

– It's Time to Talk! – Children's Views on Children's Work

**Global Evaluation of
Outcomes of the
International Campaign
and Research**



#talkaboutchildwork

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Executive Summary

Context of the evaluation

Time to Talk (T2T) was initiated by Kindernothilfe Germany (KNH), terre des hommes (tdh) Germany¹ and Save the Children Canada in 2016. In their programming with working children, all three realised that the complexity of the situation of working children required urgent attention. According to the International Labour Organisation's (ILO) estimates (2017), 218 million children, almost 17% of the total global child population, are involved in some kind of work. Many working children were not benefitting as intended from interventions against child labour, sometimes even experiencing adverse effects. They were further denied a voice at local, national and international level on matters concerning their lives. This contradicts Article 12 of the United Nations Child Rights Convention (CRC), according to which children have the right to be heard in decision-making processes relevant to their own lives. The three founding organisations concluded with designing a project that is based on a more diverse understanding of child work and labour. They realised that context-specific approaches and solutions were required based on the understanding that working children have multifaceted socio-economic backgrounds and identities and are not a homogenous group. Operationalising this insight, they defined listening to working children as the most critical step for positively impacting the children's living conditions and forwarding their perspectives to relevant policy actors.

Funded by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), the project started in 2016 and will end after two extensions in 2020.

Project goal: The project's goal is to enable and empower working children to have their views heard in local, national and global decision-making processes, including in the run-up to the IV Global Conference on the Sustained Eradication of Child Labour in Argentina in November 2017 and further adequate policy discussion forums.

In the first phase, T2T collaborated with 56 partner organisations to conduct a participatory consultation with almost 2.000 working children. Partners were trained in relevant methods and tools, and further to that **Children's Advisory Committees** (CACs) were formed. In the second phase, partners were reduced to 25, focusing on 28 CACs in Latin America, Africa, Asia, the Middle East and Europe.

The overall approach the project has adopted resembles a participatory action learning process. It has developed materials, tested these in practice, and generated new knowledge and insights, enabling further steps of implementation, including advocacy for and by working children from local to the global level.

Purpose and objectives of the evaluation

In the fourth year of implementation, the Steering Committee organisations and the BMZ initiated the evaluation of Time to Talk.

The evaluation had two primary purposes: Firstly, **assessing** the level of achievement of the intended project outputs. Secondly, **learning** from the first project cycle and its results to inform the subsequent project proposal for an anticipated follow-up project.

Evaluation focus

The evaluation was to focus on three of the project's expected outputs:

1. Working children in at least 25 countries have established and articulated their position on the issue of child work. They have organised to share their experiences and to develop and pursue

1 Representing Terre des Hommes International Federation

- solutions for their (day-to-day) challenges. This includes addressing the relevant stakeholders from peers to parents and teachers to local to national policy officials.
2. The working children participating in the project activities know and put to use their right to participation in processes that affect them as set by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.
 3. Public awareness for children's right to participate has been strengthened.

It is important to note that the scope does not cover all objectives. The ToR structured the evaluation objectives **by target groups**: working children, facilitators and stakeholders. Each evaluation objective has been linked to one or two of the five OECD-DAC evaluation criteria.

Methodology

A participatory multi-methods evaluation approach was chosen, using the following key components:

1. A desk review of existing documents and documentations,
2. Visits to a sample of 14 CACs and respective partner organisations for interactive focus group sessions using child-friendly, visual and interactive tools based on semi-structured interviews with children, facilitators, partner management and key local stakeholders.
3. Where necessary, KIIs were done for accessing additional information not shared in group meetings.

Participation of stakeholders in the evaluation in numbers:

- 150 CAC members (93 female and 57 male), 8 Alumni (above the age of 18), representing 14 CACs in 10 countries;
- 48 facilitators, 42 partner staff with management responsibility, from 14 partner organisations in 11 countries
- 150 participants in total in eight reflection and validation meetings and workshops
- Facilitated by a team of three evaluators and in each location support for note-taking and translation if required.

Limitations

The onset of COVID-19 prevented evaluators from accessing Paraguay and Indonesia. The final validation and reflection workshop planned for Indonesia with CAC and partner participation from the Philippines, Indonesia, the Steering Committee and T2T's consultants had to be cancelled and facilitated virtually. While CAC-members were able to validate findings at the national level, their participation was not possible in the virtual meetings due to social distancing regulations. The virtual process allowed for the participation of a larger number of partners from different countries.

Key Findings

1. Working children

Overall, the project's impact on CAC members was significant and impressive, as shown in Table 1 below. Impacts identified by CAC members were validated through data collected independently from CAC facilitators.

For the majority of impacts, CAC members identified no significant change between the genders. In three areas, girls showed a higher level of impact (highlighted in yellow). All three are areas where girls in conservative societies started at much lower levels than boys; providing more significant potential for change.

CAC members gave many examples of how their relationships had positively developed: within the CAC, their families, towards communities. The majority of positive examples related to relationships within

groups: In several cases, CAC members initially needed time to grow together as a group and overcome negative feelings, discrimination, quarrels and fighting. They now appreciate being together with other working children, making joint efforts to improve their situation and that of other working children. Social skills of members have significantly grown.

Table 1: Top eight impacts of CACs on members (identified by members)

Type of impact	Frequency impact was named	Share of CACs naming impact	Average relevance to members (1-3)	% of CAC members showing change	% of female members showing change	% of male members showing change
1. Improved relationships	86	86%	2,4	89%	90%	89%
2. Knowledge of children's rights	55	100%	2,5	87%	87%	86%
3. Doing awareness and advocacy activities	46	86%	2,8	82%	82%	84%
4. Increased self-confidence	41	86%	2,5	90%	93%	81%
5. Positive emotions	24	71%	2,6	87%	89%	85%
6. Motivation to help other children (non-CAC members)	23	86%	2,6	85%	86%	85%
7. Improved communication skills	17	50%	2,7	75%	81%	69%
8. Increased awareness of importance of education	13	50%	2,8	94%	100%	88%

a. Children's knowledge and awareness of their rights, especially their right to participate

Increased knowledge of children's rights is the only impact mentioned by members of all fourteen groups. Knowing their rights has been transformative for CAC members. They realised how others should treat them, and at the same time, they understood their own responsibilities and how they should be treating others. *"Unlike before, when I didn't even know that I was already a child labourer, I am now aware of the age limit of children to work."* (girls, Kaugmaon-CAC, Philippines). CAC members are now **sensitised, identify abuses** of their and other children's rights and have started speaking out against these.

Further, CAC members have an **increased desire** to participate in decisions concerning their own lives. **Improved communication skills** and other positive changes in their personality due to being part of the CACs have given members **increased opportunities to participate in conversations and decision making in their families**. Some partner organisations have **increased opportunities for children to participate in their planning and decision making** (e.g. strategic planning) as a result of the project. Some CACs experienced participation at various political levels. However, this has mostly not yet been institutionalised. Partners, e.g. in Guatemala, Bangladesh, the Philippines or Nepal are currently seeing and **seeking opportunities to institutionalise** participation.

b. Degree to which knowledge has been transformed into (advocacy) action

One of the impacts with the highest level of relevance to CAC-members is their involvement in advocating for working children's rights. Gaining knowledge has energised members to become **active** themselves, either speaking out for themselves, helping non-CAC members, educating children outside their group or engaging in group-led campaigns. All CACs have designed their group advocacy action; most have also implemented these. While advocacy action has resulted in positive changes among parents, e.g. allowing children to integrate education and work better, impact on most other employers has been very limited. Some activities have targeted policy officials. While results so far have been limited, CAC members valued the opportunity to raise their voice and be heard.

c. *Unintended impacts / effects*

CACs becoming identification point and surrogate family, protected space: CAC members have established a **strong identification** with the CAC and its objectives; it has become part of their identity. In most CACs, ties have become extremely close **among group members as well as with the facilitators**. Girls from TAWLAE-CAC in Tanzania emphasised, *"We now feel rather being relatives than friends."* An Alumni of WCY Nairobi-CAC, now leading a group herself, expressed *"Before, I have never trusted anybody in my life"*. For some, the CAC has become the family they never had. It is significantly **different from the harsh context** many live in.

High level of pressure and responsibility: especially in East Africa CAC members have raised the challenge that they were feeling high levels of pressure of being a role model and having responsibilities as a CAC member.

A desire for more protection: In several cases, CAC members expressed their wish to be better protected in their advocacy actions, e.g. through the active support of their parents, a group of adults or a supportive community. FC-CAC members in Ethiopia described their mothers' Self-Help-Group providing this type of protection.

Female and children empowerment in traditional societies: *"Communicating with others is now easier, and as veiled girls, we weren't supposed to communicate with people outside our families, but now through AMURT and T2T we were exposed to others and know how to express ourselves and feel confident. Even communicating with boys and having friends that are boys."* (girls, AMURT-CAC, Lebanon).

Partner organisations are adopting across their work higher levels of child participation: partners expressed that the T2T tools allowed them to put into practice child participation. Before, they had been aware of its importance but did not know how to put it into practice.

2 *Facilitators (in partner organisations)*

Training and tools: Facilitators highly valued the training and tools provided by T2T. For many, it has transformed their way of relating to and working with children. While some facilitators appreciated the tools because of their effectiveness, being exposed to the approach has resulted in a major **paradigm shift** for others. The vast majority have started applying approach and tools frequently in other contexts. Some raised the need for more flexibility in the session plans to be able to facilitate these according to the speed of the group or local conditions.

Documentation: In some cases, a second team member has taken over documentation, while the majority was left alone with the task. It sometimes took them a full day after facilitating a session. For many, neither the rationale nor value of much of the collected data is clear.

3 *Stakeholders*

Partners: Great variety can be observed among partners, from those mostly focusing on advocacy to professional development organisations or completely voluntary entities. T2T has always been integrated with their ongoing programming and activities. Therefore, much of the positive impact is complemented or driven by the type of work these partners are doing. CAC members, for example, may benefit from scholarships and access to education, vocational training, the promotion of talents, the provision of critical psychosocial support.

Many partners struggle with the limited resources allocated to facilitate T2T activities, with no provision for staff. They still fully engage because they highly valued T2T for its approach, tools and data. While in most cases T2T plays a minimal role in terms of funding, partners have adopted T2T's principles and tools: on average, across 80% of all their programmes. Some partners have taken it even further, with adopting child participation and child rights in their strategic planning and management, giving children significant space to participate.

Contacts with decision-makers seem to vary. Relationships and the frequency of contacts intensify around activities. Partners work at very different levels so that some barely engage with decision-

makers, while especially those focusing on advocacy are more frequently in contact. These critical contacts heavily depend on a time-consuming process of regularly building and maintaining relationships, e.g. by showing presence in meetings. It has been a major challenge for T2T staff to balance this necessity with their programmatic responsibility, which has been significant with the number of countries and partners involved. However, T2T managed to create several high-key opportunities for raising the voices of working children. After a last-minute cancellation from ILO, T2T did not manage to have children at the IV Global Conference on the Sustained Eradication of Child Labour in Argentina in November 2017. However, staff were able to present the children's perspectives in a side event. In April 2018, two CAC representatives had the opportunity to present their situation as working children at the Global Child Forum in Stockholm. Two CAC members were invited to talk about children's work at the 30th-anniversary celebrations by the BMZ. One further fruit is that T2T is covered in Alliance 8.7's current Update Newsletter.

Other contacts: Local and national political structures of many countries in Latin America and Asia, provide space for child participation. This is considered as critical for institutionalising the CACs and the participation of working children. Partners are at different levels in developing relationships and participation. At the same time, these structures have frequently valued the data provided by T2T.

Key Conclusions

Relevance

T2T has been highly relevant to **CAC members**. In the vast majority of targeted countries, working children have no specific representation bringing them together, raising awareness about their rights and working towards improving their situation. T2T has transferred relevant knowledge to members. Self-confidence and communication skills have been significantly strengthened, giving CAC members new opportunities for their lives, often complementing partners' efforts.

Partners have strongly emphasised the relevance of the project. Many expressed that the project provided them with effective tools and an approach to facilitate real participation, something they had been struggling with prior. Data created by the project was critical for many to support the case of working children. The approach and the complementing tools have been adopted across many of the partners' programmes. One partner explained that they would have valued to be more involved in the planning and decision making of T2T because it directly impacted their work.

At the **global level**, the project has been relevant to give a voice to working children and, based on a credible set of data, to increase the understanding of their situation.

Effectiveness

T2T has been effective in developing knowledge among CAC members on their rights. Through the project, many CAC-members have developed impressive communication skills. The participatory approach, as well as the sessions, have enabled a conscientisation process among CAC members. In combination, these have led to higher levels of self-confidence and high levels of motivation for advocacy action at individual and group level. In many cases, members have been empowered, evident in the examples set by the alumni. Members have an understanding of their right to participate in matters concerning their lives. Many have the knowledge and self-confidence to get involved and speak-out. In some cases it seemed that partners and children were not sufficiently aware of the risk children were exposed to (e.g. individually addressing drug addicts, or addressing issues in families practising witchcraft, demonstrating and exposing local issues at higher levels and facing hostility when returning to the community). T2T has been successful in increasing opportunities and space for working children to be heard at the global level. This has been achieved through generating and sharing data on working children and representing or even enabling CAC members to represent working children at relevant global events. While achievements have been remarkable, progress at the global level has been challenging and slow, with significant opposition due to opposing paradigms on child labour.

Efficiency

While an economic analysis was beyond the scope of the evaluation, the project bears evidence to being efficient. Public awareness on the situation of working children and rights has been increased among

parents, communities, and to some extent among employers and policy officials at different levels. Considering the number of partners and countries involved, the project is operating with a very low budget, mobilising partner resources and synergies for implementing T2T. The project has been strong in complementing partners' competencies and ongoing activities. T2T has been very strategic in using its limited resources for advocating globally for the rights of working children, creating and making best use of several strategic, high-visibility opportunities.

Impact

T2T has had an impact at different levels with varying degree. The lives of many CAC members show a significant positive impact, e.g. on their identity, their skills, their relationships and standing in their communities, e.g. having become role models, returning to education and having new perspectives for life. Many facilitators and partner organisations were impacted, adopting a new paradigm on how to work with and relate to children.

Impact at the regional and national level has been less evident at the current stage, many change processes at these levels require significantly more time and presence for relationship building, networking and advocacy action. Change at the global level has been equally slow. Strongly opposing paradigms on working children only allow for incremental change and slow progress for new approaches to emerge. It is a start; however, paradigm shifts require longer-term commitments.

Sustainability

It is helpful to differentiate between levels when considering sustainability. Much of the impact at the level of individual children and facilitators can be considered sustainable – they will neither lose their knowledge, skills, nor empowerment. Seeing that organisations are adopting the approach and tools far beyond the activities related to T2T are encouraging indicators for sustainability. Partners have emphasised that they would continue using these beyond the life of the project. However, several were not sure about the sustainability of the CACs, since running these required time and resources. While some have started integrating the establishment of new CACs into other programmes and were sure to sustain the existing, this may not be an option for smaller partners. The project approach has been institutionalised at the partner level. Also, several partners have now started exploring and identifying options to institutionalise the participation of working children within the state structures. Opportunities and potential strategies, including options for sustaining CACs, differ significantly between the countries. Therefore it is not surprising that many partners have identified sustainability as a critical issue to be explored further.

Key recommendations

Recommendation 1: Starting the follow-up project with an **exploratory phase** focusing on **expansion and sustainability**.

Rationale: One key learning of the evaluation has been that partners are very diverse in terms of their programming and the context they operate. Expansion and sustainability of the CACs have been dominant issues among partners and CACs. However, opportunities and strategies for further developing the CAC approach and structure within the local context differ significantly. There does not seem one specific approach that would fit all partners and their CACs. Partners strongly recommended that sustainability should be addressed at the beginning of the project. Therefore, the next project phase should start with a 6-12 months exploratory phase, leading partner organisations and children through a participatory learning process, allowing them to identify their future approach to CACs/ working children's groups, advocacy for working children and their sustainability.

Specific recommendations:

- **Develop guidance and tools** to support participatory mapping, analysis and action planning (by children, partners and other relevant allies) on sustainable structures and processes for working children's participation in decision-making affecting them at different levels (families, communities, local governance, sub-national, national).

- **Mapping and dialogue** should be the first activities of the project's exploratory phase, creating the required understanding on available options for sustainability between children, partners, key stakeholders and the T2T Steering Committee.
- **Create space for exchange** and horizontal learning on expansion and sustainability among different partners and CACs for cross-fertilisation. These could be general and later focus around specific themes of sustainability and expansion, e.g. the institutionalisation of child participation for increased, continuous participation of working children in relevant decision making.
- **The mapping should identify different existing thematic networks** to address the identified issues by working children and to collaborate with more and differing partners, that will help to enhance the presence and visibility of Time to Talk and working children in general.
- **Explore the need and value of data** at different levels: CACs, partners, national, regional and global. Within the exploration phase, the role and type of data to be collected for advocacy should be defined. This should create local ownership and contribute to collecting data defined as relevant by partners and CACs, which all actors will use for advocacy from local to the global level.

Recommendation 2: Increase participation of partners and CACs in the planning, management and monitoring of the project.

Rationale: T2T has created space for working children's participation in advocacy actions and significantly contributed to increasing child participation within their partners' work. Throughout the evaluation, partners and children have shown significant interest in participating in the design of the projects' future. Many of T2T's principles and practices are applicable to the planning, management and monitoring of the project. Increasing the participation of children and partners in these areas has the potential to develop stronger links between local action and global advocacy.

Specific recommendations:

- **Define** with partners and children during the exploratory phase **how to increase participation of partners and CACs** in the management and monitoring of the project.
- Review the **opportunity to establish a permanent structure**, for example, a permanent children's and a (separate) partners' committee which would participate meaningfully in Steering Committee processes relevant to them, allowing increased collaborative participation.
- **Explore and establish new means of virtual collaboration.** The current COVID-19 pandemic has triggered significant improvements in opportunities for virtual collaboration. New opportunities should be explored which allow the Steering Committee, partners and children to meaningfully communicate and collaborate virtually.

Recommendation 3: Structural development of T2T by creating a platform that will allow for diverse types of partnerships and create opportunities for new local and international partners to get involved.

Rationale: T2T's approach is a success and therefore, has created high levels of interest for expansion at different levels. Children see the need to allow more of their friends and vulnerable children to be organised in CACs to benefit but also increase the potential of CACs to become more influential. Many partners are convinced of the CACs and want to establish more because it is seen as an effective approach to improve the situation of the children while creating the critical mass needed to influence decision-makers. Several international organisations have approached T2T to discuss their potential participation and adoption of the approach. The past set-up was focused on a set number of partners and CACs defined by the availability of funding and capacity of the project staff. Therefore, the number of partners had been reduced after the first two years.

Specific recommendations:

- **Explore and identify options for a future structure** with children, partners, existing networks and potential new international partners.

- **Clarify**, where applicable, **and develop a strategy on how to relate to existing networks**, avoiding weakening these but finding ways to complement each other.
- **Define different options for membership or participation** based on the needs of partners. This should include the aspect of how different forms of membership would contribute to advocating for the rights of working children (e.g. local, regional, global).
- **Avoid dropping partners** due to funding or managerial limitations. Create alternative membership options. Where not possible, ensure a smooth exit process preventing harm to CACs.
- **Develop a Training of Trainers (ToT) manual and course** to develop sufficient local capacities for expansion. Trained teams of experienced partners then could take over local training for new partners, reducing costs. The ToT concept should keep the principle of jointly training organisational decision-makers and facilitators by training both roles for mixed trainers' teams.

Recommendation 4: Increase T2T staff for augmenting the project's potential for engagement in global advocacy while continuing the management of the complex project and increasing engagement and interaction with partners.

Rationale: The project's effectiveness in advocating for the rights of working children at global level heavily depends on the participation in relevant meetings, conferences etc. for establishing contacts and being seen as a relevant actor. Presence in meetings allows engaging with critical actors who currently hold an opposing paradigm and may otherwise not be ready to meet and engage on the issue. Keeping CACs involved and coordinating their contributions in global action requires significant time.

Specific recommendations:

- Increase T2T staffing on the level of the Steering Committee and at the local level to facilitate the exploratory phase and thereafter contribute to CAC coordination.
- Establish and work with permanent structures of CAC representatives and partners on advocacy issues at the global level. Define priorities jointly for advocacy at the global level, including critical relationships to be developed, messages, and meetings to be attended. Coordinate with partners representation in regional and global meetings.

Recommendation 5: Updating and strengthening Child Protection, Risks and Ethics in the T2T materials to address learning from the past phase

Rationale: Each phase of work has had a strong focus on using the nine basic requirements as a planning tool and "risk assessment" activities were integrated into the plan. However, some children still face risks as a result of their advocacy work, and some CAC members feel burdened by their roles and responsibilities. Thus, T2T should further strengthen the ethical approach to identify and minimise risks.

Specific recommendations:

- Update Toolkit Advocacy Cycle to include the following: Parents/ caregiver informed consent for specific advocacy action, risk-assessment as its own step, expectation management (psychosocial preparations) including debriefing.
- Refine guidance to ensure further emphasis on the role of the child protection focal point to reinforce: consideration of stopping/ changing activities that may cause harm; ensuring informed consent from children's parents/caregivers for specific advocacy activities; prevent harmful decisions on CAC level and to deliver "delicate" issues to upper levels (e.g. Steering Committee) to advocate for time for fun relaxing activities together.
- Increase information sharing with children about referrals and whom to report different issues on. Adapt training on Psychological First Aid – have a strong focus on referrals.
- During advocacy planning and implementation processes, ensure regular reflection with CAC members about the level of their responsibility and how to reduce their responsibilities if they face too much; and ways to support one another.

- Explore the possibilities to use the community of practice (CoP) as a space for reflection on advocacy plans of the CACs and also to have a significant increase in the reflections on risks/Risk assessment. Use CoP to ensure open and ongoing challenges of communication about ethical issues and effective ways to resolve them (considering children's best interests and do no harm).

Recommendation 6: Increase the involvement of parents in the project.

Rationale: Throughout the evaluation, members from several CACs and partners have emphasised the potential and need for better involvement of parents and caregivers. These were identified as critical persons to ensure good risk management and as potential supporters of the working children and their advocacy activities.

Specific recommendations:

- Define with CACs and partners different dimensions of parent involvement for developing an approach to parent involvement.
- Identify and include partner organisations' best practice experience in the involvement of parents in projects/advocacy/etc. Systematise and feed it back to all partner organisations. Develop with partners and CACs options for meaningfully collaborating with parents and caregivers.

Recommendation 7: Continue developing and expanding the toolkits. Facilitate training on new materials.

Rationale: The toolkits and related capacity building have been a great success for the project. Application levels are very high and go beyond the specific context of the project. The toolkits drove project activities and have been the backbone of the entire process. A follow-up-project should build on this good practice and develop a new toolset to facilitate the next phase. Partners identified additional capacity building needs and a further need to adapt tools to the context.

Specific recommendations:

- Develop a toolkit with a modular structure, adaptable to partner's contexts and situations.
- Continue training facilitators (adults, children & youth) in child participation and addressing power imbalances.
- Integrate a ToT approach that strengthens the opportunity for adult-child co-facilitation.
- Create more specific training modules for the different people/roles within the project, e.g. Participation Tools and Methodologies, documentation, Public speaking, Advocacy and Communication, Financial Administration, child safeguarding, self-care, children's participation in organisational decision-making.
- Integrate the aspect that advocacy efforts are often not a one-off, but may be a longer-term process for realistically achieving the desired change.
- Provide facilitators and documenters with incentives that can increase their engagement.

Recommendation 8: Simplify documentation while increasing quality and local ownership.

Rationale: While many facilitators felt overburdened with documentation and did not understand the value of much of the requested details, project staff was often unhappy about lacking details since they were dependent on the quality of the information provided for developing consistent global data.

Specific recommendations:

- Offer specific training for documentation. Increase local ownership and use of data.
- Identify with partners what documentation is most needed – focus on the essence.
- Explore with partners the use of online survey tools and platform for documentation for simplification (with offline function).
- Co-create any new tool with partners.
- T2T staff should do once every 3-6 months an online interview with facilitators and/or children for additional in-depth information.

Glossary

AfCiC	Action for Children in Conflict
AMURT	Ananda Marga Universal Relief Team
BMZ	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development
CAC	Children's Advisory Committee
CEIPA	Centro Ecumenico de Integracion Pastoral
CESIP	Centro de Estudios Sociales y Publicaciones
CoP	Community of practice
CRC	The United Nations Child Rights Convention
CSID	Centre for Services and Information on Disability
CWISH	Children-Women in Social Service and Human Rights
FC	Facilitator for Change
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
ILO	International Labour Organisation
KII	Key Informant Interview
KNH	Kindernothilfe Germany
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MANTHOC	Movimiento de Adolescentes y Niños Trabajadores Hijos de Obreros Cristianos
MOLACNATS	Movimiento Latinoamericano y del Caribe de los Niños, Niñas y Adolescentes Trabajadores
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
T2T	Time to Talk
TAWLAE	Tanzania Association of Women Leaders in Agriculture and Environment
TOT	Training of trainers
tdh	terre des hommes
OECD-DAC	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development – Development Assistance Committee
ToR	Terms of Reference
WCY	Welfare for Children and Youth

1. Context and background of the evaluation

1.1 Context of the Project

Kindernothilfe Germany (KNH) and terre des hommes (tdh) Germany², currently constituting the steering committee of the Time to talk! project, have both realised in their work with working children that many were not benefitting as intended from interventions against child labour. At the same time, working children were denied a voice at local, national and international level on matters concerning their lives. This contradicts Article 12 of the United Nations Child Rights Convention (CRC), according to which children have the right to be heard in decision-making processes relevant to their own lives.

According to the International Labour Office's (ILO) estimates (2017), 218 million children, almost 17% of the total child population globally, are involved in some kind of work. While many actors aim at eradicating certain forms of child labour, tdh and KNH have experienced that this valuable endeavour sometimes fails to improve the situation and lives of the children targeted, in some cases even leaving them worse off than before. Struggling with the question on how to ensure that children will truly benefit from their interventions, they concluded that any intervention had to address the complexity of the issue, based on a more diverse understanding of the matter: *"Children can - and do - work to support themselves and their families whereby this work may have positive or negative effects. Children may work with dignity and in settings that are neither harmful nor exploitative, where they are able to learn technical, business and life skills; earn an income and realize their citizenship as active members of their community. However, children may also find themselves working in unsafe and unhealthy environments, with little or no pay, which furthermore interfere with their access to education, hence limiting future opportunities."*³

KNH and tdh have concluded that context-specific approaches and solutions are required based on the understanding that working children have multifaceted socio-economic backgrounds and identities and are not a homogenous group. Ensuring relevance and accountability towards working children in this complexity is only possible through their meaningful participation at all levels: homes, schools, workplaces, communities and policy-making.

Based on an understanding of the complexity and a need for individual solutions, KNH and tdh emphasise the need to create a policy framework that allows for unique solutions focusing on the rights, well-being and best interest of every individual child in every unique context. For achieving this, they define listening to working children as the most critical step for positively impacting the children's living conditions.

1.2 Introduction to the project

Following their understanding of the complexity of child labour and the need to create space for working children's voices, Kindernothilfe Deutschland, Save the Children Canada, and terre des hommes Germany in March 2016 launched 'It's Time to Talk! – Children's Views on Children's Work' (after this: Time to Talk! or T2T) which ended at the end of July 2020. The German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development is funding Time to Talk!.

Project goal: The project's goal was to enable and empower working children to have their views heard in local, national and global decision-making processes, including in the run-up to the IV Global Conference on the Sustained Eradication of Child Labour in Argentina in November 2017 and further adequate policy discussion forums.

In the first phase Time to Talk! collaborated with 56 partner organisations. **Children's Advisory Committees (CACs)** were formed and partner organisations identified and trained to support these. In the second phase, the number of partners was reduced to 25, focusing on 28 CACs in Latin America,

2 Representing Terre des Hommes International Federation

³ It's Time to Talk Evaluation ToR, page 2

Africa, Asia, the Middle East and Europe. Further, a virtual **Adult Advisory Committee (AAC)** was established, including academics and practitioners with relevant experience in children's rights advocacy and children's work issues.

The overall approach the project has adopted resembles a participatory action learning process. It has developed materials, tested these in practice, and generated new knowledge and insights enabling further steps of implementation, including advocacy for working children and their situation from local to the global level. This included the following steps:

- A research toolkit was developed for consulting working children and documenting their views and experiences.
- Partners were trained to use the research toolkit⁴ in preparation for facilitating the consultations.
- Consultation results were summarised in a Global Report⁵ that was presented at the IV Global Conference on the Sustained Eradication of Child Labour 2017 in Argentina.
- A methodology toolkit⁶ was developed to guide the development of collaborative and child-led advocacy on local to national level.
- Partners were trained to use the methodology toolkit in preparation for facilitating collaborative and child-led advocacy on local to national level.
- CACs either collaborated in or led advocacy activities.
- A validation and lessons learned process.

The project had a participatory design since it involved partners and especially working children. The project has described three types of participation it has used:

1. **Consultation** of 1.822 children, aged 7-18, in 36 countries. Adults initiated and facilitated focus group discussions and participatory activities, as well as individual interviews to explore and documented children's views and gain a better understanding of their experiences.
2. **Collaborative participation** of children aged 9 to 18 who were actively involved in CACs that accompanied the research and consultation process by drawing upon working children's expertise and insights as advisers, analysts, and advocates. Further opportunities for collaborative participation were Public Action Events and a National Exchange Programme, some Advocacy Actions and further collaborative initiatives.
3. **Child-led participation** occurred where working children initiated and planned their own activities to advocate for themselves on issues affecting them. Some of these received support through project activities. Activities organised by working children included rallies, sports events, demonstrations, theatre, workshops, video and music productions, press tours and press releases.

⁴ It's Time to Talk! –Children's Views on Children's Work: Research Toolkit. Duisburg, 2016 https://www.timeto-talk.info/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Toolkit-Time-to-Talk-_.en.pdf

⁵ It's Time to Talk! – Children's Views on Children's Work. Duisburg, Second Edition 2018 https://www.time-talk.info/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/T2T_Report_EN.pdf

⁶ It's Time to Talk! – Children's Views on Children's Work: Toolkit II Supporting collaborative and child-led advocacy. Duisburg, 2019 <https://www.time-to-talk.info/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Toolkit-II-FINAL.pdf>

2. Purpose of the evaluation

This evaluation had two primary purposes: Firstly, **to assess** the level of achievement of the intended project outputs (as defined in the project matrix). Secondly, **to learn** from the first project cycle and its results to identify potential implications for a subsequent project proposal for a future follow-up project.

The evaluation has been initiated by the Steering Committee organisations and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development.

Evaluation focus

For fulfilling its two primary purposes, according to the ToR, the evaluation focused on three of the intended outputs:

1. Working children in at least 25 countries have established and articulated their position on the issue of child work. They have organised to share their experiences and to develop and pursue solutions for their (day-to-day) challenges. This includes addressing the relevant stakeholders from peers to parents and teachers to local to national policy officials.
2. The working children participating in the project activities know and put to use their right to participation in processes that affect them as set by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.
3. Public awareness for children's right to participate has been strengthened.

In line with the dual purpose of the evaluation, assessing the level of achievement of these three prioritised results lead and fed into assessing potential implications and identifying critical learnings for developing evidence-based recommendations towards the development of the strategies and activities to be included in a follow-up project that is to start in 2020.

3. Evaluation Objectives

The ToR have structured the evaluation objectives **by target groups**: working children, facilitators and stakeholders. Since the evaluation methodology was expected to use the OECD-DAC evaluation criteria, the evaluation objectives have each been linked to one or two of these.

1) Working children

- To assess children's knowledge and awareness of their rights, especially their right to participate (Effectiveness)
- To assess the degree to which this knowledge has successfully been transformed into (advocacy) action (Effectiveness)
- To assess the usefulness of the project interventions for the children's interests (Relevance)
- What are unintended impacts/effects (other working children, families, schools, communities) (Impact)
- What is the potential future of the CACs (Sustainability)

2) Facilitators (in partner organizations)

- To assess the appropriateness and quality of the training, especially content and training methods (Effectiveness)
- To assess if the newly learned skills from training are also used in other contexts. If not, what are the reasons? (Effectiveness, Sustainability)
- To assess the extent to which the training workshops influenced the participants' understanding, approach, and work with working children (Impact, Sustainability)

- To assess the quality and adequacy of the toolkits and meeting plans incl. proposed time (Efficiency)

3) Stakeholders

- To assess the frequency, success and sustainability of contact with local, regional, national or global decision-makers (Impact, Sustainability)
- To assess stakeholders to whom the project interventions were relevant and in what way? (Relevance)
- To assess the level of media coverage with relation to Time to Talk! and children's right to participate (Impact)

4. Methodology

4.1 Participatory multiple methods approach

Following the ToR, a participatory multi-methods evaluation approach was chosen, using the following key components:

4. A desk review of existing documents and documentations,
5. Visits to a sample of 14 CACs and respective partner organisations for interactive focus group sessions using child-friendly, visual and interactive tools based on semi-structured interviews with children, facilitators, partner management and key local stakeholders.
6. Where necessary, KIIs were done for accessing additional information not shared in group meetings.

All evaluation processes involving children used child-rights-based approaches as the basis. The evaluation team covered and went beyond the three core principles of the child-rights-based approach described by Lundy/ McEvoy (2012):

- *“the research aims should be informed by the CRC standards,*
- *the research process should comply with the CRC standards;*
- *and the research outcomes should build the capacity of children, as rights-holders, to claim their rights and build the capacity of duty-bearers to fulfil their obligations.”*

The evaluation methodology is based on the evaluation's strategic nature. The methodology was designed to maximise learning and feed into the development of a project proposal for a future follow-up project, in addition to assessing the project's level of achievement. The evaluation methodology aimed at maximising in-depth learning on the project approach, assessing its potential with input and participation from all key stakeholders, especially CAC-members. It was expected that the process would create insights and lessons for future evidence-based planning.

A participatory learning/reflective approach to the evaluation was used, maximising meaningful participation among critical stakeholders in the programme. Accordingly, the evaluation used qualitative evaluation tools.

4.2 Why stakeholder participation in an evaluation process?

A participatory evaluation approach reflects the participatory nature of T2T and specifically its toolkits approach for working with children.

From an ethical perspective, all stakeholders have invested time and a variety of resources into the project. They were also expected to do so during the evaluation and a potential future phase. Therefore, all should have the opportunity to participate in the evaluation process and learning meaningfully.

An approach to meaningful participation was further used to increase the **quality of the evaluation findings and recommendations**. It allowed for a much deeper engagement of the evaluators with

stakeholders (for details see description of tools below), creating more opportunities for evaluators to generate an in-depth understanding of the project and its many contexts. Involving stakeholders in a first level of creating recommendations, based on a two-stage joint learning and reflection process, allowed generating recommendations that are more relevant to the context and have a **higher likelihood of being adopted** after the evaluation. Participation enabled stakeholders to understand why certain conclusions have been drawn; creating **higher levels of ownership of findings and recommendations**.

From a **sustainability perspective**, learning among local stakeholders needs to be maximised because stakeholders will have to continue one day without external support. Therefore, stakeholders need full ownership of learning that allows stakeholders to **improve impact for the future**.

4.3 Participation and potential bias

Often, participation is not well perceived in evaluation processes since it is felt that stakeholders would bring in a bias. Therefore, it has been essential to have measures in place to avoid or minimise bias, e.g. through an independent, external evaluation team, building-in triangulation to check results, where appropriate (e.g. using the same tool with different stakeholders as for identifying the project's impact on children). Participants presented information as a group and not as individuals after internal group discussions to protect the individual.

While the first level of an interpretation/analysis of findings and development of recommendations took place with key stakeholders, the external team went through an independent second level of analysis ensuring a critical review of the first level of analysis and independent development of conclusions and recommendations.

4.4 Evaluation tools and process

In the design of the evaluation process and tools, it has been critical to consider the potential of CAC members and partner staff to participate. By the nature of their situation, working children may have significant time commitments, due to their work and potential education. Therefore it was essential to critically consider in which steps of the evaluation process participating would benefit CAC members most. While only limited adaptation to the tools was necessary (e.g. due to literacy, age and the time CAC-members were available, COVID-19-related restrictions) the time and days for meetings were flexibly arranged as far as possible based on the local context.

Key opportunities for stakeholders' participation included:

- Partner organisations participated in defining critical stakeholders to participate in the evaluation process;
- Evaluation tools (see for details below) were designed as reflective tools allowing participants to verbally and visually share their experiences and then jointly reflect on these;
- Country-level validation and reflection workshops allowed stakeholders, including CAC-members, to learn from the information all had shared, discuss and clarify any differences, reflect on key findings, make sense of these and develop recommendations.
- Global validation and reflection workshop: representatives of partner organisations, together with the Steering Committee, participated in validating and reflecting on findings and in developing detailed recommendations for a potential future phase of the project. While initially a much higher level of CAC-member and partner participation had been planned, it was neither possible to facilitate the process in Indonesia nor have children participate virtually (for more details see limitations).

The evaluation tools for children and partners were similar to T2T tools. This allowed especially children to participate in the evaluation in a way they already had been used to. Tools for the FGDs were visual tools, where an image was used to facilitate the reflection process. Visual tools have helped to increase attention and participation, allowed participants to see what key information

was documented and enabled them to discuss more complex issues between different components of a visual image.

4.4.1 FGDs with CACs

Focus group discussion with CACs:

CAC members were separated by gender for the focus groups discussions. They first drew a large person on a poster representing a CAC-member. They were then asked to discuss and write (children chose the language) or draw on the poster what impact it had made, being a member of their CAC: how did the membership (their participation in the CACs) impact their thinking (head), relating (hands) and acting (feet). After completing the body map, additional layers were added:

- Impact on their family (on the right of the poster)
- Impact on their community (on the left of the poster)

Figure 1: Presentation of body map by WCY Homabay-CAC



In the next step, each group was asked to discuss how important/relevant they felt the changes they experienced had been, using high, medium and low. They were then asked to quantify among how many boys or girls in their CAC (depending on the gender of their FGD group) the impact had occurred, e.g. among 6 out of 12 members.

After all FGD groups had presented to the evaluators and the other group(s), the evaluation team asked clarifying questions and explored issues in more detail.

In the next step, all CAC-members present were asked to jointly identify key stakeholders who had supported them and rank them according to their relevance, using high, medium and low.

Where time allowed, themes and issues that had emerged throughout the meeting were further discussed. Meetings on average took 2-3 hours, including a break.

4.4.2 FGDs with facilitators

Focus group with facilitators: The FGDs with the facilitators were based on an adaptation of the tools used with the children. However, facilitators prepared two body maps: one representing themselves and one representing a CAC member.

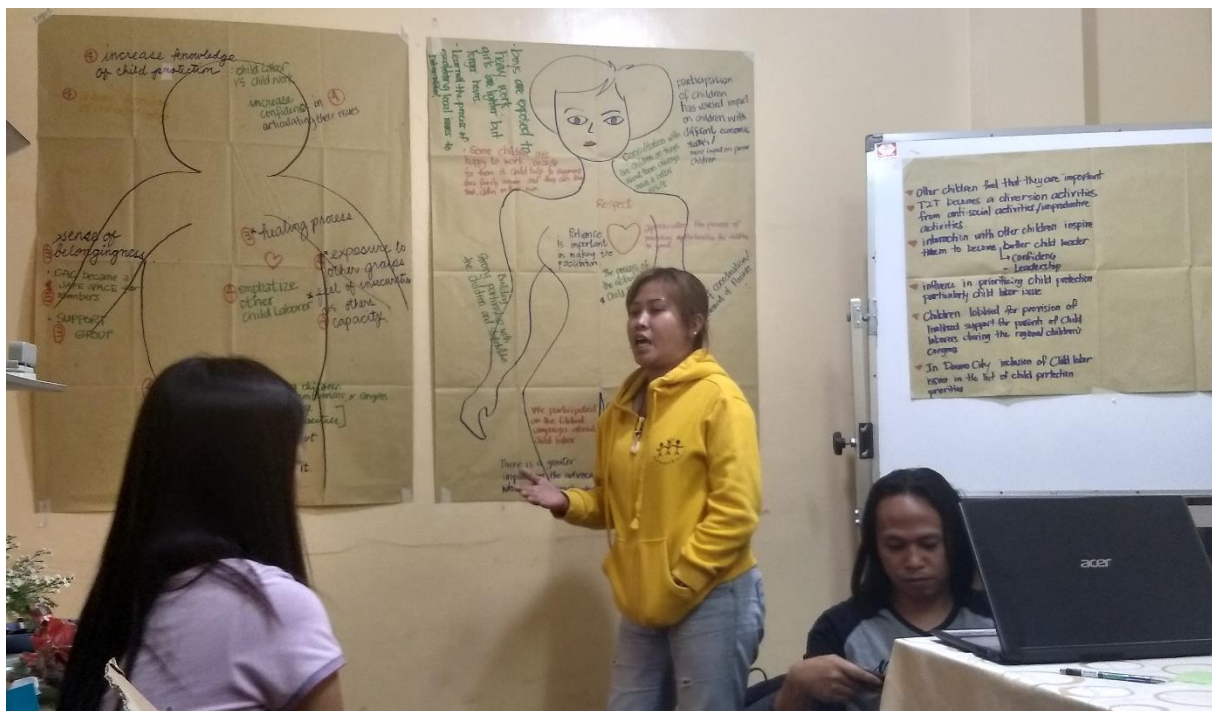
First, facilitators were asked to prepare a body map representing **a facilitator**. They were then asked to discuss and write on the poster what impact it had made, being a T2T facilitator of the CACs: how did becoming a CAC-facilitator impact their thinking (head), relating (hands) and acting (feet). After completing the body map, additional layers were added:

- Impact on their family (on the right of the poster)
- Impact on their organisation (on the left of the poster)

Second, facilitators were asked to prepare a body map representing a **CAC-member**. They were then requested to discuss and write on the poster what impact they had observed the membership in the CACs had on the children: how did the membership (participation in the CACs) impact their thinking (head), relating (hands) and acting (feet).

After completing the body map, facilitators were asked to further specify the impact by gender.

Figure 2: FGD with facilitators - presentation of body maps



While facilitators prepared the body maps, the evaluation team only sat on the side, observed and where necessary responded to questions. After completing both body maps, facilitators presented these to the evaluation team. Evaluators had the opportunity to ask questions for clarification and go more in-depth on specific issues.

Themes and issues that had emerged throughout the meeting were further discussed, where time allowed. Meetings on average took 2-2.5 hours.

4.4.3 FGD with partner's management

The main tool used for the FGD with management staff of partners was the “tree of change” tool. The image of a tree was used to structure the FGD with partners including following key steps:

Question/Theme	Figure 3: Partner management FGD - tree of change
3. Birds (red): What are the threats to your impact? How severe is the threat? (H=high, M=medium, L=low)	
2. Fruit (orange): What impact did T2T have on the partner's programmes?	
1. Branches (brown): Partner's major programmes/areas of work (Asterisk indicates if T2T tools or approach were adopted into the programme)	
4. Stem (grey): Partner's core functions impacted by T2T	
5. Roots (blue): Stakeholders contributing to T2T related impact. Level of relevance of stakeholder's contributions to achieving T2T-related impact (H=high, M=medium, L=low)	
6. Sustainability: What would be the impact of an end of T2T support/end of the project? (Responses not visualised on poster)	
Note the numbering represents the sequence of the questions.	

Themes and issues that had emerged throughout the meeting were further discussed, where time allowed. Meetings on average took 2-2.5 hours.

4.4.4 Stakeholder interviews

The restricted time for data collection per country (on average 1.5-2 days per partner) has only allowed for a limited number of interviews. The primary strategy has been to cover the majority of data collection in group settings to maximise participation and facilitate joint reflection. However, where the integration of key stakeholders has not been possible, or questions were not appropriate to ask in a group setting, the evaluators took time with individuals to answer a specific set of context-specific

questions which usually had emerged from the group interactions. These interviews have included partner staff, facilitators, teachers, individual children, representatives of local authorities, a media representative, KNH representatives. Where possible, groups of teachers, parents etc. could be interviewed to avoid having the opinion of an individual. Where advisable, KIIs were conducted with community leaders etc. Key stakeholders could alternatively or additionally participate in the Reflection Workshop/ Roundtable.

4.4.5 *Reflection workshops*

Reflection workshops were facilitated in six of the countries covered. The detailed set-up was adapted to the local context. In general, the workshops had the following in common:

- Representatives of partners, CACs, and stakeholders participated
- Partners and CAC-representatives presented their work from the FGDs
- Participants identified key issues from the presentations
- Sharing and validating the participants' key observations
- In-depth discussion of selected findings from all presentations
- Joint preparation of recommendations for a potential future phase of the project

A participatory approach was used to facilitate the workshop, ensuring that children have the opportunity to share and participate.

Figure 4: Reflection workshop in Kenya - gallery walk



While in four countries, one partner and one CAC were represented, Kenya was different. Two partners and three CACs participated along with several stakeholders from both partners and the East Afrika KNH representative along with representatives of KNH partners who were not involved in T2T. While a similar mixed set-up had been planned for the two partners and their CACs in Lebanon, COVID-19 forced to hold separate meeting only involving CAC representatives and representatives of the respective organisation.

Figure 5: Reflection Workshop Nepal - group-work for developing recommendations

4.5 Sampling

The evaluation-ToR included a suggested sample of 15 out of 28 CACs according to the following criteria:

- Representation of all four regions covered by the project (Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Middle East/Eastern Europe);
- Different forms of work and living conditions;
- Organised and non-organised groups (in the sense of being part of a network);
- Representation of rural and urban groups.

After a joint discussion between the Steering Committee and the evaluation team it was decided to visit all CACs in person instead of meeting 8 of 15 CACs virtually. The reason was that with limited additional effort, it was possible to get much better and more in-depth data with a higher level of participation among children. In addition, it was agreed to include a CAC in Indonesia which would also participate in the validation and reflection workshop. This brought the total to 16 CACs.

A detailed overview of the sample and participants per activity and partner/CAC can be found in the appendices (Appendix 1: p.61 and Appendix 2: p.62)

Due to COVID-19-related travel restrictions, it has not been possible to meet 2 out of the 16 sampled CACs, children were not allowed to meet so that virtual meetings were not an alternative.

Participation of stakeholders in the evaluation in numbers:

- The evaluation team met a total of 14 CACs, representing 50% of the groups involved in the project.
- 14 out of 24 (58%) active partners participated (MOLACNATS from Paraguay was not visited due to COVID-19, but interviewed and included virtually). These partners facilitate 19 out of the 28 active groups (68%).
- 150 CAC members (93 female and 57 male) and 8 Alumni (above the age of 18) participated, representing 14 CACs in 10 countries.
- 48 facilitators and 42 partner staff with management responsibility, from 14 partner organisations in 11 countries participated.
- A total of 150 participants attended the eight reflection and validation meetings and workshops.

4.6 Internal Quality Management

Training of evaluation team: The team had worked extensively together on earlier evaluations. All three evaluators were involved in adapting the tools which they had already used in prior assignments. The lead evaluator and one junior evaluator facilitated data collection in Kenya, the first country together to allow covering the large number of CACs and for minor “live” adaptations while using tools for the first time in the T2T evaluation context. This approach ensured consistency for data collection in subsequent countries. The team remained in regular contact throughout the evaluation process, adapting where necessary especially to unforeseen challenges posed by COVID-19.

Visual facilitation: A visual facilitation process was designed, using helpful images and allowing participants to visualise and document their discussions. This included a validation process, assuring quality because all participants were able to see the information documented. It allowed going back in discussions to earlier points, make connections, and it provided opportunities to discuss more complex issues. Results were photographed and cross-checked with the notes.

Working and discussing in sub-groups: To ensure that all participants felt free to participate and share their ideas, they were placed, whenever appropriate, in homogenous sub-groups. This was also practised during plenary sessions (e.g. when questions were asked, the homogenous groups discussed, before responding).

Structured data collection forms: All tools have a structured data collection form. This ensured that interviewers systematically documented all critical information, and the team leaders were able to identify any gaps quickly. At the same time, this allowed for an efficient and systematic analysis process, significantly simplifying coding processes.

Interviews and FGDs in teams: KIs and FGDs were always done in teams ensuring that one person was able to focus on note-taking entirely. Notes were always reviewed by both team members and the team lead.

Reflection workshop: A critical aspect of the reflection workshop was the validation of key findings by key stakeholders.

4.7 Limitations

The onset of COVID-19 prevented evaluators from accessing Paraguay and Indonesia. Data collection in Lebanon, specifically the reflection workshop had to be altered, not allowing for mixing any members of the CACs. The final validation and reflection workshop planned for Indonesia with CAC and partner participation from the Philippines, Indonesia, the Steering Committee and T2T's consultants had to be cancelled and facilitated virtually. While CAC-members were able to validate findings at the national level, their participation was not possible in the virtual meetings due to social distancing regulations. The virtual process allowed for the participation of a larger number of partners from different countries.

5. Findings

The structure of the findings section follows the main three sections of evaluation questions: CACs, facilitators and stakeholders. Within each section, responses are provided to the respective evaluation questions, which are included as headings (level 3, e.g. 1.1.1.).

5.1 CACs

5.1.1 *The children's knowledge and awareness of their rights, especially their right to participate (Effectiveness, Impact)*

Being a member of the CAC – what has been the impact?

Table 2: Impact of being a CAC-member

Impact Category Detailed	Frequency of Category (How often impact category was named in all meetings with CACs)	How many CACs mentioned this Impact Category from a total of 14 CACs visited	Percentage in how many CACs this Impact Category was mentioned	Frequency of Impact Category by Facilitators
Positive relations*	86	12	86%	29
Children's rights - knowledge	55	14	100%	24
Awareness and advocacy activities*	46	12	86%	18
Self-confidence*	41	12	86%	27
Positive emotions	24	10	71%	10
Motivation to help other children (non-CAC members)	23	12	86%	12
Improved communication skills	17	7	50%	13
Importance of education	13	7	50%	6
Positive thinking - of future	9	3	21%	0
Positive thinking - in general	6	4	29%	0
Increasing membership of CACs	5	4	29%	5
Responsibility	4	4	29%	9
Improved planning skills	2	1	7%	0
Other	19	10	71%	12
Gained life skills				11
Making connections outside of Partner organisation				7
* For these impact categories and detailed breakdown is provided later in the findings.				

The above table shows data collected from 14 CACs and their facilitators.

Children **highly valued being members** of their CACs. Overall, the impact on CAC members has been significant as reported by children and facilitators and observed by the evaluators. While much of the impact can be related to T2T, not all may be solely attributed to T2T. Often, T2T was integrated into

ongoing programmes, and some of the CAC members had been part of partners' programme activities before.

CAC members, as well as the facilitators, have been able to share many positive impacts CAC membership has had. **Changes presented** by the children/youth were **highly consistent** with the facilitators' observations.

The first six categories of impact emerge as those most common in the CACs: they were named by at least 10 out of 14 CACs. These six will be described in more detail:

1. Positive relations

Impact Category - Detailed	Frequency of Category (How often impact category was named in all meetings with CACs)	How many CACs mentioned this Impact Category from a total of 14 CACs visited	Percentage in how many CACs this Impact Category was mentioned
Positive relations	86	12	86%
a. Positive relations - within group	46	10	71%
b. Positive relations - other children	13	10	71%
c. Positive relations - community	11	6	43%
d. Positive relations - parents	11	6	36%
e. Positive relations - other	6	5	36%

12 out of 14 groups described that their relationships had been positively impacted through their membership in the CAC. Members of 10 groups described how relationships within the CACs had positively developed and changed.

Positive relations – within group

"Within the group, we used to gang up against each other, usually two against two. Now we are one group and one hand. We had feelings of jealousy, hate, and criticism towards each other, and now we are one group and have more positive feelings towards each other." (girls, Nabaa CAC)

In several cases, CAC members initially had to grow together as a group and overcome negative feelings. In Nepal, CAC members were discriminating between members from different schools. However, members from ten CACs have provided many examples of how their relationship has changed. The boys from Nabaa CAC reported that this is now even reflected in their CAC-motto: *"One hand does not clap on its own"*. A significant change when considering the context of the CAC. All live in one of the most notorious camps in Lebanon with constant tensions within, including frequent clashes. The CAC members explained *"There is no racism among the members of the group anymore. We are from different places and countries with different colours, and we don't discriminate among each other."*

"We are rather relatives than friends" is how female members from TAWLAE CAC in Tanzania summarised the transformation of their relationships. CAC members expressed the value of knowing children who are in the same situation and have similar aspirations. Girls from CESIP -CAC pointed out: *"It was nice to be part of a group with other children that also care about the situation of working children and want to keep going to school to improve their lives."*

CAC members have realised the value of working together. Female members from TAWLAE-CAC explained, *"working together we can achieve something"*. The CACs have become an essential part of their members' lives and their relational network. This is specifically visible when speaking to CAC-Alumni, those who had to leave the groups after they had reached the age of 18. Alumni of two CACs in Kenya and one in Nepal had remained very close to the groups, now either had facilitative role supporting the CACs and those in Kenya had established their own groups with 35-100 members each.

Therefore, it is not surprising that members of all groups hope and even expect the CACs to continue *"We expect to continue to belong to the CAC group because it develops our skills, increases our security and knowledge of their rights"* (boys, CESIP CAC).

Positive relations – other children

Ten CACs reported that their relationships with other children (non-CAC members) had developed positively because of their participation in the CACs. Girls from CESIP and Nabaa CACs explained that through their membership in the CACs, they had gained social skills that enabled them to relate to other children. CAC members learned how to respect others and treat them differently: *"Before being part of CAC we didn't respect street children, but now we do respect them, we didn't involve street children while playing games but now we play together"* (boys, CWISH-CAC). Male members from Nabaa CAC explained: *"Similar to being affectionate, we also learned that we ourselves should be less harsh with children because they're only children and don't understand what's going on sometimes"*. When learning about their rights, many CAC members realised that they should respect the rights of other children.

Positive relations – community

Six CACs gave information on how relationships towards communities had improved as a result of their CAC membership. All groups in East Africa explained that they now had become role models in their communities. *"We have self-control as a result of being role models and have improved our community standing after changing our behaviours, e.g. from being troublesome for the most time, to a point where the community now appreciates us"*. (boys, AfCiC-CAC). While CAC members value their new role, they see it at the same time as a burden and fear to fail or not be able to fulfil expectations.

Members from Balkan Sunflowers CAC in Kosovo explained that relationships to the society had significantly improved. People now were interested in their situation; their issues were made public. One positive result is that they feel that risk for them has reduced.

Positive relations - parents

While the majority of the groups described that their parents were initially critical and often negative about their participation in the CAC, they had become supportive after seeing the positive changes in the children.

Six CACs shared examples of how their CAC membership had positively impacted relationships to their parents or the entire family. *"We have learned how to solve feuds and problems positively. For example, dealing with our mothers is now more positive, and we do it much less angrily. Before, we and our mothers would communicate angrily with each other"* girls participating in Nabaa-CAC illustrated. CAC members in Kenya described the same experience that they had learned to deal less aggressively with their families, and in turn, these were now reacting much less aggressive towards them. One male member (AfCiC-CAC) in Kenya said that according to local tradition, he as one of the younger children in the family would not be listened to when any issues were discussed in the family. However, since he became a CAC member, this had gradually changed, and he was now consulted even by his elder siblings and his contributions valued. Female members from TAWLAE CAC had the same experience that their opinion on various family issues is welcome.

2. Children's rights - knowledge

Having gained knowledge on children's rights was the impact area named second-most frequently by children and facilitators. It was named by children **from all 14 CACs** participating in the evaluation. Overall, children had detailed knowledge about child rights.

Many CAC members expressed that knowing their rights was precious for them, allowing them to **realise how others should be treating them** and at the same time understanding their **own responsibilities** and how they should be treating others.

"We are aware that children have rights, and we feel with voice and vote we can say what we feel and change things in the System." (girls, CEIPA-CAC)

Understanding their rights has also led them to understand that they were child labourers. *"Unlike before, when I didn't even know that I was already a child labour. I am now aware of the age limit of*

children to work.” (girls, Kaugmaon-CAC). Boys of AfCiC-CAC explained “Most of the children work and they are underpaid. Under the constitution of Kenya, children under 18 should not work to get money.” Their conclusion: “All children should be educated about their rights.”

CAC members are now **sensitised and observe abuses** of their individual rights as well as violations of other children's rights. They express that knowledge on children's rights has empowered and activated them. *“Now, we will take action, because we can define our rights, and we know that we can develop, without fear of thinking, or of expressing our positive ideas for change.”* (girls, CEIPA-CAC). Many CAC members **intervene when they see** the rights of other children being **abused** (e.g. deprivation of education, physical abuse, unsafe working conditions), either by educating the child, addressing the perpetrator (FC parents and teachers, TAWLAE parents) or they inform the respective authorities to deal with the case (e.g. TAWLAE, WCY CACs). Members from WCY-Homabay-CAC only meet during holidays because most members attend boarding schools far from their home. Other children come to them and share their challenges, which CAC members then will share at their meetings during holidays and together develop advice.

Some CAC members have started **claiming their rights** towards their employers (e.g. AMURT, Nabaa, CWISH-CACs), while others use the information to choose better employers and jobs (AfCiC-CAC). *“We now know that the salary they're paying us is actually what we deserve and know how to defend ourselves and not staying overtime.”* (girls, AMURT-CAC)

Many CAC members see the **right to education** as critical for the future of working children, an opportunity to escape their situation. Either they have managed to accommodate work, and school or some see that they will not be able to return to education but want to prevent their younger siblings and as many other vulnerable children as possible from dropping out of school.

Right to participate: Children in all groups have a **clear understanding** of their rights and an **increased desire** to participate in decisions concerning their own lives. **Improved communication skills** and other positive changes in their personality due to participating in the CACs have given members **increased opportunities to participate in conversations and decision making in their families**. Several CAC members explained that they feel taken more seriously by parents and older siblings (e.g. AfCiC-CAC, Nabaa-CAC). Some partner organisations (e.g. AfCiC, AMURT) have **increased opportunities for children to participate in their planning and decision making** as a result of the project. For instance, AfCiC now involves children in their strategic planning while AMURT has increased involvement in planning and implementing their courses.

CAC members had the opportunity to participate in meetings and discussions at various levels within their region, country or internationally. However, most of these **opportunities so far have been one-offs** and have not resulted in sustained participation. The main action was the presentation of either results of the consultation and/or the CACs' proposals. Usually, there was a specific, time-bound reason for the activity. In Latin America or Asia; however, there are structures of NGOs of children's right coalitions or child protection that could be targeted as potential spaces of more constant participation. Partners, e.g. in Guatemala, Bangladesh, the Philippines or Nepal are **seeking opportunities to institutionalise** participation. In these countries, structures and laws are in place that would allow for child participation but often are not enacted.

3. Awareness and advocacy activities

The third most named impact area by CACs was the engagement of members in awareness and advocacy activities. Twelve groups referred to these. Some few were still in the stages of preparing their advocacy activity and therefore would not see themselves implementing these, explaining why not all fourteen have named the implementation of these activities as an impact.

A detailed overview of the awareness and advocacy activities is provided in a section specifically designated to the issue (see 5.1.2 starting page 31).

4. Self-confidence

Increased self-confidence among CAC-members emerged as the fourth most frequently mentioned impact area, cited by 12 out of 14 groups.

Table 3: Increased self-confidence among CAC-members

Impact Category - Detailed	Frequency of Category (How often impact category was named in all meetings with CACs)	How many CACs mentioned this Impact Category from a total of 14 CACs visited	Percentage in how many CACs this Impact Category was mentioned
Self-confidence	41	12	86%
a. Increased self-confidence in communication	31	10	71%
b. Increased self-confidence not related to communication	10	8	57%

In more than 75% of the cases CAC members mentioned increased self-confidence, it was related to increased self-confidence in communication. The evaluation team was impressed by the level of self-confidence of CAC-members. Many interacted freely with the evaluation team, shared their opinions and observations and were able to confidently present results from group-work in front of larger groups, including persons of authority.

CAC members clearly described the changes in their self-confidence: *"The project has helped in expressing our feelings we are more confident to educate others about children's right and also can speak in public."* boys, AfCiC-CAC. *"We have lost shyness in front of the public and peers because we have been practising to talk and give our opinion in front of other children. They listen to us, and we listen to them."* (girls CEIPA-CAC).

AMURT-CAC female members come from relatively conservative Syrian refugee households and are usually confined to their homes with little interaction beyond their families. They equally emphasised, being part of the CAC had been vital to the transformation of their self-confidence and relationships by learning the basics of communication: *"Communicating with others is now easier, and as veiled girls, we weren't supposed to communicate with people outside our families, but now through AMURT and T2T we were exposed to others and know how to express ourselves and feel confident. Even communicating with boys and having friends that are boys."* (girls, AMURT-CAC).

Girls from CEIPA-CAC emphasised that increased self-confidence is leading to action: *"Now, we will take action, because we can define our rights, and we know that we can develop, without fear of thinking and express our positive ideas for change"*. Several groups described how increased self-confidence allowed them to speak up against abuse: *"We now defend ourselves when we are exposed to violence We speak up when someone is being abused"* (girls, Balkan Sunflowers-CAC).

Most of the CAC members' statements on self-confidence not related to communication were linked to increased self-esteem as expressed by the girls of Balkan Sunflowers-CAC: *"Our self-esteem has grown. We have understood that our life is important."* It is linked to valuing their own identity as emphasised by girls from MANTHOC-CAC: *"We identified ourselves and valued ourselves as workers. We used to feel ashamed and embarrassed that we had to work, but after being in the process, we learned to value our contributions to our families, and we realised that we are responsible and not only helping out."* However, other CAC-members were struggling with their identity. Kaugmaon-CAC stood out with having very few female CAC members, although more girls than boys had participated in the first phase of the project before the CACs were formed. The current female members explained that becoming a CAC member stigmatised them, and they were more likely to be bullied at school.

The impact goes beyond the time of being CAC member: Former WCY Nairobi-CAC members, who had to leave the CACs at the age of 18, who took on facilitative roles, saw that their membership had had a significant impact on their lives *"We developed self-drive and started being able to make decisions which is the ability to stand up for oneself"*.

5. Positive emotions

10 out of 14 CACs described positive emotions as an impact of participating in CACs. CAC meetings were fun, but CAC-members' explanations included a much wider variety of reasons: *"We felt joy, confidence and satisfaction. We had fun, and it was a good time to share with other friends. We felt like we could give our opinion and that we are contributing to our families and our lives."* (boys MANTHOC-CAC). *"We experienced feeling valued and happiness when we were together. The activities were fun and joyful"* (girls CEIPA-CAC). The positive emotions were not only about benefitting themselves as CAC members but about *"feeling happy more children are being rescued through CAC help"* (girls, WCY Homabay-CAC).

6. Motivation to help other children

12 out of 14 groups stated that being a CAC member had motivated them to help other children. *"We felt that we were collaborating, we felt valued and important when our voice was heard, as defenders of other working children"*, (girls, MANTHOC-CAC).

For example, CSID-CAC, a group of members living with disabilities, expressed that not only children with disabilities should be included and targeted by the CACs but also the most vulnerable. Boys of AfCiC-CAC said: *"We have a desire to put more energy to help children affected by child abuse in the community. Many children are under child labour, thus causing harm to them and making them miss out of school. When those children get to know their rights, it will help them say no to the child labour."* They try to help their peers to get out of situations like drug abuse. *"At school, we help each other physically and emotionally with the skills taught at CAC [...] A lot of children facing child labour tend to slip to drug abuse to make them forget about their situation they are undergoing and for them to understand their right they need to put aside drugs so as they can be able to think straight and stand for rights of the children in labour"*. (boys, AfCiC-CAC) They experienced that not all peers accepted their support, especially when addicted to drugs, while others did.

Many CACs, often in collaboration with the partner organisation, **educate a significant number of children outside the CAC on child rights** (e.g. CWISH, CESIP, AfCiC and FC held additional meetings at schools, e.g., WCY-CAC and TAWLAE-CAC members return after meetings to their area to share with groups of children in their respective areas, Nabaa brings additional youth together that are then sensitised by CAC members.

7. Further impact on CAC members

Half of the groups named increased communication skills and increased awareness on the importance of education as impacts. Two additional areas observed by facilitators (in addition to those named by CAC members) were the increased **life skills** and the **establishment of relationships of CACs beyond the partner organisations** with other organisations and institutions. Some of these life skills were connected to the partners' ongoing programmes (e.g. vocational training). An important observation has been that many of the impacts that were stated have not been achieved by T2T alone, but by building on, linking with, boosting or benefitting from partners' ongoing initiatives. These include initiatives of reintegrating children into formal education or vocational training (e.g. CWISH, WCY, AfCiC, AMURT, TAWLAE, CEIPA,) or providing them with psycho-social support (e.g. AMURT), developing their talents (WCY).

Overall, an impressive development of social skills

- Significant increase in social skills, e.g., relating to each other, parents, teachers, employers, caring for others.
- Interpersonal skills development, e.g. conflict resolution, strengthening their level of being responsible
- Developing a positive identity as a working child

- Discovery of talents (WCY)
- Increased social skills have enabled improved results in schools, e.g. through better self-confidence, being able to engage and ask questions (CWISH).

5.1.2 *To assess the degree to which this knowledge has successfully been transformed into (advocacy) action (Effectiveness)*

For a better understanding of the level to which knowledge has been transformed into action, all statements of children given during the body mapping exercise were analysed whether they referred to any action related to individual or group advocacy action as a result of CAC membership.

Table 4: Analysis of children's statements for advocacy action

Action Category	Frequency of Category	How many CACs mentioned this Category
0 = Statement not related to action	206	14
1= Helping non-CAC members	17	9
2= individual advocacy action	29	8
3 = Planned group advocacy action	49	12
4 = Other - not clear if group or individual	6	4
5 = Action but not representing a direct act of advocacy or help	27	11

As already stated above, gaining knowledge about their rights had **energised members to become active**, either speaking out for themselves, helping non-CAC members or educating children outside their group or engaging in campaigns. Learning is shared beyond the group – individually or in organised group meetings, school meetings.

Individual level:

- CAC members feel a responsibility to **educate and sensitise** other children on their rights (this was already described in detail in 5.1.1 in section 6 on page 30);
- Many feel an urge or a duty to **step in and act** when they see rights abused. E.g. members of TAWLAE-CAC speak to parents or report to the police when they see a child working during school hours or see a child that is too young for work.
- Children took the initiative to **address issues** with parents, employers and schools.
- The T2T tool **“Daily calendars”** has allowed children to **negotiate** with their parents and employers their working and studying hours, allowing them to integrate both better. (FC-CAC),
- **Employers** – Nabaa-CAC members are preparing an advocacy action to inform their employers about basic child rights to get them committed to these. They have the hope that they can negotiate at least a little with their employers to improve their working situation. Generally, where parents are the employers, children have been able to negotiate improvements e.g. allowing them to better integrate work and education (e.g. FC-CAC, Nabaa-CAC). Others have made the experience that employers would not change. For example, CWISH members learned about their rights to health. After falling ill, one boy

expressed to his employer that he had a right to be treated. However, the employer accused the boy of not caring of his health and did nothing. The boy was not in a position to look for a better employer and had to stay (in Nepal many working children are sent from rural areas to urban centres for working and supporting their family, while often getting the opportunity to access education. They live with their employers. According to CAC-members, they may already start working at the age of 5. Other CWISH-CAC members all had experienced on a variety of issues that employers would not change. While CWISH and the CAC keep trying addressing employers, it has been a very challenging issue. Most do not want to be identified and engage in any activities since child labour has become illegal.

Group level:

CACs jointly engage in advocacy with planned activities which are part of the planned CAC sessions and in several cases in more spontaneous activities. At the time of the evaluation, the CACs either had implemented advocacy activities or were preparing these (e.g. AMURT, Nabaa, AfCiC). Activities represented a wide variety from targeting local to national issues and actors. In most cases, preparing the advocacy activities has taken significantly more time than scheduled according to T2T. Members showed enthusiasm about the activities *“For the first time in our lives we talked with decision-makers and were able to demand change, present our proposals to the municipality and speak to the Vice Ministry of Labour about the realities of child labour”* (girls, CEIPA-CAC).

- AMURT has combined its activity with its ongoing Creative Media project. Twenty meetings have gone into preparing the advocacy activity so far, significantly more than the single session scheduled.
- FC-CAC has successfully managed to abolish the practice of boys having to herd their families' cattle, not allowing them to go to school. All boys in the community are now regularly attending school. Teachers used to punish girls when coming late to school. CAC members sensitised the teachers that girls were late because of their duties at home and have achieved that they were not punished anymore for being late.
- CESIP – the group used a play to target parents, school and community and include peers. The reaction was very emotional to the risks children identified in their communities; parents were crying. As a result, three kids stopped working in risky jobs, mainly related to brick production. Several of the CAC members who work with their families also reported an improvement in their working conditions, reduction of hours, space and time for homework, support in school activities. FC-CAC reported similar impacts of a play they had prepared.
- Guatemala – The CAC organised a march in downtown towards the municipality to present their proposals to the Mayor. However, it may have had limited impact, as the key authorities they met, Vice Minister of Labour and Mayor of Quetzaltenango, left their positions after changes in government in 2019. Still, CAC members have recognised that they have a space for participation.
- WCY Homabay-CAC – a girl (not a member of the CAC) was raped and murdered in the community. The CAC observed that although the perpetrator was known, nothing happened. They prepared banners, put tape across their mouths and started demonstrating in front of the local police station. When nothing happened, they did the same at the county-level authorities.
- Balkan Sunflowers: as there was at one place no streetlight in the neighbourhood, the CACs were concerned about physical security, they went into the municipality: CACs mobilised parents, civil society organisations and community representatives.

Overall, a high level of knowledge has been transformed into advocacy action. Key observations were:

- Advocacy initiatives were not in all cases successful in achieving their objectives. For example, schools in Guatemala did not tolerate high levels of absenteeism of working children, therefore not allowing them to complete education. Consequently, the working children were considered as drop-outs (authorities either expect a child to be in education full-time or not at all).
- Even when advocacy initiatives did not seem to have much impact, children still valued that they had the opportunity to raise their voice and expressed that they did not feel alone with their problem. (Kaugmaon)
- Generally, when advocacy activities targeted parents as the employers of children (including domestic work), there has been positive impact, e.g. reduction in workload, allowing to do homework while working, allowing more time for school responsibilities.
- Other employers than parents: while children raised issues related to them (e.g. the right to health in Nepal) this has achieved no, or very limited positive response.
- Children created awareness spontaneously among other children, CAC members feel responsible for sharing among other children.

5.1.3 *What are unintended impacts/effects (other working children, families, schools, communities)*

CAC becoming identification point and surrogate family, protected space

CAC members have established a **strong identification** with the CAC and its objectives; it has become part of their identity. In several cases, the evaluators have observed that (e.g. WCY, TAWLAE, AMURT, Nabaa, CWISH, Kaugmaon, CSID, Balkan Sunflowers, CESIP) **extremely close ties** have been established **among group members as well as with the facilitators**. This was visible in how members were caring for and respecting each other as well as the facilitators. The CACs almost seems to play the role of a **surrogate family**, providing the positive relationships some children have never had. An Alumni of WCY Nairobi-CAC, now leading a group herself, expressed *"Before, I have never trusted anybody in my life"*. Boys from Nabaa-CAC pointed out *"There is no racism among the members of the group. They [the group members] are from different places and countries with different colours, and they don't discriminate among each other."* A great achievement for a group coming from probably the worst refugee camp in Lebanon. The CAC's motto reflects the relationships *"One hand does not clap on its own"*. Girls from TAWLAE-CAC also emphasised their special relationship *"We now feel rather being relatives than friends."*

The CACs and the space partners provide the members with is a place significantly **different from the harsh context** many live in. CAC members expressed how the group had impacted them by **feeling** happy, loved, secure, more stable, getting moral support from the group, hope for the future. Frequently partner staff and especially facilitators have very close relationships with CAC members, in a very positive sense often beyond the facilitators' professional responsibility (e.g. TAWLAE, CWISH, Kaugmaon, AMURT, Nabaa).

Members feel highly committed and relevant by helping others. However, in some cases, as expressed in several CACs in East Africa, a few CAC members showed such a high level of commitment that it had started becoming a burden either timewise or in the sense of not being able to fulfil the role they felt they had. This will be described in more detail in the section below.

Further evidence of the importance of the CACs to its members is the fact that Alumni are taking leadership roles and supporting existing groups as the project had intended for this phase. Besides, WCY-CAC Alumni from Nairobi and Homabay had also started their own groups which currently had 35 – 100 members each.

High level of pressure and responsibility

In several cases, CAC members have raised the issue that they were feeling high levels of pressure of being a role model and having responsibilities (e.g. CEIPA, TAWLAE, WCY, AfCiC). *"People hate you in the community when their expectations towards the CAC are high, and you do not meet them. So you feel bad that you have not been able to help"*. (CAC member from East Africa⁷) *"There is low or damaged self-esteem because the community expects perfection from the CAC."* (CAC member from East Africa⁸). The practice of selecting a maximum of 15 children per CAC resulted in some CAC members feeling a high level of pressure and responsibility because they were among the chosen few who were allowed in the CAC.

Advocacy activities creating potential risks for CAC members

In several cases, children have voiced concerns that they did not feel sufficiently protected or supported in their advocacy activities, an issue also raised by some partner organisations. There were instances, where partners and children did not seem to be sufficiently aware of the risk children were exposed to (e.g. individually addressing drug addicts, addressing issues in families practising witchcraft, demonstrating and exposing local issues at higher levels and facing hostility when returning to the community). While the second T2T tool includes a step of assessing risks, this did not seem to be sufficient to address the situations CAC members were facing. It seems that the advocacy cycle does not include a step of parents being informed and getting their consent for their children to participate in specific advocacy activities. Partners and children expressed the need to better include parents. The children are proposing to include project components that involve parents, community and local leaders to have their protection and support. Currently, the involvement of parents seems mostly be limited to give an initial consent for the child to participate in the CAC. While the tool, to some extent, addresses the risk for the officially planned joint advocacy activity it does not address instances where members were individually, or as a group, spontaneously reacting to situations they were facing.

Female and children empowerment in traditional societies

According to the accounts of children and the evaluation team's observations, the level of empowerment, especially in more traditional contexts was higher for girls than boys (AMURT, Nabaa, CSID). *"Communicating with others is now easier, and as veiled girls, we weren't supposed to communicate with people outside our families, but now through AMURT and T2T we were exposed to others and knew how to express ourselves and feel confident. Even communicating with boys and having friends that are boys."* (girls, AMURT) Girls from Nabaa also described how they had been empowered, how their perspective on their life and role as women was changing: *"We are working on getting freedom for women and more space for women to work and make decisions, as well as speaking up about what we think. Women should have a voice, and they should be heard."* (girls, Nabaa CAC) Despite the changes, girls from Nabaa expressed that they were afraid of being women in their community. They explained that the programme had not decreased their fear and anxiety because only the group members had changed but not the society and community they live in.

Taboos have decreased, children can talk in front of adults as reported, e.g. by the CACs in Kenya, Tanzania, the Philippines and Bangladesh. Some among the older female members in Guatemala expressed that they were now able to speak in front of elders which was seen as a success in a patriarchal system. However, in Guatemala, a need was identified to work more with traditional leaders since these were still advising parents to send their children to work in towns. One challenge mentioned was the lack of material and data in indigenous language.

⁷ Since the information was confidential only the region is named.

⁸ Since the information was confidential only the region is named.

Partner organisations adopting across their work higher levels of child participation

The majority of partner organisations interviewed expressed that the project's tools had a significant impact on them. While they had sought to practice a child-friendly approach before, they felt they lacked the tools to put this into practice. The T2T tools now allowed many partners to put into practice a child-friendly approach with significantly higher levels of participation. The evaluation showed that this change among the majority of partners was transferred to many other activities not linked to the project. It transformed how they relate to the children, and it has created space to allow children to increasingly participate in decision making instead of decisions being taken for them, e.g., this covered issues as choice of snacks, meals, games, defining advocacy issues and action, but also participating in strategic planning as explained by AfCiC.

Some partners (e.g. AMURT, CWISH) felt that there was a discrepancy between the project's desire to strengthen child participation and the pressure to accomplish the predefined session plans. They expressed that the session plans did not give sufficient space to children, pushing them to work on questions and tasks without giving sufficient time.

Certain advocacy activities creating risk for CAC-members

In several cases, children have voiced concerns that they did not feel sufficiently protected or supported in their advocacy activities. They feel exposed in their communities with limited or no backing. Learning about their rights, children are highly motivated to act also on behalf of other children. Therefore, advocacy activities in many groups go beyond the official activity that has been part of the T2T programme, which include a step of risk management. Members see issues and act as a group or individuals spontaneously. For example, a young girl in the community of WCY's Homabay-CAC was raped and murdered. Although the community was aware of the perpetrator, no one acted. Therefore, the CAC-members decided to put tape over their mouths and demonstrate at the local police. After realising that this had no effect, they addressed the authorities a level higher outside their community and demonstrated again. Upon their return to the community, they were met with significant hostility and felt rather unprotected. In other cases, CACs or individual members took the initiative to talk to parents of working children, employers or drug addicts. Members of TAWLAE-CAC reported that they even dared to visit a household that was known and feared for its witchcraft. Members of CWISH-CAC and CSID-CAC as well as staff of the organisations expressed concerns and suggested to create a structure that would provide protection. Most suggested to involve parents; others suggested Alumni or other adults that were concerned about working children. A positive example was reported by children and staff in rural Ethiopia. Since the mothers of the CAC-members were organised in Self-Help-Groups, which had a strong position in the community, these were able to provide the CAC with a platform to safely convey messages to the community. Mothers ensured the protection of their children within the community and supported their matters. Kaugmaon staff emphasised, based on their many years of experience with working children, they much more involve parents in their projects and expressed this also should be practised for T2T in future.

Other unintended effects:

- Corporal punishment decreased in schools (FC-CAC, TAWLAE-CAC).
- Teachers have become more flexible in how they approach child labour (FC-CAC, CWISH-CAC).
- Girls in the Philippines preferred not to become members of the CAC because they felt they would become more visible as child labourers and consequently expected to be labelled and bullied as garbage collectors in school. While more girls had participated in the first phase of the project, few were willing to become formal members of the CAC so that Kaugmaon only managed to have three female members when forming the CAC.

- Awareness among parents has increased that child labour is not suitable for their children, and they feel bad about making their children work. However, parents feel that they have no other option since they need their children's income to survive and therefore continue sending their children to the street (Balkan Sunflowers-CAC, CESIP-CAC, CEIPA-CAC). Parents in Guatemala have expressed that they highly value education and hope their children could finish school. Still, the dire situation of the family required all family members to look for income and contribute.

5.1.4 *The usefulness of the project interventions for the children's interests (Relevance)*

Looking across the different CACs visited during the evaluation, significant differences occur between the situation of working children. Despite these major differences, members of all CACs that were part of the evaluation have clearly expressed that T2T has been relevant to them.

Interestingly, the project's significance for children can partially be contributed to intended but also its positive unintended benefits, e.g. the substantial contributions to social skills, and the group becoming an identification point and surrogate family.

Relevance as a representation of working children:

- In several countries, working children have no representation (e.g. Lebanon, Tanzania, Ethiopia), in Bangladesh specifically working children with disabilities have no representation.
- For all contexts, **relevant data on working children** has been lacking. T2T tools allowed to document their issues, enabling partners and CACs to have data to present and discuss their case, giving working children a voice.
- Enabling partners to have a more explicit **profile in focusing on working children**. Among the partners, few partners as MANTHOC already had a very clear identity of and focus on working children. Other partners previously had an approach of working with the children's parents and through the project started shifting towards a much stronger working children focus. For example, CSID through the programme, established a new organisational focus on working children. Overall, the programme has contributed to increasing local interest and commitment to supporting working children.

Awareness of being part of a global project

- Throughout the life of the project, CAC-members were excited to discover that their problems were a global issue, and they were not the only tackling the challenge. They expressed that to some extent, they felt comforted by knowing children were exposed to and suffering from the same issues. At the same time, it increased their motivation to advocate for their rights.
- Girls from AMURT-CAC explained that being part of a global project enabled them seeing their own experience in the context of other realities.
- It meant something to children to be part of a global initiative. It contributed positively to their identity of being a member of the CAC. Practically, the identity of being part of a global initiative differed significantly. The Rural CAC in Ethiopia was significantly less aware of the global project than groups in Lebanon or the Philippines with much better access to communication.

Relevance to changing the actual situation of a member

- In a context as rural Ethiopia, the project has made a significant impact on the working situation of its individual members and other children in the community. The children

usually work for their parents, and the CAC has been able to advocate for and achieve changes that now allow all members and also other children in the community to attend school, experience less violence and have work schedules adapted to their education needs. In other contexts, e.g. Nepal, the CAC has not been able to impact the employers' attitudes or behaviours. Consequently, resulting in no change in the child's working situation. However, children and their teachers have still expressed that the project has been highly relevant to them. Children have expressed that increased communication skills have allowed them to improve their school performance significantly, one alumnus will now have the opportunity to go for further education – seen by him as an opportunity to escape the poverty cycle. Across all partners, it has emerged that being a member of a CAC has had a positive impact on the children, no matter whether they had been able to change the working situation or not. The reason is that T2T facilitated strengthening social skills and also, partners have integrated T2T into their programming, allowing CAC-members to benefit (e.g. promotion of talent at WCY, access to vocational training, facilitation of scholarships). Participating in the CACs has given many members social and leadership skills which they are able to apply in different contexts.

- The male youth from Nabaa-CAC explained that they did not expect to be able to fully realise their aspirations through the project, e.g. getting the right for education. However, they believed that they were contributing to achieving change for their younger siblings by lobbying for education, allowing other children to achieve what they had hoped to achieve for themselves. They mostly see no opportunity how they could get (back) into education, which they believe is the key to long-term change for working children. However, Nabaa's programme still provided them with opportunities for vocational training.
- The partner organisation's other programmes and networking abilities significantly determine what opportunities CAC members are given.

Who supported the CACs?

After CAC-members had identified T2T's impact, they were asked to name the actors they believed had contributed to achieving these changes. CACs then defined whether these actors had been of high (3), medium (2) or low (1) relevance to them.

Not surprisingly, partner organisations facilitating the CACs emerged as the main supporters. Partners were explicitly named by 64% of the groups and received the maximum score for being relevant⁹. CAC-members valued the significant role partner organisations played as expressed by MANTHOC-CAC members: *"They organized everything, all the workshops and meetings and are always ready to help out if we have any problems or need help. They also help to establish contacts so that we can talk to some authorities. We feel valued by them."* Support from partner organisations was received in many areas covering moral and psycho-social support to practical aspects as providing space to meet or providing opportunities for training. Concerning relevance, partners received the maximum rating.

⁹ The 64% stated may be misleading. In some cases, it seemed that CAC members assumed that the question was not about the partner organisations and therefore did not name them. Throughout other exercises, all CACs had expressed and valued the role of the partner organisations, without exception.

Table 5: Support to CACs as viewed by its members

Actors Category	Frequency - how often category was named	How many CACs mentioned category?	% How many CACs mentioned category?	Average score for relevance 1=low, 3=high
Partner Organisation	13	9	64	3,00
Family	9	8	57	2,25
School	9	5	35	2,22
Other NGOs	5	5	35	2,60
Government	4	4	28	2,67
Community	6	4	28	2,40
Friends	3	3	21	1,67
Other children	3	3	21	3,00
Employers	1	1	7	2,00
Scouts	1	1	7	1,00
Others	7	6	42	2,10

The second most named category of support was family, named by 57% of the groups. The type of support provided was very different. In several cases, children were glad that parents supported them by simply giving their consent for participation (e.g. Kaugmaon-CAC), others were glad their parents encouraged them to continue participating (Balkan Sunflowers-CAC), other children also received some financial support to be able to attend (e.g. for transport, AfCiC-CAC). Some CSID-CAC members required a significant commitment of their parents to allow them to participate in the CACs. Without the parents dropping them off at meetings and collecting them again, certain children with disabilities would not have been able to participate. While in most cases, support was focused on consent and logistics, in some exceptional cases (FC-CAC and CESIP-CAC), parents supported children in their advocacy activities. Especially mothers in rural Ethiopia who were organised in Self-Help-Groups¹⁰ provided their children with a platform to share and supported them on the issues of early marriage and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). Children expressed that they would appreciate more support from their parents, e.g., male youth from Nabaa-CAC expressed that they would value if their parents would encourage them and tell them they are on the right path, they believe this would reinforce them to stay on the path for a longer time. Members of AMURT-CAC expressed that parental support would be so important and make such a difference for them since they had significant control over what they were allowed to do and had a role in choosing or ending their jobs. Considering the limited support received from the parents, it is not surprising that with an average score of 2.25 the relevance is lower than for partner organisation.

Schools and other NGOs come third because each was named for their support by 35% of the groups. For the schools, the collaboration between CWISH-CACs and schools stood out and was different from all other cases. CAC meetings took place at the schools during school hours, the only time CAC-members working as domestic workers were able to participate. Support was given by providing opportunity to participate in activities, in managing resources, through teachers support in planning and conducting CAC activities in school. In Kenya and Ethiopia (AfCiC-CAC and FC-CAC) CACs were given the space to meet at schools. AfCiC-CAC members also reported that several schools provided scholarships for them. In three cases, CAC members valued the moral support they received from their schools. Support from other NGOs was quite diverse; in some cases, ongoing collaborations with other NGOs benefitted T2T

¹⁰ Through a community development programme supported by KNH

activities. For example, Nabaa has a collaboration with Save the Children strongly focusing on child rights. In other cases, as WCY's Homabay-CAC received funding from local NGOs supporting their activities.

CAC-members only in a few cases saw that the government was supporting them and their cause. AfCiC-CAC received some funding through the government, while WCY's Homabay-CAC valued that the local chief provided moral support and helped with enforcing laws. Kaugmaon-CAC-members valued the support provided through local authorities to be able to return to school. With an average score of 2,67 the relevance of the government-related support was rated high. The youth from Nabaa-CAC expressed the potential they saw of increased involvement of the government: *"If there is good communication between the CAC and the government, then the government can put out official laws and force their implementation which would improve the status of working children. If the government sets the laws, then this would be great support because it could become something that can change children's rights and then Lebanon can be an example of how they are defending working children."*

5.1.5 *What is the potential future of the CACs*

Since this section is part of the findings, the perspectives and views of the interviewees are represented here. The issue is further explored in the discussion and reflection below.

CAC members are very clear in expressing that they want the CACs **not only to be sustained but expanded**. They believe it is unfair that only a few are allowed to participate, they do not like the idea that their friends cannot become members, although the CAC would also be highly relevant to them. This frequently results in jealousy in potentially strained relationships. (e.g. TAWLAE-CAC, AfCiC-CAC, FC-CAC, CWISH-CAC). Members also believe that a continuation of the CACs is critical for their own future: *"We expect to continue to belong to the CAC group because it develops our skills, increases our security and knowledge of our rights."* (children, CESIP-CAC) They fear their thoughts, and voices would not be heard after this project, because it has given them the space to be able to talk about their issues like it hadn't happened before girls from CEIPA-CAC elaborated.

Several CACs as well as partners (e.g. FC-CAC, CWISH-CAC, WCY-CACs, CSID-CAC) see a strategic value in increasing the number of CACs, allowing them to **increase their influence. CAC-members believe their voice would have more weight**.

The continued engagement of Alumni in facilitating CACs (CWISH-CAC, Kaugmaon-CAC) or even starting their own groups (WCY-CAC) indicate the relevance CAC-members see in their groups. It also represents a critical potential for the future of the CACs.

With some few exceptions, CAC-members want to **meet more regularly**; those living nearby were suggesting to meet weekly, others at least monthly. In several cases, CACs are already meeting significantly more often than the scheduled meetings (e.g. AMURT-CAC, FC-CAC). FC-CAC meets weekly at the school which all members attend. TAWLAE members raised the issue that due to distances and their work obligations, they were unlikely to be able to continue participating in all meetings if the frequency was increased.

Some of the Latin American partners were facing a different challenge: the continuation of the CACs seemed **logistically challenging** due to the movement and migration of working children. In these contexts, maintaining a constant group seemed a challenge. Children in Nepal (CWISH-CAC) suggested to systematically integrate the CACs with the schools, having a representative from each. Partners in Bangladesh, Nepal, Guatemala and the Philippines saw opportunities to integrate CACs with their governments' ongoing efforts to develop structures and processes for increasing child participation.

Given the fact that the project only provided very limited financial support to facilitate the groups and partners having to use their staff time and in some cases resources to run the CACs, they showed very

capacities to sustain the existing groups or even expand these. While some would struggle to sustain the CACs (e.g. AMURT, CWISH), others saw opportunities of integrating the approach with other projects and even expanding in future (e.g. FC, CSID).

CACs offered members very diverse additional opportunities, depending on the embedding of the CACs into the ongoing work of partners and the nature of their other work. Children benefitted from being able to attend partners' community centres and their programmes (e.g. Balkan Sunflowers, AMURT), scholarships for education (e.g. WCY, AfCiC), psychosocial support (e.g. AMURT), additional training courses (e.g. Nabaa), training on and facilitation of income-generating activities (e.g. AfCiC) the identification and systematic support of talents (e.g. WCY) and many more.

A major learning that emerged from the evaluation was that the future of the CACs is something very context-specific, depending on the partner's capacities and ongoing work, as well as opportunities local and national governments were providing, or factors as the geographical spread of CAC-members. Each country and context provide different opportunities, and each partner has different resources and limitations for defining the future of CACs.

Looking into the future, it may be important to reflect on strategies of how CACs will be able to fund initiatives. In Guatemala (CEIPA-CAC), children had ideas for awareness campaigns (e.g. producing a video), but there was no funding to implement what they had envisioned.

Partners have strongly emphasised that **planning for the future of CACs and specifically their sustainability** should take place right from the beginning of the next phase to avoid ending up in problems when entering the final year. Children and partners suggested that the following aspects are critical to cover:

- What will the future legal identity of the CACs be?
- How should CACs from different partners within the same country, region or globally connect?
- Do working children need to do all the advocacy work or who will support? Is it fair for working children to do all and bear the burden?
- How could CACs better deal with expectations, especially where advocacy activities are unlikely to bring change within a short time or may even result in no change at all?
- Who will facilitate CACs in future?
 - A current challenge is that many facilitators have limited capacity to facilitate CACs since work is done either voluntarily or in addition to ongoing responsibilities. Therefore, it usually represents additional work for facilitators.
 - Children and Alumni – some are doing this already. They either co-facilitate with the trained facilitators or independently facilitate the programme allowing to reach more children. In some cases, children have suggested they could facilitate in future, e.g. FC-CAC-members suggested they could replicate the sessions for other children in their school.
 - However, for being sufficiently equipped to facilitate, children voiced the need for additional training and monitoring. An important issue to discuss is what level of capacities any facilitator would require, including leadership, facilitation, psycho-social aspects, active listening.
- Several partners have voiced challenges with implementing the session plans. For example, AMURT and CWISH facilitators experienced that it had not been possible to cover the content in one session as suggested and budgeted. While the T2T material allows for some flexibility and

encourages contextualisation, facilitators suggested that it was necessary to have a contextualised action plan, have content that can be flexibly integrated in individual sessions, summer camp, or other set-ups.

5.2 Findings related to Facilitators

5.2.1 To what extent did the T2T project influence the participants' understanding, approach, and work with working children (Impact, Sustainability)?

T2T has had a significant impact on the trained facilitators and their organisations. This section focuses on the impact on the facilitators. The following table illustrates how T2T has impacted the facilitators.

Table 6: T2T's impact on facilitators

T2T's impact on facilitators (body mapping tool)	Frequency
Increased awareness of child labour and knowledge of child right abuses	26
Improved teaching skills	23
Informing others about and advocating for child rights	17
Positive relations – with children	13
Improved communication skills	12
Making connections outside their organisation	12
Access to toolkits	11
Increased motivation to help working children	10
Expanding work and focus of organisation projects	9
Positive emotions	8
Involving children in decision making	6
Other	11

The most common impact on facilitators has been an **increased awareness of child labour and knowledge of child right abuses**. *"The children face challenges, and through T2T we better understand their concerns, what they go through. That way, we feel more empathic and have become more caring"*. (facilitators, Balkan Sunflowers-CAC¹¹). *"Previously, even with interaction with working children, we didn't know the differences between various types of child labour and how to work with these children. We have been able to get a better understanding, e.g. about harmful work, and are able to differentiate it from work that helps the child to grow. We have learnt this by using the toolkit to interact with working children. Our work has become much more accommodative towards working children."* (facilitators, AfCiC). Facilitators across all partners valued that the training and the T2T tool-set allowed them to work in a very different way with children, enabling them to listen and learn much deeper about the situation of working children. Consequently, their projects and activities have become more effective to support these. Closely related to gaining deeper insights into the situation of working children is an **increased motivation of facilitators to help working children** (8th most frequently named change).

The second most named impact was **improved teaching skills**. FC facilitators explained that *"T2T helped us to develop child-friendly facilitation skills - for instance how to develop consent, identify children for*

¹¹ Facilitators are from Balkan Sunflowers and tdh Kosovo since they are working collaboratively on the T2T activities.

training based on their age, choosing a suitable time for meetings, selecting safe venues and providing training using play methods. Before we used a lecture type of training which was boring." The toolkits, in addition to the training, were a key factor in enabling facilitators to adopt a new teaching approach. Kaugmaon facilitators illustrated *"The toolkits were easy to follow. The facilitators were guided accordingly in the process as they have the toolkits. It is child-friendly in the sense that children respond well to some of the exercises. The facilitators easily build rapport to the children through these exercises. Thus, as a result, children easily open up and communicate their feelings and thinking."* The learning included very practical aspects as described by CWISH facilitators: *"Decorations in the facilitation room made the room child friendly. Children were excited to be in the meeting after seeing the child-friendly setup. This helped facilitator to conduct session more easily."* It also helped facilitators to redefine their own role as CESIP facilitators explained: *"We learn to self-regulate ourselves as adults to promote the autonomy of all participants. We have always worked towards empowering children and youth, but with these tools and this kind of activities we had to reposition ourselves as adults that accompany the process and not try to lead it."*

Closely related to the improved teaching skills are several other changes named by the facilitators as **improved communication skills** of facilitators (fifth-most named change), the **access to T2Ts toolkit** (seventh-most named change) and **involving children in decision making** (eleventh-most named change). Involving in decision making includes aspects as choosing games or food but also opportunities to engage in programmatic decisions at the organisational level as reported by AfCiC facilitators.

The third most frequently named change is **informing others about and advocating for child rights**. With more in-depth insights into the situation of working children through the use of the T2T tools and having developed teaching and communication skills have resulted in facilitators more actively engaging in advocacy for working children. This may be about educating children, parents and employers locally, targeting politicians and authorities at the local and national level, as well as contributing to global advocacy through T2T. The data generated through T2T was a critical enabler to share information.

The fourth most often named impact were **improved relationships with the children**. AMURT facilitators described that using the tools and sessions provided by T2T, the facilitators *"felt a bond with the children on a very high level"*. The T2T tools and approach have enabled facilitators to engage with children differently, allowing them to see them in a very different light. A TAWLAE facilitator pointed out: *"I had wrong perceptions, I learned they can behave and express their ideas"*. A change in the way how facilitators relate to the children has resulted in significant changes among the children. A Balkan Sunflowers-CAC facilitator described *"We built trust with children so that we would understand them better, identify their concerns. The children trust us more now. In the beginning, they were hesitant. And now they are freer to share their opinions, and they do show more interest."*

The fifth most frequently named change by facilitators was making connections outside their organisation. The training has allowed facilitators to develop international connections to peers, learning from their experiences. Facilitators value and still use the WhatsApp group to stay connected across countries and for getting support. Being part of T2T has given several organisations a new role and standing in their country. They are acknowledged as having expertise on working children and are invited to meetings and conferences dealing with the issue (e.g. Kaugmaon, WCY, AfCiC). CSID reported that being part of T2T enabled them to establish contacts to different NGOs. AfCiC and Kaugmaon facilitators reported about being able to take influence at political processes they did not have access to in their country before.

Overall, T2T has transformed the awareness for working children's realities among the majority of partner organisations and facilitators, specifically the challenges they are facing and the role work plays in their lives. Partner organisations and their facilitators have adopted a new participatory approach in

working with children. Partners and facilitators, who were hardly engaged in advocacy before, have now adopted it as a key component of their work for improving the situation of working children.

5.2.2 *Are the newly learned skills from trainings also used in other contexts? (Effectiveness, Sustainability)*

AfCiC facilitators elaborated how the skills gained from T2T are not limited to CAC-meetings but have impacted the way how they operate as an organisation: *“T2T influenced us to have a participatory framework when planning for other projects. We learned in the training that children are at the centre of our work. For example, initially, when there was a call for proposals, we sat, downloaded the necessary forms and did our work as a team. But now following the training, we call stakeholders, including the children. We sit down with them and ask what they want or what they do not want to be included in the proposal, how to do it and then agree and assign tasks and responsibilities.”* Facilitators from most partners have explained how T2T had changed their perceptions and thinking about children in general and how to relate to and work with children and specifically with working children. Working with a participatory approach has transformed the relationship with children. In the discussions about the sustainability of T2T's impact facilitators explained that what they had learned was not limited to the project anymore but has become their general way of thinking and working. They did not see how they would go back to how they have been doing things before T2T. FC is integrating the approach into projects not linked to T2T. The broad spectrum of partners also regarding their previous engagement with working children results in very different levels of impact on the partner organisations.

Section 5.3.1 and specifically Table 7 (p.47) illustrate the extent T2T has had an impact on partner organisations and has been used in the partners' different programmes.

5.2.3 *The appropriateness and quality of the training, especially application and documentation of the results (Effectiveness)*

In general, the training of facilitators was named as one of T2T's major highlights. Training targeted leadership, as well as facilitators. The rationale was a deliberate approach to ensure that the approach would have support at the leadership level and would create sufficient support for facilitators to apply T2T's approach. The significance and relevance of involving leadership is clearly visible in section 5.3.1 (p.46). In this section, the focus will be on facilitators, some of whom may also have leadership positions in their organisations. All facilitators were very positive about the training; they highly valued the tools they were trained on. The vast majority of facilitators interviewed showed a high level of ownership of T2T principles and the project's approach. A strength of T2T and key factor for the success of the training has been its approach of combining training in a workshop setting with immediate application in the work context. A WhatsApp group and continued contact to the T2T team has ensured the support required for implementation. The tool guides include detailed session plans in addition to the background theory. Facilitators have highly valued the tools for practically implementing what they had learnt.

Some facilitators saw the need to adapt the session plans to their specific context. However, they felt that they did not have sufficient capacities to adapt the sessions to the specific context, e.g. to age, time available (e.g. AMURT, CWISH).

There are many indicators for the **appropriateness of the training provided**. Training has led to implementation among all partners covered in this evaluation. **Tools and new skills allowed to build confidence in CAC-members. Facilitators are** better able to understand children and their situation; they love children more than before and can facilitate a programme that CAC members highly value. After being trained, trainers have returned to their home organisations and have trained other staff. All

have applied the tools and skills they had been trained on as part of the T2T modules they have been facilitating with the CACs.

One challenge identified by partner organisations was the attrition of experienced and trained staff and volunteers. FC reported that increasing government salaries in Ethiopia have led to significant competition so that they had to be very strategic in identifying the most committed staff to be trained. On the final day of data collection in Nepal, the contract of one of the two trained facilitators ended, resulting in a loss of T2T-related capacities for CWISH.

One general challenge the majority of facilitators were raising (e.g. AMURT, CWISH, CSID, FC) is the issue that any work for T2T generally has been additional work for them. It was work they had to do on top of their regular workload. T2T's budget did not cover any salaries or financial compensation for facilitators. Facilitating the CACs required significantly more efforts and time than facilitators had expected. Several raised the issue of documentation taking much time from the facilitators after the CAC meetings or it even was a process that involved several members of the staff in being completed.

Documentation

The documentation of CAC sessions is the only data produced for T2T's global advocacy work. At the same time, the data allows for monitoring progress. The T2T team has expressed that they frequently struggle with either incomplete data or data which does not have the required level of detail. The team is aware that many partners experience challenges with the documentation and experience it as a burden. Several facilitators have complained that the project involves too much documentation, too many details were required, and some of the data collection seemed redundant to them. Especially volunteer facilitators and those without support in note-taking find the current practice challenging since they needed up to one full day after the meeting to complete the documentation. Partners with a specific person dedicated to note-taking (e.g. Nabaa, CWISH) felt that the workload was less of a challenge; however, the Nabaa note-taker and facilitator elaborated that they felt unsure how to fill-in several parts of the document. Facilitators from Balkan Sunflowers-CAC¹² faced the challenge that when sessions were adapted, the documentation format did not fit anymore. Partners frequently asked whether that much data was required. It seemed that many facilitators were not clear about how their notes would be used and what the relevance of the different components of their reports was. While facilitators highly valued T2T's products, which the T2T team develops from their data, many did not seem to understand the link between their note-taking and the products.

Few partners seemed to have made any use of the documentation themselves. AMURT facilitators expressed that they realised the value of the notes when they resumed the work with their CAC after a long break. One additional challenge mentioned by some partners was staff rotation. Note-taking is often a role allocated to volunteers who may leave after a short while. Partners dealing with mostly illiterate children pointed to the issue that all they had after a CAC meeting were drawings. Sometimes it was challenging to reconstruct the information which then facilitators may misinterpret when it comes to documentation resulting in inaccuracies.

¹² This included Balkan Sunflowers and tdh Kosovo facilitators, since both organisations are collaborating in Kosovo on the T2T activities.

5.3 Findings – stakeholders including partner organisations

5.3.1 Stakeholders to whom the project interventions were relevant and in what way? (Relevance)

T2T has been operating at different levels, from local to global. For better understanding its relevance, three perspectives will be explored: T2Ts relevance for partners, its relevance and the involvement of stakeholders by the partners and finally the relevance of the programme at global level, mainly linked to the work of the project team.

T2Ts relevance to partners

T2T has intentionally worked with a broad spectrum of partners. Therefore, great variety can be observed among these: they range from networks or organisations mostly focusing on advocacy to organisations that mostly have a development background. While some are professional development organisations, others are completely voluntary entities. Partners show significant differences in terms of size and programming. For all partners covered in this evaluation, partners have always integrated T2T with their ongoing programming and activities. T2T was deliberately created as an add-on and not a stand-alone project. Therefore, its actual implementation is significantly shaped by the nature of the partners' programming. Examples are the Media club of AMURT, vocational training offered by Nabaa, legal and counselling support by CWISH, WCY facilitating scholarships especially for talented children, AfCiC and Kaugmaon supporting working children's' families to generate income, CSID's focus on children with disabilities. One example is CEIPA's practice of connecting and integrate working children into their educational support actions. This allows CAC members complete their studies in elementary school and enter secondary school. CEIPA has direct interventions in places of work, for example, at the local markets, with teachers that help and teach the children during their work breaks.

Despite the diversity of partners, T2T has been complementary to their ongoing work. The benefit was visible in both ways. The partner's work has significantly benefitted as it will be described in more detail below, but also much of the programme's positive impact is complemented or driven by the type and nature of the partners' work. CAC members, for example, have benefitted from scholarships and access to education, vocational training, the promotion of talents, the provision of critical psychosocial support. Through the integration of T2T with the partners' existing programmes, many CAC members have additional opportunities that positively impact their development and future. However, these opportunities may not be sufficient or relevant to all CAC members. An important observation has been that not only T2T benefits the partner organisations, but the different existing programmes and competencies of partners significantly contribute to the success of T2T.

For several partners, the involvement in the T2T project has led to a shift or expansion of their work towards (more) targeting working children (e.g. CSID, Nabaa, FC). *"T2T helped to focus on working children, their rights and issues. Tools generated the information basis. Before, we had little information about working children, their needs and specific situation. Using the T2T tools has allowed us to generate significant information and learn about their situation. In turn, it has now allowed us to start teaching children about their rights and support them."* (management, Nabaa) WCY management expressed that T2T is seen as a valuable "label" that has strengthened the reputation and standing of their organisation, showing their competence on the matter of working children.

In general, partners highly regarded T2T. Major reasons included:

- The tools were seen as highly effective in generating valuable insights into the situation of working children and producing a wealth of data that can be used for advocacy and helps to get a much deeper understanding of the children's situation. This has allowed many partners to better adapt their programming to the children's needs and improve relationships. Participating

in T2T supported Kaugmaon to enable children to participate in campaign activities. While Kaugmaon had been involved in child protection, T2T enabled them to have a more effective approach. The tools allowed to put faces and real stories to child labour. Allowing the CAC members to speak to the media had a significant impact on popularising the issue.

- Several partners explained that in the past, they had always aimed at being child friendly. However, only T2T's approach and set of tools had now allowed them to move from theory to practice, primarily through enabling child participation. Partners described the tools as innovative, effective and fun to facilitate with the kids. They emphasised that they would not have had the resources to develop such tools themselves.
- The training and tools have created valuable competencies among partners. T2T has trained facilitators and a representative from their management, who in most cases have then trained other staff and transferred their new skills. *"T2T has enhanced and enriched the approach of our teachers and created a change in dealing with youth. It has helped us to think better about which vocations we want to put the children in. When understanding what the children are going through, we can make better choices in designing our programmes."* (management, AMURT)
- T2T has boosted the ongoing work of partners. *"We have been working with the municipal level authorities prior to T2T. We used the T2T platform to increase the participation of children and youth and strengthen their relationship with the municipalities. This has resulted in the local government approving a municipal public policy for children and adolescents "Child labour axis". We incorporated input from the T2T consultation process and facilitated focus groups with children, parents and local leaders where we used tools from the T2T toolkit".* (management, CEIPA)

Table 7: T2T's impact on partner's different branches (programmes) and core functions

Name of Partner	Total number of branches (programmes)	In how many branches has T2T been included?	% of branches T2T had an impact on	How many core functions did T2T have an impact on?
AfCiC	5	5	100%	3
AMURT	3	2	67%	2
CEIPA	3	3	100%	3
CESIP	4	4	100%	1
CSID	13	5	38%	5
CWISH	4	3	75%	2
FC	3	3	100%	2
Kaugmaon	5	5	100%	3
Nabaa	6	4	67%	3
TAWLAE	9	4	44%	4
tdh Kosovo ¹³	3	2	67%	0
WCY	6	6	100%	2
		Average	80%	2.5

¹³ tdh Lausanne in Kosovo works in cooperation with its local partner Balkan Sunflowers. Since only tdh Kosovo management staff was able to participate during data collection, results in the table refer to tdh Kosovo.

The table above shows to what extent T2T has had an impact on the different branches of the partner's work (most defined these as their different programmes) and to what extent it had an impact on core functions. Usually, the programme had an impact because partners had adopted T2T's approach and practices into their various branches.

Adoption and use of T2T tools and principles by partners:

All partners have expressed that the T2T tools and principles are highly relevant and can be used beyond specific T2T activities. Tools and principles were used and adapted to many different areas in their work, as explained by the CEIPA management above where these were used of adopting a municipal policy.

T2T tools and principles, according to the table above, were adopted and integrated across many branches of the partners. Not adopting the tools and principles in certain programmes often was due to the nature of the programme. For example, partners did not adopt the tools and principles in their relief programmes or other programmes that were not related to or perceived as suitable for the T2T components. Partners also expressed that the tools and principles had different levels of relevance for their programmes, so the level of integration varies.

Significant differences were observed in how partners adopted tools and principles. For some, especially smaller partners as AfCiC, it was an opportunity to adopt a new paradigm of working with children, which is now reflected in all their programming and even has influenced the way they do their strategic planning. Other organisations already had a similar paradigm in place but T2T added the value of having an effective approach and tools of working in a participatory way with children.

Many partners struggle with the limited resources allocated to facilitate T2T activities, with no provision for staff. However, they still fully engage because they highly valued T2T for its approach, tools and data. While in most cases T2T plays a minimal role for partners in terms of funding, partners have adopted T2T's principles and tools: on average, across 80% of all their programmes. Some partners have taken it even further, with adopting child participation and child rights in their strategic planning and management, giving children significant space to participate in decision making.

Involvement of local stakeholders supporting to achieve T2T-related impact

The number of stakeholders partners have named, who are contributing to achieving T2T related impact, differs significantly. The range is between 2 and 14, with an average of 6.25.

Table 8: Number of stakeholders per partner related to T2T impact

Partner organisation	Number of actors who supported achieving T2T-related impact
tdh Kosovo ¹⁴	2
CEIPA	5
CESIP	5
CSID	5
FC	5
Kaugmaon	5
Nabaa	5
CWISH	6
AfCiC	7
AMURT	8
TAWLAE	8
WCY	14
Average	6.25

Further, significant differences can be observed between the type of supporting stakeholders and the number of partners relating to these in the context of implementing T2T.

Table 9: Type of stakeholders supporting partners in achieving T2T related objectives

Category of supporter	Frequency of Category	How many partners have this category of support?
Parents	12	9
Other partner organisations, mostly CBOs, LNGOs and NGOs	13	7
Local authorities	9	7
Schools	11	6
Government agency (national)	13	5
Community	6	5
Employers	5	4
Media	3	2
Other	3	3

¹⁴ tdh Lausanne in Kosovo works in cooperation with its local partner Balkan Sunflowers. Since only tdh Kosovo management staff was able to participate during data collection, results in the table refer to tdh Kosovo.

Roles of different stakeholders have already been described in detail above (see pages 38ff), based on the perspective of CAC members. Therefore, descriptions are short; additional details are only provided where the partners gave additional relevant information. Parents are named by most of the partners as supportive stakeholders. However, their role does not go far beyond allowing children to participate in CAC meetings. Several partners have pointed to the potential of better integrating parents because they often play a critical role in deciding whether children work and the type of jobs they get involved in.

Collaborations with other partners mostly include CBOs, local and international NGOs. These are a source of additional funding, they may work on specific issues together, or children may be referred for specific services to other partners which the T2T partner cannot provide. AMURT collaborates with a local NGO that is more experienced with advocacy at the national level as a strategy to ensure the CAC's advocacy activity can be implemented.

Local authorities are seen as critical stakeholders by partners and are attributed to have a variety of roles. In some contexts, partners see a major task in mobilising and educating local authorities to become more active in addressing the rights of children and specifically working children. In other contexts, local authorities are already seen as partners in child protection, where space for child protection has been created, and authorities (including the police) are dealing with cases of child abuse. Partners here see their role in influencing child protection priorities and strengthening the participation of children.

Schools are critical partners for several CACs by providing meeting space. In addition, some schools provide a platform for CAC members to share what they have learned and educate children in schools.

Government agencies at the national level are seen as important stakeholders since these have significant control over policies impacting working children (e.g. legislation regarding access to education). They provide services to children that are facing challenges. The majority of partners only had limited interaction with national-level government.

Partners define a number of actors within the communities as critical stakeholders. These differ between the contexts and include: affluent community members providing financial support, community health or other resource persons who were acting as a link to the community, faith groups and self-help groups providing space and protection for the children.

Only a small minority of partners has named employers and media as supportive stakeholders.

Relevance to partners at global level

The T2T project team has named a total of 16 stakeholders, of which ten are considered national and six global stakeholders. The stakeholders include UNICEF, several trade unions, international NGOs and advocacy initiatives.

T2T involved stakeholders such as UNICEF to learn and exchange on how to advocate for child participation in the ILO context. At the same time, T2T aims at influencing child participation practices at the highest political levels. For example, UNICEF has invited T2T to share on this matter. T2T has developed a joint policy brief in cooperation with Young Lives.

A significant number of T2Ts relationships are centred around the participation in key events as advocacy opportunities. A large number of contacts were centred around the IV. Global Conference on child labour. The project has either sought the support of stakeholders to participate in the global conference or to have the opportunity to present at a side-event, after participation in the main event had been declined. This included contacts to trade unions and international NGOs. Many of these contacts were

focused on the specific issue and remained limited to it. This explains that many of T2T's relationships were focused on a specific issue (seven). The same number of contacts are irregular contacts (seven), while T2T has regular contact with two civil society stakeholders (Young Lives and Die Sternsinger).

Other examples where stakeholders were critical for T2T's participation in events was the support of Child Rights Connect for the 30 Years Child Rights Convention celebrations at the UN in Geneva.

5.3.2 *Frequency, success and sustainability of contact with local, regional, national or global decision-makers (Impact, Sustainability)*

Contacts T2T partner contacts to local, regional and national decision-makers

Usually, T2T partners establish and manage contacts with decision-makers at the local, regional and national level. Depending on the context and the characteristics of the partner, contacts with decision-makers vary significantly. Several countries already have or are currently establishing structures for an increased level of child participation, including Guatemala, Peru, Bangladesh, Nepal and the Philippines. These opportunities are, for example in countries as Lebanon or Kosovo, non-existent. Where in place, these provide partners with opportunities to link CACs to structures facilitating child participation and engage with decision-makers. While some partners have been involved for many years with these structures for child participation (e.g. CESIP, CSID, Kaugmaon), others are at the stage of exploring how to link to these (CWISH is exploring how to link to Nepal's recently decentralised structures). Local and national political structures of an increasing number of countries in Latin America and Asia provide space for child participation. Many partners consider this as critical for institutionalising the CACs and the participation of working children. Besides the context, the programmatic portfolio and approach significantly determine their nature, level and frequency of their engagement with decision-makers. Partners as MANTHOC, CESIP, WCY or CSID have a long history of engaging with decision-makers at the local, regional and national level. Advocacy and strategically targeting decision-makers are part of their development approach. Other partners as AMURT or AfCiC have mostly operated at the local level, more focusing on a relief and development approach than advocacy. Therefore, existing contacts to decision-makers are mostly at the local level (e.g. school authorities), often for coordinating access to certain services for children. However, through their involvement with T2T, these partners have started establishing new links to decision-makers, which are relevant for the new advocacy initiatives. For example, AMURT has established and strengthened links to an NGO which is active in advocacy and has contacts to relevant decision-makers. AfCiC has started establishing links to decision-makers such as a local MP. Some partners have increased the frequency and intensity of contacts around advocacy activities. The data on working children they have created with T2T, according to partners, has been a great support in their relationships to decision-makers.

In the contexts where child participation is institutionalised, the potential for sustained relationships with decision-makers increases. Contacts cease to depend on the goodwill and initiative of individuals from both sides, partners and government levels.

T2T's project team's contacts to decision-makers at the national and global level

In numbers, the T2T team counts nine national and two international/global contacts to decision-makers. Given the goal of T2T to enable child participation at the IV Global Conference on the Sustained Eradication of Child Labour in Argentina in November 2017, it is not surprising that the main focus of the project team have been efforts to establish contacts to decision-makers at the ILO. When the ILO made a last-minute cancellation for the participation of two delegates from the CACs at the conference, the project team mobilised a significant number of decision-makers, mostly representing governments (e.g. Netherlands, Sweden, Brazil, Argentina, Canada), in order to at least enabling the presentation of the report at side-event. This allowed staff to present the children's perspectives in a side event.

The established linkages contributed to additional major opportunities for advocating for rights of working children and enabling their participation. Both events allowed CAC members to present their matters. In April 2018, two CAC representatives were invited to present their situation as working children at the Global Child Forum in Stockholm. Further, two CAC members were invited to talk about children's work at the 30 Years anniversary celebrations by the BMZ. The project's key hope for the

future is to achieve the participation of working children at the V Global Conference on Child Labour, which is scheduled to take place four years ahead of the 2025 deadline set by SDG target 8.7 to end child labour in all its forms.¹⁵

The T2T team has regular contacts to the ILO, the BMZ and the German Permanent Mission in Geneva. Contacts to the German Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Labour as well as to the governments of Argentina and the Netherlands have been irregular, mostly depending on the requirements of project activities. Contacts to representatives of several countries have been limited to mobilising support for presenting the report at the side-event of the IV Global Conference in Argentina.

The majority of these contacts are critical for achieving further progress on the representation and participation of working children at a global level. However, establishing, managing and sustaining these contacts depend heavily on a time-consuming process of regularly building and maintaining relationships, e.g. by showing presence in meetings. It has been a major challenge for T2T staff to balance this necessity with their programmatic responsibility, which has been significant, considering the number of countries and partners involved in the project.

5.3.3 *To assess the level of media coverage with relation to Time to Talk! and children's right to participate (Impact)*

T2T documents its media coverage on its website.¹⁶ It currently has 52 entries of a variety of print and online media coverage of T2T. While the vast majority of these 52 entries targets a local or national audience. However, some target the global level, including the latest entry (June 2020), a United Nations publication produced by the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children 2020. The document presents T2T as the first of ten case studies for child participation approaches to tackle violence. Equally targeting a global audience are an open democracy publication or the coverage of the project in Alliance 8.7's recent Update Newsletter. Among the publications geared more towards a national or local audience, the vast majority has been published in Germany. Indonesia and the Philippines stand out with several publications, while Switzerland, Austria, Guatemala, Argentina, and India are all represented with one publication.

¹⁵ Source: ILO https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_norm/---relconf/documents/meetingdocument/wcms_735901.pdf

¹⁶ Access T2T's media coverage on <https://www.time-to-talk.info/en/in-the-media/>

6. Conclusions

The conclusions are structured along the five OECD-DAC criteria relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability.

6.1 Relevance

T2T has been highly relevant to **CAC members**. In the vast majority of targeted countries, working children have no specific representation bringing them together, raising awareness about their rights and working towards improving their situation. T2T has transferred relevant knowledge to members. Self-confidence and have been significantly strengthened, giving CAC members new opportunities for their lives, often complementing partners' efforts.

Partners have integrated T2T into their ongoing work, creating additional benefits for the children, e.g. providing psycho-social support, reintegrating these into education, providing vocational training, identifying and fostering their talents. In combination with the impact of T2T, the project has had a very positive effect on the life of most CAC members. While local advocacy activities of children have shown mixed results, children have highly valued understanding their rights and being able to voice these.

The CACs have been popular among its members and seen as highly relevant for their context as working children. They feel that they have acquired highly relevant knowledge, developed strong social skills, improved relationships and have been involved in advocacy actions at different levels. They have an extremely high commitment to share their learning with peers and support these. Realising this high level of relevance, CAC members clearly voice that membership of CACs should not be limited since many more working children should have the same opportunity to benefit. Further, they believe that increasing the number of members and groups will strengthen their voice when advocating for their rights. Therefore, members express the need to continue and expand the CACs. The initial T2T concept did not envision to set-up a structure of CACs. The concept has evolved with the success and high relevance of the groups to its members. Consequently, an expansion strategy is not in place and the project and partners would need to address several challenges:

- Each country and partner have a specific context, requiring significant contextualization to develop a realistic and sustainable approach for expanding CACs.
- Currently, neither the project nor partners have a model for developing a sustainable structure of CACs.
- Limited availability and sometimes capacity of facilitators without a project budget for their salaries;
- Some children already feel overwhelmed with the responsibilities they have in the CACs, and it could be challenging for these to take over additional roles in supporting new groups. Many face time limitations, especially when balancing work and school. The issue should be taken-up at the project level, so that CAC members, partners and T2T can come up with respective guidance.

In summary, CACs have been so relevant and successful for working children that it has created the need to develop a sustainable concept for the continuation and expansion of the groups.

Facilitators highly value T2T's training as well as the tools they have been trained on. For many, the engagement with the project has been transformative to their approach of working with children and understanding their situation.

Partners have strongly emphasised the relevance of the project. Many expressed that the project provided them with effective tools and an approach to facilitate real child participation, something they had been struggling with prior. The process of using participatory tools to engage with working children and collect T2T data has been an eye-opener for many. The data created by the project is critical for many to support the case of working children. Approach and tools have been adopted across many of the partners' programmes. One partner explained that they would have valued to be more involved in the planning and decision making of T2T because it directly impacted their work. Creating a decision-

making body that includes partners, as well as representation of children, could ensure a higher level of participation in the design and management of the project ensuring to maintain its outstanding level of relevance and enabling high levels of ownership.

At the **global level**, the project has been relevant to give a voice to working children, based on a credible set of data, and increase the understanding of their situation. The project is filling a critical gap by acknowledging that working children are a reality and therefore need representation in matters of their concern. Working against major opposition, advocacy for the participation and the rights of working children at the global level remains highly relevant.

6.2 Effectiveness

T2T has been effective in facilitating the establishment of CACs which have not only generated valuable data on the perspective of working children but which have enabled its members to identify and implement their own advocacy activity. Achieving this has included developing knowledge among CAC members on their rights and a motivation to advocate for these. Through the project, many CAC members have developed impressive communication skills, allowing them to better engage in conversations and speak out for their own rights and the rights of other children. The participatory approach, as well as the sessions, have enabled a conscientisation process among CAC members. In combination, these have led to higher levels of self-confidence and high levels of motivation for advocacy action at individual and group level. In many cases, members have been empowered, evident in the examples set by the alumni. Members have an understanding of their right to participate in matters concerning their lives. Many have gained the knowledge and self-confidence to get involved and speak-out.

The success of the CACs is also evidence of the effective training of facilitators. Facilitators value the new knowledge and skills they have gained and feel much better equipped to facilitate children's groups.

Partners highly value the contribution of T2T to their work. The project has enabled partners who had not been active in advocacy to gain experiences in this field and integrate it into their work. Data generated by the project has provided them with a resource that is highly valued by local actors, has given credibility to their involvement with working children.

T2T has been successful in increasing opportunities and space for working children to be heard at the global level. This has been through generating and sharing data on working children and representing or even enabling CAC members to represent working children at relevant global events. While achievements have been remarkable, the project has not managed to fully achieve its main objective, the participation of working children in the IV Global Conference for Working Children. Progress on this specific matter has been challenging and slow, with significant opposition due to opposing paradigms on child labour. However, the project has managed to facilitate other high-level opportunities for working children to share their perspectives.

One of the most significant successes of the project has been the generation of data representing the voice of children. However, documentation, which is a key component of this success, has been a major challenge. T2T staff often felt that the documentation of CAC meeting, which were used to generate the data, lacked the desired level of detail. At the same time, facilitators felt overburdened with the documentation and believed that much of what was collected was repetitive. For the future, it will be critical to creating an understanding among those taking notes, how the information will be used and what for. Partners should understand the potential of the data they collect for their work and ideally be able to use the data also for their purposes.

6.3 Efficiency

While an economic analysis was beyond the scope of the evaluation, the project bears clear evidence to being highly efficient. Public awareness on the situation of working children and rights has been increased among parents, communities, and to some extent among employers and policy officials at different levels. Considering the number of partners and countries involved, the project has been operating with a very low budget, mobilising partner resources and synergies for implementing T2T. The

project has been strong in complementing partners' competencies and ongoing activities. Partners have adopted the approach across the many of their programmes and it has also strengthened the core functions of most partners. Many partners and CACs have considered the project to be so relevant that they have creatively found ways to reach a much higher number of children than intended by the project.

T2T has been very strategic in using its limited resources for advocating globally for the rights of working children, creating and making best use of several strategic, high-visibility opportunities. The T2T team has been strong in leveraging existing strategic linkages of the steering committee member organisations to lobby and create advocacy opportunities.

6.3.1 *Impact*

T2T has had an impact at different levels with varying degree. The lives of many CAC members show a significant positive impact, e.g. on their identity, their skills, their relationships and standing in their communities, e.g. having become role models, returning to education and having new perspectives for life. A strength of T2T has been its ability to choose partners with often outstanding ongoing programs for children. Integrating these with the T2T approach has enabled to achieve impressive impact on CAC members.

Many facilitators explained that T2T had not only trained them on highly relevant and effective tools, but transformed their mindset on how to interact and work with children. Using the participatory tools and processes have enabled many facilitators to engage in a different way with children, enabling them to listen, learn and develop a new relationship. Combining workshop-style training with practical guides, a clear process for facilitating the learning and a budget for implementation has resulted in all trained facilitators applying what they have learned. It was a very wise decision of the project to invite a facilitator and manager to be trained together and ensure that facilitators will have the necessary support within their organisations to actually implement what they had learnt and have the required support. At the same time this practice significantly increased the potential for wider adoption of T2T's approach within the partner organisations, visible in uptake in many of the partners' programmes. It is an impressive result to what extent T2T has impacted partner organisations with its limited resources. The programme has transformed many partners in the way they work with children enabling these to adopt an effective approach of child participation.

Impact at the regional and national level has been less evident for most partners at the current stage, many change processes at these levels require significantly more time and presence for relationship building, networking and advocacy action. Those partners who in the past have been focusing on advocacy have shown more impact at these levels, having the required relationships and capacities and therefore contributing, e.g. to the formulation of local policies related to working children.

At the global level, the project's goal has been to enable child participation at the IV Global Conference on Child Labour. Since the ILO has a very strong position on child labour which has been seen by the ILO as not compatible with T2Ts approach, it is not surprising that change has been very slow and the actual objective has not been achieved. However, progress has been made with regular contacts. A meeting for an exchange on the tools for child participation scheduled for 2020 had to be postponed due to COVID-19. However, T2T has still managed to present the perspective of children at a side event and CAC-members were invited to present at other high-profile events. A context that is marked with such opposing paradigms requires significantly more time for building relationships and trust to enable change. It is a start, and working realistically for a paradigm shift requires longer-term commitment.

One critical unintended impact has been that CAC members felt exposed to risk and did not feel sufficiently protected or supported in their advocacy activities. Partially this can be related to a positive impact on members being so motivated that they started engaging individually or as a group in advocacy activities, without having the capacity to assess the risks. But also, the advocacy activity that was part of the programme in several cases seemed to create risk despite the advocacy cycle including a step of risk assessment. Since several partners were for the first time engaging in advocacy work, they may not have had the experience to do a realistic risk assessment. In addition, children and some partners felt that involving parents or local leaders could have given them better protection. Strengthening competencies

on assessing risks, including additional steps in the tools and including parents and community will be important measured for the future of the CACs.

Many CACs had chosen objectives for their advocacy action which were either challenging or only long-term achievable. This raises the potential of CAC members experiencing that their action has not led to any change, some experiencing this as a failure. For avoiding future negative impact, it will be critical to have a strategy in place on how to deal with expectations and potential failures. This should include debriefing processes allowing to deal with failures and challenges.

6.3.2 *Sustainability*

It is helpful to differentiate between levels when considering sustainability. Much of the impact at the level of individual children and facilitators can be considered sustainable – they will neither lose their knowledge, skills, nor empowerment. Evidence to the sustainability are Alumni, those who have left the groups after reaching the age of 18. Most have stayed in a close relationship with the CACs, have taken over a facilitative role. Some have started their groups. Education and skills gained in the groups have provided opportunities for further education and enabled to be more strategic in identifying good jobs.

Sustainability among facilitators is also high. While they may move to different organisations, they will still be able to use the toolset and approach they have learned, creating the opportunity to transfer these to a new context. The majority clearly showed evidence of a paradigm shift in their approach of relating to children. They have explained how it had even impacted their families. This is a change beyond the life of a project.

Seeing that organisations are adopting the approach and tools far beyond the activities related to T2T are encouraging indicators for sustainability. Partners have strongly emphasised that they would continue using the approach and tools beyond the life of the project. However, several were not sure about the sustainability of the CACs, because running these required time and resources. Since the CACs in several cases have become identity and family of CAC members, their long-term perspective and sustainability are critical issues to prevent emotional harm to members and disintegration of their support network. While some partners have started integrating the establishment of new CACs into other programmes and were sure to be able to sustain the existing CAC, this may not be an option for smaller partners.

The project approach has been institutionalised at the partner level. Also, several partners have now started exploring and identifying options to institutionalise the participation of working children within the state structures. Opportunities and potential strategies, including options for sustaining CACs, differ significantly between the countries. Therefore, it is not surprising that many partners have identified sustainability as a critical issue to be explored further.

7. Recommendations

Recommendation 1: Starting the follow-up project with an **exploratory phase** focusing on **expansion and sustainability**.

Rationale: One key learning of the evaluation has been that partners are very diverse in terms of their programming and the context they operate. Expansion and sustainability of the CACs have been dominant issues among partners and CACs. However, opportunities and strategies for further developing the CAC approach and structure within the local context differ significantly. There does not seem one specific approach that would fit all partners and their CACs. Partners strongly recommended that sustainability should be addressed at the beginning of the project. Therefore, the next project phase should start with a 6-12 months exploratory phase, leading partner organisations and children through a participatory learning process, allowing them to identify their future approach to CACs/ working children's groups, advocacy for working children and their sustainability.

Specific recommendations:

- **Develop guidance and tools** to support participatory mapping, analysis and action planning (by children, partners and other relevant allies) on sustainable structures and processes for working

children's participation in decision-making affecting them at different levels (families, communities, local governance, sub-national, national).

- **Mapping and dialogue** should be the first activities of the project's exploratory phase, creating the required understanding on available options for sustainability between children, partners, key stakeholders and the T2T Steering Committee.
- **Create space for exchange** and horizontal learning on expansion and sustainability among different partners and CACs for cross-fertilisation. These could be general and later focus around specific themes of sustainability and expansion, e.g. the institutionalisation of child participation for increased, continuous participation of working children in relevant decision making.
- **The mapping should identify different existing thematic networks** to address the identified issues by working children and to collaborate with more and different partners, that will help to enhance the presence and visibility of Time to Talk and working children in general.
- **Explore the need and value of data** at different levels: CACs, partners, national, regional and global. Within the exploration phase, the role and type of data to be collected for advocacy should be defined. This should create local ownership and contribute to collecting data defined as relevant by partners and CACs which all actors will use for advocacy from local to the global level.

Recommendation 2: Increase participation of partners and CACs in the planning, management and monitoring of the project.

Rationale: T2T has created space for working children's participation in advocacy actions and significantly contributed to increasing child participation within their partners' work. Throughout the evaluation, partners and children have shown significant interest in participating in the design of the projects' future. Many of T2T's principles and practices are applicable to the planning, management and monitoring of the project. Increasing the participation of children and partners in these areas has the potential to develop stronger links between local action and global advocacy.

Specific recommendations:

- **Define** with partners and children during the exploratory phase **how to increase participation of partners and CACs** in the management and monitoring of the project.
- Review the **opportunity to establish a permanent structure**, for example, a permanent children's and a (separate) partners' committee which would participate meaningfully in Steering Committee processes relevant to them, allowing increased collaborative participation.
- **Explore and establish new means of virtual collaboration.** The current COVID-19 pandemic has triggered significant improvements in opportunities for virtual collaboration. New opportunities should be explored which allow the Steering Committee, partners and children to meaningfully communicate and collaborate virtually. For reducing issues with language barriers, it may be helpful to organise collaboration at the regional level.

Recommendation 3: Structural development of T2T. Creating a platform that will allow for diverse types of partnerships and create opportunities for new local and international partners to get involved.

Rationale: T2T's approach is a success and therefore, has created high levels of interest for expansion at different levels. Children see the need to allow more of their friends and vulnerable children to be organised in CACs to benefit but also increase the potential of CACs to become more influential. Many partners are convinced of the CACs and want to establish more because it is seen as an effective approach to improve the situation of the children while creating the critical mass needed to influence decision-makers. Several international organisations have approached T2T to discuss their potential participation and adoption of the approach. The past set-up was focused on a set number of partners and CACs defined by the availability of funding and capacity of the project staff. Therefore, the number of partners had been reduced after the first two years.

Specific recommendations:

- **Explore and identify options for a future structure** with children, partners, existing networks and potential new international partners.
- **Clarify**, where applicable, **and develop a strategy on how to relate to existing networks**, avoiding weakening these but finding ways to complement each other.
- **Define different options for membership or participation** based on the needs of partners. This should include the aspect of how different forms of membership would contribute to advocating for the rights of working children (e.g. local, regional, global).
- **Avoid dropping partners** due to funding or managerial limitations. Create alternative membership options. Where not possible, ensure a smooth exit process preventing harm to CACs.
- **Develop a Training of Trainers (ToT) manual and course** to develop sufficient local capacities for expansion. Trained teams of experienced partners then could take over local training for new partners, reducing costs. The ToT concept should keep the principle of jointly training organisational decision-makers and facilitators by training both roles for mixed trainers' teams.

Recommendation 4: Increase T2T staff for augmenting the project's potential for engagement in global advocacy while continuing the management of the complex project and increasing engagement and interaction with partners.

Rationale: The project's effectiveness in advocating for the rights of working children at global level heavily depends on the participation in relevant meetings, conferences etc. for establishing contacts and being seen as a relevant actor. Presence in meetings allows engaging with critical actors who currently hold an opposing paradigm and may otherwise not be ready to meet and engage on the issue. Keeping CACs involved and coordinating their contributions in global action requires significant time.

Specific recommendations:

- Increase T2T staffing on level of the Steering Committee and at local level to facilitate the exploratory phase and thereafter contribute to CAC coordination.
- Establish and work with permanent structures of CAC representatives and partners on advocacy issues at global level. Define priorities jointly for advocacy at the global level, including critical relationships to be developed, messages, and meetings to be attended. Coordinate with partners representation in regional and global meetings.

Recommendation 5: Updating and strengthening Child Protection, Risks and Ethics in the T2T materials to address learning from the past phase

Rationale: Each phase of work has had a strong focus on using the nine basic requirements as a planning tool and "risk assessment" activities were integrated into the plan. However, some children still face risks as a result of their advocacy work, and some CAC members feel burdened by their roles and responsibilities. Thus, T2T should further strengthen the ethical approach to identify and minimise risks.

Specific recommendations:

- Update Toolkit Advocacy Cycle to include the following: Parents/ caregiver informed consent for specific advocacy action, risk-assessment as its own step, expectation management (psychosocial preparations) including debriefing.
- Refine guidance to ensure further emphasis on the role of the child protection focal point to reinforce: consideration of stopping/ changing activities that may cause harm; ensuring informed consent from children's parents/caregivers for specific advocacy activities; prevent harmful decisions on CAC level and to deliver "delicate" issues to upper levels (e.g. Steering Committee) to advocate for time for fun relaxing activities together.
- Increase information sharing with children about referrals and who to report different issues on. Adapt training on Psychological First Aid – have a strong focus on referrals.

- During advocacy planning and implementation processes, ensure regular reflection with CAC members about the level of their responsibility and how to reduce their responsibilities if they face too much; and ways to support one another.
- Explore the possibilities to use the community of practice (CoP) as a space for reflection on advocacy plans of the CACs and also to have a significant increase in the reflections on risks/Risk assessment. Use CoP to ensure open and ongoing challenges of communication about ethical issues and effective ways to resolve them (considering children's best interests and do no harm).

Recommendation 6: Increase the involvement of parents in the project.

Rationale: Throughout the evaluation, members from several CACs and partners have emphasised the potential and need for better involvement of parents and caregivers. These were identified as critical persons to ensure good risk management and as potential supporters of the working children and their advocacy activities.

Specific recommendations:

- Define with CACs and partners different dimensions of parent involvement for developing an approach to parent involvement.
- Identify and include partner organisations' best practice experience in the involvement of parents in projects/advocacy/etc. Systematise and feed it back to all partner organisations. Develop with partners and CACs options for meaningfully collaborating with parents and caregivers.

Recommendation 7: Continue developing and expanding the toolkits. Facilitate training on new materials.

Rationale: The toolkits and related capacity building have been a great success for the project. Application levels are very high and go beyond the specific context of the project. The toolkits drove project activities and have been the backbone of the entire process. A follow-project should build on this good practice and develop a new toolset to facilitate the next phase. Partners identified additional capacity building needs and a further need to adapt tools to the context.

Specific recommendations:

- Develop a toolkit with a modular structure, adaptable to partner's contexts and situations.
- Continue training facilitators (adults, children & youth) in child participation and addressing power imbalances.
- Integrate a ToT approach that strengthens the opportunity for adult-child co-facilitation.
- Create more specific training modules for the different people/roles within the project, e.g. Participation Tools and Methodologies, documentation, Public speaking, Advocacy and Communication, Financial Administration, child safeguarding, self-care, children's participation in organisational decision-making.
- Integrate in the toolkit the aspect that advocacy activities is often not a one-off, but may be a longer-term process for realistically achieving desired change.
- Provide facilitators and documenters with incentives that can increase their engagement.

Recommendation 8: Simplify documentation while increasing quality and local ownership.

Rationale: While many facilitators felt overburdened with documentation and did not understand the value of much of the requested details, project staff was often unhappy about lacking details since they were dependent on the quality of the information provided for developing consistent global data.

Specific recommendations:

- Offer specific training for documentation. Increase local ownership and use of data.
- Identify with partners what documentation is most needed – focus on the essence.
- Explore with partners the use of online survey tools and platform for documentation for simplification (with offline function).

- Co-create any new tool with partners.
- T2T staff should do once every 3-6 months an online interview with facilitators and/or children for additional in-depth information.

8. Appendices

8.1 Appendix 1:

Current (2019) Children's Advisory Committees:

No.	Country/Partner Organisation	Organised/ non-organised	Participation in National Exchange and/or Public Action
1	India/PARA***	Non-organised	NA + PA
2	India/Sikshasandahn	Non-organised	NA + PA
3	India/tdh & CACL	Non-organised	NA + PA
4	Nepal/CWISH	Non-organised	NA
5	Indonesia/PKPA****	Non-organised	NA
6	Philippines/Kaugmaon***	Non-organised	-
7	Bangladesh/CSID*	Non-organised	-
8	Kenya/AfCiC	Non-organised	PA
9	Kenya/WCY*	Organised	NA
10	Ethiopia/FC*	Non-organised	-
11	Zambia/JCM	Non-organised	-
12	Zambia/BIC	Non-organised	-
13	Rwanda/Children's Voice Today	Organised	-
14	Tanzania/TAWLAE	Non-organised	-
15	Peru/MANTHOC	Organised	NA + PA
16	Peru/IINCAP	Non-organised	-
17	Peru/CESIP	Non-organised	-
18	Guatemala/CEIPA	Non-organised	PA + NA
19	Bolivia/PASOCAP	Organised	NA
20	<i>Chile/Protagoniza**</i>	<i>Non-organised</i>	-
21	Paraguay/MOLACNATS*/****	Organised	-
22	Kosovo/Balkan Sunflowers*****	Non-organised	-
23	Jordan/tdh	Non-organised	-
24	Lebanon/Nabaa	Non-organised	-
25	Lebanon/AMURT	Non-organised	-
<p>* please note, some partners are facilitating two or more CACs due to differences between rural and urban areas resulting in 28 active CACs</p> <p>** inactive</p> <p>*** Initially PARA from India was sampled, but because it has been impossible to get a visa within the given time it had to be replaced by Kaugmaon in the Philippines.</p> <p>**** Restrictions due to COVID-19 did not allow meeting MOLACNATS CAC, staff was interviewed virtually; for the same reason it was not possible to involve PKPA (Indonesia)</p> <p>***** In collaboration with tdh Lausanne in Kosovo</p>			

8.2 Appendix 2:

Sampled partners and CACs

Partner	Location	CAC female FGD - body map	CAC male - body map	Facilitators FGD	Partner - FGD	Reflection workshop	Other	CAC Alumni	Final Validation
AfCiC	Kenya (Thika)	9	7	4	5	35			X
WCY	Kenya (Nairobi)	6	1	2	4			4	X
	Kenya (Homa Bay)	5	0				3	2	
FC	Ethiopia	11	10	3	2	n.a.			
TAWLAE	Tanzania	4	7	7	2	n.a.			
Kaugmaon	Philippines	3	6	4	4	15		1	X
CSID	Bangladesh (Dhaka)	3	3	5	3	n.a.	1		X
CWISH	Nepal	10	6	2	1	25		1	
Nabaa	Lebanon	7	4	2	7	10			
AMURT	Lebanon	9	0	2	3	11			X
tdh Kosovo / Balkan Sunflowers ¹⁷	Kosovo	8	3	4	1				
MANTHOC	Peru	4	4	0	0	0	0	0	
CEIPA	Peru	7	5	5	4		24	0	X
CESIP	Guatemala	7	1	5	4	0	7	0	X
MOLACNATS	Paraguay	0	0	3	2	0	0	0	X
	Total	93	57	48	42	96	35	8	8

¹⁷ Balkan Sunflowers implemented T2T activities in collaboration with tdh Kosovo.



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