Challenge Accepted:
Web-Portal for children and young people’s participation in the CRC monitoring and reporting process in Moldova

Children and Young People’s Rights in the Digital Age, 2016
Smiljana Frick, Child Rights Information Centre (CRIC) Moldova
Challenge Accepted:
The idea of the Web-Portal

• Web-portal – children and young people’s 
  (Reflection Group’s) response to main challenges of 
  their involvement in the CRC monitoring and 
  reporting process:

  • Limited opportunities (to take part in decision 
    making processes in general)

  • Negative experience (in general)
“... a potentially huge network of like-minded peers ... new critical skills ... alternative deliberative spaces ... a virtual public sphere ... interactivity, global scale, fast connectivity, unlimited capacity ... democratic ... direct communication among citizens ... undermining or disintermediating traditional gatekeepers....” (Livingstone, 2009:121)
“Online, people are discovering common interests with a potentially huge network of like-minded peers, developing new critical skills and building alternative deliberative spaces ...” (Livingstone, 2009:121)

However, the internet seems to be most effective at engaging those already interested in the social and political issues, not at mobilizing those disengaged. (see Livingstone, 2009:122-130)
80% urban and 70% rural have regular access.

Various purposes - educational to commercial.

“Over 38 percent of respondents read or watch the news online. Especially boys (39.4%), 16 year olds (50.4%) and children from urban areas (41.7%).” (La Strada, 2014:34)
Challenge Accepted: children & young people’s participation in general

- “Tokenism.”
- Lack of feedback.
- Who is included or excluded.
- Consultation but not dialogue.
- Lack of sustainability.

- Adult processes and structures exclude children and young people.” (Tisdall, 2015:382)
- “Rebuke and reprisal” (see Lundy, 2007:934)
Challenge Accepted: Concept of the Web-Portal

• CRIC’s main strategy remains enabling children and young people to set their agenda:
  • RG members are involved in the creation of the web-portal, both its contents & design.
  • Children and young people (groups or individuals) provided channels to influence content & design.

Child Rights Information Centre (CRIC) Moldova
Enabling direct communication among participants the internet can “undermine or disintermediate traditional gatekeepers, both political elites and global media corporations.” (Livingstone, 2009:121)

- How “direct” is the online communication, how safe is it from influence of predominant discourses?
- How “direct” should it be, given the various risks related to the internet?
## Challenge Accepted: Online Risks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classification (Livingstone, 2009)</th>
<th>Content: Child as Recipient</th>
<th>Contact: Child as Participant</th>
<th>Conduct: Child as Actor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Commercial</strong></td>
<td>Advertising, spam, sponsorship</td>
<td>Tracking, harvesting personal information</td>
<td>Gambling, illegal downloads, hacking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Aggressive</strong></td>
<td>Violent, gruesome, hateful content</td>
<td>Being bullied, harassed or stalked</td>
<td>Bullying or harassing another</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sexual</strong></td>
<td>Pornographic, harmful sexual content</td>
<td>Meeting strangers, being groomed</td>
<td>Creating, uploading pornographic material [wider sense, not only sexual]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Values</strong></td>
<td>Racist, biased or misleading info/advice (e.g., drugs)</td>
<td>Self-harm, unwelcome persuasion</td>
<td>Providing advice e.g., suicide, pro-anorexia [hate speech]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Challenge Accepted: Moldovan Context

- Growing awareness of online risks & prevention programmes (see La Strada, 2014; Child Rights Council NAP 2016)

- Mayor issues:
  - Some are at more risks (girls, rural, 12 years old)
  - Giving out personal information that can put them at further risks (e.g., reprisal, (cyber)bullying)
Challenge Accepted: Dealing with Risks

- Strengthening children and young people’s abilities to deal with risks, respect others etc.
  - Risk assessment and mitigation strategies
  - Developing guides, code of conducts etc.
- Additional channels, including web-links for reporting violence, discrimination etc.
Challenge Accepted:

• Challenge – maximise opportunities & minimize risks
• On & off-line: similarities & differences
• Web-portal as an example of critical, creative and ethical usage of the internet
Challenge Accepted: Bibliography

Thank you for your attention.