is referenced and can be easily traced afterwards. This number should go on to all of the notes that you take:

- The number should begin with **GD** if it is a group discussion, **I** if it is an interview, **RI** if it is a rapid interview, **KI** for a key informant interview, or **O** if it is an observation.
- You should then indicate which country the research took place. For example, for the pilot we used SE for Senegal, **IN** for India or **AL** for Albania.
- You should then use the first few letters of the community in which the research took place. So, if it took place in a village called Kangama, you would write **KAN**.
- Finally add a number, with the first group discussion or in-depth interview you do in each community being number **1**, the second number **2** and so on.

So the whole number will look something like this: **GD-SE-KAN-1**.

### Notes for translators

Often you will have to translate the notes that you have taken into a common language so that everyone involved in the research process can understand them. It is very important that translators stick as closely as possible to the original notes. Translators may also need to think about who will be reading the translation, and to add further comments or guidance to make things clear for anyone who may not be so familiar with local terms, colloquialisms or place references. Further tips for translating notes are included in Box 17.

**Box 17:**

## Top tips for translating notes

- Allow adequate time for translation. One set of notes from an interview or group discussion can take up to one to two hours to translate. Build this into planning and budgeting.
- Explain the purpose of the research to the translators so that they have a bit of background information.
- Emphasise the importance of sticking as closely as possible to what the participants have said, even if they have not expressed themselves in a grammatically correct way.
- Show translators the 'Rules for note-taking' above. Explain the importance of using the same punctuation as the researchers when they took the notes.
- Explain who will be reading the translated notes and encourage translators to add any further clarifications to make the notes clearer for the recipient(s). Make sure that the translators clearly state that they have added these clarifications themselves by beginning them with the phrase 'Translator's note:' and putting them in brackets.
- Ensure that translators have access to the research team to ask for clarifications. For example, if they cannot read handwritten notes.
- Carefully check the first few sets of notes that the translators do and provide feedback.
- If at all possible, it can be useful to use a range of people in the translation process. If you are translating from another language into English, a native English speaker will usually find this quicker to do than someone who has another first language. However, a good knowledge of local culture and colloquialisms is invaluable in helping to interpret and translate some terms.

# Part 5: Analysis and report writing

## Analysing the information gathered

### What is analysis?

Analysis in this context can be defined as a way to make sense of the mass of information generated from the research project so that it can be used. This is achieved by identifying patterns and trends in the information gathered and exploring explanations for these patterns and trends.
The importance of systematic, rigorous analysis
Research projects on a complex subject such as forced child begging are likely to produce a huge amount of information. As outlined above, understanding forced child begging properly requires talking to a large number of adults and children, and you may end up with notes from up to 250 observations, interviews and group discussions. All of this data can seem quite overwhelming and the thought of making sense of it all a huge challenge. It may be tempting just to sit back, close your eyes and brainstorm on what the key findings and conclusions are from your memory of the research process. It is very important that you do not do this as you are likely to remember only what stood out to you in the research, which may be quite different from what is actually important in the lives of children who are forced to beg. Systematic and rigorous analysis is the only way to minimise such bias. Such analysis is time-consuming and even boring at times, and it can seem pointless to keep entering the same information from different participants again and again. However, only through such analysis can you prove the strength of the findings and work to eliminate, or at least minimise, your own bias. Analysis will be much less of a chore if you start early, and build it into your original planning.

### Steps in analysis

There are many different ways of analysing qualitative information, ranging from simple cutting and pasting of notes by hand to using complex computer programmes. Below is a description of the process that we used for the pilot. It requires a computer, and researchers with typing skills and the ability to use word processing programmes. Like all forms of analysis, it also needs time and patience. During the pilot, the speed with which we could enter data into the database improved with time and practice, but it is advisable to allow at least two hours per in-depth interview, key informant interview and group discussion, with much less time needed for observations and rapid interviews.

**Step 1: Getting organised**
If you have not already done so, it is important to number each of the interviews, group discussions and observations (see Part 4 for details). As the information is gathered, keep a constant record of what you have and where it is. A table such as Table 3 on the next page can be very helpful here.

**Step 2: Developing a database/framework**
Read through the interview and group discussion notes and pull out themes and sub-themes under which you could logically organise the data. For the pilot, we were able to identify the following themes:

- Extent and nature of forced child begging/begging
- Effects of forced child begging/begging
- Which children are forced to beg/beg
- Causes of forced child begging/begging
- Effective strategies.

Under causes, we developed sub-themes, such as:

- Poverty
- Education
- Inadequate care and protection.

Systematically list the different categories of answers that the interviews and group discussions have generated under the sub-themes. For example, under poverty as a cause of forced child begging/child begging, we found that most responses fitted into one of the following categories:

- Poverty given as a general reason
- Poverty related to parental unemployment
- Poverty related to parental drug/alcohol abuse
- Poverty related to the death or illness of a parent
- Poverty related to drought/loss of crops.

List the sources of information. For our research, we found that responses varied by age and gender, and category of individual. We decided that the most logical way to split the data up would be according to the following sources:

- Boys
- Girls
- Parents
- Other sources.

Use all of this information to produce a table or database into which you will enter all of the information from the research. An example of part of a database referring to the causes of forced child begging/child begging is included in Table 4 on the next page.

**Table 3: An example of a record of group discussions**

| Discussion number | No. of participants | Category of participants | Discussion completed | Notes checked | Notes translated | Translation checked | Analysed | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| GD-AL-TR-1 | 8 | Boys who beg | X | X | X | X | X | |
| GD-AL-TR-2 | 7 | Girls who beg | X | X | X | | | |

**Table 4: Part of a databasereferring to the causes of forced child begging/child begging**

| | Boys | Girls | Parents | Others |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Poverty given as a general reason** | | | | |
| **Poverty related to parental unemployment** | | | | |
| **Poverty related to parental drug/alcohol abuse** | | | | |
| **Poverty related to the death or illness of a parent** | | | | |
| **Poverty related to drought /loss of crops** | | | | |

**Step 4: Synthesis and interpretation**

In this context, synthesising and interpreting the information means summarising and drawing conclusions from the findings. This can be done once all of the data has been entered. However, it may also be helpful to do this as you go along, as will enable you to feed back any questions that are thrown up by the analysis process to research teams for them to look into further with participants. The process of synthesising and interpreting the data involves:

- Looking for trends and patterns in the database: Under each of the headings in the database, look for trends, where several different individuals are saying the same thing. Explore differences, where, for example, girls are reporting varying experiences to boys, or those living in one town are having a different experience from those in another. Go back to your original research question and try to ascertain how the research answers these questions. Start to develop a list of key conclusions that can be drawn from the research. Organise these in a logical way under the research questions or the heading of the database.
- Thinking about possible explanations for trends and patterns: Try and add to your conclusions by exploring possible explanations for the trends and patterns which are emerging. For example, why might boys be earning more than girls? Why is forced child begging more common in one town than another? Try and base your explanations on evidence, but where you cannot do this, develop theories and suggestions for why trends and patterns might exist.
- Questioning the truthfulness and strength of your findings: Think about whether you trust the data and the conclusions you have drawn. Do you have reason to doubt the conclusions that you are making? Is there any reason why participants might not tell the truth? Maybe they are ashamed, worried that researchers will disapprove of their real views, do not know the answers or simply do not want to tell you? Do you have enough evidence to back up your conclusions? Are there any contradictions in the data? If so, why might these exist? Are the explanations that you are offering the only possible explanations on offer? A good way to add to this process of questioning the data is to imagine that you are someone who is hostile to your research. What challenges would they make to try and discredit what you have done? Go back to the list of conclusions and explanations that you have made and think about which ones will stand up to scrutiny.
- Choosing the most important/relevant findings: By now, you may have a long list of research findings. As is discussed in more detail below, you may not be able to include all of these findings in the final report as it will

Some top tips for entering data into the database are included in Box 18.

## Box 18: Top tips for entering data into the database

**How to enter data**

- Get to know the database before you begin. This is easier if the people entering the database have a role to play in creating it. Otherwise, read though it several times and take notes.
- View the database as fluid and evolving. If you find information that does not seem to fit under an existing heading, add a new one. Just make sure that you communicate this to any colleagues also working on the database.
- Try and include most of the information contained in the interviews, group discussions and observations, even if it seems trivial or irrelevant. However, you do not need to include the introductions made by the research team.
- Provide details of the source of information before each new data entry. This will help you to spot trends in the database by factors such as the age of the child, or the location of the interview. For example, during the pilot, we wrote down the following before each data entry:
  - The interview number.
  - The category of the participant. For example, begs/forced to beg by parents/ex-beg/mother of beg/at-risk of begging.
  - Details of the occupation/position of key informants for key informant interviews.
  - The age of the child for interviews/group discussions with children. For example, I-AL-TR-1 (10 years old, begs).
- For group discussions, number each of the participant entries and record their number before you enter information from them. This will help you to tell whether information is coming from one or more individuals in the discussion.
- It is important to keep the information as close as possible to what has been said in the interviews, group discussions etc. Where possible, copy down exactly what is written in the transcripts.
- Make sure that you also mark any direct quotes in the transcripts also with speech marks in the database. Highlight or underline any 'interesting' quotes that could be used in the final report so you can find them easily when you come to write it.
- You can add your own thoughts and views to the database, but these should be clearly distinguished from what the participants have said. They should be written in italics and in brackets, for example (I'm not sure that I believe what this person has said).
- You may decide that information fits in several different places in the database. You can repeat the same information in different parts of the database.
- Always try and read interviews, which have been taken with members of the same family together and record any contradictions in brackets with italics. For example: (The mother says the children only beg for one hour, but the children say they beg for eight hours each day).
- If there is anything from the transcripts that you do not understand, include the information in the database, but highlight it in yellow so that it can be followed up later.
- Keep a record of which interviews/group discussions you have entered into the database, and put a large tick on the coversheet once you have entered the information. This will prevent you from entering it twice!
- If you are working on a computer, remember to save the database frequently and keep hard copies in case you lose it.

make the report too long. You will need to think about which findings are most relevant and helpful in terms of fulfilling the goals of the research, and, importantly, for ensuring that the lives of children who are forced to beg are improved. Prioritising the findings will also help policy makers and practitioners think about how best to respond to the challenges raised by the research. For example, if you have uncovered a long list of causes of forced child begging, it is a good idea to think about which causes the research is suggesting are most important and in most need of urgent action for preventing it.

**Step 5: Developing recommendations**
As you start to develop conclusions from the research, you can begin to think about what this all means for preventing forced child begging/child begging, and for helping boys and girls who are already begging or who have been forced to beg. During the pilot, we thought about the implications of our findings for actions to:

- Prevent forced child begging/child begging
- Legislate against forced child begging/child begging
- Rescue and rehabilitate children in extremely exploitative situations
- Improve conditions for children who are already begging on the streets.

We examined the policy and practice implications for a range of actors, including children, parents, governments, NGOs and UN agencies. We also thought about how responses might differ depending on types of forced child begging. In particular, we looked at different responses for girls and boys who were:

- Forced to beg by parents through violence, threats or other forms of coercion.
- Forced to beg by individuals other than their parents.

We also examined links with the wider problem of child begging.

### Who should do the analysis

During the pilot, we found the involvement of a range of different people in the analysis process to be extremely valuable. The consultant and members of the research teams who had a degree of computer literacy did much of the data entry. Other members of the research teams were consulted throughout this process to check for clarifications, and researchers from Albania, India, and Senegal came together in a meeting to discuss findings once all of the data had been collected and most of it entered into the database. We also involved individuals with relevant programme and policy making experience in developing the recommendations from the research. If time and resources permit, it is also a good idea to present a draft of key conclusions from the research to some of the participants to get their feedback.

# Report writing

**Components of a research report**
It is a good idea for research reports to include the following sections:

- One to two page summary: This is probably the most important part of the report as many busy policy makers and practitioners will not read beyond this section. So, do not rush writing this bit!
- Contents page and acknowledgements.
- Introduction: This section should include your rationale for doing the research, the goals of the project, and an outline of the rest of the report to help readers navigate their way around it. You will need to refer to existing literature on or relevant to forced child begging here to explain how you are filling in gaps in current understanding.
- Description of the methods used: You will need to explain who you spoke to, the locations for the research and the techniques used. Showing the efforts you made to get the data will add credibility to your findings. You should also briefly explain some of the challenges of and limitations to the research to give an accurate picture of the data and head off potential criticism.
- Presentation of the key research findings: This will be the longest part of the report and should be organised under logical headings and sub-headings. You might want to use similar headings to those used in the database. It is a good idea to include evidence from other studies here either to back up your findings, or show how your research adds to existing knowledge by filling gaps in or drawing different conclusions from other studies.
- Conclusions and recommendations: This section pulls together and summarises the findings and looks at how the information could be applied to prevent forced child begging or improve the lives of children who are forced to beg.

### The process of writing a research report

The first step in writing a research report is to develop a plan of what you want to say, organising key points under headings and sub-headings. It is a good idea to share this plan with other members of the research team to get their feedback and check that you have not missed out anything crucial. The hardest part of the report to plan will be the section on the research findings. However, this will be much easier if you have undergone the process of rigorous and systematic analysis and synthesis described above. In developing the plan, think carefully who your target audience is and what you want the report to achieve. You may not be able to include everything in the report, so think about the key pieces of information that are needed to achieve your goals.

Once you have developed a plan you can begin writing. Different people do this in different ways. Some start in the middle with the research findings, and then write the introduction and conclusion once they have a clearer idea of the direction the report is taking. Others work systematically through the report, starting with the introduction and ending with the conclusion. You will have to find the approach that works best for you.

It is unlikely that the first draft of the report that you produce will be the last and, although re-drafting is likely to be the last thing you want to do at the end of this long process, it will invariably improve the report. Again, it is good to get colleagues and other members of the research team to comment on drafts of the report, and it can even be a good idea to include other policy makers and practitioners. Their fresh insights can add greatly to findings, and this has the added bonus of making some of those you may want to influence with the research feel involved and engaged in the process. Set limits on the number of re-drafts and the time available for comments, otherwise the process of re-drafting can go on indefinitely.

**The style and length of the report**

The style and length of the report should be determined by your target audience. Stick to language that they will both understand and respect, and think about how much they are actually likely to read. Try to put yourself in their shoes: If you were a busy social worker or government policy maker, how much time would you have for reading?
In general, the answer will be very little time at all, and perhaps depressingly for you after all your hard work, they may not get further than the summary. Your job is to make the report as engaging as possible right from the start, and to keep it as concise as you can. Clear headings will help readers find the parts of the report that most interest them quickly. As a general rule, it is a good idea to stick to 30 or 40 typed pages. Remember that if, by keeping your report short, more of those you want to read it are actually likely to look at it, then less is most definitely more.

# Appendix 1: Forced child begging under international law

Children who are forced to beg are protected under international and regional law. Governments ratify international treaties and thereby commit themselves to meeting the obligations contained in those benchmark standards. Governments can be called to account if they have ratified a treaty and then fail to meet the internationally agreed norms that it contains; and in some cases, a treaty is so widely ratified by States or covers a principle believed to be so fundamental, that it can be said to apply whether a state has opted to ratify it or not.

The most relevant international treaties to forced child begging are the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) and the International Labour Organization's (ILO) Convention No. 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour (1999). International standards on trafficking are also likely to apply:

## UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child sets norms on all aspects of childhood, and obliges the states which have ratified it to protect children and promote their wellbeing in the areas that it covers. All forms of begging violate children's rights under this Convention. Rights that are particularly affected by begging include the right to be free from economic exploitation or performing any work which is hazardous, affects a child's education, or harms their development (Article 32); and the right to protection from all other forms of exploitation (Article 36). To date, this Treaty has been ratified by almost all states in the world. In addition, states, which have ratified the UN Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography (2000), are also obliged to criminalise the sale of children for forced labour.

## ILO Convention on the Worst Forms of Child Labour

The ILO is the lead international agency on all matters relating to labour rights, including for children. It provides the setting for states to come together to agree international standards in this area, monitors their application and also in some cases can offer technical assistance to help governments implement them better.

ILO Convention No. 182 concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour (1999) is widely ratified by states. Furthermore it is one of the conventions considered to be "fundamental" under the ILO system and therefore deemed applicable to all member states of the ILO whether they have chosen to ratify it or not.

It was adopted in response to growing awareness of the problem of child labour and the need to do something urgently to combat its most hazardous forms. It therefore defines child labour practices which are completely unacceptable and must be addressed as a priority. All children who are forced into begging fit clearly within its parameters, whether their involvement in begging is as slavery, forced labour, as the end result of trafficking by parents or others, or simply by virtue that begging is an illicit activity or the state concerned lists it as a "hazardous" form of work:

> "All forms of slavery or practices similar to slavery, such as the sale and trafficking of children, debt bondage and serfdom and forced or compulsory labour" (Article 3(a));
>
> the "use, procuring or offering of a child for illicit activities" (Article (3(c));
>
> and work, which is likely to "harm the health, safety or morals" of the child (Article 3(d)).

## United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish the Trafficking of Persons

Forced child begging often includes trafficking for the purposes of begging. This can be defined using the UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish the Trafficking of Persons Especially Women and Children, supplementing the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (2000):

> "... the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons ... for the purpose of exploitation..." (Article 3).

Under the terms of this Protocol, child trafficking does not have to involve coercion or deception; any children who have been moved for the purposes of exploitation are considered to have been trafficked whether the child agreed to it or not. This applies to cross-border and internal trafficking, as well as trafficking by criminal gangs or family members and 'friends.' All governments which have ratified this Protocol are obliged to tackle all forms of trafficking, including that of children for the purpose of begging.

# Appendix 2: Coversheets

## Coversheet 1: Rapid interviews with children

**Interview number:** ______________________

**Research location** (community/country where research is taking place): ______________________

**Information about the interview:** ______________________

Date: ______________________ Venue (place where interview was conducted): ______________________

Interviewer: ______________________

Note-taker: ______________________

Were these notes taken: (tick) During the interview After the interview

**Information about the child being interviewed:** ______________________

Name (if appropriate to ask the child's name – if not you can leave this space blank): ______________________

Rough estimate of the child's age: ______________________ Sex: ______________________

**Is the child disabled?** (Please provide details or his/her disability) ______________________

______________________

**Information on the research process:**[5] ______________________

______________________

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______________________

[5] This is information about the methods used. For example, which methods worked well? Which worked badly? Were there any problems faced during the discussion?

# Coversheet 2: In-depth interviews with children

**Interview number:** ______________________________

**Research location** (community/country where research is taking place): ______________________________

**Information about the interview:** ______________________________

Date: ____________________ Venue (place where interview was conducted): ____________________

Start time: ____________________ End time: ____________________

Interviewer: ____________________ Recorder: ____________________

Anyone else present: ______________________________

Were these notes taken: (Please tick box) During the interview After the interview

**Information about the child being interviewed:**

Name: ____________________ Age: ____________ Sex: ____________

**Who is this interview with?** (Please tick one box)

Child who currently begs Ex-child beggar Child who is at risk of begging

**If known, has this child been forced to beg? If so, please briefly state the evidence to suggest this:** ____________________

______________________________

______________________________

______________________________

**Is the child disabled?** (Please provide details or his/her disability) ______________________________

**Name of parent/carer of this child also interviewed for this research/ their interview number** **(if relevant):**

______________________________

**Child's ethnicity/religion/area of origin/caste** **(as relevant to your setting):** ______________________________

**Information on the research process:**[6] ______________________________

______________________________

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[6] This is information about the methods used. For example, which methods worked well? Which worked badly? Were there any problems faced during the discussion?

# Coversheet 2: In-depth interviews with children (continued from over)

**Information on the research process** (continued from over): ______________________________

**Information about all of the household members** (who currently live with the child):

| Name | Age | Sex | Relationship to the child | Current occupation | Currently in school? Highest class ever reached in school? |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | **The child participant** | | |
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# Coversheet 3: In-depth interviews with parents/carers

**Interview number:** ____________________

**Research location** (community/country where research is taking place): ____________________

**Information about the interview:** ____________________

Date: ____________________ Venue (place where interview was conducted): ____________________

Start time: ____________________ End time: ____________________

Interviewer: ____________________ Recorder: ____________________

Anyone else present: ____________________

Were these notes taken: (Please tick box) During the interview After the group interview

**Information about the parent/carer interviewed:**

Name: ____________________ Relationship to child: ____________________

Age: ____________________ Sex: ____________________

**Who is this interview with?** (Please tick one or more boxes as appropriate)

Parent/carer of child who is currently engaged in begging
Parent/carer of ex-child beggar
Parent/carer of child who is at risk from forced child begging

**Is there any evidence that any children from this household are currently, or have even been, forced to beg? If so, please briefly provide this evidence here.**

____________________

____________________

**Name of the child/children from this household also interviewed for this research/their interview number(s):**

____________________

____________________

____________________

**Information about the research process:**[7] ____________________

____________________

____________________

____________________

[7] This is information about the methods used. For example, which methods worked well? Which worked badly? Were there any problems faced during the discussion?

# Coversheet 3: In-depth interviews with parents/carers

(continued from over)

**Information on the research process** (continued from over): ______________________________

**Information about all of the household members** (who currently live in the household with the parent being interviewed):

| Name | Age | Sex | Relationship to the household head | Current occupation | Currently in school? Highest class ever reached in school? |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | **Household head** | | |
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# Coversheet 4: Group discussion with children

**Group discussion number:** ______________________________

**Research location:** (community/country where research is taking place)______________________________

**Information about the group discussion:** ______________________________

Date: ______________________ Venue: (place where group discussion was conducted)______________________

Start time:______________________ End time: ______________________

Facilitator:______________________ Recorder: ______________________

Anyone else present:______________________________

Were these notes taken:(tick box) During the group discussion After the group discussion

**Who is this group discussion with?**

Children who beg
Ex-child beggars
Children at risk of begging

**Information about the research process:**[8] ______________________________

______________________________

______________________________

______________________________

**Information about the research participants**

| No. | Name | Sex | Age | Disabled? (briefly describe disability) | Other information (include any evidence that the child is forced to beg here) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | | | | | |
| 2. | | | | | |
| 3. | | | | | |
| 4. | | | | | |
| 5. | | | | | |

[8] This is information about the methods used. For example, which methods worked well? Which worked badly? Were there any problems faced during the discussion?

# Coversheet 5: Group discussion with adults

**Group discussion number:** ______________________________

**Research location:** (community/country where research is taking place)______________________________

**Information about the group discussion:** ______________________________

Date: ______________________ Venue: (place where group discussion was conducted)______________________

Start time:______________________ End time: ______________________

Facilitator:______________________ Recorder: ______________________

Anyone else present:______________________________

Were these notes taken:(tick box) During the group discussion After the group discussion

**Who is this group discussion with?**

Parents/carers of children who beg Parents/carers of children at risk of begging

Parents/carers of ex child beggars/children who have been rescued from forced child begging

Other key informants (please state which) ______________________________

**Information about the research process:**[9] ______________________________

______________________________

______________________________

**Information about the research participants**

| No. | Name | Sex | Occupation | Other information |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | | | | |
| 2. | | | | |
| 3. | | | | |
| 4. | | | | |
| 5. | | | | |

[9] This is information about the methods used. For example, which methods worked well? Which worked badly? Were there any problems faced during the discussion?

# Coversheet 6: Key informant interviews

**Interview number:** ____________________

**Research location:** (community/country where research is taking place)____________________

**Information about the interview:** ____________________

Date: ____________________ Venue: (place where group discussion was conducted)____________________

Start time:____________________ End time: ____________________

Interviewer:____________________ Recorder: ____________________

Anyone else present:____________________

Were these notes taken:(tick box) During the group discussion After the group discussion

**Information about the key informant**

Name: ____________________

Occupation:____________________

Organisation (if relevant): ____________________

How the 'key informant' is relevant/linked to children who beg? (For example, 'employer'? Gives to children who beg? Works with children who beg?)

____________________

____________________

____________________

____________________

____________________

Any other relevant information (For example, age, sex, etc.): ____________________

____________________

____________________

____________________

**Information about the research process:**[10] ____________________-____________________

____________________

____________________

____________________

____________________

[10] This is information about the methods used. For example, which methods worked well? Which worked badly? Were there any problems faced during the discussion?

# Appendix 3: Forms

## Form 1: Daily activity chart for children who are forced to beg

Name of child:________________________________ Date of interview:________________________________

Interview number:________________________________

| Estimated Time | Activity | Comments |
|---|---|---|
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# Form 2: Observations

Name of researcher: ______________________ Observation location: ______________________

Time observation started: ______________________ Time observation ended: ______________________

Date: ______________________

Please record any break periods when you left the location/stopped observing (for food/toilet etc.): ______________________

Number of children begging in the location at the start of the observation period: ______________________

Number of children begging in the location at the end of the observation period: ______________________

Was this information recorded (please tick): During the observation After the observation

**Please select as many children as possible to observe closely and record their details below (continue on a separate sheet if necessary):**

| Child | Sex | Estimated age | Time started begging if witnessed | Did the child eat or drink? | Who begging with (co beggar(s)), e.g. age, sex, disability etc. | Behaviour of co-beggar towards the child | How many people gave to child | Does the child have a disability? What? | Other observations, e.g. any evidence of forced begging, e.g. someone dropping off or collecting child(ren)? Or monitoring child(ren) while begging? If so, give details. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
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