Nina Klang (1978) works as a lecturer in special needs education and as a researcher at the School of Education, Culture and Communication, division of education and special needs education at Mälardalen University. She is affiliated with the SIDR (Swedish Institute of Disability Research) and with the multidisciplinary research group ICU-CHILD (Interested in Children, Youth and their Understandings; Children-Health-Intervention-Learning-Development). Her main interests concern the classification ICF-CY and strategies and perspectives in assessment for children in need of special support.

Describing disability in children on the basis of summative characteristics may fail to provide in-depth information about the individual differences in children's functioning. A need for a functional approach has been suggested, which focuses on strengths and challenges children face in natural contexts. The International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health, version for children and youth (ICF-CY) has been suggested as a tool within the functional approach. This doctoral thesis is built on four empirical studies with the aim to explore the applicability of the ICF-CY to describe functioning and environment of children with disabilities. In the studies the ICF-CY components and categories were explored through ICF-CY based questionnaires and by linking texts of individual habilitation plans to the ICF-CY. In overall the components and categories are applicable to describe functioning and environment of children with disabilities. However, the studies raise questions about the universal use of the performance qualifier in the component Activities and participation as well as about the alternatives in the use of the component Environmental factors. The studies indicate a need to use the components Activities and participation, Environmental factors, Body functions and Body structures together in order to provide fair and informative assessment of children's functioning and environment. Besides, challenges in the exhaustiveness of the ICF-CY categories to describe family situation and psychosocial environments of children have been identified. Implementation of the ICF-CY may support professionals in child and youth habilitation to document children's functioning more precisely and in more detail. The professionals consider the ICF-CY as applicable in assessment and intervention planning but describe challenges and dilemmas in the use of the classification.