

# Life in Colours: Appendices

## Annex A: Research tools

### **Focus Group Discussions – Facilitator’s Guide**

#### Introduction

Thank you for talking to us today. As you know, we work with the \_\_\_\_\_ office and we are conducting research to understand Children’s Experiences of COVID-19. We got in touch with you through \_\_\_\_\_.

We are talking with children/adolescents aged \_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_. Our aim is to learn about children’s experiences and opinions about the COVID-19 pandemic through a series of activities in group. We will not ask you to directly share your personal experiences, so do not feel obliged to share what you do not feel comfortable sharing. We appreciate you agreeing to talk with us, and we hope to learn much from you.

Before we start, is there anything else you’d like to ask about our research study that maybe we have not properly covered during our one-on-one call? Or anything else that came to your mind after it?

#### Icebreaker: Let’s get to know each other

Would you like to present yourself (say your nickname, your age, the place where you live and a rule that in your opinion is important to ensure that all of us feel good and respected). Also, mention two truths about yourself and one lie, the others need to guess what’s the lie!

*One researcher repeats the rules mentioned. And then asks:*

- 1) Do we all agree with the rules?
- 2) Is there anything missing?

#### Activity 1: Object of the Pandemic & Covid-19 makes me feel

##### Activity 1a

We asked you to bring with you today an object that symbolizes and defines how you have perceived and experienced the Covid-19 period so far.

- 1) Please describe to us the object you have chosen for today and let us know why you selected it. I can start.

### Activity 1b

- 1) Using the online tool (e.g., Mentimeter) write three words that complete the following sentence: "Covid makes me feel..." *The researcher can show the word cloud to participants (anonymity will be respected as the clouds will contain all words)*
- 2) Are you surprised about what you see? Would you like to comment some of the words?

### Activity 2: Imaginative story of a child/adolescent during Covid (40 minutes)

*This activity could be carried out in 2 breakout rooms with one facilitator per group.*

In group, create the story of a child/adolescent whose life is similar to yours that has lived throughout the various stages of the pandemic. Your story creation will be supported by a series of guiding questions. Feel free to add details and imagine additional areas that may be important for your character's life. Discuss in group and share ideas.

#### Define main character and timeline for your story

- a) Draw the main character of your story and determine name, age, sex, where s/he lives, if s/he lives with parents or not, if s/he goes regularly to school etc.
- b) Draw a timeline with the key moments in the pandemic for children/adolescents whose life is similar to yours in this country. Think about some of the measures that you are aware of which were taken by your country to minimize the spread of COVID-19. E.g.:

Initial national lockdown _____ easing of restrictions (summer) _____ reopening of schools _____ re-tightening of restrictions (at regional level)
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For the following questions you can use the timeline to help create [NAME]'s experiences and feelings.

#### Theme 1: Daily life/activities during the pandemic

- a) What has [NAME] usually done in her/his daily life since (or before?) the pandemic started?
- b) How has her/his daily activities changed compared to before the pandemic?
- c) How have the key events/moments in the timeline impacted her/his daily life? *Probe*: schooling, food, access to healthcare, peer networks, play, leisure (activities s/he had to stop or new activities s/he started), etc.
- d) What were the positive changes/ What has s/he enjoyed? Why?
- e) What were the negative changes/challenges? Why?
- f) Thinking about these key events/moments in the timeline how did they make [NAME] feel? *Probe*: Fear, anxiety, concern, confusion / surprise, amusement, rest

### Theme 2: Relationships during the pandemic

- a) How have [NAME]'s key relationships changed during the pandemic? I am referring to relationships with friends, teachers, siblings, parents/cohabitants, relatives and other important persons in [NAME]'s life, including new persons s/he may have met since the beginning of the pandemic. *Probe*: Whom did s/he lose contact with because of the pandemic?
- b) Where some changes for the better? Where some changes for the worse? Why? How did s/he cope with these changes?
- c) How did these changes make her/him feel?
- d) What are some positive effects that [NAME] has seen on himself/herself after living through the pandemic? Please elaborate
- e) What could have gone better for [NAME]? What could have been done to improve her/his situation(s)? *Probe*: how about important relations? How about key activities?

### Theme 3: Physical and virtual spaces

- a) What were the important physical spaces [NAME] occupied during the various stages of the pandemic? How did they change with compared to before the pandemic? Draw a map of these spaces.
- b) With which emotion would [NAME] typically associate those spaces (eg. boredom, fear, comfort, happiness, joy, calm, uncertainty etc.)?

Additional question: How about the virtual environment?

*After this question, if activity 2 has been carried out in break out room, move all children back to together and continue with the rest of activities.*

*Before moving to the break, ask children to share a high-quality picture of the drawings they made (story's characters, timelines, maps) – they can do that immediately or after the FGD by email.*

### **Break (5 minutes):**

Let's all together stand up and have a stretch! You can imitate our movements (researchers on camera do some jumps, stretch your arms, your face, etc. – try to keep the exercise amusing) and give participants the possibility of moving to another room (grab a glass of water, go to the toilet, quickly look at their mobile phones, etc.)

### **Activity 3: Recommendations for the future (in plenary) (30 minutes)**

Watch the video clip of the President/Prime Minister's speech about the next set of measures to deal with COVID-19 (first 45 seconds).

Imagine that you can assist and recommend the government on how to best deal with the situation.

- a) What decisions would you suggest him/her to take to reduce the spread of COVID-19 as well as protect the wellbeing of adolescents like you? – *Think about the lives of your character, yours and those of other adolescents.*
- b) Having experienced the pandemic, what would you say is your hope for your future as children/adolescents in this country? Why?
- c) And your worries? Why?

Imagine the COVID-19 period as a portal/corridor to a new world.

- a) How do you think the new world should look like?
- b) Do you have any other suggestions or comments about children's experiences of COVID-19 in your city/country?

### **Activity 4: Attitudes vis-à-vis the Covid-19 pandemic**

**Individually and anonymously**, reply to the quick following poll:

- 1) Pick the sentence from the list that mostly resonates with you:

- a) Covid-19 has had a big impact on our community
  - b) Covid-19 has had a big impact on my family
  - c) Covid-19 is a serious health problem
  - d) Covid-19 is not a serious health problem
  - e) Covid-19 is a serious socio-economic problem
  - f) Covid-19 is a monster
- 2) Pick the sentence from the list that mostly resonates with you:
- a) Wearing masks in public is important
  - b) Wearing masks in public is not important
  - c) Wearing masks in public makes me look silly
- 3) Pick the sentence from the list that mostly resonates with you:
- a) Lockdowns are unnecessary
  - b) Lockdowns are necessary
  - c) Lockdowns restrict my freedom
  - d) The Covid-19 vaccine will save us
- 4) Pick the sentence from the list that mostly resonates with you:
- a) School closures and distant learning are great
  - b) School closures and distant learning are terrible
  - c) Distant learning taught me new things
  - d) Distant learning is not bad, but it does not work in my school

### Concluding remarks

Thank you very much for having taken part in this Focus Group Discussion. Your ideas, thoughts and recommendations will be extremely useful to inform programmes and policies in this country and ensure that your views are taken into account.

Also, we would like to let you know that we will contact you for follow-up activities. This will happen in a few months' time. The potential follow-up activities are:

- 1) Taking part of a one-on-one in-depth interview
- 2) Sharing drawings, pictures, videos, audio material in line with the reflections about the life of an adolescent during the pandemic
- 3) Sharing written text (a written story, a diary, some thoughts regarding the life of an adolescent during the pandemic)

As you know, participation in the next step will be completely voluntary. We will contact you by email and you can let us know if you are interested to participate or

not. By email we will also provide you with technical details on how to safely share material with the research team, to ensure data privacy.

We will of course also be in touch with all of you via email or via your school when the research report will be published, so you can read it yourselves

## **In-depth interview – Facilitator’s Semi-Structured Guide**

### **Instructions for the interviewer**

*These interview guides will be used with adolescents (i) who have already been part of a focus group discussion (FGD) with the research team, or (ii) who are new to the research. Therefore, the facilitator should adapt the questions based on this information.*

*If the interviewee was part of a FGD, the facilitator should look at the adolescent’s contributions in the FGD and note down some key points that would be worth exploring more in depth. The list of the interviewee’s contributions during the FGD should inform the way these semi-structured guidelines are used.*

*Moreover, the facilitator could further tailor these semi-structured guidelines based on the specific circumstances of the adolescents interviewed (which may depend on their socio-demographic characteristics). The facilitator will do that using specific and adapted probes.*

### **Introduction**

Dear \_\_\_\_\_, welcome back. How are you?

Thank you for talking to us today. As you know, I work with the \_\_\_\_\_ office and we are conducting research to understand Children’s Experiences of COVID-19. We already had a discussion together in the focus group. We appreciate you agreeing to talk with us again to share your personal experience and we hope to learn much from you.

Today I will ask you questions about your personal experience during the pandemic. Remember that you can always tell me that you prefer not to answer any given question. You can also ask for a break, or to abandon the call before the end of the interview.

Before we start, is there anything else you’d like to ask about this research study?

### **Introductory questions [Ice breaker 1]**

- 1) What have you been doing today?**
- 2) How did you spend your day?**
- 3) What is your plan for the day?**

If child participated in FGDs:

- 1) Do you remember what you discussed with your peers during the FGD?
- 2) *Probe:* Would you like to discuss any particular theme that was discussed then? Please elaborate.
- 3) Would you like to share anything that came into your mind after your participation at the FGD? Please elaborate.

If new child:

- 1) Why have you decided to take part in this one-on-one interview?

### **Your relationships during the pandemic [OPTIONAL: icebreaker 2]**

#### **Activity: Quadrant of relations**

I am interested in understanding a bit more about your experiences in terms of relations since the pandemic arrived in the country. To do that I am going to ask you to take a paper and a pen/pencil to do a short activity.

Please divide the page into 4 quarters and each quarter in half. Draw yourself in the middle. In the left part of the quadrant, I would like you to list people, answering these questions:

- 1) Who are the people I spent most time with since the pandemic arrived?
- 2) Who are the people I spent less time with?
- 3) Who are the people I do not talk to anymore?
- 4) Are there new people I met (since the pandemic arrived)?

In the right part of the quadrant, for each person you listed, I would like you to answer the following questions, drawing symbols:

- 1) Do I live with them? Or used to live with them? 🏠
- 2) During the pandemic, did the relations with these people evolve for the better or for the worse? 😊 😞
- 3) With whom did you enjoy spending time the most, especially during the restrictions? ☆
- 4) Do you spend time with these people mainly online or offline? 📶 🚫

Your page should look more or less like this (*the researcher shares his/her screen*):



People I have been spending more time with	🏠 😊 📶
People I have been spending less time with	📶 😞
People I do not talk to anymore	😞 📶
New people I met	☆ 😊 📶

I will leave you for 5 minutes so you can do that on your own (you can switch off the video and the audio if you want, I will switch off mine.)

*After 5 minutes:*

Now I would like you to describe me the quadrant. Probe:

- 1) What are the activities you do together?
- 2) What are the activities you do not do anymore or you interrupted/changed because of the pandemic? How do you feel about that?
- 3) Why do you think the relations changed for the better? And for the worse?
- 4) How did you meet? Why are you not talking anymore?
- 5) (If applicable) After the restrictions lifted, who were the people you could not wait to spend time with? What did you want to do with them?

## Wellbeing

I would now like to talk about your assessment of the overall impacts of the crisis on your well-being.

- 1) How are you?
- 2) **How do you feel today?**
- 3) (If applicable) How have been things going since the last time we met?
- 4) **How have you felt in the last year?**
- 5) **How has your life changed with respect to before the pandemic started?**
  - a) Has your daily life changed?
  - b) Has the way you spend your time changed?
  - c) How are you feeling about these changes? *Probe:* Think about your home environment, your health, your relationships, your education, your work,

your leisure activities / passions, your access to services. *Specific probes depending on the circumstances of the interviewee.*

- 6) **What were the negative experiences you lived in the past year, in relation to the Covid-19 pandemic?**
  - a) *Probe:* What are some of the negative effects that you have seen on yourself after living through COVID-19 pandemic?
  - b) What were some negative situations you lived because of the pandemic? Please elaborate.
- 7) This can be a stressful time for many people – **Would you say it has been stressful for you as well?**
  - a) **Why?**
  - b) **In which ways?**
- 8) **How do you deal with your stress or when you are feeling sad?**
- 9) **Is there anyone you can talk to in confidence?**
- 10) What were the positive experiences you lived in the past year in relation to the Covid-19 pandemic?
  - a) *Probe:* What have you learned about yourself from the crisis?
  - b) What are some positive effects that you have seen on yourself after living through COVID-19 pandemic?
  - c) What were some positive situations you lived because of the pandemic? Please elaborate.
- 11) **Apart on the impact on yourself, are there other things you have been concerned about in the last year?**
- 12) **Do you think other people experienced the Covid-19 pandemic as you did or in a different way? How?**

### **Aspirations for the future**

- 1) **How do you imagine your life in the future?**
- 2) **How have your plans and aspirations for the future changed because of Covid-19?**
- 3) **Having experienced the pandemic, what would you say is your hope for your future as adolescent in this country? How so?**
  - a) *Probe:* reflect on the specificity of the interviewee's circumstances (UASC, LGB, trans, boy, girl, etc.).
- 4) **What are some worries for your future? How so?**

### **Attitudes and opinions towards the pandemic**

- 1) If you had to explain the Covid-19 pandemic and its consequences on adolescents like you to an older person, what would you tell them?**
- 2) In general, what do you think about Covid-19?**
- 3) What do you think the Covid-19 experience is teaching to the world?**

### **Agency**

- 1) Do you talk about these things (governmental measures, policies at national/international level in response to Covid-19) with other people?**
  - a) With whom?**
  - b) Do you feel they listen to you?**
- 2) Do you feel informed enough?**
- 3) During the pandemic, what things have you been able to decide for yourself?**
- 4) What things have been decided for you by other people?**
- 5) How has it changed with respect to prior to the pandemic?**
  - a) Probe: have you faced any conflict with family members, community, peers, teachers, or school in the past year?**
  - b) Have you ever heard of/participated in initiatives in the framework of the covid-19 pandemic organised within your school, community, association, or at municipal, regional and national level?**

### **Closing questions**

Think about your life.

- 1) What could enhance your situation – and the situation of your family/community if the pandemic was to continue?**
- 2) Do you have any other experience, suggestion or comment you would like to add concerning your life in your city/country during the COVID-19 pandemic?**
- 3) Of all the things we talked about, what to you is the most important thing that was said?**

### **Concluding remarks**

Thank you very much for having taken part in this in-depth interview. It has been a great pleasure working with you and learning from you in these months. We will use your ideas, thoughts, and recommendations to inform policy makers in this country and ensure that your views are taken into account. We hope to be able to talk to you again in the future, maybe a year from now.

- 1) Would you be interested?
- 2) Do you have any question for us before we close?

Thank you very much again, we really enjoyed listening to you, and we hope you enjoyed spending this time with us. We will of course be in touch with you via email or via your school when the research report will be published, so you can read it yourself.

## **Indications for additional individual asynchronous contributions**

OPTION 1: Think back to the topics that were talked about during the focus groups, the story of the fictional character that you and the other young people in the group created, and the other things that were discussed. Is there something in particular that you would like to tell us about in more detail, from a personal perspective and relating to your own experiences? If yes, you can do this through writing something (essay, poetry, short story, comic strip or any other format that you prefer) and/or a drawing/photograph accompanied by some text to explain the ideas.

OPTION 2: You could tell us how you're doing now, after more than a year since the start of the pandemic. How do you feel? What has changed, or is changing, in your life? How are your relationships with other people going? Are there things that you feel that you need? Are there things that you miss? What have you learned? How do you spend your time? You can tell us in a format like a few pages from a diary and/or with a drawing/photograph/comic strip with some accompanying explanation.

OPTION 3: You could contribute something, not so much from an individual or personal perspective, but more from the point of view of your generation – the generation that has been living through the pandemic as adolescents. What do you think are the biggest fears of your generation? And what are the biggest hopes? What issues do you think the government and other key adults should focus on, and work on, in order to ensure a good quality of life for your generation, in the present and in the future? You can write an essay, a newspaper article or simply send us a drawing or comic strip with a few explanatory details added to explain the ideas.

OPTION 4: If none of the above are quite right in terms of how you would like to tell about your experiences of the pandemic (or discuss your opinions), you can also share your contributions with us in any other way that explains your feelings and point of view.

Please send any contributions via e-mail to \_\_\_\_\_ **21 June 2021 (at 23:00)**. If possible, please send documents in Word format (or an equivalent open file format) and the drawings/photos/comic strips in .jpeg format. If you have any queries about the options, please feel free to send us an e-mail.

It's completely up to you whether you want to participate in this phase of the research. We'd be grateful if you could respond just to let us know if you are interested to contribute and also to confirm if you would prefer us not to publish any drawings/photographs/comic strips that you create.

Your contributions will be treated anonymously and will be handled in exactly the same way as the contributions that you made to the focus group (as described in the information sheet that we sent to you and your parent(s)/legal guardian and the consent forms that were signed before the focus groups).

Finally, just to emphasize that we are interested in your experiences, perceptions, and opinions; and that it doesn't matter how "perfect" or "original" or "correct" any drawings/photos/comic strips/texts that you send us are. The only important thing is that they are from you and speak FOR you.

## Annex B: Project partners

### Schools

IC di Bella (Potenza)

IC Martellotta (Taranto)

IC Monte Argentario - Giglio (Grosseto)

IC Pianezza (Turin)

IC Prà (Genoa)

IIS Cuomo Milone di Castel San Giorgio (Salerno)

IIS Fazzini di Grottammare (Ascoli Piceno)

IIS Torlonia Bellisario di Avezzano (L'Aquila)

IISS C. Alberto Dalla Chiesa di Montefiascone (Viterbo)

IPSAR Costa Smeralda di Arzachena (Olbia-Tempio, Sassari)

ISIS Magrini Marchetti di Gemona del Friuli (Udine)

Istituto Scuole Superiori Balilla Pinchetti di Tirano (Sondrio)

ITCS Gaetano Salvemini di Casalecchio di Reno (Bologna)

ITE Galileo Galilei (Vibo Valentia)

Liceo Classico e Linguistico Ruggero Settimo (Caltanissetta)

Liceo De André (Brescia)

Liceo Scientifico e delle Scienze Umane Laurana Baldi (Urbino)

Scuola secondaria di I grado "Borghi" (Rome)

### Third sector organisations

Arciragazzi Nazionale

Associazione Inventare Insieme Onlus – Centro Tau (Palermo)

Circolo Arci - La stanza di Cesco (Bari)  
 Comitati Arcigay (BAT, Reggio Calabria)  
 Cooperativa Prospettiva (Catania)  
 L'Impronta Associazione Onlus (Milan)  
 SAI - Casa dei Mirti (Palermo)  
 SAIFIP, Istituto Metafora (Rome)  
 Transparent (Lecce)

### Young Advisory Board

<b>N.</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Age at the beginning of the project</b>	<b>City</b>
1.	Elisabetta De Francesco	11	Bari
2.	Giulia D'Ambrosio	11	Bari
3.	Michele Mazzoleni	11	Milan
4.	Massimo Carlo Bonomi	11	Milan
5.	Martina Maragno	11	Milan
6.	Riccardo Finizio	12	Selargius (Cagliari)
7.	Federico Finizio	12	Selargius (Cagliari)
8.	Arianna Pisano	13	Selargius (Cagliari)
9.	Gaia Balloi	13	Selargius (Cagliari)
10.	Chiara Zito	15	Reggio Calabria
11.	Victoria Romano	16	Milan
12.	Agata Bernacca	17	Lucca
13.	Virginia Barchiesi	17	Ancona



<b>14.</b>	Carlo Capasso	18	Naples
<b>15.</b>	Elisa Cremona	18	Lucca
<b>16.</b>	Gianmario Cosentino	18	Como
<b>17.</b>	Bianca Scattolon	19	Turin
<b>18.</b>	Nafissa Aboukassim	20	Asti
<b>19.</b>	Eleonora Barone	21	Castelvetrano (Trapani)
<b>20.</b>	Francesca Pace	21	Potenza

### External Advisory Board

<b>N.</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>
<b>1.</b>	Cathy Mathews	Medical Research Council Cape Town - South Africa
<b>2.</b>	Christine Hunner-Kreisel	University of Vechta
<b>3.</b>	Joyce Wamoyi	Medical Research in Mwanza, Tanzania
<b>4.</b>	Monica Ruiz-Casares	McGill University, Canada
<b>5.</b>	Shazly Savahl	University of the Western Cape, South Africa
<b>6.</b>	Silvia Guglielmi	Overseas Development Institute, UK

## Annex C: Informative note and consent forms



### Research Study

### Children's experiences and views of COVID-19 and responses to it

#### **PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS**

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#### **INFORMATIVE NOTE ON THE RESEARCH STUDY**

*“Children’s experiences and views of COVID-19 and responses to it”* is an international research project developed by UNICEF Office of Research (OoR) – Innocenti. The project aims at understanding children’s and adolescents’ experiences and opinions regarding the Covid-19 in various countries to inform all the stakeholders responsible for their wellbeing.

In Italy, the research study is implemented by UNICEF Innocenti, UNICEF Europe, and Central Asia Office (ECARO), and UNICEF Italy that collaborates directly with schools on the whole national territory. The research team engaging with children and adolescents participating in the research study is formed by two researchers belonging to the staff of UNICEF Innocenti and UNICEF ECARO.

The research involves children and adolescents between 11 and 19 years and it will try to understand their experiences and opinions on various issues, including, *inter alia*, those related to the national lockdown during the months of March-April 2020, the restrictions imposed to limit the spreading of the pandemic, and the socio-economic consequences connected to it.

The research project will involve children and adolescents in two different but complementary phases:

**PHASE 1:** Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with children and adolescents (Dec 2020/Jan 2021)

During this phase, the researchers will conduct FGDs with children and adolescents living in different Italian regions. The FGDs will take place online and include a maximum of 8 participants belonging to the same age group (11-13 years and 14-19 years). They will last ca. 1 hour and 30 minutes.

**PHASE 2:** One-on-one interviews with children and adolescents (February 2021)

After having analysed the data gathered from the FGDs, the research team will select and interview one-on-one SOME volunteers among the children and adolescents who participated in the FGDs to discuss in-depth about the themes emerged during phase 1.

After the FGDs and/or the one-on-one interviews, the researchers might ask the participants to further contribute with their drawings, photos, or written texts, if they wish to. All the data gathered will be analysed and the results will be published in a report, as well as disseminated through UNICEF Innocenti website. The names of the children and adolescents participating in the research study will not be published; their identities will always be protected. Participants will be informed about the results of the research study via email.

### **BEFORE THE FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION**

Before the FGD, the researchers will contact the participants individually by email to schedule with them a video call. The call is aimed at providing the participant with all the necessary information before the FGD with regards to his/her rights, and to answer all potential questions, doubts and curiosities. Parents and caregivers are not obliged to participate to the call, but they can if they wish to. During the call, the researchers will ask the participant if s/he wishes to keep his/her video on during the FGD. This preliminary video call will not be recorded.

### **MODALITIES AND DURATION OF THE FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION**

The FGDs will take place online, using the platform Zoom. A link will be sent to the email address indicated to access the discussion. Participants are asked to access the link from a private room. No third person should be allowed in the room during the FGD, apart from the participant.

Each FGD will last ca. 1 hour and 30 minutes. Participants are encouraged, but not obliged, to keep their video on. Only the audio will be recorded, and, after the FGD, the researchers will transcribe verbatim the whole discussion, changing the names of the participants.

Participants can leave the FGD if they feel like; they are not obliged to participate until the end. The researchers will not ask participants to disclose any personal information or experience. The researchers will not disclose the content of the FGD to any third party, including teachers, school management and parents/legal guardians.

### **AFTER THE FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION**

A few weeks after the FGD takes place, the researchers will contact some of the participants individually, asking them if they would like to be interviewed in a one-on-one modality to discuss some of the themes emerged during the FGD. If the participant agrees, the researchers will schedule with him/her a day and time to conduct the interview online and subsequently send him/her the link to access via email.

For the online interview, as for the FGD, the participant will be asked to access the link from a private room, where no third person is present. S/he can decide if keeping the video on or off; only the audio will be recorded. The researchers will transcribe verbatim the audio files anonymising them.

### **PRIVACY AND TREATMENT OF DATA**

All personal data collected within the framework of the research study (contact details of children and parents/legal guardians) and research data (audio recordings) will be treated taking into account Art. 13 of the Italian Privacy Code and Art. 13 of the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) by the UNICEF Office of Research (OoR) – Innocenti – with legal office in Via degli Alfani, 58 - 50121, Florence – Italy.

The data will be used exclusively within the framework of the research project and not shared with any third party, unless the researchers suspect the child is at risk of abuse and/or has been victim of a crime, in which case UNICEF staff will report the case to the relevant authorities, following UNICEF standard procedures for child protection.

UNICEF Innocenti will store the data for a period of 24 months since the signature of the consent forms in conformity with its internal Policy for the Protection of

Personal Data and Ethics Privacy Guidelines. If they wish to, the research participants and/or their parents/legal guardians can contact UNICEF Innocenti at the email address [florence@unicef.org](mailto:florence@unicef.org) asking for their personal data to be deleted before the 24 month-period.

### **PUBLICATION OF THE CHILD'S PRODUCTS**

Before or after the FGD, via email, the researchers might ask you/your child to share drawings, stories, or photos (without people's faces or recognisable features) that you/s/he might want to produce expressing your/his/her thoughts about the pandemic. They could be used for publication and dissemination of the research results, but your/the child's identity will always be protected. You might consent to this or not.

**CONSENT FORM FOR PARENTS/LEGAL GUARDIANS**  
**(to be signed only when the participant is younger than 18 years old)**  
**OR FOR PARTICIPANTS OLDER THAN 18**

The undersigned \_\_\_\_\_  
Born in \_\_\_\_\_ province \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_  
Resident in \_\_\_\_\_ n \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ postal code \_\_\_\_\_ province \_\_\_\_\_  
e-mail \_\_\_\_\_  
parent / legal guardian of (child’s name) \_\_\_\_\_  
Born in \_\_\_\_\_ province \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_  
Resident in \_\_\_\_\_ n \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ postal code \_\_\_\_\_ province \_\_\_\_\_  
e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

**CONSENT**

\_\_\_\_\_ (child’s name)’s/my participation in the Research Study  
“Children’s experiences and views of COVID-19 and responses to it” as described  
in the Briefing Note attached to this for.

**Place and date:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

I furthermore consent the use of my/my child’s productions (drawings, pictures,  
written texts, etc.) for the exclusive purpose of the above-mentioned research and  
its public dissemination (optional):

**Place and date:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

## **CONSENT FORM AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR THE PARTICIPANT**

(to be read, compiled and signed by all participants regardless of age)

If you are reading this, it means you are interested in our research study and you are thinking about participating. Before taking your decision and signing this consent form, please read carefully the following information, questions and suggestions.

### **About this research study**

If you read and sign this document, you will participate to an online Focus Group Discussion (FGD).

- 1) What does it mean?** It means that you and other adolescents of your age group will talk with two researchers from UNICEF about adolescents' experiences during Covid-19. Together with the researchers, you and the other people in your group will create a story. Nobody will ask you direct questions about yourself and your experiences. The researchers might ask for your opinions, but never anything personal.
- 2) Why is UNICEF carrying out this research study?** At UNICEF we are working to understand "what are children's and adolescents' experiences, opinions, hopes and worries about the Covid-19 pandemic," because we want to advise governments to take actions that are meaningful for the people of your age. The study is international; it includes several countries in the world. Italy is one of the first countries where the study is carried out.

### **Your rights and your privacy**

- 3) Your participation to the research study is volunteer.** Nobody should force or push you to participate. You are free to take your own decision.
- 4) The researchers will record the audio (not the video!) of the FGD.** After the FGD is over, they will listen to it and transcribe verbatim everything you and other participants said. They will not mention yours nor anybody's name. The

recordings will be stored by UNICEF in a safe way for 4 years; they will then be destroyed.

- 5) What happens with the information you share with us? All information you provide will be considered confidential and grouped with comments from other participants. The researchers will never reveal anything you say to anybody else, including your parents/legal guardians, teachers, or educators. Only in case there is evidence that you are at serious risk or have been victim of a crime, they are obliged to report it to the authorities; in that case, they will talk to you first and also remind you that you can call the 114 for support.
- 6) What about the information other participants share? We ask that you respect your fellow participants by keeping all information they say during the FGDs to yourself, and by respecting any comments others share. Also, you should not take pictures and screenshots during the FGD. You should not record the conversation. It is a matter of respect. You should respect all participants' privacy and they should respect yours.
- 7) Who will read the things we learn about you in this study? Your name will not be in any report of the results of this study. Your name will be replaced with the words "participant 1" or "participant, age xx". Research findings will be summarized, without any identifiable information.
- 8) You do not have to answer anything that you do not want to. You may feel uncomfortable with the questions being asked or upset about certain topics. You may feel like you have to say things in front of other people that you don't want to. Sometimes things that bother one person don't bother another person at all, so please let us know if and when something is bothering you. If this happens, please know that you do not have to answer anything that you do not want to. You will be reminded of it at the beginning of the focus group.

### **Practical aspects of participation**

- 9) Who will be in the FGD with you? If you are between 14-19 years old or in high school, you will participate to a FGD with 7 other adolescents from this age group whom you do not know. They live in another city and attend another school. There is the remote possibility only one of them attends your school in another class. If you are between 11-13 years old or in middle school, you will participate to a FGD with other 5 adolescents from this age group. There will be



at least one other boy or girl coming from your class. The others might be from another school and city.

- 10)**How will the FGD take place? The FGDs will happen online. After you sign this form, one of the researchers will contact you via email. She will plan with you an audio/video call to meet you on a one-on-one basis ahead of the FGD. Your parents/legal guardians can also participate to this call if they want to meet the researcher. During this call, you and your parent/legal guardian can ask the researchers all the questions you want. A few days after this call, the researchers will send you a Zoom link to connect to the FGD.
- 11)**What do you need to participate? You need a device to connect. It is advisable it is a personal one: your or your parent/legal guardian's computer, laptop, I-Pad, or smartphone. You should connect from a private room. Does the place where you live have a room where you can stay alone and comfortable for 1 hour and 30 minutes? If not, talk to the person who told you about this research. They already agreed to provide you with a device or a private room if you do not have one.
- 12)**The drawings and photos developed during the FGDs will be shared with the researchers and, as long as they do not contain any identifiable information, will be used in dissemination material as part of the research project.

### **What if you change your mind?**

- 13)**You can leave the FGD when you feel like. If, for any reason, you do not want to take part in the FGD any longer, you can let the researchers know (also privately, via chat, if you prefer). There is not any obligation in staying until the end. If you decide to stop, no one will be angry or upset with you.

### **Voluntary next steps**

- 14)**After the FGD you could be contacted again by one of the researchers asking if you would like to be part of a one-on-one interview to discuss some of the themes that emerged from the initial findings of the study. You can freely accept or refuse; the activity is not mandatory, and you should take part only if you feel comfortable.
- 15)**After the FGD, via email, the researchers might ask you to share drawings, stories, photos, or audios that you produce. When they ask you, you can answer

yes or no, and you can decide what you want to share. You can also tell them if you want your product to be public or not; anyway, your name will never be reported to protect your identity.

If you want any additional information about all the above, feel free to ask us any question you may have during our one-on-one call ahead of the FGD. If your questions are urgent, you can contact the researchers:

MARIA ROSARIA CENTRONE - [mcentrone@unicef.org](mailto:mcentrone@unicef.org)

FRANCESCA VIOLA - [fviola@unicef.org](mailto:fviola@unicef.org)

**Now, if you are interested and want to participate in this research study, please fill in the following information and sign the document.**

NAME AND SURNAME: \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

MOBILE PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

YOUR SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_