

## D 5.3 CUIDAR National Policy Debates Framework

The aim of the Policy Debates is to carry the key messages to a high national and international level in order to affect policy development in this area. This will involve staging a key event in each country in which the perspectives of children and young people and the exigencies of policy will be brought together.

The Open University of Catalonia will work with the other partners to plan and execute these events according to the logic and needs of every context. We do believe that such customisation can promote more successful outcomes as well as favouring a more comparative analysis.

Some general comments and recommendations:

- Awareness raising and communication is a process. So, although we will be working to stage a key event in each country, it is important to think about it as a long-term strategy, and enrol key actors, such as policy-makers and mass media, sometime before (and possibly after) the event.
- WP5 Policy Debates should be built upon WP3 and WP4 outputs and evidence. This means that these debates must include and integrate the different outcomes of the Dialogues (WP3) and Mutual Learning Exercises (WP4) to ensure that children and young people's (C&YP's) perceptions, priorities and ideas are heard at a national level. But it also means that these outcomes can be used during the preparation of the national event to recruit and sensitise policy-makers, practitioners and the media so as to raise awareness and focus attention on the national event.
- As with all CUIDAR interactions we strongly suggest that events are child-friendly and child-centred. Where possible, we encourage partners to involve children and young people's meaningful participation and direct contribution to the design and development of the national event.

### 1. Designing the event:

**What has to happen?** We have designed a flexible structure that can be adapted and adjusted in every country according to the needs and possibilities of each partner. It has four moments, or objectives (to be combined and implemented in the same day/event). Only the first and the last one are compulsory, or integral to every national event. Obviously, partners can also suggest and share other possibilities to this framework.

1. **Sensitising:** The main aim of the national event is to carry children's key messages to a high level national and international level in order to affect policy development in this area. So, the event has to make room **at least** for a **moment of dissemination and communication** of the work done by children and young people in WP3 & WP4. This can be done by different means: short presentations by children themselves, exhibiting the work done in several stations... every partner can think about the best means to do this, also engaging children in the design process (in pre-event sessions, for instance. More on this later).

As the event is partly about raising awareness, we suggest connecting these dissemination acts with a wider statement, such as:

- **C&YP's participation is a right** (to be fulfilled). The event can be used as a way to disseminate the UNCRC, and to sensitise about their right to participate and contribute to issues, policies and discussions that affect their lives.
- **C&YP's participation is possible.** WP3 and WP4 outputs can be used to emphasise that C&YP's participation is possible, feasible, practicable, and even rewarding for children and young people and the adults involved. Experts enrolled in WP4 can also be allies in advocating this
- **C&YP's participation is not only possible but useful, instrumental for emergency, risk and/or disaster management.** Evidence gathered can also show that apart from being possible, participation is useful and productive for disaster risk management: children have clever and innovative ideas and suggestions for disaster management (they envisage unanticipated needs, tools and improvements). Experts enrolled in WP4 can also be allies in advocating this.

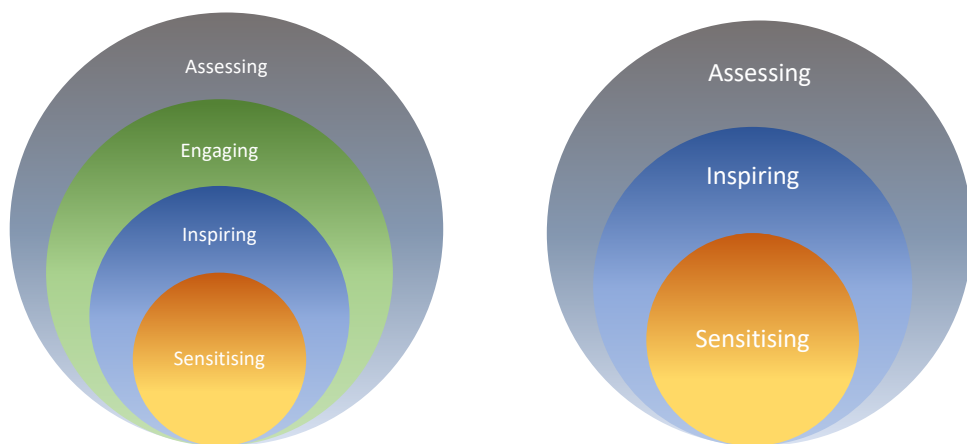
These are suggestions, and every partner (with the participation of the children involved) can decide how to adjust the communication and dissemination of the work done in WP3 & 4 with these wider statements. You can decide to work just on one, or to combine different statements. It's up to every partner's possibilities and preferences. However, we strongly suggest thinking about communication from this advocacy approach, particularly for those partners that will organise their event mainly about and around this very first moment.

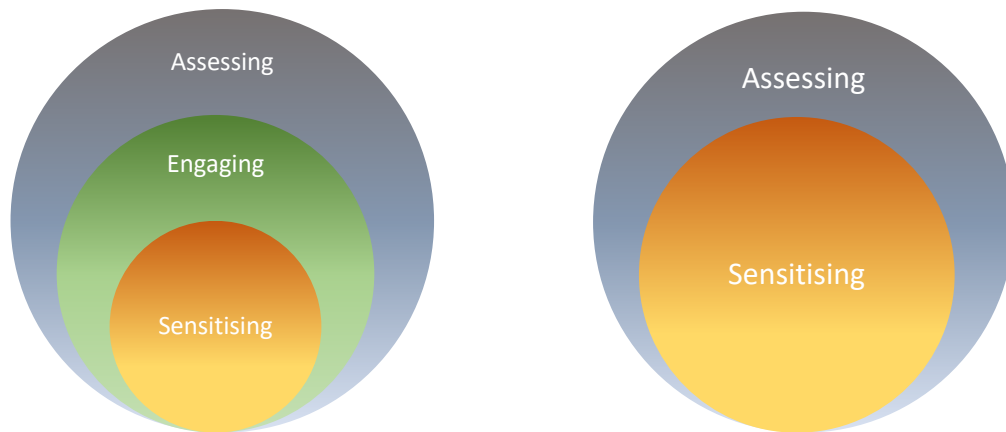
- 2. Inspiring:** For those partners who can (and want) to conduct a bigger event, we also recommend designing a **second moment** where other C&YP's participatory experiences are exhibited and shown. Again, the format can be adapted to every country but it's important to identify and invite best practices in different fields where children and young people have developed and sustained a meaningful participation. For instance, we would like to invite some representatives from children's councils, some of them very active in the local governance in Catalonia; or the Youth Scientific Council of Sant Joan de Déu Hospital (a children's hospital). The idea here is to invite them to talk and present their experience of participation as way to reinforce the message given in Moment 1, about the rights, possibilities and benefits of participation; but also to inspire policy-makers and practitioners working in the field of disasters, as well as the children participating in CUIDAR project, with successful practices and experiences coming from other fields.
- 3. Engaging:** For those partners who want to organise a more participatory event, we also suggest designing a **Moment 3** devoted to actively engage the policy-makers, experts, and practitioners invited to the national event. We think that a good way to raise awareness is to design some activities that request policy-makers and practitioners to play a more active role, going beyond attending and listening to children and young people. For instance, we are working on the possibility of organising a collaborative workshop, right after Moment 2, where policy-makers, experts and practitioners will distribute and work in groups, together with children involved in CUIDAR, to prototype forms of participatory engagement of children and young people in disaster risk management. The prototypes will be briefly discussed and assessed collectively.

This is only one option, there can be more, and we are happy to share our ideas and to support the rest of the partners, if needed, in thinking about more engaging formats for this Moment 3 of the national event.

- 4. Assessing:** whatever is finally included in your national event (as we said at least Moment 1 has to be incorporated), we strongly suggest designing a later moment to assess the event and gather evidence from the different actors involved. If you develop a national event that includes Moments 2 and 3 we suggest conducting this later moment of assessment without children (this can be too long for children, and also children's feedback can be collected in a post-event session). Ways to do this can include a focus group with some key policy-makers, practitioners, experts and so on; or it can be a survey or a questionnaire that you use. In any case it is important to gather enough feedback from the actors involved in order to later produce the report that will inform WP6: Recommendations.

### Different combinations to organise the final event





## 2. Key Questions and considerations

- There must be at least **1 National Event** per country and it should last no more than **4 hours or half a day**. As in the case of WP4, anything longer than this will likely be too long for the children. Moment 4 (assessment) can be programmed outside these time constraints. For instance, we are thinking of conducting the assessment in the afternoon, once the event has concluded for children.
- Where possible, we encourage partners to choose a significant date which helps to attract the media attention. For example **1<sup>st</sup> June** is Children's International Day, and the media can be receptive to cover an event like this, but every partner can decide whether this is a good option or not to each national context.
- Where possible, we encourage partners to choose a **child-friendly space** (space matters!) to conduct the national event. Also, and depending on the final format, we encourage partners to find a flexible space where different kind of activities can be organised (from oral presentations to work in groups, and specially deliberative processes). Some technological requirements can also be important (sound, video or Wi-Fi to connect with some of the children that cannot attend). These specificities can be discussed and agreed with the children involved in pre-event sessions.
- Attendees: the aim is to carry the key messages to a high level national and affect policy development in this area. Every partner must decide who can be invited to achieve this goal (emergency planners, practitioners and policy-makers in fields such as education, childhood, participation, civil protection, etc.). WP2 interviews can be helpful in this regard, as well as the contacts and meetings conducted during WP3 & 4. We also encourage re-interviewing some key actors in the field to check out names already identified and collect new ones. Where possible, we also encourage partners to organise an '**attendee bag**' with key messages and information from the project (flyers, examples of outputs from WP3 & 4, etc.). This can also be designed with children.

- It is also important to enrol **mass media**, as they can be strategic to raise awareness, and to design strategies to publicise the national event widely to attract as much attention as possible.
- Facilitators: as in WP4 it is important to have **facilitators that have been able to build relationships with children and key stakeholders**. It is also important also to make room for any children who show the aptitude or interest in facilitating the event alongside ourselves.
- Internationalisation: this framework is designed to facilitate at least one national event per partner country. If possible, and feasible, we can think of **international actions** to strengthen the message across partner countries and to reach international policy-makers (European Commission, if possible). But apart from that, we also encourage partners to think of other creative alternatives to involve the work done in other countries in their own national events (showing short clips, posters or pictures from other workshops in other countries...).
- Evidence: where possible, images and video material should be collected that can be included in the final project video. In general, any material that captures the event (posters, meeting minutes) is welcomed as well as the feedback from the different actors involved (children, but also practitioners, policy-makers, etc.).

### 3. Prior to the event

- **Pre-event sessions with children:** we recommend at least 3 pre-event session with children and young people (if possible and if schools and children agree on that).
  1. A first session to invite children to have a role in talking about their expectations and generate ideas about the event, particularly about what they can do to communicate their ideas and messages and to sensitise policy-makers. Also, they should think about the way they want to be represented in the event (particularly if some of them don't want to, or cannot attend the event). Additionally, we can also invite children to map key actors and stakeholders that can be invited as they are identified as those who have power of decision-making (this will be later paired with each partner's network and relationships with national actors/stakeholders). This session needs to be carried out in a participatory, engaging way.
  2. A second session to invite children to work on their plan of communication and prepare the materials and work on the messages they aim to convey.
  3. As the event will gather different groups from different cities and regions, we strongly suggest planning another pre-event session the afternoon immediately before the event. This can be used to get to know each other, to get familiar with the space and/or to organise some 'common' and very simple message/action/performance.
- **Previous work with policy-makers and the other actors involved.**
  - As a way to prepare the event, we recommend conducting a media campaign to raise awareness among civil protection actors, policy-makers and civil society in general. To do

this, you can disseminate WP3 & 4 outputs via mass media and social media. The aim is to attract attention to the national event and assure media coverage of it.

- Where possible, we suggest having one or different pre-event sessions with some of the most significant actors you aim to sensitise. This session (or sessions) can be used to:
  - Introduce the aim of the event/project and share some results (WP2 report) as a way to set the ground to talk about C&YP's (lack of) participation in disaster management.
  - Share some ideas about the event and get some feedback and suggestions from them.
  - Share some useful guides (as in WP4) to let adults know it's important to create and sustain a safe, enabling and child-friendly environment.

#### **4. Post-event session:**

- Where possible, we suggest going back to children to evaluate the event with them; to share with them some of our conclusions and recommendations; and talking about our next steps and how to maintain or close their involvement in the project.