

# Meaningful Children's Participation Workshop

Funding for the rights of the child under the rights equality and citizenship  
programme

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# OBJECTIVES

- ✓ Support participants to **expand their knowledge, skills and tools** to engage in participatory practices with children and young people.
- ✓ Encourage participants to **reflect on their own professional practices** in order to identify avenues to engage with children and young people and find joint solutions to challenges and concerns around children's participation.
- ✓ Assist participants on the **basic requirements** in planning, implementing and assessing participatory activities with children and young people.

# OUR COMMITMENT TO CHILDREN'S PARTICIPATION

We understand that respecting and supporting children's participation is a **human rights obligation**.

Children's participation is both an **individual's right**, but also a **working method** that crosscuts all themes and contexts.

Children's participation is framed as a **set of civil rights** to be fulfilled, a principle to be applied, and a **means to fulfil other rights**.

# PARTICIPATION RIGHTS

**Art 12:** Right to express an opinion

**Art 13:** Right to freedom of expression

**Art 14:** Right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion

**Art 15:** Right to freedom of association and peaceful assembly

**Art 17:** Access to information

**Art 29:** Respect for human rights and responsible life in a free society

**Art 31:** Right to fully participate in cultural and artistic life

# DEFINITION

## Article 12 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child

1. 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.

## UN Committee on the Rights of the Child General Comment No. 12:

... 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.

# DEFINITION cont.

**Any  
interaction  
with  
children**

**Children have an opportunity to  
form and express their views freely**

**Children's views are respected and  
taken seriously**

**Decision making processes are  
informed by children**

**Children see the results of their  
participation**

This concept focused on 'child participation' and persons below the age of eighteen. Recognizing that some older children (e.g. ages 12-17) prefer the terms, 'young people' or 'adolescents' these terms may also be used in some contexts, but still apply to persons under eighteen years of age.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qPny8jyOo1s>

# UNPACKING CHILDREN'S PARTICIPATION

## Key questions in line with international standards

### MILESTONES

- New conceptualization of childhood and the UNCRC.
- Second Special Session on Children, UNGA 2002.
- A World Fit for Children
- General Comments 12
- UNCRC concluding observations
- Notion of space
- Development of child participation models

### CHALLENGES

- Concept of participation vs strategies for translating it into practice
- Participation vs consultation
- Changes in culture vs structures
- Adults own authority vs children agency
- Tokenism
- Diversity of local contexts worldwide
- Lack of feedback



# IDENTIFYING CHALLENGES

## Common barriers and problems

1. Tokenism
2. Consultation not dialogue
3. Who is included or excluded
4. Adult processes and structures exclude children and young people
5. Lack of feedback
6. Lack of sustainability

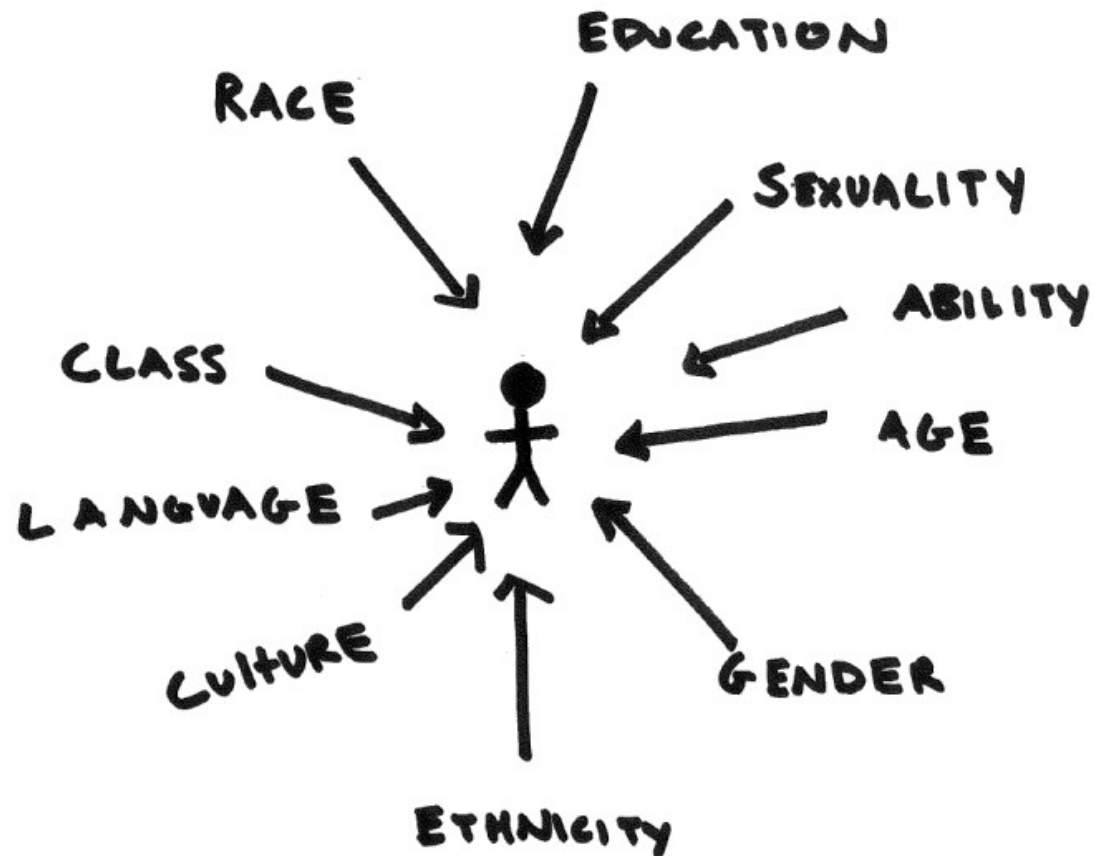
## Additional challenges

- Concept of participation vs strategies for translating it into practice
- Intergenerational power difference
- Diversity of local contexts worldwide

Tisdall (2014)

# IDENTIFYING CHALLENGES Cont.

## Inclusion and diversity



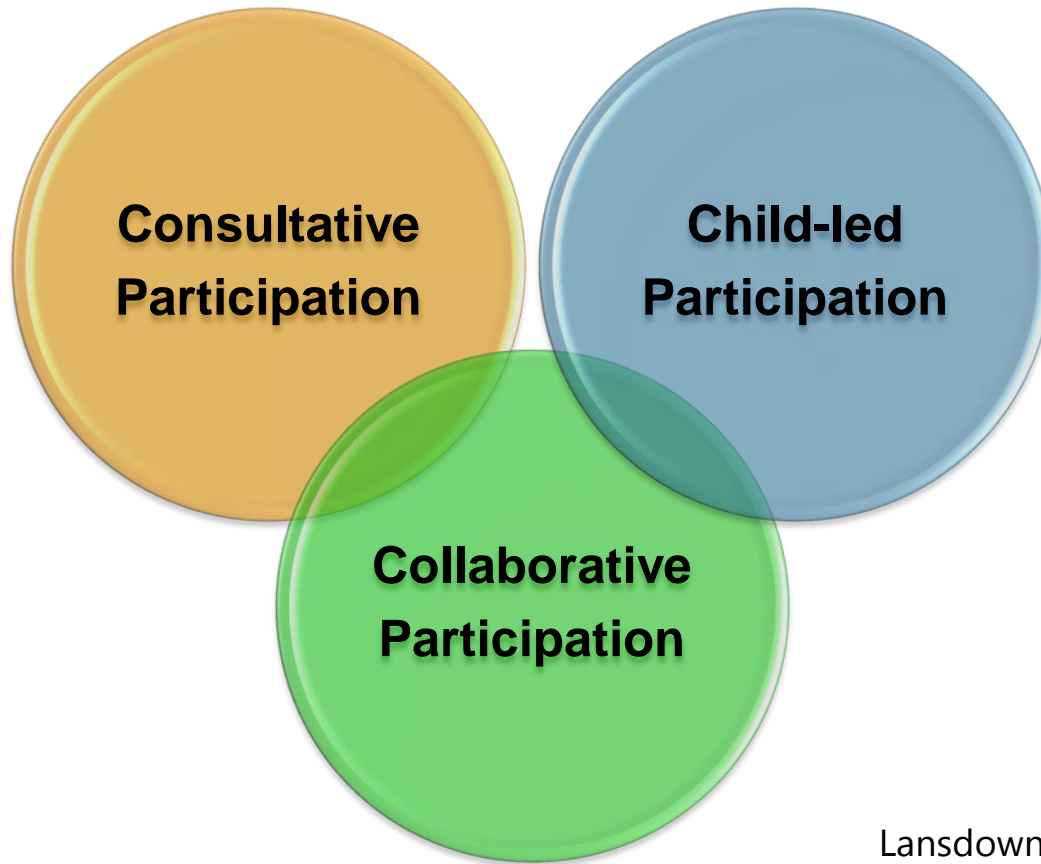


<https://www.wvi.org/video/world-visions-young-leader-romania-speaks-un>

# NINE BASIC REQUIREMENTS FOR CHILDREN'S PARTICIPATION



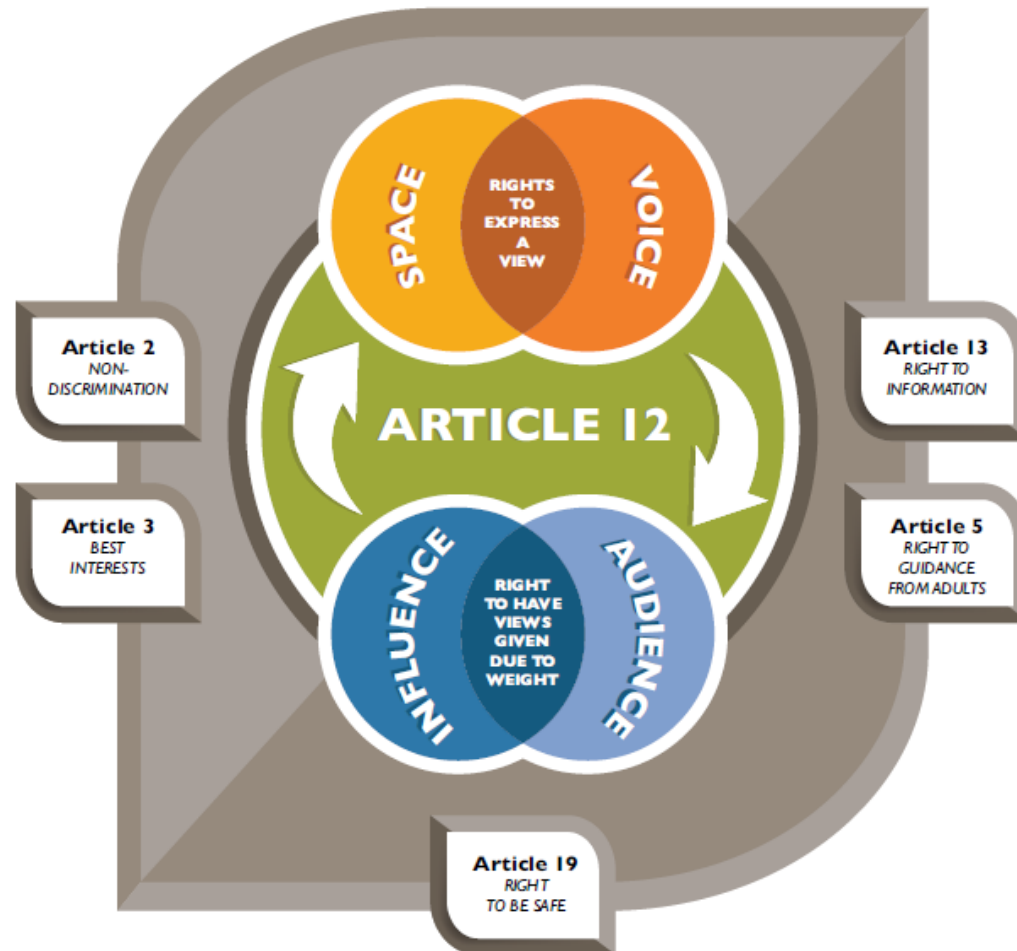
# CHILDREN'S PARTICIPATION MODELS



Lansdown (2011)

# CHILDREN'S PARTICIPATION MODELS Cont.

## Lundy model





<https://youtu.be/vuo4FxNfjig>

# Implementing children's participation practice at the local, national and global level

- **Voice against violence:** a group of eight young experts supported by the Scottish Government to influence the National Domestic Abuse Delivery Plan for Children and Young People (Houghton 2013, 2015).

<http://www.voiceagainstviolence.org.uk/>

- **Child-led research:** World Vision developed a series of child-led research projects where children are equipped with tools and skills to conduct research and findings are used to make a change in their lives (Cuevas-Parra and Tisdall, 2019).

<https://www.wvi.org/publications/report/child-participation/child-led-research-participating-research-leading-it>

- **Young Edinburgh Action:** participatory action research projects of between 6-15 young people, that are run annually as part of the City of Edinburgh Council's youth participation strategy (McMellon et al. 2015; Macdonald et al. 2018).

<http://www.crfr.ac.uk/projects/current-projects/young-edinburgh-action/>



# Logframe from Mongolia

Outcome 1	Outcome 2	Outcome 3	Outcome 4
The community, especially parents and caregivers, demonstrates attitudes and behaviours that provide a caring and protective environment for all girls and boys, especially the most vulnerable children.	<b>Children are empowered and mobilised to protect children abuse, exploitation and other forms of violence against children.</b>	Child protection mechanisms are functioning effectively in protecting boys and girls from abuse, exploitation, neglect and other forms of violence against children.	Increased long term funding to eradicate violence against children, and particularly corporal punishment



<https://www.wvi.org/video/young-leaders-ending-violence-against-children>

# THEORY TO PRACTICE Cont.

○ **Young Leaders:** This is a programme designed to give children and young people the space and opportunity to gain skills, knowledge and tools to engage in campaigns across the globe aimed at ending violence against children and to advocate for children's rights. The Young Leaders is a dynamic virtual network across countries and regions where children and young people selected by their own local constituencies meet and learn together and build collaborations in order to influence, collectively and individually, their communities and countries and to influence the global debate on issues relevant to them.

○ **Child Forum in Bangladesh:** This is a project that aims to provide space and opportunities to children to engage in advocacy initiatives. As part of their activities, child forum members reported stopping around 600 child marriages over two years, as a result of their collective actions.

# Thank You!

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