Child Status Index

Made Easy

Child Status Index Made Easy

Florence Nyangara, Ph.D
Beverly Nyberg, Ed.D
Robert Murphy, Ph.D
Karen O'Donnell, Ph.D

MS-08-31c October 2008 **Printed on recycled paper**

Contents

4 Steps in Completing the Child Status Index

6 Family and Child Information – CSI

9 CSI Domain 1 – Food and Nutrition

13 CSI Domain 2 – Shelter and Care

17 CSI Domain 3 – Protection

21 CSI Domain 4 – Health

25 CSI Domain 5 – Psychosocial

29 CSI Domain 6 – Education and Skills Training

33 Important Events – CSI

34 Services or Resources - CSII

35 Funding

Foreward

The Child Status Index (CSI) is very easy to use. You don't have to be a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) expert to use it. If you do home visits and talk to children and their caregivers, then you can use this index to assess the well-being of each child.

This booklet contains both a picture and written form of the CSI. The drawings or pictures show children in both a very good status (far left) and in a very bad status (far right) for each of the 12 factors. The booklet also provides basic instructions for how to complete the CSI, including sample questions and observations to enable you to make your own judgments and rate the child in all 12 outcome areas based on local standards.

For each factor you are not required to ask all the suggested questions or observe all the suggested examples, but it is important to understand what you are looking for in each factor. Please read the *CSI Field User's Guide*, 2008, for more detailed instructions on how to use the CSI. If you require more information about the CSI, please read the *CSI Manual*, 2008.

Steps in Completing the Child Status Index

Step 1: Prepare for the child assessment visit using CSI

1.1 – Learn about the CSI.

1.2 – Gather the family and child's background information.

1.3 – Prepare the CSI Record Sheet for this visit.

Step 2: Conduct the child assessment visit

2.1 – Begin the visit with:

- Introducing yourself;
- Explaining the purpose of today's visit – to find out how the family and children are doing; and
- Obtaining verbal consent from the caregiver to conduct the visit.

2.2 – Talk with the caregiver/parent about the family and child.

2.3 – Talk with the child and others (neighbor, teacher, etc., if possible).

2.4 – Look around/observe the family's living situations, possessions, etc.

Step 3: Complete the CSI Record

3.1 – Score the CSI immediately after completing the interview and observations.

3.2 – Complete important events.

3.3 – Complete the service record.

Step 4: Plan follow-up & referrals

TIPS for the Assessment Visit

- ✓ Keep conversation informal and as natural as possible.
- ✓ Explain to the caregiver why knowing "How the child is doing" is important for them and other children in the community.
- ✓ Show sincere and genuine interest in the family and child.
- ✓ Use open-ended questions.
- ✓ Develop your own style to establish trusting relationships.
- ✓ Review and rate each factor before leaving the home.

Family and Child Information – CSI

Date _____
Visitor's Name _____
Caregiver's Name _____
Relationship to Child _____

Family ID _____
Family Name _____
Child ID _____
Child Name _____

Age _____

Gender (Female/Male)

Location:
Village _____
District/Ward _____
Region _____

Sources of information for scoring CSI:
Parent _____
Guardian _____
Child _____
Teacher _____
Neighbor _____
Other (specify) _____

Child Status Index Questions

Assessments of a child's well-being using the CSI are usually done through home visits. Start the visit as naturally as possible, with friendly and spontaneous greetings, as appropriate for each culture.

- **Introduce yourself** to the guardian, other adult, or child. The discussion about the child should be informal. Allow the interviewee to respond spontaneously, and show your interest in the child.

- **Remind the child or guardian about the program** that serves this child or other children in the community/country and the reason for asking about the child in this manner. You may explain that the reason for the visit is to know how the children are doing, especially this child, what has been happening in the child's life (good or bad) since the last visit, and whether there are any changes in the child's life. Explain that getting this information about the child is done so the agency or government can know about the children's well-being and, for those receiving support, find out how the services are affecting children's lives.

- **Get the informant's consent** to provide this information before proceeding with the discussion. Oral consent is sufficient when you are collecting data to evaluate services and not as part of a research project. If the CSI is used for research, follow the country's human subjects review board guidelines for getting informed consent.

General Questions for the Family/Caregiver

- How are you and your family?
- How are the children?
- Tell me more about this child (use the name of child receiving services).
- How is (tell me about) this child's life?
- What is it like to take care of this child?

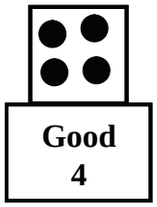
General Questions for the Child

- Tell me about your life.
- Tell me about your typical day.
- Tell me about your future goals and plans.

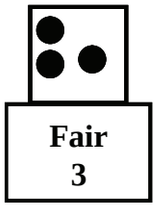
CSI Domain 1 – FOOD AND NUTRITION

Factor 1A. Food Security

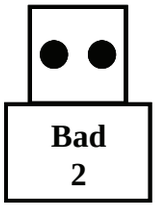
Goal: Child has sufficient food to eat at all times of the year.



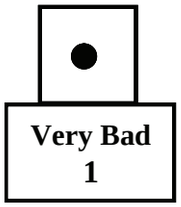
GOOD = 4
Child is well fed, eats regularly.



FAIR =3
Child has enough to eat some of the time, depending on season or food supply.



BAD = 2
Child frequently has less food to eat than needed, complains of hunger.



VERY BAD = 1
Child rarely has food to eat and goes to bed hungry most nights.

Sample Questions for Factor 1A. Food Security

- What does the family/child eat?
- How does this household/institution get the food?
- Tell me about times when there is no food.
- Does this child complain of hunger?

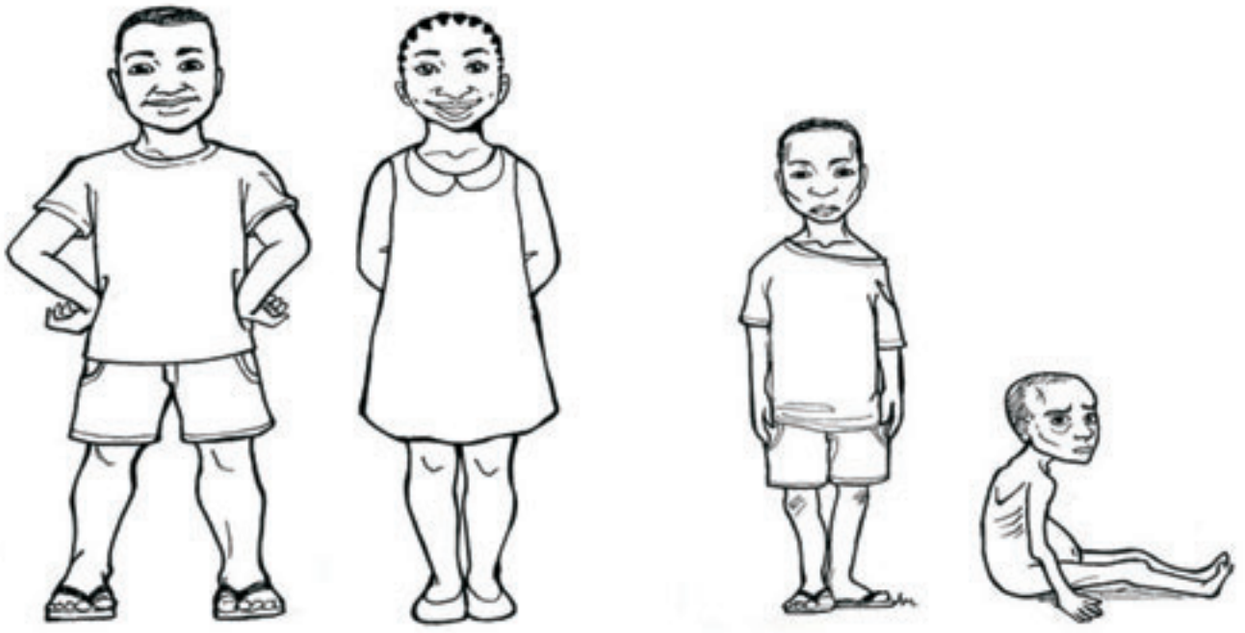
Possible Observations

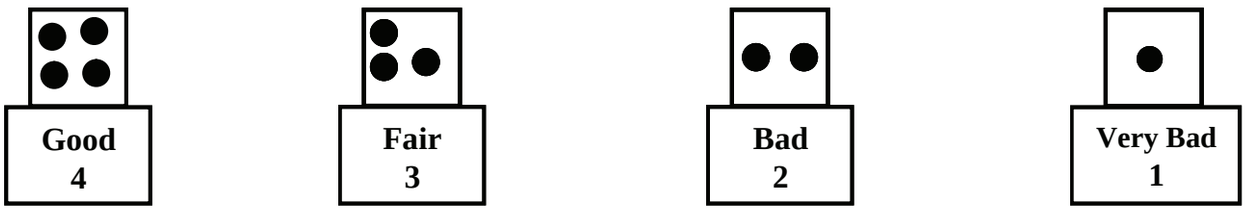
Look around the homestead including the storage facilities like granary, garden, and farm animals. Does the kitchen look like it was used to prepare food recently?

CSI Domain 1 – FOOD AND NUTRITION

Factor 1B. Nutrition and Growth

Goal: Child is growing well compared to others of his/her age in the community.





GOOD = 4
Child is well grown with good height, weight, and energy level for his/her age.

FAIR = 3
Child seems to be growing well but is less active compared to others of same age in community.

BAD = 2
Child has lower weight, looks shorter, and/or is less energetic compared to others of same age in community.

VERY BAD = 1
Child has very low weight (wasted) or is too short (stunted) for his/her age (malnourished).

Sample Questions for Factor 1B. Nutrition and Growth

- How is the child growing?
- Does he/she seem to be growing like other children the same age?
- Are you worried about this child's growth? Weight? Height?

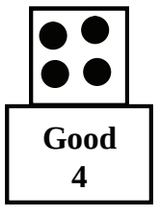
Possible Observations

Compare how well the child seems to have grown compared to other local children the same age.

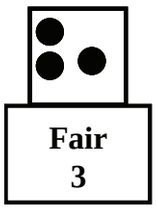
CSI Domain 2 – SHELTER AND CARE

Factor 2A. Shelter

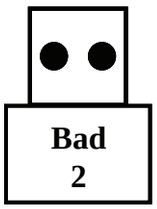
Goal: Child has a stable shelter that is adequate, dry, and safe.



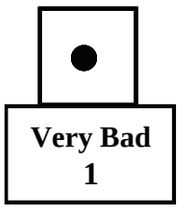
GOOD = 4
Child lives in a place that is adequate, dry, and safe.



FAIR =3
Child lives in a place that needs some repairs but is fairly adequate, dry, and safe.



BAD = 2
Child lives in a place that needs major repairs, is overcrowded, inadequate, and/or does not protect him/her from weather.



VERY BAD = 1
Child has no stable, adequate, or safe place to live.

Sample Questions for Factor 2A. Shelter

- Where does the child live?
- Where does he/she sleep?

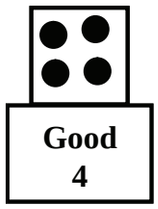
Possible Observation

Is this house or institution adequate, or in need of repairs?

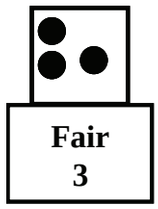
CSI Domain 2 – SHELTER AND CARE

Factor 2B. Care

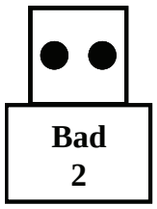
Goal: Child has at least one adult (age 18 or over) who provides consistent care, attention, and support.



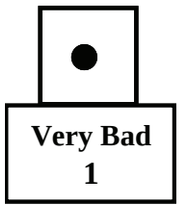
GOOD = 4
Child has a primary adult caregiver who is involved in his/her life and who protects and nurtures him/her.



FAIR = 3
Child has an adult who provides care but who is limited by illness, age, or seems indifferent to this child.



BAD = 2
Child has no consistent adult in his/her life that provides love, attention, and support.



VERY BAD = 1
Child is completely without the care of an adult and must fend for him or herself or lives in child-headed household.

Sample Questions for Factor 2B. Care

- Who is the most important adult in this child's life?
- Who takes care of this child?
- When something exciting or fun happens, who does the child tell?
- Who does he/she go to if sad? — or talk to about worries?
- Who does he/she go to if hurt?

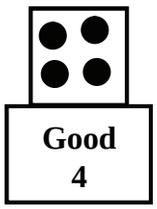
Possible Observations

How do the child and adult interact? Do they appear to know one another and have a good relationship?

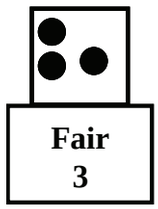
CSI Domain 3 – PROTECTION

Factor 3A. Abuse and Exploitation

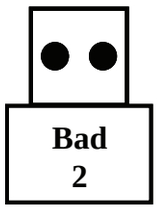
Goal: Child is safe from any abuse, neglect, or exploitation.



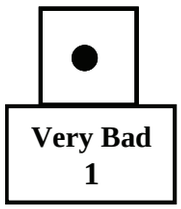
GOOD = 4
Child does not seem to be abused, neglected, do inappropriate work, or be exploited in other ways.



FAIR = 3
There is some suspicion that child may be neglected, over-worked, not treated well, or otherwise maltreated.



BAD = 2
Child is neglected, given inappropriate work for his or her age, or is clearly not treated well in household or institution.



VERY BAD = 1
Child is abused, sexually or physically, and/or is being subjected to child labor or otherwise exploited.

Sample Questions for Factor 3A. Abuse and Exploitation

- Does anyone hurt this child?
- Do you think the child feels safe?
- Does the child work for anyone outside the household?
- Does anyone else who knows the child think he/she is being hurt by someone else? Or sexually abused?

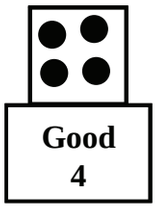
Possible Observations

Does the child have any marks or bruises that suggest abuse? Does the child seem like an abused child, very withdrawn or scared?

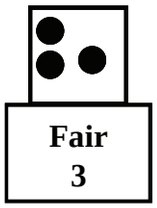
CSI Domain 3 – PROTECTION

Factor 3B. Legal Protection

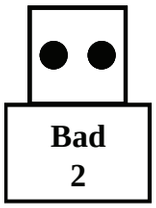
Goal: Child has access to legal protection services as needed.



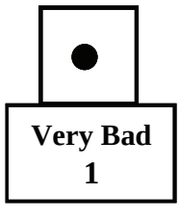
GOOD = 4
Child has access to legal protection as needed.



FAIR = 3
Child has no access to legal protection services, but no protection is needed at this time.



BAD = 2
Child has no access to any legal protection services and may be at risk of exploitation.



VERY BAD = 1
Child has no access to any legal protection services and is being legally exploited.

Sample Questions for Factor 3B. Legal Protection

- Does this child have birth registration or certificate? Does the family have a will?
- Has he/she been refused any services because of legal status?
- Do you know of any legal problems for this child, such as land grabbing?
- Does this child have an adult who stands up for the child legally?

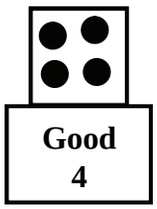
Possible Observations

When possible, observe the child's fear of losing his/her family properties. Does the caregiver or volunteer have any concerns or hesitations when asked about the child's legal protection services?

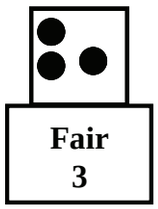
CSI Domain 4 – HEALTH

Factor 4A. Wellness

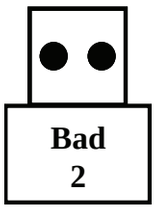
Goal: Child is physically healthy.



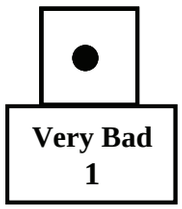
GOOD = 4
In past month, child has been healthy and active, with no fever, diarrhea, or other illnesses.



FAIR = 3
In past month, child was ill and less active for a few days (1 to 3 days), but he/she participated in some activities.



BAD = 2
In past month, child was often (more than 3 days) too ill for school, work, or play.



VERY BAD = 1
In past month, child has been ill most of the time (chronically ill).

Sample Questions for Factor 4A. Wellness

- Tell me about this child's health.
- Tell me about the last sickness the child had.
- Does he/she miss school or work because of illness?

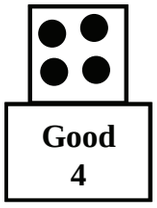
Possible Observations

Does the child appear to be active and generally healthy?

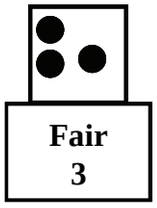
CSI Domain 4 – HEALTH

Factor 4B. Health Care Services

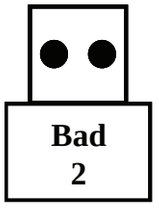
Goal: Child can access health care services, including medical treatment when ill and preventive care.



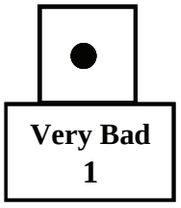
GOOD = 4
Child has received all or almost all necessary health care treatment and preventive services.



FAIR = 3
Child received medical treatment when ill, but some health care services (e.g. immunizations) are not received.



BAD = 2
Child only sometimes or inconsistently receives needed health care services (treatment or preventive).



VERY BAD = 1
Child rarely or never receives the necessary health care services.

Sample Questions for Factor 4B. Health Care Services

- What happens when this child falls ill?
- Does he/she see a nurse, doctor, or any health professional?
- When he/she needs medicine, how do you get it?
- (For under 5) Has the child been immunized to prevent illness?
- (For adolescents) Has anyone talked to the child about risks for HIV/AIDS and how to protect against these risks?

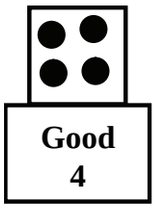
Possible Observations

When possible, observe the child's immunization card, and availability of bed net. How likely is the child to receive the health care services needed?

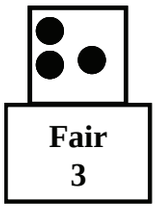
CSI Domain 5 – PSYCHOSOCIAL

Factor 5A. Emotional Health

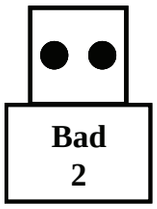
Goal: Child is happy and content with a generally positive mood and hopeful outlook.



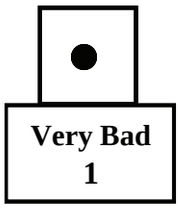
GOOD = 4
Child seems happy, hopeful, and content.



FAIR = 3
Child is mostly happy but occasionally he/she is anxious, or withdrawn. Infant may be crying, irritable, or not sleeping well some of the time.



BAD = 2
Child is often withdrawn, irritable, anxious, unhappy, or sad. Infant may cry frequently or often be inactive.



VERY BAD = 1
Child seems hopeless, sad, withdrawn, wishes could die, or wants to be left alone. Infant may refuse to eat, sleep poorly, or cry a lot.

Sample Questions for Factor 5A. Emotional Health

- Is this child happy or sad most of the time?
- How can you tell if he/she is happy or unhappy?
- Do you worry about this child's sadness or grief?
- Have you ever thought the child did not want to live anymore?
- Do you worry he/she might hurt himself/herself?
- Do you think you have a good life (ask child)?

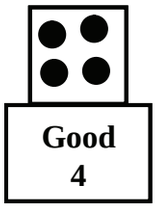
Possible Observations

Child seems happy and active and eager to talk with home visitor.

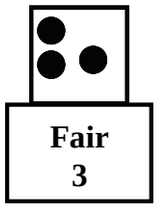
CSI Domain 5 – PSYCHOSOCIAL

Factor 5B. Social Behavior

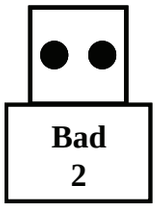
Goal: Child is cooperative and enjoys participating in activities with adults and other children.



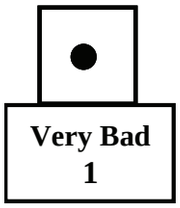
GOOD = 4
Child likes to play with peers and participates in group or family activities.



FAIR = 3
Child has minor problems getting along with others and argues or gets into fights sometimes.



BAD = 2
Child is disobedient to adults and frequently does not interact well with peers, guardian, or others at home or school.



VERY BAD = 1
Child has behavioral problems, including stealing, early sexual activity, and/or other risky or disruptive behavior.

Sample Questions for Factor 5B. Social Behavior

- What is his/her behavior toward adults? Obedient?
- Does this child need to be punished often?
- Does the child play with other children or have close friends? If so, does he/she enjoy being with other children?
- Does he/she fight with other children?
- Do you worry the child will get in trouble at school?

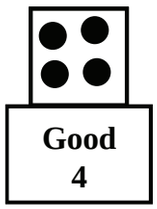
Possible Observations

When possible, observe the child's social behavior. What does his/her attitude seem to be toward the guardian or other children? How does he/she interact with them, and with you?

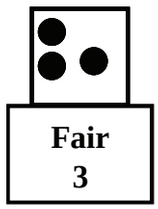
CSI Domain 6 – EDUCATION AND SKILLS TRAINING

Factor 6A. Performance

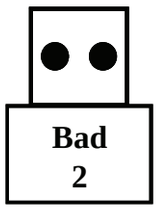
Goal: Child is progressing well in acquiring knowledge and life skills at home, school, job training, or an age-appropriate productive activity.



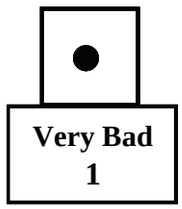
GOOD = 4
Child is learning well, developing life skills, and progressing as expected by caregivers, teachers, or other leaders.



FAIR = 3
Child is learning well and developing life skills moderately well, but caregivers, teachers, or other leaders have some concerns about progress.



BAD = 2
Child is learning and gaining skills poorly or is falling behind. Infant or preschool child is gaining skills more slowly than peers.



VERY BAD = 1
Child has serious problems with learning and performing in life or developmental skills.

Sample Questions for Factor 6A. Performance

- Is this child developing as you would expect (younger child)?
- Is this child learning new things, as you would expect others his/her age (younger child)?
- Do you worry about this child's performance or learning?
- Is the child quick to understand and learn?
- Do teachers report that the child is doing well in school?
- Does he/she do a good job with chores at home, such as work in the garden?
- Is the child advancing to the next grade as expected?
- Have you worried that this child does not learn as well as other children?

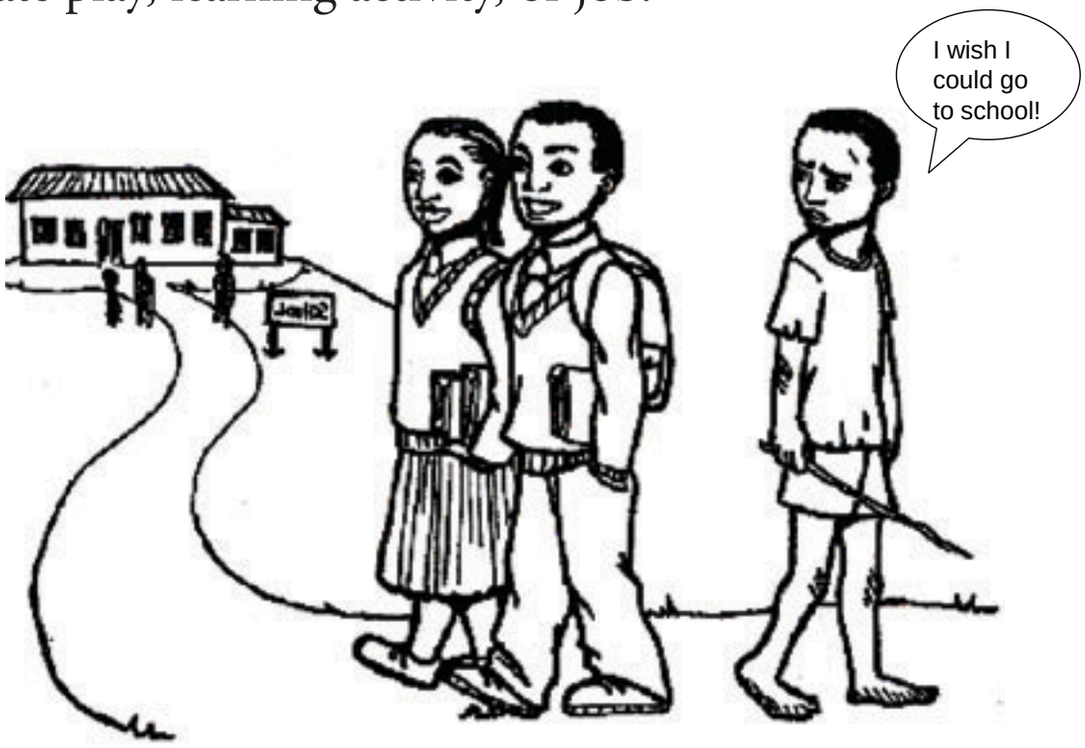
Possible Observations

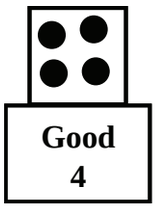
If the child is an adolescent, ask the child about skills training and learning skills that are useful to him/her. If in school, observe the response if asked about class performance ranking. If the child is five years old or younger, observe the child's developmental progress (i.e., in language, movement, learning), and compare this to what you expect for children that age (i.e., talking, walking by year two).

CSI Domain 6 – EDUCATION AND SKILLS TRAINING

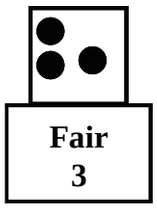
Factor 6B. Education and Work

Goal: Child is enrolled and attends school or skills training or is engaged in age-appropriate play, learning activity, or job.

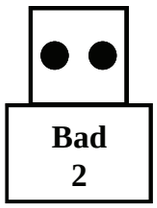




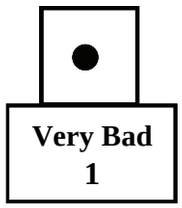
GOOD = 4
Child is enrolled in and attending school/ training regularly. Infants or preschoolers play with caregiver. Older child has appropriate job.



FAIR = 3
Child enrolled in school/ training but attends irregularly or shows up inconsistently for productive activity/job. Younger child played with sometimes but not daily.



BAD = 2
Child enrolled in school or has a job but he/she rarely attends. Infant or preschool child is rarely played with.



VERY BAD = 1
Child is not enrolled, not attending training, or not involved in age-appropriate productive activity or job. Infant or preschooler is not played with.

Sample Questions for Factor 6B. Education and Work

- Is the child in (or has he/she completed) primary school?
- Tell me about the child's school or training.
- Who pays school fees and buys uniforms and school materials?
- (If enrolled) does this child attend school regularly?
- How often must the child miss school for any other reason?
- Does he/she go to work regularly?

Possible Observations

If possible, observe the child's school uniform or supplies and their usage. For infants or preschoolers observe if he/she is involved in any play or learning activity with any family member(s).

Important Events – CSI

The CSI Record Form includes a section for describing any important events that have happened in the child's life since the last CSI rating (or during the past year for children who have not previously been rated).

Check any events that have happened since the last CSI assessment or six months:

___ Child left program
___ Child pregnant
___ Child died
___ Parent ill
___ Parent/guardian died (specify who) _____
___ Family member died
___ Change in caregiver/adoption
___ Change in living location
___ Community trauma (violence, famine, flood, etc.)
___ Other (Specify) _____

Comment(s) *if necessary:*

Services or Resources – CSI

Another section on the CSI Record Form is used to record all services and resources being received by the child, household, or institution at the time of the assessment. This requires a direct interview with the primary adult in the child's life, usually a parent or guardian.

TYPES OF SUPPORT/SERVICES PROVIDED *(at present):*	**What was provided?**	**Who provided services?** *(e.g., NGO, neighbor, teacher, church, or other)*
A. Food and nutrition support (such as food rations, supplemental foods)		
B. Shelter and other material support (such as house repair, clothes, bedding)		
C. Care (caregiver received training or support, child placed with family)		
D. Protection from abuse (education on abuse provided to child or caregiver)		
E. Legal support (birth certificate, legal services, succession plans prepared)		
F. Health care services (such as vaccinations, medicine, ARV, fees waived, HIV/AIDS education)		
G. Psychosocial support (clubs, group support, individual counseling)		
H. Educational support (fees waived; provision of uniforms, school supplies, tutorials, other)		
i. Livelihood support (vocational training, micro-finance opportunities for family, etc.)		
j. Other: _____		
Suggestions for other resources or services needed:		

Funding

The development of the *Child Status Index* was made possible by:

- Support from the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), through the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) by contract to the MEASURE Evaluation project under terms of Cooperative Agreement GPO-A-00-03-00003-00.
- Implementation by the Carolina Population Center at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, in partnership with Futures Group International, John Snow, Inc., Macro International Inc., and Tulane University.
- A subcontract from MEASURE Evaluation to Duke University and the Center for Child and Family Health in Durham, North Carolina, for development of the *Child Status Index*.

About MEASURE Evaluation

MEASURE Evaluation strengthens the capacity of host-country programs to collect and use population and health data, and is a key component of the USAID program, Monitoring and Evaluation to Assess and Use Results (MEASURE) framework.

MEASURE Evaluation fosters demand for effective program monitoring and evaluation and seeks to empower its partners as they improve family planning, maternal and child health and nutrition, and prevent HIV/AIDS, STDs and other infectious diseases worldwide.

The Child Status Index (CSI) tool was developed to support implementation of a key component of MEASURE Evaluation: Data Demand and Information Use (DDIU).

All components of the CSI Tool are available on the MEASURE Evaluation Web site at **http://www.cpc.unc.edu/measure**.

This publication is in the public domain and may be reproduced and distributed as needed. Published in 2008 by MEASURE Evaluation.

MEASURE Evaluation
Carolina Population Center
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
206 West Franklin Street
Chapel Hill, NC 27516-3997
Phone: 919/966-7482
Fax: 919/966-2391
http://www.cpc.unc.edu/measure