A Participatory Assessment of Street to School Programmes: Global Report

Dr Sarah Thomas de Benítez

Foreword

As a global insurer we are committed to making a real contribution to society through our business activities and community investment programmes.

We believe that we have a responsibility to help those in our communities who are the most excluded. and few are more excluded than street-connected children and youth. They could be living or working on the street, have run away from home, or spend a significant amount of time 'hanging out' on the street. Here they face serious threats and are at risk of not fulfilling their potential.

Our Street to School programme has been championing the rights of street-connected children around the world since 2010. We want to give them a more secure future.

By enabling children to escape from the risks of street life and empowering them to access education or training opportunities, we can make a difference. We believe that each and every child should have an education – because education is insurance for a better life.

Our original goal was to help 500,000 children by 2015. Thanks to the help of our partners, employees and customers, we have already reached more than 600,000 children. But there is so much more to do.

We have partnered with experts in many of our markets to support street-connected children and youth, and those at risk of becoming street connected. We recognise that the problems leading young people to the street are complex, but we have committed to shine a big yellow spotlight on the issue and to try to be a catalyst for lasting change.

After supporting the recent report by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights on: 'the protection and promotion of the rights of children working and/or living on the street', we are now actively engaging with the recommendations from that report. One way we have taken action is by commissioning this pioneering study, led by Dr Thomas de Benítez, which responds to the UN call "to ensure that children, as experts on their own lives, participate in information gathering, analysis and dissemination of research".

By taking on this in-depth participatory assessment we aimed to learn, alongside our partners, from the children, their communities and individuals on the front-line of service delivery. We wanted to know what matters to young people, how they believe the programmes they're involved in are working and how they could be made more effective.

We have encountered surprises along the way and we have embarked on a learning journey toward supporting our partners more effectively. One of the biggest surprises for us has been how novel the qualitative, participatory evaluation approach is amongst donor-NGO partnerships. In order to realise the benefits of taking this approach across our Street to School partnerships, in 2013, we will create a toolkit to support integrating participatory approaches into ongoing monitoring and evaluation.

We hope that by sharing our experience of including this valuable element within the way we shape, monitor and evaluate our programmes, we can shed light on the value of true child participation to all parties. We believe, now more than ever, that by carefully listening to the voice of the beneficiaries in our programmes we can have a much greater and sustained impact. We have learnt a great deal from this process and we commend it to you.

Gay Huey Evans, Chair of Corporate Responsibility Committee, Aviva

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Published April 2013 in London by Aviva plc.

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For 25 years Sarah has worked to improve young people's well being: from founding and directing the JUCONI Foundations for street-connected children in Mexico and Ecuador in the '80s and '90s, to leading the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights' global research study on the rights of children working and/or living on the street in 2011. Sarah has a PhD in Social Policy (London School of Economics) and Master's degrees in Public Policy (Princeton) and Social Policy Research (LSE).

As a senior international consultant and Independent researcher, Sarah chairs the Consortium for Street Children's Research Forum. More information and downloadable publications can be found at www.streetchildren.org.uk

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Disclaimer
This research and report has been led and written by Dr. Sarah Thomas de Benítez. Views expressed in this report are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect those of Aviva plc, Save the Children, YouthLink, L'Albero della Vita or Child Rights and You.

Acknowledgements

Local researchers and authors of local reports

Bijita Devsharma (New Delhi)

I am a development consultant from India with an MA and M.Phil in Sociology from Delhi School of Economics, working for over seven years on child rights and education, particularly mainstreaming children in difficult situations (street-connected, living in conflict areas, or subjected to child labour). I specialize in and most enjoy using participatory research and monitoring tools, including arts and alternative methodologies so children are listened to in assessing different programs, and have had the opportunity to engage with programs for organizations like Save the Children, India; ECPAT, Luxembourg; and ICICI Foundation for Inclusive Growth, India as an evaluator and external consultant. I have also worked on grant management for education programs with Sir Ratan Tata Trust, Mumbai and the New Education Group, Delhi. Besides work, I am a mother of a four-year-old, married to an online marketing professional, and love to sing, dance, and write short stories for children.

Neeraja Phatak (Jharkhand)

I have been working for and with children since 1982. I have a Master's Degree in History and a Bachelor's in Pedagogy and Education, moving in to the development sector in 1992. My work with Save the Children UK, India office included work with the Child Support (sponsorship) Programme, as well as issues including violence against girls, child labour, child abuse and Right Based Programming as a researcher, trainer and programmer including in emergency situations. As an independent consultant on Child Protection I have worked in Afghanistan, Bhutan and India with organizations including UNICEF, The Government of India at the Centre and in the State of Madhya Pradesh, Save the Children, SOS – Children Villages India and Child Rights and You. I am now working on the background paper for a policy on 'orphans' for the National Commission for the Protection of Child Rights - India.

Carlotta Zaniboni (Milan)

I am an Italian clinical psychologist living in Milan. I graduated in psychology at Università Cattolica of Milan with honours. My training has been in child neuropsychiatry at IRCCS Galeazzi of Milan, at Yale University-Yale Child Study Centre, and at Guy's and Thomas' Hospital of London-Evelina Children's Hospital, where I have had a clinical and research formation. Today I work as a consultant psychologist at IRCCS Galeazzi-Centro Tourette e Sindromi Correlate: I am active in tourette syndrome patients' rehabilitation, using a cognitive-behavioural approach.

Tara Black (Toronto)

For over ten years I've worked in various capacities including positions at youth treatment centres, front-line child protection, Sessional Lecturer for the University of Toronto, co-manager for the 2008 Canadian Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect, and Supervisor of Research and Programme Evaluation at the Child Welfare Institute at the Children's Aid Society of Toronto. I received my PhD and MSW at the University of Toronto, and Bachelor of Science degree from Queen's University in Canada. I am currently a consultant working on research projects such as provincial child welfare data systems, youth reintegration services from youth justice, and the 2013 Ontario Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect.

Steering group members

Michael Gale

As programme officer for Latin America and the Caribbean at the Global Fund for Children, I work to identify, support, and strengthen promising grassroots organizations working with vulnerable children. I have a Master's degree in Latin American studies (University of Texas at Austin) and Bachelor's degrees in international studies and Spanish studies (American University).

At the Global Fund for Children, we envision a world where all children have the opportunity to learn, grow and thrive. Learn more at:

www.globalfundforchildren.org

Clare Hanbury

For 30 years, I have been working with children and child-focused organizations to embed the idea of children's participation into government and non-government child health and education programmes and in numerous countries. I have done this through writing education, training materials and good-practice guides, training trainers, curriculum development, campaigning, speaking, mentoring, and teaching.

Clare's current passion is for her new initiative: the 100 Project (2013). This project distils child-friendly health action information for children and delivers it by mobile phone. For more information on Clare's work and the progress of the new project go to:

www.clarehanbury.com
www.lifeskillshandbooks.com

Andy McCullough

I have worked around social care issues for the past 27 years and currently work as Head of public affairs and policy for Railway Children, an organization that works globally with children at risk on the streets. I have acted as a consultant and policy advisor around developing responses to runaways and was the founder and current chair for The English Coalition for runaway children and sit on a number of National steering groups who focus on running away and being street involved. I have managed projects and initiatives (nationally and internationally) within the drugs, youth work and mental health fields.

I have published a number of papers and am qualified in youth work, counselling and management.

Dr Lorraine van Blerk

I have 15 years' experience researching with street children, challenging issues of inequality and injustice. A key aspect of my research has been developing ethical and participatory frameworks. I have published two books and over 60 articles from my research. I am currently working with StreetInvest on a multi-site longitudinal project investigating street children's capabilities.

Currently I am Reader (Associate Professor) in Human Geography at the University of Dundee. More information about my research and publications can be found at http://www.dundee.ac.uk/geography/staff/lorrainevanblerk/

Louise Meincke

I am the Advocacy Director at the Consortium for Street Children, with responsibility for campaigning and lobbying. During 2011, I provided technical advice and support for the drafting of UN Resolution 16/12 on street children, and have subsequently worked closely with the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) to implement the recommendations of the Resolution – this included authoring the participatory 'Children's Voices' research paper for the subsequent UN OHCHR report on street children.

I am a founding Trustee and Company Secretary of a youth engagement charity, a Fellow of the RSA and was runner-up for the Sheila McKechnie Foundation's 2006 'Economic Justice' award.

Bo Viktor Nylund

I am a protection and legal practitioner who has focused on state and non-state actor responsibility and accountability in the implementation of human rights throughout my career.

Since 1998 I have worked with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) in the areas of corporate social responsibility, child protection, humanitarian policy and planning, and children's rights based in Bangkok, Colombo, Khartoum, New York and Geneva. In 2010, I also supported the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in the development of an Office-wide strategy for engagement in humanitarian action. Currently, I head the newly established Corporate Social Responsibility Unit in UNICEF's Private Fundraising and Partnerships Division where I have led the development and roll-out of the new Children's Rights and Business Principles, the Workbook 'Children are Everyone's Business' as well as the UNICEF internal strategic framework and capacity development for advancing children's rights within business.

For their support in guiding and organising input into the research:

Thanks to Jacquie Irvine from Good Values; Emanuela de Matteis, Pooja Khan, Christine Rupnaraine, Charlotte Brierley and David Schofield from Aviva.

2. Executive Summary

The purpose of this Global Report is to transmit the findings, process and recommendations of an international study conducted throughout 2012 with the participation of young people and staff members in four projects in India, Canada, and Italy, supported by Aviva under its 'Street to School' Programme. The study aimed to surface young people's perceptions of, and understand their experiences in, services they receive under Street to School. Careful attention is paid in this report to the ways in which young people chose to express themselves. Wider lessons are drawn for other specialized interventions designed to help street-connected children and other vulnerable young people in complex circumstances[1].

Four local reports have also been produced: One for each of the participating projects[2]. Each offers a wealth of information gathered with children and contextualized by a local researcher with project staff members and other stakeholders. Each report explains research methods and techniques used, along with findings from and recommendations for the specific project. The four local reports are as follows:

- **Toronto, Canada:** 'Young people's experiences in the co-op housing programme. PASSPORT 2012: A study on YouthLink's Street to School supported programme in Toronto, Canada' written by Tara Black with YouthLink.

- **New Delhi, India:** 'Children's Voices and Expressions at Rang Birange Sitare. PASSPORT 2012: A study on Save the Children's Street to School initiative in New Delhi' written by Bijita Devsharma with Save the Children, India.

- **Milan, Italy:** 'Re-cercando Insieme! (RE-searching Together!), written by Carlotta Zanaboni with L'Albero della Vita.

- **Jharkhand, India:** 'Young people's experiences in the Giridih district of Jharkhand – a Jago Foundation Project, supported by CRY' written by Neeraja Phatak with Child Rights and You (CRY).

The study is known as 'PASSPORT 2012' - where PASSPORT stands for 'Participatory Assessment of the Street to School Programme: an Opportunity for Reflection and Testing'. PASSPORT was a journey of opportunity to test a participatory research approach and generate lessons for practitioners. Three innovative lenses were brought to the research:

- Young people were viewed as **service 'end-users'** capable of contributing valuable information to improve service design[3].

- Projects were understood as **'social innovations working in complex situations'** allowing a new Developmental Evaluation (DE) approach[4] to be used, to support their ongoing development[5].

- This research was seen as a useful **testing ground for new UN recommendations** urging that 'children, as experts on their own lives, participate in information gathering, analysis and dissemination of research' and encouraging participatory research with street-connected children and families to inform policy-making and design of specialized interventions'[6].

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[1] A stand-alone 14-page 'Global In-Brief' version of this report is also available at www.aviva.com/street-to-school/research
[2] All local reports are available online at www.aviva.com/street-to-school/research
[3] Street-connected children are more commonly asked about their situations and lives, than about services they receive. See Thomas de Benitez, Sarah (2011) State of the World's Street Children: Research. CSC: London, p. 17-19 on participatory research studies with children in street situations.
[4] As articulated in: Gamble, Jamie A. (2008). A Developmental Evaluation Primer. McConnell Foundation: Canada and Patton, Michael Q. (2011) Developmental Evaluation: Applying Complexity Concepts to Enhance Innovation and Use. The Guilford Press: NY. More traditional evaluation approaches aim to test or validate programme models rather than support their development.
[5] See Patton 2011:23. Under this approach, project staff and young people alike are considered as allies in the research, rather than under the microscope
[6] See http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Children/Study/OHCHRBrochureStreetChildren.pdf Articles 76 and 77.

Headline findings

i. Young people had positive opinions about the benefits received in all four projects, including **improved well being** and **better future prospects**.

ii. **Profiles varied in crucial ways:** from children with strong street connections (Rang Birange Sitare) to children with no street connections (Jharkhand and Milan projects) for whom services were designed to be preventive. Such differences have critical implications for counting numbers of 'street children' supported, assessing children's progress and design of services.

iii. Young people were mainly enrolled in school and/or training, and showed **improvements in attendance, attitude to school and/or grades, except for children with strong street connections** for whom school attendance was proving difficult to sustain and drop-out rates were an ongoing problem.

iv. **Young people experienced 'added value' in all four projects**, attaching importance to service aspects not expressed in goals, strategies or reports. They particularly valued **supportive relationships with service staff and having fun while learning.** Positive spillover effects and virtuous cycles were identified, whereby young people achieving goals such as positive schooling experiences also experienced higher self-esteem or better mental health.

v. **Young people** – irrespective of age, sex, ethnicity, country or nature of circumstance – were able to **generate useful, distinctive insights about services they received** and reported that the experience was empowering.

Headline recommendations

i. For the **Street to School** Programme: Formulating clear criteria about children's connections to the street will help guide selection of partner projects and improve monitoring and evaluation of children's achievements.

ii. For **Practitioners offering interventions for young people in complex circumstances**: Developing supportive relationships between project staff, teachers, other carers and young people should be considered an underlying strategy to achieve wide-ranging goals – and should be explicit in planning.

iii. For **Researchers**: Participatory research involving service end-users and project staff should be an integral part of service evaluations.

iv. For **Funders**: Ensure a focus on numbers does not obscure deeper transformations of children's lives. Qualitative indicators of well being should be included in reporting to help capture the essence of young people's success in making sustainable life changes.

v. For **Young People**: Ask to be consulted about decisions that affect you and services you receive. It is your right and you may be able to improve things.

This Global Report is organized as follows: Chapter 1 explains the importance of listening to young people, before introducing both the research study and the four participating projects within their organizational contexts. Young people who agreed to participate in PASSPORT 2012 are introduced in Chapter 2, before Chapter 3 introduces each of the four Street to School projects in turn. Young participants provide insights into projects as 'end-users' of their services in Chapter 4. The most interesting findings were unexpected – key surprises are identified and discussed in Chapter 5. Local researchers then explore experiences of the study in Chapter 6, surfacing opportunities and challenges of conducting participatory assessments. Finally, Chapter 7 offers the main findings drawn across all four sites and recommendations for different audiences. A bibliography lists all texts used and an Appendix sets out the research process.

3. Glossary

Bal Sabha – Children's Collective

Bal Sansad – Children's Parliament

CRC – UN Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989

La Bussola, meaning 'The Compass' is Albero della Vita's Care Centre on the outskirts of Milan, Italy

NGO – Non-Governmental Organization (also sometimes known as a Civil Society Organization)

PASSPORT 2012 – Participatory Assessment of Street to School Programme – an Opportunity for Reflection and Testing in 2012

Rang Birange Sitare – meaning 'bright and colorful stars' is Save the Children, New Delhi's Education and Activity Centre in Nehru Place

S2S – Street to School (Aviva's Global Community Development Programme)

4. Introduction

This first chapter divides into three sections. Section A sets out the case for listening to young people's opinions about services they receive, and taking these seriously as inputs into service design. Section B explains Aviva's commissioning of a qualitative, participatory research study to elicit young people's views and experiences of their services in four projects supported by Aviva's Street to School Programme – in Jharkhand and New Delhi, India, Toronto, Canada and Milan, Italy. Section C focuses on the research project itself, known as 'PASSPORT 2012', which adopted a new approach to evaluation to enable young people in complex circumstances, and the projects providing them with services, to be involved as active participants.

A. Listening to young people

> Listen to young people's opinions about support services they receive, and take them seriously as valuable inputs into service design, planning and evaluation.

Every young person has a right to be heard and for her or his opinions to be taken seriously. The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) makes this point clear for even quite young children: ***"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."*[7]** We also have detailed guidance from the Committee on the Rights of the Child on how to interpret this right to be heard in different settings[8]. PASSPORT 2012 presented **an exciting opportunity to explore ways of listening to children and youth**[9] – collectively recognized in this report as 'young people' – in a variety of services supported by a global Corporate Responsibility Programme[10].

In this report we listen to young people in precarious circumstances – some work or live on the streets; some have been placed in care by a Family Court; others are the first in their village to go to school; yet others 'aged out' of care with nowhere to go. They are not accustomed to having their voices heard. Young people are sometimes simply ignored, or felt by adults to be unreliable informants, too inexperienced or too damaged to be capable of reflecting or expressing valuable ideas. And in highly demanding environments, even the most sympathetic adults are overstretched, sometimes overwhelmed, reducing the opportunities they have to listen to young people. PASSPORT 2012 offered **an important opportunity to demonstrate to young people that we are actively listening** and taking their opinions seriously.

Young participants in our research are 'end-users' of innovative services provided by leading Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). PASSPORT 2012 has allowed **a rare opportunity for young people to inform decision-making about services they receive.** Listening to service end-users, or clients, is increasingly accepted by policy-makers as a vital part of evaluating service delivery. How much more important is it, then, to listen to marginalized young people about their experiences of services? And to listen in ways that are not tokenistic, offering young people the spaces, time and support to participate meaningfully on their own terms. In this project, adults initiated the study while young people were informed, consulted and shared in some of the decision-making[11].

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[7] CRC 1989, Article 12 – full text at http://www.unicef.org.uk/Documents/Publication-pdfs/UNCRC_PRESS200910web.pdf
[8] Committee on the Rights of the Child General Comment No. 12, 2009 – full text available at http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/crc/comments.htm
[9] Using UN definitions of a child as under 18 years old and youth as aged 15-24 years.
[10] This meant, among other things, taking full account of Clause 132 of General Comment No. 12 in which 'The Committee urges States parties to avoid tokenistic approaches, which limit children's expression of views, or which allow children to be heard, but fail to give their views due weight. It emphasizes that adult manipulation of children, placing children in situations where they are told what they can say, or exposing children to risk of harm through participation are not ethical practices and cannot be understood as implementing Article 12.'
[11] In terms of participation, this places the study somewhere between Rungs 5 and 6 on Roger Hart's Ladder of Young People's Participation (see Appendix for detail and Lyford Jones for Save the Children UK, 2010: 12)

PASSPORT 2012 has also been **sensitive to young people's contexts** – to be able to assess young people's capacities to form a view and better understand what they wish to convey. "Research has shown that information, experience, environment, social and cultural expectations, and levels of support all contribute to the development of a child's capacities to form a view."[12]

Our approach to listening for this research was ethical, holistic – which meant listening carefully to project staff and other stakeholders as well as to young people – and systemic, which meant giving weight to the importance of inter-relationships between young people and others, including those who were absent (such as families in some projects). We have been guided by the spirit of learning from young people within their service contexts. This report gives precedence to quotes from young people, and also listens to project staff, other informed stakeholders and the local researchers, inviting the reader to listen as well as to read the accompanying commentary. We understand 'voices' as offering substantive opinion, not just as illustrations of research findings.

Young people were in the main very happy to be consulted, delighted to share their ideas through play, drawing, performance or in conversation. Some were initially wary, including adolescents who had suffered abuse:

"When people ask me, 'Tell me something about yourself; what do you like more and less; and what would you like to change?', I feel in difficulty, I don't know what to answer"

(Sabrina, Milan)[13] – evidence of the importance of ensuring young people feel comfortable, secure and engaged in the research. Others were more keen to please listening adults than to express critical insights, notably in cultural contexts where children's participation has traditionally been discouraged:

"The Bal Sansad [Children's Parliament] has been set up so that the school functions properly, the bell is rung on time to ensure children can study properly and also play properly [...] The Bal Sansad is very good for us"

(Bal Sansad Ministers, Jharkhand), evidencing the importance of context in carrying out participatory research. For many, their experience of participating in research, sharing views and being actively listened to was fun, enjoyable and empowering. Some took time out of busy schedules to share their experiences:

"I want to give back... they gave to me so it's just like, I don't know, when people give to me I want to give back... this is an opportunity [to give back]."

(Madelaine, Toronto)

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[12] Committee on the Rights of the Child General Comment No.12, 2009: Clause 29
[13] Sabrina and all other names of young participants are pseudonyms. All quotes, drawings and photos used in this report are drawn from the local reports, unless stated otherwise. This particular quote is drawn from the local report about L'Albero della Vita's service in Milan. Quotes drawn from any of the other three reports will also be referenced geographically as Toronto, New Delhi and Jharkhand.

B. Aviva, PASSPORT 2012 and participating projects

Aviva commissioned PASSPORT 2012 as a qualitative, participatory research study to find young people's views and experiences of services in four partner projects supported by Aviva's Street to School Programme – in Jharkhand and New Delhi, India, Toronto, Canada and Milan, Italy.

Aviva launched its **flagship Corporate Responsibility Programme 'Street to School' (S2S)** in 2009: "Street to School is about championing the needs of street children around the world. We recognize that every child living on, working on or otherwise connected to the street has the right to fulfil their potential."[14] Working through partnerships with more than 20 charities, **Street to School aims to help children working and living on the streets get back into school or training.** Street to School's goal is to 'help at least half a million street children by 2015'[15] through focusing on five strategic areas: Awareness and prevention; Outreach; Health and wellbeing; Safe places; Education and training; supported by an Advocacy strand.

In 2011, Aviva saw an important opportunity for Street to School to **pursue key new recommendations from the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights**[16] to: 'Encourage and support participatory research with street-connected children and families to inform policy-making and design of specialized interventions.' (Art. 77c) and to conduct qualitative research in which, "…children, as experts on their own lives, participate in information gathering, analysis and dissemination of research," (Art. 76). As a direct result, **Aviva commissioned PASSPORT 2012 in early 2012**, a research project designed to surface and reflect on children's perceptions and experiences of services supported by the Street to School Programme.[17] PASSPORT 2012 stands for Participatory Assessment of Street to School Programmes – an Opportunity for Reflection and Testing in 2012. The acronym aimed to convey a journey beyond frontiers – an adventure. Aviva envisaged PASSPORT 2012 as a qualitative study adding new knowledge to information gathered from the Street to School Programme's existing quantitative measurement framework.

Projects supported by Street to School use a broad range of approaches, with some features in common:

i)   They address gaps in service provision, which prevent some young people from realizing their rights.

ii) They aim to bridge gaps between children's realities and existing services, rather than to create alternative services.

iii) They target young people in complex circumstances who have experienced multiple deprivations.

iv) They provide specialized interventions tailored to meet children's circumstances within their specific local contexts.

v)   They are social innovations designed and run by NGOs, which depend on attracting funding for their survival and development.

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[14] See http://www.aviva.com/corporate-responsibility/street-to-school/
[15] See http://www.aviva-street-to-school.com/
[16] The UN's Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights commissioned a global study on children working and/or living in the street in 2011. The High Commissioner submitted her report to the UN Human Rights Council, which approved and welcomed her guidance to States. The study and report were supported by Aviva, in a unique cross-sector partnership with the OHCHR, the Consortium for Street Children and UNICEF.
[17] Aviva commissioned a second study 'The Reach Model Evaluation' in the same year, using a summative evaluation approach to test effectiveness of a model of support developed by Railway Children for runaways in the UK and delivered by Safe@Last. The Reach Model Evaluation report is available at https://www.railwaychildren.org.uk/media/90291/reach_-_full_report.pdf

When Aviva put out a call to its partners, inviting expressions of interest in participating in PASSPORT 2012, several responded and five were selected as potential candidates[18]. In February 2012, four Street to School partner NGOs signed up to the research[19]:

- **Save the Children India's Rang Birange Sitare** Education & Activity Centre in New Delhi.

- In Toronto, Canada, **YouthLink's Co-operative Housing Program**.

- A partnership between **Child Rights and You (CRY) and Jago Foundation, supporting Children's Collectives and Children's Parliaments** in rural Jharkhand, India.

- On the outskirts of Milan, Italy, **L'Albero della Vita's After-School Labs** in its La Bussola care home for abused children.

Table 1: An overview of the four Street to School partner projects in the study

NGO and Location	YouthLink, Toronto, Canada	Albero della Vita, Milan, Italy	CRY & Jago, Jharkhand, India	Save the Children, New Delhi, India
The Street to School supported project	Co-operative Housing Program	After-School Labs in La Bussola Care Home	Children's Collectives & Children's Parliaments	Rang Birange Sitare Education & Activity Centre
Scope and focus	Four houses in Toronto. Three are female-only houses (for three, four or six youth) and one is co-ed for up to four youth.	Supplementary educational activities in La Bussola, a foster home for children who have suffered abuse at home.	Village-based Children's Collectives and school-based Children's Parliaments in rural, Dalit communities.	An education and activity centre for street-connected children in a busy commercial centre.
Social innovation	Housing support to help marginalized youth become independent within society.	Educational techniques to improve school success and stimulate learning.	Collective support by children to encourage children to attend school.	Educational support to help children access formal schooling.
Young people in the project	Total of 16 vulnerable youth, aged 16 to 21 years, residents at any one time.	Total of 10 children, aged 5 to 15, referred by Italian courts due to abuse or other family problems.	Total of 228 children in 45 villages – first generation of children in school, in a district with high poverty levels and few services.	Total of 223 street-connected children, aged 6 to 15 years, attended at some time during 2010-2012.

[18] Selection was made by Aviva's S2S Programme managers as both broadly representative of the partners supported by S2S experiences and on the basis of interest expressed by the partners themselves. One S2S partner in Ireland expressed interest and was selected but in early 2012 regretted that it was unable to commit to PASSPORT 2012 because of major internal re-organization.
[19] See Chapter 3 for more detailed information on the work of these four NGOs supported by Aviva's S2S Programme

C. About the research

PASSPORT 2012 was a qualitative research study, which adopted a new approach to evaluation to enable young people in complex circumstances, and the partner projects providing them with services, to be involved as active participants, with young people's voices and experiences firmly at the centre.

PASSPORT had two main aims:

1. To generate, and learn from, **new findings about Street to School and the specialized interventions** it has fostered, by using a participatory approach to research with street-connected children.

2. **To draw wider lessons for specialized interventions** designed to help street-connected children through preventative work and support in accessing healthcare, safe places and education.

Three innovative lenses were brought to the research:

1. Young people were viewed as **service 'end-users'** capable of contributing valuable information to improve service design[20].

2. Projects were understood as **'social innovations working in complex situations'** allowing a relatively new Developmental Evaluation (DE) approach[21] to be used, to support their ongoing development[22].

3. This research was seen as a useful **testing ground for new UN recommendations** urging that 'children, as experts on their own lives, participate in information gathering, analysis and dissemination of research' and encouraging 'participatory research with street-connected children and families to inform policy-making and design of specialized interventions'[23].

A **Developmental Evaluation** approach was adopted[24], enabling its researchers to:

1. Capture and analyse **complex issues**

   Complex issues are: difficult to define; have tangled root causes; involve stakeholders with diverse values, interests and positions; vary from person to person, community to community; are constantly evolving; and have no obvious answers or measures of success (see Patton, 2011: 9, using Complexity Theory). Services supporting young people with multiple deprivations can best be understood as addressing 'complex' issues.

2. Use **systemic thinking**

   Systemic thinking is a component of Complexity Theory. It focuses on processes of change, rather than on snapshots, and on inter-relationships rather than linear cause-and-effect. It recognizes that young people with multiple deprivations live non-linear, dynamic and unpredictable lives. Linear thinking assumes 'an autonomous, self-reliant, self-determining individual making rational, knowledge-based decisions about what to do in his or her own best interest. It is a simple framing of how change occurs. But everything we know about how human beings really make decisions tells us that this model is far out of touch with reality' (see Patton, 2011: 118).

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[20] Street-connected children are more commonly asked about their situations and lives, than about services they receive. See Thomas de Benitez, Sarah (2011) State of the World's Street Children: Research. CSC: London, p.17-19 on participatory research studies with children in street situations.

[21] As articulated in: Gamble, Jamie A. (2008). A Developmental Evaluation Primer. McConnell Foundation: Canada and Patton, Michael Q. (2011) Developmental Evaluation: Applying Complexity Concepts to Enhance Innovation and Use. The Guilford Press: NY. More traditional evaluation approaches aim to test or validate programme models rather than support their development.

[22] See Patton 2011:23. Under this approach, project staff and young people alike are considered as allies in the research, rather than under the microscope.

[23] See http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Children/Study/OHCHRBrochureStreetChildren.pdf Articles 76 and 77.

[24] See the Appendix for an explanation of why Developmental Evaluation was considered an appropriate match for the research study.

3. Conduct **participatory research**, involving young people and also project staff in formulating and conducting the study as well as in analysing and representing study findings.

Participatory research is a process of sequential reflection and action, carried out with and by people rather than on them. Local knowledge and perspectives are not only acknowledged but form the basis for research and planning. […] The key difference between participatory and conventional research methodologies lies in the location of power in the research process. (Adapted from Cornwall and Jewkes, 1995: 1667.)

A multi-site, layered case study research design was used to draw lessons in each site 'systemically' and across all four projects. Each project formed a single case study, centred on young people – individually and/or collectively – who received its services, within the context of their organization and community. This design:

- created a way to explore young people's perceptions and experiences of their S2S service, while being highly sensitive to complex relationships between Young Person, Service, Organization, Community, Nation and World

- allowed information gathered to be organized in the same way across all four research sites (in Toronto, Milan, Delhi and Jharkhand), so that lessons could more easily be drawn from the four 'Case Study' sites for PASSPORT 2012.

Strong ethical frameworks were developed at each research site to guide engagement with young people. We worked to put in practice the CRC's guidance: 'All processes in which a child or children are heard and participate, must be...[19]:

Transparent and informative	Voluntary	Respectful
Relevant	Child-friendly	Inclusive
Supported by training	Safe and sensitive to risk	Accountable

PASSPORT 2012's research methodology is set out in the Appendix: The Research explaining the Developmental Evaluation approach and layered case study research design; including ethical and analytical frameworks; with references to information gathering methods and techniques, and the research timeline.

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[25] See the Appendix for a full citing of Article 134 of the Committee on the Rights of the Child's General Comment No.12

5. Introducing participating Young People – 'In Vivo'[26]

This chapter introduces young people who participated in the research using their chosen media, including interviews, drawings and collective activities, and contextualized by supporting information. We need to understand something of young people's lives, circumstances and aspirations to be able to assess their experiences of services designed to support them[27]. Notable from the information gathered are: the complexity of young people's lives; the diversity of their current circumstances; and differences in nature and strength of connections to the street.

Introduction: Young people introduced themselves in spaces where they felt comfortable, within an overarching approach and research methods that gave them varying degrees of control over the process, depending on the project and setting . We listened to what they chose to share and we learned from their body language and their silences too. Varying proportions of young people who were using the services at the time of fieldwork participated in the research (ranging from 31% of youth in YouthLink's Toronto-based Co-op Program to 100% in L'Albero della Vita's After-School Labs in Milan).

Table 2: Young people using services in 2012 who participated in the research

Name of S2S supported project	Number of young people using services during the research period	Number of young people participating in the research	Percentage of current service users who participated
YouthLink's Co-operative Housing Program	16	5	31%
After-School Labs in L'Albero della Vita's Care Home La Bussola	10	10	100%
Jago's Children's Collectives & Parliaments	228	91	40%
Rang Birange Sitare Education and Activity Centre	40	25	62%

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[26] 'In Vivo' literally means 'in Life' – or within the lived environment. It is used in qualitative research for coding a word, phrase or expression drawn directly, or 'live', from the information gathered. An 'in vivo' is identified as interesting or as triggering further thought (e.g. Bazeley and Richards, 2000:24)

[27] Projects and their services are introduced in Chapter 3. More detail about young people and services are available in each of the four local reports, from YouthLink in Toronto, L'Albero della Vita in Milan, Save the Children in New Delhi and CRY with Jago in Jharkhand.

'Batman'[28] is one of five young people to participate in the research at **YouthLink's Co-op housing program** – resident youth have busy work and schooling schedules. He was the one male to participate, from a Co-op population of three males and 13 females[29]. Batman is a 19-year-old Canadian youth who arrived at the Co-op in February 2011. Batman told it this way:

'Briefly, at 11, I was in a foster home. Then I went back home with my mom, then I went back to that place but only for a while, then on the streets for a while at 13, then a group home, then my Dad picked me up and he sent me to another group home in his small town for two years, then I moved back in with him then, um, he couldn't deal with me and apparently I gave him a mental breakdown. Then I moved in with my second cousin then I switched towns…I was sent to a shelter then I got my apartment but that didn't work out so I stayed with a friend. I went back to the apartment and now I came here [Toronto]. When I got here I was stuck in a shelter for one or two months and then, oh yeah, the group home. And then they finally kicked me out and I moved back to [a city] and I came back to the group home then to a shelter for a bit then I came [to YouthLink's Co-op] […] 'I've been thrown around a lot…'

Batman speaks of complex circumstances: chaos, rejection, the street and multiple deprivations. He said he has moved home 22 times as he struggles to finish school and prepare for adult life. Six years ago, Batman had strong street connections, but he has not been back. Before moving into the co-op, he had dropped out of school. Batman is a Crown ward (meaning the State has become his official guardian).'[30]

Amber is a resident in one of the co-op homes for young women. Amber and researcher Tara drew her story together:

'She wanted a pseudonym that was pretty "like a gemstone", so she is Amber. Amber presents as a sweet, kind, gentle, human being. She loves animals and has volunteered at the humane society. Her hair changed colours over the course of the evaluation taking on different shades of the rainbow. Amber presents as reserved, but seemed to enjoy our interactions. She described her relationship with her mother as "… better when we're not in each other's space all the time… My Mom was bothering me. She would use mental illness. [Mom would say], 'I know someone who is bipolar and they had a total breakdown and it took them one month to get over it and it took me three years'. I said 'Oh Mom'. I mean, I got rid of all the negative people in my life and I can't get rid of her because she's my Mom. So, she's my one negative influence. I love her and we still get along but we are such different people." Amber wants to finish high school and "get a hold of" her depression. Amber's father had mental health issues. He committed suicide when she was 15 years old. Amber has attempted suicide. Before moving into the co-op housing program, she was living in a hospital, even attending school in the hospital. Amber disclosed that she often has nightmares, so she stays up late at night, which has developed into sleeping problems.[31]*'*

Amber's depression and mental health issues resonated with other co-op residents. A 19-year-old with fragile mental health and a precarious family environment, she may be at risk of moving on the street, although she has developed no street connections to date. Unlike Batman, she did not drop out of school. Amber is struggling to move from teenagehood to independent living within society.

[28] His chosen pseudonym
[29] Gender is a difficult categorization in this context: at the time two young men in the co-op were transitioning to female. Given this context and our interest in allowing youth to explore and voice their own identities, gender may not be a helpful dividing principle.
[30] Black, 2013: 15
[31] Black, 2013: 14

Across the Atlantic Ocean, in **L'Albero della Vita's child care centre La Bussola**, on the outskirts of Milan, Sabrina is a 13-year-old who is also struggling with depression as well as '…a mild form of dyslexia'. When asked, as part of a research 'Tree Activity' to name three adjectives that best described her (see Fig. 1), Sabrina said:

> "My adjectives are nothing, nothing, nothing. For my future I want to leave."

One of ten children, six boys and four girls, in La Bussola, Sabrina and older brother Tom (15) have lived here since early 2009. They had a traumatic upbringing, including repeated aggression and abuse by their mother, and were sent by a Family Court to a temporary care centre for 20 days and then on a longer-term basis to La Bussola. Trial periods of spending weekends at home have been unsuccessful. Sabrina and Tom, who have no street connections, are expected to move to an adolescent care centre or a foster family in late 2013.

11-year-old Jane, from Sicily, also removed from her family after suffering abuse, describes herself as,

> "nice, generous, creative; I can keep control, I want to be an astronaut, I want to be adventurous".

Fig 1: Tree Activity, La Bussola

As part of 'La Bussola' research in Milan, each child created a leaf and wrote his or her name, surname, gender, age and nationality.

Then each chose three adjectives they felt best described them – together with a sentence about their future.

Young people then glued their leaves on to the branches of a tree drawn by the oldest member of the group.

Fig 2: Drawings by Jane, La Bussola

Creative swirls and colour give voice to Jane's positive outlook and optimism about the future.

10-year-old Jude, from Morocco, moves frenetically, finding it difficult to keep still.

"Yes, I'm brave"

he says.

"[In the future I will be a] Soldier, I will be rich, I will play in Milan team, I will have a Ferrari and I will be an ambassador"

His exuberance belies misery at being 'returned' to La Bussola from a new foster home within a day, after his prospective foster parents found him 'unmanageable', despite a process of familiarization. This rejection is the latest in a series of rejections.

Fig 3: Drawings by Jude, La Bussola

The first shows Jude scaling a ladder between his two 'homes' (family and La Bussola). The second, a peaceful, sunny landscape – but with no-one there… Jude feels caught.

Jude and Jane have no street connections and have never been out of school; they also share complex family circumstances, uncertain futures and ambitious aspirations,
but have very different outlooks on life.

Their circumstances, experiences and futures could hardly be more different, though, from those of 9-year-old Sonam, as she mentally prepares for her (illegal) arranged marriage next year. Sonam attends **Save the Children, New Delhi's Rang Birange Sitare Education and Activity centre** in one of Delhi City's busiest commercial centres.

"Sheela and her sister put vermillion in the parting of their heads and keep them covered. They are married…actually even I am engaged. This year when we go back to my village, I too will get married"

says 9-year-old Sonam in a hushed tone, as if revealing a secret. […] Yet she seems to have accepted what awaits her in the near future. During an introductory game Sonam refused to hold another boy's hand, conscious of her soon-to-be married status. Sonam lives with her family precariously beneath the Delhi Metro flyover near Nehru Place. [Sonam] wakes up early each morning and sets out for rag-picking…[32]

Sonam has strong connections to the streets, living in the middle of a busy traffic intersection with her family, and working by day, picking through rubbish in public spaces. As a girl, she is particularly vulnerable to rights violations such as early marriage, which usually implies giving up school too. Not all young people attending Rang Birange Sitare have such strong street connections. 15-year-old Mahesh has not lived or worked on the streets, although the street is where his social life plays out as his family lives in a roadside slum, and his schooling started late.

[32] Devsharma, 2013:16

"When I grow up I want to become a computer engineer,"

(see Fig. 4 below), 15-year-old Mahesh told me [...] He is tall, expressive and loves going to school.

"I had never been to a school till sometime back and used to loiter around aimlessly all day. Then this NGO came along and I started going to a school run by them. This was five years back. Now, I will appear for my class 10 exams this year."

Mahesh's life has been transformed since he began going to school and he feels very grateful to that first NGO-run school. Rang Birange Sitare to Makesh is a bonus, a space where,

"I come to study silently, away from the noises of the street and Didi of course helps us with our studies."

Mahesh [...] has dreams and is optimistic he can fulfil them.[33]

Fig 4: Mahesh drawing his aspirations

Mahesh and Sonam are consistent participants in Rang Birange Sitare. Bijita identified four profiles of children attending Rang Birange Sitare:

- Those who do a full day's work in public spaces – mostly rag-picking (finding items in the rubbish that they can sell on for recycling).

- Some do not work or go to school, but their families, like Sonam's, live together in the streets, on pavements or under high-level overpasses.

- Others, like Mahesh live in crowded roadside shanties and go to school as first-generation learners, but lack support and quiet places at home to study.

- Others live alone on the streets, battling with street survival and drug use.

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[33] Devsharma, 2013: p.15

Our fourth research site, also in India, couldn't be further removed from the bustling urban spaces where Sonam and Mahesh live. **Jago's Children's Collectives and Children's Parliaments** have been established in remote rural villages in Jharkhand, east India, where poverty levels are high and services are few. Here, children have no street connections and seem, on the surface at least, to live simpler lives, but as the first generation of their socially marginalized Dalit community to be in school, they are also constrained by long-entrenched traditions, which discourage creative thinking and children's participation.

I ask, "What is the purpose of the Bal Sansad [Children's Parliament]?" The Ministers [child representatives] tell us,

"The Bal Sansad has been set up to ensure the school remains clean and neat"; "Children get a good education", "All the teachers come to class on time and teach the children". "We sit in a circle divided along gender lines

– boys to the right, girls to the left – no-one tells them to do this, they follow their usual routines. I ask the children, "Do you know why we are here?"

"We were told some visitors are coming to see the Bal Sansad"

says one of the members,"[34] – in other words they had not been prepared for the research fieldwork.

It was hard to glimpse individual lives. Younger children were given 'a sheet of paper and colours and [I] ask them to draw – 'whatever you like, just use the colours'. The children sit in two groups, a girls group and a boys group. All the children in a group have similar drawings.' We get a tantalizing peek of creative thinking when we adapt Carlotta's research 'Tree Activity' from Milan (see Fig. 1 on page 21 above) to see how young people in this Jharkhand village express their aspirations. When invited to draw a leaf, they hesitate. They sit for minutes with blank sheets of paper, crayons poised, waiting for clues from the adults. Eventually Neeraja and I draw two quite different leaves – 'bolder boys take the cue and begin to draw, others lean over to copy them. ***"You can write on your leaf what job you'd like to do when you grow up… And you can say what kind of person you'd like to be, too"***; Girls write they want to become doctors, one a postman, another, an inspector. Boys want to become engineers […] One child is different,

Fig 5: After checking for permission one boy draws a mango – slowly, carefully, thoroughly (he's almost the last one to finish) – then sticks it onto the large paper tree.

"Can I draw a fruit instead of a leaf?"

he asks. He draws a mango – a yellow and green one with "plat" (pilot) written on it.[35]

Concluding remarks: In this Chapter, young people demonstrated an enormously diverse range of experiences and circumstances, across regions and within projects. Perhaps most starkly drawn are the differences between 9-year-old Sonam, rag-picking on New Delhi streets and preparing for marriage, and 19-year-old Batman, getting his life together in Toronto after a chaotic childhood of rejection and mobility. Some young people were found to have no connections to the streets; others are immersed in street-life. So how does each of the four projects in the research respond to young people with complex needs and aspirations? The following Chapter gives information about these four projects.

[34] Phatak, 2013:14
[35] Phatak, 2013:16

6. Four Projects under 'Street to School'

Projects supported by Street to School use a broad range of approaches, responding to diverse and complex issues faced by vulnerable young people, in different organizational, geographical and socio-political contexts. Four projects participated in the research and are the focus of this chapter. They are social innovations working to bridge gaps between young people's realities and existing service provision

Introduction: Aviva's Street to School Programme (S2S) supports projects run by more than 20 NGO partners. Four of these projects participated in the research and are the focus of this report. When Aviva put out a call to its partners, inviting expressions of interest in participating in PASSPORT 2012, several responded and five were selected as potential candidates[36]. In February 2012, four S2S partner NGOs signed up to the research:

- **Save the Children India's Rang Birange Sitare** Education & Activity Centre in New Delhi.

- In Toronto, Canada, **YouthLink's Co-operative Housing Program**.

- A partnership between **Child Rights and You (CRY) and Jago Foundation, supporting Children's Collectives and Children's Parliaments** in rural Jharkhand, India.

- On the outskirts of Milan, Italy, **L'Albero della Vita's After-School Labs** in its La Bussola care home for abused children.

They do not claim to be representative of all projects supported by Aviva, but show the diversity and reach of Street to School. This chapter introduces the four projects: how and why they came into being; their objectives, approach and main activities. More information is available about each project, as well as its organizational and geographical context, in the local reports for each project and on the respective NGO's website.

A. YouthLink's Co-op Housing Program, Toronto, Canada

Housing support to help marginalized youth become independent within society.

Total of 16 vulnerable youth, aged 16 to 21 years, residents at any one time.

YouthLink's Co-op Housing Program began in 1973 when a first house was purchased in the Greater Toronto Area[37] and expanded over the next decade to include three more houses and provide paid, live-in mentors in three of the four houses. Co-op Housing responds to an identified gap in service provision: to provide an affordable, safe place for vulnerable youth aged 16 to 21 needing help to find stability and prepare for independent living, and who are unable to live with their families. Originally the Co-ops offered longer-term residence, with an average stay of three or four years, but changes in government funding in the early 2000s squeezed residence to a transitional stay of around one year.

Fig 6: One of the four Co-op Houses

[36] Selection was made by Aviva's S2S Programme managers to be both broadly representative of the partners supported by S2S experiences and to respond to interest expressed by the partners themselves. One S2S partner in Ireland expressed interest and was selected but in early 2012 regretted that it was unable to commit to PASSPORT 2012 for difficulties caused by internal re-organization.
[37] Originally by The Big Sister Association of Metropolitan Toronto, who purchased the first co-op house in 1973, offering housing and support to help four young vulnerable women live independently. Members would make weekly visits offering mentorship and support.

YouthLink staff members shared that the co-op programme works:

"…to provide an opportunity for youth to prepare for independence in safe transitional housing […] they can make some mistakes, have some supports."

To ensure youth *"…have worked on something that will benefit them in the future: own apartment, long-term housing, finish school…"*

"…to finish growing up. Make sure that's as good an experience as possible."

While they are *"…contributing to the house and keeping themselves in school or in work."*

All four Co-op houses are within walking distance to public transport, furnished and include a shared phone, cable, utilities, computer, dishes and a shared television.

Youth are responsible for paying rent of CAD$325 per month[39], as well as their other financial needs. Mentors play a key role, offering help with life-skills, running house meetings, ensuring safety and programme standards, but they are not counsellors or social workers and also have other full-time jobs or attend college/university.

Emphasis is placed on helping residents improve their skills in the following areas:

- Responsible behaviour (e.g. paying rent);
- Attending a full-time school/work programme;
- Life skills (e.g. budgeting, cooking, self-care);
- Relationship skills (e.g. developing a peer network);
- Learning to deal with conflict through compromise/ negotiation;
- Capacity to plan for the future.

Success for youth is understood as highly personalized and responsive to each individual's circumstances. Success is *"a number of different things… depends on the kid… they are being constructive… not in jail… not pregnant… they have friends… they know how to budget… they plan for their discharge… they have money saved… how to furnish a place… so many things can be a success… do their income tax… they are healthy… go to the doctor… know where to go when they are in trouble… a huge list… having a social network."* [39]

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[38] This is a very low rent. Average rent in Toronto for a one-bedroom apartment is about CAD$1200 per month.
[39] All quotes and information here have been drawn from the local report by Tara Black, 2013

B. L'Albero della Vita's After-School Labs, outside Milan, Italy

Educational support to improve school success and stimulate learning. Total of 10 children, referred by Italian courts due to abuse or other family problems, aged 5 to 15 years of age

The After-School Labs started in 2010, as a new project supported by Aviva's S2S Programme, to help children in L'Albero della Vita's care home, called 'La Bussola', to improve their school performance. This recognised that children arriving in La Bussola "…need S2S school support because they have a trauma which disconnects them", found schooling difficult, had lost educational time, were affected by changing schools and seemed likely to drop out of school. The After-School Labs aim to:

Fig. 7: World of Words' Activity used by children in their assessment of the After-School Labs

- Increase children's chances of success at school, encouraging them to stay in school longer and do well there.

- Reinforce children's personal development, improving their quality of life by helping them feel comfortable and confident with core subjects.

- Provide individualized schooling support to help identify and pursue individual projects with each child.

"Volunteers, staff and other specialists are involved in the [After-School Labs]; children participate in assuming roles of individual responsibility, too." "[After-School Lab] activities are part of La Bussola calendar, they are now an integral part of La Bussola life." When asked to describe the S2S After-School programme in three adjectives, two key staff members said: "Amusing, moving, enriching," and "Original, creative and interesting".

Learning activities focus on three school subjects which children living at La Bussola find most difficult: Italian, English and Maths. They emphasize fun and stimulation of learning:

- Italian: Individual homework support once a week, plus educational activities such as "Think of a Word" (game about grammar) and "Fantasy world" (game to enrich vocabulary).

- English: In two age groups, twice a week, homework support plus activities such as "Garden of Desires" (learning to grow vegetables and fruits in La Bussola's garden – using English).

- Maths: Individual homework support once a week, plus educational activities such as "S2S Bar" (cooking, working out costs and selling produce using tokens to residents, staff and volunteers) and "Maths Olympiads" (a game using multiplication tables).

- Other occasional activities have included visits to Natural History or Science and Technology Museums.[40]

[40] All quotes and information here have been drawn from the local report by Carlotta Zanaboni, 2013

C. CRY - Jago Partnership, Children's Collectives & Children's Parliaments, Jharkhand, India

Collective support by children to encourage children to attend school. A total of 228 children in 45 villages – first generation of Dalit community children in school.

CRY (Child Rights and You) and Jago formalized their partnership in 2004, after three decades of work by CRY collaborating with a range of partners in India to address root causes of violations of children's rights. Jago had received CRY support from 1998 to address child rights' issues in five villages. Street to School has supported CRY-Jago's work since January 2011, in 45 villages in Jharkhand's Districts of Giridih and Koderma. The CRY-Jago partnership developed in response to specific issues identified as affecting children, particularly those from the socially marginalized Dalit community, in a state with high poverty levels, poor schools and few health facilities:

- High school dropout rates

- Child marriage

- False marriage (outsiders marrying girls to take them as house helps)

- Child labour

- Substance abuse

Jago raises awareness of rights, encourages provision of new government services and facilitates access to existing services. A key strategy has been the establishment of Village-based Collectives (Women, Youth and Children) to empower people to demand services. Jago works directly with 228 children in 45 villages and reaches out to a further 9,630 children in 51 other villages[41]. Almost all Jago's core staff and volunteers are representatives of Dalit communities in the area (including Jago's founder and director). Jago's vision is *"The society based on equality, brotherhood, equal treatment with women, equity and self governance".*

Fig. 8: Jago-Bal Sabha and Bal Sansad

A key strategy for realizing children's rights is through Village-based Children's Collectives (called Bal Sabhas) and School-based Children's Parliaments (called Bal Sansads). All children in a village are considered members of the Bal Sabha, which meet in village primary schools. Bal Sansads are formed of pupil representatives and meet in their middle schools.

Children's Collectives (Bal Sabhas) promote awareness of a range of child rights through peer-to-peer engagement. Children's Parliaments (Bal Sansads) ensure that all children enrol, attend and stay in school. "Of what benefit is the Bal Sansad?" The teachers say, *"The Bal Sansad has made the children responsible, they take tasks allotted to them seriously, they sort out petty quarrels between children, children now don't come complaining to us, they go to the Bal Sansads with their complaints (about their quarrels)."* There is immediate evidence of children being responsible – a bright-faced little boy peeps in: "Can I ring the bell? It's time."[42]

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[41] 'Middle' schools in the 45 villages attract children from clusters of surrounding villages, so this number represents the population attending Middle School (between Primary and High School).

[42] All quotes and information here have been drawn from the local report by Neeraja Phatak, 2013

D. Save the Children, New Delhi – Rang Birange Sitare Education and Activity Centre, India

Educational support to help children access formal schooling. Total of 223 street-connected children, aged 6 to 15, attended at some time during 2010-2012.

Fig. 9: Road-side shanties – home to children coming in the afternoon group

"Working with a focus on street-connected children had always been a part of Save the Children's line of thought. However, the real impetus in this direction came with an e-mail dated 14th January 2009 sent by our CEO to the entire Delhi staff. The mail titled "Right under our nose" was a very small yet a very powerful mail…it was then that a number of studies and preliminary situation analyses were done to understand the situation of street-connected children in and around this area".The e-mail (See Fig. 9 below) was written as Aviva was starting up its 'Street to School' Programme. As context, a survey conducted for Save the Children, India in 2011 had found 51,000 'street children' in New Delhi.[43]

Some 500 children were found to be living and/or working in and around the Nehru Place commercial centre.

From: thomaschandy[mailto:t.chandy@savethechildren.in]
To: delhistaff@savethechildren.in
Subject: right under our nose!
Sent: Wednesday, January 14, 2009 10:17 AM

Dear all,

Every day when we come up to our office, they are there, but we have stopped noticing them! They have become a part of the Nehru Place sky line and our existence. We probably are even getting their services indirectly. These are children doing hazardous labour in the dhabas and other places here, something which we want to make socially and culturally unacceptable.
Can we, Save the Children Delhi staff, do something to eliminate this and protect these children? If we can't, we are in the wrong business.

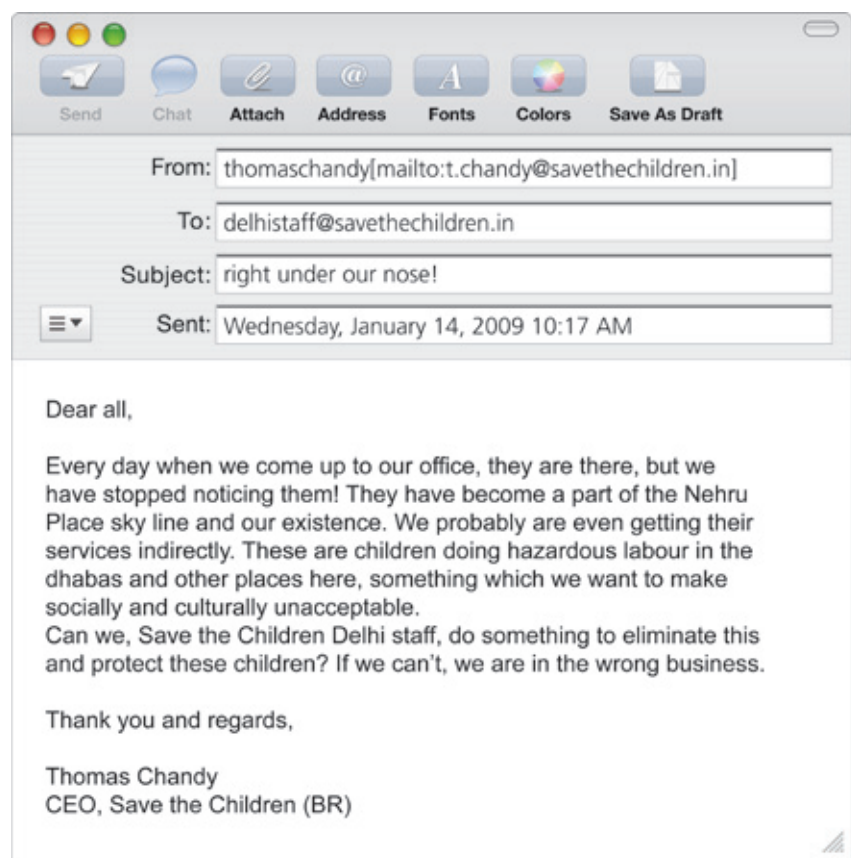Thank you and regards,

Thomas Chandy
CEO, Save the Children (BR)

Fig. 10: Internal e-mail from Thomas Chandy, as CEO of Save the Children, India

[43] See Save the Children (2011) Surviving the Streets: A census of street children in Delhi by the Institute for Human Development and Save the Children: 'Thirty six per cent of street children belonged to the category of children from street families. Children who work on the streets and returned home regularly constituted 29 per cent and children living alone on the street constituted 28 per cent of the total street children population in the city.' P.5

"…Our idea was perfectly in line with what Aviva was proposing through 'Street to School' and that's how the partnership began from December 2009…" The overarching goal of the S2S partnership with Save the Children, India, was ambitious: 'To create an enabling social and policy environment in India wherein adequate measures ensure the prevention of vulnerable children from being forced on to the streets.' To reach this overarching goal, S2S set objectives, including: 'By August 2011, at least 90% of the 700 target street children in the age group of 6-18 in Delhi and Kolkata are helped off the street and out of work, and have access to age-appropriate formal education and vocational opportunities.'

In Delhi, community mobilizers on the ground began to contact children in street situations through outreach work. In consultation with children, staff identified the need for a safe and child-friendly space. Rang Birange Sitare came into being in October 2010 as one of three 'facilitation centres' for children in Delhi supported by Aviva's S2S Programme[44].

Rang Birange Sitare is an education and activity centre that operates during the day for street-connected children, staffed by a Centre leader, a teacher, a support officer and a community mobilizer, to carry out the following activities:

(i) Providing life skills education to children through sessions and workshops.

(ii) Providing remedial education prior to linking to age-appropriate schooling.

(iii) Providing counselling support for trauma and drugs/substance abuse.

(iv) Providing services e.g. food, water, clothes, toilet and facilities for bathing etc.

(v) Working with target schools and teachers, and equipping them with inclusive learner-friendly teaching-learning skills through regular training.

(vi) Carrying out regular health check-ups and linking children to medical support.

(vii) Forming and strengthening an Advocacy group on the rights of street children.

Emphasis is on preparing children in a variety of ways, according to their circumstances, for education – and working with schools to enable them to stay there. Success is understood in terms of children's access to rights, including school enrolment and attendance.[45]

[44] The two other centres, in Lajpat Nagar and Okhla, are run by other NGOs in partnership with Save the Children. PASSPORT 2012 research addressed only Save the Children's direct intervention through Rang Birange Sitare.
[45] All quotes and information here have been drawn from the local report by Bijita Devrasharma, 2013

E. Concluding remarks

The four projects introduced in this chapter are highly context-specific, responding to particular needs emerging in young people locally and within parameters set by the different NGOs. Each programme supports **marginalized young people, although these have differing relationships with the street:**

- Rang Birange Sitare in Delhi interprets the 'street to school' remit literally, aiming to help children living and/or working in the streets get into school.

- Toronto's Co-op Housing supports an older group of highly marginalized youth who may or may not have spent time on the streets, helping them into mainstream society through services including school/college.

- CRY-Jago in Jharkhand and Italy's L'Albero della Vita aim to ensure children enrol and stay in school, although participants do not have street connections. These services can be understood as using school attendance as a strategy to prevent children moving to the streets later in life.

At operational level, projects have adopted **different approaches to support**:

- Jago can be seen as taking a 'bottom-up' approach, favouring local understandings and deep knowledge of the fabric of community, in partnership with CRY, which brings global understandings of children's rights to support.

- L'Albero della Vita has a 'top-down' legal mandate to look after children sent there by a Family Judge, yet fuses this with a philosophy to empower children, identifying and nurturing development of individual identity.

- Co-op Housing and Rang Birange Sitare have both identified – and aim to bridge – the breach between existing top-down services and individual young people's complex circumstances, negotiating their way resolutely through what Developmental Evaluation terms the 'muddled middle'.[46]

Together, all four projects were found to have **important features** in common:

- They address gaps in service provision, which prevent some young people from realizing their rights.

- They aim to bridge gaps between children's realities and existing services, rather than to create alternative services.

- They target young people in complex circumstances who have experienced multiple deprivations.

- They provide specialized interventions tailored to meet children's circumstances within their specific local contexts.

- They are social innovations designed and run by NGOs, which depend on attracting funding for their survival and development.

The following chapter explores young people's insights into their services as supported under the Street to School Programme.

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[46] Patton identifies the muddled middle thus: 'In the global village, change occurs in the middle, where top-down and bottom-up knowledge and interests collide, get entangled together, do battle, find common-ground and otherwise encounter real-life complexities as effective principles are adapted to local context.' 2011: 152

7. Young People's Insights into their Services

Young people were found to hold very positive views of the services they received, feeling improvements in their current wellbeing and optimism about future prospects. They placed particularly high value on supportive relationships and having fun activities integrated into delivery of services.

Introduction: Chapter 2 introduced young participants in the PASSPORT 2012 research. This chapter explores expressed insights into their experiences in the four services supported by Street to School, as described in Chapter 3. Through conversations, games, drawings and other activities over time, local researchers learned what young people valued about the services they received, their aspirations and ideas about how services might be strengthened. More detailed accounts from children within their specific contexts are available in each of the four local reports.[47]

A. Children's perceptions of Rang Birange Sitare, New Delhi

Children value this Centre as a place for learning and study, in line with a key Rang Birange Sitare goal to help children get into school. Children admire Centre staff and value their warm relationships, which generate a sense of safety and belonging.

Young people were particularly proud of the **learning and support for schooling** they received in the Centre – in line with Rang Birange Sitare's main goal of helping children get into school. "I have learnt drawing and colouring here. Earlier I did not even know how to hold a pencil," says a smiling 10-year-old Sunita (her drawing here below). She loves her big notebook – perhaps her most prized possession – she can tirelessly go over each of her drawings and writing exercises time and time again.

Sunita's drawings are full of smiling people with arms wide open.

Fig. 11: Drawing by Sunita depicting the members of her family living on grass in the open

[47] As in previous chapters, all quotes and information here have been drawn from the respective local reports from the four research sites, unless otherwise specified. In the case of the Italian language report, quotes and information have been translated into English by local researcher Carlotta Zanaboni.

Preeti is another 10-year-old artist:

"I love drawing"

she says. Preeti's world revolves around the Centre and school – where she is doing well. She depicted her favourite things (through her drawing below) as: food she eats Rang Birange Sitare (particularly rajma-chawal); people she meets at school and at the Centre (all her friends are her favourite people); drawing at the Centre (instead of watching TV – see picture bottom right); and – the only non-Centre activity – playing in a garden. In another activity Preeti used props to make a story about dressing up and looking beautiful. Her short story talked of feeling accepted, appreciated and admired – emotions she particularly relates to Rang Birange Sitare's teaching staff.

Fig. 12: Drawing by Preeti depicting her favourite things

Older boys appreciated the Centre's nurturing and quiet environment conducive to study:

"I come to the Centre to sit in the corner and study silently... when I face problems in studies, I seek [the teacher] Didi's help and she responds immediately"

says 15-year-old Pradeep who goes to school regularly and plans to take his class 10 exams this year.

"We come here because it is less noisy, there are no mosquitoes and we can quietly sit and study here...learn our lessons and do our homework"

shares Mahesh, who is also preparing for his class 10 exams.

Children valued **a range of specific improvements in their well-being**, from help in reducing work to support for solvent abuse. Continuing with Sunita's story – she and her younger brother, 7-year-old Prashant, still go rag-picking in the garbage every morning, but she feels things have changed for the better.

"Earlier we both used to go for rag-picking to far-off places along with my father very early in the morning. But now my father doesn't take us along. We mostly do it in the vicinity and then come to the Centre".

Other young people, who were not in school, transmit a sense of belonging to Rang Birange Sitare as a nurturing supportive space. 14-year-old Ratan was among the first children who came to the Centre

"I'm from the first batch, you know"

he said with pride. Efforts to help Ratan get into school have not been successful; after various absences he dropped out altogether. But he still comes to Rang Birange Sitare,

"I like to rest... watch TV..." even though he thinks he may not be *"allowed if I do not give up my addiction".*

"Yes, earlier I used to sniff [dendrite, or 'liquid paper'], but now I have stopped. It's not good. Didi also tells us it's not good and will harm us one day".

Ratan works as a rag-picker, scouring commercial rubbish for items he can sell for recycling.

Older adolescents were clearest about how their time in Rang Birange Sitare was **improving their future prospects**.

"We are looking forward now to our courses"

says Pradeep, the others nod and chip in.

"I'm going to do computing... software, Word, Excel and so on"... "...and English"..."This will help us to get good jobs"... "[Rang Birange Sitare] is helping us in this so we can get good jobs" [48]

With Centre support for their schooling and training, the older boys enthused about their plans for the future, aiming to complete schooling and vocational training with Rang Birange Sitare support – although nothing is taken for granted, they are grateful for what they have. Mahesh has his vision firmly based on his own efforts.

"When I grow up I want to become a computer engineer" and Sohan plans to become a painter.

Younger children in school were also **optimistic about the future**, from Sunita's aspiration to become a teacher (see drawing opposite) to Preeti's desire simply to stay in school and keep coming to the Centre.

Fig. 13: Sunita's aspiration is to become a teacher

[48] Log Book, Sarah Thomas de Benitez, Lead researcher on visit to Rang Birange Sitare 10th October 2012

Notable exceptions were 9-year-old Sonam, she does not see her future as being in her hands, but in those of her parents who she thinks have arranged her marriage already – and Ratan, struggling with his drug habit, who focused on more immediate needs,

"I want to sleep…"

Young participants felt comfortable enough in the Centre, within secure and supportive relationships with staff, to offer collective suggestions for strengthening the Centre. **Three types of recommendation were made**, each by an identifiably different group of children:

• A desire for **the Centre to reflect more of children's ongoing work** emerged from younger children who are in school, as expressed, for example, by Preeti pointing to the display boards,

"I want the (painted) walls to be changed. I am tired of seeing them like this for so long"

and by Sonia,

"I have made many beautiful pictures but feel sad that none of them have been put up on the walls here".

• A desire for **more physical play and recreational activities** surfaced among out-of-school children, for example,

"We don't have space to play here. Running, hopping, jumping cannot be done within this space"

explains Rayeez, one of several children who finds it hard to sit still for any length of time.

• The main request from adolescent boys in school was for **more quiet time:**

"I come here to sit and quietly study at one corner. Sometimes it gets a little noisy when there are many children doing different things." Prakash.

B. Children's perceptions of their After-School Labs, Milan

Children value their After-School Labs because they help them to study difficult subjects while having fun. They enjoy studying together, particularly when accompanied by staff members, and this has helped them enjoy school more in general as well as attain better grades – the main goal of the After-School Labs.

The ten young residents of L'Albero della Vita's care home, La Bussola, are required to take their 'After-School Labs' programme, which provides after-school support for English, Italian and Maths. This is the only one of the four PASSPORT projects in which young people are obliged to participate.[49] Even so, **satisfaction levels with the project were very high** and residents were quick to recognize After-School Labs as **helpful to their schooling:**

"And at school we are getting better, even grades!!"

exclaimed Jane, talking about maths, supporting evidence from their school reports.

More interestingly, **satisfaction rankings were highest for 'working with staff' and 'working together'**. Research methods were designed to mimic the format of After-School Labs, and included a range of activities including 'World of Words', 'Treasure Hunt', 'Tree Activity' and 'Thermometer'. Using 'Thermometer', children divided themselves into three mixed age/gender groups, labeled Black, Blue and Green, to collectively rank their satisfaction with After-School Labs. In the spirit of their After-School Maths activity, each group added up their grades and gave total 'satisfaction' scores. Green Group expressed the highest total satisfaction level of 44/50 (88%) rating 'liking the subject matter' and 'working together' highest (100%). Black Group had the lowest overall score of 36/50 (72%) ranking 'working together' and 'working with staff' as 100%, but saying they didn't feel they were learning new things (10%). The Blue Group (pictured here) ranked their total satisfaction score as 41.5/50 (82%) and rated working with staff and learning new things highest, both at 100%.
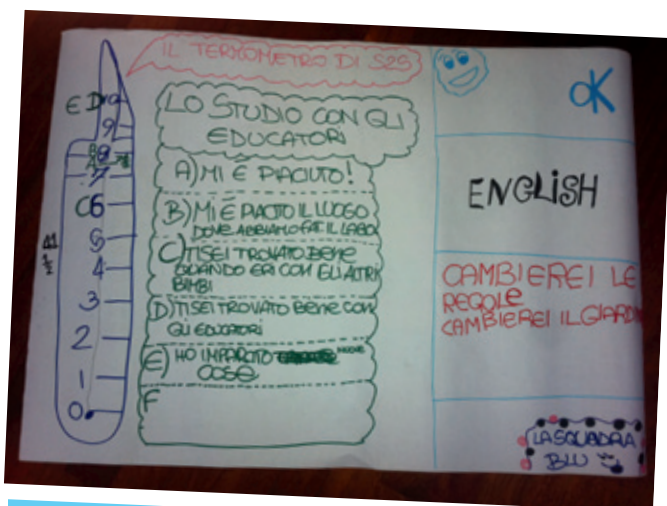

Fig. 14: Thermometer developed and used by children to rank satisfaction with their After School Labs: Blue Group rankings

[49] Children are placed by a Family Court in L'Albero della Vita's care home La Bussola, where all residents are required by the NGOs staff to take the After-School Labs initiated under the Street to School Programme.

In the discussion that followed, Green Group members explained,

"Yes, we prefer it when we don't study by ourselves, not on our own. With someone else it's better and much more fun!"

Black Group members added,

"We would like to always have fun while studying – it helps to make studying much easier!"

Collective working and having fun were the most desirable elements expressed.

Children identified activities they most liked and disliked in the After-School Labs:

- Two groups chose the 'Street to School Bar' as their favourite activity:

"I like Street to School Bar because I've tried something new" said Tom, adding that in S2S Bar,

"We prepare a real bar with cooks, waiters and cashiers and we serve food and drinks to adults".

S2S Bar involves dressing up, assuming specific adult job roles, learning new skills, reading recipes, writing menus and price boards, and exercising maths skills to charge adults the correct number of tokens.

"We all really like S2S Bar!" (Mark). *"I like all S2S fun activities, the ones in which we can play!"* (Sabrina).

- English, including English music activities, was most disliked by 2 groups.

"English is so difficult to learn…" (Jane).

While they may dislike or find subject areas difficult, La Bussola residents recognize that they are **motivated to learn when they have fun and can work together**.

The future for La Bussola's residents is uncertain: they do not know if they will return to their families or perhaps move on to a foster home. However, they frequently drew our attention to their **positive contacts with and feelings about family**. For example Mark said proudly:

"These beautiful shoes are a present from my mum"

and Tom made a point of referencing that "Sabrina received this dress from our mum".

Children are not actively encouraged to dwell on the future by La Bussola staff, so Victoria was intrigued by the 'Tree Activity' in which they were invited to think about what they wanted to become:

"For us, this is the first time we are writing about what we'd like for our future".

Almost all were optimistic and upbeat: Jane wrote on her leaf 'Astronaut, adventurous', while Jude ventured:

"Soldier, I will be rich, I will play in the Milan team, I will have a Ferrari and I will be an ambassador".

Only Sabrina expressed her prospects somewhat negatively:

"For my future I want to leave... I will go away".

Children worked in groups on proposals for strengthening the After-School Labs. Their priorities focused on **having more freedom of choice**:

- "We would like to change some rules at La Bussola and we would like to have a bigger garden."

- "Always for play-and-learn activities."

- More freedom to choose activities and subjects in the After-School Labs. "

Why don't we change subjects next year?"

– geography, history and physics were proposed as possibilities. They enjoyed the freedom allowed in this research to express their preferences through different media, for example:

"So we can really decide what to perform and wear at the final event?" (Mark).

And Alexia was thrilled to be able to bring her friends home:

"May I really invite six schoolmates to the final event?"

- "We'd like to have the possibility of more activities outside La Bussola."

C. Young people's perceptions of Children's Collectives and Parliaments, Jharkhand

Young people experience village-based Children's Collectives as structured spaces in which they meet, raise awareness of problems like child labour and young marriage, and encourage school attendance. Young people in the school-based Children's Parliaments are proud of their roles and value their responsibilities for keeping order and improving children's behaviour in school.

Young people from two villages and one middle school gathered for various research sessions – sometimes together, sometimes only as a Collective or a Parliament. In all sessions, children confidently asserted that their Children's Collectives and Children's Parliament have helped to raise awareness among their peers and families, about problems like child marriage and child labour, getting children to go to school and making sure that children are clean, neat and tidy. As a result, they say, attendance at school is high, child labour and child marriage have reduced, and children behave better. This supports quantitative evidence in reports that the Jago-CRY partnership in Jharkhand is pursuing its stated goals of helping children to access their rights and attend school. During one research session, 'All children sign their names on a sheet of paper. 58 signatures – and some in English! [Their second or third language.] It is immediate and striking evidence that all these children go to school – the first generation in their village.'[50]

At a research session with a Children's Collective, members discuss how they use peer group pressure to monitor and encourage regular attendance at school. The 'attendance monitor' asks a young boy, who has missed school the day before,

"Why didn't you go to school yesterday?"

"I had work, there was no one at home" he replies.

"Okay" says the monitor, *"Make sure you go from tomorrow."* (See photo below).

Fig. 15: Children's collective attendance monitor

[50] Phatak, 2013: 17

In another session, Ministers and their Deputies, in a Children's Parliament, explained how they work together by drawing a diagram of their specific roles and responsibilities (see photo opposite), including maintaining discipline, reminding children about good habits in personal hygiene, nutrition and uniform, and helping to organize sports and games. They understand the goal of the Children's Parliament as helping the school to run well, rather than helping children improve their capacities for participation: *"The Bal Sansad [Children's Parliament] has been set up so that the school functions properly, the bell is rung on time, to ensure children can study properly and also play properly. That's why the Bal Sansad has been set up. The Bal Sansad is very good for us"*.
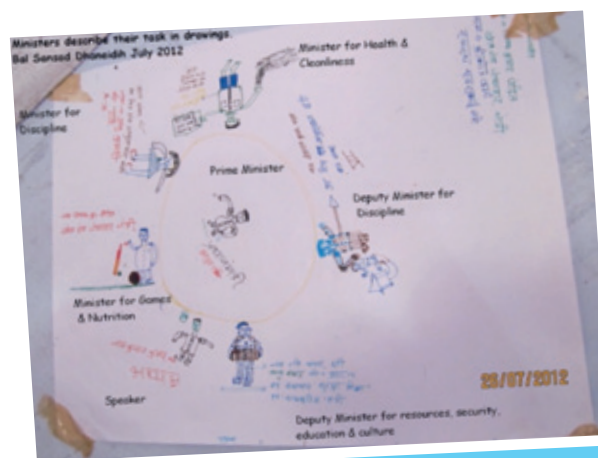

Fig. 16: Ministers describe the purpose of the Bal Sansaad

Young people were keen to talk about their commitment to raising awareness about child labour and marriage, increasing school attendance and doing well at school in academic terms, but also evidenced great **excitement and enjoyment at getting together as a 'Collective' to play games, do puzzles, draw and undertake other activities**. In research sessions, they were most absorbed, at ease and confident when given clear, limited, instructions (such as: colour a flag or draw your house), and most unsettled and hesitant when invited to be more creative (such as: create leaves for a tree, or do free drawing). Children's expressed perceptions of their Collectives and Parliaments – whether verbally, through drawing, role-play or games – were similarly limited to recognizing successes and listing activities, rather than to reflecting on feelings or voicing more nuanced opinions. This was exemplified in a research activity to help a Children's Parliament develop an Action Plan (2012-2013). Intended to enable children to voice their priorities in an empowering way, the Plan became a more limited exercise, in which children listed: two requests (for play kits and a hand-pump); three activities already approved by adults; and one activity suggested by the researcher (a campaign against spitting). Just two weeks later, the Parliament reported back: two activities had been successfully completed with the third underway, one request was granted with the second delayed, but the campaign against spitting was yet to start. Parliamentary Ministers expressed their satisfaction with progress, but no new activities were put forward or plans made to address the delayed activities.

All young people perceived their **future job prospects as considerably brighter than those of their families, because of schooling**. Girls wrote that they hoped to become doctors or teachers, one a postman, and another a school inspector. Many boys said they wanted to become engineers, one wanted to become a pilot and another to join the Border Security Force. No-one said they wanted to work on the land, be an animal herder, have a restaurant or otherwise follow in the footsteps of their un-schooled parents. However, even the most enthusiastic young people could not describe what, after leaving school, would be the next steps to attaining these jobs.

Young people in the Collectives and Parliaments made no specific recommendations for strengthening these services, but showed great enthusiasm for collective play activities and for using voice recorders and cameras in the research.

D. Young people's perceptions of Co-op Housing, Toronto

Youth value YouthLink's Co-op Housing program because it responds to them in a personalized way, as individuals. They appreciate the stable and nurturing environment that they feel is helping them to take solid steps towards independence.

Young people in YouthLink's Co-op Housing identified different ways in which **co-op living has helped them to find stability and take steps towards independent living.**

"... I had no plans whatsoever and now I have a five-year plan" (Amber).

Madelaine had successfully transitioned out of a rehabilitation program she called "sobriety living". Maria described feeling "safe and happy" after struggling with abuse at home from her stepfather. Jessica has enrolled in an alternative school. Batman sounded more ambivalent – he was struggling, but felt that being lost is somehow better now he has the tools to help him get back on track. "It's different this time being lost."

All five youth participants in the research said they had **improved their well being. Success meant a move into education for one and staying sober for another.** For Jessica one of the most important things was:

"...having a roof over my head and calling somewhere home."

For Batman, "I would be on the streets," since he had "...aged out of foster care." For Amber, the co-op "... gets kids, like, back on their feet." Madelaine felt fulfilled "When I got a job... I was so happy." Madelaine explained that in the co-op the "...main goal is to be independent and create structure for ourselves..." "When I think of independency I think of like not just financially but physically, emotionally... the way you take care of your own self." Before "I would spend frantically... unnecessary things... now I am more financially aware instead of splurging... being able to wake up on my own and get from point A to point B..." For Madelaine, her **co-op housing mentor was key**, as a person to turn to for advice but also for authority – she "holds you accountable. Also someone there will give you the kick you need if you are slacking... there's structure but not so much structure." For Jessica too, her mentor was

"really amazing... she was always there for us... she was just awesome... so understanding."

Mentors also understand the value of their role for co-op youth: *"Kids appreciate having someone in the house... not so old that you're a parental figure but not so young either"*. But approaches and connections are diverse: One felt like 'a Big Sister', another *"We always have moments with youth... honoured, privileged..."* One said one of the great things was *"the moments late at night with youth when they open up about things they've been carrying for years."... "I was talking about trauma from past experiences – sometimes this trauma goes as far back as early childhood. There will be years of their childhood or pre-teen years that they don't remember and they've told me that part of them is aware that this is to protect themselves from horrific memories of psychological, sexual or physical abuse."* Another looks to the future: *"There's no such thing as a full-time victim... what happened yesterday, happened yesterday, you have tomorrow"*.

Co-op residents felt optimistic about their prospects, attributing importance to both schooling and employment. During her time left in YouthLink's Co-op Housing, Madelaine hopes to attempt college again; she expects to "go to school because I want to and I want to get it done – be more ready for school." Maria too "... applied and got accepted [to college] then I failed math and could not get into summer school...I will finish school in December...then go to college for human resources." Amber hopes to be accepted into university next year. Batman and Jessica aim to finish high school.

Once they leave the co-op, after a maximum of one year in the programme, Batman plans to be out of school and in a stable job. Madelaine hopes to move in with her sister and be able to have her own dog. Maria aims, within five years to

"finish college, have a car, my own place."

Amber plans to pursue a Bachelor's degree – perhaps a Master's. She wants to

"get a hold of my depression... I want to go to [university]... If I get in then this will be a total success."

Jessica "will make sure when I'm discharged that I have a stable job and am graduating."

Their mentors, who believe these are not unrealistic goals, share their optimism. An experienced YouthLink staff member added, *"Success for me is going to be really different things for different people. And it may not be: 'I've got you all better now and I will launch you into the world."* It's: *"This is a little piece of your life and I hope that if you reflect later you can see things a different way or you can know or appreciate things about yourself that you've never been in a position to look at before'."*

The five research participants had suggestions on how the Co-op could make improvements to better help youth:

- "They've helped me... but make it easier for me... it's tough out there... connections or recommendations...more specifics I guess." (Jessica).

- Amber echoed a common feeling that some young people need **more help with planning:**

"One of the girls had no idea where to go education-wise and I know I hardly wanted to finish high school when I first came to the program. Finding somewhere to live after being in the co-op can also be problematic."

- They also wanted to give tips for other young people in similar situations. Jessica's advice was:

"Make sure when you leave you can do better things... able to achieve your goals. Sounds cheesy but it's true... be more independent." The co-op "gives you rules... clean up after yourself... you have to be productive... go to school or have a job... there are other girls here that can relate to your situation." Amber advised young people to **help each other stay on track:**

"Good for youth to keep youth on the right track... strictness is good in that sense."

E. Concluding remarks

In all four projects, young people drew attention to the importance they place on supportive relationships with project staff and on fun approaches to learning.[51] This despite a wide range of ages and diverse backgrounds – from 7-year-old children accustomed to street work, to 21-year-old young adults marginalized from housing, school and employment opportunities – and the broad range of services they experience. Optimism about their future prospects and a sense of improved well-being from participation in their services were common across project sites.

Young people's insights provide vital information for service design and improvements. For example: practitioners may motivate young people to participate in a challenging activity or to set higher goals for themselves by deliberately making learning fun; and if relationships are highly prized, then service providers may decide to invest more in their staff even at the expense of infrastructure or equipment.

While insights of service users are vital, they are only a part of the service experience story. The next chapter draws on perspectives of other people who play a role in the young people's service experiences – staff members, teachers and families, as well as observations by the researchers themselves – to enrich and contextualize young people's insights.

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[51] Although young adults in YouthLink's Co-op participating in the research opted for more traditional research techniques: interviews, conversations and meetings, rather than playful or 'fun' techniques

8. Exploring the 'Unexpected'

A range of diverse unexpected findings emerged from each of the four research sites. These were identified by reviewing children's insights and finding different interpretations within their service, organizational, reporting and/or community contexts. Surprises included undeclared or undervalued benefits for young people, as well as context-specific opportunities and challenges facing service providers. Key strengths, opportunities and challenges for each site are identified and explored.

Introduction: This chapter builds on insights by young people, reported in Chapter 4, into their experiences of the four services described in Chapter 3. Now we identify surprises emerging from trying to understand young people's insights within their wider contexts – both within the service/organization and local development contexts. These surprises take the form of strengths, opportunities and challenges which, although not readily recognized by young people, have been identified as important by service staff, teachers, families and/or local researchers. This chapter explores the most significant 'unexpected' strength, opportunity and challenge found in each project and summarizes them in Table 3 at the end of the chapter.[52]

A. Surprising findings in Rang Birange Sitare, New Delhi

i.   Key Strength: A core group of young people with weak street connections, outside the Centre's profile, were bringing welcome stability, a calming effect and good role models for children with strong street connections who were the main target group for this intervention.

ii.   Key Opportunity: Street-connected children who use solvents are attracted to the Centre, despite a lack of experienced counsellors available to help them. Current recruitment of counsellors presents a significant opportunity for the Centre to address solvent use.

iii. Key Challenge: Enrolment of children in school is high. But attendance and retention are problematic for a diverse range of reasons expressed by children, families, school teachers and Centre staff including bullying, boredom, poor support for children, and lack of teacher training. Finding sustainable ways for children to stay in school presents the Centre's most significant challenge.

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[52] As in previous chapters, all quotes and information have been drawn from the respective local reports from the four research sites, unless otherwise specified. In the case of the Italian language report, quotes and information have been translated into English by local researcher Carlotta Zanaboni

1) Strength: Stability and role models

Pradeep is one of a group of five adolescent boys who have no strong street connections[53]:

"I came to know about the Centre from my friend Mahesh. My house is on the roadside and it is very noisy there. I have difficulties concentrating, so I come here as it is quieter and I can study in peace".

These older boys were already in school when they first came to Rang Birange Sitare. They do not work or live in the street; their homes, although poor and informal roadside housing, are stable, with at least one parent earning a steady income as a driver or road stall owner. This group, who do not fulfil the street-connected, out-of-school profile for which Rang Birange Sitare was designed, have found in the Centre a quiet place to study, help for homework from trained teachers and access to vocational training courses to develop skills for the formal job market. More importantly for the Centre, these teenagers have brought unexpected benefits for younger street-connected participants who are out of school. The teenagers:

- are positive role models for younger children with less or no schooling

- have a calming effect on children with street-connections, many of whom display behavioural difficulties including violence and excitability

- bring stability to the atmosphere of the Centre – their regular presence and concentrated study provide a quiet routine.

2) Opportunity: Counselling support

For Praksah, the Centre is a space for rest and recreation away from the street. Prakash works at rag-picking almost the entire day and comes to the Centre irregularly. Ratan, his close friend and cousin said, ***"Prakash is often not allowed inside the premises as he is mostly in an intoxicated state as a result of his habit of sniffing fluids"***. Local researcher Bijita reports: During my fieldwork, several children like Ratan and Prakash came to the Centre either carrying dendrite (a fluid used for correcting texts and easily available in the local stationery shops) or under solvent influence. [On one occasion], two boys wanted to constantly go to the bathroom taking turns for sniffing. Nevertheless, Rang Birange Sitare has become a significant place for these young people, whether as a safe place to sleep, or an occasional place to rest, have a meal or watch television. Centre staff are concerned that they do not have the skills to offer counselling support for trauma or substance abuse – despite these being Rang Birange Sitare goals: ***"...amongst our various activities with children at the Centre, controlling substance abuse among children has been the biggest challenge and perhaps our weakest area of support and intervention"*** (staff member). As an organization, Save the Children, India is troubled that the Centre is unable to respond to young people in this situation and by the end of the research period, partly prompted by the research itself, they had renewed earlier efforts to recruit trained, experienced counsellors.

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[53] Rang Birange Sitare is designed for children with strong street connections who are out of school

3) Challenge: Attendance and staying in school

Children's enrolment in school is a key Rang Birange Sitare goal and 40 of the children registered with the Centre during the research period were enrolled at local government school 'Modi Mill'. However, 24 of the 40 were either not attending at the time of the fieldwork or had completely dropped out of school. Insights from children, staff and teachers revealed a range of problems:

"...But children in school fight and bully me a lot. There is this girl who [...] is like the class leader. She bullies children a lot. [...] Children at school threw away my sandals. So I can't go to school. It's so hot during afternoon time, my feet burn and hurt. [...] Even teachers ask us why we have come like this. So that's why I have been missing school." (Sonia, 10, who had stopped attending regularly.)

"Blue Bells[54] was good. But to this school, I just don't feel like going. [...] We know less than the other children in school. When we do things in an incorrect way, teachers scold us, even beat us up. I was beaten once. My mother keeps asking me to go to school. But I don't feel like" (Rayeez, 13 who has dropped out).

Rang Birange Sitare staff had another view *"...They feel lost and scared. There are many children who come to the Centre but are scared of going to school. For instance, Amir, Rayeez, Sonia – these brothers and sisters while all are enrolled and go to school often, come and share that if they don't finish their homework, teacher will scold them. They also say that they are incapable of understanding what teachers teach in class..."* (Centre teacher).*" At the same time, Modi Mill School teachers felt detached from the Centre: "...only about 10-12 children out of 40 who are enrolled here attend school regularly [...] I have not attended any training programme. I have just attended one programme where they informed us about the [Rang Birange Sitare] programme. I do not know of any training programmes for teachers...I haven't attended any,"* (Modi Mill School teacher). Other teachers seemed even less aware of the project and did not know the names of children from Rang Birange Sitare in their classrooms.

Although a key strategy area for Rang Birange Sitare is 'working with target schools and teachers and equipping them with inclusive learner-friendly teaching-learning skills through regular training', this strategy is not operational. Save the Children, India have identified increasing hostility towards NGO intervention in government schools, since the introduction of India's Right to Education Act in 2010, as a key obstacle to working with schools and teachers. Finding a workable strategy to boost children's attendance and retention in schools through enabling inclusive classrooms is the Centre's most significant challenge in enabling children to move from the street and into school.

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[54] Blue Bells is a private school in the area. Save the Children had a joint project with Blue Bells in 2010: 40 children were enrolled and attended Blue Bells for three months of that year. But the project closed in February 2011 after which children were enrolled into government schools.

B. Surprising findings in Children's Collectives and Parliaments, Jharkhand

i. Key Strength: Attendance at school is high and constant. This is a remarkable achievement for the first generation of children from Dalit communities in the region to have access to formal education.

ii. Key Opportunity: Awareness of the negative implications of child marriage for girls is growing, despite entrenched gendered attitudes. Reported successes of a gradually increasing age of marriage for girls suggest a significant opportunity exists to eliminate child marriage in the villages where the Jago-CRY partnership is active.

iii. Key Challenge: Membership of the Collectives and Parliaments is high. However, critical thinking, active child participation and leadership are undeveloped, hampered by traditional attitudes towards children. They represent the next key challenge for Jago.

1) Strength: High levels of school attendance

Middle School attendance by young people in the three villages participating in this study was surprisingly high and constant. This finding was unexpected, since one of the child rights issues facing Dalit communities, as identified by the CRY-Jago partnership, was a high drop-out rate from Middle Schools. It was clear from the research that Collectives and Parliaments are key factors in this success, as part of an integrated strategy:

• Children's Collectives and Parliaments work in tandem to 'play an important role to influence individual children by creating peer pressure and as a first step ensuring regular attendance.' Village-level Collectives are open to all children, so can reach out widely to encourage school attendance. Parliaments are school-based, so able to monitor actual attendance. Members of Parliament, as members of Collectives too, are able to identify children not in school and take action at village level.

• Children's Collectives and Parliaments are part of a wider integrated strategy to improve school attendance: mothers are taught to read: *"We know how to sign, we learnt from Jago, they taught us"* (Tuskiyo village) and are encouraged to send their children to school in Women's Collectives, which can be approached for support in specific cases of children missing school.

• Finally, extra support is given to help ensure girls attend school. *"All the children in our village go to school. When children finish primary school in our village they have to go to another village, we don't like sending our girls out alone so Jago helps our girls get admission to the same school, so that our girls do not have to walk to school alone,"* (Tuskiyo Village mothers)

Fig. 17: Girls and mothers discuss marriage and schooling with local researcher Neeraja

2) Opportunity: Eliminate child marriage

Jago recognizes that traditional customs of early marriage in Jharkhand still force some young people, mainly girls, to drop out of school – this was the second issue identified as a priority concern by Jago. Children's Collectives have addressed this issue – with some success.[55] They have a two-pronged approach: using awareness-raising activities among young people themselves; while collectively petitioning parents found to be arranging early marriage – as well as putting additional pressure through the Women's Collectives.

However, the practice continues and married children continue to drop out of school, according to our research, for at least three main reasons:

- Married children are stigmatized at school: I ask Jago Staff, "Why do children stop attending school once they are married?" They explain, "*The others tease them – "Oh now you are married why do you need to come to school"* or *"Where is your wife?"* Married girls are identified by the vermillion in their partings and a large red tikka on their foreheads. The staff say, *"The girls feel embarrassed to go to school with these trappings"*. More important is the change of status – a girl becomes a daughter-in-law once she is married and with that her status changes from 'girl' to 'woman'; and has to burden the responsibility of running the home.

- Parents and young people are under pressure to conform to tradition: 'A young girl sitting in the background says she no longer goes to school. […] She says, *"Once you are married, what's the use of going to school? You go to your in-laws"*. Mothers explain *"When we find a good match we cannot wait, if we wait the dowry price increases."*

- Underlying gender divisions, which uphold traditions such as marriage of young girls, are deeply entrenched, embedded in the daily activities, roles and responsibilities of the Collectives and Parliaments, despite Jago's clear intentions to improve girls' lives. Examples from the research include:

  - Children's Parliament: 'One of the groups [in the research session] has four boys and one girl – the Deputy Prime Minister [of the Parliament]; she can't get a word in edgeways and so sits and watches the boys.'… I asked the Prime Minister (a boy) what his Deputies did – "Oh nothing – they don't do anything. It's the Ministers who do the work'' – most of the Ministers in the group (10 boys and 10 girls) were boys while most of their Deputies were girls.

  - Children's Collective: 'Most of the voice recordings are those of the boys, the girls did not voice their opinions, although […] they are happy to sing. When this observation was shared with Jago Staff, they said, "Girls generally don't speak much"… Girls sang: ♫…Welcome guest to our home… Today joy is like many lighted lamps twinkling in our world… Our eyes have yearned to see you… forgive us if we make mistakes... we are ignorant, show us the way…♫

  - Supporting structures: Seven male and one female Jago staff accompanied a research session – the lone woman was a competent facilitator who moved quietly around the room offering children crayons, paper, tape etc. During three hours of interaction, while Jago's male staff were vocal and informative participants, the lone woman spoke to the room only twice, in support of statements made by her male colleagues.

While eliminating child marriage may be understood as a challenge more than an opportunity, Children's Collectives and Parliaments, with Jago's support, have already had important successes in this area. The opportunity now is for deeper reflection on gender discrimination and a move towards equality in the daily practices of Collectives and Parliaments.

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[55] A 2011 report covering all villages within Jago's area of influence calculated the following advances had been made: Out of 17 marriages - eight girls were over 15 years of age. Five child marriages were stopped. 121 adolescent girls reached high school and 13 drop-out adolescent girls re-entered school

3) Challenge: Increase child participation

Children's Collectives and Parliaments promote awareness and practice of a range of child rights using peer-to-peer engagement – an approach encouraged and supported by CRY. A surprising finding of the research, however, was that levels of child participation and leadership were low, with most tasks being assigned to children by adults. This was particularly evident in Children's Parliaments, which are more structured than the Collectives:

- **Elections:** 'Children in Dhaneidi tell me the process of constituting the parliament and appointing ministers. [...] Fifty children are selected by the teachers from Classes VI, VII & VIII. The criteria for selection are regular attendance, 'good children' and children who are good in their studies. Out of this group, Ministers are selected and the larger group agrees to this selection. [Jago's founder] clarifies this at a later meeting saying that children elect the members with a show of hands. Both adults and children believe the other side is making the choice'. Children confirmed they had not participated in an electoral campaign or a secret ballot.

- **Power:** When asked about the statutory government-provided midday meal at school, Members of Parliament say "Only sometimes we don't get the meal; The quantity is enough and nutritious. It is good we get the midday meal, we don't go home and eat; poor children don't go hungry; the food is according to a fixed menu [...]". Their Prime Minister added "...The quantity is enough and the food 'tasty' and nutritious...". 'Nutritious' is too technical an adjective for children to use I think to myself; when I share this with Jago staff, they agree that the children are unlikely in the course of normal conversation to use 'nutritious' to describe their meal, they must have learnt the term in school [...]. The surprise for me lay in an observation by a Jago Staff member that "Too much water is added to the khichadi (gruel)", making the meal probably less appetizing as well as less nutritious than it could be.' These statements together suggest that children have been coached to respond by their school and may feel unable to speak freely.

- **Planning:** One exercise in the research was to develop a Parliamentary Plan of Action 2012-2013. Development and execution of the Plan was however notable for its high dependence on adult assignment of tasks. As noted in Chapter 4 above, the Plan (see photo opposite of the Plan's agreed activities) laid out goals already approved by adults. Participants lacked training and experience in how to discuss and prioritize problems, set objectives, agree strategies, allocate responsibilities or agree times. Two weeks after the first research session, local researcher Neeraja returned for an update on how the Plan had progressed. Parliamentary leader, Kundan Lal, recounted:

Fig. 18: Girls and mothers discuss marriage and schooling with local researcher Neeraja

Planting of trees: We have planted shrubs and trees in and around the school * Will have water filters (in each class) cleaned: The filters have been cleaned in all the classes, one is left * Will ask for play kits: The play kits have arrived * Will ask for a hand pump in the school: This is delayed * Will ensure cleanliness: The cleanliness drive has begun * Start a campaign against spitting: Have begun a campaign against spitting; "We will start this campaign".

- **Inclusion**: Unusually, there was no sign of any children with a physical or mental disability in the villages where our research took place.[56] Parents and Jago staff responded to my observation saying, **"There are no disabled children here"**. Young people confirmed that they knew no children with disabilities. This may reflect different understandings of disability; that disabled children have not survived or perhaps are not socializing outside the home. A concern is that village children may unwittingly be excluded from Children's Collectives by lack of awareness about disability.

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[56] According to India's Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, 1.67% of Indian children have a disability.

Developing child participation and leadership will be a significant challenge for the Collectives and Parliaments. As well as requiring training and ongoing support by the CRY-Jago partnership, this strategy will need to engage with entrenched power structures within schools and the wider community.

C. Surprising findings in the After-School Labs, Milan

i.   Key Strength: An emphasis on 'play to learn' in the After-School Labs has had unanticipated benefits of improving children's social skills and their confidence in working together.

ii. Key Opportunity: Some children had assumed individual responsibilities for specific activities in the After-School Labs with positive impacts for their personal growth. After-School Labs could provide such an opportunity for all.

iii. Key Challenge: Staff and the researcher shaped research techniques together to make them relevant to the children. A challenge will be to translate this process into a regular element of After-School Labs evaluation.

1) Strength: 'Play to Learn' for social skills

L'Albero della Vita's After-School Labs emphasize fun and play to help stimulate academic learning. However, this approach had additional positive effects on children, beyond schooling.

- Accustomed in the Labs to the use of games for learning, children were **flexible, adaptive and quick to reflect together on learning**. During a 'Treasure Hunt' activity, for example, children pursued speed rather than quality *"They answered more questions than us but we first ran to the next stage"* (Nick). Children were then given a different incentive – they would win a better prize if their group answered more items correctly than the other team (the gold prize would be for quality), rather than finishing first (a silver prize was awarded for speed). On this instruction, children changed their approach: *"No, wait guys, we haven't finished answering the questions yet, then we can go!"* (Tom) and they started to take more time answering the questions. In the wash-up discussion, children eagerly reflected that this learning was helpful to their daily living not just school.

- Accustomed in the Labs to collective learning, using mixed ability and age groups, children actively **searched for roles that matched their individual abilities and knowledge while adding value to the collective** – a useful skill to bring to friendships as well as to collaborative school projects. Examples from the research included:

"As I can't write, may I help in colouring others' leaves?" (5-year-old Ben during the Tree activity);

"We are helping each other, I do what I can do, and the other does what she can!" (Tom) and *"I don't know if the others will be interested if I speak generally about Italy, maybe I can speak about Sicily, may I?..."* (Jane during World of Words, as a native Sicilian).

2) Opportunity: Freedom and Responsibility.

After-School Labs have **contributed to children building their confidence and assuming responsibility**. Tom wanted to show how seriously he takes his responsibilities in the 'Garden of Desire', an After-School Labs project that centres on growing vegetables and herbs chosen by the children: *"I was charged with the role of assuring the health of the garden"* and *"Sorry, I can't come with you because I need to go to the garden, and to see if everything is ok there"* (Tom).

Staff had noticed Tom's particular interest in the garden so offered him the opportunity to supervise the garden. He responded enthusiastically. La Bussola's Coordinator noted admiringly *"He is really competent and seriously committed to the garden"*. During our research, children showed on various occasions great enthusiasm for exploring individual creativity while working to a collective theme, as shown in the following two examples: each child produced a highly distinctive 'leaf' – in shape, colour and written comments – to glue to a collectively drawn paper Tree (see photo 3 on pg 24); and in an activity in which children were invited to mould plasticine into whatever shape they wanted, each child produced a different animal. Local researcher Carlotta was surprised both by the diversity of animals modeled and by the collective agreement to produce animals. Alexia explained: "It is because of the several games that we have done with animals", suggesting children together had acquired confidence about their knowledge of animals in After-School Labs – and yet each wanted to express their individuality through modeling something distinctive. Even working within a constrained legal environment, in which children's freedoms are limited, La Bussola staff have an opportunity to find ways to give all residents some freedom of choice to grow in confidence and express their individuality through assuming responsibility for a specific activity.

3) Challenge: Participatory assessment in La Bussola

Local researcher Carlotta was pleasantly surprised by the close, ongoing support she received from staff to help her weave her research into children's daily After-School Lab activities. Known as 'RE-searching together!' Carlotta's research activities were assimilated into care home La Bussola's regular schedule. 'I received the offer from staff to have a 15-minute meeting before every scheduled 'RE-searching together!' day in La Bussola to discuss the planned activity and to agree how to create the best synergy between staff, researcher and children' […] 'Staff reminded me to contextualize the final event to children in order to make clear to them the process of the research and the significance of the final event". Staff also expressed interest in specific research techniques used saying that they intended to introduce them into their daily activities. This positive, symbiotic relationship proved important to both researcher and staff as they shared ownership of the research process with the children. It will now be a challenge for La Bussola staff to develop participatory assessments into a regular element of internal evaluation for the After-School Labs and perhaps more widely in La Bussola, and to act upon the emerging findings

D. Surprises in YouthLink's Co-op Housing, Toronto

i.   Key Strength: Evidence of a 'virtuous cycle' in which impetus from stable, supportive housing led to more enthusiasm for school – creating more confidence at home, and finally a belief they could succeed in education.

ii. Key Opportunity: Mental health and sexual identity were reported by youth as significant issues they face – and have been able to address – in Co-op housing. There is an opportunity to raise the profile of these issues and talk about the successes of Co-op Housing to date in dealing with them.

iii. Key Challenge: Funding for the Co-op is precarious. With government funding focused on 'bed' numbers, and much funding of a short-term nature, a key challenge is show the Co-op represents an effective investment in youth with complex needs.

1) Strength: Co-op and schooling as a virtuous cycle

All youth interviewed in the Co-op expressed some desire to go to school, college or university. This was not unexpected, since one of the criteria for young people coming into the Co-op is to attend school. However, local researcher Tara was surprised by the strength of young people's new-found enthusiasm for schooling, which motivated them to strive harder in their Co-op living, which in turn helped their confidence to succeed in education, creating a virtuous cycle for young people who were not used to doing well in daily life or at school. The five youth participating in our research had won bursaries, gained entry to college, and were enjoying school – sometimes for the first time. As one example: In June 2012, Batman received a $1,000 bursary from his school. He said that receiving the bursary was the

"first time that I was valued as a person... (without having to worry about money) I can concentrate on other things like school."

He described how he received a standing ovation when he received the bursary. I interviewed his social worker, who described the scene like this: "It was in a banquet hall, 20 tables, ten people at each table, friends and peers... quite a special night... they get recognized... [Batman] was quite humbled to get that recognition so publicly. [He was] making lots of transitions... to a big city... By having his connection to YouthLink it boded well for this school. He received all four credits…attendance was near perfect.' With regard to Batman and his academic success, the social worker noted a ***"specific connection to stable and reliable housing."*** He explained: ***"If you know where you are going after school every day, it's easier to come to school the next day." There is a "...connection of housing and direct impact with how successful school will be... it's so clear to me. [Batman] is a great example of whenever it works really well, it works extremely well."***

2) Opportunity: Responsiveness of Co-op Housing to emerging issues

An unexpected finding was that young people talked about serious mental health issues, because mental health does not appear in either the Co-op profile for eligible young people or in Co-op expectations for youth to move from mental illness to wellness. Mental health difficulties – from depression, suicidal ideation and attempted suicide to family mental health crises – were expressed by all five young people who participated in the research. Amber spoke about her depression, Madelaine about her anxiety, and Jessica about being disoriented. Their mental health seemed to be improving or at least stabilizing during their time in the Co-op. Their depression or anxiety seemed to subside. I was surprised at how often "mental health" was mentioned and the focus on the experiences for youth. Youth and staff agree that increasing numbers of young people who apply for and who enter Co-op Housing face at least low to moderate mental health problems, and some show significant improvements in their mental well-being during residency. The Co-op's responsiveness to mental health as a growing concern and staff capacity to help young people towards mental wellness is an under-reported benefit of this service.

Sexuality is an even more sensitive emerging issue, which also does not appear in the Co-op profile or expectations for youth. Youth talked about sexual identity and the importance of having a safe place to 'figure it out'. Staff confirmed growing numbers of young people entering the Co-op struggling with sexual identity issues. In 2012, one of YouthLink's co-op houses effectively became a safe place for LGBTQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer) youth. This is not yet well known in the community. A social worker explained that young homeless males who identified as gay, transgender or queer faced more problems finding a placement in Toronto: ***"Female youth can go to [an agency] in a shelter or shared setting, but males have limited options other than YouthLink."*** A newly coalescing but not yet fully shaped 'goal' of YouthLink's Co-op Housing is to respond to what staff identify as a growing demand for housing from young people whose sexuality has caused them inner conflict, conflict with their families and perhaps within their peer community. In this area too, the Co-op's responsiveness seems an under-reported benefit to a particularly marginalized group of homeless youth.

YouthLink has an opportunity to raise the profile of emerging issues faced by homeless youth and also to demonstrate the successes of Co-op housing for young people struggling with particularly sensitive issues who have even more restricted options for housing placements than other homeless youth.

3) Challenge: Precarious funding

YouthLink's Co-op Housing faced significant funding cuts during the research period of 2012 as staff struggle to demonstrate Co-op Housing effectiveness. In an economic climate where funding decisions for sheltered accommodation are based increasingly on 'bed numbers' and on demonstrated cost-effectiveness, an intervention serving youth in complex circumstances is at a disadvantage. As a YouthLink staff member said, ***"Quantitative is easier to say: 'That program worked...' Other programs are not that easy to quantify but are just as good in the long run."*** This is because:

- 'Bed numbers' favour interventions that get young people out through the exit door faster (e.g. '50' people using ten beds over a year is preferable to ten people using the same ten beds in the same period). This means either accepting youth who have fewer and easier problems to resolve (i.e. have high capacity to become independent more quickly) or helping more vulnerable youth to make some progress before exiting them either to another service or independent living – but they are less prepared for that.

- 'Cost effectiveness' favours interventions that address single, specific issues (e.g. provision of training or completion of high school), because they are easier to demonstrate success. Interventions that address complex issues are harder to disentangle, their outcomes are harder to predict, effectiveness is therefore harder to measure, and costs are harder to attribute.

A key challenge facing YouthLink is to demonstrate to funders that Co-op Housing represents an effective investment in youth who face complex circumstances.

E. Concluding remarks

This chapter has drawn attention to a wide range of 'surprises' emerging from reviewing young people's insights within the wider contexts of their services and the location of each research site. A key strength, opportunity and challenge was identified from each local report, as summarized in Table 3 below. Chosen from all the unexpected findings from each site, these were the surprises that emerged most strongly in local researchers' review of children's insights with front-line staff and other stakeholders, supported by available project documents. Key strengths speak to the dedication and creative resourcefulness of those on the front-line of service delivery. Key opportunities build on progress already made by young people and service providers. Key challenges will need to be addressed to achieve service goals for the young people they support.

Table 3: Key unexpected findings in the four Street to School partner projects

Three Unexpected Findings	Rang Birange Sitare	Jago Collectives & Parliaments	La Bussola After-School Programme	Co-op Housing
Key Strength	A core group with weak street connections provide stability and role models for children with strong street connections	High, regular school attendance has been achieved in communities with little experience of education	Learning through play has helped children to improve their social skills and confidence in working with others	Stable housing and schooling have worked positively together help youth create a 'virtuous cycle' of success
Key Opportunity	Recruitment of specialist counsellors to address trauma and substance abuse	Children's Collectives to spearhead the drive to eliminate child marriage in villages	Make participatory assessments a regular feature of After-School Labs evaluation	Raise the profile of mental health and sexual identity in youth homelessness
Key Challenge	Reduce irregular attendance and desertion from school by children with strong street connections	Develop critical thinking, active child participation and leadership	Give each child the freedom to choose an area in which to assume and exercise responsibility	Demonstrate Co-op housing as an effective investment for youth with complex needs

9. Research as 'Lived Experience'

Even NGOs committed to realizing rights may not respect young people's right to be consulted about their services, if such organizations feel under-resourced and funders are unwilling to finance participatory monitoring and evaluation. PASSPORT chose to involve NGO staff – as well as young people – as active participants in the research, to empower young people and potentially transform service practices.

Potential pitfalls of this approach were mitigated to some extent by the research approach and methods. Time constraints and ensuring meaningful participation were major challenges. Children valued having fun through play, whatever the research techniques used, and participants were gratified by having their views respected and taken seriously. NGO staff were able to learn new techniques and improve their own capacity to conduct participatory research – still work in progress.

A. Introduction

This chapter highlights challenges and opportunities of putting into practice a participatory assessment within PASSPORT's established parameters: a one-year study in four different NGO services in diverse contexts. Earlier chapters have focused on young people's perceptions and experiences, as well as on the NGO services. This chapter also captures researcher perspectives about the research process.

An early discovery was that none of the four NGOs had conducted qualitative or participatory research, except on occasion as part of a one-off larger project. Nor did they have mechanisms to consult young people about the services they received – in part because these were not required by their funding organizations. This meant that the NGOs lacked experience and internal capacity to carry out participatory evaluations, although three of the four NGOs did have research departments with at least one trained researcher on staff. None of the young people who engaged with PASSPORT had experience of being asked for their opinions of services they had received, or had prior experience with participatory research.

A key decision was taken early in the PASSPORT study to recognize NGO staff, as well as young people, as key participants in a participatory assessment of services. This decision recognized that both young people and NGO staff would need to be actively engaged in the research, for it to be both an empowering process for young people while also having the potential to transform practices in service delivery. A child-centred, developmental evaluation approach was adopted to try to accommodate these dual, sometimes conflicting, priorities.[57]

B. Moving from a global frame to research on the ground

Within PASSPORT's overarching Developmental Evaluation approach and ethical framework, young people and NGO staff at each of the four research sites worked together with a researcher who was recruited locally by the NGO with PASSPORT support. Researchers got to know young people, introduced them to the aims of the research and the nature of participatory research, before consulting them and NGO staff on how young people could express their views about the services they received within the research time and NGO constraints.[58]

[57] See the Appendix for more information about the research approach and design.
[58] In the CRY-Jago research a different path was followed, because young people and Jago staff asked CRY, after the initial piloting phase, to recruit a new researcher with more experience of participatory research and a stronger rapport with children. In this case, participatory techniques were proposed by CRY-Jago staff, then tried out and modified by the second researcher, Neeraja Phatak, in her engagements with young people.

PASSPORT recognized that young people and NGO staff faced dilemmas. How could young people express their opinions of services they received, when:

- Service providers or other stakeholders might be present… Would this make young people feel intimidated, coerced or uncomfortable?

- Service providers would become aware of their views… Would this have repercussions for young people afterwards?

Assessments at each site addressed these concerns about power in different ways, with three elements in common:

- Local researchers were encouraged to focus on strengths. This meant inviting young people to express positive feelings and opinions about their services, while recording criticisms without seeking more information about them than was freely offered. This reduced young people's and NGO staff anxieties, allowing a more comfortable exploration of what worked well and through that, identifying obstacles to service improvement.

- Young people were invited to participate in the design, testing and implementation of research techniques at each site. In this way, young people were able to take some control by choosing how, when and where to express their views – and could opt out if and when they felt uncomfortable.

- NGO staff were invited to actively learn from young people. This meant encouraging staff to focus on empowering young people through consulting them as service users. NGO staff were encouraged to self-identify as young people's allies in the research, rather than as potentially under threat from what young people might say.

Research techniques varied in response to participants' interests, experiences and characteristics – and also to the opportunities and constraints of their services, their local contexts and local researchers' experiences. Techniques were piloted, then modified – or even totally changed – in response to young people's reactions. Arts-Based Approaches (ABA)[59] were chosen with children in New Delhi's Rang Birange Sitare by researcher Bijita, who explained ABA as '…increasingly being used as a therapeutic tool with people who have experienced trauma, have been victims of violence or have experienced complete or partial denial of rights. As such I felt it was an appropriate medium for street-connected children, who experience violence and multiple violations of their rights'. To assess the After-School Labs in Milan, local researcher Carlotta designed 'RE-searching together!' as a project in which 'children participate in proposing activities or themes, materials, use of spaces and time' fitting well with the After-School Labs' ethos of learning through play. Activities included 'a final event – as an exhibition of the research results and theatre performance' designed and run by the children. Youth in Toronto's co-op housing program chose more traditional formats of house meetings and interviews. Local researcher Tara noted that her 'Fieldwork involved attending house meetings, driving young people to meetings or shopping, recording interviews or simply youth and researcher having a cup of coffee or sandwich'... 'The positivity allowed them to focus on their strengths, which is consistent with a strength-based approach that YouthLink values.' In Jharkhand, India, local researcher Neeraja was surprised to find that the anticipated method of accompanying children in developing a collective 'Action Plan' was, in one community, unworkable: 'Developing an Action Plan was planned as a final outcome with 20 children in Budhiyatand [Children's Collective] but in reality 'not 20 but 58 children […] were all ready and waiting to participate. My Pilot Framework was put away and I engaged with the children on their terms, through drawing and outdoor games'…. 'An exercise that was planned to be an in-depth interaction metamorphosed into a broad-based participatory assessment'.

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[59] ABA are process-based practices that use play and movement, song and dance, drama and the arts to enable children to express themselves freely.

C. Local researchers 'living' the research

Challenges:

The two most significant challenges identified by PASSPORT's four local researchers were:

1. Insufficient time to conduct their participatory assessments, a difficulty exacerbated by PASSPORT's requirement of using a Developmental Evaluation approach.

2. Difficulties of engaging some young people in participatory research.

Insufficient time: A single participatory assessment has a limited reach and requires considerable preliminary work to prepare young people – and NGO staff – for meaningful participation. After start up, recruitment and briefing of local researchers, PASSPORT was able to allocate only a six-month period within which to conduct participatory fieldwork, to allow sufficient time in the one-year project for analysis, interpretation and reporting. All four researchers found the time allocated for each study had been significantly underestimated, particularly with respect to involving young people – and consulting with NGO staff – in the later stages of analysis interpretation and dissemination. In Tara's words: 'In retrospect, I needed much more time. I especially needed more time to consult with youth on the final product. I would have liked more time for recruitment, follow-ups, validation, and report writing […]. If I do something similar again, I will spend a lot less time on data collection, with more time allotted for analysis and writing.' Bijita added that the rigour needed to ensure a robust Developmental Evaluation process was very time-costly: 'Analyzing the data gathered and drawing interpretations from them within the DE approach was a challenging and rigorous task […] This process was long and complex but it provided me with important insights for my data analysis in future research.'

Engaging young people: Each researcher faced different challenges to engage young people in a participatory research process. For example, in New Delhi, Bijita found solvent users and some other street-connected children with limited attention spans and aggressive behaviours were unable or unwilling to engage regularly with Arts Based Approaches as part of a larger group. In Toronto, Tara was worried she had not been able to engage with some youth at all: 'Youth who were struggling (e.g. on suspensions) or not attending house meetings (e.g. due to other commitments) were not interested in participating in the research. […] I felt as though I could have spent more time trying to reach youth who did not volunteer.' In Milan, Carlotta worked hard to enable older, adolescent, participants to feel comfortable in a research process that included children as young as six years old. Her approach was to encourage adolescents to assume roles of responsibility and leadership in collective work.

Opportunities:

Local researchers identified the most significant opportunities as:

1. Working with NGO staff, as allies, which allowed for a richer understanding of young people's experiences plus service recommendations coherent with NGO realities.

2. Flexibility of the approach allowed for creativity and room to explore interactions.

Working with staff: In Toronto, Tara found rich details about the Co-op Housing Program by regularly contextualizing information gathered with young people – 'A rare opportunity was working closely with the co-op coordinator and mentors. During the active phase of data collection, the Co-op coordinator and I were meeting weekly, and I was seeing a mentor at least once per week (each house met once every two weeks). […] I believe this helped me, as the researcher, understand YouthLink's co-op housing program in an in-depth manner.' In new Delhi, Bijita trained project staff in Arts Based Approaches and worked with Save the Children to take action on smaller findings emerging from children during the research itself: 'My good relationship with Rang Birange Sitare staff was an integral part of the research process. Their eagerness in participating in the research and learning the ABA approaches were evident from their active presence in the Facilitator's Orientation workshop […] Since the research was a participatory process, Save the Children took opportunities to challenge and learn about the research as it unfolded and to incorporate early recommendations that emerged through mutual discussions and exchanges at meetings.'

Flexibility: Neeraja, in Jharkhand found, 'My research was able to explore interactions among children, between girls and boys; between children and adults etc. […] I found DE actively encouraged me to explore these interactions and appreciate complexity. […] The case study design in a real-life context provided an open framework to understand the situation in a holistic manner, taking into account their all important organizational and local contexts from "what is" to "why it could be so". In Milan, Carlotta was able to work together with children very creatively: 'One of the greatest innovations of PASSPORT 2012 is the choice of a qualitative method of research for analyzing resources and limits of S2S Programmes […] 'RE-searching together!' gave birth to many ideas for working playfully with children'.

D. Young People's participation in the research

Challenges:

PASSPORT's main challenge was ensuring participation was 'meaningful' for young people[60] within the project's limited timeframe. This was not identified as a challenge by the young people themselves, who had no prior experience of participatory research, but rather by the PASSPORT research team, including the local researchers. Young people's participation in their assessments of services varied by degree across the four sites, limited by time and according to local circumstances and conditions of NGO services. For example, in Milan, all young residents of La Bussola care home were expected by staff to participate in assessing their After-School Labs. This meant it would be difficult for children to decide to opt out if they wanted to. In practice, they negotiated their participation with researcher Carlotta, for example: Tom on occasion excused himself to tend to the garden, his area of responsibility in the home; Victoria opted out of part of a session to complete her homework; and Sabrina's initial reluctance to participate in the final performance for RE-searching together! –

"I don't want to participate - or I can just stay in the audience"

was addressed by discussion of several other options, from which she chose a more active back-stage role:

"OK, I'll be the costumer".

In Jharkhand, opting out was definitely not a problem – rather, young people were hugely enthusiastic and eager to be included, with many more children crowding in to participate in each session than had been anticipated. A challenge in Jharkhand was to tailor research activities to young people's capacities and levels of development: 'My attempts to engage with children in full analysis were very limited and constrained by children's lack of experience in collectively engaging in planning, creative thinking or evaluation', and to accommodate much larger numbers than planned in ways that would be empowering. At the request of the young people: 'Small group discussions were replaced by discussions in the larger group; and individual activities with group activities, for example, drawing together on a large sheet of paper.'

Opportunities:

Young people liked two particular aspects of their participation in the research process:

1. Having fun through play

2. Feelings of importance and being taken seriously.

Having fun through play: In the three NGO services catering for younger children and adolescents (rather than the Co-op Housing Program's youth), research participants consistently chose 'play' in various forms to express opinions about their services – including drawings, both individually and collectively, board games, puzzles, plasticine modelling, treasure hunts and dramatic performance. Their participation throughout the research period was generally high, attendance was strong and behaviour was enthusiastic. That said, not all forms of play were successful: early researcher ideas to make comic books, create photo scrapbooks, use dance and make videos all bit the dust during early pilots, because either time or regularity of attendance in sessions was insufficient to allow for good use of complex activities. In Toronto's Co-op Housing for young adults, participating youth were more comfortable with house meetings and informal interviews/conversations than with researcher attempts to use play, videos, electronic media or writing, which young people thought would take up too much of their time.

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[60] PASSPORT used the following interpretation from Save the Children of 'meaningful' participation, summarized as when: Children and their ideas are treated with respect; Aims and outcomes of their involvement are explained; Children volunteer to participate – or decide not to; The process and experience builds confidence and self-esteem and is empowering; Child-friendly methods are used –fun, interesting, engaging and in line with children's evolving capacities; Opportunities suit the development needs of the child, and are in line with what children chose; Time is factored into project-planning – it takes time to do participation well and it shouldn't be a one-off event (from Lyford Jones, 2010: 15)

Feeling important and being taken seriously: Young adults in Toronto's Co-op Housing regarded their participation in PASSPORT as an opportunity to help others by sharing their views, for example Madelaine:

'I want to give backv they gave to me so it's just like, I don't know, when people give to me I want to give backv this is an opportunity [to give back]'

– a view shared by her house-mates. In Jharkhand, members of the Children's Parliament said they felt proud to have been asked for their Plan of Action and for being involved in the research. In Milan, Victoria reflected on what was most important for her, "For us, it is the first time we are writing about what we'd like for our future," and Alexia was thrilled to be able to swell the audience for the final research performance, "May I really invite six schoolmates to the final event?". These are a few of many expressions that reflect, through use of a participatory research process, incremental contributions to young people's confidence, self-esteem and empowerment.

E: NGO perspectives on the research

Staff in all four participating NGOs were highly receptive to briefings about the Developmental Evaluation approach and PASSPORT's understanding of participatory research. They liked the idea of an inclusive process in which NGO staff were active participants in the journey. They self-identified as social innovators working with young people in complex circumstances, operating in what the Developmental Evaluation approach refers to as the 'Muddled Middle' where: 'In the global village, change occurs in the middle, where top-down and bottom-up knowledge and interests collide, get entangled together, do battle, find common-ground and otherwise encounter real-life complexities as effective principles are adapted to local context'.[61]

NGO staff who participated actively in PASSPORT regularly shared their views about the research process, as it developed. From the beginning, YouthLink staff wanted research evidence about their Co-op Housing Program and viewed a participatory process as a rare opportunity for youth to tell their story in an empowering way: *"… at the end of the day what I am really hoping is that we can find kids who really feel genuinely that this programme has helped, and who can help other kids and tell that story to partly affirm their own experience and actually to help others".* CRY also placed great value on the organizational learning for Jago and CRY about ways to conduct participatory research themselves: *"The PASSPORT research, which is all about capturing children's voices, is therefore a perfect extension of CRY's own belief in a child's right to expression. This research is the first of its kind that CRY has participated in and therefore provides huge learnings for CRY – at various levels."*

Towards the end of the fieldwork, staff in Milan were encouraged by children's enthusiastic participation in the research: *"If children weren't stimulated or interested, they wouldn't have produced such creative, tidy and detailed wall charts."* They built on this reflection to make a more general comment about organizational learning: *"Through this research, children are giving us educational recommendations for learning at La Bussola".* At project end, Rang Birange Sitare's Coordinator summarized the research process for Save the Children, New Delhi as: *"The journey of these last eight months was indeed very interesting and informative. It gave the team several useful suggestions and insights about the programme and the improvements were done as early as possible in line with initial observations and findings. Discussions with Sarah and Bijita were particularly useful in understanding [Rang Birange Sitare] from a different perspective. The study process also informed us about the diverse interventions happening in other countries. The Development Evaluation approach has been a new learning for me and the team."*

[61] Patton 2011: p. 152

F. Participatory research and service delivery

An aim of PASSPORT was to encourage NGOs to embed participatory research with young people into existing regular monitoring and evaluation of their services. This meant that NGOs would need to be convinced of all the following:

1. Young people have an unalienable right to be consulted about the services they receive.

2. Listening to – and acting on – young people's opinions will improve service delivery and/or outcomes for young people.

3. NGOs have or can attract the necessary resources to be able to conduct regular participatory research.

In practice, PASSPORT was able to make progress on each of these fronts, although to varying degrees each NGO remained doubtful about having sufficient human resources and time – with the finances they imply – without active support from funding organizations.

1. **Right to consultation as service users:** All four NGOs value and strongly encourage young people's active participation as leading actors in their services. Two of the four participating NGOs list children's participation among their essential organizational values. Staff at all levels of the four NGOs agreed that young people had the right to be consulted as service users but, faced with scarce resources and with young people who were deprived of access to a number of their rights, tough choices had to be made based on NGO capabilities and funding. In Jharkhand, local researcher Neeraja encouraged CRY-Jago to take a qualitative leap to put their joint ideals of child participation into daily monitoring and evaluation practice. Children's Collectives and Parliaments, she suggested, "…will benefit enormously from Jago staff – and ideally teachers – who have been trained and exposed to good practices in child participation." Building on CRY-Jago's successes in enabling almost all village children to access secondary education, they had now reached a stage at which, "Children should be trained in participatory methods to research with other children and with adults, as well as contribute to Jago's external reports."

2. **Young people contributing to improving services and/or outcomes:** PASSPORT was able to demonstrate to each NGO through the research process how listening to young people could improve service delivery in very immediate ways. In New Delhi for example, local researcher Bijita reported, "Save the Children took opportunities to challenge and learn about the research as it unfolded and to incorporate early recommendations that emerged through mutual discussions and exchanges at meetings into the workings of Rang Birange Sitare". By the end of fieldwork, several emerging findings had already been acted upon, for example: Work had started on finding a nutritionist to consult with children and together come up with a list of nutritious and enjoyable meals; a new recruitment drive had started for a counsellor experienced in working with substance use and violence; regular weekly consultations with staff and children had been instigated; and staff were discussing sub-dividing the single space in Rang Birange Sitare to allow for a quiet study area and a counselling area, as well as a larger activity space.

3. Resources to conduct participatory research: PASSPORT was able to improve NGO human resource capacity to conduct participatory research by sharing appropriate research techniques and specific instruments with NGO staff. In New Delhi, Bijita brought a research method to Rang Birange Sitare, in the form of Arts-Based-Approaches, that staff were very keen to learn. Facilitation workshops were organized for staff members to learn about and test new skills, then staff members participated in introducing and using them with children. In Milan, Carlotta used a different strategy, shaping her research techniques to fit within the service to be evaluated (After-School Labs), so that 'RE-searching Together!' could become an After-School Lab activity in itself. In this way children, researcher and staff worked together to create and use research techniques such as 'Thermometer', 'Tree Activity' and 'Treasure Hunt'. Through this process, staff became highly engaged in the research. "Soon and unexpectedly, I received the offer from staff members to fix a 15-minute meeting before every scheduled 'RE-searching Together!' day at La Bussola to prepare for the activity that was going to start, and to create the best synergy between staff, children and researcher." Their engagement both improved the activities and exposed staff members to using new 'play' activities to consult with children, ideas that have already been incorporated into their daily work. CRY has adopted the Ethical Framework developed for this research more widely to help frame its activities throughout India, while YouthLink intends to consult its Co-op Housing residents in Toronto on an annual basis.

10. Main Findings and Recommendations

While Chapter 5 summarized specific findings from each project, this chapter draws together main findings from across the four projects as follows:

A. Three common findings across the four projects

B. Three Street to School Programme findings

C. Four findings about the research process.

Examples from PASSPORT 2012 are used to support the findings and key arguments are summarized, to be understandable without reference back to detailed findings in the body of this report.

Recommendations form the second half of this chapter:

• Three top priorities plus Two or Three secondary priorities are recommended for each of the following audiences: NGO service providers; Aviva's Street to School Programme; funding agencies and corporate responsibility programmes; researchers; and young people.

These are rooted in PASSPORT 2012 findings and refer back to appropriate findings and specific local reports as appropriate.

Main findings

A. Three common findings across the four projects:

1) **Young people expressed very positive perceptions of their experiences in the four Street to School supported projects.**[62] Examples of numerous, diverse expressions[63] include: "I have learnt drawing and colouring here. Earlier I did not even know how to hold a pencil" – 10-year-old Sunita, said about her participation in New Delhi's Rang Birange Sitare (Sunita has also reduced her hours working in the streets). In Milan's La Bussola, where After-School Labs provide collective schooling support, 'Green Group' members explained,

"Yes, we prefer it when we don't study by ourselves, not on our own. With someone else it's better and much more fun!" and

"And at school we are getting better, even better grades" said Jane, talking about maths. Young people talked about experiencing improved well-being across a range of areas. In Toronto, Madelaine said of her experience in Co-op Housing,

"I feel this is a really good place to have stability and to have a more healthy environment".

Many also expressed better prospects for the future; adolescents in New Delhi for example talked enthusiastically about training to become computer engineers.

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[62] This might be expected in services where participation is voluntary and where young people opted for participation in PASSPORT (the case in three of the four sites). But this finding also held true in the fourth project where participation is not voluntary: in Milan, children are placed by a Family Court in L'Albero della Vita's care home La Bussola where all ten residents are required to take the After-School Labs supported by the Street to School Programme. Even in this situation, La Bussola's residents ranked their After-School Labs very highly.

[63] See each of the the four local reports for a fuller review of children's perceptions and quotes.

2) Young people, staff and other stakeholders corroborated reports that each project was actively and centrally pursuing its stated main goals found, in daily practice – from improving school success to preparing for independence. YouthLink's Co-operative Housing Program in Toronto aims to help marginalized youth become independent within society. Jessica's activities and thinking show how her time in the Co-op is clearly focused on realistically achieving independence, after battling with mental health and family difficulties: '…So I am thinking in order to get a job, I have to pay for this. In order to finish school and go off to college I need to do that and this. I know I need to initiate it and strive for something and go from there but for some reason it's just hard for me to do…' Jessica has enrolled in an alternative school and is enthusiastic about the school's personnel and activities. Persuaded that finishing high school is within her grasp, she "will make sure when I'm discharged that I have a stable job and am graduating." Half-way across the world, in rural Jharkhand, Jago aims to encourage children to enrol and stay in school, through support from school-based Children's Parliaments and village-based Children's Collectives. PASSPORT gathered evidence of their supportive activities from the children themselves and cross-referenced this evidence with accounts from teachers and in the quantitative reports.

3) Young people attached particular value to two service features that were not expressed as goals, strategies or activities, nor captured in quantitative reporting, but which young people considered as key to their achievements in the projects:

i. **Development of ongoing, supportive, relationships with service staff members**. Service providers and other stakeholders consulted reinforced the importance of this finding, with staff members regularly voicing frustration at the lack of weight given in report formats and in resource allocation to building positive relationships with young people. As one example, the high value of live-in 'Mentors' in YouthLink's Co-op Housing Program to enabling youth to transition from vulnerable situations to independence was stated repeatedly by young people, mentors, YouthLink management and external stakeholders including school social workers. Mentors offer help with life skills, run bi-weekly meetings and ensure safety and programme standards in the house – they are not counsellors or social workers and also have other jobs or attend college or university. One young participant, Madelaine, explained that the mentor "holds you accountable. Also someone there will give you the kick you need if you are slacking… there's structure but not so much structure." Jessica said her mentor was "really amazing… she was always there for us… she was just awesome… so understanding." From the mentors' perspective: "Kids appreciate having someone in the house… not so old that you're a parental figure but not so young either." A mentor said that one of the great things about being a mentor was "the moments late at night with youth when they open up about things they've been carrying for years […] trauma from past experiences – sometimes this trauma goes as far back as early childhood. There will be years of their childhood or pre-teen years that they don't remember and they've told me that part of them is aware that this is to protect themselves from horrific memories of psychological, sexual or physical abuse."

ii. **Having fun to stimulate learning and increase participation in activities.** This finding extended even to older participants, youth aged 18 to 21, who were intent on gaining adult independence. Again, front-line staff members were aware of children's gains when learning was made fun, but the intrinsic and instrumental values of having fun are not reflected in report formats. In La Bussola, Italy, children who have been abused or maltreated by their families cope with deep sadness, trauma and their consequences. They were clear on many occasions about their desire to have fun: "We would like to change some rules at La Bussola to have more fun activities," and, "I like S2S fun programmes – the ones in which we can play!" Sabrina (a 13-year-old with a gloomy outlook on life), and Jane was keen: "Let's do a fun final event". La Bussola's children looked forward to their S2S After-School Labs because they anticipated having fun there. When children were invited to choose activities, materials and awards, they consistently chose ones that seemed the most fun and involved playing. And having fun, in turn, contributed to exerting themselves more to learn and participating in activities that reinforced their learning. La Bussola staff recognize the interconnectedness of fun and learning: "This final event can be fun, or cognitively or socially stimulating – any of these". Children and staff alike all recognized having fun as an important element to encourage and improve learning in the form of grades and enjoyment of school.

Such 'added value' elements carry crucial implications for service design, resource allocation, staff recruitment, support and training, programming of activities, and for evaluation of service effectiveness and long-term impacts.

B - Three Street to School Programme findings

1. Young people's experiences were more diverse than the 'street child' profile anticipated by Aviva's Street to School Programme. Three distinct profiles were identified:

i. **Children who are already strongly street-connected** through working and/or living in public spaces. School is an option to help them realize their rights. Some children attending Rang Birange Sitare meet this definition, including '12-year-old Pramod who wakes by 4 o'clock every morning to catch a bus to Chirag Delhi, where he spends five hours rummaging through dustbins and garbage heaps to collect plastic, metal, glass and other material that he can sell to get anything between Rs. 20 and Rs. 40 in a day. Having finished collecting garbage he heads to Rang Birange Sitare.' A minority of the young people who participated in PASSPORT were found to fit this profile.

ii. **Young people with more limited street connections**, having worked or lived on the streets but who had now 'aged out' of childhood and fit the 'youth' category. This includes young people in YouthLink's Co-operative Housing like 19-year-old Batman: "Briefly, at 11, I was in a foster home. Then I went back home with my mom, then I went back to that place but only for a few months then back home for a while, then on the streets for a while at 13, then a group home […]'. While Batman's time living in the streets contributed to his experiences and identity work, his street connections are in the past and do not place a significant role now in his everyday life. Others have not worked or lived in the street, but spend time socializing there, living close to the streets in families buffeted by urban poverty. This includes some adolescents in Rang Birange Sitare in Delhi, including 15-year-old Pradeep: "I came to know about the Centre from my friend Mahesh. My house is on the roadside and it is very noisy there. I have difficulties concentrating, so I come here as it is quieter and I can study in peace." Pradeep was already in school and did not work or live in the streets when he began coming to Rang Birange Sitare, although he spends time socializing in the streets.

iii. **Young people with weak or no known connections to the streets**. A majority of children participants in PASSPORT 2012 fit this profile. These included children removed from their homes because of family abuse (in L'Albero della Vita's La Bussola care home), as well as young people whose families live in extreme rural poverty with access to few services (such as the young people in Jharkhand). They have no clear street connections, although histories of family abuse and extreme poverty are among risk factors for moving to the street. The rationale for viewing these children as specifically at risk of becoming street-connected has, however, not been fully articulated.

These distinctions are not adequately captured in the existing S2S monitoring, evaluation and reporting – and are often missed in quantitative evaluation reports more widely. However they have important implications for:

- Selecting the appropriate nature and type of tailored intervention;

- 'Blending' profiles for maximum effect for the main participants (for example providing more street-connected children with role models while enabling less street-connected children to develop educational skills);

- Evaluating service effectiveness for children, since the change brought about by a project must necessarily take account of children's 'starting' conditions when measuring their 'progress' towards defined goals.

All young people who participated in the study, in all four projects, had experienced multiple deprivations, including extreme poverty, abuse and/or discrimination, that prevented take-up of their rights to education, healthcare, a supportive family, housing and/or other services. They can be understood as vulnerable young people living in complex circumstances. 'Complex' means: difficult to define; having tangled root causes; involving stakeholders with diverse values, interests and positions; varying from person to person, community to community; constantly evolving; having no obvious answers or measures of success.[64] For example, participants in Italy's La Bussola cope with the wide-ranging psychological consequences of family abuse/maltreatment while also physically living away from home, with uncertainty over their future and attending new schools. In a completely different context, children from marginalized Dalit families in Jharkhand's rural communities, as the first generation to attend school, confront entrenched gender and age discrimination that continues to propel girls into early marriage and poses serious challenges to independent thinking by children.

2. **Participating young people were mainly enrolled in school and/or training and many showed improvements in attendance, attitude to school and/or grades. The exception was for children with strong street connections for whom school attendance was proving difficult to sustain and dropout rates were an ongoing problem.**

Enrolment in school is a giant step forward for children whose parents never went to school – and even more so when the community itself has no experience of schooling (as is the case for children from some Dalit communities in Jharkhand). However, it may well be difficult for children to stay in school without additional support: for example girls may be taken out of school to marry; married boys and girls may feel uncomfortable at school and drop out; children may be pulled out occasionally or regularly for seasonal agricultural work or domestic work if parents are ill, die or are simply overworked; children who drop behind academically may be unable or unwilling to stay on. At the same time, teachers may not turn up (some teachers were on strike for higher pay during PASSPORT 2012) affecting the entire school population. Jago's Children's Collectives and Parliaments are an example of how ongoing participatory monitoring can reduce dropout rates and encourage active school attendance, providing a platform from which to identify and address particular challenges to children enjoying their right to education.

[64] Patton, 2011: 9

Children with strong street connections, however, face a range of challenges to sustaining their achievements at school. Children in Rang Birange Sitare were enrolled, but 24 of the 40 involved in PASSPORT research were either not attending at the time of the fieldwork or had completely dropped out of school. Challenges identified range from children's difficulties integrating into school for social or academic reasons: "...But children in school fight and bully me a lot. There is this girl who […] is like the class leader. She bullies children a lot […]" (Sonia, 10 who attends irregularly). "We know less than the other children in school. When we do things in an incorrect way, teachers scold us, even beat us up," (Rayeez, 13 who has completely dropped out). Centre staff also felt "…They feel lost and scared. There are many children who come to the Centre but are scared of going to school," (Centre teacher Priya.) Teachers felt they lacked support, "I have not attended any training programme…" (Lata Ma'am, school teacher) adding that, "Children often tell us that 'Ma'am, this school is far from our house and we can't walk so much'." At the same time, Save the Children staff has faced challenges gaining access to teachers since government schools underwent restructuring in 2010 as a result of India's Right to Education Act of the same year.

3. **Reporting formats from partner projects to the Street to School Programme were able to identify project progress towards stated goals but failed to capture other areas of young people's experiences in participating projects.** The Street to School Programme's monitoring and evaluation framework has to date focused on gathering quantitative measurements, particularly the numbers of young people supported across all S2S supported projects in six defined strategic areas: Awareness and prevention; Outreach; Health and well-being; Safe places; Education and training; and Advocacy. Numerical reports are supplemented with explanatory comments and periodically with illustrative individual success stories. Two important areas that are currently not captured are unexpected benefits of services and sustainability of achievements by young people.

   1. **Unexpected benefits of services in the form of 'added value' experienced by young people.** Two such unexpected benefits were found across all projects: the value to young people of positive relationships with service staff and the importance of having fun to stimulate learning (both reported in Common Findings above). Two examples of added value found in one or more of the four projects that are also not currently captured in reporting are:

      a. **'Spillover' effects:** Activities designed to improve schooling success may also incidentally improve social skills, self-esteem and/or abilities to assume responsibilities. These 'spillover' effects may be just as important for young people's lives as the intended effects. To be capitalized upon, however, they need to be identified. As an example, YouthLink's Co-op Housing, which is not intended for youth with mental illness, seems to produce positive effects on the mental health of young people struggling with depression and anxiety: 'Amber has attempted suicide. Before moving into the Co-op Housing Program, she was living in a hospital, even attending school in the hospital.' Amber herself said that the Co-op, "is a really good program – it's really nice. I am really glad something like this exists. Because even here mental illness is a really shifty topic, so people don't really want to deal with it. I'm glad there's an option and that there are people that, like understand." It seemed that supportive, nurturing housing had a positive spillover effect onto young people's mental health. This is an important finding since more newly arriving youth seem to face mental health problems than previous entrants: "A lot more treatment kids… a lot more mental health issues… more complex situations… before it was more kids in a bad situation that needed a place to stay…" Other noticeable 'spillover' effects included children in Milan experiencing not only improvements in their schooling, but also in their personal growth and in their social relationships; and young street-connected children in Rang Birange Sitare benefiting from interactions with teenagers using the Centre to do their homework, who are good role models and bring a calming, stable atmosphere to the Centre.

b. 'Virtuous cycles' in which access to a number of different support services, enables a young person to leverage the benefits of one service to enhance benefits experienced in another, or others. To maximize their value, virtuous cycles need to be identified and valued. In a collective virtuous cycle, a young person who participates as a member in a village-based Children's Collective in Jharkhand and is also elected into a school-based Children's Parliament, can bring awareness of the benefits from one to the other. As an example, awareness of the importance of specific aspects of hygiene, reinforced at school by the Minister for Health and Cleanliness, can be stimulated in the village by the same children through the Collective, of which all village children are members, and through their mothers in the Women's Collective. In an individual virtuous cycle example, youth who get a place in Co-op housing find the space, routine and support to concentrate on improving their school performance, which raises their grades, and thereby improves their self-esteem/confidence, which feeds back into their presence in the Co-op house where they become more enthusiastic and helpful, which feeds positively into their relationships with mentors, and with school staff – this has been the experience of Batman, who from a high-school dropout has become a young man receiving a standing ovation for his progress at school "[It was the] first time that I was valued as a person", and who is confident that he can successfully complete high school and get a stable job.

2. **Sustainability of achievements made by individual young people within their services.** Street to School reporting currently does not capture sustainability of achievements by young people (even those such as school attendance, which are among stated goals) or recognize the importance of context to sustaining achievements. Nor are they contextualized. The above findings point to the importance of contextualizing achievement for understanding their sustainability. The following are examples from PASSPORT of critical roles of different contextual environments for sustaining young people's achievements:

   a. **Service context:** In Milan, children participate in After-School Labs, which are embedded in the activities of a residential care home. Children's achievements in schooling through the After-School Labs are sustained by the supportive wider service context provided by the care home.

   b. **NGO context:** In New Delhi, children receive schooling support from Save the Children's Rang Birange Sitare Centre and are enrolled in local mainstream schools. For children's enrolment in mainstream schools to become sustainable, Save the Children as an NGO adopts a bridging role between children's street experiences and school. The NGO's ability to work with teachers and help them make their classrooms inclusive is critical for children to remain in school.

   c. **Community context:** In Jharkhand, Children's Collectives and Parliaments are embedded in their local communities. Community support is critical to enabling these mechanisms to sustain school attendance, address gender discrimination and encourage children's participation.

   d. **Regional-national contexts:** In Toronto, YouthLink's Co-op Housing is a stand-alone programme, which depends for its survival on regional and national government policies and funding. It is therefore critical that these regional and national audiences understand the value of the programme for vulnerable youth with housing needs.

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[64] Patton, 2011: 9

C - Four findings about the research process:

1) Young people – irrespective of age, sex, ethnicity, language, country or nature of circumstance – were valuable contributors to research aimed at assessing and improving services designed for them. Using a range of participatory methods, young people were able to articulate their views, particularly about aspects of the services that they rate highly, and generate useful, distinctive, insights to inform service design and delivery. Some young people opted not to participate in the research. Those who chose to participate reported that the experience was empowering, gratifying and/or enjoyable.

- **No insuperable barriers were found** to prevent young people articulating meaningful views about their experiences of services. Quotes, drawings, wall-charts and other findings expressed in the four local reports and drawn on for this global report, are persuasive. Methods and techniques were varied and adapted to young people's circumstances. Drawings and play were found particularly useful for eliciting views from younger children; and simplified questions with more explanation were successfully used even with young people whose first language was not that of the local researcher, for example Maria, in YouthLink's Co-op Housing, a native Armenian speaker recently arrived in Canada.

- **Intrinsic gains for young people were found from participating in service assessment**. The act of consulting with young people in participatory ways produced positive effects for them. Some found the process empowering. Sabrina, a 13-year-old in La Bussola, Milan noted early in the research: "When people ask me, 'Tell me something about yourself, what do you like more and less, and what would you like to change?' I feel in difficulty, I don't know what to answer," but soon became an enthusiastic participant when fun group activities were used, offering several reflections, such as: "I like Street to School fun programmes – the ones in which we can play,"… "I'd like to study and play at the same time," and "Why don't we change subjects next year?" suggesting that geography, history or physics could be also brought into the After-School Labs. During the final performance, Sabrina said she felt pleased her opinions had been asked in a way that made her feel comfortable – and were taken seriously. Other young people said they found the research gratifying for them as a way to 'give back'. Eighteen-year-old Madelaine was not the only resident of YouthLink's Co-op Housing who felt that by offering her views on the Co-op, she was helping to improve the service in ways that might help other young people down the line. "I want to give back… they gave to me so it's just like, I don't know, when people give to me I want to give back… this is an opportunity". Some children simply enjoyed participating in the research, as they found the activities stimulating, for example in Jharkhand, 'Through the time we were there, more children trickled in, "We also want to colour".'

- **Consultation, cross-checking and validation were useful to build rich understandings of young people's experiences of their services**. As young people expressed their views, sometimes over weeks or even months, local researchers also consulted NGO staff and sometimes family or school staff (with young people's permission) together with available documents, to develop a 'thicker' body of information about young people's experiences. Perceptions and other experiential evidence were then analyzed together, and researchers returned to validate, clarify and seek new insights from young people. This process helped to clear up misunderstandings and misinterpretations, reduce distortions and jog memories, while keeping young people's perceptions at the core of the participatory assessment.[65] As an example, Amber's statement that she had tried to commit suicide just before she was admitted into YouthLink's Co-op was a surprise to the local researcher, who asked the Co-op's Coordinator for more information around Amber's admission. Amber's case file confirmed a suicide attempt, but placed it further in the past, suggesting either that for Amber the incident still loomed large or that a second incident had not been reported. Further conversations with Amber and her mentor concluded that Amber had tried to commit suicide some time ago, had received treatment and improved her mental health enough to be considered able to cope in Co-op Housing.

[65] Young people were rarely found to have misled the researcher, possibly because strengths-based, methods such as Appreciative Inquiry were used. Perceptions found to be at odds with observed and/or documented experiences, concerned a) misunderstandings (cleared up in validation), b) 'live' emotions young people were still struggling with, and c) situations in which young people could be understood from surrounding evidence to be aiming to please the accompanying adults

2) Developmental Evaluation (DE) was found to have brought value to a participatory assessment of NGO services in three main ways:

i. **Capturing less tangible, interrelated aspects of service** valued by young people that are incidental or missed by traditional approaches to evaluation, as shown by the above findings.

ii. **Contextualizing them transparently and systematically** to generate rich understandings of young people's experiences as service users.

iii. **Encouraging discussion and take-up of early findings during the research**. This process both informed the research itself and resulted in early take-up of findings and introduction of feasible service improvements – an option not available in traditional evaluation approaches. Early take-up of findings was particularly evident when either the NGO's Street to School Coordinator was also the NGO's designated Evaluation Coordinator for PASSPORT, as in Rang Birange Sitare, Save the Children; or when research activities were 'embedded' into the service itself, as in the After-School Labs in Milan.

3) However, a Developmental Evaluation approach was found to need more resources to implement, than better known participatory approaches might have required, in the form of:

i. **Time** for briefing, training, introduction and implementation. Developmental Evaluation is a relatively new approach, so neither NGOs nor local researchers were familiar with its conceptual underpinnings or its practice. This meant that time was needed for briefing sessions on expectations and process, reading, further discussion before introducing and check-backs on methodology during the research.

ii. **Human resources** for research and NGO learning. Developmental Evaluation requires ongoing investment by NGO staff during the research to discuss surprises, shape priorities and make decisions together with the evaluator. This meant assigning an Evaluation Coordinator within each NGO who was familiar with participatory research, had good collaborative skills, and was able to transmit learnings within the wider organization. This commitment was difficult for NGOs to put consistently into practice, with the Evaluation Coordinator frequently having a heavy workload.

iii. **Financing** for these inputs. NGOs were required to finance their own time and human resource inputs into PASSPORT 2012. For those NGOs feeling acute financial pressures, this caused additional strains.

4) Participating NGOs have taken up research instruments from this research to use in their wider work.

Each NGO found a particular research instrument useful for their wider work. They were all, however, quite different:

i. CRY has adopted for future research throughout its work across India, the Ethical Framework developed between CRY and local researcher Neeraja, based on global **Ethical Framework** materials produced for the global PASSPORT research (see Appendix).

ii. Rang Birange Sitare staff have assimilated **Arts Based Approaches (ABA)** into regular activities with children, based on workshops facilitated by local researcher Bijita and experience of implementing this method with children as part of the research.

iii. La Bussola staff have assimilated **specific 'play' techniques** for consultation with young people, including 'Thermometer' and 'Tree Activity', developed by researcher Carlotta and children for the research in After-School Labs.

iv. YouthLink intends to introduce annual consultations with youth as service end-users, using the **Topic Guide** generated by local researcher Tara and young people in Co-op Housing.

B. Recommendations

Top three recommendations for NGO services working with young people

1. Think about the **profiles** of the young people your services support – or intend to support – and assess if your services are addressing their complex circumstances. If so, achievements for young people are likely to reflect the quality and depth of relationship building between staff and young people – so value empathy, knowledge and commitment in your staff and volunteers.

PASSPORT research found a range of profiles of young people in complex circumstances: young people with street connections; those with experience of family abuse; members of a community, such as a Dalit community, which experiences discrimination in wider society; vulnerable young people transitioning from childhood to youth. Differences in experiences have implications for service planning and evaluation to make services effective. Enabling young people to build meaningful relationships with staff and ensuring they have fun while learning are likely to help children access other rights. These core features, sometimes taken for granted, have implications for service planning, human resources, allocation of funding and evaluation to make services effective. Examples from PASSPORT 2012 of 'virtuous cycles' and positive 'spillover effects' may help staff to identify ways to create synergy through partnerships with other services or to capitalize on activities so that they produce additional positive effects for young people.

2. Be highly aware of **context**: To bring about transformation, try building on (bottom up) strengths of participating children, families and communities, while exposing staff and/or volunteers to rights-based and participatory practices in other places (top down) to help recognize and address local discriminatory practices.

Children's Collectives and Parliaments in Jharkhand, India provide a good example from PASSPORT 2012. These community-based mechanisms, developed with support from Jago, have been highly successful in getting children into school and retaining them there, because they were designed and supported by committed local staff and volunteers who understand and know how to work with complex local power structures. In order to extend these successes so that Collectives and Parliaments can address entrenched discrimination against girls and against child participation, Jago staff, volunteers and young people would benefit from exposure to rights-based and participatory practices in another regions of India, perhaps supported by national partner CRY, so that they can see and learn about them in action, then work out how and what experiences can be brought back to help Jharkhand Children's Collectives and Parliaments work effectively with their communities to increase gender equality and child participation.

3. Services geared to helping children from the street into school need to work as hard on the 'school' end as the 'street' end of service provision, so that children can **sustain achievements** at school. Develop strong, supportive relationships with teachers and principals to find ways to bring inclusive practices into the classroom.

Rang Birange Sitare is an example from PASSPORT 2012. This educational and activity centre, run by Save the Children, New Delhi, has successfully enabled young people in complex situations, including young people with strong street connections, to enrol in formal schooling. But children have found it difficult to stay in school, even with the supplementary schooling support provided by Rang Birange Sitare. In order to enable children to stay in school, classrooms need help to become more inclusive – a significant challenge for NGOs and India's education system. This recommendation draws attention to the importance of monitoring and evaluating sustainability of children's achievements.

Second tier recommendations for NGO services working with young people

a. Introduce electoral processes for young people to encourage leadership and nurture empowerment as well as giving them practise in citizenship and good governance. This can include planning and execution of electoral campaigns with policy manifestos, secret ballots and vote counting, as well as monitoring committees afterwards to help elected officials, Ministers or Monitors, achieve their campaign pledges. This recommendation emerges from Neeraja Phatak's Jharkhand report.

b. Encourage young people to propose ideas for activities on a regular basis; make sure they understand constraints before they are asked to think about proposals and encourage a wide variety of subjects, themes, materials and locations. Stimulate creativity and free expression. Aim to link learning in the service with school to help young people appreciate and gain confidence with knowledge. This recommendation emerges from Carlotta Zanaboni's Milan report.

Top three recommendations specifically for Aviva's 'Street to School' Programme

1. Refine Programme aims and profiles of beneficiaries.

This will help Street to School ensure the best match to Aviva's corporate goals; streamline its support; assess project impacts on young people's lives; and contribute to improving service performance.

2. Refine reporting formats to capture qualitative changes in young people's lives.

Alongside quantitative indicators, aim to capture 'added value' experienced by young people, in well-being, relationship-building, having fun and aspirations, as well as through positive 'spillover' effects and 'virtuous cycles'. Seek evidence of sustainability of young people's achievements.

3. Develop a research toolkit for NGOs supporting young people in complex circumstances to help build in-house capacity for participatory... research with young people using a Developmental Evaluation approach.

This would boost innovative service development as well as help NGOs show potential funders the transformative value of their services for young people's lives.

Top three recommendations for funding agencies, corporate responsibility programmes and independent foundations in general

1. Ensure that **screening of funding proposals** includes requests for evidence of:
- Regular consultations with young people as end-users of services
- Ethical practices
- Profiles of participating children
- History of service development
- Understanding of complex circumstances
- Understanding of context

Young people have a right to be listened to. They also contribute important insights that should be used to help shape and improve services and individual outcomes. Consultations with service users should be evidenced in some kind of documented process, whether written, drawn, photographed or video-recorded. You will also want to know about evidence of how service user recommendations feed into planning and practice. Some NGOs may need time and flexibility to be able to comply with these requirements, in which case a clear route map towards ethical good practice and consultation with service users might be appropriate.

2. Introduce into **project reporting requirements**:
- Participatory elements for appropriate contributions by young people in monitoring and evaluating their services
- Emerging 'surprises' as evidence of an ongoing search for added value and beneficial side-effects
- Evidence of sustainability of initial achievements for young people

Be prepared to contribute to costs of participatory monitoring and developmental evaluation, in terms of time and human resources. If such systems are not in evidence, be prepared to fund training, coaching and start-up costs. Be flexible in the scope, nature and timing of participatory monitoring and evaluation – these can be negotiated with each service according to purpose, location and difficulty of circumstance.

3. Spread the word: Quantitative evaluation may be cheaper and easier to conduct, and more useful for marketing, but numbers are a poor proxy for transformative change in children's lives and can miss the essence of success of social innovations.

Qualitative changes can be about forming nurturing, secure, relationships, dealing effectively with trauma, improving self-esteem, empowerment and/or assimilating life skills. These changes can be difficult to quantify. As an example, if funding is awarded based on 20 young people receiving three specific services during a period of one year, services can come under pressure to ensure these numbers are achieved – with less regard for the profile or circumstances of the young people themselves. This increases the risk of failing young people with complex needs, who may need more tailored services and more time to achieve goals than others. A combination of quantitative and qualitative research is best to identify underlying factors of success, relate them to context and circumstance, and underpin sound investment in young people.

Secondary priorities for funding agencies, corporate responsibility programmes and independent foundations in general

a. Committed, experienced and trained staff and volunteers capable of developing nurturing relationships over time – much more than spaces, equipment or materials – help children to change their lives. This suggests prioritizing support for recruitment, training and ongoing support for staff members and volunteers. This recommendation emerges from all four local reports.

b. Encourage your staff to build meaningful relationships with NGO and Programme staff to promote bridge-building, empathy and knowledge sharing between funding agencies, business and NGOs. This recommendation emerges particularly from the Street to School initiative in Jharkhand.

Top three recommendations for evaluative research

1. Make participatory research part of regular NGO evaluative practice, based on an explicit ethical framework that respects young people's right to be listened to on all matters that affect them.

In policy research, the case for consulting service end-users has been convincing. PASSPORT 2012 demonstrates that consulting young people should be no exception. Aim to support, train and coach young people to play a gradually fuller and more active part as service end-users in annual planning, monitoring and evaluation. A Working Paper with criteria for developing an Ethical Framework appropriate for use with street-connected children is provided in the Appendix. Each of the four local reports also attaches a copy of the Ethical Framework developed for the particular service and young people participating in PASSPORT research.

2. Use a developmental evaluation approach to explore complex needs, capture dynamic environments, and support development of social innovations.

Encourage reflective practice in safe spaces where emerging concerns, challenges, and surprises can be discussed frankly. Aim to build on project strengths and search for 'added value' to capitalize on positive side effects. A Developmental Evaluation framework will be appropriate to support ongoing programme development, generate new innovations, or help them scale up.

In PASSPORT 2012, two services seem particularly strong candidates for a continuing Developmental Evaluation process: Rang Birange Sitare as a young, dynamic social innovation seeking to adapt effective principles to support street-connected children in New Delhi; and Jago as a grassroots-led social innovation preparing to bring effective principles of gender equity and child participation into Jharkhand's Dalit communities. Both projects are highly collaborative in approach and learn quickly from emerging findings

3. Conduct formative or summative evaluations to assess the value for young people and society of projects when they reach an appropriate stage of development: when service delivery is stable, consistent, systematized and well documented.

This will be particularly helpful when contextual data is available to allow robust cost-effectiveness studies of tailored interventions that can compare intervention costs with projected costs of no or alternative interventions.[66] It is important to recognize what purpose the evaluation is intended to fulfil. If the intervention is conceptualized as a potential 'model' for others, then a formative evaluation could be useful to test and help improve development of the model. If the intervention is recognized as a 'model' ready for others to use, then a summative evaluation framework would be more appropriate.

In PASSPORT 2012: L'Albero della Vita's After-School Labs service seems a strong candidate for formative evaluation, in order to assess what is needed to help it develop into a model of good practice. Meanwhile, YouthLink's Co-op Housing is a good candidate for summative evaluation to assess its cost-effectiveness as a strategy for vulnerable youth to become independent in Canada.

Secondary priorities for research

a. Engage staff with the research method and techniques proposed to promote take-up within the NGO. This recommendation emerges from Carlotta Zanaboni's and Bijita's Devsharma's reports.

b. Encourage participatory tracking research to find out from young people what happens to them after the service. This means keeping good regular records, include a baseline of information about each young person who enters the service (perhaps after a brief familiarization period) and consulting them perhaps annually about their whereabouts and any changes. This research could help ensure financing and policies respond to complex circumstances rather than to 'bed numbers'. This recommendation emerges from Tara Black's report in Toronto.

c. Conduct qualitative research to find 'invisible' young people such as young married girls, young people in domestic labour, or young people with disabilities. This recommendation emerges from Neeraja Phatak's report in Jharkhand.

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[66] The Reach Model Evaluation is a good example, available at https://www.railwaychildren.org.uk/media/90291/reach_-_full_report.pdf

Top three recommendations for young people as service end-users

1. Make sure young people are consulted about decisions that affect them. It is their right and they can provide valuable insights to improve service design or delivery. Involving them should be empowering.

Evidence from PASSPORT was that all four NGOs were prepared to listen to young people and have taken their opinions seriously. This may not always be true for all staff members in all projects, but there are usually diligent staff members who want to hear young people's views. Ideas may be expressed verbally, in writing, performance, in song or drawings. Through drawings and conversations, street-connected children in Rang Birange Sitare communicated ideas for changes to the meal menus – and they were listened to.

2. Working in groups can help young people come up with and refine ideas for activities they would like to try out to achieve service goals, while also working on their social skills and building relationships.

In PASSPORT's research in Milan, young people were already used to working together and working collectively with staff members in their After-School Labs. They built on this in 'RE-searching Together!' to come up with ideas in teams and present them in different formats – wall charts, performance and conversation. Staff could allocate a regular time and space in which young people can work together, maybe with staff members, to discuss ideas for activities.

3. Help young people to recognize their successes and reflect on their strengths. Focusing on what they want to change and on future goals is important but so is appreciating hurdles overcome, and recognizing development of inner strengths.

Young people participating in PASSPORT 2012 sometimes did not fully recognize the hurdles they had confronted – and overcome – until they talked about them in the research. Creating spaces and times to reflect on young people's strengths and successes can help them look forward with more confidence.

Secondary priorities for young people

a. Learning through play can help children remember things better. Encourage young people to think of fun ways to learn things and create spaces to share their ideas with staff. This recommendation emerges from Carlotta Zanaboni's report in Milan.

b. Everyone learns in different ways Use different ways and techniques to explain goals, strategies and other aspects of service to young people. Ask them to 'feed back' their understanding to make sure they have fully grasped the information. This recommendation emerges from Tara Black's report in Toronto.

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Appendix

About the Research

'Things should be made as simple as possible, but not any simpler' Albert Einstein

'…the human element of qualitative inquiry is both is strength and weakness - its strength is fully using human insight and experience, its weakness is being so heavily dependent on the researcher's skill, training, intellect, discipline, and creativity. The researcher is the instrument of qualitative inquiry, so the quality of the research depends heavily on the qualities of that human being' Michael Q. Patton

1

Appendix 1

1. The Overarching Approach taken to PASSPORT 2012 was a **Developmental Evaluation (DE) Approach,** which was chosen as a way to steer a participatory assessment that aimed at surfacing young street-connected people's perceptions and experiences of four highly varied services within 3 countries and across 4 diverse local environments.

Reasons for adopting Developmental Evaluation, as articulated by Jamie Gamble (2008) and detailed by Michael Q. Patton (2011), were because it is:
- Well suited to accommodate participatory research
- Appropriate to dynamic and innovative service environments
- Designed for complexity, it can recognize the complex circumstances of marginalized young people and capture interdependencies of complex systems
- Focused on supporting development of future participatory assessments of services, rather than on carrying out a one-off ad-hoc assessment
- Highly adaptable to local contexts
- Well articulated theoretically while practical in orientation

DE was felt to be a good approach for an assessment that was initially formulated and designed in a 'top-down' way, by Aviva and a researcher at global level, in consultation with participating NGO staff and Aviva's local offices, but was intended to be shaped and carried out at the local level *with* rather than *for* young people – engaging with them in 'bottom-up' participatory research. DE is a '*middle approach, navigating, sorting out, making sense of, and adapting top-down and bottom-up forces'* (Patton, 2011: 187).

Participatory Evaluation was not considered the appropriate overarching approach for this project, since PE is essentially transformative and 'bottom-up', involving research participants in all stages of the evaluation - including its formulation – to answer questions posed by the participants themselves. This was not the case in PASSPORT.

Traditional 'top-down' Evaluation approaches were less appropriate to the kind of dynamic environments and complex services proposed for the assessment. See Section 2 below for a table of differences between Developmental and more Traditional forms of Evaluation.

Developmental Evaluation understands the following:

a. COMPLEX ISSUES are: difficult to define; have tangled root causes; involve stakeholders with diverse values, interests and positions; vary from person to person, community to community; are constantly evolving; and have no obvious answers or measures of success (see Patton, 2011: 9, using Complexity Theory). Services supporting young people with multiple deprivations can best be understood as addressing 'complex' issues

b. SYSTEMIC THINKING as a component of complexity theory. It focuses on processes of change, rather than on snapshots, and on inter-relationships rather than linear cause-and-effect. It recognizes that young people with multiple deprivations live non-linear, dynamic and unpredictable lives. Linear thinking assumes *'an autonomous, self-reliant, self-determining individual making rational, knowledge-based decisions about what to do I his or her own best interest. It is a simple framing of how change occurs. But everything we know about how human beings really make decisions tells us that this model is far out of touch with reality'* (see Patton, 2011: 118)

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Appendix 2

2. Review of Differences between Developmental & Traditional Evaluation

Assessment Attributes	Developmental Evaluation	Traditional Evaluation Approach
Purpose	Supports *development* of innovations	Formative evaluation: improves; Summative evaluation: tests, proves and validates models
Situation where appropriate	Complex, dynamic environments with multiple possible paths – need for exploration and innovation	Manageable and stable situations, goals known, key variables are controllable, measurable, predictable
Focus	Systems-change-driven	Outcomes-driven, systems as context
Locus	Navigates '*muddled middle*' where top-down practice & bottom-up realities collide	Evaluation is top-down or bottom-up
Model	Based on systems-thinking to map and track interconnections. Causality based on pattern detection constructed from observation	Based on linear cause-effect logic model. Causality is modeled, hypothesized, predicted and tested
Measurement approach	Develop measures and tracking mechanisms as outcomes emerge. Tracking forks in the road and implications of key decisions	Measure against predetermined goals and SMART outcomes
Unexpected consequences	Expect the unexpected	Token attention to side effects
Evaluation design	Evaluator collaborates with those engaged in change, to co-create an assessment useful to the innovation	Evaluator determines design based on rigour, and controls the evaluation even when stakeholder input is solicited
Methods approach	Utilization focused (relevance and confidence)	Methods-focused (validity and reliability)
Role of the Evaluator/Researcher	Evaluator as facilitator, bringing evaluative thinking to the team, supportive of values and vision and helping to build capacity	Evaluator as independent observer. Credibility depends on independence.
Accountability	To programme commitments to make a difference	To external authorities and funders
Organizational locus of evaluation	A leadership function nurturing: reality-testing, results focus, learning orientation	A compliance function delegated down or outside the organization
Evaluation results	Effective principles that inform practice and minimum specifications that can be adapted to local context	Validated and generalizable good practices
Assessment impact on organizational culture	Evaluation aims to nurture hunger for learning	Evaluation can engender fear of failure
Evaluation capacity	Evaluation process helps build ongoing and long term capacity to think evaluatively	Usually not an objective. Focus on getting credible evaluation results
Approach to complexity	Evaluator expects uncertainty, learning responds to lack of control	Aims for certainty, attempts to control evaluation process
Evaluator attributes	Methodological flexibility, systems thinking, creative and critical thinker, teamworker, able to facilitate rigorous evidence-based reflection to inform action	Methodological competence and commitment to rigour, independence, analytical and critical thinker
Evaluation standards and ethics	Knowledgeable about and committed to professional standards	Knowledgeable about and committed to professional standards

Extracts from Patton, 2011: 23-26

3

Appendix 3

3. The Research Design for PASSPORT 2012 was a **Multi-Site, Exploratory and Layered Case-Study design**

This envisaged 4 single, yet related (multi-site), case studies, in which the unit of analysis was to be the '*Street to School Programme*' (S2S) in each of the four organizations. This design respected variations in:

- Service size, scope, approach, activities, goals, strategies, participant numbers and experiences, anticipated outcomes
- Each NGO's organizational structure and culture
- Each NGO's local and national context.

A case study design allowed the Assessment to take a holistic approach, centred on young people's experiences of services, which could capture the inter-relationships between young people, services and others (coherent with the systemic thinking of Developmental Evaluation)- including those who were absent (such as families in some projects).

Its exploratory nature offered an open-ended format to encourage flexible exploration of perceptions, behaviours and relationships underpinning service activities and young people's outcomes.

A layered design allowed the overall Assessment to coordinate research across the 4 project sites, by organizing data collection, analysis and interpretation within and between the 4 projects, allowing lessons to be drawn, if and as applicable, across sites.

A six-layered case study design, to capture views of participating young people at the centre, enriched by information about the Service, NGO, Community, National-Local Context and International Context of out-of-school children

Out-of School Children- International Context

National and Local Context

Community- Stakeholders, Culture, Organization

NGO - Staff, Structure, Systems, Culture

Aviva-sponsored S2S Project - Unit of Analysis

Participating Children and Youth

4

Appendix 4

4. Participatory Research in PASSPORT 2012

PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH was understood as 'a process of sequential reflection and action, carried out *with* and *by* people rather than *on* them. Local knowledge and perspectives are not only acknowledged but form the basis for research and planning. […] The key difference between participatory and conventional research methodologies lies in the location of power in the research process. (Adapted from Cornwall and Jewkes, 1995: 1667)

PASSPORT's intention was to involve young people as far as possible – with support and engagement from NGO staff – in designing, planning, conducting and analysing the research study in each site – within the DE overarching approach and the case-study design. However, capacities to implement these were even and limited by one or other of the following: difficulties experienced by local NGOs in finding and recruiting suitably qualified local researchers for the time period required; time available for briefing, training, support of local researchers and NGO staff; coordination of research stages across four diverse research sites; varying levels of engagement by young people and/or NGO staff; managing boundaries between NGO staff and young people's participation.

PASSPORT used the following interpretation from Save the Children of 'meaningful' participation, summarized as when: Children and their ideas are treated with respect; Aims and outcomes of their involvement are explained; Children volunteer to participate – or decide not to; The process and experience builds confidence and self-esteem and is empowering; Child-friendly methods are used – fun, interesting, engaging and in line with children's evolving capacities; Opportunities suit the development needs of the child, and are in line with what children chose; Time is factored into project-planning – it takes time to do participation well and it shouldn't be a one-off event (from Lyford Jones, 2010: 15).

PASSPORT was adult-initiated – at global and local levels of research. Young people were then consulted, informed and shared some decision-making with adults. There was some variance by site conditions and research stage – see local reports for specific information on participation. In terms of Treseder's 'Degrees of Involvement' (see below from Lyford Jones, 2010: 11), PASSPORT can be understood as straddling 2 of the 5 degrees of participation: 'Consulted and informed' and 'Adult-initiated, shared decisions with children'.

Treseder's 'Degrees of Involvement' model[1]

Treseder's model uses five degrees of participation that should be viewed as "different, but equal, forms of good practice". There is no hierarchy of involvement; the type of involvement depends on the wishes of children, the context, children's developmental stages, the nature of the organisation, etc.
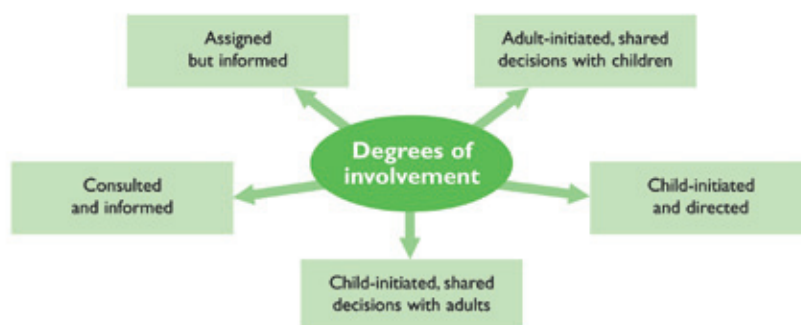
[1] P Treseder, *Empowering children & young people: promoting involvement in decision-making*, Save the Children, 1997.

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Similarly, in terms of Roger Hart's better-known Ladder of Participation (see below from Lyford Jones, 2010: 12), PASSPORT can be understood as straddling rungs 5 (Young people consulted and informed) and 6 (adult-initiatied, shared decisions with young people).

Roger Hart's Ladder of Young People's Participation

Rung 8 Young people and adults share decision-making

Rung 7 Young people lead and initiate action

Rung 6 Adult-initiated, shared decisions with young people

Rung 5 Young people consulted and informed

Rung 4 Young people assigned and informed

Rung 3 Young people tokenised*

Rung 2 Young people are decoration*

Rung 1 Young people are manipulated*

Adapted from Hart, R. (1992). *Children's Participation from Tokenism to Citizenship*, Florence: UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre.

Under both readings, PASSPORT can be understood to have engaged young people in meaningful, while modest, participation.

At the same time, PASSPORT also engaged NGO staff in meaningful participation, with the aim of encouraging NGOs to embed participatory research with young people into existing regular monitoring and evaluation of their services.

Development of ethical frameworks was a key element of ensuring that participation was meaningful. This the subject of the following section.

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Appendix 5

5. PASSPORT Ethical Standards and Checklist

Introduction

The following is a copy of the **Ethics Working Paper** produced by PASSPORT's Lead Researcher, circulated to local researchers and discussed in a teleconference, with an invited speaker Dr. Lorraine Van Blerk, member of PASSPORT's Steering Group. Each local researcher then used the Working Paper and Teleconference discussion to formulate, together with their NGO, an ethical framework appropriate to the young people, their service, the NGO and the wider environment. Each ethical framework was assessed in draft form against a **Checklist for Ethical Frameworks** also provided her below and any omissions addressed in the final version. Each Ethical Framework is available in the respective local report.

ETHICS WORKING PAPER

As PASSPORT 2012 researchers you will already have a draft ethical framework/code/protocol - at some stage of development:

- It will need to reflect your NGO partner's ethical standards/code as a minimum
- Similarly it must reflect your national/regional/local legal standards for research with children/young people

The aim of this paper is to help you consider additional ethical aspects relevant to your participatory assessment with young people – and identify those you want to discuss further in our teleconference – so that you can each complete a written research ethical framework/code/protocol appropriate for your PASSPORT 2012 research.

I raise some questions in this paper and refer to sources you may find useful for further reading (see Section E for full citations).

Section A - Overview: Ethics and Participatory Research with Children
Section B - Building Ethics into the Research Design - Sampling, Consent, Confidentiality and
       Protection
Section C - Dealing with Ethical questions arising during fieldwork
Section D - Ethics in Analysis, Reporting and Dissemination
Section E – Useful sources of further reading

A. Overview: Ethics & Participatory Research with Children

There are a growing number of resources on participatory research with children that have sections on ethical implications. One useful, free, resource is: Save the Children's (2004) publication: *So You Want to Involve Children in Research? A toolkit supporting children's meaningful and ethical participation in research relating to violence against children.* From: http://www.ovcsupport.net/s/library.php?Id=904

Pages 27-41 specifically address Ethics – you may wish to read this section for elements relevant to your particular research (characteristics of children and/or organizational setting, involvement of other stakeholders etc) - there is a handy 'check list' on P.40-41.

The ethics of research with young people is a balancing act:

- How to prevent and reduce harms in research to protect children and young people
- Risks and harms of silencing/excluding individuals or groups from research about their views, experiences and participation
- How to manage power differentials
- How to be accountable to young people

The *Research Ethics Guidebook: a resource for social scientists* published by the UK's Economic and Social Research Council draws attention to the following 4 provisos additional to those relevant for research with adults, as specific to research involving children:

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1. Children's competencies, perceptions and frameworks of reference, which may differ according to factors including – but not only – their age, may differ from those of adults;
2. Children's potential vulnerability to exploitation in interaction with adults, and adults' specific responsibilities towards children;
3. The differential power relationships between adult researcher and child participant; and
4. The role of adult gatekeepers in mediating access to children, with concomitant ethical implications in relation to informed consent.

(Available at http://www.ethicsguidebook.ac.uk/)

Some other points made in the same UK's Research Ethics Guidebook are:

- As a researcher, you may have to get initial consent from gatekeepers – parents, teachers, NGO staff or others with a duty of care for the child – and you need to consider who you have to get permission from. This permission does not mean the child has consented to participate, but it allows you to seek consent from the child.
- You should get active consent from each individual child – not from children as a group (because individuals in the group could feel pressured to take part against their wishes). If you are not going to get consent from each individual child, your approach is very likely to be questioned by an ethics committee, and so you need really clear justification.
- As a general rule, the child is the participant, not the gatekeeper, and so ethics principles about consent should always apply to the child – whatever the child's age. As with adults, start from a position of assuming competence […] but recognise the need to adapt your methods for seeking consent to their level of understanding. […]

The Committee on the Rights of the Child's General Comment No. 12 on the Right of the Child to be Heard, contains guidance for ethical processes in which children participate in Article 134 as follows: All processes in which a child or children are heard and participate, must be:

(a)　　Transparent and informative - children must be provided with full, accessible, diversity-sensitive and age-appropriate information about their right to express their views freely and their views to be given due weight, and how this participation will take place, its scope, purpose and potential impact;

(b)　　Voluntary - children should never be coerced into expressing views against their wishes and they should be informed that they can cease involvement at any stage;

(c)　　Respectful - children's views have to be treated with respect and they should be provided with opportunities to initiate ideas and activities. Adults working with children should acknowledge, respect and build on good examples of children's participation, for instance, in their contributions to the family, school, culture and the work environment. They also need an understanding of the socio-economic, environmental and cultural context of children's lives. Persons and organizations working for and with children should also respect children's views with regard to participation in public events;

(d)　　Relevant - the issues on which children have the right to express their views must be of real relevance to their lives and enable them to draw on their knowledge, skills and abilities. In addition, space needs to be created to enable children to highlight and address the issues they themselves identify as relevant and important;

(e)　　Child-friendly - environments and working methods should be adapted to children's capacities. Adequate time and resources should be made available to ensure that children are adequately prepared and have the confidence and opportunity to contribute their views. Consideration needs to be given to the fact that children will need differing levels of support and forms of involvement according to their age and evolving capacities;

(f)　　Inclusive - participation must be inclusive, avoid existing patterns of discrimination, and encourage opportunities for marginalized children, including both girls and boys, to be involved (see also para. 88 above). Children are not a homogenous group and participation needs to provide for equality of opportunity for all,

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without discrimination on any grounds. Programmes also need to ensure that they are culturally sensitive to children from all communities;

(g)   Supported by training - adults need preparation, skills and support to facilitate children's participation effectively, to provide them, for example, with skills in listening, working jointly with children and engaging children effectively in accordance with their evolving capacities. Children themselves can be involved as trainers and facilitators on how to promote effective participation; they require capacity-building to strengthen their skills in, for example, effective participation awareness of their rights, and training in organizing meetings, raising funds, dealing with the media, public speaking and advocacy;

(h)   Safe and sensitive to risk - in certain situations, expression of views may involve risks. Adults have a responsibility towards the children with whom they work and must take every precaution to minimize the risk to children of violence, exploitation or any other negative consequence of their participation. Action necessary to provide appropriate protection will include the development of a clear child-protection strategy which recognizes the particular risks faced by some groups of children, and the extra barriers they face in obtaining help. Children must be aware of their right to be protected from harm and know where to go for help if needed. Investment in working with families and communities is important in order to build understanding of the value and implications of participation, and to minimize the risks to which children may otherwise be exposed;

(i)   Accountable - a commitment to follow-up and evaluation is essential. For example, in any research or consultative process, children must be informed as to how their views have been interpreted and used and, where necessary, provided with the opportunity to challenge and influence the analysis of the findings. Children are also entitled to be provided with clear feedback on how their participation has influenced any outcomes. Wherever appropriate, children should be given the opportunity to participate in follow-up processes or activities. Monitoring and evaluation of children's participation needs to be undertaken, where possible, with children themselves.

B. Building Ethics into the Research Design - Sampling, Consent, Confidentiality and Protection

B.1 Sampling - the first ethics question you face in sampling is who you include, or exclude. Some questions to consider:

  · How can you make your research as inclusive as possible?
  · Will any children be excluded from your research?
  · If so, can you justify this?

You should be clear in your ethical code/protocol (which should be attached as an Annex to your final report) about why the children you want to study need to be involved, and should possibly include some reflection about who is left out of your study.

Any issues of recompense for participation should also be considered and agreed at the design stage.

An example from the UK's Research Ethics Guidebook: research with young children
Researchers studying childhood often sample children aged 8-17 years only. Reasons that are given to support this practice might include: children aged under 8 years do not have clear views; they are not able to express views clearly; they cannot be relied on to provide valid evidence; they are too vulnerable to be included in research studies. Yet increasingly researchers and practitioners find that young and even preverbal children provide valuable data through their talk and behaviour, and that ignoring their views can unhelpfully distort research findings, policy and practice.

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B.2 Consent - Consent is the central act in research ethics, as set out in the 1947 Nuremberg Code. The 1964 Helsinki Declaration stipulated that valid consent is properly informed and also freely given – without pressures such as coercion, threats or persuasion. The UK's Research Ethics Guidebook has two core principles concerned with freely given and fully informed consent -or '*valid consent*'.

- *'Research subjects must be informed fully about the purpose, methods and intended possible uses of the research, what their participation in the research entails and what risks, if any, are involved.'*
- *'Research participants must participate in a voluntary way, free from any coercion.'*

Participants and researchers may define 'harm' differently. The consent process needs to allow time to clarify any differences. Researchers may then gain new insights into risks, and how to reduce them.

Consent is therefore a process – not a simply yes or no. It is the process by which potential participants can decide if it is worth taking part in a study despite any risks and costs. This may sound extreme, but respect for consent sets standards of respect for the relationship between researchers and participants.

Sometimes, obtaining written consent from children is appropriate, but in other situations it is arguably not helpful (see eg Save the Children p.36). Sometimes audio consent is more acceptable. Whatever way you choose, the details of your research must be made understandable to children so that they can make an informed decision to take part (see eg Young & Barrett 2001a on research with street children)

Similarly, you may need to gain written/audio/other consent from gatekeepers to research with children and young people eg parents, teachers or social workers. The role of gatekeepers in relation to informed consent highlights debate about children's competency and autonomy to make decisions about whether to participate in research.

Young people in vulnerable situations – eg children in care or street-connected children – may have additional, complex issues around informed consent.

You may face the risk that, by securing consent from adult gatekeepers, agreement to participate from children may be based on passive assent rather than freely given and fully informed consent.

Difference between consent and assent - US literature sometimes talks about children's 'assent'. However, it is not a useful concept for several reasons:

- Assent can be used to refer to agreement by minors who have no legal right to consent. However most legal frameworks do not specifically exclude any child as too young to be competent. Children, therefore, who can make informed, competent decisions are giving consent, rather than assent.
- Assent refers to agreement by children who understand some but not all the main points required for consent. But this begs the question of whether a partly informed decision can count as a decision at all.
- Finally, assent can be taken to mean 'at least not refusing'. But that is very different from actually assenting – i.e. positively agreeing. Children may be too afraid, confused, or ignored to refuse. So the term assent may be misused to cover children's refusal.

Parents'/carers' consent - General guidance is to ask parents' /carers' consent to approach children and then ask for children's consent. Ethical research involves informing and respecting everyone concerned. However, there are certain dilemmas, eg obtaining the consent of both parents. Will the consent of one parent alone suffice?

Some questions to consider:

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- How do you propose to seek young people's informed consent?
- How will you make sure that children can opt out during the research?
- How will you make sure that children's participation is based on consent rather than assent if you need to ask permission from gatekeepers?

B.3 Confidentiality and Protection

A third ethics principle (UK's Research Ethics Guidebook) states:

- *'the confidentiality of information supplied by research subjects and the anonymity of respondents must be respected'.*

You need to make sure that participants are clear of the limits of confidentiality in your project, and that you plan for the unexpected in as much as you can.

Are you asking questions that could reveal difficulties where you might need to act to ensure that a young person, or someone identified by them, can access help or support? That might include disclosure of abuse or neglect, or it could relate to serious physical or mental health problems, or it could relate to their support needs.

You need to consider – in advance – what could arise and at what level of concern it might be appropriate to act. You also need to make sure that you have clear procedures in place in case such concerns arise.

If at all possible, individual researchers should not have to make the decision to breach confidentiality on their own – an ethical code/protocol should include provision for the researcher to consult with a supervisor, project director, or another experienced researchers (and, if necessary, to make contact outside office hours).

All PASSPORT 2012 research will take place with the active support of a local organization (CRY, Save the Children, Albero della Vita or Youthlink), which means there should be some organizational support available to protect children. This should be made explicit.

Some questions to consider (see eg Save the Children p.36-37):

- How will young people protect their identity?
- What do you plan to do if you see or hear something that gives you cause for concern about children being subjected to harm?
- Who will have access to any audio/video tapes?
- How will you keep them secure?

UK's Research Ethics Guidebook suggests the following principles as a useful starting point:

- As part of the consent procedure, the researcher should explain that if (s)he hears or sees something that gives cause for concern, (s)he has a duty to act, but will talk with the participant (adult or child) first about what to do. That might mean that the researcher should first encourage the person to talk to someone who could help, or agree that the researcher should talk to someone else on their behalf.
- In exceptional circumstances – if someone would be put at greater risk by consulting in this way with the participant – it may be necessary for the researcher to breach confidentiality without first talking to the participant. This means that when seeking consent – you need to explain the limits of confidentiality. For example, you might say:*'We will not tell anyone what you tell us unless we think someone might be hurt. If so, we will talk to you first about the best thing to do.'*

In practice, statements such as this have prompted concern about potential damage to the integrity of the research relationship, or about the potential to cause anxiety for research participants. [However] you can't achieve fully informed consent without making clear the limitations of confidentiality in your specific project.

C. Dealing with Ethical questions arising during fieldwork

It is almost impossible to predict all the difficulties and ethics dilemmas that might arise in a participatory assessment with young people – and some can be overstated (see Punch, 2002 for a healthy assessment of ethics in research with children in Bolivia). However, you can prepare yourself for your particular research project by:
- Thinking about what might happen;
- What you might do and how you might respond; and
- Who you might seek advice from in case of difficulties.

Make time to talk these things through with your organization, the lead PASSPORT 2012 researchers or another experienced colleague.

A key issue to consider throughout your fieldwork is the power differential between researcher and young person. Your positionality as a researcher conveys certain power with respect to each child and possibly other participants. You need to deal with this in your research design, but also be constantly aware of power and positionality throughout your research (see eg Young & Barrett, 2001a in their research with street children in Africa)

Your own welfare as a researcher is also a relevant concern (eg Save the Children p.40).
- How will you ensure your own safety?
- Where will you look for emotional support if you need it?

D. Ethics in Analysis, Reporting and Dissemination

D.1 Analysis - Some issues that you may need to reflect on in your preparations for analysis include:

- Will children/young people participate in analyzing your findings – if so, how?
- Will children / other participants be able to build their own skills by participating in the analysis – if so, how?
- How will you validate the findings of your research with young people and/or other participants?

D.2 Reporting (excerpt from UK's Research Ethics Guidebook) - Reporting research raises ethics questions that need careful thought. What is the potential impact of your research? How could it be used or misused? How will people interpret your findings? What do readers need to know about your study's research, including your approach to ethics? Will children be directly involved in your reporting? Be aware that reader responses affect how research is understood and used. People may misunderstand and misapply the findings of research, and it can be very helpful to think about how such misunderstandings might arise, when analysing your data and writing up your study. Once your work reaches the public domain, it is difficult to retain control over how it is represented. This can have consequences for the people you studied, both individually, or the wider groups you may claim to represent in your writing.

Your reporting of your research methods can have an impact on other people. Thorough reporting – of what you did, with who and how – helps you to be accountable for your work to funders and others with an interest in the research. Such transparency is vital if your readers are to be able to evaluate the strength and nature of your research findings and make best use of them.

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By including a description of your approach (as protocol/code/framework) to research ethics (and what actually happened in practice), you can also help researchers learn from each other's ideas and experiences.

Participatory research with young people also needs to be accountable to them. It is worth considering:

- How will you make your report accountable to participating young people?
- Will children receive your report in final or other form?
- Will your report include child-friendly summaries?
- Will a separate child-friendly report be developed by/with your PASSPORT 2012 organization?

D.3 Dissemination and 'impact'
Research – including this participatory assessment - aims to sow the seeds of changes in policies, services, or beliefs about children's experiences, capabilities and voices.
While dissemination raises complex issues, it has also been argued that people have an ethical duty to try to make their research findings widely known and, if possible, acted upon.

Some questions to consider:
- Will young people participate in dissemination of the research – if so, how?
- Will other stakeholders/participants participate in dissemination of the research – if so, how?

E. Useful reading (Free resources in Bold)

Alderson, P., and Morrow, V. (2004) *Ethics, social research and consulting with children and young people*. Barkingside: Barnardo's.

ESRC: **Research Ethics Guidebook: a resource for social scientists** http://www.ethicsguidebook.ac.uk/

Farrell, A. (Ed.) (2005) *Ethical issues in Research with Children*. Maidenhead: Open University Press.

Laws, S., and G. Mann (2004) **So You Want to Involve Children in Research? A Toolkit Supporting Children's Meaningful and Ethical Participation in Research Relating to Violence against Children**, Stockholm, Sweden: Save the Children
http://www.ovcsupport.net/s/library.php?Id=904

Morrow, V. (2008) Ethical dilemmas in research with children and young people about their social environments, *Children's Geographies*,6:1, 49-61.

Punch, S. (2002) Research with Children: The same or different from research with adults? **Childhood** Vol. 9(3): 321 –341

 http://www.dreamscanbe.org/Reasearch%20Page%20Docs/Punch%20-%20research%20with%20children.pdf

Thomas, N. and O'Kane, C. (1998) The Ethics of Participatory Research with Children, *Children and Society* 12: 336-48.

Young, L. and H. Barrett (2001a) Adapting Visual Methods: Action Research with Kampala street children, **Area** 2001, 33.2: 141 -152
http://www.streetchildren.org.uk/content.asp?pageID=46&showPublications=t (CSC Resource Library – search in 'East and South Africa')

Young, L. and H. Barrett (2001b) 'Ethics and Participation: Reflections on Research with Street Children', *Ethics, Place and Environment* 4.2: 130-1

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**Teleconference on Ethics in Participatory Research with Children
Note of Main Points**

Agenda: 1 hour Teleconference
1. Introductions - Researchers and your research
2. Overview - Ethics and Participatory Research with Children – Lorraine Van Blerk
3. Research Design - Sampling, Consent, Confidentiality and Protection
4. Dealing with Ethical Questions arising in Fieldwork
5. Ethics in Analysis, Reporting and Dissemination
6. Final Agreements

Participants: Tara Black (PASSPORT 2012 Researcher, Youthlink, Canada)
Bijita Devsharma (PASSPORT 2012 Researcher, Save the Children, India)
Carlotta Zanaboni (PASSPORT 2012 Researcher, Albero della Vita, Italy)
Neeraja Phatak (PASSPORT 2012 Researcher, CRY, India)
Sarah Thomas de Benitez (PASSPORT 2012 Lead Researcher)
Lorraine Van Blerk (Academic Researcher, Dundee University and member of PASSPORT Steering Group)
Charlotte Murray (Street to School Consultant, Aviva Global)

Main Points Emerging:

1. Introductions - Researchers and your research
   I. Encouragement given for **researchers to communicate among themselves** if they wish to find out more about a particular research project or approach – all have each others e-mail addresses. Exchange skype addresses…
2. Overview - Ethics and Participatory Research with Children
   I. Agreement that **the above Working Paper covers the main ethical points** for research. Aim at all times to **Do no harm to children**. In other words to do what is best in terms of not putting a child at risk of harm. All other ethical decisions should cascade fairly naturally from this main tenet.
   II. On **Consent** Lorraine Van Blerk added 4 points: First – consider the (cultural) context for **gaining informed consent in the most appropriate way** – eg written consent might not be as appropriate to local context or children's circumstances as verbal consent – do what is most appropriate to the child; Second – make clear to children that **they can opt out of the research at any time without shame or difficulty;** Third – if you plan to interview a child's parents, teachers or other duty bearers, consider whether you should first ask the child for his or her consent for that – making sure the child fully understands why you wish to conduct those interviews and what the information gained will be used for – in other words, **consider children as gatekeepers** too; Fourth – Work hard to **ensure children fully understand what they are consenting to** – think about ways to verify that
   III. On **Confidentiality** Lorraine added 2 points: First on Anonymity, to consider the need to **extend anonymity beyond names** to include eg locations, to ensure that information cannot be traced back to particular children; Second to consider why and when specific information or people require anonymity – **consider if the situation is appropriate for children to be able to choose whether or not they are anonymous – remembering that research can have a legacy in the longer term** (eg a child may choose not to be anonymous 'now' without fully understanding implications for his or her employment or treatment in the longer term)
   IV. On the issue of **Power Differentials**, Lorraine drew attention to the power an NGO can have over young people – who may feel obligated to participate in research because of what they feel the NGO has done for them. **Consider whether children are being coerced into participating** in your research perhaps because of guilt (but do not feel comfortable) or because they genuinely want to participate – are you asking in ways that young people can easily state their opinion? Needs thought and vigilance…

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V. On **Dissemination** – Lorraine stressed the need to ask children not only if they agree with the findings you have chosen to highlight and the way you plan to disseminate them, but also if anything has been missed from your findings that they would like to see included. The important point is to **make sure children are comfortable with the ways they are represented** in your findings and in wider dissemination.

NB Lorraine offered to help with ethical advice if useful (although not available for next 10 days). I recommend you first consider discussing ethical questions with your NGO contacts and/or your researcher colleagues. Then turn to me as next port of call. Then we can consult Lorraine as necessary.

Additional key points covered:

3. Research Design - Sampling, Consent, Confidentiality and Protection
    I. **Sampling** – while you may have a stated approach to sampling or informant selection (eg maximum variation, or even 'consult with all children in the project'), you should be prepared to modify that approach in light of your realities in researching together with children. Eg some children may not wish to be included – others may wish to include all their friends. The important points are: Make research appropriate to children; Document your decision-making (initially in your log-book/reflective diary and field notes as appropriate) as you move from research design to field work realities, so that you can show why and how you have modified your selection of participants
    II. **Consent** – most important is to make sure that a child understands what he or she is consenting to. This means that you may need to explain your research aims, process etc in varying ways to children of different ages, characteristics and situations. Explanations can be personalized – the key is to make sure children fully understand, to be able to give informed consent.
    III. **Confidentiality** - you need to be clear before you start your fieldwork on the steps you will take if a child shares information with you (or you observe something) concerning actual, past or potential harm to the child. Children should have this process explained to them as part of gaining their informed consent.
    IV. **Protection** – in making sure a young person is motivated (but not coerced) to participate, listen closely to the language used, watch the child's body language and be alert to signs of discomfort. If you have any sense of coercion or feel the child may regret participating in the research, make sure you provide easy, dignified ways for him or her to leave if they want to – and repeat this at any time during the research process you sense something similar.
4. Dealing with Ethical Questions arising in Fieldwork
    I. If you find something in the course of your fieldwork in which you feel obligated to intervene – think first of harm and implications for the child, and then of how best to handle. Discuss asap with NGO or – if problem is in the NGO – with me. We can think better together….
    II. Some problems may be better dealt with at the 'systemic' level – eg if there is a pattern of behaviour allowed or even encouraged within the NGO – may be best dealt with through recommendations to the NGO (to better protect current and future children from harm). If urgent – let's make some early recommendations in the way most likely to produce positive change…
    III. Multiple meetings with young people – are you worried about 'using up' their good will? Depends on the young person's own situation and the researcher's approach. Be careful to always leave the door open to opting out and are alert to signs of discomfort. At the same time, show their participation is genuinely valued and be alert to signs of enjoyment/satisfaction.

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5. Ethics in Analysis, Reporting and Dissemination
   I. Agreement to **put children's interests (and particularly protection from harm through research) first – at all stages of the research** – from design, through fieldwork, to analysis, reporting and dissemination.
   II. Consider creative ways for children to validate findings, to help/participate actively in analysis, to represent themselves in reports and dissemination
   III. Agreement to discuss these issues further as research progresses, and in the meantime to be alert to opportunities and to create spaces for children's active participation in the later stages of the research
6. Final Agreements
   I. Researchers to each produce their **draft ethical protocol/code/framework** before engaging in full stage of fieldwork. Use the Working Paper above and these notes for guidance as needed – consult me when you want. The earlier you have this in place, the better (Carlotta – after contract signed; Neeraja has already submitted draft). Please send your drafts (including explicitly any legal national/local as well as your NGO's requirements) to me so I have copies of all at the global level. Me to contribute with suggestions as appropriate. **Ethical protocols/codes/frameworks to be finalized (although can be added to later on) at latest by start of pilot fieldwork**.
   II. On Confidentiality – as you develop anonymity (ie pseudonyms etc) keep a register (in Excel?) to **reference real names with pseudonyms** - so that you maintain consistency in use of names/locations in your analysis and final reporting. If you have questions about this, please ask – I have examples
   III. Researchers to share/consult with each other and/or me on ethical issues as they arise – to deal with them quickly and appropriately

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PASSPORT Checklist for Ethical Frameworks

Ref	Ethical Considerations	Toronto DRAFT	FINAL	Delhi DRAFT	FINAL	Jhar/d DRAFT	FINAL	Milan DRAFT	FINAL
1.	Explicit reflection of NGO ethical standards								
2.	Explicit reflection of national/local standards for research with children/young people								
3.	Assessment of risks of harm to child/youth participants through research								
3a	*Plan to minimize risks*								
3b	*Plan to deal with distress*								
3c	*Plan for handling situations where risk of serious harm is disclosed*								
3d	*Provisions to consult about breaching confidentiality*								
3e	*Arrangements for ongoing support for child/youth if needed*								
4.	Consideration of child protection issues in daily practice								
5.	Assessment of possible risks to researcher safety								
5a	*Steps to prevent and deal with them*								
6.	Informed consent of children/youth participants								
6a	*Ensuring each knows they can withdraw consent at any point*								
6b	*Ensuring information is understandable and attractive to them*								
6c	*Ensuring children give consent to consult/interview parents/carers*								
6d	*Includes information about their rights as respondents*								
6e	*Includes information about how their data will be handled and stored*								
7.	Consent from parents and/or carers								
8.	Informed consent to involvement by any other participants								

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9.	Practical arrangements to protect confidentiality							
9a	*Children*							
9b	*Other participants*							
10.	Inclusion of voices of children facing discrimination							
10a	*Maximized opportunities for girls and boys to participate fully*							
10b	*Why children you want to study need to be involved*							
10c	*Reflection about who is left out*							
11.	Consideration of child/youth participation							
11a	*In analysis and validation of findings*							
11b	*In report writing and type of report(s)*							
11c	*In dissemination (Ensure children are comfortable with how represented)*							
11d	*In building their skills*							
12.	Consideration of need to offer recompense to those helping with research							
12a	*Form this will take*							
13.	Support of NGO/community organizations/ people important in the lives of children							
13a	*Consultation with NGO/communities in planning*							
13b	*How research will contribute to capacity building*							
14.	Feedback to NGO/communities on research findings							

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Appendix 6

6. Global Research Framework and Timeline in Four Key Stages:

A. Research Process: 8 'Core' Stages

In planning and practice, these boundaries were porous: for example Developmental Evaluation training (Stage 1) continued through the Process in the form of coaching and site visit discussions. Similarly, some stages were iterative: for example, Data Organization and identification of Information Gaps (Stage 5) started in Stage 3, happened constantly as researchers followed their emerging data, organized it in the case study 'layers' and found new information gaps they needed to fill, through to Stage 7. In another example, preliminary analysis started at piloting (Stage 3) and was conducted throughout information gathering (Stage 4) – helping to guide detection of information gaps, with formal final analysis in Stages 6 & 7.

Cross-cutting the Core Stages were:
1) Regular Progress Reports (3 to 4) with tangible deliverables submitted on agreed dates by Local Researchers, with feedback from Lead Researcher and NGO Reps – aimed at supporting researchers to keep on track
2) Regular Check-ins between Researchers and their NGO Evaluation Reps (as set up by researchers and NGO reps) – aimed at researchers informing NGOs of emerging findings – for discussion, and NGOs helping to fill information gaps for researchers
3) Researcher Teleconferences (3) – aimed at reaching common agreements and responding to concerns about Ethics, Analysis & Interpretation, Reporting
4) Cataloguing of audio recordings, drawings, wall charts, photos etc – all kept by local researcher, with full copy for lead researcher
5) Each researcher kept a 'Log Book' to note and reflect on 'surprises' or 'unexpected' observations, events, insights – aimed at asking questions to track decision-making in the research process. NGO reps were also encouraged to do so for their own and their organization's reflective practice

Since NGO staff were engaged as active participants in the research, they were invited to reflect regularly with the local researcher on the research process as well as on emerging findings. Researchers and NGO staff were encouraged to record and discuss 'surprises' emerging along the way, which helped them to reflect together on advantages and difficulties of the participatory research process.

B. Roles & Responsibilities

- **1 Lead Researcher:** Overall direction of global assessment; Support for local researchers; Responsible for global research process and global report

- **4 Local Researchers:** Direction of local assessment; Support for NGO learning; Responsible for local research process and local report

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- **4 NGO Director-level Representatives:** Leadership of local assessment in the NGO; Chair local Steering Group; Help Evaluation Coordinator resolve emerging issues; Responsible for take-up of learning within the NGO and externally.

- **4 NGO Evaluation Coordinators:** Ensure local researcher access to NGO, S2S Programme, children and other relevant stakeholders; Arrange lead researcher Site Visits; Responsible for documenting and sharing research process in the NGO, building capacity in evaluation & supervision of research. Should be a person keenly interested in the potential of evaluation for organizational learning and building the NGO's capability and experience

- **4 Aviva Local Representatives:** Support to keep Project on track; Help NGO resolve emerging problems; Support for local dissemination; Responsible for monitoring local assessment for Aviva

Key Stage 1: Feb 2012 (1 month)
Aim: Global Project Set Up
Indicators:
- Broad Approach and Research Design Agreed
- Global Research Framework & Timeline Agreed
- 2 NGO Representatives Identified and Briefed (Leadership & Dissemination; Evaluation Coordination)
- Roles and responsibilities of Aviva Coordinators and NGO Representatives agreed
- Timing for 1st Site Visits by Lead Researcher agreed
- Progress Report submitted on KS1 to Aviva

KS1	Lead Researcher	Local Researcher	NGO	Aviva Local Rep
Key Deliverables	* Agreed Global Approach, Design, Framework & Timeline * 4 x 1st Site Visits programmed in * Progress Report	None	* NGO Director-level Rep briefed * NGO Evaluation Coordinator appointed & briefed * 1st Site Visit programmed	* Roles & Responsibilities of Aviva Coordinators & NGOs defined * Support (when and how) for NGOs agreed
Approx Days KS1	7	0	2 = 1 Dir + 1 Coord	1
Av. Days per Month	7	0	2 = 1 Dir + 1 Coord	1

Key Stage 2: March – April 2012 (2 months)
Aim: – Local Research Preparations Completed
Indicators:
- NGOs and Aviva Coordinators are comfortable and familiar with Approach, Research Design, Framework and Timelines
- Recruitment Process & ToR for Local Researchers have been developed
- Steering Groups established
- Local Researchers Recruited
- Lead Researcher has undertaken (ideally) 2 day 1st Site Visit to each NGO
- Local Researcher Briefed
- Local Researcher Proposals submitted for Case Study Research (desk reviews, methods, techniques, participants)
- Progress Report submitted on KS2 to Aviva

KS2	Lead Researcher	Local Researcher	NGO	Aviva Local Rep
Key Deliverables	* 4 x NGO Directors & Evaluation Coordinators +	* Contract signed * Case Study Research	* 1st Site Visit carried out; NGO Rep for meeting &	* Briefed in 1st Site visit * Participation in

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	Aviva Reps briefed on Approach, Design, Framework, Timelines * Local Researcher recruitment process & ToR developed * 4 x 1st Site Visits completed * Local Researcher briefed * Progress Report 2	Proposal finalized * Briefed and prepared, with materials & techniques, for information gathering * Familiarized with NGO situation, S2S needs and concerns	Evaluation Coordinator for logistics and briefing * Local Researcher recruited * Local Steering Group established * NGO Evaluation friends across NGOs have 'met'	Local Researcher Recruitment * Participation in Local Steering Group
Approx Days KS2	26	3	6 = 2 Dir + 4 Coord	2
Av. Days per Month	13	1.5	3 = 1 Dir + 2 Coord	1

Key Stage 3: May – Sept 2012 (5 months)
Aim: Local Information Gathered and Stage 1 Analysis Completed
Indicators:

- Local Researchers have completed pilots and information gathering as required for each Case Study (with children, young graduates, staff and community stakeholders as required by their ToR and agreed Case Study plans)
- Local Researchers have shared information gathering experiences with their NGOs, with support from the Evaluation Champion, on a regular basis
- Local Researchers have resolved data collection method problems with NGOs & their peers
- Lead Researcher has undertaken (ideally) 2 day 2nd Site Visit to each NGO
- Platform for Analysis has been agreed and local researchers familiarized with the software (software purchased and installed if needed)
- Analysis has been completed, submitted to the Lead Researcher and discussed by peers
- Steering Groups – at Global and local levels have met at least twice to consider dissemination of the final reports
- Progress Report submitted on KS3 to Aviva & Good Values

KS3	Lead Researcher	Local Researcher	NGO	Aviva Local Rep
Key Deliverables	* Supervised data collection methods (pilots, transcripts, audit trails etc) and resolve methodology glitches * Agreed Platform for analysis, local researchers briefed; software purchased; analysis checked * 4 x 2nd Site Visits completed * At least 2 Global Steering Group meetings held and dissemination plan agreed * Progress Report 3	* Piloted instruments and information gathered according to ToR and agreed Case Study plan * Briefed and prepared for analysis * Process and preliminary results shared regularly with NGO Evaluation Coordinator and peers in other NGOs * Analysis completed and submitted to NGO and Lead Researcher, according to ToR and agreed Case	* Evaluation Coordinator has up-to-date audit trail of research for capacity building * Has ensured access to researcher for data collection (interviews, focus groups etc) * Completed 2nd lead researcher Site Visit, including building capacity in research supervision * Director-level Rep has led meetings of Steering Group and agreed dissemination plan * Process and preliminary results shared regularly	* Meeting with Lead Researcher in 2nd Site visit * Fortnightly check-in with NGO Evaluation Coordinator on Project progress and audit trail * Participation in local Steering Group meetings

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		Study plan	between NGOs	
Approx Days KS3	20	15	9 = 3 Dir + 6 Coord	3
Av. Days per Month	4	3	1.8 = 0.6 Dir+1.2 Coord	0.6

Key Stage 4: Oct – Dec 2012 (3 months)
Aim: Analysis and Interpretation Completed, Reported and Learning Embedded
Indicators:

- Local Researchers have resolved data analysis problems, submitted Analysis to NGOs, and received feedback from Lead Researcher, NGOs, young participants and Aviva Coordinators.
- Local Researchers have conducted first interpretations, shared them with peers, NGOs, young participants and Lead Researcher and received feedback
- Interpretation of results completed and circulated widely
- Local Researchers have written draft reports and got feedback from NGOs, peers and Lead Researcher
- Lead Researcher has written draft global report and received feedback from local researchers, NGOs, Aviva Coordinators and Global Steering Group
- Final local reports have been submitted by Local Researchers to NGOs and Lead Researcher. Content standardized for Global Report, but length and style negotiable with Local Steering Group
- Final Global Report submitted to Aviva & Good Value (15 to 40 Pages), format negotiated with Global Project Steering Committee, geared to international learning and dissemination needs

KS4	Lead Researcher	Local Researcher	NGO	Aviva Local Rep
Key Deliverables	* Interpretation agreed at local level * Feedback on Local Reports * Draft Global Report circulated widely and feedback received * At least 1 Global Steering Group meeting to discuss and agree final report * Final Global Report	* Data interpreted, shared according to ToR and agreed Case Study plan * Formal feedback on Evaluation Coordinator's audit trail * Draft local report circulated widely, presented to NGO and children, and feedback received * Completed local report * Feedback on global report	* Evaluation Coordinator completed audit trail of research * Evaluation Coordinator has led 1 day Workshop on internal learning * NGO Director-level Rep has agreed and shared action plan for dissemination * Feedback given on local and global report drafts	* Fortnightly check-in with NGO Evaluation Coordinator on Project progress and audit trail completion * Framing with Aviva/GV and Researchers on development of NGO research audit trails into a S2S 'tool kit' for research * Participation in local dissemination plan
Approx Days KS3	17	6	7 = 1 Dir + 6 Coord	2
Av. Days per Month	5.7	2	2.3 = 0.3 Dir+2 Coord	0.7

| **TOTAL in 2012** | **70 DAYS** | **24 DAYS** | **24 DAYS = 7 Dir + 17 Coord** | **8 DAYS** |

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Appendix 7

7. Research Methods and Techniques

Within PASSPORT's global Developmental Evaluation approach, its exploratory, layered case study design, and the core research stages, local researchers gathered information using **Appreciative Inquiry, Arts-Based Approaches** and **Participatory Action Research methods** – all collaborative, strength-based, forward-looking methods of information gathering. These methods were chosen by the local researcher together with the NGO. NGO staff were invited to actively learn from and with young people in all sites. This meant encouraging staff to focus on empowering young people through their participation in the research. NGO staff were encouraged to self-identify as young people's allies, rather than as potentially under threat from what young people might say about different aspects of their services.

Participation, or sampling, was inclusive - aimed at including all who wanted to participate while respecting those who did not want to join in – although this sometimes required negotiation with young people and/or NGO staff. In New Delhi, where numbers were large, and variations between children's characteristics and circumstances considerable, the local researcher used **maximum variation** as a sampling technique to try to reach a large a range of characteristics and experiences as possible while respecting young people's decisions to opt out (such as boys using solvents).

Young people were invited to participate in the design, testing and implementation of research techniques at each site. In this way, young people were able to take some control by choosing how, when and where to express their views – and could opt out if and when they felt uncomfortable. **Research techniques** chosen were generally formulated in response to a combination of: young participants' interests, experiences and characteristics; opportunities and constraints of their services; local contexts; and local researchers' experiences.

- In Toronto, local researcher Tara noted that her *'Fieldwork involved attending house meetings, driving young people to meetings or shopping, recording interviews or simply youth and researcher having a cup of coffee or sandwich'... 'The positivity allowed them to focus on their strengths, which is consistent with a strength-based approach that YouthLink values.'* Youth used mobile phones and e-mails to communicate with Tara, but decided not to use photos, videos, writing or other techniques which were more time intensive.
- In Milan, Carlotta and children together developed and used a series of playful assessment activities as part of the After School Labs they were evaluating, including: Expectations Inventory (to understand expectations); Thermometer (to rank satisfaction); Tree Activity (to explore aspirations); Treasure Hunt (to explore collaborative skills); English Flag and World of Words (to assess formal learning); Final Performance (to present and validate findings).
- In New Delhi, Bijita worked with children to develop experiential stories through drawings, story-telling and physical games
- In Jharkhand, Neeraja used: Action Planning; Discover/Dream/Design and Deliver stories; Drawings, Games and Puzzles

Techniques were tried out, modified or dropped altogether. Some of the most innovative ideas – such as making comic books; photographic scrapbooks; video collages; dance – were abandoned as impractical, inappropriate or irrelevant. Emphasis was less on the precise techniques and more on the participatory nature and young people's comfort with using them.

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Appendix 8

8. PASSPORT 2012 – Analysis Working Paper

As PASSPORT 2012 researchers you have already given thought to how you will analyse the information you gather with children, young people and other stakeholders – as stated in your original Case Study proposal.

The aim of this paper is to help you consider, in more detail, key aspects of PASSPORT 2012 for the analysis of your participatory assessment with young people, so that you can each:

(a) Make sure that the analysis you carry out is participatory and appropriate for your particular PASSPORT 2012 research

(b) Write a clear and consistent Analysis section in your Final Report.

Section A - Researchers and where you are in your research
Section B – Overview: Analysis, Participatory Research and a layered Case Study design
Section C - Marshalling Findings, Preliminary Analysis & Information Gaps
Section D - Children's and other Stakeholders' Participation in Analysis
Section E - Manual Analysis - Coding & Pattern identification
Section F - Rigour and Accountability
Section G – Reference Sources

(A) Researchers and where you are up to in your research

Each of you has time allocated specifically for formal analysis of information gathered, as well as some time earlier in the research for identifying information gaps and doing preliminary analysis during your fieldwork stages (see Appendix 1 of your Contract). These times vary according to the type of research you are undertaking.

In addition, each of you has your own timetable for research – meaning that one researcher may already be starting formal analysis while another researcher is just about to start fieldwork. At the time of our teleconference, all of you will have at least started fieldwork (some will already have finished).

You have each proposed one or more techniques for analysis, ranging from pattern analysis (comparing a predicted pattern with the empirical evidence from fieldwork) to participatory analysis (from presenting individual young people's accounts with little interpretation, to presenting the results of collective analysis by the group of participating children).

Common to all, however, are (a) the overarching requirements of PASSPORT 2012 and (b) the limited time you have available for analysis.

In our teleconference it will be useful for each of you to briefly explain how you propose to analyse your gathered information and how your proposed techniques sit within the overarching framework of PASSPORT 2012.

(B) Overview: Analysis, Participatory Research and a layered Case Study design

B.1 Analysis and Participatory Research with Children:

It has been argued that '*of all the different stages of the research process, the analysis and interpretation of findings is the most important stage at which to involve young people*' (Holland et al, 2001). At this stage the power differential between researchers and participants is potentially at its greatest, because this is when information about the participants is turned into knowledge that will be disseminated to others (Heath et al, 2009).

The extent to which research participants should be involved in analysis of data is subject to debate. On the one hand, involvement in making sense of the data helps to reduce power imbalances and contributes to a more valid – and varied – set of interpretations. On the other, analysis involves specific research skills, knowledge and experience that many young people do not have, including understanding of the policy context within which the research is located.

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An example of the importance of bringing children into analysis comes from research for the International Labour Organization (ILO) on child labour, in which findings about dangerous work carried out by children were analyzed and interpreted differently by adults and child participants: Adults concluded that all forms of child labour should be abolished; Children concluded that workplace regulation was needed to ensure that children did not have to carry out dangerous work, but felt that children should have a right to work (Jones, 2004).

The most comprehensive involvement of young people in research is in peer-led research – where young people are involved in *all* aspects of the research process – from deciding on the research topic and questions, designing instruments and generating the data, through to analyzing and disseminating the findings. Such research can be empowering, but is highly resource intensive (time, financing, skills) requiring considerable investment in training and on-going support for the young people involved. PASSPORT 2012, as a global assessment, is not peer-led research but each PASSPORT 2012 researcher is well-placed to identify areas in which participating NGOs could productively encourage such peer-led research in the future for organizational learning and child empowerment.

For PASSPORT 2012 research, there are ethical and organizational concerns to involving children in analysis. What kind and level of participation is allowed by the organization, for legal or other constraints? What kind and level of participation in analysis is appropriate in view of the age and circumstances of the children in your research?

There are at least 2 approaches to analysis of (qualitative) interview material – one regards interview data as a 'resource' the other as a 'topic' in its own right. In the first, a researcher uses interview data as a resource to provide insights into a particular issue (understanding that interview data may differ from experiences and behaviours outside of the interview situation). In the other, the researcher's interest shifts away from the accuracy or otherwise of the account, to the *way* in which that account is presented, or the *told story* – to gain insights into the sense which people make of their social worlds and thereby provide alternative, possibly more nuanced understandings of a research topic. Are your interview data 'resource' or 'topic'?

B.2 Layered Case Study Research Design

The Research Design for PASSPORT 2012 is a Multi-Site Exploratory Layered Case-Study design (see PASSPORT 2012: An Introduction), envisaging 4 *'single, yet related (multi-site), case studies, in which the unit of analysis is the Street 2 School Project in each organization'*. This design respects variations in S2S programme, NGO organizational structure and culture, and local and national context.

Our analytic strategy at this level will be '*developing case descriptions'* (one of 3 analytic strategies proposed by Yin, 2003: 109. The other 2 are: relying on theoretical propositions; and setting up a framework based on rival explanations).

Yin proposes 5 specific techniques for analyzing case studies: pattern-matching; explanation building; time-series analysis; logic models; and cross-case synthesis (Yin 2003 p.116-137). Whatever the choice of strategy and technique, Yin challenges researchers to *'produce high-quality analyses, which require investigators to attend to <u>all</u> the evidence, display and present evidence separate from any interpretation, and show adequate concern for exploring alternative interpretations'* (Yin, 2003: 109).

Key elements for analysis are:
- <u>Case study</u> design allows a systemic approach centred on young participants of each S2S Programme
- Its <u>exploratory nature</u> encourages in-depth exploration of perceptions, behaviours and relationships underpinning programme outputs and young people's outcomes
- A <u>layered design</u> permits analysis by layer – both to distinguish between layers in each research site and to bring data together by layer for analysis across project sites

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B.3 - Developmental Evaluation Approach– the 'Muddled Middle'

Our Case Study research design brings a pre-defined organizing lens to the research and can be understood as a 'top-down' organizing principle. It relies on multiple sources of evidence, with data needing to converge in a triangulating fashion and benefits from the prior development of theoretical propositions to guide data collection and analysis (Yin, 2003:14).

Our Participatory Assessment invites young people to contribute their own perceptions and experiences of S2S Programmes in a variety of ways and can be understood as a 'bottom-up' strategy.

Developmental Evaluation is an approach well suited to '*navigating the 'muddled middle' where top-down practices and bottom-up realities intersect*' and is also able to capture interdependencies of complex systems.

Analytical techniques used in Developmental Evaluations include 'mapping' of links and detection of patterns (falling within Yin's conception of pattern-matching), as described by Patton (2011) for example on pages p.118-119

So what does this mean for PASSPORT 2012 analysis? I suggest that our main analytical tasks are three:

(a)   Identify topics, themes or issues relevant to the S2S Programmes that young people draw attention to and express as being important or meaningful to them (bottom-up thinking)

(b)   Relate these to S2S, organizational and local data, both primary and secondary, that can help to contextualize these topics, themes or issues and the circumstances of participating young people (top-down thinking)

(c)   Ensure both that young people validate our selection and expression of meaningful topics, themes and issues, and that S2S stakeholders have opportunity to consider them – identifying commonalities / differences with transparency and respect (navigating the muddled middle)

(C) Marshalling Findings, Preliminary Analysis & Information Gaps

C.1 - Marshalling Findings

Our Case Study design allows for a preliminary organization of data by layer. This means that information gathered in each 'layer' should share a label. For example: Data generated with young people could all be grouped in an 'A' folder; while data gathered on the S2S Programme could be in a 'B' folder; and information concerning the NGO carrying out the S2S Programme could be kept in a 'C' folder.

An accompanying reference checklist (label plus description) allows you to keep tabs on what information you have gathered within each layer of your Case Study. For example: information gathered from an individual child, let's call her Sarah (interview recording, transcript, notes, drawings) could be grouped within category A.1 (Sarah) -if you want to make sure you have interviews and drawings for each child then A.1.1 could be Sarah's interviews; A.1.2 could be Sarah's drawings; A1.3 might be Sarah's family interviews/photos. Your second child, Thomas, would be A.2 (Thomas) – with his interviews at A.2.1, drawings at A.2.2 and family interviews/photos at A.2.3. Since your focus analytical focus is on children's perceptions and experiences of the S2S Programmes, you will be collecting most of your primary data within those 2 layers, although you will need contextual information from the other layers.

By the end of your fieldwork, you should have a complete reference checklist, a folder/box of data for each layer, and files organized for easy access within each folder/box.

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C.2 – Preliminary Analysis

During your fieldwork, you should aim to carry out preliminary analysis, using your chosen method of analysis, of at least: One young person's/group's interviews/drawings etc; and one interview/document belonging to the S2S Programme layer.

This should enable you both to address difficulties you find in practice with your analytical technique and also to identify 'information gaps' within and between layers.

C.3 – Information Gaps

In reviewing an interview or seeking to understand a drawing/diagram/action plan made by children – questions emerge for the researcher from phrases left hanging/unexplained, or drawings or even action plans that seem to suggest a variety of interpretations. Try to make sure you carry out such preliminary analysis before your final contact with that child/group of children so that you can, in your final meeting, seek clarity or explore untapped ideas (fill information gaps). In research centred on children's views and experiences – children should be the first 'go-to' resource to help you with your preliminary analysis. Their views and experiences will form the backbone of your interpretations and final reports.

A next stage is to review an interview/meeting with another stakeholders, or review a document, corresponding to the second (S2S) layer of your Case Study. This will raise similar unexplained questions and feelings of conflicting interpretations. Alongside them, you should search for possible 'links' in terms of topics, themes or issues also emerging in your preliminary analysis of the child's/children's produced materials – looking for commonalities and differences between them. In finding some, new questions will emerge as you try to make sense of the common/different views expressed. Again – try to make sure you carry out such preliminary analysis before your final contacts with children and other stakeholders, so that you can, in your final meeting, fill these information gaps.

Finally, a review of the materials collected – as listed in your reference checklist – will help you to identify those emerging priority topics, themes or issues for which you have – and do not yet not – sufficient contextual information to understand them in organizational or societal terms. These point to information gaps in documentary evidence – to be explored with your host NGO and/or with national centres of expertise.

Identification of information gaps should be welcomed as evidence of growing researcher understanding of the worlds of participating young people. While many gaps may be detected, further exploration should focus particularly on: a) topics/themes/issues raised by young people and b) linkages between different Case Study layers

(D) - Children's and other Stakeholders' Participation in Analysis
Ethical concerns at analysis stage were raised in the Working Paper on Ethics. These suggested that each researcher should consider at least the following:
- Will children/young people participate in analyzing your findings – if so, how?
- Will children / other participants be able to build their own skills by participating in the analysis – if so, how?
- How will you validate the findings of your research with young people and/or other participants?

Children's and other Stakeholder participation in analysis need to be carefully thought through by the researcher together with the host NGO. It is worth considering:

- Whether you have enough material to present youth accounts with little interpretation (with analysis focused more on selection of materials/quotes etc to be presented)
- What aspects of the analysis are important for young people and other stakeholders to participate in?

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- Is your plan to involve young people in analysis feasible? For example: Will your joint analysis be understandable and attractive to them? Will they have the time? Is your host organization fully on board with your plan for participatory analysis?
- Will young people's participation in analysis be followed up by a representation of their stories with which they are comfortable? What products can they reasonably expect to see/receive?

(E) Manual Analysis - Coding and Pattern identification

E.1 Coding

Coding is a way of expressing thinking 'up' from the data – in which a researcher identifies 'nodes' and gathers references to the material about these 'nodes'. Coding is also a way of thinking 'down' from categories to all the material about them – in which the researcher searches for empirical data in relation to wider categories and explores conclusions by checking for associations between the gathered information and concepts, ideas or descriptive categories (see Bazeley and Richards, 2000:53)

Organizationally, coding is a useful way of keeping track of topics or ideas, and of documents about them. But more than that, creating a 'node' and selecting text for coding are interpretative, analytic processes in which thinking about the data is extended beyond the descriptive to a more abstract level (Bazeley and Richards, 2000:53)

Coding is likely to be of 4 types (ibid: 53-54):
- 'In Vivo' coding – in which you pick up words, phrases and ideas directly from the text. These codes are usually about detail and some may be later dropped or merged with other codes
- Descriptive coding – which captures information provided in the text such as what someone reports about how they are feeling.
- Broad-brush coding – gathering material on wider categories. These might be topics of questioning or observations, responses to structured questions or key themes or issues arising from the data
- Concept coding – to pick up and 'open out' an idea that you might want to explore (can be broad or detailed, descriptive or interpretative)

A researcher can combine different types of code, making sure that each type is clearly identified. A Developmental Evaluation (muddled middle) approach and Participatory Assessment (in vivo) encourage use of different types – for example:
- In Vivo coding is particularly important for focusing on the language and expressions used by young people (and stakeholders) themselves. This is clearly consistent with a central aim of PASSPORT 2012 – to surface children's voices, perceptions and experiences
- Broad-brush coding seems particularly helpful for systemic inquiry – in PASSPORT 2012 for example, to link topics, themes or issues emerging from research with young people to information gathered about the S2S Programme, which is nested within a wider socio-cultural context

For your own particular research, you may also find descriptive and/or concept coding useful instruments for analysis.

The following steps can be helpful for generating useful descriptive and concept codes (adapted from Bazeley and Richards, 2000:56)
- Identify: What's Interesting? (Highlight the Passage)
- Ask: *Why* is it interesting? (This may generate a useful descriptive code. Make a D node)
- Then think: Why am I interested in *that*? (This will generate a more abstract concept that will be helpful when you begin to organize your concepts/categories for final reporting. Make a C node)

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E.2 Pattern Identification

'*Qualitative pattern-seeking is often more like groping around than elegant hypothesis-testing*' (Bazeley and Richards, 2000:168). At this stage, the researcher is moving into analytical interpretation – identifying patterns within and between the various nodes you have selected.

You will probably be looking particularly for patterns in 3 ways:
- Young Voices - Young people's expressions in relation to their experiences in the S2S programme – commonalities (priorities, forms of expression, types of prior and actual experience) and notable differences among them
- Young People & S2S Programme – commonalities and differences between young people's expressions and S2S objectives, assumptions and realities
- Young People & S2S Programme in Wider Context - Young people's expressions and S2S objectives, assumptions and realities, compared with wider organizational and societal objectives, assumptions and realities – for broad commonalities and differences

E.3 Manual Analysis

Why is PASSPORT 2012 opting for Manual Analysis rather than Computer-Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software (CAQDAS):
- Numbers of young people participating in the project have turned out to be small enough in each research project to make manual analysis a reasonable option. Three projects have fewer than 20 young participants and one project is engaged in research with a single collective of children (even though numbers of children in that collective exceed 20)
- Fieldwork time is also short enough to mean that primary data produced (interviews, drawings etc) are not overwhelming in number or scope, for the purposes of analysis
- Case Study design is 'exploratory', rather than descriptive or explanatory, meaning that while each Case Study has rationale and direction (and asks "What can be learned from young people about their experiences of a S2S Programme"?), they do not require the degree of analytical power needed for an 'Explanatory' or even 'Descriptive' Case Study.
- CAQDAS requires investment in software (eg NVivo, Atlas.ti, Nud*isT, MAXqda) and in researcher training if researchers are not familiar with these packages. The researchers recruited for PASSPORT 2012 are not familiar with CAQDAS.
- NGO learning about qualitative, participatory research will be better enabled by researchers' use - and sharing of the process - of manual analysis. None of the participating NGOs has in-house experience of doing qualitative research, so manual analysis is a useful first step before moving onto use of CAQDAS in the future.

Manual analysis can include options like setting up meeting/panels (whether of young people and/or NGO staff) to (a) reflect collectively on the researcher's choice of anonymised 'in vivo' and/or broad-brush nodes'; (b) interpret collectively emerging patterns or links between and/or meanings behind 2 or 3 nodes identified as particularly interesting or contested.

For manual analysis to be robust and accessible, the process used should be open and transparent to key stakeholders, particularly to the NGO Evaluation Coordinator(s) for PASSPORT 2012 and, if appropriate, to the young people at the centre of the research. A section in your final report should clearly describe the analytical process used.

(F) Rigour and Accountability

The credibility for qualitative inquiry depends on three distinct but related inquiry elements:
1. Rigorous techniques and methods for gathering high-quality data that is carefully analysed, with attention to issues of validity, reliability, and triangulation
2. The credibility of the researcher, which is dependent on training, experience, track record, status, and presentation of self
3. Philosophical belief in the phenomenological paradigm, that is, a fundamental appreciation of naturalistic inquiry, qualitative methods, inductive analysis and holistic thinking

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1) Aim to create **confidence** that *'the results of the research represent reality'* as *'the outcome of an empirical encounter, specified by time and space, with the world that was coordinated by the researchers in a transparent way'* (Gaskell & Bauer, 2000: 344). Confidence is indicated by:
   a) triangulation and reflexive understanding (eg Data Organization shows triangulation within and across case study layers + Log Books for reflexive understanding)
   b) procedural clarity (eg good documentation in Progress Reports; Ethical Framework and copies of recordings, drawings etc; and Analytical Working Paper with In Vivo + cross-analysis with others + Pattern Analysis through mapping)
   c) corpus construction (eg maximizing the variety of unknown representations – mapping the representations in a population, not measuring their relative distribution – so we need some evidence of saturation)
   d) thick description (eg extensive use of verbatim and other reporting of sources + good coding)

2) **Relevance** refers to *'the extent to which the research is viable in the sense that it links to theory 'internally' or is a surprise vis-à-vis some common sense 'externally'.* Relevance is indicated by
   a) corpus construction
   b) thick description
   c) surprise value (eg Log Book for surprises re expectations formed by S2S information received + by positionality of the researcher. Confirmed and disconfirmed expectations)
   d) Communicative validation (eg validation with sources for some information. But understand that *'tacit knowledge, or the blind spots of self-observation, often escape the immediate awareness of the social actor.'*… *'If the researcher gives in to 'censorship'* by the social actor, this would threaten the independence of the research. In PASSPORT we have accepted the view of validation with young people and review by NGO staff).

(G) Reference Sources

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