Methodology for Ensuring and Monitoring Child Participation in Developing and Evaluating Child Helpline Services

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The team of Animus Association Foundation

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CHAPTER 1: Introduction

1.1. Identifying the need for a child participation methodology in Bulgaria, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and the Czech Republic

The Right to Participation

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) strongly underlines the notion that children are independent subjects and hence have rights. The convention has been ratified by a large number of countries now and one of the things it aims to guarantee to all children is the growing possibility for active participation in society.

Article 12 of the UNCRC states *"Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child."*

Article 13 of the convention also contains that *"The child shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of the child's choice."*

Importance of Participation

Traditionally, adults are those who make the decisions related to children and their well-being. However, children and young people have their own feelings, needs, expectations and often shape their own ideas about how things should be done and how their needs can be met. If adults do not take into consideration what children really feel, want and need, what they provide to them can turn out to be insufficient or may lead to more adverse consequences than beneficial ones.

An important question to be raised here is what the barriers to child participation are. First of all, these are the adults' attitudes. Adults are often not ready to regard children as being able to form their own valid opinions and ideas; they frequently underestimate the intellectual capacities of children and young people[1]; they do not trust the opinions and ideas of children; or they are not ready to give up the control; or they may be overprotective and think that they should protect youngsters from taking on responsibilities before they come of age.

Surely, development is a complex process and in its course children need more and more responsibilities and chances to form and express opinions. This empowers them and gives them a deeper understanding of the relationship between actions and their consequences. The ability to take responsibility and to make one's own decisions does not just appear at a certain age - it develops. And participation can surely contribute to the development process.

Another barrier to active child participation is the lack of knowledge and know-how. Even well-meaning adults will not be able to actively involve children if they do not have the practical instruments to do this. That is why the development of methodologies, good practices and the exchange of information are so important.

At the same time, in order to really understand what participation is, we should be familiar with what it is not. In other words, we must be aware when an initiative is not really allowing children to participate, or not doing it in a meaningful way, which results in a formal participation rather than real one.

[1] Surely the thinking of a child is different from that of adults, as well as it is less mature. Therefore children do not have by law the freedom to take some important decisions by themselves, but usually children, even from a very young age, have ideas or recommendations about matters that concern them that are worth accounting for.

Roger Hart[2] explains the process of child participation using the metaphor of a ladder where the lowest steps are actually activities that do not lead to real participation, but to formal one, namely:

- Manipulation: If the children are made to do something by adults but they do not understand its meaning and their own action. Example: children carrying signs at a political protest, etc., without understanding what the event is all about and what their role means. Or gathering children to give recommendation about the school and then doing nothing about these recommendations and not giving feedback to the children why nothing has been done. This is not meaningful participation. It is, in fact, pretend participation and can even be described as a form of exploitation. Manipulation is highly unethical;

- Decoration: If the children are present at an event, but are there only to be shown, to sing and dance or carry around some badges, for example but do not know or understand the cause or the event and are just instructed what to do. It can be said they are there for decoration and this is not a form of participation;

- Tokenism: If the adults say that the children can state their mind but actually children have no real choice about the subject or the style of communication and are not given enough information or space to form their opinion. This is not participation either. For example a young person can be brought to a conference/round table with the implied idea that they represent all young people, but the youth, in fact, is not fully aware what the event is all about and has had no real opportunity to consult their views with other young people, etc. he or she is there as a token. In such cases the young person is often shown, photographed, mentioned but he/she did not have the chance to really contribute or be heard. This phenomenon is often called tokenism and it is a common risk if the essence of child participation is not really understood.

Examples of the above can be found easily. Understanding why these are not really forms of participation is crucial for the professionals aiming to encourage real child participation.

Even though the examples above illustrate situations when children are not really participating, it is important to mention that events and projects that are fully planned and organized by adults can still lead to real and meaningful child participation. There are a number of important requirements for a project to be truly labelled as participatory (Hart):

1. The children understand the intentions of the project;
2. They know who made the decisions concerning their involvement and why;
3. They have a meaningful (rather than 'decorative') role;
4. They volunteer for the project after the project was made clear to them.

For example, children can be invited to join some activities after they have been informed of what the project is about, as well as of its cause, and how and who it will benefit, what they can really contribute to, etc. Let us take joining activities for cleaning the school yard or the neighborhood as an example. Children can be obliged to take part, which will not lead to actual participation, or they can be invited, told why the initiative is important, how it will contribute to the well-being of the community, asked to join in and given the freedom to choose how to contribute. Then this will be an instance of real child participation and this particular form of participation is called by Hart *assigned but informed.*

[2] Hart, R.A. Children's Participation: From Tokenism to Citizenship. UNICEF publication. Retrieved from: http://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/childrens_participation.pdf

Young people can function as consultants on projects initiated by adults, if they are given enough information and space to share their honest opinions and if these opinions are given serious consideration by the adults afterwards. For example, promotional video clips or posters can be developed and then shown to children – then modified in regard to children's feedback. R. Hart calls this form of child participation *consulted and informed.*

A higher form of child participation can be described as adult *initiated, shared decisions with children*. This is particularly important when it comes to projects or activities that directly concern children. For example – what new activities/clubs should be introduced to a school.

Hart further speaks of activities that are *child initiated and directed.* In some cases, children can have their own ideas and initiatives that can be turned into action. Then the role of the adults would be to recognize the good ideas, encourage the kids and provide resources. For example, children can have ideas about improving the school yard or a neighborhood park and can be absolutely able to carry out these ideas by themselves if they receive proper assistance by the adults (permission, encouragement, and help). If the adults react as if they were the only ones entitled to making decisions, the initiative of the children, no matter how good, could be crushed.

Finally, Hart speaks of *child-initiated, share decisions with adults* type of participation. The children can suggest an activity or certain changes and they then, together with adults, make the decision how to apply them.

Why develop a child participation methodology?

Child participation is a relatively new phenomenon – for centuries adults have taken the decisions and have not allowed children their say on even extremely important matters for their own lives and future. The views on child development and child upbringing have changed significantly over the past century and now children are not viewed simply as a possession of the parents, but as individuals with their own opinions and needs, and the emphasis is on the understanding of children and their empowerment. Creating real opportunities for children to participate is a long process that requires the adults to learn how to involve children in a meaningful way, how to give them the chance to speak their mind, to listen to them and appreciate their ideas, to collaborate with them on important issues and to let them actively participate in the making of decisions on matters that concern them. In some countries, such as the Eastern European ones involved in the project, the concept of child participation is very new, so the ways to involve children and to make participation possible have not yet been developed. In Bulgaria, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and the Czech Republic there is very limited experience of child participation, yet no established good practices. Therefore, there is a clear need for a methodology that can actually make child participation possible and that can describe how participation can be organized, realized and evaluated.

1.2. The Purpose and Goals of the Child Participation Methodology

The overall goal of the child participation methodology developed under a project, funded by the Fundamental Rights and Citizenship Program of the European Union, is to integrate the child's point of view in the development and evaluation of child helpline services in 5 EU member states. Specifically, the methodology aims at:

- introducing a unified methodology for ensuring and monitoring child participation in developing and evaluating child help services;

- empowering children through participation;
- introducing techniques for measuring the scope, quality and results of child participation;
- introducing changes to the work of the child helplines involved in the project, as a result of the participation of children.

1.3. Outline of the Project "Strengthening Children's Voices in EU Society through 116 111 Child Helplines"

The child participation methodology outlined earlier in the chapter is elaborated under a project entitled "Strengthening Children's Voices in EU Society through Child Helplines". The project is funded by the Fundamental Rights and Citizenship Program of the European Union and runs from December 2012 to November 2014. The project is implemented by a partnership of 6 organizations, operating the 116 111 child helplines in Bulgaria, Romania, Poland, The Czeck Republic, Slovakia and the United Kingdom. The project is coordinated by Animus Association Foundation, Bulgaria – the NGO operating the child helpline in Bulgaria.

The project, setting the framework for development of a child participation methodology, aims at creating the best possible conditions for children's voices to be heard at 5 European child helplines. In listening to children's voices, the action uses as a guiding principle the right of children to participate in matters that affect them. The child's right to participation is a fundamental right contained in the UNCRC. In working with this particular right, the project builds a partnership among European countries to which the issue of ensuring child participation is relevant from a number of perspectives.

Five of the project partners are Eastern and Central European countries that share a similar historical past of many years of violations of human rights. Furthermore, Bulgaria, Romania, Poland, The Czeck Republic and Slovakia are all current EU member states in which the fundamental child's right to participation, as contained in the UNCRC, is more formally prescribed by the EU-harmonized legislation rather than practically applied. It is exactly due to the post-communist heritage that a well-established practice of child participation is actually lacking in these 5 countries.

As EU member states, Bulgaria, Romania, Poland, The Czeck Republic and Slovakia have all long ratified the UNCRC, some of them more than 20 years ago. By ratifying the convention, these countries have recognized children as holders of many essential rights and acknowledged the need for special protection and care for these rights by the adults because of the more vulnerable and not yet independent status of children and adolescents. The right to participation, relevant to children's taking active part in decisions affecting their lives, is just one of the many fundamental children's rights that all EU member states commit to respecting and ensuring conditions for. In fact, all of the above countries have begun to offer children some opportunities for participation, but these are only partial and the effects are minimal. Though the first steps have been taken – the ratification of the UN Convention, the development of some mechanisms and legal documents on child participation, a lot still needs to be done in order to put in place working mechanisms for participation and meaningful inclusion of children in matters that concern them.

As far as the 116 111 child helplines are concerned (as an instrument in the protection and care for children), no real mechanisms for child participation and input have been available so far in any of the above countries. So, the development of a methodology ensuring and monitoring child participation is of prime importance. The project addresses this very pertinent need of having to develop

and implement a child participation methodology that guarantees that children and adolescents in Bulgaria, Romania, Poland, Slovakia and the Czech Republic are involved when it comes to changing and improving the current child helpline services or to developing new ones.

At the same time, ChildLine - the charity running the 116 111 child helpline in the UK - was attracted to the project partnership because of its 10-year experience in ensuring and monitoring child participation. ChidLine additionally benefits the project outcomes by bringing in its rich expertese in developing a methodology that ensures and evaluates child participation in shaping and improving child helpline services.

While addressing the need for elaborating a child participation methodology, the project seeks to encourage children in Bulgaria, Romania, Poland, The Czeck Republic and Slovakia to take active part in developing and evaluating child helpline services. It gives the chance to up to 80 children, aged 11 – 19, to participate in the development of a methodology ensuring child participation at the 116 111 helplines in the above countries. The methodology is being developed by directly involving children in workshops with children's monitoring and advosory groups that are set up under the project in Bulgaria, Romania, Poland and Slovakia.

In a total of 32 workshops, the members of the children's groups contribute to the development of a comprehensive child participation methodology which makes it possible for children, adolescents and young people to voice their points of view and opinions when child helpline services are shaped or evaluated. The implementation of such a methodology improves the helpline services offered in the above-mentioned member states and benefits all service users.

The methodology that the project develops builds on the model of providing and monitoring child participation that the British ChildLine adopts. The Bulgarian, Romanian, Polish and Slovak child helplines cooperatively elaborate the child participation methodology, in partnership with empowered children and adolescents, and implement it in the final project phase. The Czech 116 111 child helpline pilots the newly developed participation model in the last six months of the project, without conducting children's seminars but while still very meaningfully contributing to the elaboration process. In the stage of piloting the methodology, the helpline teams collect and process initial data and use it for evaluation and improvement of the model as well as for drawing conclusions and recommendations about integrating the child's point of view in child helpline services.

Apart from involving children in participation, the project also works to build the capacity of helpline professionals to communicate with children with particular vulnerabilities by ensuring an exchange of best practices and conducting field visits and trainings. Via case studies, analytical reports, reccommendation paper and lobbying, the project also strives to improve the capacity of the child protection systems in Bulgaria, Romania, Poland, and Slovakia to respond to children's issues as voiced at the child helplines. On the public and community level, a specially designed awareness-raising campaign voices and promotes children's hot issues in the broader European society.

Via the various activity workstreams, the project targets a total of up to 80 children and adolescents who are empowered to participate in developing child helpline services as well as 102 helpline professionals. It also targets around 4 000 professionals within the child protection systems of five EU member states, as well as teachers, parents and citizens of participating countries.

Finally, the implemenatation of the project is expected to bring about significant outcomes on the different content levels that it

intervenes on. The most important outcome is a developed and well-working child participation methodology that enusures that children and adolescents are involved when it comes to shaping child helpline services in Bulgaria, Romania, Poland, Slovakia and the Czech Republic. Other important outcomes are connected with the improved opportunities for children in 5 EU member states to participate in matters that concern them, thus realising their fundamental right of care and protection, as well as with an increased capacity of the child helplines staff to work with children with vulnerabilities and to respect their viewpoints. The project is also expected to improve the child protection systems in Bulgaria, Romania, Poland and the Czech Republic in terms of providing children with practical opportunities to exercise their right to participation, as well as by increasing the quality of the 116 111 child helpline services. The action is also a step forward in levelling the professional standards and harmonizing the child helpline services across 6 EU countries.

CHAPTER 2: Review of Child Participation Practices in Bulgaria, Poland, Romania and Slovakia

2.1. A Glimpse of Decision-making Processes and Strategies Relevant to Ensuring the Child's Right to Participation in Bulgaria, Poland, Romania and Slovakia

The following country reviews study child participation practices and existing mechanisms for ensuring child participation in 4 European countries: Bulgaria, Poland, Romania and Slovakia, based on their individual country reviews. The country reviews on child participation have been realized within the scope of the Project "Strengthening Children's Voices in European Society through Child Helplines", funded by the Fundamental Rights and Citizenship Program of the European Union. Each country review was accomplished in months 2-4 of project implementation. Partner countries have adopted different approaches to presenting the current situation on child participation, studying the effectiveness of existing methodologies, identifying main challenges and proposing recommendations for improving existing practices and mechanisms. This chapter aims at summarizing the situation on child participation in Bulgaria, Poland, Romania and Slovakia by presenting a comparative study among the countries and setting the analytical frame for further discussion on child participation by incorporating best practices in all 4 countries.

The **Bulgarian** review presents an overview of state policies, encouraging child participation, then studies the existing mechanisms on child participation and the manner in which they are applied in practice, and finally, presents the challenges on the road to incorporating children's opinions in decision-making processes. According to the report, child participation has been included in the 2013 Bulgarian National Program for Child Protection and was recognized as one of the Program's top priorities. Also, in 2012 a Chart on Child Participation has been developed by The State Agency for Child Protection (SACP), with the primary goal of promoting child participation in reality. Existing mechanisms in Bulgaria foresee the creation of Student Councils on school, municipal and regional level. However, these structures are only partially developed and their function is limited.

At the national level, children in Bulgaria are represented by The Child Council (CC). Children members of this Council present their views on matters that concern them and on the policies developed by the SACP. It also facilitates children in establishing partnerships with local child councils, the Regional Inspectorates of Education, the Child Protection Units and NGOs. In addition, CC members participate in meetings of the National Council for Child Protection and have already issued their own statements on important topics such as safe internet space, introduction of health education in schools, violence to and by children, the Bulgarian National Helpline for Children 116 111. The CC members opted for establishment of School Parliaments, encouraged the development of extracurricular activities, and advocated parents' involvement.

Children also brainstormed ideas how to facilitate communication between peers, and how to initiate a national debate on how to make school more appealing for students. The CC is a self-governing body and decision about membership and internal rules have been entirely the responsibility of children. According to the review, however, the SACP has not used the full potential of the CC. It remains unclear whether children's opinions are taken into account and whether their proposals have influenced relevant institutions.

The second country review outlines **Poland's** international obligations on child participation, the measures taken at the national level since 1989, local measures at the municipality level, legal framework on child participation, examples of the structure and activities of two Youth City Councils (for the cities of Warsaw and Kalisz), and NGOs role in establishing Youth Councils and supporting their activities.

In Poland attempts to create a national youth representative body started as early as 1989. The establishment of a National Youth Council is an obligation taken by Poland with the adoption of the European Act for Youth in 2005. The closest body to a National Youth Council is The Polish Council of Youth Organizations (PCYO). People who participate in the PCYO represent their organization but all join efforts for the Polish youth.

In the Act for Municipal self-government adopted in 1990, the creation of youth councils have been mentioned, but no specific recommendations regarding its appointment, structure and cooperation between adults and youngsters have been made. Thus, the establishment of Youth Councils has an advisable nature rather than a binding character. In Poland there are 100 municipal youth councils, with the total number of municipalities being 2 500. The role of the Youth Councils is to deliver proposals on matters concerning young people and give opinions on decisions taken by the municipality.

NGOs in Poland play a significant role in the establishment and promotion of Youth Councils as institutions allowing young people to influence the decision-making process at the local level. A growing number of NGOs dealing with children and their rights decides to have a Youth Council and consult their actions with the beneficiaries. For example, The Civis Polonus Foundation works not only towards the establishment and support of Youth Councils, but also towards the creation and sharing a work methodology.

The **Romanian** review begins with an overview of the bodies that have been representing students since 2002. It also offers some strategic directions in regards to the structure development, external relations, student representation and policies.

The child helpline in Romania is one of the most influential means for children's voices to be heard. It enables and encourages children to express their opinions and participate in the decision-making process regarding child matters. Since 2007, Romania has a structure

representing children at the national level. This is the Romanian National School Student Council (CNE). Its goal is to represent and promote the educational, social and cultural interests of school students before all relevant bodies, in particular before the Ministry of Education. Its goal is to strengthen and facilitate children's access to information, counseling and guidance in view of protecting and promoting children's rights. Also, it aims at strengthening the cooperation between the main actors involved in the educational environment.

Different student bodies and various initiatives concerning students' involvement in decision-making stared in 2002. Student councils function at school, county, regional and national level. The presidents of the County Councils of Children are involved in the activity of the Child Helpline, and they can share opinions about the challenges that children face in the respective county. The results of the activities developed with The Romanian National School Students Council are evaluated on a yearly basis in order to produce better results.

Slovakia's country review includes a short geographical and historical overview of the Slovak Republic, a survey of existing practices, legal and policy framework of child

participation, an overview of the bodies protecting children's rights, and the implementation of children's right to participate in different settings and situations: family, school, in situations of violence and in judicial and administrative proceedings.

The policy review on child and youth participation for 2012 reveals that children in Slovakia recognize Child Helplines as the most important tool for promoting their right to be heard. Bodies such as the local Children's Parliaments and the Children's Ombudsman are not very popular, with one in five children being not familiar with these bodies and the purpose they serve. School and Youth Councils, although better known by children, are often not supported by school authorities and perceived more as a formality rather than bodies with real impact on decision-making. Children feel they do not have any influence on the decision making process at the municipal level and have little or no expectation to change anything in this regard. They express greater confidence in youth-run organizations and feel they have their voices heard through volunteering in such organizations as compared to youth councils or children's parliaments. The report says that the reason for the malfunction of all bodies representing children's opinions is lack of appropriate skills and experience in both children and adults.

2.2. Four National Reviews: A Comprehensive Analysis of the Current State of Child Participation in Bulgaria, Poland, Romania and Slovakia

I. COUNTRY REVIEW, BULGARIA

Country-Review-BULGARIA.pdf

II. COUNTRY REVIEW, POLAND

Country-Review-POLAND.pdf

III. COUNTRY REVIEW, ROMANIA

Country-Review-ROMANIA.pdf

IV. COUNTRY REVIEW, SLOVAKIA

Country-Review-SLOVAKIA.pdf

2.3. Summaries and Conclusions Relevant to Child Participation Practices in Bulgaria, Poland, Romania and Slovakia

Bulgaria, Poland, Romania and Slovakia admit the importance of children's opinions and recognize that children need to be given space and appropriate mechanisms to express their views. This is evident in the countries' policies: all four countries initiate and endorse the creation of bodies such as Student Councils and Children's Parliaments. These bodies are comprised solely of

students with the purpose to express students' views and represent their interests at school, local and national levels.

However, in all four countries social attitudes, that youngsters can be seen only as part of the problem and not as an agent in the solution, constitute the major obstacle towards child participation. There is still a common understanding that children belong to their parents and are not capable of making their own decisions. There is still the ubiquitous belief in society that if empowered, children will use the power in a destructive way to oppose adults and defy rules. One of the greatest challenges is the stereotype that "adults always know better", as well as the view that if empowered, children will undermine adult authority. Also, despite the fact that state policies encourage child participation, children never or seldom receive feedback on their suggestions and proposals. This is recognized as a major problem since instead of empowering children, it results in disappointing them and eroding their belief that active citizenship is possible.

In all four countries legislation has set the framework for establishing student bodies but all four partners report that these bodies do not have a real impact on decision making processes regarding matters that concern children and young people. So far, child participation remains more in theory than in practice and although mechanisms for ensuring child participation do exist, their implementation seems rather schematic and formalistic. The role of the NGO sector appears to be crucial in all four countries. NGOs advocate for child participation, organize trainings to enhance teachers' and parents' capacity on child involvement, and raise children's awareness on how to make their voices heard. All four countries emphasize on the need of exchange of good practices.

Finally, all four countries indicate child helplines as the most significant tool allowing children to share their views and give recommendations on how existing policies can be improved.

CHAPTER 3: Target Groups, Method, Ethical Principles

3.1. Target Groups of the Child Participation Methodology

The current methodology was developed through the practical experience of child helplines in five EU member states – Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Poland, Romania and Slovakia and with the guidelines and support provided by the associate partner ChildLine, UK.

The target audiences that can use the methodology are the staff of these helplines and any other helplines or similar programs that work for children – with the aim of making their work more child-friendly and actually fit to the real needs and expectations of children and young people, as they themselves perceive these.

The targets of the children's groups, set up under the project "Strengthening Children's Voices in European Society through Child Helplines", were children in the above-mentioned EU countries. The creation of children's monitoring and advisory groups requires reaching out to children and attracting and involving them in various participation activities.

3.2. The Instrument for Developing the Methodology: Four Monitoring and Advisory Children's Groups

The specific tool employed in the development of the methodology were 4 monitoring and advisory groups, of up to 20 children each, set up in Bulgaria, Poland, Romania and Slovakia. The four children's groups that were formed and the children's seminars that took place in the course of the project included 346 participants in total – 92 in Bulgaria, 131 in Romania, 79 in Slovakia and 44 in Poland. The process of creating the groups was designed in accordance with the good practices of more experienced colleagues – ChildLine, UK – as well as thanks to own contributions and ideas, related to the specific context in each country and the experience and expertise of each partnering organization. The methodology is created on the basis of this experience and combines the best practices applied in the partnering countries.

3.3. Professional Standards and Ethical Principles

Code of Conduct for Work with Children

Every organization participating in the project and working with children has its own code of conduct and is also led by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. But some of the general principles are summarized in the following paragraphs.

Working with children requires the strict adherence to principles that guarantee children's safety, dignity and the respect of their fundamental rights. Therefore, all the professionals in the partnering organizations follow a number of ethical principles in their everyday practice with children such as:

- every child has the right to be respected and to have equal access to the programs and resources created for children;
- every child has the right to participate, regardless of ethnicity, origin, age, economic status, specials needs, gender, sexual orientation, religion;
- every child has the right to receive the information and support necessary for his or her self-identification, development and assertiveness within a group context;
- every child has the right to receive information and support in order to understand in full measure the meaning of the choices they need to make;
- every child has the right of personal life and the right to expect that the relationship between him or her and the professional will be within the law

and all the relevant political and ethical standards.

Additionally, while working with children, professionals should:

- treat with respect the unique personality of the child; value and respect each child or young person as an individual in his/her own right, in his/her role as a member of his/her family, and in his/her role as a member of the community s/he lives in;
- know and adhere to the most contemporary views and theories of children's development; facilitate the optimal growth and development of each individual child or young person to achieve his or her potential in all aspects of functioning;
- maintain personal and professional integrity, develop skills and knowledge in order to work with competence, work co-operatively with colleagues, monitor the quality of services, and contribute to the development of the service and of policy and thinking in the field of childcare;
- respect the relationship of the child or young person to his/her parents, his/her siblings, other members of his/her family and other significant persons, taking account of his/her natural ties and interdependent rights and responsibilities;
- create safe and free of stressors environments that can stimulate the social, emotional and physical development of the children;
- respect the values and beliefs of the child and not try to impose his/her own values and beliefs;
- not discriminate against any child and actively oppose at all times any form of discrimination, oppression or exploitation of children and young people.

In the professional ethics applying to the work with children, confidentiality is a central issue. Professionals therefore should:

- keep the personal information shared by the child confidential unless it is related to risk for the child;
- keep the written documentation related to the children in safety and not share it outside the organization (unless it is related to risks);
- connect the child protection organs, if he/she receives information that a child is at risk;
- inform the children about the aims, techniques, rules and procedures of the gatherings of the groups/participation activities;
- inform the parents about the aims, techniques, rules and procedures of the participation activities and provide their cooperation and consent;
- in cases of photographs and recordings – video, audio or on another device – ask the child/parents for consent if they will be shown to other parties or posted online and if they do not agree to that the recordings should be destroyed;

Safeguarding Principles Relevant to Participation

When it comes to involving children and young people in participation, in addition to their professional ethics for working with children and adolescents, organizations should follow safeguarding principles particularly relevant to the process of child participation. Those principles build on the general procedures for guaranteeing the safety and well-being of children, employed by organizations which interact with children, adolescents and young people.

Below are listed a number of safeguarding principles that ChildLine, UK applies to any participation activity involving children and young people. These offer a comprehensive and inclusive practice of child participation that individual organizations may use as a stable and solid basis to put in place their own safeguarding procedures relevant to participation. *****Some of the safeguarding principles relevant to child participation that ChildLIne, UK employs are the following:

- treat all children and young people with respect including respect for diversity;
- respect children and young people's right to individuality and freedom of expression within safe limits;
- involve children in the planning of all activities as far as possible and ensure that their views are heard and considered;
- regularly ask for feedback from children and young people to ensure that the organisation is responding to meeting their needs;
- provide every opportunity for children and young people to maximise their potential;
encourage young people to and adults to point out attitudes or behaviours they do not like;
- work in partnership with other departments and organisations to ensure that everything possible is being done to safeguard the welfare of children;
- recognise that special caution is required when you are discussing sensitive issues for example child abuse, confidentiality, with children and young people;
- ensure that you do not allow yourself to get into a situation where abuse of trust may occur, such as working with a close acquaintance or family member;
- ensure that whenever possible there is more than one adult present during activities with children and young people, or at least you are within sight or hearing of others unless the reason for this has been firmly established and agreed with parents/ carers and senior managers;
- ensure that you put in place appropriate safeguards if required to transport children and young people, including seeking consent from parents/ carers and senior managers before transporting children alone;
- be aware that physical contact with a child or young person may be misinterpreted;
remember that someone else might misinterpret your actions, no matter how well intentioned;
- report all allegations/suspicions of abuse or poor practice which fails to protect children;
- record in writing any concerns or issues raised about the safety or children and young people or any concerns about the conduct of individuals towards children and young people;
- give guidance and support to new staff and volunteers to ensure that they are aware of their responsibilities and the behaviours expected by the organization;
- make best use of the training and development opportunities offered to you to ensure that your knowledge and skills are at a high enough level to allow you to contribute towards the organisations goals and objectives.

In order to ensure the safety and well-being of children and young people involved in participation, professionals should not:

- have inappropriate, abusive or harassing physical or verbal contact with children or young people;
- allow yourself to be drawn into inappropriate attention seeking behaviour/ make suggestive or derogatory remarks or gestures in front of children or young people;
- jump to conclusions or make assumptions about others without checking facts;
either exaggerate or trivialise child abuse issues;
- show favouritism to any individual;
- take a chance or an unnecessary risk when common sense, policy or practice suggests another more prudent approach;
- display discriminatory, violent or degrading behaviours towards either children and young people or other staff and volunteers;
encourage children and young people to act in a discriminatory, violent or degrading way towards others;
- encourage children and young people to break the law by allowing the consumption of cigarettes, alcohol or drugs;
- allow individuals to gain access to children, without having completed the appropriate checks and processes;
- put yourself in positions where you are alone with children and young people away from organisational premises, such as taking them

out on trips unaccompanied by other adults, unless the reason for this is part of a work plan authorised by senior management;
- take children and young people home unaccompanied, unless the reason for this is part of a work plan authorised by senior management;
- encourage children and young people to be out of school unless it absolutely necessary;
- seek information that you have no right of access to;
- breach confidentiality as set out in the organization's principles and standards;
- take illegal drugs or consume alcohol in the course of your working hours.

(The above safeguarding principles were shared with the project partnership by professionals from ChildLine participation team at a thematic training held under the project in London. They are literally quoted from the materials pack provided by ChildLine at the same training. For more information on the safeguarding practice of NSPCC, UK and ChildLine, UK, please, consult: http://www.nspcc.org.uk.)***

Charter of Participation

Finally, in conducting participation activities, professionals need to exert efforts to translate basic participation rules to the language of children and young people, including those from vulnerable groups. Particularly helpful in this area is the Charter of Participation that the ChildLine, UK employs. In a child-friendly format, the document acquaints children and young people involved in participation with fundamental rules of participation. Some of these principles relate to the importance of being listened to and of listening to other people, the need of being provided with feedback on what has happened and why, the significance of adults recognizing children's opinions and ensuring that everybody feels accepted, safe and respected, etc (for more information on the Charter of Participation, see Chapter 5).

CHAPTER 4: Conceptual Framework of the Methodology: The Child Participation Model

4.1. Brief Introduction to ChildLine's Model of Child Participation

The National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC), established in 1895, is the only UK children's charity with statutory powers to protect children at risk of abuse. In addition to the NSPCC Helpline which offers information and support to adults on various child-related issues, the organization also runs the ChildLine
- the UK's free helpline for children and young people where trained volunteers provide advice and support to children, by phone, mail or text, 24 hours a day.

In counseling children and young people, the ChildLine team focuses on accepting every child and exploring his/her emotions and behavior so as to fully understand the situation and all the available choices. While providing appropriate information and support, the consultants concentrate on adequately assessing the risk so as to always ensure the child's well-being.

In addition to helping children via telephone, mail and text consultations, ChildLine runs an important outreach activity – the Childline school service - which makes it possible for specially trained volunteers to talk to primary school children about violence, while empowering them to protect themselves against abuse and neglect and showing them how to access the child helpline.

Child participation is another inseparable component of ChildLine's model of work which enables children and young people to influence the recruitment of staff, the services that ChildLine runs, and the policies and attitudes that it impacts. In ChildLine's ethos, participation is the process through which children's and young people's views are listened to so as to be reflected in decision-making relevant to child wellfare.

In 1990 as a result of the formal adoption of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child by the NSPCC which, in addition to other fundamental children's rights, also regulates every child's right to participate and express his/her views freely on matters that concern him/her, the NSPCC established its Participation Unit, part of which is ChildLine's Participation Department.

ChildLine's Participation Department supports children and young people in influencing decision-making and focuses on promoting and providing feedback on the voices expressed by children and young people themselves. ChildLine's 10 years' practice of ensuring child participation has contributed to the development and constant improvement of a sophisticated participation model consisting of 5 stages: Referral, Assessment & Support, Practice, Measurement & Outcomes, and Exit.

ChildLine's participation model is built around the ideas that participation is empowering to children and improves their emotional resilience and that listening is the best practice when it comes to eliciting the views and opinions of children and young people. The child helpline in the UK additionally considers that young people's involvement in decision making is critical in ensuring the quality and improvement of the services offered at the helpline and that the process of child participation should be conducted with an emphasis on the changes that participation achieves for both the young people and the service.

The referral stage of participation is realized by requests from young people who have expressed a desire for participation as well as requests from various departments at the ChildLine that need the point of view of young people in their work. Children and young people file their requests for participation via

the ChildLine website or some of the other available online participation tools, and devisions requesting child participation in a given issue fill in a specific request form and file it directly to the child participation department.

When it comes to participation requests from young people, a key moment for the ChildLine participation team is to ensure that in the process of referral the boundary between child participation and the provision of specialized support services is strictly respected.

Once a young person files his/her request to intern at ChildLine or take part in a participation activity, in addition to the parental consent form, parents or care-givers are asked to complete a form aimed at determining whether the sessions, discussion topics, etc at the participation event are appropriate for the young person. This is not only to ensure that the young person will be involved in activities he/she feels comfortable with but also to guarantee that participation on sensitive topics will not ensue any potential risks for the young person himself and all other young people participating in the same event.

Parallel to the research of the parent's point of view on the young person's participation, the young person is also asked to complete a personal support plan in which they mark the types of participation events they're interested in being involved, as well as some details about their personalities, they way they feel in a group, etc. Similarly to young people willing to join participation events, interns fill in a personal commitment plan, which functions as an agreement between the candidate intern and the ChildLine. The commitment plan gives information about what is particularly expected from the young person and specifies the type of support that the intern needs so as to achieve his/her goals while interning at ChildLine. Part of the personal commitment plan that interns fill in is the Code of Conduct, which all NSPCC staff and volunteers sign and are expected to follow.

After the referral stage, the Participation Unit carries out an assessment looking into who would be the best to conduct the engagement with children and young people as well as an assessment of which young people can be involved in ChildLine's participation activities. The process of assessment shows that some young people can be included in participation activities without any concerns as to whether the participation can trigger problematic personal issues, others turn out to need support to be able to benefit from participation, while for third it sometimes becomes obvious that participation needs to be postponed until a later point in time when their personal issues have been solved. Such young people are referred to ChildLine helpline, the NSPCC helpline and the other NSPCC support services.

Once the young people are approved for participation, depending on their preferences and capacities, they are involved in a number of participation activities available at the Childline helpline and the NSPCC such as: consultations on activities/messages/issues, advisory/participation/focus groups, involvement in staff recruitment, campaigning and lobbying and sharing views at fundraising, lobbying or training events. Other participation activities that young people usually benefit from is the sharing of opinions and experiences in the media on issues related to the ChildLine's areas of operation or when it is considered that their perspective would improve the quality of the child-related matter produced by the media. Young people also have the chance to contribute to the commissioning of services and activities, to be trainers, researchers, evaluators, etc.

In practice, at ChildLine participation takes place through participation groups, the "N-spire" network, theme ambassadors, bespoke activities and ChildLine internship, with core participation activities usually involving

children and young people of up to the age of 18. However, in cases of disabled young people and young people in the child protection system, participation activities work with young people up to the age of 25.

ChildLine has local and national participation groups in all four nations which give children and young people who have been supported by the child helpline the opportunity to share their views on various child-related topics. These topics are usually related to child protection but they can sometimes be also relevant to different national and local issues and policies that Childline wants to develop or lobby for. Another important role of some of the participation groups is to ensure space for training of participants to lead interview panels for recruiting new Childline staff. Participation groups ensure that young people's voices contribute to decision making when it comes to developing and improving the services offered at the child helpline in the UK.

N-spire is a safe online network that since October 2011 has been giving children and young people engaged in ChildLine and NSPCC participation activities the chance to communicate and collaborate with each other. Various online tools of the network - live chats, forum discussions and event information - give young people the chance to contribute to activities such as launching the ChildLine Facebook page, developing videos and awareness-raising campaigns, and participating in online discussions across the UK. All those different online participation mechanisms available at the N-spire network allow children and young people to influence major decisions within the organisation.

ChildLine theme ambassadors are young people who have had direct experience of one of the NSPCC's seven priority themes which are: minority ethnic children, neglect, sexual abuse, physical abuse, babies, children in care and children with disabilities. Ambassadors who have had direct contact with NSPCC staff from their theme are later able to advise on and influence the above-mentioned service areas via speaking at various advisory groups, at awareness-raising or fund-raising events, etc.

Another tool for young people to influence ChildLine work is the internship programme mentioned above which welcomes young people with direct interest in the helpline. Intern candidates are thoroughly evaluated and after a support and training process, approved interns have the chance to influence ChildLine services and model of work, while also acquiring vocational skills for their own professional careers.

ChildLine Participation Department also gathers information and opinions from young users at the ChildLine website through online surveys and "Message Boards" which make it possible for children and young people to provide support to one another.

The support provided to young people throughout the whole participation process is another important phase of the ChidLine participation model. The function of the support phase is to ensure preparation for and support at various participation events, thus facilitating sharing and learning with other young people. This type of support does not envisage the provision of support for the other issues going on in young people's personal lives. If any personal issues need to be resolved, the young person is referred to the other counseling and support services run by ChildLine and the NSPCC.

Before every participation event, the participation unit gives the young people detailed information about what is going to happen at the event so that the young person can be clear and confident about their role at the event. During the event, the participation team also supports the young person by making sure that they feel comfortable and that any arising issues are timely addressed. The participation team is also responsible for

organizing briefs for the events and taking care of the logistics related to participation activities. It is also the task of the participation team to adequately assess the risks that might be associated with the participation of a young person at a particular event. The participation team is also expected to pass on to colleagues and other available services any concerns or risks identified by the attending member of the team or the young person himself.

The participation unit also supports the young people in communicating their voices and opinions to senior members of staff and departments at Childline and the NSPCC, including to other organisations and even the government. An important outcome of the support stage of participation is that the participation team helps the young people to improve their team-building, presentation, or public speaking skills.

As part of the participation model, every young person's involvement in participation is continually monitored and internships are particularly reviewed monthly and three-month performance reviews are regularly prepared.

Focus on outcomes and what the participation of children has achieved not only for the service but also for children themselves is another important element of the ChildLine participation model. After a particular participation activity has been organized and delivered, the number of children and young people involved and other important information is stored by the participation team in a special activity log. The activity log also contains information about the aim of the participation activity, the name of the responsible contact person as well as the unit which has commissioned the particular participation activity. The activity log allows the participation team to track all participation activities and to produce a monthly report showing the number of young people involved, the activities that have taken place and the key outcomes achieved for the month.

After the delivery and report of a particular activity, the feedback circle in the ChildLine participation model also begins. Young people provide the participation team with feedback about the activity that has taken place. The divisions that have commissioned a particular participation activity are also provided with feedback about the conducted event and are asked to provide back to the participation team feedback on the involved young people and the achieved outcomes. Finally, the participation team provides young people with feedback on how their views and experiences have impacted a particular service, activity, topic, etc. Information about whether the feedback circle has been completed for a given participation activity is also stored so that it can be monitored at any time.

The feedback is collected via a specifically designed evaluation toolkit which comprises various young person-friendly feedback forms and activities which young people can complete anonymously either on the spot or online after the event. The feedback form designed for young people researches how they found the event, what they liked most and least, whether they felt their voices were listened to, etc. The feedback form targeting divisions within ChildLine focuses on the purpose of the participation event, the key outcomes of the activity/consultation, how young people have influenced decision. The results from both types of feedback is then presented in a young person's friendly way through emails, calls, messages and certificates and sent out to children and young people who have been involved.

In addition to the activity log which presents numbers for young people and activities, ChildLine also logs a quarter return spread sheet which gathers quarterly figures on the number of conducted participation activities and young people involved as well as information on evaluation of whether young

people have had a positive experience, if they were given feedback and if they felt they influenced decision making.

The data reported in the activity log and the return spread sheets allows to store and work with information specifically related with the outcomes resulting from child participation such as the numbers of requests for participation activities and the devisions they were filed from, where resources were best used and where impact was best evidenced, etc.

In summary, the UK's support line for children incorporates and constantly improves a sophisticated model of participation which equally effectively accommodates the organisation's policy to listen to the voices of young people and the needs and expectations of the young people themselves. The model makes it possible to listen to young people who have experienced abuse, thus making the offered services, conducted campaigns and achieved impacts more effective.

**The above presentation of ChildLine's model of child participation is based on information provided at the charity's official website, as well as at the thematic training in London that took place under the project.*

4.2. The Model of Child Participation Adopted in the Current Methodology

4.2.1. Brief Description of the Child Participation Model Adopted in the Current Methodology

The child participation model adopted in the current methodology builds on the model of child participation employed by the British 116 111 child helpline – ChildLine, while adapting it to the realities of 4 Eastern European countries in which child participation is a very much novel topic at the practical level.

Within the proposed methodological model, child participation takes place in four major stages - *involvement, participation, recording child participation and reporting and analyzing the outcomes of participation.*

The process of child participation starts with *the involvement* of children, which could happen through various channels and can be either on an ongoing base or as a one-off participation activity, requested by a service or department at the organization.

Once the children have been involved, the stage of *participation* begins by employing different participation tools such as permanent children's group, field seminars or temporary children's group. The permanent children's group is a sustainable tool of child participation, consisting of a number of full members who are trained and empowered in active participation. The permanent children's group convenes upon request to work on a particular task, thus helping to elicit children's points of view on a given issue or topic. *Field seminars* are task-oriented workshops which can be held outside the premises of the organization, where a particular target group of children and young people can more easily be reached. The temporary children's group is a participation tool which gathers a focus group of children representing a particular target group to work on a specific task.

An important element of the child participation stage is the provision of group and individual *support* for all involved children on an ongoing basis. It is the prime responsibility of the child participation facilitators to ensure the necessary conditions for children and young people to feel supported and empowered during the whole process of participation.

The provision of *feedback* is another key element in the model of child participation offered within the current methodology. Feedback has to be provided from children to professionals, from professionals to children and from professionals and children to the

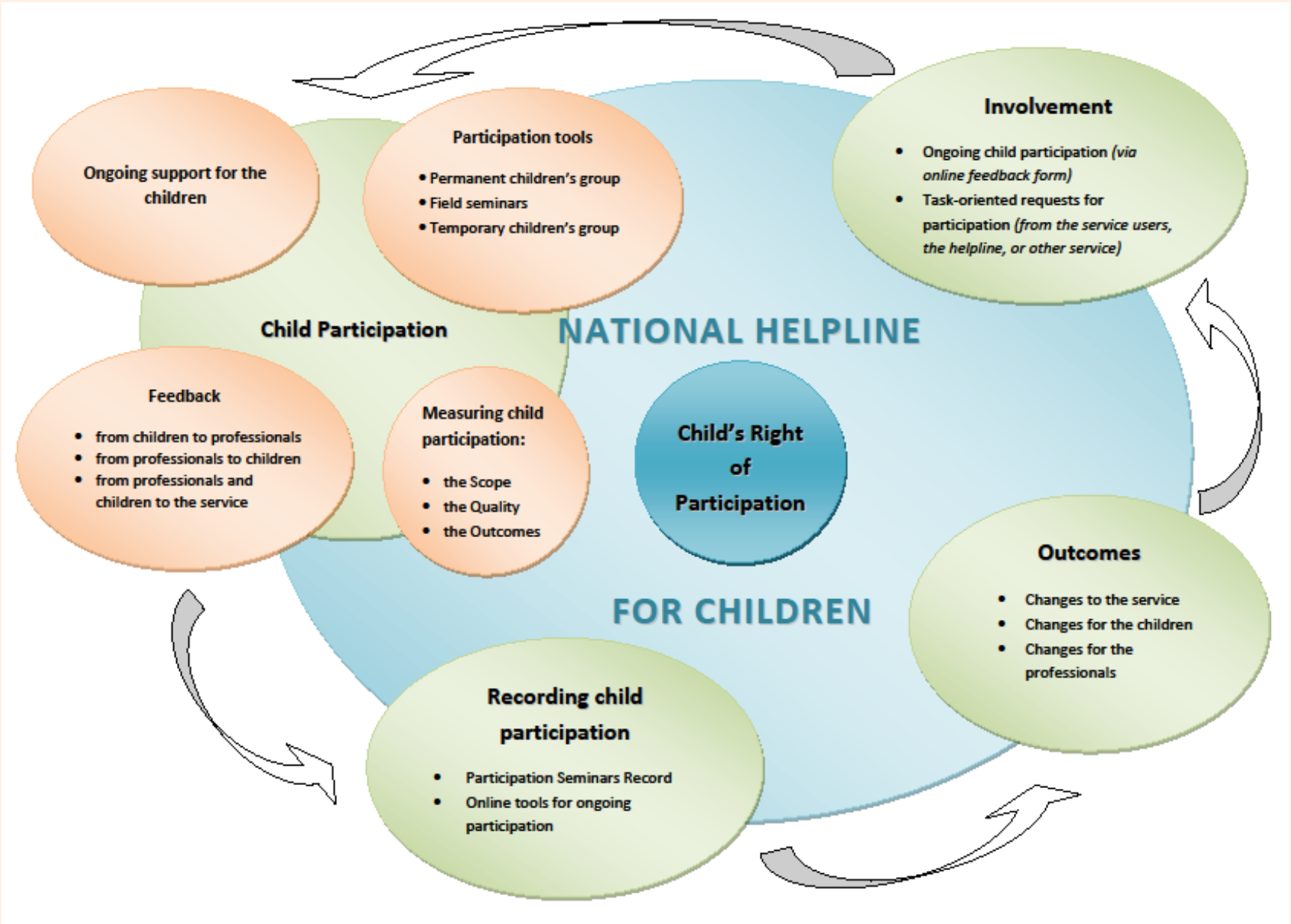
service that has requested participation. The completion of a feedback circle ensures that effective and meaningful participation is at place.

Another central element in the child participation model employed in the current methodology is the *measuring* of the scope, quality and outcomes of children's participation. Evaluation along these three parameters is considered still another prerequisite, if meaningful participation is to be sought.

In order for the participation process to be reflected on and conclusions and best practices to be reached, participation has to be recorded. The stage of recording child participation is the next important level in the participatory model adopted in the current methodology. The results from the conducted children's seminars, the feedback collected from all involved parties, as well as the results from the evaluation of children's participation are recorded in a participation record tool (see template in Appendices) or via online tools for ongoing participation (e.g. child-friendly feedback forms), which can then be collected in a specialized online system.

The model of child participation developed within the project completes with the stage of identifying and reflecting on the *outcomes* of child participation. The integration of the achieved outcomes is the ultimate stage and goal of child participation as meaningful participation should lead to actual results – both outer (in terms of generating ideas and meeting specific objectives) and inner (e.g. a sense of growth, empowerment, greater awareness of children's rights, etc) not only for the involved children and professionals, but also for the service and potentially the whole organization.

4.2.2. Organigram of the Child Participation Model Adopted in the Current Methodology



4.3. Measuring the Scope, Quality and Impact of Child Participation – Gerison Lansdown's Model

The child participation methodology developed under the project "Strengthening Children's Voices in EU Society through Child Helplines" adopts *ChildLine's approach to monitoring and evaluating child participation. The model is thoroughly presented in the "*Framework for Monitoring and Evaluating Children's Participation*" and the "*Toolkit for Creating a Step Change in Monitoring and Evaluating Children's Participation*" developed by Garison Lansdown, 2011. The first paper offers a model of measuring the process and impact of child participation by building on a number of earlier theories on evaluating child participation. A particular achievement of Lansdown's model is that it strives to formulate reliable indicators for measuring child participation for which data can actually be collected. The latter paper is a practical manual that supports the implementation of the framework by providing guidance and sample participatory tools which can be used to collect and analyze the data relevant to the indicators for measuring child participation identified in the framework.

In Lansdown's theory, before any child participation initiative can take place, an environment favourable to the respect of the child's right to participation has to be ensured. Once such an environment is created and child participation activities have taken place, it is also necessary to elaborate and use child-frindly tools to measure how meaningful participation is.

In the model of measuring child participation adopted by Lansdown, three different aspects need to be measured in order to claim that a participation activity has been monitored and evaluated adequately. These aspects are the scope, quality and outcomes of child participation.

4.3.1. Scope of Child Participation

The scope of child participation refers to the degree to which participation has been accomplished and stands for what is actually being done. While evaluating the scope of participation, children give their feedback on the extent to which they were involved, thus informing relevant actors whether, throughout the participation process, they felt consulted, or partnered by adults, or supported to manage the participation activity themselves. While evaluating the scope of participation, children also give important feedback on whether they find particular aspects of the activity more relevant to participate in than others, as well as whether they prefer to be consulted in one aspect of the process, but still to collaborate or manage in others.

Within the dimension of scope of participation, it is necessary to differentiate between the categories of "adult consultative participation", "collaborative participation" and "child-led participation".

Lansdown states that adult consultative participation is at place when adults seek the opinions of children and young people in order to get some understanding on a child-related issue. In this type of participation, these are the adults who initiate and manage the participation process and there are no true possibilities for the children and young people to control the outcomes. Yet, consultative participation acknowledges that children have experience and opinions which have to be taken into account by adults in decision-making.

Collaborative type of participation is present when adults and children are equally partnering in the participation process and when children and young people are provided with opportunities for active involvement at any stage of a participation activity. Collaborative child participation is considered to be the appropriate instrument for empowering children to influence both the

very process of participation and the outcomes that it achieves.

According to Lansdown, child-led participation is at hand when the participation activity offers children and young people the opportunity to initiate activities and advocate for themselves. It is a type of interaction in which children have the chance to identify the topics of interest by themselves and the professionals' role is one of facilitating the process, while young people are entrusted with the role of controlling the process. In child-led participation, children are empowered to advocate for themselves and to be able to follow their own participation goals through the information, advice and support provided by adults.

The three different levels identified within the dimension of the scope of participation are effective in different contexts and situations. At the same time, initiatives which start as a consultative type of participation, may in the very process of involving children, develop as collaborative or child-led types of interaction as children are empowered in participation i.e. they gain the skills and capacity to ne more active.

In her framework for evaluating child participation, Lansdown proposes a matrix containing criteria against which an organization can measure and identify the type of participation that has been achieved within the project, program or initiative that it is undertaking. The analysis of the results gives useful information about whether it the organization could have involved children earlier or whether it had been possible for the children to have a greater control over the process. (for further details on the Matrix for evaluating the scope of child participation, please, consult "*Framework for Monitoring and Evaluating Children's Participation*" (Lansdown, 2011).

4.3.2. Quality of Child Participation

The dimension of quality of child participation refers to the extent to which a particular participation activity has met the standards for meaningful and effective participation. In Lansdown's theory, there are nine standards for quality child participation which an activity, initiative, program, etc. has to meet in order to be considered meaningful and safe for the children. These standards, as defined by Lansdown, are the following ("*Framework for Monitoring and Evaluating Children's Participation*" (Lansdown, 2011, p. 27 - 30):

1. Participation is transparent and informative (children understand what the participation activity is about, their role is clearly defined and the goals for participation are agreed upon with the children involved);

2. Participation is voluntary (child's involvement is voluntary and a child can withdraw any time he/she wants);

3. Participation is respectful (adults support children so as to facilitate their participation and treat their opinions and suggestions with respect);

4. Participation is relevant (the topics that children are invited to provide opinions on are of real relevance to the children's own lives);

5. Participation is child-friendly (the method of work builds the self-esteem of the participants and is sensitive to children's age; the activity is conducted in a child-friendly meeting place and information is presented in a child-friendly format);

6. Participation is inclusive (the activities facilitate the equal participation of all children and use an inclusive and non-discriminatory method of work);

7. Participation is supported by training for adults (the involved professionals need to be adequately trained so as to be able to work

effectively with children of different ages and abilities);

8. Safe and sensitive to risk (it's adamant that involved professionals take all the necessary steps to make the environment safe for the children and to minimize the risk, if the discussion of a particular topic is likely to bring about any negative consequences for the children);

9. Participation is accountable (children have to be given quick and clear feedback on the impact of their involvement and have to be supported to participate in the follow-up process of participation activities).

Additionally, Lansdown offers a matrix, which when filled in, can help organizations to figure out whether the above standards for quality participation have been satisfied, thus providing information on what needs to be improved. It is important that the analysis with respect to the meeting of standards of meaningful participation should be carried out by both the concerned children and the involved professionals (for additional information on the matrix, please, refer to the "*Framework for Monitoring and Evaluating Children's Participation*" (Lansdown, 2011).

4.3.3. Outcomes of Child Participation

The evaluation of outcomes of child participation is an aspect of the participation process that researches the impact of a specific participation activity on the involved children, young people, and professionals. Within this dimension, impacts can be observed on families, on individual organizations involving children in participation, as well as on the level of the wider realisation of children's and young people's rights within their families, communities and at local and national level.

It is important to mention that when evaluating the impact of participation, the outcomes have to be assessed towards the objectives for involving children. The goals for child participation need to be clearly identified at the beginning of a participation activity since they will surely affect the type of indicators adopted for measuring the outcomes of participation.

Lansdown proposes a range of dimensions that can be assessed in attempting to evaluate the outcomes of child participation. She further highlights that those dimensions would vary in accordance with the objectives and the particular outcomes that a participation activity intends to achieve. She also draws special attention on the fact that the expected participation outcomes need to be assessed, if possible, by all involved parties - children, parents, staff, even community members if relevant to the content of the particular activity. Another important aspect that is emphasized is that in evaluating the outcomes of participation, it is important to step on true evidence for a change and to avoid simple claims that a certain change or outcome has been achieved.

Lansdown differentiates between two types of outcomes – process outcomes and structural outcomes. In her theory, process outcomes are related with the impacts that participation achieves for the groups directly or indirectly involved in it and the following examples of process outcomes are suggested ("*Framework for Monitoring and Evaluating Children's Participation*" (Lansdown, 2011, p. 36 – 37):

1. **Outcomes for children -** greater self esteem and self confidence; acquisition of skills (communication, problem solving, negotiation etc); greater awareness of rights; sense of efficacy and empowerment;

2. **Outcomes on parents' attitudes or behaviour -** higher level of awareness of children's rights and needs; greater level of sensitivity to children's rights and needs; improved quality of relationships with children; greater understanding of children's capacities; willingness to consult with and take account of children's views;

3. **Outcomes on staff attitudes and behaviour -** changing practice towards respecting children's rights and needs; greater level of sensitivity to children's rights and needs; improved quality of relationships with children; greater understanding of children's capacities;

4. **Outcomes for services/programmes/organisations/institutions -** change in organisational culture towards greater respect for children's rights; willingness of staff to reconsider power balances and relinquish control in favour of greater power sharing; children's participation built in to all programme areas as a common underpinning approach; changes in programmes to reflect children's concerns and priorities;

5. **Outcomes within the local community -** greater awareness of children's rights and attitudes towards children; improved status of children within the local community; increased willingness to act in the best interests of children.

The other type of outcomes that Lansdown associates with child participation are the structural outcomes that concern the impact of participation on a larger group of children and young people, not directly involved in a particular participation activity, in the realisation of their rights. Again, just like process outcomes, structural outcomes will vary depending on the objectives and the effect that a particular participation initiative strives to achieve.

Speaking about structural outcomes, Lansdown highlights that in some projects, activities or initiatives, participation itself can be desired outcome. In such cases, the activities will be assessed in terms of whether they have actually achieved participation, still with an account of what results have been achieved as a result of this participation.

Yet, for other programmes participation can be a means to achieving some desired goals and outcomes. According to Lansdown, in such cases it is not sufficient to collect proof just on what has been changed but also on the fact that these changes were achieved exactly thanks to children's participation.

On the level of structural outcomes, Lansdown again suggests a range of possibilities, each one of which may be further specified or detailed depending on the goal of the particular participation activity. The following structural outcomes connected with child participation can be expected to occur depending on the intervention level that a project strives to address ("*Framework for Monitoring and Evaluating Children's Participation*" (Lansdown, 2011, p. 37 – 38):

1. Legal/policy reform - raising age of marriage; ending corporal punishment in the family and all other environments; establishing the right of children to access confidential medical advice and counselling; primary and secondary education is compulsory and free; legislation on child labour is introduced, implemented and monitored in dialogue with children themselves;

2. Awareness of children's rights - children have knowledge about their rights, and how to realise them; human rights education is included in the school curriculum; policy makers are sensitive to and aware of children's right to participation;

3. Opportunities to influence public decisions - children are consulted on local and national government legislation, policies, services and resource allocations; children are represented in local and national governance bodies; children have the right to establish their own organisations; children have the opportunity to use broadcast, and online media to communicate their own views;

4. Political commitment to respect children's rights - government provides a

transparent budget indicating levels of expenditure on children; social protection policies address and are informed by the rights and needs of children;

5. Respect for rights in the daily lives of children – schools provide a child friendly, participatory learning environment; children are involved in decision-making processes concerning their own health care, consistent with their evolving capacities; children can access confidential health care services, including reproductive health care; children participate in local community actions or decision-making processes; child friendly cities and communities are introduced; schools provide a child friendly; participatory learning environment.

Just as in evaluating the scope and quality of child participation, matrices are offered to help organizations involved in child participation measure whether the type of outcomes that their initiatives have set at the beginning have been achieved once the participation process has been completed (for additional information on the matrices evaluating outcomes of participation, please, refer to the "*Framework for Monitoring and Evaluating Children's Participation*" (Lansdown, 2011).

CHAPTER 5: Developing the Child Participation Methodology

5.1. Introduction

The methodology presented in the following paragraphs was developed through the practical involvement in child participation of child helplines in five EU member states – Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Poland, Romania and Slovakia, as well as with the guidelines and support provided by the associate project partner - ChildLine, UK.

The methodology offers practical steps to involving children and young people in participation, as well as specific tools to measure and record the process of participation and to evaluate the achived outcomes. Eventually, the methodology makes it possible for the child helplines in the above European countries to effectively integrate the child's point of view in the work of the helpline, thus improving the quality of the service and strengthening the impacts for the children, adolescents and young people calling at the helpline.

The following chapter offers valuable guidelines on how to advertise, set up and maintain child participation groups by presenting concrete methods of work with children and adolescents in group contexts, as well as specific instruments to measure the scope, quality and outcomes of child participation. The suggested group activities and evaluation tools are just sample ones, setting examples of the general direction of the working approach. Many other different group techniques and measurement instruments can be employed, depending on the particular project and the specific participation goals.

The audiences that can benefit from the methodology and the presented working techniques are the staff of the European helplines mentioned earlier and any of other helpline or program that works with or for children – with the aim of making their work more child-centered and fit to the real needs and expectations of child and adolescent service/program users.

5.2. Setting up Children's Monitoring & Advisory Groups

Involvement/Recruitment

Once the need for the involvement of children and young people has been identified, the specific goals of participation have to be formulated i.e. why exactly the children are being involved and to what type of activity, event or initiative they will be asked to contribute. When planning a particular participation activity, consider specific ways in which children and adolescents can be involved and ensure ongoing support for the participants.

Reaching out to Children and Adolescents

In order to attract the neccessary number of motivated and interested children, many different channels should be explored, for example:

- the Internet: popular teen forums, websites, blogs;
- schools: announcement boards, teachers;
- other educational institutions (e.g. Ministry of Education, other relevant structures/directors, etc);
- popular magazines and other media;
- peer-to-peer campaigns: children and young poeple spreading the information among themselves.

Typically, in ensuring representation in participation, the goal is to attract a diversity of children, not just members of a certain subgroup. You need to gather information of how different subgroups can be reached specifically, not just as part of the general population of children. For example: helpline

users, children with disabilities, children from smaller towns and villages, etc. An add/announcement aimed at the general population can or cannot attract a child who uses the helpline or has a disablity, etc. In order to guarantee such participation, additional channels need to be sought: community centers, social services offices, resource centers for children and families, and other relevant facilities, depending on the context of the specific country.

Identify as many as possible channels for reaching out to children and choose the ones that seem most suitable for your situation and resources. Be flexible, as some channels may prove less effective than expected.

Invitation/Announcement

An invitation should be prepared and disseminated through the chosen channels. It should be written in accordance with the channel that will be used and the age group that it targets. Will there be one single invitation for all ages or different ones aiming to attract younger kids and teenagers? Some useful general tips for the outlook of the invitation:

- ✓ it has to be concise and clear, speaking to children in their own language;
- ✓ it has to be attractive;
- ✓ it has to be eye-catching with regard to colors, drawings and images;
- ✓ it has to have a dynamic banner if it is advertised online.

The process of involvement is very challenging, especially in the beginning. Without a well-developed organizational system for child participation, the whole concept of participation is new both to professionals and children. Children and adolescents themselves have no or little experience with participation and the professionals are often inexperienced in developing their own approaches to attracting and motivating participants. That is why, often the first child participation groups that are set up under a particular project or initiative do not have as many or as diverse members but the process of forming them is very useful in terms of acquiring experience, ideas and good practices.

Collection of Applications

The ways in which applications will be collected should be decided on and planned before the announcement is spread so that when it starts to circulate there would be an available way for the children to apply. What needs to be decided on?

- What will be required from the children in order to apply? Just stating their willingness to participate, filling in a specific application form, writing an e-mail, writing an essay, or writing a motivation letter? All of these can be used – separately or in combination – and still other forms of application can be added;

- How will children and young people apply? By calling, filling in an online form, sending an e-mail or motivation letter, etc? Whatever way is chosen, the whole application process should be very clearly explained in the announcement, so that children do not get confused. If an online system is to be used, it should be available and well tested before the announcements are disseminated.

You need to decide on how children will apply and then you have to provide the appropriate means for the process of application to take place.

Assessment of Applications

Before the applications start arriving, the criteria for selecting the members to a particular participation activity should be clearly set within your team. When selecting the members, consider the following parameters:

- age limits (up to 18 years of age or more);
- whereabouts: where does the child live, can children living in other cities/villages be transported (It is better to have children form various regions as the helpline is not aimed at a particular city/region only but often the resources are not sufficient for ensuring the transportation of children to and from the participation location. In such cases the alternative of an online participation group could be useful);
- some physical or psychological conditions that may prevent the child from participation (Are there such? What are those conditions and why they prevent a child from participating? If a child with such a condition applies and is not approved, they still need to receive an explanation);
- parental consent: children should be informed early on (in the announcement or the initial application phase) that parental consent is required. The lack of such consent will make the application inacceptable, which would be a difficult situation, if a child is willing to participate. A contact may be established with the parents to informed them of what the initiative is about and how it can benefit the young person so that eventually they may give their consent. However, if no written parental consent is obtained, the child will not be able to take part – and this again needs to be properly explained to him/her – why the consent is needed and why without it the child cannot be admitted to the group.

Assessment of Motivation

Motivation is one of the main factors for successful participation, so it should be assessed during the initial stages of the children's involvement. Then motivation has to be maintained and strengthened during the process of participation. It can be best assessed through a motivation letter and mainly, an interview – face-to-face or over the telephone or Skype. It could be best to ask different questions and explore the motives that the child has in applying, as well as his/her expectations for the process. Children could have unrealistic expectations for what is going to happen or their motivation may not fit the purposes of the group (e.g. there could be expectations for travel, payment, or other privileges).

Motivating Young People to Participate

Motivation is the key to successful involvement in any kind of activity for both children and adults. When forming a child participation group, motivation not only needs to be assessed at the beginning but more importantly – it needs to be strangthened and further encouraged in the process. So particular efforts and different approaches need to be employed in order to motivate and inspire the children and adolescents.

Some general suggestions on how to motivate the children are:

- ✓ giving them further information about their rights and how to excercise them – thus they could feel more empowered and that their oppinions matter;
- ✓ explaining the meaning and purposes of child participation by involving them to describe what it means to them individually;
- ✓ giving them opportunities for self-expression;
- ✓ showing them respect and consideration;
- ✓ including team building games and activities; developing a real group/team, based on mutual respect, friendliness, common goals; if good group cohesion is achieved, the participation in the group itself becomes a source of satisfaction and the members find the groups activities appealling;
- ✓ analyzing their expectations and trying to meet them properly;
- ✓ engaging them in meaningful activities – children should not be expected to participate and feel motivated by

activities that seem to them pointless and uninteresting, and not giving them any kind of new knowledge, self-esteem or other gains;
- ✓ showing them the significance of participation and the chance to help things become better for themselves or other chidlren;
- ✓ creating opportunities for them to learn new things, to grow and develop new interests.

Face-to-face Group and Virtual Group

According to the available resources and the purposes of participation, it should be decided wheather to set up a face-to-face group, a virtual group, or both. Surely to have both participatory tools has many advantages – exchange of information and ideas is easier through the Internet, it does not require so many resources, children from all over the country can be involved, etc. However, it also has its disadvantages – motivation and involvement, as well as group cohesion, are much more difficult to build up and sustain in the virtual reality, also not all activities can be done online, etc.

What will be needed to set-up a virtual group:

- ✓ announcement/ad – circulated mainly online;
- ✓ membership criteria (additional ones might be added here – access to the Internet, for example);
- ✓ channels for communication: Facebook (it could be a closed Facebook group; Skype (for Skype conference meetings), e-mails (e.g. for spreading tasks and feedbacks), a forum (if the organization already has a forum, an additional section can be added to it that is visible only to the members of the particular participation group), etc.
- ✓ parental consent;
- ✓ rules and activities.

It is beneficial, if the resources of the organziation allow, to have both a face-to-face and a virtual group, the latter could be particularly useful for children living in remote areas.

5.3. Responsibilities of the Children's Monitoring and Advisory Groups, Capacity Building and Provision of Support

When the group has been set up and initially motivated, then it is time for the actual participation to begin.

Responsibilities

The roles and responsibilities of all parties involved, as well as how the group will function should be clearly defined from the very beginning. They should be decided on and agreed with the children.

The main goal of children's focus groups set up under projects implemented by child helplines is to make it possible for children to benefit from their right to participate actively in the improvement of the services offered by the helplines. The children's role is to express their opinions and suggestions freely, while the professionals' role is to ensure a safe atmosphere in which children feel understood and comfortable to share opinions.

Children's responsibilities are connected with participating in a set number of child seminars/initiatives/events, observing the rules of the particular participation format and with giving their contribution to different activities agreed with them in advance.

The frequency, length and concrete dates of activities have to be carefully scheduled in accordance with children's capacities to attend extra-curricular activities.

If the specific participation activity is a children's focus group active for a definite period of time, it is helpful if the group remains open till the very last seminar so that new members can join in at any time. In such cases, part of the ongoing responsibilities of

the members of the group are related with transfering their knowledge about child participation to the newly arriving group members or to members absent from already conducted workshops due to various reasons. As part of the working approach, the facilitators of the workshops should empower the children to be able to explain to the new-coming members the activities held in previous seminars, to talk about their own motivation and experiences while participating and to be open to the expectations of the most recent members of the group.

With both temporary and permanent children's groups, the primary responsibility of the children lies mainly with advising professionals on various child-related topics and with monitoring the process of child participation. That is why it is well grounded if focus groups held with children and adolescents are called Children's Monitoring and Advisory Groups. At the same time, the professionals' role is mainly associated with ensuring the appropriate conditions for safe, meaningful and quality participation to take place.

Capacity Building

Once the children's group is launched, the professionals' efforts should be dedicated to building the capacity of the group to function as one complete whole so that it can be able, over a series of seminars, to achieve the goals for which it was set up.

The intriductory children's seminar should be devoted to ensuring group cohesion through different interactive group activities. It should draw attention to the importance of every child's contribution to improving the work of the child helpline and to working to establish group rules and responsibilities. During the first children's seminar, efforts have to be made to help children to act spontaneously and to feel safe both with each other and with the professionals working with them.

While building group cohesion, the child facilitators should encourage every child to find their own place in the group and to participate only in the activities which are important for them. If, for example, there is a child in the group who does not feel comfortable while participating in role-playing games, the facilitators should offer to the child alternative ways of participating – e.g. assuming the important role of the observer during the role playing games. This will allow the child to share what they have observed from outside the particular scene and will help them to contribute meaningfully to every activity, while feeling comfortable with the role they have.

Over the whole sequence of seminars, an individual approach should be used to every child. This will help the facilitators to build a contact with all the members in the group and to get to know children's strong and weak moments during the seminars. All children need to be encouraged and supported during the seminars, regardless of their intellectual, emotional and participation capacities.

If children's seminars are held according to the professional standards for ensuring quality participation, they are expected to help the group members to improve different parts in themselves such as the ability to communicate and listen, being brave enough to share opinions, thoughts and suggestions, etc. It is further possible for the changes resulting from participation to be transferred to children's personal lives outside the group.

An important element of the capacity building process is the provision of feedback after every seminar, based on the children's involvement and efforts spent. This gives children important knowledge as to what particularly has been achieved. Knowing how one has contributed is trully empowering when it comes to child participation.

Motivation and capacity building of the children's focus groups is a continuous and

intense process which should employ different tools for group work and should account for the specificity of the personality of every individual child. The efforts invested in capacity building contribute to the effective functioning of the group and the attainment of the set group goals. As to the effects beyond the limits of the focus group, child participation and contribution to group activities help children to see some personal issues from a different perspective and to communicate more effectively with the important others in their lives.

Support

The children will need the support and sometimes guidance of the adults from the organization. The organization should have an expert specifically involved with the children's group. The best option is to have 2 facilitators of the children's group whom the children get to know and trust so that if one is not available, the other can provide the needed support. The involvement of many different experts at different times can create serious problems with regard to building rapport between children and adults. The chosen experts should be fully involved and aware of the activities related to the chidlren's group, they should monitor its progress and when a problem arises they have to be able to offer possible solutions based on the knowledge they have gathered about the group and the individual children. Thus, even if somebody else steps in for a particular activity/seminar/event, the leading expert/s will be able to prepare the children and be available for their questions and possible hesitations.

In order to provide the support and functioning of the children's groups, the organization should prepare a set of guidelines for the process, based on their experience, expectations and resources. The guidelines should give instructions on what has to and could be done with the group (activities, safeguarding procedures, recording participation), by whom (which experts), how, where, etc.

A lot of attention should be dedicated to maintaining children's motivation. Even if motivated initially, children can get bored or uninterested at any point, if constant work on upkeeping motivation is not done. This means provision of games and activities for enhancing group cohesion and involvement. High levels of involvement of the child participation experts and very good rapport between him/her and the kids are also important.

Another set of internal rules should be created for the children's group – these rules have to be developed together with the children, not set up by the adults and imposed on the kids. That is how the young people will feel much more involved and dedicated to following these rules and guidelines. They could be related to:

- *the way the group will gather and communicate;*
- *the duration of the meetings;*
- *the use of mobile phones during meetings, attendance;*
- *the right to choose whether to participate in a certain activity or not, etc.*

5.4. Techniques for Work with Children to be Used in the Child Seminars

Parental Consent

Since we are working with minors, decisions such as participation in a group should be consulted and approved by the parents. Written consent is important as otherwise it can come under question at any moment. Also, it should be noted that parents can reconsider their decision at any point, if they feel the group is not safe for their child. That is why it is important to keep them updated about the activities, both current and forthcoming, so that they could be prepared and their worries could be handled. Once

again, it is important to have two constant figures connected to the group so that they are available to parents' queries as early in the participation process as possible. If parents are reluctant to give consent for participation in general or for a particular activity (e.g. a trip), then the expert could talk to them and try to explain what will be done, how, what measures of safety will be taken, etc. There is a good chance for the parents to feel much more secure this way and to give consent for their children's participation.

Code of Conduct for Work with Children

A specific code of conduct should be developed within the organization which sets the roles and responsibilities of the experts working with the children. It should be based on the general code of conduct of the organization and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, but with some additional information, specific to the participation activities. It should state what is ethical and what is unethical in the treatment of children, how the boundaries, confidentiality and dignity of the children will be protected, etc.

Focus Groups/Mediation of Virtual Group/Expert Working Group

The *activities chosen for the groups* – both face-to-face and virtual – should be carefully selected in accordance with a few main criteria:

- they should be related to current activities/project/initiatives of the organization (if the organization needs to create a new moto, then children can participate with ideas; if one already exists, they can participate in its evaluation, or they can give ideas about what is needed for the website, etc);
- they should be meaningful – both for the children and the organization; participation for the sake of participation is not a good option and nobody is motivated by activities they do not find meaningful and useful;
- they should truly allow the participation of children – for example, if it is something that will not in the end depend on the input of the kids, this could be disappointing to them and can set a bad example;
- they should be interesting and dynamic – boring tasks will make the children leave the group, as well as will the lack of dynamism. Children are very curious and flexible, these qualities of theirs should be the basis of the approach, but their patience should not be tested;
- they should be versatile: different games and activities should be used, in accordance with the size of the group, the main focus/goal, the age of the children, the material base, etc.

The specific techniques used can be very different:

- warming-up games (ice-breakers) for the initial stages of the forming of the group and for the start of each seminar/meeting;
- discussions, brain storming activities;
- group cohesion building exercises – ones that require togetherness, sharing of information, building up of trust;
- role plays – they are usually popular among children and are very valuable as a way to really try to walk in somebody's shoes and get in touch with their perspective;
- interviews;
- presentations/making of presentations; delivering presentations on important topics;
- specific games/techniques, related to a certain topic;
- creative exercises – drawing, writing, making of collages;
- energizers for the time the group members feel tired or inattentive, etc.

A number of possible games, exercises and techniques have to be prepared by the child participation experts at the very beginning. Then they should be applied with flexibility: some techniques may prove very popular, so

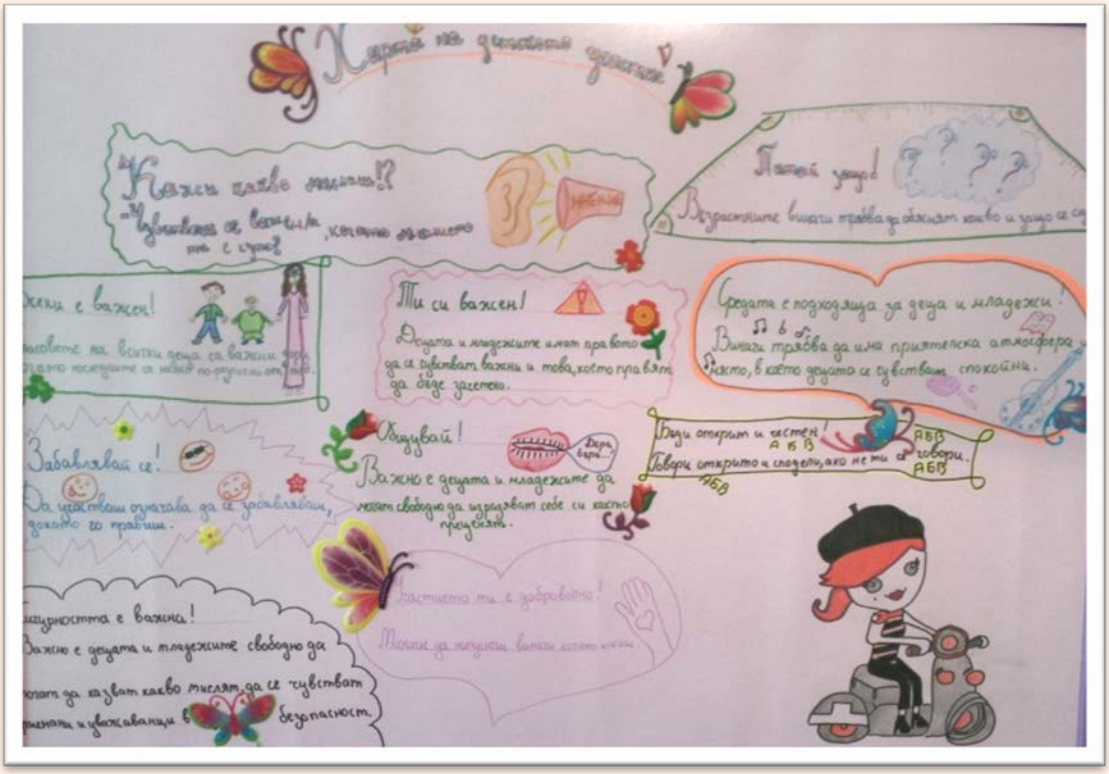
they can be included again, while others may not be suitable at a specific moment or with certain children. Therefore, some of the chosen techniques may be dropped, others can be added or modified. The focus should be on the children and their needs and interests.

Charter of Child Participation

In working with children involved in participation, a Charter of Participation may be particularly useful. The Charter of Participation introduces "basic rules" of participation such as the importance of listening and being listened to, the significance of ensuring that everyone gets a say and that everybody's opinions are respected and recognized; the need for a child-friendly and relaxed atmosphere/place/setting and for pleasant and entertaining activities, as well as the need for adults to provide feedback on what has happened and why, etc.

The Charter of Participation should be targeted specifically at children and young people and should be instrumental in acquainting them with the right to participate and in empowering them to benefit from this right. The Charter of Participation developed by the British 116 111 child helpline can be very helpful with children's participation groups as it presents a comprehensive set of rules of participation in a very clear and understandable way, while strengthening the meaning of every rule with an attractive and child-friendly illustration next to it. The Charter may be translated into the organization's native language and a member of the children's group may be asked to make a poster version of the charter by drawing pictures next to each translated and written rule. The poster should be made available to the children and adolescents at every seminar/meeting of the face-to-face group so that both children and facilitators can refer to it whenever needed throughout the seminars**.**

With virtual groups, the poster of the charter may be photographed and uploaded on the relevant link so that it again sets the rules of the forum/discussion/cause, etc.



5.5. Specific Indicators to Measure the Scope, Quality and Outcomes of Child Participation and Tools to Collect Information on Them

How do we know if participation has actually been meaningful, satisfactory and empowering to the children and adolescents? It is not enough to focus only on how it can benefit our work, it is much more important to concentrate on how it is perceived by the children themselves. Specific methods, techniques and indicators are required to measure participation.

The child participation methodology elaborated under the project "*Strengthening Children's Voices in EU Society*" adopts Garison Lansdown's model for measuring child participation, briefly described in Chapter 4.3. Lansdown's approach and theory to evaluating child participation is one of the most recent and sophisticated ones and since 2011 (when the latest version of Gerison's methodology became available) has been piloted and tested by a number of agencies across the world.

By adopting Lansdown's model of evaluating child participation, a project can easily ensure the monitoring of the categories of scope, quality and outcomes of child participation (for details on the content of these categories, see Chapter 4.3).

5.5.1. Measuring the Scope of Child Participation

Following Lansdown's theory, it is important to assess how the children perceived the scope of their own participation in different activities i.e. whether they see it as "adult consultative participation", "collaborative participation" or "child-led participation" (for details on the content of these categories, see Chapter 4.3).

Based on the matrix for measuring the scope of child participation elaborated by Lansdown in the "*Framework for Monitoring and Evaluating Children's Participation*" (Gerison Lansdown, July 2011), the participation team should identify a project-specific indicator relevant to the category of scope of child participation (see Table 1).

Indicator for Measuring the Scope of Child Participation

The indicator that can be chosen for this particular level of evaluation of child participation may be formulated as "*at least 70 % of the children (in a particular seminar/activity/event) evaluate their participation as collaborative or child-initiated*" (see Table 1 on p.44). The information that has to be collected is the number of children evaluating participation respectively as consultative, collaborative or child-led.

Recommended Instrument/Game

In choosing the practical tools to collect data on the indicator measuring the scope of participation achieved in the children's seminars, the project team should research Lansdown's "*Toolkit for Creating a Step Change in Monitoring and Evaluating Children's Participation*" (Lansdown, 2011) for an interactive evaluation game that will be appropriate for the particular context - a single focus group, a series of children's seminars, or else.

The particular instrument that is chosen can be an adaptation of any of the interactive exercises offered by Lansdown to analyse the scope of participation throughout the program cycle ("*Toolkit for Creating a Step Change in Monitoring and Evaluating Children's Participation*", p. 27 – 30). The following paragraph describes how one particular exercise measuring the scope of participation can be applied.

Description of the game: The facilitators put 3 posters in different places in the room where a children participation seminar/activity

is being conducted. The pictures on the posters should designate the 3 different type of participation – consultative, collaborative and child-led. The original version of the game contains a fourth poster portraying a “children not involved” situation. However, in some projects in which child participation is a central goal, as well as also a means to achieving other project objectives, the “children not involved” situation might be considered irrelevant.

Once the posters are placed around the room, the facilitators explain to the children the images and the corresponding words beneath them, thus linking the posters with the idea of ‘consultative’, ‘collaborative’, and ‘child-led” types of participation. In exploring the meaning of the words together with the children, Lansdown’s criteria for what each type of participation means can be used as reference points but presenting them in a child-friendly language that children could understand is very important.

When the facilitators are sure that the participants well understand what idea and type of participation each poster stands for, the children and adolescents are asked to stand by the visual image which they believe best illustrats the extent to which they themselves have been involved in the participation process. When all the children have chosen their places under one of the posters, the facilitators ask them (sometimes individually, sometimes as a group) to provide arguments for why they chose the particular place. After hearing each other’s arguments, children have the chance to change their places.

At the end of the game, the facilitators record children’s final position i.e. write down the number of children who stand under each of the 3 poster, thus getting information on the number of children who assessed the type of participation in the particular seminar as consultative, collaborative or child-led.

The game can be replicated at the end of every seminar/activity/event and summary data should be presented in the analysis of the results of child participation.

Table 1. Indicator for Measuring the Scope of Children's Participation and Tool to Collect Information

Type of participation	**Criteria** (as defined by Lansdown)	**Indicator**	**Tools** (to gather information)
Consultative participation	children's views are solicited but the design, information collection & analysis is undertaken by adults	*Information collected*: number of children evaluating participation as consultative;	Children standing by the visual image that they think best indicates the type of involvement (15 mins) The game is carried out during the last session of children's workshops so that information can be collected after each seminar.
	planning takes account of issues raised by children		
	children are consulted on whether the program has been successful in achieving its objectives		
Collaborative participation	children contribute to the design of methodology, data collection & data analysis	*Information collected*: number of children evaluating participation as collaborative;	
	children are involved in the implementation of the program		
	children collaborate with adults in developing the criteria for evaluating the program		
Child-initiated, led or managed	children themselves identify issues of concern	*Information collected*: number of children evaluating participation as child-led;	
	children organize & manage the program & full responsibility for its implementation		
	with adult support, children undertake the evaluation of the project		
		Indicator: at least 70 % of the children evaluate their participation as collaborative or child-initiated	

**The presented criteria for the 3 different types of participation as well as the suggested game for collecting information are quoted from Gerison Lansdown's "Framework for Monitoring and Evaluating Children's Participation" (Lansdown, July 2011).*

5.5.2. Measuring the Quality of Child Participation and Tools for Collecting Information

Similarly to the approach in measuring the scope of participation, when evaluating the quality of child participation, using Lansdown's matrix for measuring the quality of child participation can be extremely helpful ("*Framework for Monitoring and Evaluating Children's Participation*", Gerison Lansdown, 2011). In operationalizing the category of quality of children's participation, the project team should refer to the guideline criteria developed by Lansdown, while drawing special attention to finding appropriate child-friendly wording equivalents so that children of different capacities can well understand what each standard for quality participation stands for.

Based on the knowledge derived from the matrix, the participation team should formulate a project-specific indicator relevant to the category of quality of child participation (see Table 2).

Table 2. Indicator for Measuring the Quality of Children's Participation

Standard for quality participation	**Criteria** (as defined by Lansdown)	**Indicator**	**Tools** (to gather information)
Transparent & informative	children understand what the project is about & are informed about the scope & nature of their participation	*Information collected*: the score with which children rate the requirement	Pots & Beans game (15 mins)
	everybody's roles & responsibilities are clearly defined & understood		
	goals & targets are agreed with the children		
Voluntary	children have voluntarily agreed to be involved	*Information collected*: the score with which children rate the requirement	Pots & Beans game (15 mins)
	children are given time to consider their involvement		
	children can withdraw at any time if they wish		
Respectful	children's time commitments are respected	*Information collected*: the score with which children rate the requirement	Pots & Beans game (15 mins)
	working methods take into account social, economic & cultural practices		
	support for key adults in children's lives so as to ensure the participation of children		
Relevant	issues are of relevance to children's lives	*Information collected*: the score with which children rate the requirement	Pots & Beans game (15 mins)
	children are not pressed to participate in issues they don't consider important		
Child-friendly	working method are developed together with children & build children's self-confidence & self-esteem	*Information collected*: the score with which children rate the requirement	Pots & Beans game (15 mins)
	child-friendly meeting places		
	Info is provided in child-friendly format & in good time		
	children's need for participation to be fun & enjoyable is recognized		

Inclusive	children have equal chance to participate & non-discriminated by any criteria	*Information collected*: the score with which children rate the requirement	Pots & Beans game (15 mins)
	participation is consistent with children's capacities		
	initiative sensitive to cultural context of participating children		
Supported by training for adults	staff provided with appropriate training, tools, supervision	*Information collected*: the score with which children rate the requirement	Pots & Beans game (15 mins)
	staff regularly evaluate their participation practice		
	staff sensitized to children's participation		
Safe & sensitive to risk	children involved are informed of their right to be safe from abuse	*Information collected*: the score with which children rate the requirement	Pots & Beans game (15 mins)
	consent is obtained for the use of all information provided by children (including photos, digital images)		
	children have the right to a safe & confidential complaints procedure		
	unless otherwise agreed, it must not be possible to trace information back to individual/ groups of children		
Accountable	all children involved are given rapid & clear feedback on the impact of their involvement	*Information collected*: the score with which children rate the requirement	Pots & Beans game (15 mins)
	adults will evaluate how they have translated & implemented children's priorities		
	children are supported to participate in follow up and evaluation processes		
		Indicator: 70 % of the children evaluate at least 5 standards with the highest or second to highest score (i.e. 2 or 3 beans)	

**The presented standards and criteria for quality child participation as well as the suggested game for collecting information are quoted from Gerison Lansdown's "Framework for Monitoring and Evaluating Children's Participation" (Lansdown, 2011).*

Indicator for Measuring the Quality of Child Participation

As visible from Table 2, one indicator that can be chosen for the level of evaluation of the quality of child participation may be termed as *"70 % of the children evaluate at least 5 of the standards for quality participation with the highest or second to highest score".* The information that has to be collected in order to analyze whether the particular indicator has been achieved or not is the score with which children evaluate each standard during individual seminars/activities/events.

Evaluation Instruments/Games

The practical tool that may be chosen to collect data on the above indicator measuring the quality of participation achieved in a particular children's seminar/activity can be an interactive evaluation game, called the "Pots & Beans" Game, borrowed from the "*Toolkit for Creating a Step Change in Monitoring and Evaluating Children's Participation*" (Lansdown, 2011).

The "Pots & Beans" Game can be used to evaluate how well each of the nine standards for quality and meaningful participation has

been met, as well as to give suggestions about what could be improved. The game can be part of the evaluation session held at the end of the seminar/activity.

Description of the game: At the beginning of the game, the facilitators arrange a set of 9 paper cups, each one labeled with one of the standards. The facilitators then explain in a child-friendly way the meaning of each of the nine standards (based on the criteria provided in Lansdown's framework).

Then the children are asked to evaluate the extent to which each standard has been satisfied in the particular seminar. The children, as a group, may put up to 3 beans in every cup bearing the label of a particular standard, with the following designation of degrees (*as formulated by Lansdown herself, in Lansdown, 2011):

0 beans = the standard was not met at all;
1 bean = the standard was not really reflected in practice;
2 beans = the standard was met to some degree, but not fully satisfied
3 beans = the standard was fully satisfied.

The children get the chance to explore 1 standard at a time and they have the task to agree on the score with which they wish to evaluate the particular standard as a group. It is important for the facilitators to ensure the space and conditions for children to express their opinions freely while discussing each standard and to have the opportunity to reflect on their experience. The children are also encouraged to provide good arguments for their group decisions.

At the end of the game, the facilitators record the score with which the children's group evaluated each one of the nine standards in the particular seminar/activity. Summarized data regarding the quality of participation should be presented and interpreted in the analysis of outcomes of children's participation.

5.5.3. Measuring the Outcomes of Children's Participation and Tools for Collecting Information

In developing indicators for measuring the outcomes of child participation, the project team should formulate expected results based on the types of impacts associated with child participation that Lansdown presents in her "*Framework for Monitoring and Evaluating Child Participation"* (for details on those, see Chapter 4.3).

If a particular child participation activity is a pilot initiative for the organization, the participation team may decide to explore and

monitor only some results potentially identified on the level of the children and adolescents directly involved in participation. With pilot initiatives, results on involved professionals, the relevant service/s and the organization as a whole may be left unresearched and to be considered under future projects. Increased self-esteem or self-confidence and improved sense of empowerment are just two of the outcomes that can easily be explored on the level of individual children and adolescents involved in participation. Table 3 offers potential formulations of indicators relevant to the measurement of the above specific impacts on children (see Table 3 below).

Table 3. Indicators for Measuring the Outcomes on Children Directly Involved in Participation Activities

Impact on	Expected result	Indicators	Tools
Children & adolescents (involved in child participation under a project/initiative)	**greater self-esteem and self-confidence**	1) 70 % of children state they had a positive experience and that their views & opinions were listened to *Information collected*: children's feedback & No of children with positive experience 2) 70 % of children state they believe they influenced decision making *Information collected*: children's feedback & No of children who thought they influenced decision-making	"Body mapping" game – to explore changes in children before and after their involvement in a project Changes can be positive or negative, expected or unexpected (duration: 45 minutes)
	sense of empowerment	1) 70 % of the children state that they were given space to share opinions/suggestions *Information collected*: children's feedback 2) 70 % of children and young people receive feedback about their input *Information collected*: No of children who received feedback 3) 70% of the children are able to talk about the meaning or benefits of child participation; *Information collected*: children's feedback 4) 70% of the children understood why they were invited to participate; *Information collected:* children's feedback	

The main tool for collecting information on the above indicators can be a child-friendly feedback form which children can fill in either on the spot immediately after a seminar has taken place or later at home. The feedback form should contain questions relevant to the desired research areas and progress on the above indicators should be timely observed and analyzed once the whole series of seminars has been completed. Results from the feedback forms should be summarized and reflected on at the end of a particular participation activity.

Another instrument in collecting data for the outcomes of child participation can be the "Body mapping" Game, adopted from Lansdown's "*Toolkit for Creating a Step Change in Monitoring and Evaluating Children's Participation"* (Gerison Lansdown, 2011). When the participation activity is a series of seminars, the first part of the game can be conducted during the introductory empowerment seminar, while the second part can be completed during the final evaluation seminar with the children. The game measures the changes in the lives of the

children before and after their active participation in the group by juxtaposing the left-hand side of the body, which figuratively stands for the period before the children's involvement in the group, and the right-hand side of the body, representing the children's realities after their participation in the seminars. Results from the body-mapping game should also be summarized and analyzed once the particular participation activity has been completed.

5.6. Feedback Toolkit

Before the start of the participation activity, a toolkit has to be designed for collecting feedback and measuring participation. As with other suggested tools and games, different options exist, so the selection should be based on criteria such as: age, number of particpants, time limits, other activities planned, good practices and experience (if the experts are well prepared to use some particular tools or methods or prefer specific ones). Some games/tools were described in the previous paragraphs. Also, a short questionnaire/feedback form can be included that can be designed for a particular participation group or specific cycle of meetings of the group. An example of such feedback form is available in the Appendix for Chapter 6. Other tools and games can be developed and introduced – or modified, depending on what is needed and what works best for a project's particular needs. In summary, when it comes to collecting children's feedback, a particularly helpful toolkit is a combination between a child-friendly feedback form, interactive games for collecting information on the scope, quality and outcomes of child participation and a final evaluation seminar (for further details see Chapter 5 and the Appendix for Chapter 6).

In any case, in order to measure participation and recieve meaningful feedback that can be analyzed, the tools have to be clear from the start and applied regularly. Also, the results have to be properly recoreded. The next paragraph focuses on the process of recording child participation.

5.7. Tool for Reporting Data on Child Seminars and on Indicators for Measuring Participation

One tool that can be particularly helpful in reporting data on child seminars and indicators for measuring child participation is called Participation Seminars Record. It is in tabular format and its goal is to record the data relevant to the measuring of the scope and quality of child participation. The tool collects data on:

- date, place and topic of participation seminar;
- goal of child involvement and number of participants;
- number of children evaluating participation as consultative
- number of children evaluating participation as collaborative

- number of children evaluating participation as child-led
- number of standards for quality participation that the children evaluate with 2 or 3 beans
- which standards were those (e.g. transparent and informative; voluntary; respectful; relevant; child-friendly; inclusive; supported by training for adults; safe & sensitive to risk)

The tool is filled in after every seminar conducted with the children's monitoring and advisory group and makes it possible to analyze and summarize data in terms of the achieved scope and quality of child participation, once the whole series of workshops/activities/events have been completed (see the tool attached in Appendix for Chapter 6).

Conclusion

The child participation methodology adopted in the project funded by the Fundamental Rights and Citizenship Program of the European Union was developed, realized and constantly improved with the active participation of children from Bulgaria, Poland, Romania and Slovakia and the dedicated involvement form professionals from four NGOs.

This is done with a view to the prospective user of this methodology to be able to trace the overall logic of the current child participation methodology, while specific child-friendly tools and instruments for group work can vary according to the aim of the particular participation activity and the specificity of the concrete organization/service/program involving in child participation.

CHAPTER 6: Discussion of Results and Recommendations for Implementation

6.1. Discussion of Results

This final chapter aims to present a summary of the results achieved in the four European countries which set up their own children's monitoring and advisory groups under the Project "Strengthening Children's Voices in EU Society through Child Helplines", funded by the Fundamental Rights and Citizenship Program of the European Union. These countries are Bulgaria, Poland, Romania and Slovakia in which the NGOs operating the 116 111 child helplines involved in child participation over the span of the project. The chapter also lists some general recommendations for the development of effective child participation practices that might be of use to other child helplines or any other service or program working with or for children.

Measuring and analyzing the results of participation requires keeping a log collecting information on what is happening in the process, as was described in the previous Chapter 5. The Participation Seminars Record was the tool used to gather basic information about the seminars such as date and topic of the seminar, the goal of child participation, the topics/areas/activities that children contributed to, etc. The tool also collects information on the scope and quality of child participation.

The game which the project team used to measure *the scope* of children's participation was adopted from Lansdown's "*Toolkit for Creating a Step Change in Monitoring and Evaluating Children's Participation*" (Gerison Lansdown, 2011). The game measures the level to which children believed they were *leaders, partners or students* during the seminars.

The game measuring *the quality* of the children's participation was also adopted from Lansdown's "*Toolkit for Creating a Step Change in Monitoring and Evaluating Children's Participation"*. Its goal was to elicit information on whether children's participation covered different criteria such as *being transparent and informative, voluntary, respectful, relevant, etc.*

The game that the project team used to measure the outcomes of child participation was called "The body mapping game" and was adopted from Lansdown's "*Toolkit for Creating a Step Change in Monitoring and Evaluating Children's Participation*" (Lansdown, 2011). The first part of the game was conducted during the introductory empowerment seminar, while the second was completed during the final evaluation seminar with the children. The game measures the changes in the lives of the children after their active participation in the group by juxtaposing the left-hand side of the body, which figuratively stands for the period before the children's involvement in the group, and the right-hand sides of the body, which represents the children's realities after their participation in the seminars.

6.1.1. Results from Measuring the Scope of Children's Participation:

346 children took part in a total of 30 seminars of the children's groups that were conducted in Bulgaria, Poland, Romania and Slovakia. The conclusions below reflect the results arising from the analysis of the feedback forms of 331 children, as a small number of the children's workshops were still going on at the time this chapter was composed.

Seventy-six percent of all the children thought they were partners in their interaction with the adults within the children's groups. The highest percentage in that respect came from Poland where children gave the maximum possible mark to this issue. A very high percentage came from Slovakia where 86% of the children stated that they were partners during the seminars;

Sixteen percent of the participants in total stated that they were leaders during their participation in the group. The highest percentage here came from Bulgaria where 49% of the children believed they were the leaders during the seminars.

The results can be viewed as highly positive as most of the children assessed participation not just as *consultative,* but as collaborative or child led.

6.1.2. Results from Measuring the Quality of Child Participation:

The 9 standards that were evaluated internationally were: participation is transparent and informative, voluntary, respectful, relevant, child-friendly, inclusive, supported by training for adults, sensitive to risk, accountable.

88% of the standards which measured the quality of child participation were evaluated with the highest or second to highest score in all 4 countries, which means that 8 out of the 9 evaluated standards were fully satisfied during the children's participation in the groups. The analysis shows that children's participation was meaningful and effective for the children. It also indicates that the facilitators had the professional skills to create the appropriate conditions for participation, which is an important part of the process of empowering and motivating children to benefit from this particular right.

6.1.3. Results from Analyzing the Outcomes of Child Participation

93% of all the children shared they had positive experience during their participation. In the context of child participation, positive experiences are associated with building children's self-esteem and self-confidence. We can suggest that the more positive an experience for a child is, the greater their level of self-confidence becomes.

95% of the participants believed they were given space to share opinions and suggestions, which shows that almost all children felt safe enough to express themselves and that the facilitators ensured the space and appropriate conditions for the children to voice their opinions, which is again indicative of ensuring quality and meaningful participation.

86% of all the children who participated in children's seminars in Bulgaria, Poland, Romania and Slovakia stated that they received feedback about their input. In the context of child participation, giving feedback is an important element which guarantees that child participation happened in a meaningful way.

This brief quantitative summary of some of the outcomes of participation shows that the children assessed their participation in highly positive terms. They felt they were listened to, given space to share views and ideas, and, what is more important, most of the time they felt they were not just being consulted by the adults but being given the chance to actively partner and work together with adults to achieve a common goal. At times, children and adolescents involved in participation even experienced their role in the seminars as being actual leaders in the process.

What Qualitative Changes Took Place for the Children as a Result of their Participation?

Positive changes

The feedback forms and the body-mapping game show positive changes in the children, especially related to an interest in the problems of children in general and of children with special needs, to their appreciation of their own family and life, the more optimistic outlook on life, the readiness to fulfill their own responsibilities more willingly and the appreciation of volunteer activities and the work of cultural institutions.

Awareness of their own rights

The results from the analysis of the children's feedbacks additionally indicate that children have changed a lot after their participation. Very few children had any idea what child participation stood for before the launch of the children's monitoring and advisory groups. This can be partially attributed to the educational systems in place in the involved countries, which are probably not sufficiently oriented towards informing children of their rights and of the meaning of these rights. One important outcome of the work with the children is that at the end of the workshops they were aware of their right to participate in activities and matters that are important for their lives.

Understanding the importance of being active and participating in decision making

Another significant result is related with the fact that, at the end of the seminars, children were not only aware of their right to participate but they also understood what was behind this right – what was the reason to be active, what could be changed if they were active enough in their personal lives, etc. This is a clear argument that the participants in the children's groups have successfully integrated the idea that child participation is a right which can be used not only within the children's groups but also outside them, when it comes to any other issues that affect their lives. It is also an obvious indication of the empowering effect of participation.

Sharing the feeling of empowerment

Children's feedbacks also show that for the involved children and adolescents participation is a right that can be shared. Children knew how to explain to their peers what it meant to be active in your life. They could talk about the benefits of child participation and why adults have to respect this particular right. This specific skill that children demonstrated – giving arguments about the importance of child participation - is a clear result from their experience with participation. They did not just listen about child participation, they experienced it. It could be inferred that the participants in the children's workshops were capable of transferring their experience to schoolmates and friends. Just as they were able to remind adults that they had opinions which were meaningful and important. Children already had the very positive experience of being really listened to by the facilitators in the seminars and from then on in their lives they would probably have more expectations from the adults and would insist on their right to participation to be respected.

The importance of adult support

The feedback analysis also shows that children highly appreciate the support provided by the facilitators during their first steps in child participation. This is an important message which gives us the understanding that children can develop themselves in terms of child participation if adults and professionals open themselves and change their attitudes that they are the people who know best what is good or bad for the children. As we can see from the feedback forms, when they are provided with the appropriate conditions, children can achieve a lot for themselves and for the activities in which they are involved. In our case, the children shared that they were very satisfied with the products they created within the seminars of the group.

The results from the analysis of the feedback forms indicate that child participation is an important children's right because it can influence many aspects of a child's life. It can improve children's self-confidence, which makes children and adolescents more stable and convinced that they can influence their own lives. The experience within the workshops is also an indication that the power to participate should be fostered and developed. And the important adults, professionals and parents should learn how to be partners in the interaction with children, how to be more open to changing the stereotypes they maintain and how to ask for children's opinions, to appreciate them and to help them grow as active and independent citizens.

6.2. Recommendations for Implementation

On the basis of the development of the current methodology, some major recommendations can be formulated for its implementation by any organization, service or program working with or for children.

Effective and meaningful child participation requires:

- ✓ *full understanding on the part of the involved adults of children's rights, the process of empowerment, the methods to encourage participation and the barriers to it;*
- ✓ *readiness to accept children's opinions and input that result from the participation, even if these are different from the ideas of the adults in the organization;*
- ✓ *active strategies and techniques for involvement of children and the use of many different channels to meet this goal;*
- ✓ *development of relevant expertise in the organization members who will be engaged in child participation so that they can develop trust and rapport with the children;*
- ✓ *development of a repertoire or games, tools and techniques for team building activities, motivation, specific group activities, record keeping, collection of feedback, assessment, etc;*
- ✓ *individual approach to the children in order to keep their involvement, interest and motivation high; when working with different groups of children, participants will differ in age, gender, personal characteristics, etc, so they would require individual approach both as individuals and as groups;*
- ✓ *flexibility – if the initial plan is not working, then new approaches and techniques have to be introduced;*
- ✓ *focus on the empowering potential of child participation and choice of activities that are meaningful and allow the generation of versatile ideas and actual cooperation between adult professionals and children;*
- ✓ *readiness to implement the meaningful changes and recommendations that have been proposed in the process of working with children; if children's ideas receive no real attention and are not implemented, at least to the extent possible, this will demotivate the children and will make the whole process false and meaningless;*
- ✓ *provision of feedback to the children – about how the process went, what ideas/suggestions can be implemented and in what way, what cannot be integrated and why;*
- ✓ *continuity – of the good practices and participation itself so that the practice of participation can develop and actually become part of the way the organization functions.*

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APPENDICES TO CHAPTER 5: Appendix A (Shared Experience), Appendix B (Participation) and Appendix C (Seminars with the Children's Advisory and Monitoring Group)

I. APPENDIX A: SHARED EXPERIENCE

The experience of the four countries that set up their children's monitoring and advisory groups of the initial steps of the process – the involvement of children – is described in the following passages, in alphabetical order:

BULGARIA

Recruitment: In Bulgaria the recruitment of the members of the children's group was an intensive, and at times challenging, 6-month process. Several months before the launch of the children's seminars, AAF project team developed and started to implement a consistent member-recruitment strategy which aimed at involving in the focus group both boys and girls, aged 11 to 19, with varied social backgrounds, including from vulnerable groups. The recruitment of child service users at AAF to the focus group was also accounted for in the strategy. For a period of 2 months the consultants at the 116 111 child helpline, whenever possible when completing a call, suggested to the calling children and young people the possibility to participate in a children's group aimed at evaluating and improving the work of the helpline.

Originally, the group recruitment strategy planned the involvement of children through their teachers, with the idea of contacting a number of school teachers and asking them to disseminate the announcement for the children's group among their students. The invitation to the children's group was also popularized through various media channels such as: newspapers, teenage magazines, language schools, NGOs, the State Agency for Child Protection, the Ministry of Education, school counselors, different government structures, etc.

Very soon, however, it became evident that the originally developed recruitment approach was not productive as there were just a couple of applications for the group. At that point the project team opted for direct contact with school children by visiting over 20 schools and discussing with them their attitudes about the children's group, as well as providing them with details about how they can participate in it. During this direct campaign for popularization of the idea of the children's group, children and young people were invited to join the group by filling in and submitting an application form. The application form was easily accessible online at AAF website and consisted of 3 questions which researched the child's/young person's motivation to be involved in the group. All the children and young people who submitted filled-in application forms received feedback from the project team thanking him/her for the interest and focusing on the child's strong sides and his/her readiness to be active in his/her life.

After the first 3 months of the child group recruitment campaign, there was only a small number of submitted applications. At that point, the project team decided to involve the children who had already submitted applications to the group in the recruitment process and in motivating more children to apply to the group.

The 3 children who had already applied to the group decided to create a Facebook group called: "*Direct and Indirect Help for Children*" whose task it was to popularize the idea of the children's group and to invite more members to it. The children developed the concept of the Facebook group, chose the appropriate photos and decided that each one of them will post in it a short text about his/her own motivation to apply for the focus group, hoping this would further incite other children to join it. Additionally, the children decided to promote the idea of the group among their own classmates and friends. This approach turned out to be very productive as it showed that children can be empowered by other children and can be motivated to participate in activities which are important for them. Over the next month, 12 new applications for joining the children's group were received at the online system storing the registrations to the group.

The original concept of the recruitment strategy planned for a selection of the most suitable members to the group out of the total number of submitted application. The preliminary selection criteria included parameters such as representation of boys and girls, of children aged 11 to 19, with different social status, representation of service users, the inclusion of highly motivated children, etc. However, due to the fact that child participation is at the practical level a very new topic in Bulgaria, the final number of applications did not exhaust the complete capacity of the children's group. That is why all 14 children who lived in Sofia and who applied for the group were invited and admitted to it, after their parents signing a parental consent form. The group had 1 application from an area outside Sofia. After a phone conversation with the child it became evident that distance would be a challenge, so the child participation expert thanked the child and encouraged him to continue to be active on topics which were generally important and interesting for him.

Unfortunately, no users of the child helpline service applied to the children's group. One possible explanation is that child service users are more vulnerable and need a specialized and more focused methodology to be involved in participation.

Motivation of individual members and building the capacity of the group as a whole were two important steps that were an inseparable part of the process of recruitment of members to the children's group.

Composition of the group: In Bulgaria the children's focus group consisted of 14 members, with 75% of them being between 11 and 13 years of age and 25% aged 15 to 17. Gender distribution favored girls, with 13 representatives in the group, while the boy's point of view was represented by just one teenage boy.

Challenge: Lack of age and gender diversity.

Suggested solution*: In* order for the group to include more boys and teenagers, two of the workshops were organized as field workshops i.e. they were held outside AAF offices, on the premises of one school in Sofia.

POLAND

Composition: Children's monitoring and advisory group (M&A children's group) appointed at NCF consisted of fourteen members. Following the process of members selection, twelve girls and two boys aged 14 - 17 formed the group. Most of the children were students at junior high

schools and high schools. All but one member of the group lived in Warsaw and surrounding cities. One girl lived in a village 200 km away from Warsaw and was brought to the group meetings by her parents.

Recruitment: The recruitment process started with deciding on selection criteria regarding the age, gender, motivations and characteristics of the children admitted to the group. An advertisement and a questionnaire were designed and shaped by the project team. They were later disseminated through the www.1116111.pl website, Facebook profile of the organization, and schools. Since the initial dissemination of the advertisement resulted in very few applications, special meetings at schools were organized during which project team described the aims and goals of the children's monitoring and advisory group and encouraged children to participate. The applicants were supposed to fill in a questionnaire and email it to the organization together with parent's consent. The applications were further discussed within the project team. Selected children and their parents were contacted via telephone to confirm their willingness and possibility to attend the group. During this phase we received 10 applications and 8 children were accepted to the children's group based on the preselected criteria. Two application were excluded: one due to the lack of parent's consent and the other due to the risk that the psychological situation of the child would affect their vulnerability (one child was currently using the helpline). One of the children accepted into the group did not attend the first meeting and finally resigned. During the first meeting of M&A children's group the advertisement and questionnaire were discussed with group members. Newly shaped advertisement was once again disseminated and resulted in eight applications. All applicants were accepted to join the M&A children's group of whom seven attended the meetings and one resigned without informing about the reason. Finally, 14 children participated in the M&A children's group meetings.

As far as children's motivations towards joining the group are concerned, children focused on following areas:

- influencing the work of the helpline mostly by delivering child's perspective;
- possibility to help others e.g. by creating new ways of promoting the helpline and encouraging children and youth in need to contact counsellors;
- sharing and gaining experience;
- self-development (developing one's interests, building contact with others in safe environment; becoming more self-confident);
- the joy of working as a volunteer (previous positive experience in similar activities);
- making children's voices more recognized by the adults;
- being worried about the situation of young people - their peers;
- being aware of the value of the helpline (some of the group members contacted the helpline before and were satisfied with the service).

Regarding the vulnerabilities and possible threats, the facilitators were concerned with the fact that some children seemed to reveal a tendency towards caring excessively about the problems of others which could be a burden to them. On the other hand, some members of the group were actively involved in a huge number of extracurricular activities and could not have enough time to attend all the group meetings.

In NCF, the online group consisted of the same members as the monitoring and advisory group. Young advisors decided that they would like to form a closed Facebook group which purpose was mainly to give them the ability to communicate with each other and with group facilitators.

The online group served as a possibility to exchange information about meetings and the progress of the project. The facilitators posted information on the outcomes of the meetings and could consult the children about several things regarding the project if it was not possible for all the group members to meet. They also presented some materials and changes introduced after the group meetings to receive children's feedback regarding the outcomes (e.g. During one of the meetings the M&A children's group designed a new leaflet for the helpline. After the leaflet project was prepared by the graphic designer, it could be presented to the children immediately through the online group to receive their feedback). Thus the online group was also a tool to ensure child participation.

ROMANIA

Compositon and recruitment: the participants were children and teenagers, both girls and boys, with ages between 10 and 17 years old that come from schools and high schools in Bucharest.

Their motivation to take part to our seminars was represented by:learning new things the need to get involved in developing the Child Helpline's services for children interesting locations for the seminars

SLOVAKIA

Reaching out to children: For the process of selection, we used application forms, which had to be fulfilled. Then an essay on the topic "What do you like about your child world?" and "What would you change?" had to be written down and sent to us. Some of children wrote a motivation letter. We suggest that the written expression of the child should be optional due the form, number of words, etc. The aim was to get to know the child through its work.

Looking for children was realised by putting the announcement on our website. After experiences, we would suggest to spread the invitation through interest-groups and NGOs working with children. Also to ask for help school and class teacher continuously with presenting them the meaning/ idea of the project, so they will understand it and best to excite for it.

Assessment of the applications: The indicators were mostly demographic data as a full name, an age, an address, if the parents and teachers are aware of children being out of school, etc. As we lack children, the only selecting criterion was the filled application.
Children participants decided on the first-second session to create a Facebook group. Although they were not able to join all the children in the group, that is why some children lack the information posted on Facebook. It showed up that children are really free/ irresponsible in understanding of what does it mean to be a part of. The child-participation expert tried to reach them via e-mail. This was also quite difficult, as they were not responding. For contact, we used SMS and mobile communication too.

Motivating young people: The child-participation expert communicated via e-mail and phone for the whole half a year. On each session children were encouraged to speak up, to state their own theories about world. We tried to join participants into each activity organised within the child line – fundraising events /running marathon, reading marathon, Christmas event/, educational workshops.

II. APPENDIX B: PARTICIPATION

BULGARIA

The main goal of the children's focus group set up during the project was to make it possible for children to benefit from their right to participate actively in the improvement of the 116 111 National Helpline for Children in Bulgaria. The children's role was to express freely their opinions and suggestions, while the professionals' role was to ensure a secure atmosphere in which children felt understood and comfortable to share opinions.

Within the group, the children's responsibilities were to participate in 8 child seminars, to observe the rules of the group and to give their contribution to several activities such as the drafting of the script of a movie dedicated to the work of the child helpline, the creation of an online tool aimed at collecting feedback from child callers at the helpline and the development of an electronic bulletin covering the progress of the children's workshops.

The child seminars were scheduled to take place once or twice a month over a period of 6 to 8 months and the concrete date of every seminar was discussed with the children and was approved after confirmation on their behalf. The length of individual seminars was between 4 and 5 hours depending on the tasks and group activities for the particular day.

As the group remained open till the last seminar and new members could join in at any time over the period of 8 months, part of the ongoing responsibilities of the members of the group were to transfer their knowledge about child participation to the newly arriving group members or to members who were absent from previous workshops due to various reasons. As part of the working approach, the facilitators of the workshops empowered the children to be able to explain to the new-coming members the activities held in previous seminars, to talk about their own motivation and experiences while participating and to be open to the expectations of the most recent members of the group.

POLAND

Roles and responsibilities of the children's groups; building the capacity of the children's monitoring & advisory group;

Most of the roles and responsibilities of the children's group were defined prior to the first group meeting, while some of them were elaborated by the group members themselves. The roles and responsibilities included:

a) **Creating and reviewing promoting materials/campaigns for the helpline:**

- Production of the helpline tour movie – discussion on the movie scenario; the Young Advisors accompanied the co-director in pre-production activities (selection of the indoor shooting places, taking measurements, discussing the interior design etc.), and later, during the production, provided stats for the shooting and shared their opinions regarding interior decoration; 4 members of the M&A Group took part in the shooting;
- designing the new 116 111 leaflet - the group settled on the new leaflet's form, content, and also on the places of distribution.

b) Searching for new and more effective ways of reaching out to children who need help:

- Preparation of the www.116111.pl website's new outline – the Young Advisors gave their opinions on the present layout of the website and proposed changes, which will make the tool more appealing to the youth.

c) Creating preventive programs aimed at children and youth:
- The M&A group were consulted about their opinions regarding the conducting of educational lessons in schools and the design of the scenario-based workshops for children and youth.

d) Elaborating on the methods of setting up and conducting children's monitoring and advisory groups (facilitating child participation):
- Evaluation of the M&A Group recruitment process – its shape and ways of disseminating advertisement;
- Evaluation of the meetings/seminars – each meeting of the M&A Group is concluded with the Young Advisors filling in a brief questionnaire evaluating the meeting.

Techniques for Work with Children Used in the Child Seminars (role play, projective techniques, etc);

The facilitators made significant effort to ensure that the seminars were designed and conducted in a way that would be interesting for the Young Advisors and that would ensure safe environment for expressing their thought and needs. M&A children's group meetings started with an opening meeting during which a significant amount of time was dedicated towards integration of the group and creating friendly atmosphere. Since some of the group members did not attend the group from the beginning, integrating activities were included in every meeting scenario. Facilitators focused on using active methods and designed several games and energizers which aimed at promoting creativity, integration and openness in the group.

Throughout the period, the Young Advisors were always encouraged by the facilitators to share their opinions on the given matters. All their insights were seriously considered by the NCF employees and taken into account, where possible (e.g. all the comments regarding the content of the website – its volume, placement, language etc. – were considered in rearranging the layout, but some of the suggestions regarding the coloring of the website could not be complied to due to technical difficulties).

SLOVAKIA

Code of Conduct
We worked under the traditional standards and under the Convention of Child Rights. The strongest principle is, to create the opportunity to express the view in what matters.

Parental consent
Child-participation expert personally spoke during the duration of sessions with parents of each child. The truth is that the consent was verbal not written. We suggest always to contact the parents personally, but also to have signed agreement in a paper form.
Guidelines for children's groups:

1. Make sure all participants know toilets, exits, timing of day (approximately), tea and refreshment is secure.

2. To set up the contract by the whole group (listening, respect opinions and views, confidentiality in group – They need a time for a sense of trust, safety and belonging to establish the group.)
3. All parents had contact data to Child Line. The child-participation expert has all the parental agreements.
4. Draft workshops/seminars are changing continuously, as needed.
5. We would recommend, that all the aims /of the project, of the day, of activities/ are clear to participants.

ROMANIA

Roles and Responsibilities:

- child helpline ambassadors: the Child Helpline's services were promoted by the participants;
- analysis of Child Helpline: projects, website and posters; promotional materials, answering machine's message at 116 111 – how well are these materials / instruments adapted to children and adolescent's needs;
- expressing their ideas regarding future projects;
- creating ways of promoting the Child Helpline services, such as posters, flyers, online campaign (TV and radio spots, website ads etc.).

Techniques for work with children used in the child seminars (role play, projective techniques, etc);
- interactive games: icebreakers (e.g. "true or false", "who did it?" etc.) – at the beginning of every seminar; Body Mapping – at the first/last seminar, Pots and Beans – at the end of every seminar.
- role play, workshops (website workshop, online campaign) – the participants worked in teams and they gathered informations about how to develop an online campaign;
- interview with a child helpline consultant – the participants asked questions about the child helpline activity;
- projective techniques: power point presentations of Child Helpline statistics, projects (e.g. videos of the Asociatia Telefonul Copilului);
- teaching the participants how to make a presentation about the child helpline in front of an audience.

III. APPENDIX C: SEMINARS WITH THE CHILDREN'S ADVISORY AND MONITORING GROUP

BULGARIA

The child participation methodology adopted in the project funded by the Fundamental Rights and Citizenship Program of the European Union was developed, realized and constantly improved within a series of 8 seminars spreading over a period of 8 months.
Bellow follows a description of the aim and contents of each seminar, with the introductory seminar being presented in a vignette form i.e. with detailed description of sessions so as to substantiate the method of work, while the rest of the seminars are just generally outlined. This is done with a view to the prospective user of this methodology to be able to trace the overall logic of the current child participation methodology, while specific child-friendly tools and instruments for group work can vary according to the aim of the particular participation activity and the specificity of the concrete organization/service/program involving in child participation.

Seminar 1 – The Vignette Seminar

The goal of the first seminar was to present the topic of child participation in a creative and dynamic way and to empower the members of the group to participate in the evaluation and improvement of a service which benefits all the children in Bulgaria.

The introductory empowering seminar was dedicated to establishing group cohesion and to building trust among the individual members in the group. The seminar took off with warming-up activities aimed at helping children feel secure and spontaneous. For example, one of the games used was called *"The group against the crocodiles"* in which children were asked to imagine that there are many crocodiles around them and that they should be careful when moving from one place to another. They had to line up according to the month they were born in, starting from January, and every member had to take care of others and make sure that everybody is safe and not eaten by the crocodiles. The warming-up activity helped children to feel more comfortable with each other, to be responsible for everybody in the group and to shorten the physical and emotional distance among each other, which in turn was an important prerequisite for achieving group cohesion.

The second session in the introductory seminar was dedicated to the topic of child participation. It was named "*Do I have the right to express my opinion in my family*" and children had the task, while taking roles, to present two kinds of families, differing in the way they treat children and their right to participate in matters that affect them. The first family had a teenage son who wanted to be an artist but his parents believed he had to grow up to be a lawyer as this was a far more practical vocation. They did not listen to their son and believed that they knew best what was right for him. The second family had a child who wanted to take drawing lessons. Although the parents believed that their child was too busy for taking up a new activity, they decided to talk things over with their child and the whole family decided on how to deal with the situation.

The "two families" game helped children to experience the topic of child participation, and not just talk about it. They compared two different family models in treating the child's right to participate - one in which it was difficult for the parent to give space to their child or to encourage him/her to participate in his life, and another one in which the parents believed it was

important to give the child the chance to share his/her emotions and ideas and to try to find a decision which would be somehow agreed upon by all members in the family.

At the end of the game, the children were encouraged to think about themselves and which of the models they believed suited their personalities better. This aimed at helping them integrate the experience they were just involved in and thus understand why the adults sought their inclusion. An analogy between the experiential world and the child helpline was made, making it easier for children to understand that, just like the parents in the second family, the purpose and function of the children's focus group was to give children the space to share their thoughts and opinions about the way the helpline works, thus being active in improving it.

Over the next session of the seminar, the young people discussed the principles of child participation. They received the Charter of Participation (based on ChildLine's Charter of Participation and drawn by a member of the group; See Appendices) which helped them to complete the picture of child participation. The children were told that they could use the principles outlined in this chart to explain to other children about their right to be active and to participate in topics and activities designed for them.

Another game in the session introducing child participation was a game which encouraged children to invite more children to participate in the group. Children were divided in pairs, with one person in the pair being a journalist and the other one – a child participation expert. The journalists had the task to ask about child participation and the experts were empowered to answer the different questions related to the topic. The game helped the children to feel more secure when talking to other children and when wanting to use arguments to support the thesis that active participation is an important part of human life.

Another important game in the introductory training was dedicated to the National Helpline for Children 116 111 in Bulgaria. The children received the different roles of consultants, callers, coordinators and supervisors and the call center of the helpline was reconstructed in the particular session. During the game, a number of simultaneous conversations between helpline consultants and child callers were held, just as on an ordinary day at the helpine. The task of the consultant was to listen to his/her client and try to identify the caller's main topic. The game helped the children to identify themselves with the child or with the consultant. Some of them shared that they found out how difficult the role of the consultant was when children believed you had all the answers to all the problematic situations in their lives.

As evaluating child participation is an important element of the theoretical construct adopted in the current methodology, the final session in the introductory seminar empowering children in participation was dedicated to measuring the scope, quality and outcomes of child participation.

In this final session, the children had the possibility to evaluate their participation during the day through 3 evaluation games, adopted from ChildLine's *Toolkit for Creating a Step Change in Monitoring and Evaluating Children's Participation* (See bibliography).
The first game measured the scope of child participation which had to do with children defining the extent to which they felt involved in the whole process. The facilitators showed 3 posters designating 3 different categories – "children had a leading role", "children and adults were partners", and "adults had a leading role" - and put them on different places in the room. The children were asked to think about their participation during the seminar, about whether they felt they were mostly consulted by the facilitators, or whether they were just partnering the adults or

experienced themselves as leaders during the seminar. After thinking about how they felt during the seminar in terms of being listened to and understood, every child was asked to stand next to the poster designating the category he/she believed best explained the degree to which they were involved in the in the particular seminar and was also asked to explain why he/she decided to stand next to the specific poster. After hearing everybody's arguments, the children had the option to change their place if they believed the arguments of another member of the group better reflected the way he/she himself had felt during the seminar.

The second evaluation game measured the quality of child participation which had to do with measuring the manner in which participation has been realized. The children received 9 cups, each one labeled with one of the 9 standard for quality child participation adopted from ChildLine's *Framework for Monitoring and Evaluating Children's Participation* (transparent, voluntary, respectful, etc.). Participants also received a total of 27 beans/grapes/pencils and were asked to measure the extent to which they, as a group, believed that each standard was met during the seminar. In order to evaluate every standard, the children had to put 0, 1, 2 or 3 beans in every cup, which respectively meant that the standard was not at all satisfied, was only partially satisfied, satisfied to a large extent, or fully satisfied. For example, the children were asked if their participation was voluntary and they had to answer the question as a group by putting from 0 to 3 beans in the cup bearing the label "voluntary". The same was done for the other 8 standards of effective and meaningful participation defined in the Lansdown's *Framework for Monitoring and Evaluating Children's Participation* (Gerison Lansdown, July 2011).

The two evaluation games described above were replicated at the end of each of the 8 seminars conducted under the project.

A third game measuring the outcomes of child participation was conducted once at the end of the introductory seminar and then once again during the final seminar. In this game called "The body game", adopted from Lansdown's *Toolkit for Creating a Step Change in Monitoring and Evaluating Children's Participation* (Gerison Lansdown, July 2011), was employed in order to explore the changes in children before and after their participation in the children's group and thus in the project.

In the first part of the game, held at the end of the introductory seminar, the children were asked to draw together the body of a member of the group on a big human-size poster. Then the facilitators drew a vertical line across the body from the head downwards, splitting the body into two halves – a left and right one.

The left-hand side of the body represented the children's reality before their participation, giving information about the degree to which adults are interested in the children's points of view, whether they listen to them, how they talk to them, etc. Whereas the right-hand side illustrated the changes in all these areas after the children's involvement in the project. In the introductory seminar, the children had to work just on the left-hand side of the body. They were asked to think about each part of the body (e.g. the head, the mouth, the eyes, the shoulders, etc) and reflect, respectively, on what they feel happy/worried about, how they communicate with their parents/peers/teachers/, how the adults see them, what responsibilities their parents impose on them, etc.

The second part of the game was held at the end of the final closing seminar of the children's group. Then the children were shown the picture of the human body that they drew in the first seminar and all together read and talked about what they had written about the different parts of the body. Then the children were encouraged to explore the changes that have occurred for them after their participation. Has anything changed in the way they feel about themselves? Do they see themselves differently in their families, schools and among friends? Do adults treat them in a different way? The children had to write all the changes they could rationalize on the respective part of the body that had to do with the specific change.

At the end of the game, the facilitators helped the children to make the comparison and link between their personal realities before they were involved in participation and after their experience in the children's group has been completed.

In the evaluation of child participation, children were the primary actor. The child participation experts were responsible for picking up the most suitable evaluation tools and to explain the goal and instruments of the evaluation games in an appropriate language that the children could understand. From then on, the evaluation of participation was mainly in the hands of children themselves who were encouraged and empowered to be more active in this process than the adults. The role of AAF facilitators was to provide support to the children whenever they needed it during the evaluation.

Seminar 2

The second seminar aimed at ensuring the tools and conditions for those members of the group who joined it at an earlier stage to empower the newcomer members to child participation. Another important goal of the second seminar was related to draft the script of the movie dedicated to the work of the helpline.

The activity that was used for empowering new members into participation was connected with dividing the children into two groups depending on their experience with child participation. The members of the group who joined it earlier acted like trees in the forest. The newcomer members of the group were encouraged to walk around the forest. They were instructed that the trees were full of knowledge about child participation that was acquired in the first seminar, so they were encouraged to ask all the questions they could think of that would help them find out what child participation stands for. This game helped the older members to empower the new ones and to talk about child participation from their own experience, while the children who were participating for the first time were being welcomed and integrated in the group.

The second key activity for the day was linked with the creation of the movie script. Children were divided into three groups and were given tasks related to three common children's topics according to the experience of the child helpine – relationships and friendship, bullying and violence.

The first group received a story about George, a bully abusing his schoolmates, and had to generate labels with concrete phrases: offensive words, negative labels and the positive messages related with the story they had, which can later be used in the movie scene concerning bullying. The second group was encouraged to create a story which had to include a George as a character, portraying him as a victim of violence at home and reflecting on how this made him feel. They only knew that George was abused at home but were not aware that the

character was also the character from the first story. The third group had to draft a story on the topic of “Friendship and Betrayal” and was instructed to create a story related to it, having the freedom to include any number and type of characters.

After that task, the three groups presented their stories and had a new task of linking the three short stories in a bigger one by connecting them in a meaningful way and by, thus reflecting on the fact that victimization in one circumstance leads to abuse in another one. Afterwards, each group had to enact the story drafted by one of the other two groups. After the enacting task, the facilitators encouraged the children to share their experiences with the role – how they felt while playing it, any difficulties they came across, how the story could have developed in a different way, etc.

Important outcomes of the seminar were the creation of the script for the movie dedicated to the helpline, the rationalization of the link between experienced violence and bullying, peer empowerment, etc.

Seminar 3

The goal of the third seminar was to involve more teenagers in the focus group. This was the reason why this seminar was held in another location – in a school in Sofia, with a class of 10th-graders. A setting different from the AAF offices where child seminars usually took place was chosen so as to reach a larger number from the target group – teenagers who could get potentially involved in the focus group. The particular class in which the first of the two field seminars was conducted was chosen with the help of one of the young people members of the focus group who related about her experience in the group and empowered her school-mates to participation. That was why the proposal of AAF child participation team was accepted in a good way by the particular class.

During the field seminar, the teenagers had the task to come up with the topical issues they believed were important to be included in the script for the film dedicated to the work of the 116 111 National Helpline for Children. Apart from topical teenagers’ issues, the young people also had to create the main characters in their story, the problems he/she runs into, the relationships he/she has with other people, etc.

As a result of this seminar, several topics emerged as relevant to teenagers – drug abuse, aggression among young people, social life and the family, etc.

Seminar 4

The fourth seminar of the children’s focus group was realized as another field seminar and was conducted at the same school, but with the members of a Literary club held as an extracurricular activity in the school.

The teenage members of this club had to work on one particular story in the movie script – the drug abuse story. The young people’s task was to think about the messages they wanted to send to other children and teenagers regarding the abuse of drugs and the various reasons which lead a young person to this particular abuse.

During the seminar, the teenagers elaborated the messages sentences, phrases, key words, associations, associated with the experiences and issues of the character, that could later be used in the movie.

Seminar 5

The fifth seminar of the children's focus group was dedicated to the creation of one of the electronic bulletins planned under the project. The particular newsletter was dedicated to the advance and outcomes of the children's groups in the four member states participating in the project and conducting children's groups.

During the seminar, the children and young people from the focus group had to carry out a number of activities helping them to rationalize the changes that have occurred for them after their participation and eventually compose a text on a subject of *"Have I changed after participating?"*.

An important outcome of this particular seminar was the creation of an electronic bulletin which presented participation through the eyes of children and young people themselves.

Seminar 6

In the sixth seminar, the members of the focus group created an evaluation tool which aimed at collecting the feedback of children and young people who call at the helpline. The feedback tool was meant to be available online and to collect the feedback of callers after they have had a telephone consultation at the helpline.

During the seminar, the children were asked to work in small groups in order to create the feedback tool. They had to think about the important criteria which should be included in the feedback form and were stimulated to think about what they wanted to experience as behavior, voice, attitudes, etc during a conversation with a consultant at the child helpline. The children presented their ideas about the criteria for the feedback tool and then the whole group decided which of them will be used in the final version of the tool. During that particular seminar, the children also had the possibility to call the Helpline and talk about a real problem of theirs and afterwards fill in the feedback from after having had the call.

The key outcome of the sixth children's workshop was the creation of the feedback online form which gives information about children's experiences, emotions and evaluations of the conversation, which can be used by the helpline professionals as points of improvement of the work of the helpline.

Seminar 7

The goal of the seventh workshop was to improve the criteria included in the feedback form that was elaborated during the previous seminar.
As a result of the workshop, the children introduced corrections in the wording of the criteria so as to simplify the language and make understandable to ordinary children. Other outcomes were the creation of the measurement scale in the feedback form and the introductory text preceding the table with the evaluation parameters.

Seminar 8

The final 8th seminar of the children's focus group was dedicated to the evaluation of children's participation and closing the whole process of child participation in way that is meaningful and empowering to children.

During that seminar, the children had the chance to watch the movie produced after their own ideas for the script and to provide their feedback on the result. A key activity in the seminar was the field visit to the call center of the helpline which allowed the children to get to know more directly the service whose improvement they had been supporting for 8 months.

Another central activity in the final seminar was the completion of the body game started in the first workshop and aimed at the evaluation of the outcomes of child participation. During the final seminar, the children worked on the right-hand side of the body which designated the reality for the children after their participation in the children's group. During this activity they could think about and discuss all the changes that have occurred to them in terms of the way they perceive themselves and the adults in their world, the manner in which they communicate with others, the responsibilities that they now take on, etc. Thus the children had the chance to integrate their participatory experience in their internal realities in a meaningful way, which had an overall enriching and empowering effect that children could carry on in their future lives as grown-up individuals.

During the final seminar the children also received the feedback of the facilitators regarding the outcomes that their participation has achieved for the service "116 111 National Helpline for Children" and for Animus Association Foundation as a whole. The facilitator also gave a positive personal feedback to every member in the group focusing on the strong sides that he/she demonstrated during the workshops and thanking him/her for the personal contribution to the improvement of the child helpline. At the very end of the workshop, the children received special certificates verifying their participation in a set number of workshops.

APPENDIX TO CHAPTER 6

I. ANALYSIS OF THE SPECIFIC TOOLS APPLIED FOR MEASURING THE OUTCOMES OF CHILD PARTICIPATION IN BULGARIA

As described in Chapters 4 and 5 of the current methodology, child participation should be evaluated in terms of scope, quality and achieved outcomes. Here will be presented in detail the results of the two main tools, used to measure the outcomes: A) a child-friendly feedback form, especially designed as one of the two tools measuring the outcomes of child participation under the project; B) an interactive evaluation game (the body-mapping game).

The Feedback Form

In order for the project team to evaluate the outcomes of participation, at the end of every seminar, the children were asked to fill in a child–friendly feedback form consisting of 10 questions aiming to elicit information on:

- how the children felt within the group;
- what they liked and didn't like about the seminar;
- what they learned about child participation;
- whether the seminar was a positive or negative experience for the children;
- whether they felt their suggestions and ideas were important for the involved adults;
- whether they felt they could speak their mind freely;
- whether they understood the purpose of their participation;
- whether they felt their views were considered by the adults.

In designing the feedback form, the project participation team researched expected outcomes traditionally associated with participation by formulating different questions that children and adolescents could easily understand and connect with. In the particular feedback form, the following areas and group processes were researched:

1. Participants' personal emotions within group and group cohesion (via Question: How did you feel in the group?);
2. Participants' feedback for the strong and weak sides of the seminar, as well as preference for activities (Q: What did you most like of the activities you participated in? and Q: What did you least like of the activities you participated in?)
3. The degree to which participants are able to identify and name the benefits associated with child participation, indicating whether participation has been empowering and beneficial for the children as well as whether they have acquired greater awareness of this particular rights (Q: Imagine that you need to explain to another child the meeting of child participation. Do you have an idea how you could explain why parents should give children the opportunity to share their thoughts and feelings about their own life?);
4. Whether the children had positive experiences while participating, indicating the building of self-esteem and self-confidence associated with participation (Q: Do you think that the day was positive?);
5. Whether participants believed they influenced decision-making (Q: Do you think your suggestions and ideas were important for your facilitators);

6. Whether the facilitators ensured space and appropriate conditions for children to voice their opinions, associated with quality and meaningful participation (Q: Could you speak your mind freely?);
7. Whether the facilitators found the appropriate means to explain the purpose of participation, associated with meaningful participation that is also empowering to the children (Q: Did you understand from the facilitators why you were invited to participate?)
8. Whether the facilitators were trained and prepared enough to guarantee that meaningful participation that is empowering to children takes place (Q: Do you think the facilitators listened to what you were saying?)

Template of the feedback form used in Bulgaria:

At school, teachers always give you marks about your performance…Now it is your turn to evaluate us!

1. How did you feel in the group? (Circle the number which best relates to you)
    - Excellent
    - Good
    - Between good and bad
    - Bad
    - Intolerable
2. What did you most like from the activities we did together? Please, try to explain why?
3. What did you least like from the activities we did together? Please, try to explain why?
4. Imagine you're talking to another child, how would you explain to him/her why it is important for adults to allow children to express their thoughts and feelings about their own lives).
5. What do you think? (Circle the number which best relates to you)
    - Today was a very positive day
    - Today was a positive day
    - Today was full of positive and negative things
    - Today was not a very positive day
    - Today was not a positive day
6. Do you think that what you suggested and shared was important for the facilitators? (Circle the number which best relates to you)
    - I think my opinion and suggestions were very important for the facilitators
    - I think my opinion and suggestions were important for the facilitators
    - I think my opinion and suggestions were important at times and not so important at other times
    - I think my opinion and suggestions were not very important for the facilitators
    - I think my opinion and suggestions were not important for the facilitators
7. During the day, could you express your opinion freely? (Circle the number which best relates to you)
    - Yes, I could express my opinion very freely
    - Yes, I could express my opinion freely
    - I could express my opinion freely at times and not freely at other times
    - I could not express my opinion very freely
    - I could not express my opinion freely

8. Did you understand why you were invited to participate? (Circle the number which best relates to you)
    - I completely understood
    - I think I understood
    - I am not sure if I understood
    - I think I did not understand very well
    - I did not understoo
9. Do you think that the facilitators managed to listen to what you had to say? (Circle the number which best relates to you)
    - The facilitators listened very well to what I said
    - The facilitators listened to what I said
    - Sometimes the facilitators listened to what I said, sometimes they did not
    - I think the facilitators did not listen very well to what I said
    - The facilitators did not listen to what I said
10. Is there anything else you would like to share with us?

Once the feedback research areas were identified and the questions appropriately formulated so as to be relevant to the desired research areas, the project participation team elaborated a number of indicators which observe the progress within the identified research areas and to measure meaningful participation. It was considered that in order to claim that the project team has ensured meaningful participation for the children, the following indicators need to have been achieved at the end of the seminars:

- 70% of the participants state that they felt excellent or very good within the group;

- 70% of the children are able to talk about the meaning or benefits of child participation;
- 70% of the children state that the workshops were a positive experience for them;
- 70% of the children state that they believed they influenced decision making;
- 70% of the children state that they could speak their minds very freely or freely during the seminars;
- 70% of the children understood why they were invited to participate;
- 70% of the participants state that the facilitators listened to them very well or well.

The analysis of all feedbacks collected under the 8 workshops carried out within the project shows the following very positive and optimistic results:

- 93% of all the children who participated in the seminars gave the two highest marks (excellent and very well) when they were asked to evaluate how they felt in the group. 5 % of the participants explained that they felt that the interaction within the workshops satisfied them. Only 2% of the participants pointed out that they did not feel well in the group. This result shows that the atmosphere created by the facilitators within the seminars, especially the warming-up activities, helped the members of the group to feel more comfortable and to trust each other during the day.
- As part of the feedback, children were asked to write what they liked most of the activities they participated in. Children pointed out different games and tasks during their active participation in the seminars. Some of the interactive activities which received the highest percentage of approval were: to be a counselor or a coordinator; to draw a child's body; to create the movie script and to act it out; a game called "Shape me", the

call to the National Helpline for Children 116 111; to elaborate the criteria for the feedback form, to improve the feedback form; to create the name of the group and to watch the movie dedicated to the National Helpline for Children 116 111.

- The feedback form also intended to elicit information on the activities that the children did not like during the seminars. 63% of the children shared that they did not find flaws in the seminars which is another proof that they were satisfied with by the activities during the workshops. Another 37% shared that some of the activities were difficult for them, for example, to give suggestions for the feedback tool or to call the National Helpline for children, etc.
- When asked to explain the meaning of child participation, 89 % of the children stated that they believed that adults should give children the opportunity to share their thoughts and feelings on issues which are important for them. They additionally shared that their opinions are important no matter how old they are. Children also pointed out that sharing their opinions is their right. Some of them believed that if adults respected their right to participate, children would feel more comfortable with themselves, they would feel loved and respected and would be more sincere in their communication with the adults. Some of the children stated that child participation is important as it also supports children in need who cannot voice their opinions. Only 11% of the children who participated in the seminars did not provide an answer to this question. This results shows that children, to a very large extent, can provide arguments for the benefits of child participation, which, in turn, means that children themselves have successfully integrated their knowledge and experience of child participation.
- When evaluating their experience during the seminars, 92 % of the children responded with the two highest marks, while qualifying the days as very positive or positive. The result shows that almost all of the children had a positive experience in terms of how they felt while participating in the activities during the seminars. Only 6% of the participants shared that they had both positive and negative emotions during the seminars. In the context of child participation, positive experiences are associated with building children's self-esteem and self-confidence. We can suggest that the more positive an experience for a child is, the greater their level of self-confidence is (Landsdown, 2011). The very high percentage of children evaluating their experience in the seminars as a positive one shows that the children's involvement in the seminars has contributed to the building of self-worth and self-respect in the participants.
- When evaluating if children believed that their suggestions and ideas were important for the facilitators, 100% of the children gave the two highest marks and shared that they felt that their suggestions and ideas were very important or just important for the facilitators. The children's answers to this particular question are indicative of the fact that the children believed that they had influenced decision making, which is also clearly empowering in the context of child participation.
- When asked if they were given space to share opinions, 98% of the participants answered with the two highest marks and shared that they could speak very freely or freely (see fig.6). This is an important result which shows that the children felt safe enough to express themselves and that there was clearly cohesion in the children's group. It is also an indication of the fact that the facilitators ensured space and appropriate conditions for the children to voice their opinions, which is traditionally associated with quality and meaningful participation
- When children were asked if they had the feeling that they understood why they were involved to participate in the training, 91 % of them responded with the two highest marks, stating that they well understood why they were invited to participate (see fig.7).

6% shared that they were not sure they understood what the purpose of their participation was. Another 3% pointed out that they did not understand why they participated in the workshops. The results show that the facilitators had managed to successfully explain to the children the purpose of their participation, which is associated with meaningful participation that is also empowering to the children.

- When children were asked about whether the facilitators had listened and respected their opinions, 100% of the children in the group responded with the two highest marks, indicating that the facilitators had truly listened to them. The result indicates that the facilitators were able to ensure the space and appropriate conditions for children to voice their opinions freely, which is also clearly empowering, just as it is a sign of meaningful participation.

Conclusion from the use of the feedback form: The indicators elaborated for measuring the progress in different areas related to successful and meaningful participation were achieved. The majority of them had a threshold of 70 % in order to be considered that they were reached. The analysis of the feedback provided by children shows that the average percent of success within the different research areas well exceeds the 70 % threshold, in some cases reaching a very high degree of over 90 %, and even 100 % (all participants in the seminars believed that they had influenced decision making and that the facilitators have ensured the appropriate conditions for them to speak their opinions freely). This outcome is very important since it gives us proof that the children in the children's group were empowered by the facilitators who had provided them with the appropriate conditions for meaningful participation to take place.

The Body-mapping game and its results

The game which the project team used to measure the outcomes of children's participation was called "The body mapping game" and was adopted from Lansdown's Toolkit for Creating a Step Change in Monitoring and Evaluating Children's Participation (Gerison Lansdown, July 2011). The first part of the game was conducted during the introductory empowerment seminar, while the second part was completed during the final evaluation seminar with the children. The game measures the changes in the lives of the children after their active participation in the group by juxtaposing the left-hand side of the body, which figuratively stands for the period before the children's involvement in the group, and the right-hand sides of the body, which represents the children's realities after their participation in the seminars.

THE HEAD – Before and After Participation:

In the first seminar, children were asked: What do you know about child participation? How do adults treat you?
Their responses:

- Adults do not pay attention to us;
- Adults never have the time for anything more interesting than helping me with my homework;
- Sometimes I am friendly, sometimes I am not;
- NO!
- Adults interrupt me all the time and do not allow me to talk because they are always busy;
- Adults treat me in a kind and good way;
- When you have two brothers, adults do not ask about your opinion;

- When I try to talk about something, my grandma and my teachers always think I am talking back;
- We are not children, we are teenagers;
- My parents do not give me the space to share my opinion;
- Adults believed I am old enough;
- Adults think I am a child and I don't like that;
- I want my opinion to be listened to;
- We need to support each other;
- Parents treat me in the way they want me to treat them;
- They disregard me;

In the final seminar, children were asked: Is there any change in the way adults treat you?
Their responses:

- I feel I'm carefully listened to;
- I was listened to in the group;
- I understood that my opinion is important;
- I found out that my thoughts and opinions are important and meaningful when it comes to more significant issues other than what I would have for dinner;
- I feel I am respected;
- I feel that adults listen to me carefully;
- I had the possibility to talk;
- Someone finally listened to me;
- Most of the people listen to me and I try to listen to them;
- I do not think I have changed at all but I definitely changed my point of view about problems;
- I found out that my opinion matters no matter how old I am;

Conclusion: The notes that the children left in the area of the head in the left-hand side of the body demonstrate that, prior to their participation in the group, it was difficult for children to say whether they knew anything about child participation or not. This might be the reason why they shared information mainly about the way adults treated them. The majority of the participants shared that adults did not pay attention to them, did not ask them about their opinions and treated them as if they were children, and not teenagers for example. In comparison, after their participation in the group, most of the children believed that they were carefully listened to by the adults and that they have the possibility to talk and share their opinions. Additionally, children said this also helped them to try to listen to the others. The active participation also helped children to realize how important their opinion was and to learn to be more sensitive about the others' points of view.

THE SHOULDERS – Before and After Participation:

In the first seminar, children were asked: What are your responsibilities?

- Many responsibilities, the dog, the boyfriend, the parents;
- To help my parents;
- My homework, to eat my food and many other responsibilities;
- On my shoulders, I have promises that I've made to my parents;
- I have to carry a heavy rucksack;

- I have to look after my two brothers and tolerate them, I have to carry my heavy rucksack and the guitar;

In the final seminar, children were asked: Is there any change in the responsibilities that you have?

- The expectations and criteria that I try to meet but I don't always manage to;
- Every day my parents give me different tasks that I have to do;
- I have to tidy the house and do the washing up every day;
- I do my bed every day;
- Adults give me many tasks, obligations and responsibilities but I like this because this is how I understand that they trust me and think I'm old enough;
- My sister;
- Various responsibilities every day;
- I think that everything I do is meaningful. I have to walk the dog and I have to be responsible;

Conclusion: Children have many responsibilities both before and after their participation in the group. Most of the duties they talk about before their participation in the group were related to some staff at home or with responsibilities that they connected with their siblings. After their participation in the group, some children appeared to have re-evaluated their responsibilities and to be treating them as something good as it showed them that the adults trusted in them, which in turns means that adults respect the fact that they're growing up. After their involvement in the group, some children accept their responsibilities as a meaningful part of their lives. In addition, although most of the children shared they still had many obligations, some of them pointed out a new and positive feeling related to them.

THE HANDS AND PALMS – Before and After Participation:

In the first seminar, children were asked: What activities do you usually involve in?

- The school grades;
- I go to guitar lessons
- I learn how to make magic tricks;
- I love drawing and reading;
- I skate; I do dancing, swimming, singing and acting;
- I swim;
- I do my lessons;

In the final seminar, children were asked: Is there any change in the activities that you now involve in?

- I write poems;
- I play the piano
- I draw and create staff, I do my homework, I write short stories, I love writing poems;
- I mostly write stories, poems;
- I love doing art with my aunt;
- I write poems and draw;
- Science, a whole new world!;
- I draw and do my homework

Conclusion: Children shared that before their participation in the group, they usually did some activities related to sports and music. The input from the children shows that after their involvement in the group, they do more activities related to writing and drawing. It seems like they have become more creative and this has inspired them to create products such as poems, short stories, etc. Children were more likely to express themselves by writing and drawing after their participation in the children's group.

THE HEART – Before and After Participation:

In the first seminar, children were asked: What feelings and emotions do you have most of the time? Can you name them?

- I'm excited about books;
- I'm both beautiful and angry;
- Love, happiness;
- Hatred, jealousy, kindness at times;
- We have to be good and help people;
- entertainment, trust;

In the final seminar, children were asked: Is there any change in the feelings and emotions that you have most of the time?

- I'm more excited;

Conclusion: The children expressed both positive and negative emotions that they could identify in themselves before the start of the children's group. They mentioned that they felt more excited after their participation in the group. In addition, children had more positive than negative emotions after their participation.

THE STOMACH – Before and After Participation:

In the first seminar, children were asked: Children were asked: Do you have the chance to make your own choices about the food that you eat?

- I don't have the right to an opinion when it comes to food, and even when I do have an opinion, they turned it down;
- A wish: To eat healthy food;
- A wish: To have a chance;
- Yes and No;
- It's quite a difficult choice;
- Yes, I make my own choices;

In the final seminar, children were asked: Is there a change in the way you feel your stomach and the food that you eat?

- My stomach hurts sometimes;
- I have a gastritis;
- It hurts;
- Before my participation, my head hurt every day, now it doesn't;
- Intensive change;
- Some days ago there was a death in my family and I stopped eating, now I feel better and I think people can see it;
- I have always eaten healthy food;

Conclusion: Children shared that adults did not ask them about their opinion on the food they ate before their participation in the group. After their participation in the group, children seemed more able and ready to talk about problems they had with their stomachs or other body problems they believed were solved thanks to their participation. We can further suggest that children's participation in the group, where they trusted each other, helped them not only on child participation issues but also in their personal lives.

THE LEGS – Before and After Participation:

In the first seminar, children were asked: Children were asked: Where do you usually go and what kind of places do you usually visit?

- I usually go to the park and I love going downtown;
- I go to the mountains and the seaside with my parents;
- I go to a park;
- I go to an exciting place in the center of the city;
- I go to school, my dancing club, the park;
- I meet my friends and have dinners at their houses;

In the final seminar, children were asked: Is there a change in the places that you usually visit?

- I mostly visit the park and different gardens because of my dogs and at school I communicate more with the boys;
- I go to my village in the summer;
- I walk to my school alone;
- Walks around the world;
- I still meet my friends a lot;
- I walk around more and I think about picking up some sport;
- I go the park every day;
- I go out with friends
- I'm more resilient;
- I run faster;
- I ski better in the winter;
- I go with my parents to the mountain, to the seaside and to our friends' houses;
- Before I didn't go anywhere but after my participation, I now go to the mountains with my dog; I started going out;
- I go out with friends

Conclusions from the body-mapping game: During the first seminar, children readily talked about the places they usually visited before the start of the children's group. After their participation in the group, the children seemed to have added new places in their usual routines and some changes in the way they spend their free time also became evident. For example, a child said that the new thing for him/her was the possibility to walk alone to the school, another one mentioned she/he believed they have become more resilient. Some of the children pointed out that they have improved themselves in the sports that they do. Although those types of changes may have been results of other processes in their lives, it's important that children associated them with their participation in the group.

Tool for eporting data on child seminars and indicators for measuring child participation, the filled-in Participation Seminars Record in Bulgaria

No	Date & place of seminar	Topic of participation seminar	Goal of child involvement	No of participants	No of children evaluating participation as consultative	No of children evaluating participation as collaborative	No of children evaluating participation as child-led	No of standards for quality participation that the children evaluate with 2 or 3 beans	which standards were those	No of children who state they had a positive experience and that their views & opinions were listened to	No of children who state that they were given space to share opinions/suggestions	No of children who received feedback about their input
1	13.10.2013, AAF premises	*"What does child participation stand for?"*	-to empower children to involve in & evaluate child participation	10 (10 feedbacks)	0	7 (78%)	2 (22%)	8 (89%)	1. Transparent and informative 2. Voluntary 3. Respectful 4. Relevant 5. Child-friendly 6. Inclusive 7. Supported by training for adults 8. Safe & sensitive to risk	10 (100%)	10 (100%)	10 (100%)
2	17.11.2013, AAF premises	*"Let the movie begin now!"*	-children and young people to come up with the stories to be used in the movie devoted to the child helpline	10 (9 FF)	0	1 (11%)	8 (89%)	9 (100%)	1. Transparent and informative 2. Voluntary 3. Respectful 4. Relevant 5. Child-friendly 6. Inclusive 7. Supported by training for adults 8. Safe & sensitive to risk 9. Accountable	8 (89%)	9 (100%)	10 (100%)
3	28.11.2013	*"Let the*	-collect the	21	0	15	6(29%)	9 (100%)	1. Transparent and	17 (78%)	20 (91%)	21 (100%)

	35th School, Sofia	*movie continue!"*	teenagers' point of view on the movie script	(22 FF)		(71%)			informative 2. Voluntary 3. Respectful 4. Relevant 5. Child-friendly 6. Inclusive 7. Supported by training for adults 8. Safe & sensitive to risk 9. Accountable			
4	04.12.2013 35th School, Sofia	*"Teenagers speak out for the hot issues of young people in Bulgaria"*	-young people to create the messages for the drug abuse scene in the movie	11 (9FF)	0	6 (55%)	5 (45%)	9 (100%)	1. Transparent and informative 2. Voluntary 3. Respectful 4. Relevant 5. Child-friendly 6. Inclusive 7. Supported by training for adults 8. Safe & sensitive to risk 9. Accountable	8(89%)	11 (100%)	11 (100%)
5	25.01.2014	*"Workshop for ideas!"*	-create the 4th e-bulletin planned under the project	11 (10FF)	0	5 (50%)	5 (50%)	7 (78%)	1. Voluntary 2. Respectful 3. Relevant 4. Child-friendly 5. Inclusive 6. Supported by training for adults 7. Safe & sensitive to risk	9 (90%)	9 (90%)	11 (100%)
6	22.02.2014	"*Developing a feedback form for the children calling at the 116 111 helpline!*"	-create an online feedback form that child callers at the helpline can fill in after the call	8 (6FF)	0	3 (38%)	5 (63%)	8 (89%)	1. Transparent and informative 2. Voluntary 3. Respectful 4. Relevant 5. Child-friendly 6. Inclusive 7. Supported by training for adults	5 (83%)	6 (100%)	8 (100%)

									8. Safe & sensitive to risk			
7	30.03.2014	*"Let's think again! Work on the feedback criteria."*	-improve the criteria of the online feedback tool	11 (9FF)	0	6 (67%)	3(33%)	9 (100%)	1. Transparent and informative 2. Voluntary 3. Respectful 4. Relevant 5. Child-friendly 6. Inclusive 7. Supported by training for adults 8. Safe & sensitive to risk 9. Accountable	8 (89%)	9 (100%)	11(100%)
8	26.05.2014	*"An end or a beginning? Finalizing the work of the group for children and young people"*	-close the work within the children's group and conduct the final evaluation seminar	10 (8FF)	0	3 (38%)	5(63%)	9 (100%)	1. Transparent and informative 2. Voluntary 3. Respectful 4. Relevant 5. Child-friendly 6. Inclusive 7. Supported by training for adults 8. Safe & sensitive to risk 9. Accountable	8 (100%)	8 (100%)	10 (100%)

Feedback	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Feedback collected from children	Yes, via feedback forms	Yes, via feedback forms	Yes, via feedback forms	Yes, via feedback forms	Yes, via feedback forms	Yes, via feedback forms	Yes, via feedback forms	Yes, via feedback forms
Child feedback provided to 116 111 team	Yes, by face-to-face conversation	Yes, by face-to-face conversation	Yes, by face-to-face conversation	Yes, by face-to-face conversation	Yes, by face-to-face conversation	Yes, by face-to-face conversation	Yes, by face-to-face conversation	Yes, by face-to-face conversation
Children provided with feedback on what participation has achieved	Yes, by face-to-face conversation	Yes, by face-to-face conversation	Yes, by face-to-face conversation	Yes, by face-to-face conversation	Yes, by face-to-face conversation	Yes, by face-to-face conversation	Yes, by face-to-face conversation	Yes, by face-to-face conversation

II. ANALYSIS OF THE SPECIFIC TOOLS APPLIED FOR MEASURING THE OUTCOMES OF CHILD PARTICIPATION IN ROMANIA

All the feedback forms and discussions with children underline that they had positive experiences which helped them develop themselves, understand how to communicate things and be supportive with the others.

Tool for reporting data on child seminars and indicators for measuring child participation, the filled-in Participation Seminars Record in Romania

No	Date & place of seminar	Topic of participation seminar	Goal of child involvement	No of participants	No of children evaluating participation as consultative	No of children evaluating participation as collaborative	No of children evaluating participation as child-led	No of standards for quality participation that the children evaluate with 2 or 3 beans	Which standards were those (e.g. Transparent and informative; Voluntary; Respectful; Relevant; Child-friendly; Inclusive; Supported by training for adults; Safe & sensitive to risk)	No of children who state they had a positive experience and that their views & opinions were listened to	No of children who state that they were given space to share opinions/suggestions	No of children who received feedback about their input
1	11.02.2013, Romtelecom Training Arena, Bucuresti - Ploiesti Street, no. 42-44, District 1, Bucharest	Asociatia Telefonul Copilului – importance of child participation	- the participants understand the purpose of this project - to find out information about the participant's interaction with online - participants will offer their feedback on our website	11	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2	11.16.2013, Romania Literature	The website 116111.ro	- the participants will offer their recommendation regarding the construction	12	0%	100 %	0%	9	All the standards (100%)	100%	100%	100%

	Museum, Dacia Street, no. 12, District 1, Bucharest		of the dedicated children and teenagers site 116111.ro - participants will find out more information about the child helpline during an interview with child helpline consultant									
3	11.30.2014, The National Village Museum, Kiseleff Street, no. 28-30, District 1, Bucharest.	An overview of the Asociatia Telefonul Copilului promotional materials & working instruments	- the participants will offer their feedback regarding the promotional videos created within this project and the child helpline answering machine's messages / audio background. - the participants will be challenged to promote the Child Helpline in their schools posting promotion materials	18	0%	100 %	0%	9	All the standards (100%)	100%	100%	100%
4	12.14.2013, The National Military Museum, Mircea Vulcănescu Street, no. 125-127, District 1 Bucharest.	Creating 3 promotional posters	- the new participants will find out more information about Child Helpline - the participants will work create at least 3 promotional posters - the participants will offer their feedback on the changes brought to the child helpline machine's massages	18	0%	61% (11)	39%	9	All the standards (100%)	100%	100%	100%
5	01.11.2014, Merci Tea House, Smarda	How to start a promotional	- the participants will find out more information about starting an online	18	22%	78%	0%	9	All the standards (100%)	100%	100%	100%

	Street, no.13, District 3, Bucharest.	campaign: special guests – 2 bloggers	promotion campaign - the participants will work in groups to develop their own promotion campaign for child helpline									
6	01.25.2014, The National Museum of Contemporary Art, Izvor, no. 2-4, District 5, Bucharest.	Presentation of the Asociatia Telefonul Copilului online campaign: special guests – 2 bloggers	- the participants will present their ideas about promoting Child Helpline through an online campaign	18	0%	72%	28%	9	All the standards (100%)	100%	100%	100%
7	02.15.2014, The National Technical Museum, Candiano Popescu Street, No. 2, District 4, Bucharest	How to make a presentation of the Asociatia Telefonul Copilului in schools	- the participants will learn how to make a presentation in order to promote Child Helpline in their schools and high schools.	18	0%	39%	61%	9	All the standards (100%)	100%	100%	100%
8	03.14.2014, Observatory, Lascăr Catargiu Avenue, No. 21, District 1, Bucharest.	Overview of the sessions	- the participants will find out the next steps regarding their involvement within the project - measuring project's outcomes - presenting the results of children's involvement in project	18	28%	72%	0%	9	All the standards (100%)	100%	100%	100%

Outcomes from children' seminars in Romania

The participants promoted the Child Helpline in their schools using posters, presentations and flyers:
- During the website-workshop, the participants offered ideas and suggestions about the interface of the children and teenagers dedicated site - 116111.ro, buttons' forms and arrangement, information, graphics, interactive games. Using their ideas, we can build the site with a friendly and attractive interface and structure. (see pictures in attach)
- The participants offered feedback for the promotion videos creating within this projects and used them during their presentations in schools
- The Child Helpline answering machines' messages were analyzed by the participants and modified according with their suggestions.
- The participants created three posters to promote the service 116 111
- The participants presented their ideas about promoting Child Helpline though an online campaign and offered valuable information about their online interaction.

Important observations

- In order to promote the service 116 111 to more children and teenagers, we need to address them using the online platforms that they mostly interact with.
- The teenagers ask many questions about different topic on online communities. The online counseling will increase, so we need to develop a website where they can ask questions and get help from our specialists.
- We need to build the website 116111.ro for children and teenagers and also to revise our organization's website to be more friendly and attractive
- The teenagers can be very dedicated volunteers and can bring value to the service if we empower and guide them more in our projects.

III. ANALYSIS OF THE SPECIFIC TOOLS APPLIED FOR MEASURING THE OUTCOMES OF CHILD PARTICIPATION IN SLOVAKIA

Children contribution

Creating of indicators and criteria for evaluation of Child Line services
Children were asked to create indicators – the characteristics of handling the calls necessary for helpline to be helpful.
They stated five fields of interest:
a. Availability /technical settings enabling that each caller can reach the line/
b. Quality of operator /nice, empathic, open-minded, trustworthy, friendly, interested in, professional, supportive/
c. Time /feeling plenty of time to speak, patient operator/
d. Loyalty /feeling that the operator is on my side, even the child did something not right/
e. Intelligibility /due the age, due the pronunciation, i. as support and willingness to go into deeper issues/
The form: it should be posted on our website as a virtual anonymous questionnaire, which all the children can fill in.

Outcomes of children - Child Line cooperation: Leaflet for 116 111; Promotional videos (7 videos for 7 issues of children calling on child line and 1 longer documentary movie); extension of the on-line counselling services through social network.

Child participation for children

Children stated that it was useful to speak about emotions, how they started to be more sensitive to the others (to different personalities, not to judge people due the first impression). Also they evaluate as useful the topic of communication and assertiveness, it was said that those skills could be used in family and school interactions, in everyday life. Some of children stated, that it is important to keep patience in the conflict and that the life is not polarized only to bad and good dimensions. The most mentioned was the possibility to express own opinions and ideas.

Tool for reporting data on child seminars and indicators for measuring child participation, the filled-in Participation Seminars Record in Slovakia:

	Date & place of seminar	Topic of participation seminar	Goal of child involvement	No of participants	No of children evaluating participation as consultative	No of children evaluating participation as collaborative	No of children evaluating participation as child-led	No of standards for quality participation that the children evaluate with 2 or 3 beans	Which standards were those (e.g. Transparent and informative; Voluntary; Respectful; Relevant; Child-friendly; Inclusive; Supported by training for adults; Safe & sensitive to risk)	No of children who state they had a positive experience and that their views & opinions were listened to	No of children who state that they were given space to share opinions/suggestions	No of children who received feedback about their input
1	25.09.2013 LDI premises	*"Introduction and familiarizing"*	The aim is to know each other and familiarise all participants, Childline and goals of project. + step by step during all workshops- empowering children to involve in &evaluate child participation	12	0	0	0	9 (100%)	1.Transparent and informative 2.Voluntary 3.Respectful 4.Relevant 5.Child-friendly 6.Inclusive 7.Supported by training for adults 8.Safe & sensitive for risk 9.Accountable	12 (100%)	12 (100%)	12 (100%)
2	17.10.2013 LDI premises	„*Communication and active listening*	Creation of scenario of all seminars -draft The aim of session is to know 1. level of knowledge about participation 2. Importance of listening actively and being listened to/ in participation	14	2	12	0	9 (100%)	1.Transparent and informative 2.Voluntary 3.Respectful 4.Relevant 5.Child-friendly 6.Inclusive 7.Supported by training for adults 8.Safe & sensitive for risk 9.Accountable	14 (100%)	14 (100%)	14 (100%)
3	28.10.2013 LDI	*„Information and*	The aim is to be aware of consequences of	9	0	9 Particulary	0	9(100%)	1.Transparent and informative 2.Voluntary	9 (100%)	9 (100%)	9 (100%)

	premises	*criteria for selection“*	informational overwhelming (especially important for children);, be well informed and be able to focus on relevant issues			Consultative, collaborative, little bit Child-led			3.Respectful 4.Relevant 5.Child-friendly 6.Inclusive 7.Supported by training for adults 8.Safe & sensitive for risk 9.Accountable			
4	16.12.2013	„Evaluation and decision - making“	The aim is to be aware of/ to be sensitive to differences between judgments, suppositions, assumptions and stereotypes. creation of leaflet	8	0	8 Particulary Consultative, collaborative, little bit Child-led	0	9(100%)	1.Transparent and informative 2.Voluntary 3.Respectful 4.Relevant 5.Child-friendly 6.Inclusive 7.Supported by training for adults 8.Safe & sensitive for risk 9.Accountable	8 (100%)	8(100%)	8(100%)
5	27.1.2014	„Communication II, assertiveness“	To know the communication techniques as a supportive tool for qualitative participation. Self-knowledge and communication skills. creation of video	10	0	10 Particulary Consultative, collaborative, little bit Child-led	0	9(100%)	1.Transparent and informative 2.Voluntary 3.Respectful 4.Relevant 5.Child-friendly 6.Inclusive 7.Supported by training for adults 8.Safe & sensitive for risk 9.Accountable	10 (100%)	10 (100%)	10 (100%)
6	30.1.2014	„Emotion, emotional resiliences“	The aim is to know something about feelings and sharing emotions; to be in control of emotions and to lose control of emotions. + The role of LDI in	9	0	9 Particulary Consultative, collaborative, little bit	0	9(100%)	1.Transparent and informative 2.Voluntary 3.Respectful 4.Relevant 5.Child-friendly 6.Inclusive 7.Supported by training for adults 8.Safe & sensitive for risk 9.Accountable	9(100%)	9(100%)	9(100%)

			emotional support for children			Child-led						
7	18.2.2014	„Participation as the quality of life skills and review of topics“	Awareness of advantages of some life skills in ability to be participative. + To be empowered to be involved in & to evaluate child participation	7	0	7 Particulary Consultative, collaborative, little bit Child-led	0	9(100%)	1.Transparent and informative 2.Voluntary 3.Respectful 4.Relevant 5.Child-friendly 6.Inclusive 7.Supported by training for adults 8.Safe & sensitive for risk 9.Accountable	7(100%)	7(100%)	7(100%)
8	26.3.2014	„Evaluation of the participation and conclusion“	Final evaluation How I changed myself /self-reflection/ To find out the most important criteria of the LDI service. + To be empowered to be involved in & to evaluate child participation	10	0	10 Particulary Consultative, collaborative, little bit Child-led	0	9(100%)	1.Transparent and informative 2.Voluntary 3.Respectful 4.Relevant 5.Child-friendly 6.Inclusive 7.Supported by training for adults 8.Safe & sensitive for risk 9.Accountable	10(100%)	10(100%)	10(100%)

Children defined their participation at seminars as generally collaborative, but some activities were evaluated as consultative or child-led.

Feedback	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**
Feedback collected from children	Yes, via feedback forms	Yes, via feedback forms	Yes, via feedback forms	Yes, via feedback forms	Yes, via feedback forms	Yes, via feedback forms	Yes, via feedback forms	Yes, via feedback forms
Child feedback provided to 116 111 team	Yes, by face-to-face conversation	Yes, by face-to-face conversation	Yes, by face-to-face conversation	Yes, by face-to-face conversation	Yes, by face-to-face conversation	Yes, by face-to-face conversation	Yes, by face-to-face conversation	Yes, by face-to-face conversation
Children provided with feedback on what participation has achieved	Yes, by face-to-face conversation	Yes, by face-to-face conversation	Yes, by face-to-face conversation	Yes, by face-to-face conversation	Yes, by face-to-face conversation	Yes, by face-to-face conversation	Yes, by face-to-face conversation	Yes, by face-to-face conversation

Rarely/sometimes child participants sent the spontaneous e-mail.

Regarding the results, with participants we created indicators, which will be used for optional public evaluation of helpline services by children and young people in Slovakia.

However there are two findings, which we would like to mention in the common methodology.
For strengthening children voices we have to:

- Create space and conditions for children so they CAN express their opinion
- Create space and conditions for children so they WANT to express their opinion

IV. ANALYSIS OF THE SPECIFIC TOOLS APPLIED FOR MEASURING THE OUTCOMES OF CHILD PARTICIPATION IN POLAND

All of the participants who took part in the meetings' evaluation process were very pleased or simply happy with the level of liberty they had in the discussions. They saw themselves as partners for the facilitators and were of high opinions regarding the latter. No child stated he/she has been neglected, overlooked or shrugged nor has any child complain in regard to the participation. On the contrary – the freedom of speech during the meetings led sometimes the discussions astray, which is when the facilitators were there to help.

Tool for reporting data on child seminars and indicators for measuring child participation, the filled-in Participation Seminars Record in Poland

	Date & place of seminar	Topic of participation seminar	Goal of child involvement	No of participants	No of children evaluating participation as consultative	No of children evaluating participation as collaborative	No of children evaluating participation as child-led	No of standards for quality participation that the children evaluate with 2 or 3 beans	Which standards were those (e.g. Transparent and informative; Voluntary; Respectful; Relevant; Child-friendly; Inclusive; Supported by training for adults; Safe & sensitive to risk)	No of children who state they had a positive experience and that their views & opinions were listened to	No of children who state that they were given space to share opinions/suggestions	No of children who received feedback about their input
1	7.11.2013	*'Group integration, elaborating on methods of setting up and conducting children's gropus, introduction to production of the helpline tour movie'*	- shaping a new announcement for the M&A children's group recruitment; - sharing children's opinions regarding recruitment process (time, who to address, number of children in the group) - deciding on the content of the	5	0	5 (100 %)	0	7 (78%)	Child-friendly, Supported by training for adults, Relevant, Transparent & informative, Voluntary, Respectful, Accountable	5 (100%) (all the children chose the answer: "I think the facilitators listened carefully to what I had to say"; all participants stated they	5(100%) (all the children chose the answer: "Yes, I was able to freely express my opinion")	3(60%) (children received feedback about what participation has achieved during next M&A group meeting (2 children were

			helpline tour movie - deciding on the course of M&A children's group seminars							felt "Good" during the meeting		absent during next meeting, but they could receive feedback about their input during next meetings)
2	16.11.2013	*'Working on the helpline tour movie scenario - meeting with movie's co-director; creating and reviewing promoting materials for the helpline"*	- consulting the helpline tour movie scenario (scenario based on the guidelines proposed by children during previous meeting) - accompanying co-director in pre-production activities (pre-selection of the indoor shooting places, taking measurements, discussing the interior design etc.) - preparing guidelines for the design of new helpline leaflet	5	0	5(100%)	0	6 (67%)	Child-friendly, Supported by training for adults, Relevant, Transparent & informative, Respectful, Accountable	5 (100%) (all children responded they felt "Splendid" or "Good" during the seminar; all children stated that they felt their opinions and suggestion were "very important to the facilitators" or were "important to the facilitators")	5 (100%) (all children responded they were able to "freely express their opinion" or were able to "express their opinion")	5 (100%) (all children were presented with the new leaflet designed according to their guidelines via online group; children could also see the helpline tour movie during next M&A children's group seminars)
3		*'Helpline tour*	- participating in	6	0	3(10	0	6 (67%)	Child-friendly,	3 (50%)(all	3 (50%)	4 (67%)(out

	1.12.2013	*movie shooting'*	helpline tour movie shooting (creating decorations, playing roles of teenagers calling 116 111 helpline, giving comments about the shooting process)			0%) (this is the numberof childrenwho filled in feedback forms)			Supported by training for adults, Relevant, Transparent & informative, Respectful, Accountable	children who filled in evaluation forms stated they felt "Splendid" during the meeting; all children stated their suggestions were "very important" or "important" to facilitators)		of 6 children who participated in movie shooting, four were present during next meeting during which they could see and discuss the outcomes of their participation in this process).
4	7.12.2013	*'Elaborating on more effective ways of reaching out to children who need help via helpline's website'*	- evaluation of www.116111.pl and www.helpline.org.pl websites; - discussing possible changes related to layout and content of webpages	3	0	3 (100 %)	0	6(67%)	Child-friendly, Supported by training for adults, Relevant, Transparent & informative, Voluntary, Respectful,	3 (100%) (all participants chose they felt "Good" during the meeting; all stated that facilitators listened "carefully" or "more or less carefully" to their	3(100%)	0(So far proposed changes to the websites could not be applied, thus children could not see the outcome. Nevertheless they are always

										opinions)		given feedback about the value of their input)
5	25.01.2014	*'Creating and reviewing promoting materials for the helpline:helpline tour movie, leaflet and promotion strategy; reviewing preventive programs aimed at children and youth'*	- planning promoting strategy for helpline tour movies (choosing titles and ways of distributing the movie) - giving feedback about scenario-based workshops aimed at children and youth (designed by NCF) - further elaboration on promotional materials - details of layout and content of the helpline leaflet and ways of its distribution.	6	0	6 (100 %)	0	6(67%)	Child-friendly, Supported by training for adults, Relevant, Transparent & informative, Respectful, Accountable	6 (100%) (all participants chose they felt "Splendid" or "Good" during the seminar; all stated their suggestions were "very important" or "important" to facilitators)	6 (100%)	6 (100%) (all the participants od M&A children's group could later see the outcomes - e.g. the printed version of a new leaflet for the helpline)
6	18.04.2014	'R*eviewing preventive programs aimed at children and youth; planning promoting activities for*	- giving recommendations on a new lesson scenario about sexting; - planning activities for the up-coming 116111 Helpline Open Day;	4 (one child attended the	0	4(100%)	0	6 (67%)	Child-friendly, Supported by training for adults, Relevant, Transparent & informative, Voluntary, Respectful,	4 (100%) (all participants chose they felt "Good" or "Splendid" during the seminar; all	4 (100%)	0 (So far the scenario has not been accomplished and the Open Day is to be

		the helpline, evaluating standards of help provided by 116111 Helpline'	- planning activities for the up-coming International Child Helpline Day; - designing and discussing an evaluation tool to asses standards of help provided by the 116111 Helpline	meeting via skype call)						participants stated that facilitators listened "carefully" to children's opinions)		organized, so the children could not see directly the outcomes. Nevertheless they were given feedback about thee value of their input)

Feedback	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**
Feedback collected from children	Yes, via feedback forms and anonymous "pictures voting" procedure	Yes, via feedback forms	Yes, via feedback forms	Yes, via feedback forms	Yes, via feedback forms	Yes, via feedback forms	Seminar still not held	Seminar still not held
Child feedback provided to 116 111 team	Yes, during 116 111 team meeting	Yes, during 116 111 team meeting	Yes, during 116 111 team meeting	Yes, during 116 111 team meeting	Yes, during 116 111 team meeting	Yes, during 116 111 team meeting		
Children provided with feedback on what participation has achieved	Yes, during next children's seminar	Yes, via online group, and personally - during next children's semianars	Yes, children could watch and comment about the outcome of participation (movies) during the 5th children's group seminar (when the movies were ready)		Yes, during next children's seminar			

Up-to-date six M&A children's group meetings took place in Poland. Two remaining meetings are scheduled for the upcoming weeks. This delay in conducting seminars is due to the difficulties in the recruitment process (not sufficient number of applications) and problems with fixing the dates of the meetings that would fit most of the group members. It happened quite often, that we had to reschedule the meetings because children were not available to come to NCF.

Apart from attending the M&A Children's group meetings children also joined the online group, and some of them were very active in online contact - responding to our messages, sharing their comments and opinions on different topics. Children who attended the meetings were very active and open in sharing their views. Not only did they respond to the proposed activities, but they also brought up their own ideas which were later discussed with the whole group and facilitators. They also elaborated on the topics they would like to discuss and work on during the last meetings. The group worked on several issues, which corresponded to the roles and responsibilities of the group as described above in Chapter 5 of the methodology. They worked on creating and reviewing promoting materials/campaigns for the helpline by participating in production of the helpline tour movie and actively took part in designing the new 116 111 leaflet. As far as the movie production is concerned, four of the group members took part in the movie shooting. The group participated in searching for new and more effective ways of reaching out to children who need help by discussing the current www.116111.pl website's outline and proposing changes to its layout. They were also consulted about their opinions regarding the conducting of educational lessons in schools and the design of the scenario-based workshops for children and youth. As far as elaborating on the methods of setting up and conducting children's monitoring and advisory groups is concerned, group members evaluated the M&A children's group recruitment and shared their opinion on the way of organizing and conducting every meeting/seminar.

As far as the recommendations for implementation are concerned, it proved that the children's group meetings should be shorter than 8 hours since it is difficult to arrange such a meeting in a period of time suitable for all the members. In case of our group, most of the children were actively involved in plenty of extracurricular activities and could not devote as much time to group meetings as was expected in spite of their motivations and willingness to participate. We also believe that such long meetings are much more challenging for children and it is difficult to keep them interested, focused and active for such a long time. Perhaps it would be a good solution to devote more time and effort into developing the online group - not only for the M&A group members, but also open to other children. Group members actively participated in the online contact sharing their views and opinions, since this kind of activity is less time-consuming and available at any time and place. We also consider this kind of communication as suitable and comfortable for young advisors since they are often used to contacting other people online and sharing their opinions on the Internet. This way of communication would enable us to contact more children in a short period of time, not excluding someone because of their place of residence, sickness, being involved in other activities. During one of the seminars we also organized a skype call with one M&A children's group member, who was willing to participate in the discussion but could not come to the meeting in person. We believe that such flexibility in employing different modes of contact can make the participation more available to larger group of children and has a potential in keeping children in contact for a longer period of time.
We also think it is very important to devote a significant amount of time to building the capacity of the group by promoting integration and consolidating children's motivation to participate. It is essential to create a friendly and open atmosphere and assign appropriate amount of time to

integrating activities and games not only during the first seminar, but also at the beginning of each meeting. This is especially important when new members join the group, or when as in our case - some children miss part of the meetings. It is the facilitators responsibility to ensure, the child does not feel excluded. Better integration of the group encourages children to attend the rest of the meetings. It is also crucial, that all the group meetings consist of different activities - discussions, presentations, games, role-plays - which makes it easier to focus children's attention and keep them active through the whole meeting. It is very important that group facilitators are experienced in working with children and present a respectful approach treating children as partners.

As far as motivating children is concerned, we believe it is very important to show them current effects of their work as soon as possible - e.g. after each meeting, or after accomplishing each task (for example, after discussing the new layout of the leaflet, we presented children with graphic designer's work via online group and they could see the outcome immediately and give us the feedback). We believe that such approach encourages children to further participation and ensures them that their opinions are taken into account and have impact on our work. We also observed, that it is very important that children receive some support in participating in project from other adults in their family or school. Participating in a project that lasts for a couple of months requires a lot of motivation and persistence. For some of the children it would not be possible to attend the meeting without their parents assisting and helping them to arrive at the place (especially if it is a long journey). We also believe that it is very meaningful whether parents encourage their children to be active and participate in a group or other activities, or whether they are only focused on school obligations. Perhaps it would be easier to recruit and conduct children's group after educating parents about its possible outcomes and values and encouraging them to support their children. We believe that this applies also to teachers, who could give children their support and value their active attitude also outside the school.