



Separated Children in Europe Programme

Networking with Youth
to Combat Violence
against Separated Children



Report

Separated Children in Europe Programme NGO Network Seminar

on

Networking with Youth to Combat Violence against Separated Children

Budapest, 15 – 16 November 2007

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Thursday November 15 2007

Welcome & Introductions

Participants, NGOs, project consultants and the project Advisory Board's youth representatives, were welcomed by Lise Bruun followed by a brief round the table presentation. Then the programme for the 2 day seminar was briefly introduced.

Benoit van Keirsbilck invited NGOs interested in discussing a proposal for research on guardianship to meet at the end of the first day to explore further. Also Save the Children UK wanted to discuss a proposal for the European Refugee Fund on guardianship.

Practical announcements were given on how to submit claims for reimbursement and daily subsistence allowances.

Recap of the project: Networking with Youth to Combat Violence against Separated Children / Lise Bruun

Background, aims, elements and general outlines of the project and its phases was explained, supported by PowerPoint presentation and hand outs.

What the network or platform will be called & what it will look like is to be established by youth themselves.

Countries involved in the project are the 24 EU Member States in the SCEPT as per February 2006 and Norway. This means no costs in this project can be covered for Romania, Bulgaria, Croatia, Albania and Switzerland.

Three youth representatives are involved in the project's Advisory board. The identification was more difficult than expected due to criteria for language skills and travel requirements.

The budget covers costs for the project manager, consultants, 3 Advisory Board meetings, November 2007 seminar, workshop with youth spring 2008, seminar end of 2008 and external evaluation.

General introduction to children's participation / Lise Bruun (supported by PowerPoint and hand outs)

Due to change of NGO representatives over time and different mandates within SCEPT NGOs on children's participation it was regarded important to establish common understanding, at least at a certain minimum level.

The presentation addressed the following issues:

- Why participation? It is a right according to a number of articles in the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) as well as a number of other reasons - and it also should be fun!
- Children are right holders. They have a view to bring into your work.
- Best result you can get that leads to structural empowerment & transformation.
- Requirements of organizations: democratic structure, resources, trained qualified staff, time, etc.

- The mindset on participation is the most important! If you don't have and practice this mindset yourself, you cannot bring it into your work.
- How much control do you have as NGO? How much are you willing to let go?
- Introduction to Hart's ladder on which the SCEP project Networking with Youth, depending on elements and phases, can be placed on the stages from 6 -> 8.

A brief quiz-like exercise followed where participants were given a list of examples to place on the steps of the ladder.

Workshops on participation and Save the Children Practice Standards in Child Participation

The Practice Standards (also handed out) were first briefly introduced: They have been developed as a framework for guidance and direction to staff to ensure consistent and high quality participation practice. They also state what children and others can expect and should be adapted to fit local conditions.

The 2 following workshop sessions in groups aimed at bringing in and exchanging experience among the NGOs and discuss the relevance and applicability of the Practice Standards. No general reporting back was requested.

Discussion of the Practice Standards showed

- Lot of exchange of experiences and practices
- Basic agreement on the standards.
- Good basis for our work

Important issues that are not in the Standards?

- Evaluation of what people are doing. Would be good for staff for self development. Standard 7 is more about budget & project evaluation. Evaluation of staff might be a valuable add.

Anything that should not be in the Standards?

- Are the standards updated? They were elaborated in 2005 and the Save the Children Alliance working group will have to follow up on this. There are no plans for the time being for review. However, when seen necessary this will be possible.

Has this morning changed views towards participation?

- Especially Standard 6: working with media. For some who work on these issues, they try to use standards. But it is a reminder to use standards within our organisations. Also in organisations that are not necessarily focused on working with children. E.g. how to deal with journalists when they are looking for children for media coverage. Especially communication departments have to be aware of the standards!

Practical outcomes (examples)

- No knowledge of real trainings specifically on participation. (Next morning Louise King informed that there are good training packs in UK on participation)
- There was a lot of discussion on identity + media.
- It is ethical to evaluate with participants. You learn from it, to design your next project with more richness.
- How can young people select representatives from themselves?

The first project phase ‘Mapping and identifying initiatives to date’ / Terry Smith

A questionnaire was circulated to the SCEP NGOS during the summer 2007 and only 16 responses have been received, 2 of them without comments. Among these, responses have been received from Romania and Switzerland, countries that are not directly within the remit of the project.

Terry wonders for the reasons of the limited feed back. Is it because of work overload and/or lack of time? Priorities? Are the questions in the questionnaire unclear? Is participation not a (big) part of the work?

The project’s aim is to strengthen youth participation and the SCEP will through the project be supporting a European Forum of separated youth. In the SCEP Statement of Good Practice, principle 3 is about taking into account the views of separated children.

There is willingness and openness to listen to children, but in general within the organisations there is no clear mandate for participation.

There is limited experience within our network, it is not our strength. And how to engage in participation if our definition varies?

Consulting and hearing views of children is usually embodied in legislation of countries. All European countries within the project have signed the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC).

There is a difference between consultation and participation. If there is no participatory (democratic) culture in the office then participation will not happen in a project.

In many aspects of societies children are not taken seriously. In most of the projects undertaken by SCEP partners, the separated children involved liked be taken seriously and enjoyed the projects. Participation is a means to an end and not a means in itself.

The SCEP NGOS’ experience with youth participation varies from consultation to advocacy to setting up a multi cultural youth club and are mainly to be found at the bottom end of Hart’s ladder. Exceptions are the projects ‘What do you think?’ run by UNICEF Belgium and ‘The New Home Country. Brighter Futures Project’ undertaken by Save the Children UK where young people set the agenda.

It is a challenge for our Daphne project to get young people together and there are practical difficulties like travel restrictions. A lot of separated children do not have easy access to e-mail.

And for children who are on the move there is no continuity.

SCEP needs young people to set the agenda. We have to succeed. A good starting point - according to the feed back received - could be involvement from the Netherlands, UK, Germany and Ireland. Switzerland should also be involved though not directly covered for by the project.

Plenary comments and questions:

- We might be more optimistic at the end. SCEP might not be so experienced, but e.g. in Austria the Equal project was definitely good practice. Maybe the information has not been fed back to the questionnaire? There is more potential than these four projects. *(More countries could be e.g. Belgium Norway, Sweden, Austria and Italy – comment by editor).*
- Initiatives are made in Denmark towards separated children and professional staff that might lead to a national network.
- May be there is not a structured youth network in each country, but there are centres where you can find good examples where in daily life separated children are involved in the process.
- It is important to identify mechanisms to communicate without travelling. This will also help to identify participants.
- Is there flexibility in how the project grant is spent? Can it be spent on bringing people together virtually?

- The project has been submitted to the EU Daphne II describing challenges, risks and rather open final outcome. Some mapping & capacity building is included as well as consultation with young people. Youth and NGOs will be brought together at the final seminar.
- What is the vision they will see and mechanisms they will use? Youth will have clear visions and ideas presented.
- Next step is to reach out and get young people together and support them in setting the agenda.
- Be realistic, there will not be 30 parties with self advocacy networks like Brighter Futures. At least some young people that function like a network. – The project only operates with involvement of youth from 10 countries and should be seen as a pilot!
- The questions of the questionnaire were rather difficult for new people.
- Some countries have federal systems. It is easier in centralized states.
- A few countries who have not responded have lots of experience.
- However limited the number of previous projects or existing groups, we should also think whether we could come up with others who could be involved and contribute to this process.

Introduction to second project phase ‘Outreach to separated children and youth’ / Yvonne van ‘t Oever & Simone Bommeljé

The introduction addressed the following issues, illustrated in different visual ways by PowerPoint: How do you plan your journey? Do you prepare every detail or are you backpacking and see what the journey will bring you? In this project it will be “travel to travel” to reach our destination. We know some broad outlines, of course, like the purpose of the project and the conditions for the grant. But it is not possible to fully predict where this project is going, since it will be up to the youngsters themselves to develop an opinion on this.

What we know now is that our Youth network, small as it might start, will be visible like the tip of an iceberg. Even though some countries might start off with one very active representative and others with established groups, the young people all have their own networks.

We believe our network will start off and develop like snowball. Some youngsters at first, but when they are enthusiastic about this project they will inspire others to participate. The same goes for the involved NGO’s. Some of them will be willing and able to step in from the start, others will join when the project is up and running.

We aim at the network to be self steering at the end of the project, but we know there is a lot to be done to achieve this. This is why we will arrange a meeting/workshop with (some of) the involved youth to kick off the network and make an inventory of ideas. During this meeting we will discuss some topics to empower the youth in becoming a solid network e.g.

Communication/ PR / fundraising. We will also ask the youngsters what kind of information they want and need and adjust our programme to that.

We will end this project with a Final Seminar, or something compatible. As we started our journey partly prepared, we don’t know the stories we will bring back home. During the project we will work towards this together with the youngsters and in the end raise awareness about the issues that matter most to them.

- Zaina describes a good network practise she has experienced. They could raise questions on and discuss all kind of topics on an internet forum e.g. on Violence & racism and in Egypt the group came together to talk about these different issues. After 1½ year the network still is in contact with each other. They also help each other with their problems.
- Advocacy & information & awareness raising & sharing experience & cultural support & social networking.
- Young people need to set the agenda and steer what the network has to do.

Interactive communication workshop / Yvonne van't Oever & Simone Bommeljé

The workshop consisted of four different exercises.

1. Communication in Shapes

A figure consisting of shapes and lines was described very detailed to all participants, who should draw it themselves according to the description given. The results illustrated how difficult it can be to understand each other, especially using only oral communication. This exercise pointed out the importance of clear communication.

2. Forum of Experts – role play

Case: An NGO is organising a meeting on detention of asylum seekers. The State Secretary is invited. Some of the youth is invited to participate in a panel forum a few weeks in advance. One of the young people is not informed well, but likes to join of course, because it is important for him / her. However, arrived at the meeting in the end he / she is not involved in the panel.

There is no real communication about it afterwards.

The goal of this exercise was to experience different roles and try to image being in the shoes of a person that normally is not in your circle of friends and colleagues. This method was also used to discuss a situation you might come across when you implement youth participation in your projects.

Outcomes: This role-play was a useful way to discover the difficulties of different parties handling a problem that might occur in the youth network. Sometimes it's good to place yourself in the position of the other to understand their point of view.

3. Piece of the Puzzle

All SCEP NGO partners were invited to put their most important tips on communication on the back of a globe puzzle. This puzzle will be handed over to the youngsters and the tips will be discussed during the first meeting.

- Listen to other views
- Use translation (if necessary)
- Don't shout too much
- Use pictures / metaphors
- Think before you speak
- Body language / Smile!
- Be honest
- Make it simple
- Clear roles & ground rules
- Agree to disagree
- Confidentiality
- Listen!

4. Communication Competition

Three different images were bit by bit shown on the screen. As the images started to take shape, all participants tried to discover the meaning of the pictures first. Three participants were quick enough to win a prize. This was also a quick "fun" part of the programme to show an interactive working method that can be used with a youth group.

Information market

Participants had been invited to bring, present and share information materials. Some of the materials with special relevance to the issue of children's participation were:

- Ireland's shadow report to UNCRC – with voice of children.
- DVD 'our view' – a SCEP project made by youngsters during a weekend and used in a seminar in Brussels to influence the EU on Freedom, Security and Justice.
- DVD and booklet '26.000 faces' - short movies made about undocumented children in the Netherlands: www.26.000gezichten.nl (also with English subtitles).
- Leaflets and information on the 'Brighter future' project in the UK and demo of the site www.abrighterfuture.org.uk
- Demo of the Belgian site www.sdj.be as well as books and leaflets

Friday November 16 2007

Bringing in experiences and ideas

Yvonne van 't Oever gave a short recap of the first seminar day.

Experiences with the Ama-raad (Unaccompanied Minor Asylum Seekers Council, UMA-Council) in the Netherlands / Zaina Karekezi

- UMA-Council started off because: it was always about the youngsters, but nobody talked with them. It started with 5 youngsters. From 2004-2006 Zaina was chair of the council. They came together once a month. The UMA-council existed from 2002-2006 The UMA-council has now stopped. SAMAH now works with youth representatives on different topics, e.g. detention. The Council made youth feel they had something of their own: they felt listened to: proud.
- Good practices: The outcome of a research undertaken by Terry Smith for the European Social Network was presented to the European Parliament.
- On the national level the Ama-camp was closed due to lobby of UMA-council together with other organisations.
- Meeting with Minister Verdonk

Challenges and & barriers were:

- Youth sometimes felt used. And wanted to be seen as normal Dutch people.
- It was not a very solid group with youth coming and leaving, and just a few youngsters that were really involved.
- Different cultures: coming late or not at all. Working together is difficult.
- Top down in stead of bottom up: youngsters said they (NGO) are telling us what to do.
- Youth sometimes said: "This NGO just wants to make their name".
- Due to lack of communication and time and money the council stopped.
- Now they work with youth representatives.
- Lack of money and time and focus on different projects
- Was the NGO told what kind of support youth wanted? The idea was that they would be supported by computers and training.

A Brighter Future, the UK / Jessica Nott & Justin Watson

- UK has reservation on the CRC on immigration. Many young asylum seekers face racism.
- Each group chooses own campaign which is important for them locally.
- 3,5 years
- 2 years funding from Diana Memorial Fund & Big lottery: secure funding for 6 years.
- River of life explains how system affects young people going through system of asylum procedure.

- Work with plan for six months. Also long term plans which enable them to look at long term effects & perspectives for the future.
- Brighter Futures is fixed within principles of participation. Process of constantly reminding ourselves what principles of participation are and how to use them in practise.
- Challenges: learned a lot through doing project: effective and realistic structure!
- Outcome & process: NGO's focus too much on that. Young people learn from process: how to run a workshop. Learning about process is as important as outcome! No huge expectations on young people.
- Possibility of part time staff. Made them able to get to groups each week. Without that resource it is difficult to sustain groups.
- Access for all: disabled young people, young women.
- They get support to develop own skills & capacities. What are young people getting out of it themselves!
- Sustainability is big challenge. Big issues with young people turning 18 detained, underground etc.
- Young people feel comfortable enough to give their (critical) feedback to the staff.
- First they had e.g. articles in newspapers, but now it has been taken on higher level with politicians etc.
- Things must be fun!
- Save the Children Wales is also starting up similar group in Wales. Some social service departments started up groups of young people: Learning from Brighter Futures.
- About 100 children involved: fluctuating.
- Groups are supported by social workers.
- Signposting and supporting young people. No legal assistance.
- Group has to be self steering: funding & trainings etc.

Bringing in experiences and ideas - workshops

Main outcomes of 'café table' discussions:

Involve youngsters (hosted by Terry & Jean)

- What can you do to involve youngsters in this project?
- How can you manage the expectations of the youngsters?
- How can you keep the youngsters structurally interested?

This discussion raised more questions than it answered.

Outcomes:

- We have to collaborate with other NGO's that are actually involved with youngsters.
- You should be clear what the project is about.
- Participation will not happen without processes and procedures.
- You need a structure to start off with young people
- It needs to be well funded
- You have to show them the (expected) result(s)
- You should give them influence.
- Define what the youngsters get out of this project

We have to make the first step and then guide them to make it their own project.

Support of a self steering youth network (hosted by Yvonne)

- What could best support separated children and youth in organizing themselves?
- How could you/your organization support the separated children and youth in their planning and efforts - both during the project period and afterwards? (E.g. meeting facilities, communication, consultation, transportation, financial support etc.)

Outcomes: a lot of practical suggestions for organisations

- Participation: Check what the youngsters really want
- Friendly environment /confidentiality
- Digital communication: restricted access
- Make sure that all working conditions are clear, since these projects often stop because a lack of time e.g.

Youth network influence on advocacy (hosted by Simone)

- What influence could the youth network have in advocacy?
- How do you see the cooperation between the youth network and the SCEP network in advocacy?
- How can we support the youth network in advocacy?

Outcomes:

- Terms of sustainability: realistic expectations
- Measurable outcomes
- Clear frameworks
- This project doesn't happen in vacuum
- How can you communicate and link up with NGOs and get them involved
- Every organisation should take it on as something they really want

Essential preconditions for setting up a sustainable youth network (hosted by Justin)

- What obstacles or problems can you foresee? (E.g. lack of capacity, language skills, travel restrictions etc.)

Outcomes - What we hoped the influence could be:

- There's a profit for both sides: NGOs SCEP program and youngsters
- They want to make a difference it's the right thing to have them set the agenda
- Most of the participants have contacts with youngsters already
- Difference with countries with groups or no groups and transit a stay countries, this means different problems and different views.
- Youth network would help us to get attention form the media.

General suggestions and questions to be sorted out in order to set up the network:

- support by NGO's
- funding
- information about SCEP project and the network project - leaflet with information about the project
- training should be provided –example UK
- empowerment of young people
- we need to work on structures
- Zaina's example of the digital network might be a good approach.
- What do we have to do as an European network, what do we expect of the youngsters?
- are the processes in SCEP and national NGOs to support participation projects
- try to keep the enthusiasm of this meeting e.g. send a advisory board member to the different countries to inspire the youngsters

- How are we going to protect the voices of the youngsters? Are the messages really used in the way they were meant?
- There is much to think about and analyse, consider and be careful about but it has been a constructive meeting.

Identification of NGOs to get involved in outreach phase and conclusions / Terry Smith and Lise Bruun

The principles of participation are incorporated in SCEP's strategic plan which is important to keep in mind and strive to develop in practice.

We have now the mapping to tell us where to work from.

The idea of a youth forum is to bring separated youth from different countries in Europe together to debate and set the vision and aims and also discuss the form they want to use for this.

We now have to focus on how to get from this seminar in Budapest and to the youth forum.

We want to bring in the voices of the youth in SCEP's advocacy activities.

Countries expressing interest to be involved:

1. Switzerland - via Terre des Hommes
2. Greece - via Arcis. ISS Greece can organise a meeting with them and they might take over the function as SCEP NGO. They are trained within SCEP already.
3. Germany: Thomas Gittrich has been in contact with young people. Political projects in past. Lot of interest of young people to communicate.
4. Finland: via Taina
5. Ireland: Jyothi Kanics, Irish Refugee Council, has very regular contact with an organisation for housing with voluntary staff. Support from IRC
6. Denmark: Will get in contact with professionals but need to give them a letter. No transparent democratic process, but via professionals.
7. Belgium - via Unicef an the 'What do you think' project?
8. UK: Save the Children / Brighter Futures is not in position yet to say yes, the youth will have to decide themselves. If opportunity is right they can step in.
9. Austria: Yes, Equal project. Jean. But we need money for it.
10. Sweden: through volunteers indirectly. This is a question to bring back home
11. Norway: Indirectly, have to bring question back home
12. Hungary?
13. The Netherlands?



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**Project seminar
with the
Separated Children in Europe Programme NGO Network
Budapest, November 15-16 2007**

Thursday November 15

- 9:00-9:30 Welcome and introductions /Lise Bruun
- 9:30-9:45 Recap of the project “Networking with Youth to Combat Violence against Separated Children”: aims, activities and timeline /Lise Bruun & Zaina Karekezi
- 9:45-10:15 General introduction to children’s participation /Lise Bruun
- 10:15-11:00 Workshops on participation & SC Practice Standards, first part
- 11:00-11:30 Coffee/tea break
- 11:30-12:15 Workshops on participation & SC Practice Standards, second part
- 12:15-12:30 Brief plenary catch up / Lise Bruun
- 12:30-13:30 Lunch
- 13:30-14:30 First project phase: “Mapping and identifying initiatives to date”. Presentation and discussion of findings /Terry Smith
- 14:30-15:00 Introduction to second project phase: “Outreach to separated children and youth” /Yvonne van’t Oever & Simone Bommeljé
Considerations, plans, methodology and expectations to SCEP NGO partners
Introduction to next session and Friday morning’s agenda
- 15:00-15:30 Coffee/tea break
- 15:30-16:30 Interactive communication workshop /Yvonne van’t Oever & Simone Bommeljé
- 16:30-17:00 Information market
Participants are invited to bring and present information to separated children in a child friendly format
- 19:00 Dinner at restaurant in town

Friday November 16

- 9:00-9:30 Bringing in experiences and ideas / Introduction by Yvonne van't Oever & Simone Bommeljé
Experiences from Ama raad, the Netherlands /Zaina Karekezi
Experiences from A Brighter Future, UK / Justin Watson & Jessica Nott
- 9:30-10:30 Bringing in experiences and ideas - workshops
- 10:30-11:00 Plenary: inventory of suggestions, discussion /Yvonne van't Oever & Simone Bommeljé
- 11:00-11:30 Coffee/tea break
- 11:30-12:30 Identification of NGOs to get involved in the outreach phase /Lise Bruun & Terry Smith
Conclusions
- 12:30-13:30 Lunch
- 13:30-13:45 NGO representative for Steering Committee to replace Thomas /Thomas Gittrich
- 13:45-15:30 Update on the Strategic process and Task Group Selection /Terry Smith
- 15:30-16:00 Coffee/tea break
- 16:00-17:00 Position Paper on Age Assessment: discussion of final draft (to be circulated in advance start November) / Jyothi Kanics
Position Paper on Preventing and Responding to Trafficking of Children in Europe for approval – *if time allows*
Closing – *and handing in filled in evaluation forms*



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Project Seminar
with the
Separated Children in Europe Programme NGO Network
Budapest, November 15-16 2007

List of NGO Participants

Anna Mikkonen	Central Union for Child Welfare	Finland
Benoît van Keirsbilck	DCI Belgium	Belgium
Carla van Os	Defence for Children International	The Netherlands
Chris Kondoyanni	ISS Greece	Greece
Christoph Braunschweig	Fondation Suisse du Service Social International	Switzerland
Cristina Lopes	CARITAS	Luxembourg
Inger Neufeld	Save the Children Denmark	Denmark
Stefania Ionita	Save the Children Romania	Romania
Jessica Nott	Save the Children UK	England
Júlia Gazsó	Menedek Hungarian Association for Migrants	Hungary
Justin Watson	Save the Children UK	UK
Jyothi Kanics	Irish Refugee Council	Ireland
Karoline Bakka Hjertø	Save the Children Norway	Norway
Katarina Ilanovska	Slovak Humanitarian Council	Slovakia
Magda Faltova	Counselling Centre for Refugees	Czech Republic
Margit Pollheimer	Asylkoordination Österreich	Austria
Marina Uzelac	Slovene Philanthropy	Slovenia
Monica Frechaut	Portuguese Refugee Council	Portugal
Monica Jacobson	Save the Children Sweden	Sweden
Sarah Borda Bondin	Organisation for the Integration and Welfare of Asylum Seekers	Malta
Thomas Gittrich	Bundesfachverband UMF	Germany

Resource Persons

Asmatullah Fikrat	Youth representative, Project Advisory Board	Sweden
Jean Gatsinzi	Youth representative, Project Advisory Board	Austria
Lise Bruun	Project Manager- Save the Children	Denmark
Simone Bommeljé	Consultant - YOHR	The Netherlands
Terry Smith	Consultant and Adviser to SCEP	UK
Yvonne van't Oever	Consultant - YMPULS	The Netherlands
Zaina Karekezi	Youth representative, Project Advisory Board	The Netherlands
Louse King	SCEP Steering Committee- Save the Children	UK
Rebecca O'Donnell	Save the Children Brussels Office	Belgium

PowerPoint presentations

- can be requested by sending an e-mail to Lise Bruun at LBR@redbarnet.dk

1. Recap of the project: Networking with Youth to Combat Violence against separated children
2. General introduction to children's participation
3. Workshop on participation and Save the Children Practice Standards in Child Participation
4. Presentation on the outreach phase of the project
5. Interactive communication workshop
6. Bringing in experiences and ideas
7. Experiences with the Ama-raad
8. A Brighter Future