

**Children and Young People's  
Participation:  
How do we know if it is  
making a difference?**

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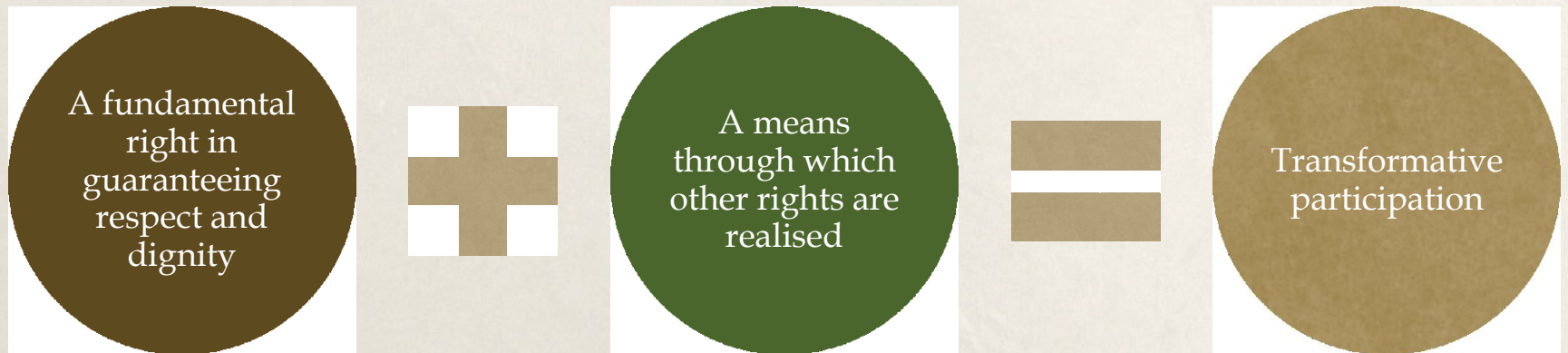
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Session One  
Contextualising  
participation

# Participation: understanding the context

- \* Differs from adult participation:
  - \* Does not afford autonomy
  - \* Necessitates support and facilitation
- \* Must be understood both individually and collectively
- \* Applies to all children on all issues of relevance to them
- \* Requires information and accountability
- \* Central to promotion of best interests
- \* A right not an obligation
- \* Involves Article 12 in conjunction with Articles 5, 13-17

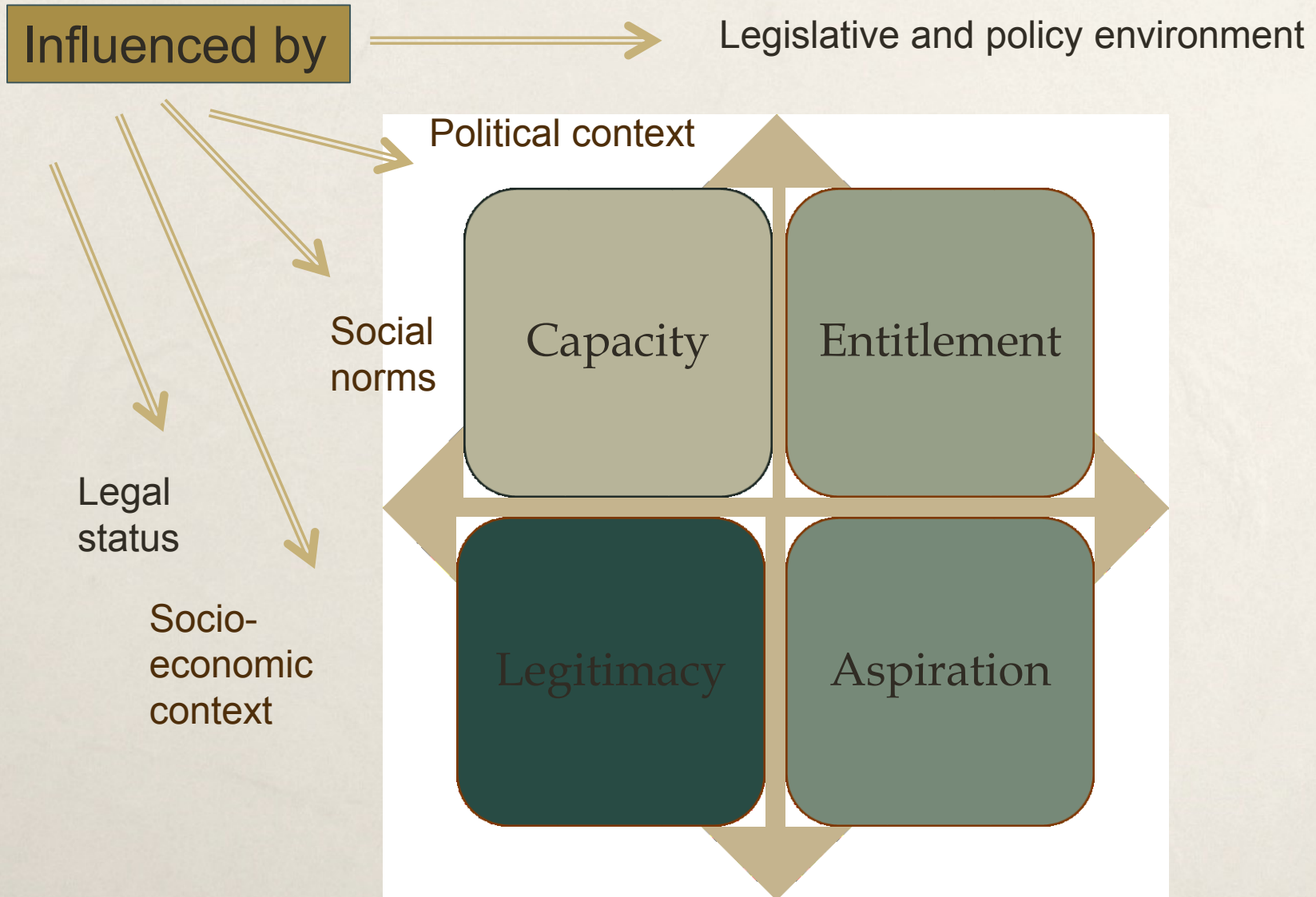
# A means and an end



# ... effective participation is....

A sense of efficacy and self belief, together with meaningful, informed and respectful opportunity to influence decisions and actions that impact directly and indirectly, individually and collectively on the life of an adolescent or adolescents

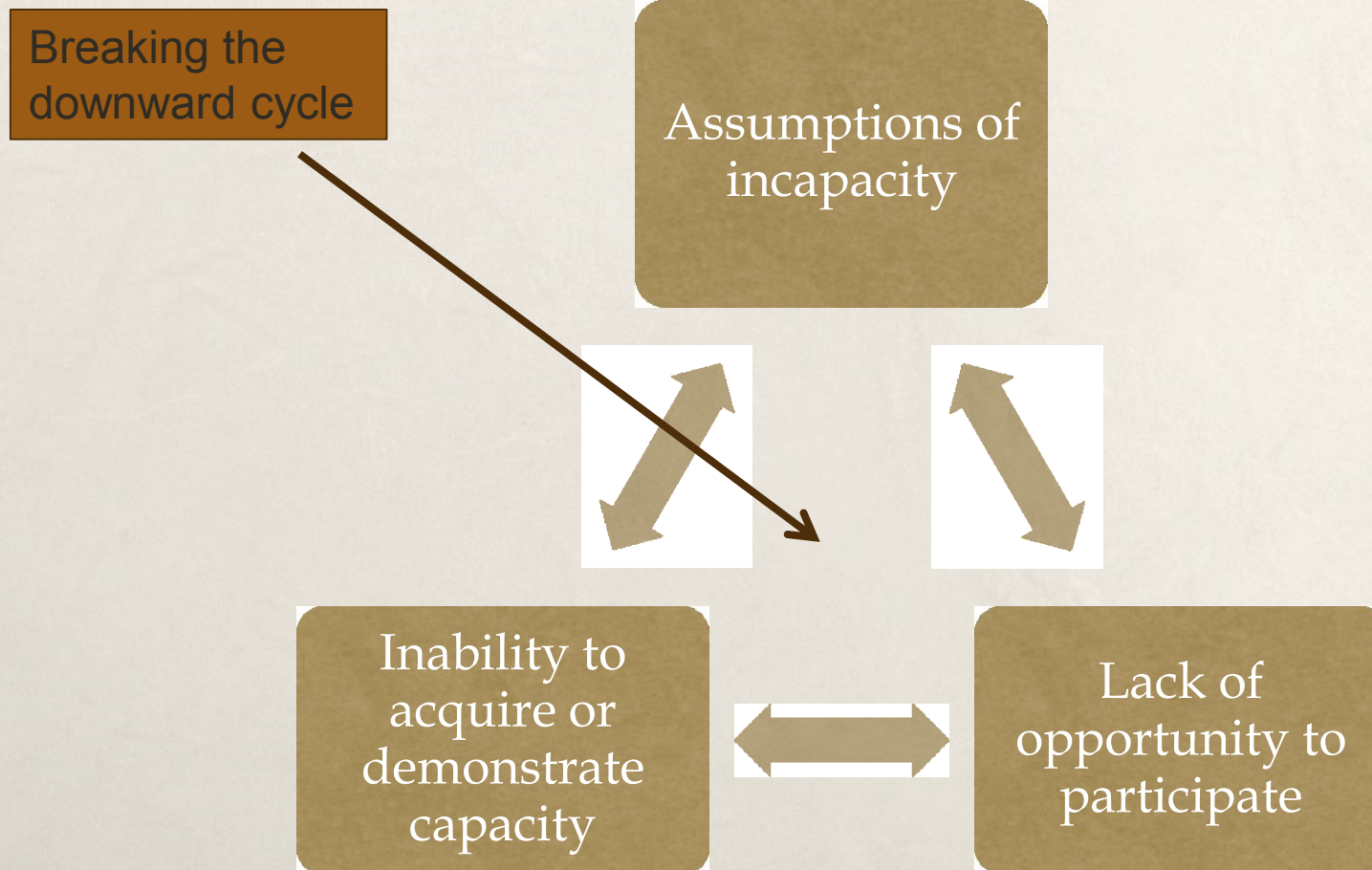
# Requires recognition of...



# Involvement in or control over decisions...?



# Acknowledging capacity





# Balancing participation and protection

Potential risks associated with participation/agency

Potential risks associated with denial of participation/agency

Exposure to avoidable harm

Exposure to retribution - challenges power bases

Excessive responsibility

Denies opportunity to learn risk-taking

Fails to recognise participation as a means of protection

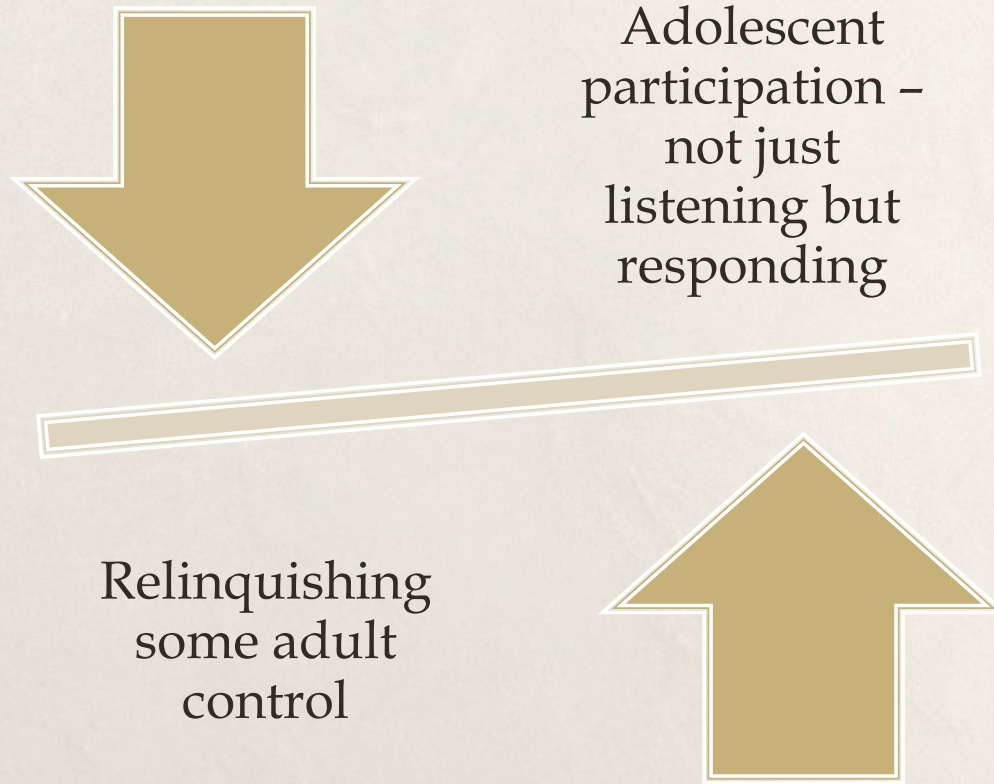
Limits capacities for effective participation

Can lead to 'hidden' and more risky participation

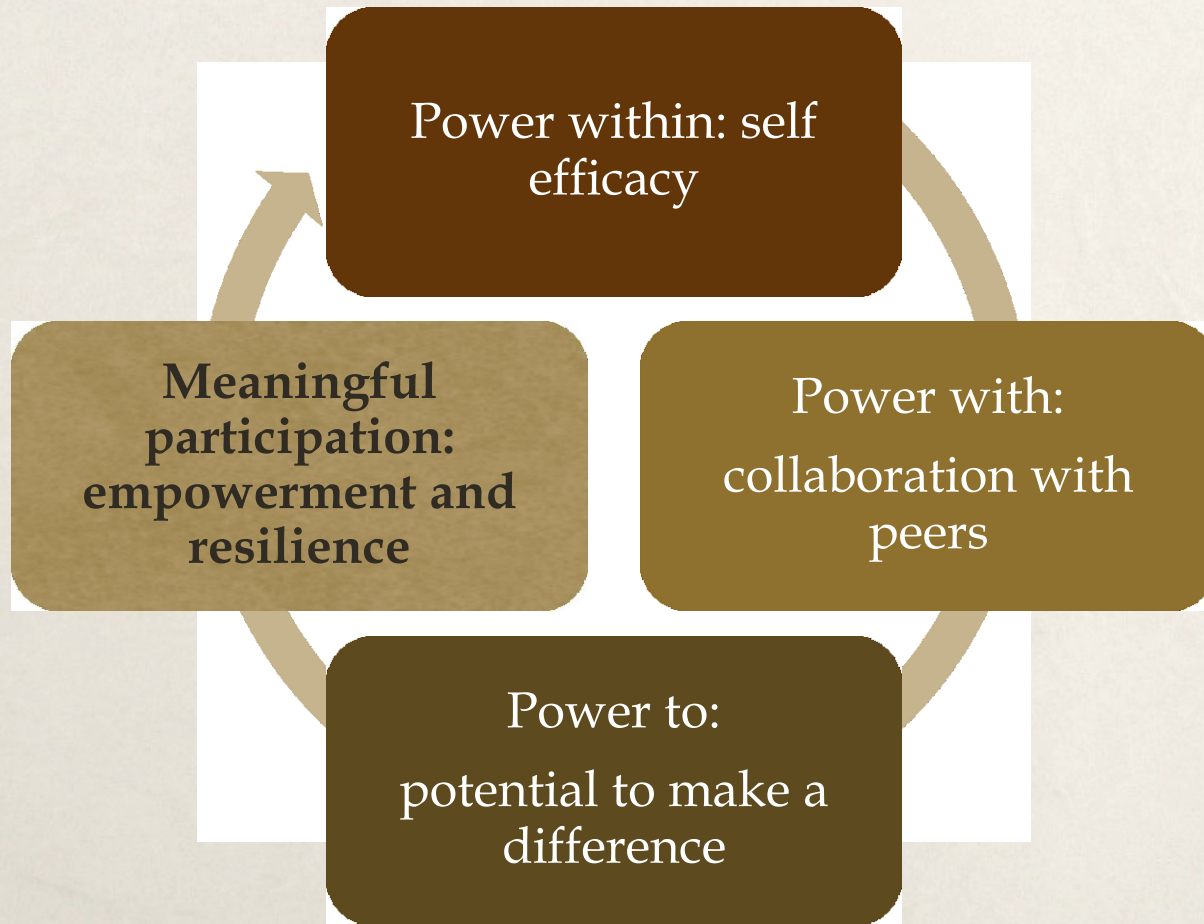
Best interests



# Shifting the balance of power



# Overall goals of participation

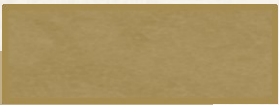


# Measuring participation



**YES?** Important to build evidence

- To strengthen accountability
- To improve practice
- To provide evidence – donors and governments



**NO?** We need to recognise:

- Participation a fundamental human right – not contingent on proving outcomes
- Social movements achieve impact through accumulated activities, not individual projects

# Conclusions

- \* Participation a fundamental right – central to dignity and respect
- \* Guaranteeing participation for all children requires a supportive legal and policy framework, training and awareness as well as appropriate spaces and opportunities
- \* Need for more systematic evaluation of what is being done and what works
- \* Children must be central to the process of defining participation, its goals and outcomes

Session Two  
Council of Europe Child  
Participation Assessment  
Tool

# CoE Child Participation Assessment Tool

To enable countries to undertake a baseline assessment of current implementation

To help identify measures needed to achieve further compliance

To provide benchmarks to measure progress over time

To strengthen monitoring and accountability

# Structure of assessment tool

## 10 Indicators

- Structural indicators eg laws and policies
- Process indicators eg training, measures to implement policies
- (no outcome indicators)

## Data sources

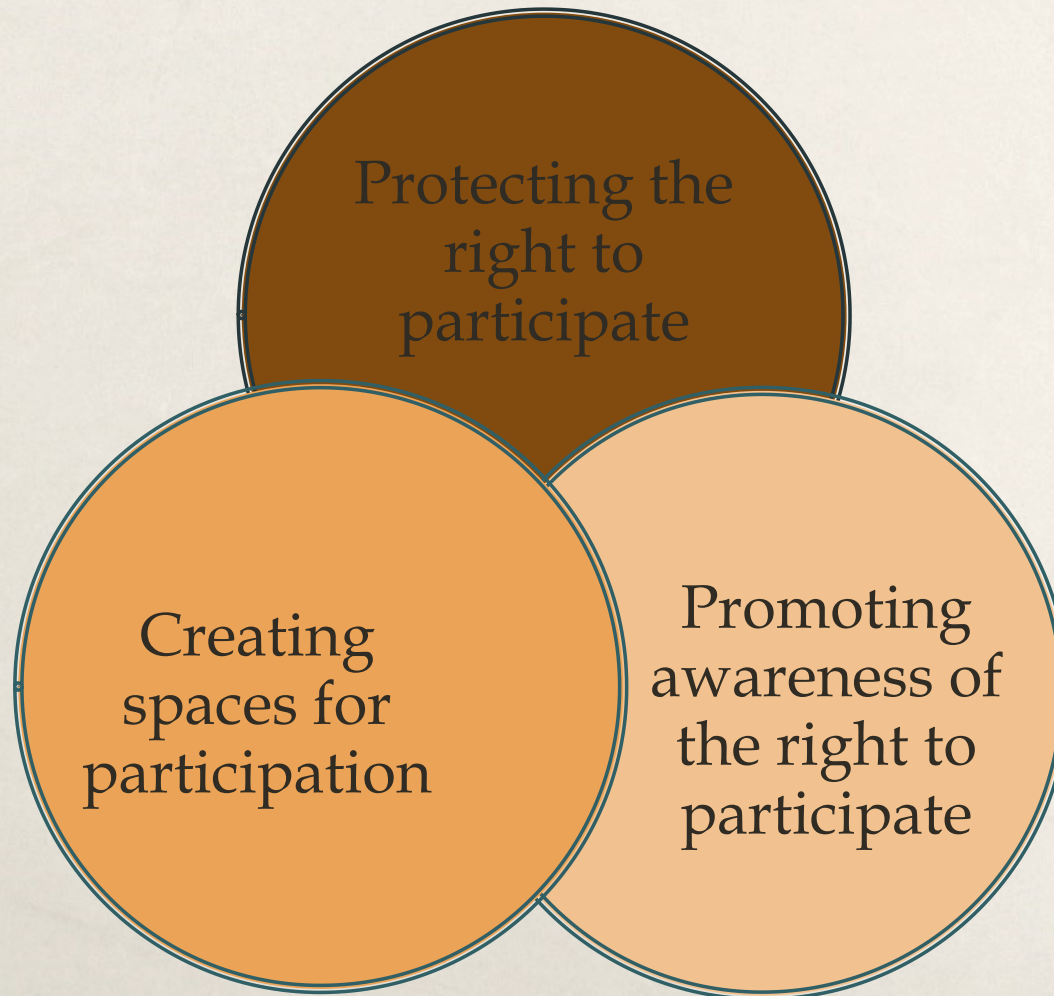
- Constitutions, laws, policies, strategies
- Qualitative research, Eurobarometer surveys, NGO reports
- Monitoring reports, CRC Concluding observations

## Assessment criteria

- Graduated criteria from 0-3
- Aim to enable tracking of progress
- Need for disaggregation



# The 10 indicators fall into 3 clusters



# Measures to institutionalise participation

- \* Protecting the right to participate
  - \* Legal protections
  - \* National strategies
  - \* Independent human rights institutions
  - \* Mechanisms to participate in judicial proceedings
  - \* Accessible complaints procedures
- \* Promoting aware of the right to participate
  - \* Training for professionals
  - \* Information for children about their rights
- \* Creating spaces for participation
  - \* Representative forums
  - \* Feedback mechanisms
  - \* Monitoring States compliance

## **EXAMPLE: Indicator 4 - Existence of mechanisms to enable children to exercise their right to participate safely in judicial and administrative proceedings**

### **Definition**

Children who come into contact with the justice system should be informed of their rights, have free access to a lawyer, be heard and taken seriously, and have decisions affecting them explained in a way that they can understand. These provisions should be available to children in criminal justice proceedings, family law proceedings, care and protection proceedings, immigration proceedings

### **Data Sources**

Key legal and policy instruments; UNCRC reports and concluding observations; European Commission for the Efficiency of Justice monitoring reports on efficiency and quality of justice; Eurobarometer surveys; FRA and European Commission on Child Friendly Justice.

### **Assessment criteria**

0= No direct access to the courts for children

1= Rules and procedures to ensure access to information on rights, to free access to a lawyer, and to be heard in judicial proceedings and to have decisions explained to them in a way they can understand are being applied in one of the judicial or administrative settings listed.

2= Rules and procedures to ensure access to information on rights, to free access to a lawyer, and to be heard in judicial proceedings are being applied in at least two of the judicial or administrative settings listed.

3= Full implementation of the Council of Europe Child Friendly Justice guidelines has been achieved in all of the specified judicial and administrative settings.

## **EXAMPLE: Indicator 5 – Child-friendly individual complaints procedures are in place**

### **Definition**

Complaints procedures are mandated by law, and are child-friendly and easily accessible to all children in a range of contexts, notably in schools and education settings, care and protection, health, criminal proceedings, family law proceedings, immigration proceedings. To be child-friendly, a complaints procedure must be safe and accessible, provide information in accessible formats, create effective referral and feedback mechanisms.

### **Data Sources**

National law; Legal and policy instruments in the field of family law, education, health care, juvenile justice, social welfare, housing, immigration; Qualitative research available

### **Assessment criteria**

0= No complaints or feedback mechanisms in place in any of the areas specified

1= Child-friendly complaints procedures are in place in two of the areas specified.

2= Child friendly complaints procedures are in place in four of the areas specified

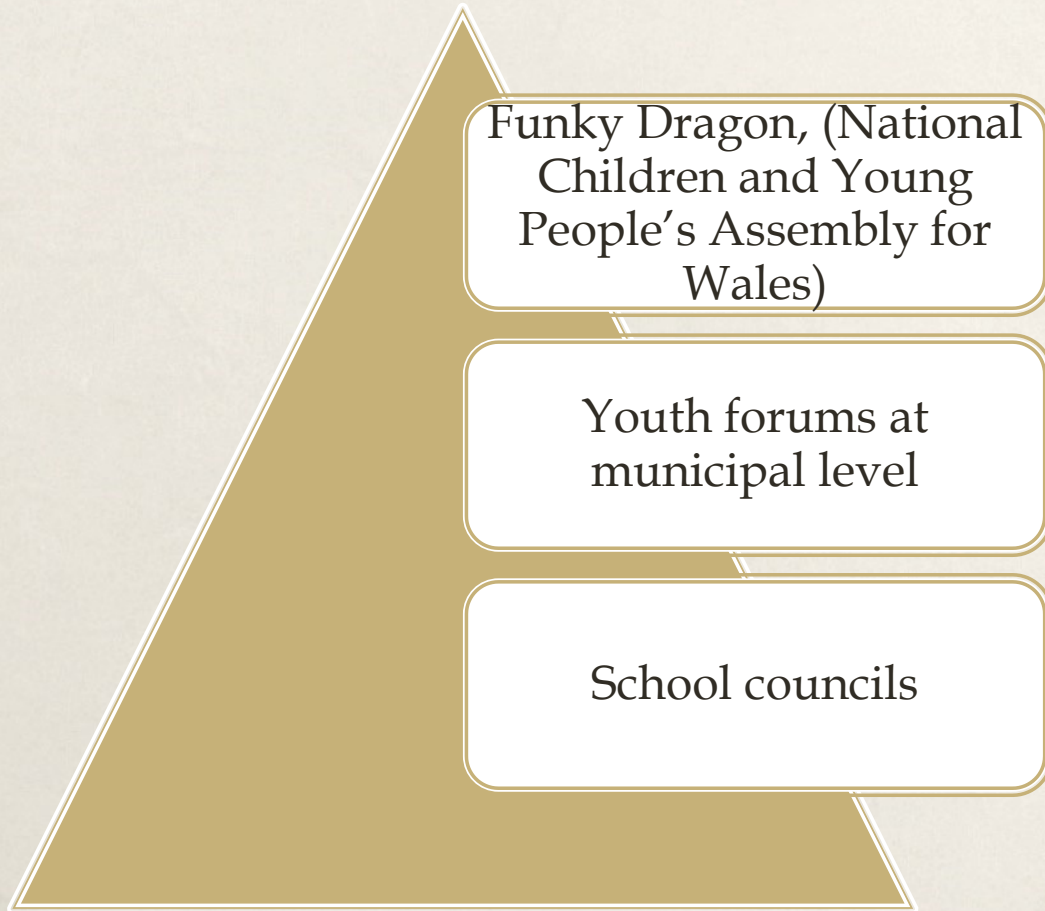
3= Child friendly complaints procedures are mandated by law and easily accessible to all children across all of the areas specified. Children are provided with information about their right to complain and receive help and support to pursue a complaint in accordance with their age and capacity.

Illustrative example of implications of  
compliance  
Funky Dragon, Wales, UK

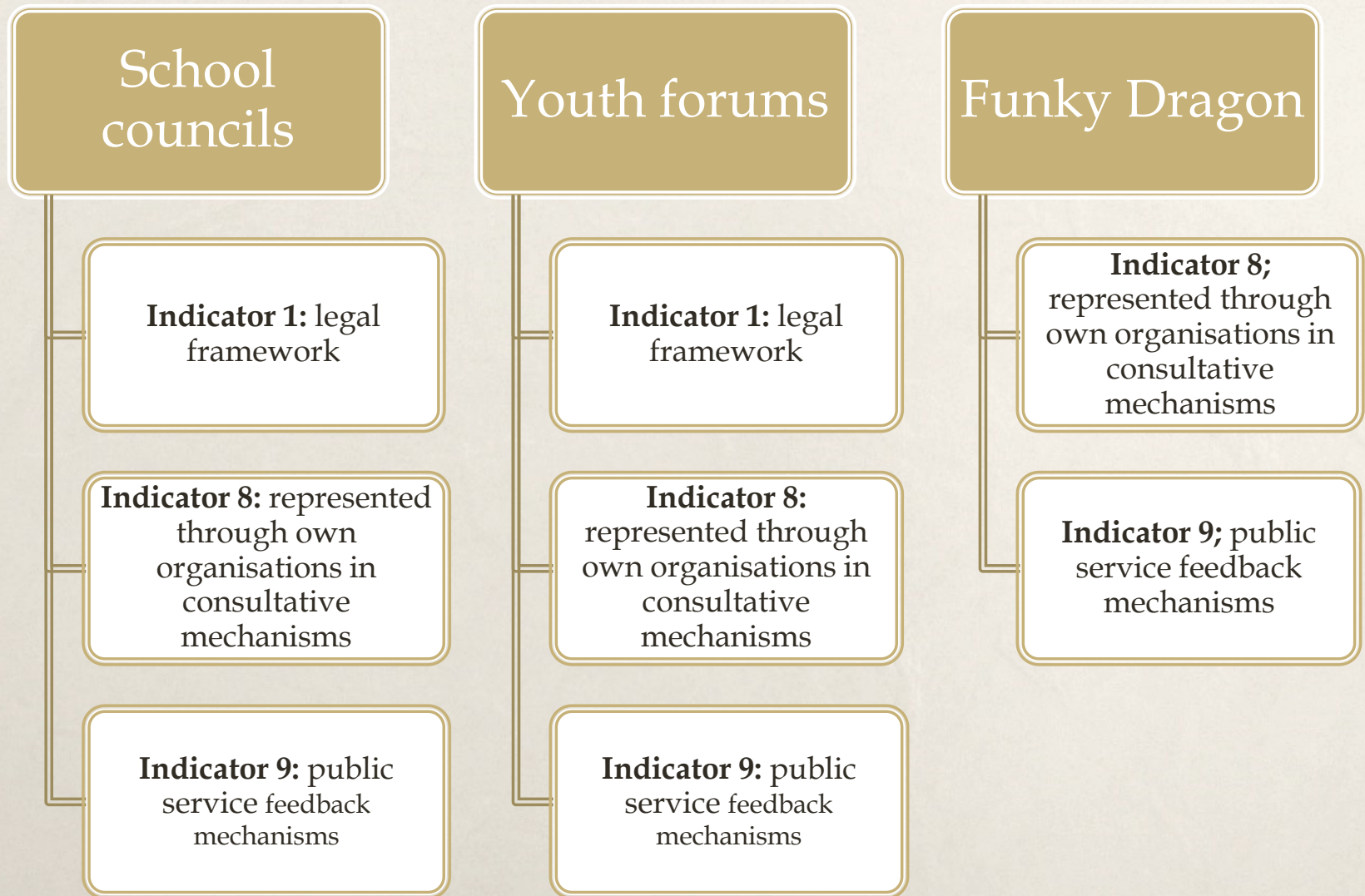
# Background

- \* Devolved government for Wales in 1998
- \* Opportunity to develop its own Assembly
- \* Expose of serious physical and sexual abuse of children in care homes in Wales dating back many years
- \* Failure to listen to children had contributed to the silencing of abuse and its continuation
- \* Recognition of the need to address the problem in Wales – and give children a voice

# Measures introduced to promote children's participation

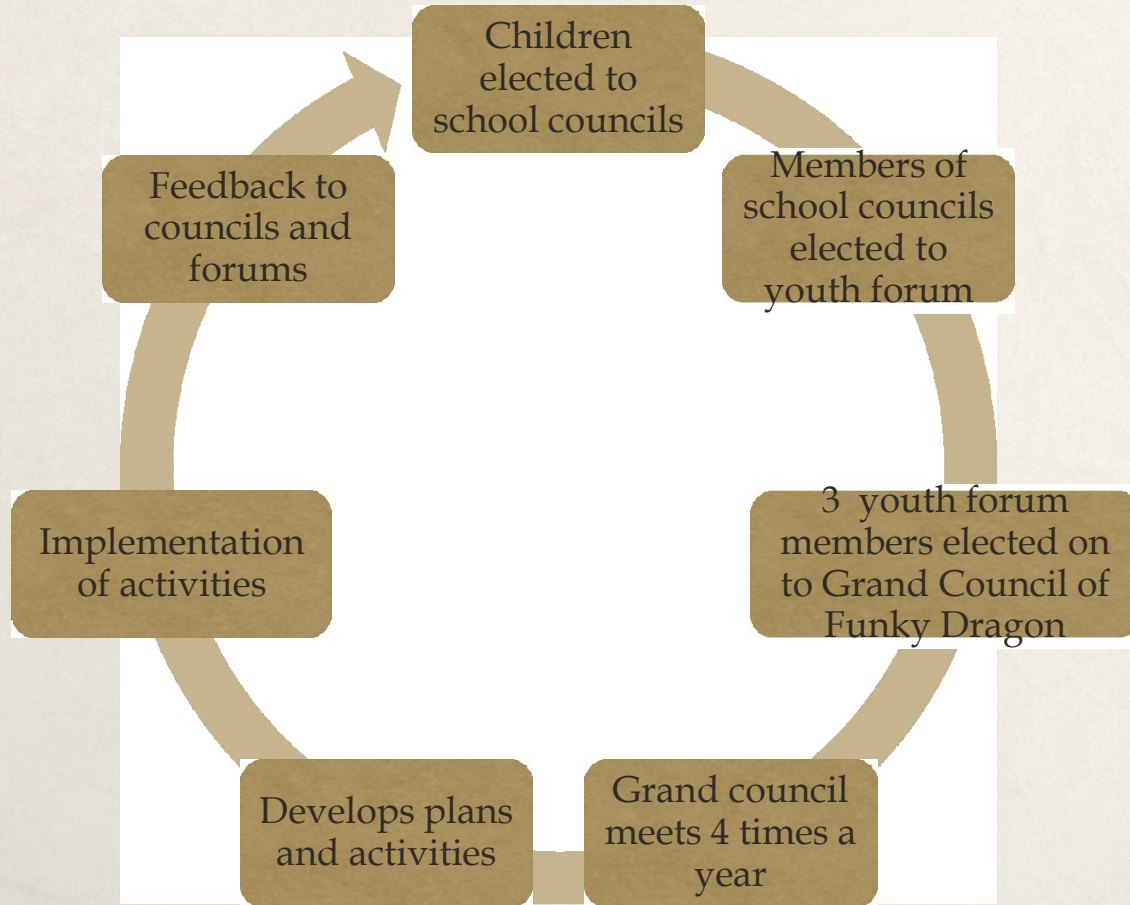


# How these initiatives relate to the Assessment Tool





# How did it work?



# Role of Funky Dragon

- ✦ Contribute to policies affecting children and young people
- ✦ Raise awareness of children's right to participation as set out in the UNCRC;
- ✦ Enable children and young people to have a voice in the Welsh Government;
- ✦ Enable the collective voices of children and young people to be heard nationally by Ministers;
- ✦ Promote meaningful and effective participation through the sharing of good practice.

# Illustrative examples of activities

- ★ Research with children 7-10 years for CRC report
- ★ Research into children's experience of bullying
- ★ Production of accessible and attractive materials on rights for children of different ages
- ★ Communication with children and young people through Youtube, Twitter, Facebook
- ★ Training for children and young people on CRC
- ★ Regular meetings with Ministers and parliamentarians
- ★ Feedback of proposed government policy and legislation

# Examples of impact of Funky Dragon

- \* Development of regulations requiring all schools in Wales to establish school councils
- \* Pupil complaints procedure support (Indicator 5)
- \* Contribution to the sexual health strategy
- \* Help with travel costs for students
- \* Introduction and development of anti-bullying strategy

# Current situation

**Funky Dragon closed after funding withdrawn October 2014**

Why?

- \*Government wanted to make cuts
- \*Indicator 1 not complied with – no legal status
- \*No security of status
- \*Vulnerable to government change of heart
- \*Highlights importance of compliance with all indicators in assessment tool

# Activity One

1 Read the indicators you have been allocated


2 Discuss and reflect on where you think Scotland stands in relation to the assessment criteria provided

Session Three  
Introduction to Child  
Participation Monitoring  
and Evaluation Framework

# A framework for monitoring and evaluating participation within programmes

## Scope

When do children get involved, and at what level – consultative, collaborative or child-led participation? – *What is being done?*



## Quality

Do participation activities comply with the nine basic requirements for ethical and effective? – *How is it being done?*



## Outcomes

What happens as a result of the participation activities – to children themselves and the realisation of their rights? – *What is being achieved?*



# M&E with children

- \* Identity programme and objectives
- \* Build support and buy in
- \* Create and train an M&E group
- \* Develop an M&E plan
- \* Undertake a baseline assessment
- \* Gather data to measure scope, quality and outcomes
- \* Document and report process and findings
- \* Draw up action plan on implications and next steps

# Measuring the scope of children's participation

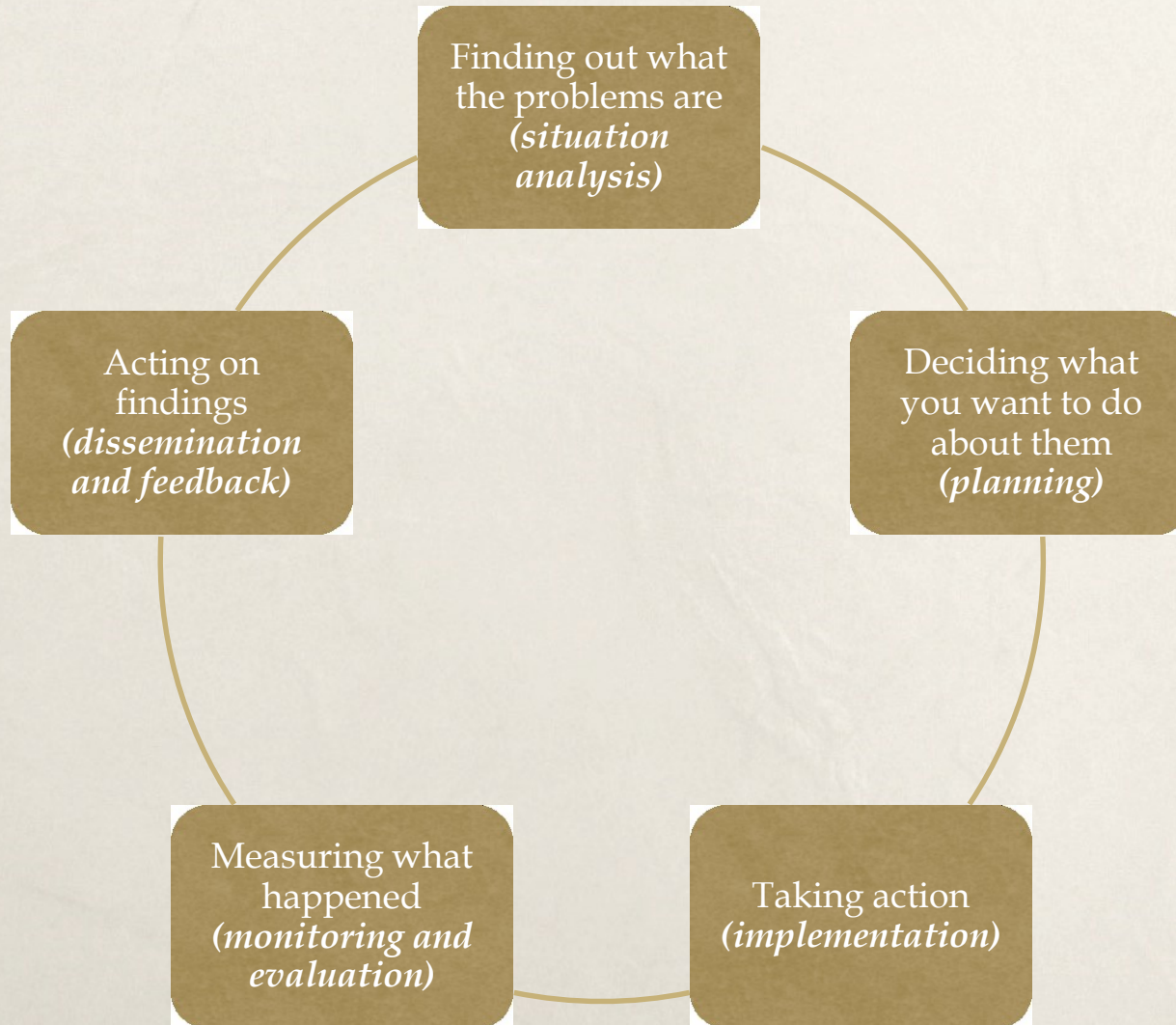
# Looking at the scope of children's participation

## Three dimensions to explore:

- 1) When do children get involved?
- 2) At what level do children get involved?
- 3) Which children are involved?



# 1) When do children get involved?



## 2) At what level

### Consultative participation

- Adult initiated
- Adult led
- Recognises the value of children's perspectives and experience

### Collaborative participation

- Adult initiated
- Involving partnership with children
- Empowering children to influence both process and outcomes

### Child led participation

- Issues of concern identified by children themselves
- Adults serve as facilitators rather than leaders
- Children have control over the process

# Scope of children's participation

	No participation	Consultative	Collaborative	Child-led
<i>Finding out what the problems are</i>		Children are asked to give their views	Children are asked to contribute to the process of finding out what problems they face in life	Children undertake their own research with other children to identify issues of concern
<i>Deciding what to do</i>		Planning takes account of issues raised by children	Children are involved in deciding what programmes to prioritise and develop	Children decide for themselves what issues they want to work on
<i>Taking action</i>		Children are invited to take part in the programme	Children work with adults to design and implement the programme	Children manage the programme and have responsibility for its implementation
<i>Measuring what happened</i>		Children are consulted on whether they think the programme achieved what it planned to do	Children work with adults to decide how to evaluate the programme	Children determine what should be evaluated and, with adult support, undertake the evaluation of the programme
<i>Acting on findings</i>		Children invited to suggest responses to the findings	Adults involve children in the implications of the findings and explore next steps	Children reflect on the findings and make proposals for next steps

### 3) Which and how many children were involved

	<b>Age range</b>	<b>Balance between boys and girls</b>	<b>Overall numbers involved</b>	<b>Numbers of children with disabilities</b>	<b>Numbers of children out of school</b>	<b>Other marginalised groups of children</b>
<b>Finding out the problems</b>						
<b>Deciding what to do</b>						
<b>Taking action</b>						
<b>Measuring what happened</b>						
<b>Acting on findings</b>						

# Tools to use for collecting data

- \* Focus group discussions
- \* Footsteps
- \* Visual programme cycle participatory mapping
- \* Walking through the project cycle
- \* An 'H' assessment
- \* Circle analysis

*With younger children: puppets, drawings or paintings*



# Group activity: Visual programme cycle mapping

- \* Break into groups into groups around specific projects.
- \* Using the chart in the handout, discuss when, how and which children and young people were involved in the project or programme. Try and be as honest as you can. **This is not a test.** It is designed to help you reflect and consider your work and how you might strengthen it.
- \* Colour in the boxes on the chart that you think most accurately reflect how the children and young people were involved. Use post-its to explain the nature of children and young people's participation.
- \* Discuss whether there are ways you could strengthen the participation.

# Session Four

Measuring the quality of  
children's participation

# Requirements for ethical and quality participation

## Children's experience

- Respectful
- Relevant
- Voluntary
- Transparent and informative

## Adults commitments

- Supported by training
- Accountable

## Nature of environment

- Inclusive
- Child-friendly
- Safe and sensitive to risk

# Example: Quality participation

	Questions to use as prompts when using this table	Requirement not been considered	Awareness of the requirement but not reflected in practice	Efforts made to address the requirement but no systematic procedures for implementation	Requirement fully understood and implemented and monitored
<b>Participation is child-friendly</b>	<b>Are child friendly approaches and methods used?</b>				
	<b>Do ways of working build children's self confidence ,among girls and boys of different ages and abilities/</b>				
	<b>Are child friendly meeting places used?</b>				
	<b>Are these places accessible to children with disabilities?</b>				

# Tools to use for collecting data

- \* Pots and stones
- \* Interviews, focus group discussions
- \* Self assessment using focus group discussions
- \* Questionnaires or surveys

*With younger children: drawing, painting, magic carpet, child led tours, games*

# Working group activity

Read through the 2/3 basic requirements for quality participation that you have been allocated

1. Discuss what you think would be needed to meet that requirement
2. Discuss any challenges you have identified in your own practice in meeting that requirement

# Outcomes of children's participation

- \* Personal outcomes *eg changes experienced by children, family and others - enhanced skills, more confidence, greater self esteem., changed attitudes*
- \* External outcomes – *changes in the realisation of rights through participation – objectives and indicators will be determined in each individual programme*

# Illustrative example

Children and young people in a local children's club are concerned that there are no play areas in their community where all children of all ages can play safely. They decide to work with the local community to explore the possibilities and advocate for investment in safe and creative play spaces.



# Example: Personal outcomes associated with participation

		No change	Immediate change / lack of sustainability/change only for some stakeholders	Significant and sustained change acknowledged by children and adults
For children	Acquisition of skills and knowledge			
	Enhanced self esteem and self confidence			
	Greater rights awareness			
	Sense of efficacy and empowerment			

# Example: Structural or external outcomes

		No change	Immediate change/no sustainability/change only for some stakeholders	Significant, sustained change acknowledged by children and adults
<b>Enhanced opportunities for play</b>	Inclusive environment			
	Numbers of children using the play space			
<b>Improved quality of play opportunities</b>	Approval rates of play space by children			
	Appropriateness of facilities			
<b>Safe and accessible play environment</b>	Confidence levels of parents			
	Numbers of serious injuries or accidents			

# Tools for gathering data on outcomes

- \* *Generic tools* - interviews, focus groups, surveys, observations
- \* Body Mapping (before and after)
- \* Red, amber, green traffic lights
- \* Children in context analysis of change
- \* Stories of most significant change
- \* Self confidence rating
- \* Decision-making chart
- \* Red ribbon monitoring
- \* Tracking of school attendance
- \* Secondary data

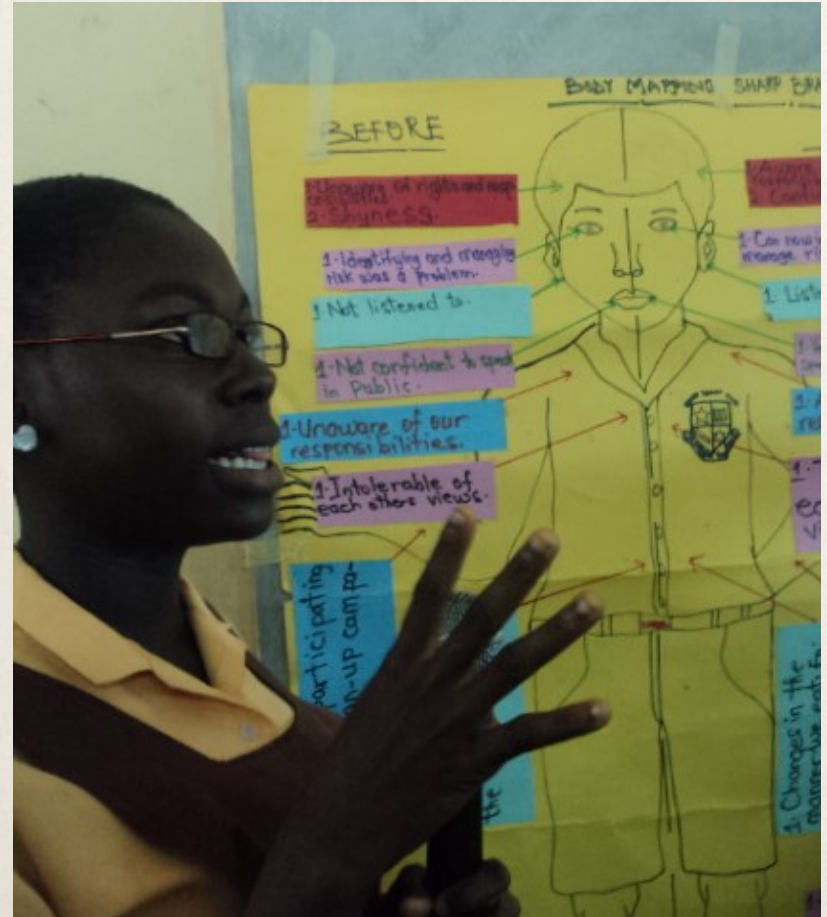
*With younger children:*

- *Puppets and drama*
- *Drawing and painting*
- *Scrap books*



# Body Mapping (before and after)

- \* Use «body map » shape for children to consider changes before and after their participation.
- \* Children can do individually first
- \* Then build a large body map to share findings.
- \* Use body parts to facilitate discussions.



# Body Mapping (before and after)

**Head:** any changes in their knowledge? what they think about/ worry about/ feel happy about? Any changes in the way adults think about children?

**Eyes:** any changes in the way they see their themselves/ their family/ their community/ their school? Any changes in the way adults see children?

**Ears:** any changes in how they are listened to? how they listen to others? what they hear?

**Mouth:** any changes in the way they speak? the way they communicate with their peers, their parents, their teachers or others? Any changes in the way adults speak to them?

**Shoulders:** any changes in the responsibilities taken on by girls or boys?

**Heart:** any changes in the way they feel about themselves? any changes in their attitudes to others? Are there any changes in the way adults or other children feel about them? Or others attitudes to them?

**Stomach:** any changes in their stomach? In what they eat?

**Hands and arms:** any changes in what activities they do? How they use their hands or arms? Any changes in the way adults treat them?

**Feet and legs:** any changes in where do they go? What they do with their legs and feet?

Think about and draw any other changes....

In summary...monitoring and evaluation is important because



**Contributes to the realisation of  
children's participation rights**