

# ICLD

## Facilitator's guide



### Child participation in the City of Vienna

**Authors:** Véronique Lerch

**Photos:** Ponderosa Templeton

This Facilitator's Guide is designed to assist you in teaching this case to practitioners. The case on the development of a Child and Youth strategy in Vienna invites participants to imagine how they would respond to the circumstances. Participants should read the teaching case in advance and identify key issues as a preliminary step toward meeting the learning objectives. As an instructor, you may then use the time in the classroom to guide participants in exploring the issues and challenges in the case; to introduce key concepts, tools, and frameworks; and to assist participants in applying the lessons learned in their own environments.

### Suggested structure of the session

- **Introduction** (10 minutes): Briefly state the learning objectives and goal of the session in reference to the case, cite specific major dilemmas.
- **Exploration** (20 minutes): Use class discussion to examine the issues and options.
- **Presentation of concepts and tools** (15 minutes): Introduce key concepts, frameworks, and tools to help participants pinpoint possible solutions to major conflicts in the case.
- **Application** (15 minutes): Ask participants to relate the concepts and frameworks to their own local authorities' challenges.
- **Wrap-Up and Takeaways (15 minutes)**: Review the learning objectives and discuss insights most relevant to the participants' organizations' challenges.

Note: the time and content can be adapted to suit the group and the context.

### Learning Objectives

At the end of the training session, the participants will

- understand that child rights are human rights and how a rights-based approach differs from other approaches;

- relate the realisation of child rights to the actions and decisions of local decision-makers;
- identify common barriers and enablers, specifically surrounding practical and ethical issues, when a local government creates the spaces and processes for children to exercise their right to have their opinions listened to and taken into account;
- be equipped with some tools to support the realisation of children's rights in their local authority, and more specifically, their right to express their opinions and have those opinions listened to and taken into account; and,
- start thinking about ways to apply the learnings of this case study to their local authorities.

## Key concepts and tools

The below key concepts and tools can be introduced to the participants for them to decide on how to design and implement participatory processes for the development of the child and youth strategy.

### Child participation in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

**Keep in mind that children are persons under the age of 18 according to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The age group covering young people varies from country to country, and between institutions. There is no universally agreed definition of a young person. In the case of Vienna, the strategy is called a child and youth strategy but covers only children.**

Child participation is one of the core principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), which asserts that children and young people have the right to freely express their views and that there is an obligation to listen to children's views and to facilitate their participation in all matters affecting them within their families, schools, local communities, public services, institutions, government policies, etc.

More information about the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child can be found on the [UN Committee on the Rights of the Child](#) website as well as on UNICEF's website: [UN Convention on the Rights of the Child \(Full version and child-friendly materials\)](#)

Children's participation is an *"...ongoing process, which includes information-sharing and dialogue between children and adults based on mutual respect, and in which children can learn how their views and those of adults are taken into account and shape the outcome of such processes."*<sup>1</sup>

Two tools are especially useful when thinking of involving children and young people in the activities and policy-making of municipalities: the Lundy model of child participation and the 9 basic requirements of child participation developed by the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child.

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<sup>1</sup> Committee on the Rights of the Child, General Comment No.12, The Right of the Child to be Heard, CRC/C/GC/12, July 2009, para 3.

## The Lundy's Model of child participation



This model provides a way of conceptualising Article 12 of the UNCRC which is intended to focus educational decision-makers on the distinct, albeit interrelated, elements of the provision. The four elements have a rational chronological order:

- **SPACE:** Children must be given safe, inclusive opportunities to form and express their view
- **VOICE:** Children must be facilitated to express their view
- **AUDIENCE:** The view must be listened to.
- **INFLUENCE:** The view must be acted upon, as appropriate.

*FIGURE 1 LUNDY'S MODEL OF PARTICIPATION AS INCLUDED IN IRELAND'S NATIONAL STRATEGY ON CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S PARTICIPATION IN DECISION-MAKING 2015-2020*

### Questions regarding space:

- Where are the children meeting to develop the strategy? Has consideration been given to where children will meet and how they will get there?
- Is the meeting place accessible and safe for all children to reach?

<sup>2</sup> Ireland Department of Children and Youth Affairs, National Strategy on Children and Young People's Participation in Decision-Making 2015-2020 (17 June 2015), p. 21. Accessible here: <http://dcya.gov.ie/documents/playandrec/20150617NatStratParticipationReport.pdf>

- Is it reachable with public transport or is it possible to make transport available to help children attend meetings? Or is it close enough to where they live/go to schools?
- Is there any arrangement with local schools for children to have time off to meet during the school day, if necessary?

#### Questions regarding voice

- Has the objective of developing a child and youth strategy been explained in a child-friendly manner?
- Was the information translated in other languages spoken by the children of the municipality? Was the language adapted to different age groups?
- Was there adequate adult support to explain the objective, the context and child rights?
- Were children provided with the training and capacity building they need and request to enable them to participate in the development of the strategy?

#### Questions regarding audience

- Were Council staff/Mayor/Council members involved in the development of the strategy? In which ways?
- Were children feeling listened to by the Council members and the Mayor? How was that measured?

#### Questions regarding influence

- What happened to proposals or recommendations raised by the Child and Youth Strategy? Did council members already identify ways to implement the strategy?
- Did the local council report back in a timely manner on how any action taken in response to any concerns or issues raised by the children in preparation of the strategy?
- Are the children provided with appropriate explanations as to the decisions made and the reasons behind them?

### **The 9 basic requirements for meaningful and ethical child participation**

- **Transparent and informative:** this requirement means children clearly understand their right to express their views, that they will be heard and valued. Children must be provided with full, accessible, diversity-sensitive, and age-appropriate information about their right to express their views freely and for their views to be given due weight, and about how this participation will take place, its scope, purpose and potential impact.
- **Voluntary:** children have received sufficient and appropriate information and time to make informed choices, and they also know that they are free to make decisions to participate or not. Participation is a right, not an obligation.
- **Respectful:** children's views are respected, valued and heard by adults and other children.
- **Relevant:** children can understand why the issue is of relevance to them and why their views are being sought. Children are also encouraged to identify issues that they themselves regard as relevant.

- **Child friendly:** the participatory methods used are child friendly. It requires a space where discussions and projects are adapted to the capacities and needs of different children and provide appropriate levels of support from adults.
- **Inclusive:** the participation process ensures that the most deprived children, children with disabilities and children who are marginalised have equal access and that their voices are heard and valued. In addition, children are not discriminated against by reason of age, gender, race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic, or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status.
- **Supported by training:** all adults working with children have been trained and equipped to work effectively with children to facilitate meaningful participation of children.
- **Safe and sensitive risk:** children know that all considerations in relation to their safety and protection from harm have been taken into account and staff have taken every precaution to minimise the risk to children of abuse, exploitation or other negative consequence of their participation.
- **Accountable:** children receive feedback on how their contribution has advised, informed, or influenced development and children have adequate time, support, and information to share any feedback with their peers.

## Wrap-up and take-aways

After the application phase, you can facilitate a discussion of take-aways from the session. These could include:

- Child and youth participation is a continuous process.
- Child and youth participation can take many different forms at the local level.
- Local decision-makers should be involved in the development of the strategy to increase their commitment to the strategy.
- Feedback should be provided to the children involved in this participatory process. They should know what is happening with the strategy.
- Etc.

## References

Children's Environments Research Group, World Vision International, [Article 15 Resource Kit](#)

Council of Europe, [Child Participation Assessment Tool](#)

[Council of Europe, Handbook on Child Participation](#)

Eurochild, [Training Tool on engaging children in advocacy work on their right to participate in decision-making processes](#)

European Commission, [Study on child participation in EU political and democratic life](#)

Learning for Well-being Foundation and Eurochild, [We Are Here. A Child Participation Toolbox](#)

Save the Children, [Child Participation Monitoring and Evaluation Toolkit](#)

UNICEF UK, [Youth Advocacy Toolkit](#)

UNICEF, [Guidelines on Adolescent Participation and Civic Engagement](#)

[Werkstadt Junges Wien, Facilitator guide](#)