EVALUATION REPORT

YOUTH VOICES FOR CHANGE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The performance of the Youth Voices for Change (YVFC) pilot project was satisfactory in its five months of implementation, especially considering the context of a health emergency Pandemic and with remote coordination with countries in Asia and Latin America. YVFC implemented a relevant additional component aligned with Down to Zero's Voice For Change indicators/objectives and the needs of partner countries with respect to youth empowerment and mobilization. This implementation had a good response among its main actors, who reached a good degree of efficiency and high levels of effectiveness, especially if we relate the results focusing on the personal transformation of the Theory of Change (ToC) mainly in young leaders.

INDEX

1.   Introduction

The Down to Zero Alliance (DtZ) is a partnership of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA), led by Terre des Hommes, with Defence for Children - ECPAT, Free a Girl, ICCO (part of Cordaid) and Plan International Netherlands. It aims to end the sexual exploitation of children and adolescents (SEC) in 12 countries, working with the following four stakeholders: Children and adolescents; Communities; Government and the Private Sector.

Youth Voices for Change is an initiative of the Down To Zero Alliance that seeks to position young leaders as central agents of change through the creation of transmedia content for the prevention of SEC. Through a process of reflection, capacity building, empowerment and creation of communication materials, safe spaces for youth mobilization are promoted.

1.1.   Background

Youth Voices for Change is present in five countries: Indonesia, Thailand, Colombia, India and the Dominican Republic. The project targets young leaders who are part of the Alliance and young people in general between 15 and 25 years of age. The strategic actions are: to strengthen the capacities of young leaders both technically in four communication formats, social media campaigns, photography, creative writing and video, as well as in their empowerment and advocacy processes in digital media for the prevention of sexual exploitation of children and adolescents.

Throughout the implementation of the pilot project, a series of modifications were made to achieve its objective, adapting mainly to the needs, contexts and circumstances of each of the countries.

67 young people applied to participate in YVFC (18 in Latin America and 45 in Asia). Following the selection process 42 applications were initially accepted, mainly considering the applicant's advocacy capacities and interest in social media, but due to the circumstances, the project concluded with 25 participants (60% of the initial number) across the 5 different countries. The main reasons for young people dropping out were: lack of time, family conflicts, connectivity problems and health crisis (COVID19).

COUNTRY PARTICIPANTS

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

COLOMBIA

INDIA

THAILAND

INDONESIA

5 COMMITTEES

YOUNG LEADERS PARTICIPATING

GENDER IDENTITY

WOMEN
18

MEN
7

YOUNG LEADERS PARTICIPATING
25

YOUNG LEADERS PARTICIPATING

INDIA
5

INDONESIA
8

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC
5

THAILAND
3

COLOMBIA
4

CATEGORIES

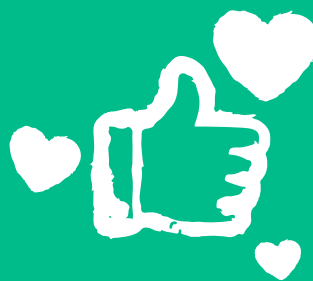STREAMING
6

BLOG
9

PHOTOGRAPHY
10

VIDEO
6

WORKSHOPS
+150

SOCIAL MEDIA OUTREACH
2,928
FOLLOWERS

1.2. Purpose

The evaluation aims to gather and learn about the perception and experience of the main actors involved in the implementation of the first version of YVFC to assess its relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability for future application.

This document responds to the scope of YVFC from the time of its pilot implementation in February 2021, until the closing date in June 2021 (relevance), the changes that show the progress from February towards the final results of the project in the trajectory of the young leaders (effectiveness), the probability that the results of the project will be maintained after 2021 (sustainability), and the dynamics of training and production of communicational materials (efficiency) in all the countries where the project is developed.

2. Methodology and Process Selection

As part of the YVFC evaluation, instruments were developed to ascertain the perceptions of each group involved in the implementation to evaluate the processes and the results of the project. These instruments were verified and validated by the Terre des Hommes PME team.

2.1. Stakeholder analysis

The evaluation was conducted in the five participating countries. It was applied to the three main groups of action and influence within the project, including:

- Youth leaders from the five YVFC youth committees.

- Implementing partners who provided contact support to youth advocacy groups and facilitated the selection process.

- Teams of volunteers who facilitated the development of the workshops (Human Rights and technical) in Latin America and Asia.

2.2. Methods

In order to facilitate the process, the contents and instruments were adapted for each group, respecting the relationship and discursive line that was handled and worked with each one of them:

- **Young leaders:** Three virtual workshops were held, one with the Latin America committee, one with the Indonesia committee and one with the Thailand committee, using MURAL to make the approach more participatory and dialogic. The questions focused on four specific areas: **training, advocacy, communication products and project.**

In the case of the India committee, due to the pandemic and the lack of internet connection of young people, it was decided to work on a written survey. In all cases we worked with real-time translators and, in the case of India, a person in charge of translating the documents into English and also reverse.

- **Implementing partners:** A qualitative form with open-ended questions focused on five areas: **best actions, expected results, evaluation of results, YVFC at BBB, recommendations to improve project implementation.**

- **Volunteers by country:** Two workshops were held, one with volunteers from Latin America and the other with volunteers from Asia, implemented in English. The MURAL tool was used to make the approach more participatory and dialogic, focusing the questions on five specific areas: **best actions, expected results, evaluation of results, improving advocacy skills of young leaders, recommendations to improve the implementation of the project workshops.**

3.   Findings

It was decided to divide the findings of the workshops by stakeholder (youth leaders, partners and volunteers) and, subsequently, the results were divided by region.

3.1.   Youth Leaders

After the workshop, the following results were systematized.

Latin America

The young leaders identified the following achievements **see Annex 1**:

- Working from a horizontal and dialogic perspective, having the support of youth volunteers, and maintaining constant communication allowed the young leaders to recognize YVFC as a safe space for reflection, exchange of ideas, learning, and co-construction.

"I FELT COMFORTABLE TALKING ABOUT TOPICS THAT I AM NERVOUS TO TALK ABOUT. I SHARED THINGS I HADN'T SHARED BEFORE"

FABIAN
YOUNG LEADER COLOMBIA

- The training process was successful because it strengthened the young people's communication and advocacy skills, promoting their creativity, recognizing their key message, their target audience, the channel and format of their preference. It also allowed them to work with new tools, creating multimedia content from a social approach for the rights of children and adolescents and the prevention of SEC.

"THE SUGGESTIONS THEY GAVE TO MY CAMPAIGN WERE MOLDED TO WHAT I WANTED TO DO"

ELIS
YOUNG LEADER COLOMBIA

- The workshops on human rights and prevention of CSEC were fundamental to promote reflection on the different realities experienced by the young leaders in relation to gender issues, youth mobilization and prevention of CSEC, recognizing themselves as agents of change with a clear objective and a more empathetic view of how the issues affect their environments.

"(THE WORKSHOPS ALLOWED ME) TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE ISSUES AND PROBLEMS, REFLECTING AND UNDERSTANDING HOW THE PROBLEM AFFECTS ME IN ORDER TO THEN HAVE AN IMPACT ON OTHERS"

NOEMÍ
YOUNG LEADER
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

🖒 The constant production of content and reflection on the issues addressed in the training processes allowed young people to share and advocate in their immediate environment, opening spaces for dialogue on the different issues.

"I LEARNED THAT BEFORE FIGHTING AGAINST THE ISSUES WE HAVE TO IDENTIFY THE MAIN PROBLEMS THAT ARE BEHIND THEM"

DAYELIN
YOUNG LEADER
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

🖒 While the youth had the support of partners to access internet packages; poor connectivity, power outages and other factors hindered participation in the training and their learning processes.

🖒 The lack of computers, cell phones, tablets, cameras, headphones, etc. hindered the content creation process.

🖒 Despite the commitment and interest of the young people in participating in as many technical and human rights workshops as possible, doing them simultaneously and frequently implied a demanding workload for the young people.

Asia

The young people from the Asia committees identified the following achievements
see Annex 2:

- They recognize that in addition to strengthening their technical skills in photography, video and creative writing, the workshops also provided them with tools to connect with their target audiences and close environments by generating spaces for dialogue and replication of their knowledge.

"**I LEARNED HOW TO SHARE MESSAGES THROUGH PHOTOGRAPHY**"

ADING
YOUNG LEADER INDONESIA

- It was possible to generate a comfortable and safe environment in the workshops allowing participants to exchange, learn and reflect on the issues in the different cities and contexts in which the young people found themselves.

"**LISTENING TO THE STORIES OF MY PEERS WAS VERY IMPORTANT FOR MY REFLECTION PROCESS BECAUSE IT BROADENED MY PERSPECTIVE**"

HANNA
YOUNG LEADER INDONESIA

- The Human Rights workshops presented new discussions related to social issues, especially concerning gender (new masculinities, LGBTIQ+, feminism, sexual and reproductive health, etc), which allowed the youth to generate their own reflections regarding these issues.

"THE WORKSHOPS ALLOWED ME TO HAVE NEW PERSPECTIVES AND BROADER POINTS OF VIEW ESPECIALLY ON ISSUES RELATED TO THE LGBTIQ+ COMMUNITY"

UNIF
YOUNG LEADER THAILAND

- Improving creative thinking skills during the brainstorming of their communication products was an opportunity for youth to position themselves as agents of change in their communities.

"I GAINED A LOT OF KNOWLEDGE. I FEEL MUCH MORE CREATIVE AND MORE CRITICAL ABOUT ISSUES"

ARIEL
YOUNG LEADER INDONESIA

- Time is a factor to consider because having many workshops in a short time was difficult to accomplish both tasks and products. In addition, the products had to be translated and sent, which delayed the process.

- They would like to have a better internet connection and/or face-to-face workshops.

- The feedback processes were complex even with translators, as the young people did not speak English, so on several occasions there was no clarity about what was expected in the final communication products.

3.2.   Implementing partners

The main achievements identified by partners in both Asia and Latin America
see Annex 3 and 4 are:

- Young leaders have gained confidence and are able to articulate the issues they care about more accurately. At the same time, they have increased their knowledge and information on the topics of prevention of CSEC, online CSEC, child labor, gender-based violence, children's education and, above all, child welfare.

- Products of an attractive, influential and communicative nature have been developed. Recognition of youth participation tools was achieved and young leaders learned how to plan their next steps for better advocacy by being the protagonists of their actions.

- The young leaders learned how to effectively communicate their message and developed their own key content for the prevention of sexual exploitation of children and adolescents. They also used social networks to share their messages on social issues in a creative way, through photography, video, streaming and creative writing.

- The dynamization of the sessions was strengthened so that the pedagogical process is built bilaterally.

- Ensured that all adults involved understand and are able to apply safeguarding. Provided training with sufficient time for them to understand the safeguard.

In terms of the challenges identified, the partners mention:

- There have been several changes in the workshop schedule. Some young people were overwhelmed by their daily activities. This has an impact on the consistency of the young people's attendance to the project.

- There has been evidence of a decrease in the enthusiasm of the youth as the workshop process progresses, this was specifically seen in Indonesia, mainly because of Ramadan month. This can be seen in the small attendance numbers compared to the beginning of the program.

- Language was one of the main challenges, as the youth leaders and some of the volunteers do not speak English, thus requiring the support of interpreters (in the case of Asia).

- Challenges related to connectivity have been addressed with additional classes during the weekend, one-on-one phone conversations, sharing all class recordings with the young leaders and short videos on various topics made by the facilitator and shared.

- Better projection of the youth leaders with more creation and dissemination of the content they make. Improve the coordination in the alliance for greater impact of the things the youth does.

- Young leaders should be oriented on safeguarding and their own safety issues should be assessed and addressed simultaneously.

In addition, the youth identified the following challenges

3.3.   Volunteers

Latin America

The main points identified by the Latin American volunteers **see Annex 5** were:

Asia

- The workshops were spaces for reflection, research and debate that allowed young people to analyze from the internal to the external, with clear messages and simple language that strengthened their confidence as agents of change.

- The methodology allowed them to form a critical eye where young people use their learning in the analysis of the current situation and cross-cut it with the realities of the countries.

- Giving young people the space to innovate and give them tools to establish their voices was an opportunity for them not only to talk about prevention, but also to open spaces for reflection with other young people with new formats, clear and coherent messages, from a more youthful vision.

- The adult and institutional discourse was left aside, allowing them to have a horizontal construction of them for them, appropriating spaces for youth interaction, such as social networks, to work on topics of their interest.

- The active participation of young people in the workshops allowed not only to generate more complex and comprehensive products, but also strengthened their training in a reciprocal way, allowing young people to propose interesting reflections and challenges, extrapolating their knowledge to other aspects of their lives outside the project.

- The active participation of the young people was limited due to the internet connection and the devices they had, so the volunteers looked for new ways to keep the young people motivated to continue their learning process.

The main achievements identified by the Asian volunteers **see Annex 6** were:

- The young people reflected on these problems with a more local perspective and, by strengthening their capacities and generating a plan for their communication products, they had a greater impact.

- Strengthening and recognizing their capacities and potential in these new communication spaces empowers them and they learn to tell their stories in a more creative and clear way with a greater impact on their advocacy processes.

- Active participation in the work allows us to reflect on the problems of the countries and the gaps that still exist in our societies.

- It is important to ensure new formats and extend the time to share knowledge and exchange reflections, for example short videos or other types of materials to ensure that young people can participate despite their own schedules and connectivity problems.

- The accompaniment of tutors and implementing partners is key to motivate and support young people in their training processes and the construction of their communication projects.

- In the specific case of Indonesia, the month of Ramadan affected the participation of the young leaders in the workshops, since they had hours of prayer and fasting.

- In the case of India, the pandemic situation and poor connectivity posed a major challenge for the one volunteer. Various methodologies and tools were used to keep the young leaders motivated.

4. Reflections and general recommendations

4.1. Relevance

- One of the main outcomes of Voices for Change is that child victims and children at risk of SEC are empowered to speak out and play an active role in their own protection and that of their peers. In this sense, YVFC contributes to this result because it empowers young people's capacities and gives them tools to continue advocating in digital media.

- Social networks have become one of the main forms of interaction of young people around the world, this in terms of pandemic has increased dramatically, becoming a fundamental need for continued education and interaction. Social networks are recognized as important spaces for advocacy that can have direct effects on the agenda of young people and their environments as agents of change in the prevention of SEC.

- YVFC is the first project of the alliance that focuses primarily on youth participation using social networks as a space for advocacy with a bicontinental reach. This opens up the opportunity to generate new strategies for scalable advocacy by the young people in the project.

- There is a need for young leaders to carry out actions together with young people from other countries participating in YVFC, in order to learn about new experiences, exchange reflections and also to generate new knowledge.

- The production of the communication materials and the training were a trigger to open deeper conversations about children's rights, gender and prevention of SEC in their environments.

4.2.   Efficiency

* It is necessary to conduct a socio-cultural analysis of each country to generate more efficient implementation strategies, this process should be built in a participatory manner between young leaders, implementing partners and the YVFC team.

* It is essential to guarantee the basic tools to ensure connectivity and production of materials for the young leaders (internet connection, updated devices, access to electricity, etc.).

* Having a coordination support person in Asia would facilitate more efficient coordination and follow-up, not only in the execution of activities, but also in the administration of the budget in each country and the management of strategic alliances to open more opportunities for the project.

* There is a need for the young people to have more support and follow-up from the partners. The youth says that they are also interested in continuing and, if possible, increasing follow-up meetings with the YVFC coordination team.
To have face-to-face activities in each country, following the collaborative, dialogic and horizontal practices that characterize Youth Voices for Change (complying with all the necessary biosecurity measures).

4.3.   Sustainability

* Work with the countries that have the best conditions and whose participation would respond to their main objectives. This implies having a specific person from the partner organisation to take the lead in the project in respect to the role of the partner within the project, and to have a budget, equipment, and basic tools to support the work of the youth leaders.

* Scalable advocacy that allows youth leaders to generate actions independently and collectively to generate new opportunities and a greater impact in their environments, always considering the safeguard protocols and the accompaniment of partners.

* It is important to improve upon the involvement of partners in the country and increase their ownership. This is also in respect to their L&A and how it connects to policy changes.

5.   Conclusions and going forward

In conclusion, the Youth Voices for Change project is an interesting opportunity to open new opportunities, spaces and advocacy processes for young leaders who are beneficiaries of the Down to Zero alliance and are now part of Building Back Better. This is because YVFC focuses on a horizontal methodology that promotes peer-to-peer reflection, and at the same time allows for a participatory construction between young leaders, partners and civil society. Finally, we know that SEC also operates in social networks, so it is pertinent to use these platforms to promote prevention and advocacy campaigns.

YVFC will continue under BBB taking into account the lessons learned from the evaluations. That is to say it will include a counterpart to facilitate/coordinate the project in Asia, it will be more integrated with the rest of the programme and the L&A activities, and keep Safeguarding and coaching as important elements of the programme.