VOICEMORE
THE HANDBOOK

War Child's Participatory Youth Advocacy Methodology

WAR child

Background

In 2016 War Child embarked on a new journey in our advocacy. We wanted to find a way to raise the voices, concerns and recommendations of children and youth affected by armed conflict more widely and directly to those with decision-making power. Our aim was to work in partnership with young people and support their leadership.

VoiceMore, War Child's youth-led advocacy methodology, was developed in response to this ambition. While guidance and materials related to youth advocacy existed, none dealt with the sensitivities, barriers and risk factors young people affected by armed conflict face. The programme was designed over five years in an iterative way, based on the feedback from pilot groups of youth and supporting staff in our countries of operation.

The programme is structured to support young people during different phases of advocacy: first building confidence and competence in articulating issues and negotiating with others, before moving on to understanding advocacy and identifying one problem impacting children and youth they wish to address. Young people are then encouraged to analyse their chosen issue in more depth, by conducting research which generates evidence for advocacy action.

VoiceMore is about working in partnership with youth and acting in solidarity to address topics they care about. It requires a commitment to equitable collaboration and meaningful participation. Organisations who have not supported participatory approaches in advocacy before can find here a blueprint from which to start, while those with existing experience can select and adapt material to add value to existing initiatives.

In line with VoiceMore ethos of inclusivity, we encourage all efforts to engage the most excluded youth, and for those utilising the programme to see it as a first step towards longer-term change-making with young people.

How to use this handbook

The VoiceMore Handbook starts with opening chapters designed to help situate the work in the wider context of child and youth participation and related law and resolutions. It then moves to look at standards for meaningful participation and what participatory practice requires in terms of commitment and approach. The rest of the handbook offers practical guidance on how to support and implement the programme including all training components and the advocacy phase. A separate VoiceMore Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL) Toolkit is available on request, which offers more detailed guidance and tools to help evaluate activity.

VoiceMore is intended to be delivered in stages in the order presented in the handbook. This helps ensure staff teams and participants are adequately prepared for each phase. Training components and activities should be adapted for each context and young people's needs.

Please note, the programme can only be referred to as 'VoiceMore' if it is delivered in full, as outlined in this handbook.

Any organisations that choose to use the handbook, or sections of the handbook, are asked to acknowledge War Child and credit and reference this handbook accordingly.

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With special thanks to the young people in VoiceMore whose feedback and ideas shaped and steered this resource.

For more information regarding the programme or this handbook, please contact Sophie Bray-Watkins on sophie.bray-watkins@warchild.net

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PART 1

Context and Need

RATIONALE

Despite the participation of young people being enshrined in international law, opportunities for children and youth to voice opinions on decisions and issues affecting them remain limited in scope globally, particularly for those who find themselves in difficult circumstances, such as children affected by conflict.

It is, however, vital that young people are supported and empowered to become their own advocates and their voices are not just heard but really listened to. Failure to do so means our understandings of their unique experiences, perspectives and concerns will be lost to the detriment of our efforts to support them.

It was this belief that led War Child to develop VoiceMore. We believe it is vital that young people affected by conflict are supported to participate if we are to see real change for the future.

PARTICIPATION AS LAW, STANDARDS AND COMPACTS

Supporting the participation of children and youth is included in a variety of international treaties and compacts, such as:

International Treaties

- The **UN Convention on the Rights of the Child**[1]: Specifically Article 12, which alongside Articles 13, 14 and 15 form the treaties 'participation rights'.
- In 2015 the **United Nations Security Council passed Resolution 2250**[2] (UNSCR 2250), which was the first resolution on youth, peace and security. The resolution highlights Participation, Partnerships, Prevention, Protection and Disengagement, and Re-integration as five pillars for action related to young people's contribution to peace processes and conflict resolution.

Global Compacts

- The **Global Compact for Young People in Humanitarian Action**[3] is a collective commitment of 60+ humanitarian actors working to ensure the priorities of young people are addressed and that they are consulted and meaningfully engaged throughout all stages of humanitarian action. See related Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Guidelines: *'With us and for us: working with and for young people in humanitarian and protracted crisis.'* [4]
- The **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**[5], adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015, provides a shared blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet, now and into the future. At its heart are the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), of which number 16 states, *'Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels.'*

Technical Standards

- **Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC)**[6] **Guidelines on Working *with* and *for* Young People in Humanitarian and Protracted Crises.** Created following the World Humanitarian Summit in 2016 as part of the Compact for Young People in Humanitarian Action, these guidelines are intended to be the go-to document for those seeking to engage young people in humanitarian responses.

1 UNICEF: https://www.unicef.org.uk/what-we-do/un-convention-child-rights/
2 UN: https://www.un.org/press/en/2015/sc12149.doc.htm
3 Global Compact for Young People in Humanitarian Action: https://www.youthcompact.org/action-2-participation
4 Relief Web: https://reliefweb.int/report/world/iasc-guidelines-working-and-young-people-humanitarian-and-protracted-crises-16-february
5 Sustainable Development Goals: https://sdgs.un.org/goals
6 Inter-Agency Standing Committee: https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/events/iasc-guidelines-working-and-young-people-humanitarian-and-protracted-crises

- The **Core Humanitarian Standard**[7] sets out nine commitments that organisations and individuals involved in humanitarian response can use to improve the quality and effectiveness of the assistance they provide. Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS) 4 relates to participation specifically, stating, *'Humanitarian response is based on communication, participation and feedback'.*
- **The Alliance Minimum Standards for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action**[8] Principle 3, which states: *'Humanitarian workers must provide children with the time and space to meaningfully participate in all decisions that affect children, including during emergency preparedness and response. To promote and support their participation is to meet human rights obligations.'*

CASE STUDY: CHRISTIAN

"As a native of this territory, I had lived a very difficult life. I lived without knowing any of the children and young people. My life was to influence other children and young people to do evil, I was locked in on myself believing that I was self-sufficient without other people with me.

My life became open because I had the chance to rub shoulders with other young girls and boys in our community to find solutions to the problems that plague us. I am starting to be close to other young people and children, to give them advice on life. I was tribal, but I am no longer tribal thanks to the programme because in our group there are many tribes and there tribalism has no place. Now I have knowledge about the rights of children and young people and know how to advocate on our problems.

After understanding the consequences that arise from the use of children and young people in armed groups, I have just had the courage and motivation to show other children and young people in my community the importance of studies, to learn different trades, and respect for the rights of children and young people. I have just had the chance to approach the authorities, community leaders and other community members to discuss the problem of the use of children and youth in armed groups.

After the program, with all that we have learned, we will continue to popularise the rights of children in my community for those who do not know them, we will continue to carry out advocacy actions on the use of children and young people in armed groups. I want to continue to interest other young people and children, to seek together a solution to children's problems. We will continue to be voices in our community without discrimination, as we learned in the VoiceMore group, so that we can move forward. Everything I have learned will remain engraved in me by teaching children, other young people and the community at large until the end."

Christian, 23, Democratic Republic of the Congo

7 CHS: https://corehumanitarianstandard.org/the-standard
8 Alliance CPMS: https://alliancecpha.org/en/CPMS_home

ADVANTAGES OF ENGAGING WITH CHILDREN AND YOUTH

There are a variety of advantages to engaging with young people. Supporting the meaningful participation of children and youth in programming provides wide reaching and multifaceted benefits for not just participants themselves but also their communities and the respective organisations working with them.

- **Listening produces greater understanding:** Child and youth perspectives are often not the same as an adult's, and unless space is created for them to activity engage in dialogue and express their thoughts, feelings and opinions, organisations will have less understanding of who they are working with.
- **The development of social competence and social responsibility:** If they are actively involved in initiatives aimed at creating peace and developing their communities, young people can develop a greater sense of social responsibility and civic engagement.
- **The development of confidence and personal competencies:** Participatory approaches help young people develop new skills and competencies. It also helps them harness key social abilities, such as critical thinking, understanding others' perspectives, negotiation and decision-making.
- **Respect and equality:** Participatory approaches are compounded by mutual respect and cooperation. A person is less likely to develop an appreciation for this if they are only subject to authority and never offered opportunities to constructively express their opinions or wishes. By placing an emphasis on dialogue and negotiation, young people are more likely to engage in this in the future.
- **Self-protective qualities:** Participatory approaches support young people to become more self-aware and confident expressing opinions. The benefits of this transcend beyond activities in programmes, strengthening self-determination and self-protective qualities in young people; the more accustomed they are to expressing concerns or viewpoints, the greater their ability to self-advocate in other areas of their lives.
- **Engagement in programmes:** If young people feel they are invested in initiatives aimed at them, they are more likely to engage in the longer-term. Likewise, if programmes and interventions are informed by feedback from those who they are targeted at, they are also more likely to meet the needs and interests of that group. In turn, this can increase engagement, reach, retention, and the success of services.

Photo credit: War Child

> "Only by experiencing respect for their own views and discovering the importance of their respect for the views of others will they acquire the capacity and willingness to listen to others and so begin to understand the processes and value of democracy. It is through learning to question, to express views and having their opinions taken seriously that children will acquire the skills and competence to develop their thinking and to exercise judgement in the myriad of issues that will confront them as they approach adulthood."
>
> **G Landsdown**[8]

8 Landsdown, G. (2005), pg 2 'Can you hear me? The right of young children to participate in decisions affecting them' in Early Childhood Development.

Photo credit: Christian Jepsen

PART 2

Understanding Participation

PARTICIPATION AND POWER

Worldwide, adults hold more power culturally, socially, economically, and politically than children and youth. It is impossible, therefore, to approach the subject of young people's participation without taking this into account, as it remains one of the major factors in making participatory programming challenging. Cultural norms and expectations regarding the role of young people in family, community and society are very powerful, and young people in many places are not expected to voice their opinion or try to lead their own initiatives. To do so can be regarded as threatening, both to the position of adults and to the traditional order of things.

Age is not the only defining factor in power hierarchies. It is also important to acknowledge the impact intersectionality – the interconnected and overlapping nature of social categorisations (such as race, class and gender) – has on systems of discrimination and disadvantage. For example, girls and young women commonly face significant barriers to equitable participation, not just because of their age but also because of their gender. If a girl also has other real, or perceived, characteristics, such as a disability, low social class or a certain ethnicity, this can further compound her exclusion and increase discrimination.

As an organisation seeking to support meaningful participation, it is vital real efforts are made to address and reduce power imbalance. This includes honest reflection regarding an organisation's commitment to allowing young people to lead and laying the right kind of groundwork in internal attitudes for this to happen. It also necessitates ensuring programming has the right kind of resources and planning to help remove barriers (for more information, see the Inclusive Programming section of this handbook).

WHAT 'PARTICIPATION' MEANS

When we talk about a programme or an activity being 'participatory', we mean people are playing an active and meaningful role in it. Participation is commonly described as divided into levels like a 'ladder'[9], moving from lower levels of influence through to leading work.

However, it is important to remember working at the 'top of the ladder' might not always be suitable in every context. Supporting young people to 'higher levels' of participation requires time and dedicated support, which, depending on the environment or context, may not be suitable or may present too many risks. Anything above Level 4, 'Assigned but Informed', is deemed participatory and still positive. Anything below that cannot be referred to as being truly participatory.

> "The things that changed my life since I have been with War Child VoiceMore is that I feel better in my daily life. I can speak freely. I feel like I finally found my place in society. I am aware of what is surrounding me and that makes me feel good."
>
> **Neville, 15, Central African Republic**

9 Hart, R. (1992) Children's Participation: from tokenism to participation, UNICEF.

PATHWAYS TO PARTICIPATION

Degrees of participation	**8. Child-initiated, shared decisions with adults**	Children have the ideas, set up the project, and invite adults to join with them in making decisions.
	7. Child-initiated and directed	Children have the initial idea and decide how the project is to be carried out. Adults are available but do not take charge.
	6. Adult-initiated, shared decisions with children	Adults have the initial idea, but children are involved in every step of the planning and implementation. Not only are their views considered, but they are also involved in taking decisions.
	5. Consulted and informed	The project is designed and run by adults, but children are consulted. They have a full understanding of the process, and their opinions are taken seriously.
	4. Assigned but informed	Adults decide on the project and children volunteer for it. The children understand the project and know who decided they should be involved and why. Adults respect their views.
Non-participation	**3. Tokenism**	Children are asked to say what they think about an issue but have little or no choice about the way they express those views or the scope of the ideas they can express.
	2. Decoration	Children take part in an event, e.g., by singing, dancing or wearing T-Shirts with logos on, but they do not really understand the issues.
	1. Manipulation	Children do or say what adults suggest they do but have no real understanding of the issues, OR children are asked what they think, adults use some of their ideas, but do not tell them what influence they have had on the final decision.

Figure 1: The ladder of participation. (Taken from 'The right to play and children's participation' by Roger Hart, in The Article 31 Action pack, published by PLAY-TRAIN, 1995).

While participation is still commonly viewed in the 'ladder' metaphor, alternative ways of thinking about degrees of participation are also helpful. In *Empowering Children and Young People: Promoting Involvement in Decision-Making*[10], Phil Treseder refashioned Roger Hart's Ladder of Children's Participation into a hub-and-spoke configuration. This was to try and help convey that in real-world settings, participation does not unfold in an ordered sequence from higher to lower forms of participation, and those that appear on lower rungs of the ladder are not intrinsically worse than higher levels. The different levels of participation should, therefore, not be seen as a kind of hierarchy; some might simply be more appropriate in certain circumstances, such as unstable contexts or when children and youth need adult support and guidance to fully participate in a leadership or the decision-making process.

10 Treseder, P. (1997) Empowering Children and Young People: Promoting Involvement in Decision-Making, Save the Children Fund, Children's Rights Office.

Assigned but informed
Adults decide on the project and children volunteer for it. The children understand the project; they know who decided to involve them and why. Adults respect young people's views.

Degrees of separation

Consulted and informed
The project is designed and run by adults, but children are consulted. They have a full understanding of the process, and their opinions are taken seriously.

Adult-initiated, shared decisions with children
Adults have the initial idea, but young people are involved in every step of the planning and implementation. Not only are their views considered, but children are also involved in taking decisions.

Child-initiated, shared decisions with adults
Children have the ideas, set up projects and come to adults for advice, discussion and support. The adults do not direct but offer their expertise for young people to consider.

Child-initiated and directed
Young people have the initial idea and decide how the project is to be carried out. Adults are available but do not take charge.

> Meaningful participation and space to come together with their peers to share their experiences and express their views can give children strength and increase their life skills and self-confidence, especially in situations characterised by conflict or insecurity." **Feinstein et al** [11]

11 Feinstein, C, Giertsen, A and O'Kane, C. (2010). *'Children's Participation in Armed Conflict and Post Conflict Peace Building' in A Handbook of Children and Young People's Participation: Perspectives from Theory and Practice.* Percy-Smith, B and Thomas, N Eds.

PART 2: UNDERSTANDING PARTICIPATION

Before embarking on a participatory project with young people, you will need to take time to consider what level or degree of participation you would like to aim for and what realising it will mean in terms of commitment and support. Harry Shier's 'Pathways to Participation'[12] is a useful model to use when analysing this – see below.

Levels of participation	Opening	Opportunities	Obligations
5. Children share power and responsibility for decision-making	Are you ready to share some of your adult power with children?	Is there a prodecure that enables children and adults to share power and responsibility for decisions?	Is it a policy requirement that children and adults share power and responsibility for decisions?.
4. Children are involved in decision-making processes	Are you ready to let children join your decision-making processes?	Is there a procedure that enables children to join in decision-making processes?	Is it a policy requirement that children must be involved in decision-making processes?
This point is the minimum you must acheive if you endorse the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.			
3. Children's views are taken into account	Are you ready to take children's views into account?	Does your decision-making process enable you to take children's views into account?	Is it policy requirement that children's views must be given due weight in decision-making?
2. Children are supported in expressing their views	Are you ready to support children in expressing their views?	Do you have a range of ideas and activities to help children express their views?	Is it a policy requirement that children must be supported in expressing their views?
1. Children are listened to	Are you ready to listen to children?	Do you work in a way that enables you to listen to children?	Is it a policy requirement that children must be listened to?

START HERE

Remember, higher levels or degrees of participation can apply more pressure to young people as they require increased responsibility. Thought consequently needs to be given to the ability and readiness of the young people taking part when deciding how much ownership they can reasonably have without overburdening them. If your team is new to participatory work, it is also normally better to start at lower levels of participation and work up to higher ones once staff and the group as a whole gain experience, competence and confidence.

12 Shier, H. (2001) *Pathways to participation: openings, opportunities, and obligations*, Children & Society.

Photo credit: Christian Jepsen

PART 3

Programme Overview

PROGRAMME SUMMARY

VoiceMore is War Child's youth advocates development programme, which empowers young people affected by armed conflict to share their experiences and act on issues impacting young people. Groups discuss and debate how conflict affects children and youth in their area and what they feel could be done to help improve their lives. They are then supported to design and run their own advocacy projects in their local community, with War Child helping them elevate these concerns to national and international platforms.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- Support young people to identify the challenges they and other children and youth face in the regions and country where they live and to undertake advocacy action that brings about positive change within their communities and beyond.
- Enable young people to improve their well-being by gaining confidence, knowledge and skills to honestly express their views, needs and rights, including understanding how to conduct research and advocacy.
- Promote the participation of children and youth in decision-making and raise the voices of young people affected by conflict to those in power.

> "This programme has changed my life. I have got new knowledge. I didn't know anything about being a spokesperson, but I have learnt about it. I used to fear speaking in public, but now I learnt how to do it."
>
> **Female Participant, VoiceMore Uganda**

ETHOS AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

COLLABORATION AND PARTNERSHIP

The aim of the programme will be to seek greater collaboration and partnership with participants. Their opinions should, therefore, be actively sought, listened to and considered in all aspects of the programme.

AUTHENTIC VOICES

An important dimension to VoiceMore is conveying the diverse and authentic voices of the children and youth. Staff or adults supporting the programme should not, therefore ,attempt to dictate or influence what young people might want to say in their advocacy. Unless participants express something that could put themselves or others in situations of risk, their words need to be heard as they intended.

PARTICIPATION IS A PROCESS

Participation is about more than just organising a few one-off activities in isolation; it is a process, so it is important to think about how to help young people reflect on their activities and learn from them over time. Supporting organisations should also reflect on what they are learning during the process of delivering the programme.

'SPOKESPERSONS' NOT 'RECIPIENTS'

While the young people taking part in VoiceMore should benefit in terms of personal development, they should not be regarded as just 'recipients' or 'beneficiaries'. They will be volunteering a significant amount of their time to support other children and youth in their community. They will also be helping the supporting organisation learn and improve their understanding of issues.

WORK MUST RELATE TO YOUNG PEOPLE'S INTERESTS AND LIVED EXPERIENCES

Young people will have their own views on what the most important issues for them and their peers are. Participatory projects need to support young people talking about, and acting upon, issues close to their interests. If adults try to enforce their own ideas about what is important, the participatory nature of the project will have been undermined. Sustained interest in work will also be difficult to maintain.

All activity under VoiceMore must also adhere to the Humanitarian Principles[13] and a 'do no harm' approach.

13 UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA): https://www.unocha.org/sites/dms/Documents/OOM-humanitarianprinciples_eng_June12.pdf

PROGRAMME PHASES

The VoiceMore Programme is organised into specific phases:

PHASE 1

Planning and Preparation
Before starting the project, ensure enough time is set aside to conduct an analysis of the local context and security to help inform location decisions. Also, consider community engagement and sensitisation to ensure the programme will be accepted. Draw up an agreed project plan (see parts three, four, five, and seven in this handbook for more detail).

PHASE 2

Staff Training
VoiceMore will require a dedicated staff member to help support the project. Ensure enough time is set aside to recruit and train this person. Staff training in this manual should be delivered to a small group, so invite other members of the team they will be working in (see part nine this handbook for more detail).

PHASE 3

Recruitment and Selection of Participants
VoiceMore should be an inclusive programme with careful consideration given to how you will identify young people to take part (see part six for more detail).

PHASE 4

Spokesperson Training for Participants
Young people first complete training to help build group rapport and develop confidence and skills ready for their role as spokespersons and representatives (see part nine for more detail).

PHASE 5

Advocacy Training for Young Participants
Once the young people have completed their Spokesperson training, they then need to move to advocacy training, where they discuss and decide upon the issue they wish to tackle and learn about key concepts and approaches related to advocacy (see part 10 for more detail).

PHASE 6

Research Training for Participants
The final training, once the young people have decided on their theme, is research training to help prepare them for the research phase (see part 11 for more detail).

PHASE 7

Research Gathering and Data Analysis
Young people carry out their data gathering and work together to analyse the results. War Child supports the development of a short report outlining their work and findings (see part 12 for more detail).

PHASE 8

Advocacy Action
Once the young people have completed their research and analysed the results, they will need to decide on what kind of activities they wish to undertake to help promote the findings from their research and make a case for change on the issue they selected (see part 13 for more detail).

PHASE 9

Evaluation and Project Close-Down
Towards the end of the programme, young people should be supported to reflect on and evaluate their learning and the impacts of their project (see parts 14 and 15 for more detail).

PART 3: PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

PROGRAMME LENGTH

Highly participatory projects require more time and effort to set up and support, particularly in challenging environments and with groups of young people with competing life pressures. Advocacy can also be a slow process, which requires tenacity and persistence; therefore, consider how long you have to support a group. While you may be able to complete the training and initial phases in six months, that might not leave enough time to undertake any meaningful advocacy or evaluation afterwards.

Also think about how long it might take to build up the confidence and skills of the young people involved. They will need some time to raise competency levels before speaking to decision-makers or presenting to audiences.

Finally, think about how the programme is going to fit in with young people's lives and the environment they live in. Many young people will be in school, at work or have family responsibilities, meaning they may not be able to meet too frequently or dedicate a high number of hours each week. If the areas are remote, access might also be challenging. Progress in moving through each phase could consequently be quite slow.

Based on the above, it is not recommended VoiceMore is attempted in less than eighteen months, with two years likely to be more appropriate. That will allow time for thorough training, creating an advocacy strategy and delivering a variety of activities to try and achieve its aims.

ADVOCACY ACTION

In the VoiceMore programme, young people will select one key issue they feel is impacting children and youth in their area. The focus of their activities will be gathering evidence and formulating a set of recommendations and solutions for change. As part of their activities, it is likely the group will want to undertake some form of action in their local communities with local people and other children and youth. However, be sure not to limit the programme to just this; there will be government departments, international agencies, community leaders, and others who have responsibility and influence on the issue raised, and as an organisation, we need to be willing to help the young people reach out to them and voice their concerns.

It can be tempting to opt for a project where young people just interact with other young people or members of the community, and while this can still bring about change (particularly to attitudes and knowledge), it would miss a vital opportunity to try and influence other spaces where power is held. It is important, therefore, that your organisation is willing to support advocacy at a local level but also regionally, nationally and even internationally.

> "Before I joined VoiceMore, I was unable to stand in front of people and lead a meeting, but since I joined, I have no doubt in my soul that I have the strength to stand alone in front of people and defend myself and defend my fellow young people and children whose rights are being abused."
>
> **Feza, 20, Democratic Republic of the Congo**

Photo credit: War Child

PART 4

Preparing for VoiceMore

VOICEMORE CHECKLIST

It is essential to read this handbook thoroughly before committing to running VoiceMore. The checklist below presents key questions and considerations an organisation needs to answer and reflect on before moving forward.

Organisational Commitment	Yes	No
Is your organisation, including your leadership and local staff team, committed to the principles and practices of participatory programming that will be required to run this programme successfully? (See Parts 2 and 3 for more details.)	***Great!*** Offering the VoiceMore staff training to a wider group of people is recommended, including managers and leadership.	***Stop!*** It will be challenging to run a programme like VoiceMore if your organisations does not fully understand the principles and necessary approaches. Consider running an induction training and/or sensitising teams to what will be needed before committing to the programme.

An Integrated Approach	Yes	No
Are you planning to integrate VoiceMore into another existing programme or to link it to other community-based work you are doing? (See page 23 for more details.)	***Great!*** As part of your planning, be sure to consider how to link the programme to other activities or movements in the community, as this will help support sustainability.	***Reflect...*** It is not essential that the programme is integrated, and it can be run as a standalone project. However, there are benefits to ensuring it does interact with other community-based activities.

Staff Support	Yes	No
Has your organisation or team already got someone who can support the activity, who has the right skills and experience, or is your organisation committed to finding and recruiting such a person? (See page 24 for more details.)	***Great!*** A programme like VoiceMore requires a specific professional skill set and competence.	***Stop!*** Participatory programmes like VoiceMore, especially when targeted at young people living in difficult situations and challenging environments like conflict affected areas, must have dedicated professional support. Relying on volunteers or untrained part-time staffing will impact quality and potentially also safety.

Budget and Resources	Yes	No
Does your organisation have the necessary budget and resources to run the programme effectively, or are you able and willing to apply for all the necessary finances that are recommended? (See page 28 for more details.)	***Great!*** During the planning phases, make sure all costs listed in the budget section are covered.	***Stop!*** Youth engagement like VoiceMore will require a dedicated budget to cover staffing and other direct costs. Trying to run a programme without these will reduce quality and compromise safety.

Context and Security	Yes	No
Are you planning to run the programme in a recovery, resilience and peace-building stage of crisis or conflict or in a development setting? (See page 30 for more details.)	***Great!*** Be sure to still conduct a conflict and context analysis during planning stages to ensure all risks and dependencies are carefully considered.	***Stop!*** VoiceMore is not suitable for early onset crisis or the acute humanitarian phase.

Inclusive Programming	Yes	No
Is your organisation and local office willing to support inclusive programming, which will mean dedicating more time during planning stages and being open to programme adaptations? (See page 33 for more details.)	***Great!*** Make sure to conduct an assessment of who marginalised young people might be in your context, and consider carefully how they can best be engaged and supported.	***Reflect...*** It can be tempting in youth engagement programmes to only work with young people who are already educated, confident and possess certain skills. While they might be good spokespersons, consider how the programme can be opened to other youth who have less opportunities or experience.

Time Commitment	Yes	No
Is your organisation able to commit to at least 18 months to three years to support the project and its participants? (See page 11 for more details.)	***Great!*** If there *is* scope to run the project beyond 18 months, then consider this, as longer time frames often work better for VoiceMore.	***Stop!*** Trying to run the full VoiceMore programme in less than 18 months will be challenging and is not recommended.

Age and Group Size	Yes	No
Are you planning to engage participants from between age 15-25 and to support groups between 10-20 young people maximum? (See page 45 for more details.)	***Great!*** If you are working with an age range spanning 15 -25, then be sure to consider further splitting into under 18s and over 18s.	VoiceMore is not designed for children younger than 15. It can be run with over 25s, but be sure not to have too wide an age range within the groups.
Safeguarding and Risk Management	**Yes**	**No**
Does your organisation have the necessary safeguarding and risk management policy and procedures in place to ensure the safety of young people and other community members? (See page 24 for more details.)	***Great!*** Alongside training and regular risk assessment, also consider engaging your wider teams and the young people themselves in organisational discussions on risk.	***Stop!*** It is not recommended to attempt to run VoiceMore if your organisation does not have clear and well understood safeguarding and risk management processes in place. It could expose the young people and others to danger.
Advocacy Action	**Yes**	**No**
Is your organisation and local office committed to supporting the advocacy ideas the young people come up with, taking their recommendations seriously, and helping them elevate these to the necessary people in power? (See page 25 for more details.)	***Great!*** The most successful advocacy projects are the ones where the whole organisation is engaging with the young people's ideas and playing an active role in supporting them bring about change.	***Reflect...*** It is possible to run VoiceMore as an isolated project and with minimal advocacy action, but consider carefully the potential negative impacts of this. Young people who don't feel supported to follow up on their ideas might feel frustrated and disillusioned. The wider community might also interpret the project as tokenism.
Follow-Up Activity	**Yes**	**No**
Is your organisation and local office willing to support young people after their advocacy and in any follow-up or continuation activities they may wish to initiate? (See page ?? for more details.)	***Great!*** Being open to supporting young people's ideas and actions beyond the fixed life-time of the project can offer greater opportunity for change and sustainability.	***Reflect...*** It is possible to run VoiceMore without post advocacy follow-up, and there might be reasons outside an organisation's control that mean supporting this is challenging. However, where possible, try and make a commitment to this.

AN INTEGRATED APPROACH

It is recommended that VoiceMore is supported with an **integrated approach**. The most successful advocacy initiatives do not exist in isolation. They must reach out and connect with lots of people and networks. They must also inform an organisation's own work on a wider scale. Before deciding on where to run the programme, organisations and teams should reflect on:

- **Would it be helpful to have the group attached to a wider project?** VoiceMore operates best when it is linked to other programmes. For example, if an office is going to be delivering a three-year livelihoods project, could be a smaller VoiceMore group be organised to help elevate issues wider groups are facing? This kind of approach can add a rich dimension of problem-solving to other interventions.
- **Are we already running lots of activities in the area where the group is planned?** If you are already working with lots of children and youth in a particular area, then having a separate advocacy activity can help test and broaden the type of support you are trying to offer. It can change the way local populations view your organisation (in terms of its collaborative approach and accountability).
- **How are we using and acting on what young people are telling us?** If you are supporting young people to speak up about issues, it is important to take their feedback into account in your own organisation's work. Feedback should be integrated into planning, particularly when issues raised relate to other thematic areas an organisation might focus on, for example, protection, education and livelihoods.

While it is possible to support a VoiceMore group outside of other programmes and in areas where an organisation has no other activity, serious consideration of the suitability of this should be undertaken. VoiceMore can help raise awareness on issues and bring about change, but it will not provide immediate answers for people in need. Local populations might require practical and immediate help before, or in addition to, any advocacy.

If run in isolation in a place where people are not familiar with the organisation, it can influence how the organisation is seen (e.g., "this organisation just talks about problems but offers no practical support") or artificially raise expectation (e.g., "they will come back and solve all the problems the young people have told them about"). Exercising sensitivity and conducting a thorough assessment before deciding on location is, therefore, recommended (see also the context analysis section of this handbook).

PROGRAMME STAFFING AND SUPPORT

A common misconception in participatory programming can be that because things will be child or youth- 'led' that only limited staffing will be required. However, while the aim will be to help young people take on increasing levels of responsibility, there will be a limit to this, and to ensure the safety and well-being of participants, it is essential that groups have a dedicated staff member to support them. This ideally needs to be full-time for the entire duration of the work planned.

It is also important to regard facilitating participatory programming as a skilled professional vocation. Understanding and supporting participatory practice requires a particular set of skills, knowledge and competence. You will need to identify someone who understands how to work with young people safely and in an empowering way. They will also need to possess the right kind of attitude to make this happen; for example, they will need to be open-minded, willing to listen, sensitive to groups' needs, and passionate about making a difference in the community.

The dedicated staff member will, in addition to overseeing young people's safety and well-being, be responsible for supporting advocacy action and identifying ways to link themes of the work to the right stakeholders in the community, region or at national level. They will, therefore, need to be organised, motivated and strategic in their thinking.

It is recommended to grade the role at a level that will attract candidates with significant experience in both working with young people and conducting advocacy. Efforts should be made to recruit female members of staff to support groups, especially in contexts where female only youth groups are most suitable or in contexts where girls might struggle to be heard or presented with high levels of violence and discrimination.

It will be essential that staff in the wider team understand what the group is doing and trying to achieve and that the office is supportive of their advocacy actions. Teams should, therefore, be inducted and kept up to date with work, and direct support staff should make efforts to connect activities to wider ones, which will help elevate issues young people are trying to raise. The VoiceMore staff member will also need to work closely with those responsible for safeguarding and security.

Supportive line management is also key to projects achieving their aims. Advocacy action is not successful if senior organisational representatives are not on board with activities. Relevant line managers should receive training on the programme and the risks and challenges of youth advocacy programmes. They should also ensure they are identifying opportunities to elevate the young people's concerns and recommendations to peers, decision-makers and contacts.

VOICEMORE STAFF CORE RESPONSIBILITIES

The VoiceMore staff member is responsible for the safe and meaningful implementation of the project and helping young people bring about change on the issue they have selected. To help give an idea of what that entails, below is a brief overview of the core responsibilities they would hold.

SUPPORT CONTEXT ANALYSIS AND PLANNING FOR DELIVERY

The VoiceMore support person should be drawn into discussions surrounding where the best locations for activity might be and in considering the differing environmental, religious, cultural, political, and social aspects that could impact on work. They should also play an active part in planning for delivery, such as creating work plans and thinking about timelines and milestones for the project. Having someone at an early stage of work viewing such decision-making with a 'participatory' lens will help draw out any potential issues and make sure expectations for delivery are clear.

SELECTION OF PARTICIPANTS, CONSENT AND REGISTRATION

Advertise and promote the opportunity locally in a way that supports inclusion. Organise the selection of young participants in line with the guidance in this handbook. Complete the registration process, gather informed consent, liaise with families and care-givers where necessary, and keep a secure database of their information, including such things as emergency contact details.

RISK MITIGATION AND MANAGEMENT

An important responsibility of the staff member will be reviewing and assessing any potential risks posed by regular group activity and their advocacy action. Such a process will be on-going throughout the programme duration and will require coordination with wider teams, including security and safeguarding.

COORDINATING REGULAR MEETINGS AND ADVOCACY ACTION

The VoiceMore staff member must ensure they communicate with the youth about the timing and place of the sessions, keeping in mind how appropriate the time and location are. Make sure to read the session plans ahead of the meeting and with time to be able to ask the Youth Engagement team any questions on delivery, make any adaptations suitable to the context and prepare any risk assessments / materials / equipment required. Although the young people will lead on deciding advocacy activities, the supporting member of staff will need to play a key role in coordinating these.

REGULAR SUPERVISION AND SUPPORT

A regular programme of supervision will need to be offered on an individual and group basis. The frequency of this can be decided on by participants depending on what they feel is needed; however, supervision should never be completely left out, even if the group seem to be getting on well. Issues can develop slowly and go unnoticed at first, so making time to discuss how participants are finding the programme will help uncover problems before they get engrained. Individual supervisions should focus on how the person is feeling about the programme: what aspects they are enjoying or finding difficult and any support they feel they might need.

REPORTING AND MONITORING, EVALUATION, ACCOUNTABILITY AND LEARNING (MEAL)

With the support of the MEAL team, make sure that monitoring and feedback mechanisms are in place, maintain grant reporting and keep an attendance sheet. This includes seeking opinions of the group, encouraging sharing of ideas and asking the young people to reflect on what they have learnt – they might have suggestions for how to amend the programme to make it better for them.

SUPPORTING PROJECT CLOSE DOWN

As the programme draws to a close, the supporting staff member will need to draw up a plan to help young people exit the programme in a safe and positive way. This will include ensuring they have all had time to express their feelings about the work, reflect on their personal and group successes, and helping them identify potential pathways after work has finished.

> "It feels good to work with VoiceMore because it helps me to make things change. VoiceMore helps me to develop my intellectual capacity so I know how to express myself and how to react in certain situations. I feel more able to bring some change, even in a complicated situation. That is basically what I like about the programme, that it has given me such capacities to defend my present and my future. All these things combined make me happy about VoiceMore."
>
> **Dieudonne, 16, Central African Republic**

WAYS OF WORKING

Supporting successful participatory programming requires a certain type of approach and emphasis on adult-child youth interaction. Below are key areas staff should ensure they are considering in all planning and implementation.

CLARITY AND PLANNING

It will be important to ensure participants understand what is going to happen on their project. If they do not know when the next meeting is or what they will be doing, they will not be able to organise it around their other responsibilities (such as work and care-giving) and are more likely to lose interest and motivation. Planning with the groups will be important. As a participatory project, they should feel ownership and have a sense of direction in the work.

MANAGING EXPECTATIONS

Managing expectations when supporting young people in conducting advocacy is imperative. They should be encouraged to consider potential impacts from a realistic standpoint. It will also be useful to help groups think about the 'bigger picture' – the structural, social and political forces that might be acting against their hopes for change. This does not mean young people should be discouraged from believing any progress at all is possible, but they need to enter into VoiceMore activities with a clear idea of what potential outcomes are likely to be. Failure to do this can result in groups feeling demotivated and disengaged when their aspirations are not realised. Make sure you are also clear about this with local communities and young people when you are setting up a new group, and do not over-promise what any resulting advocacy can deliver.

KEEPING UP MOTIVATION

It is normal for groups to be very enthusiastic at the start of a programme or project and for levels of interest to vary at different points, so helping the group maintain or find motivation will be important. Encouragement needs to be offered regularly on an individual and group basis. Efforts should also be made to try and understand what might be causing any dips in energy or enthusiasm, too, as sometimes it is not the most obvious cause.

NOT 'TAKING OVER' - THE ROLE OF SUPPORTING ADULTS

It can be very difficult for adults who are used to overseeing things to sit back and let young people take the lead. This can be particularly hard when they see groups making what they think are mistakes! Striking the right balance between offering support and guidance versus leading and 'telling' can be challenging. Most adults, in most cultures, find it very difficult to adjust to this because of existing learnt behaviours and the social norms of age automatically equalling authority over youth. The success of participatory projects is dependent on adults supporting work and being honest with themselves about the power and influence they are trying to exert. Programmes will only work if they, too, are willing to adjust or develop their approach.

GROUP DYNAMICS AND FACILITATION

It is normal for new groups to go through a period of adjustment when they first start to work together. Most of the time, they will get through this 'getting to know each other' stage naturally and emerge as a strong team on their own. However, sometimes, it may be necessary to gently manage group dynamics between members. While some individuals might naturally become leaders, it will be important to make sure they do not take over. Quieter members of the group might need help to lead certain aspects of a project (although, no person should be forced to if they do not feel ready). It will be the support lead's responsibility to ensure the group are working together harmoniously and to be conscious of how group dynamics develop over the life cycle of the work.

PROGRESSION AND LEARNING

When advocacy activities are underway, it is easy to forget to set aside time for participants to reflect on and acknowledge their learning. Young people are much more likely to engage in a project over a sustained period if they feel like they are gaining from taking part. Time should be set aside for the groups to sit and discuss how they feel their project is coming along, to reflect on work so far, and consider what they could do differently the next time. Each participant should also be encouraged to acknowledge their own personal development and how they have changed positively through participating in the programme.

"One day, we had a new teacher at our school. He wrote on the board his mobile number and said if we ever needed any help with our work, we could call him for support. We were happy because we thought he really wanted to help us learn. My friend in the class, she was confused about her homework, so she called him. He tried to make her come to his house. She felt afraid, so she did not go. After this, he was angry at her and gave her bad marks. She is scared, and now she is thinking about dropping out of school."

Neville, 14, Central African Republic
Feedback from child respondent during VoiceMore project on 'sex for grades' abuses in schools.

RESOURCE AND BUDGET CONSIDERATIONS

Supporting a participatory programme will require resources. It is not realistic to expect to undertake such intensive, highly supported work without a budget to support it. Before committing to running the programme, consider what budget you have, and ensure these funds are going to be adequate for supporting work. It is also good for the budget to be flexible, as activities may need to shift at times, and advocacy activities will not be planned and implemented until closer to the end of the programme. As a guide, the types of costs that need to be included are:

STAFFING

This should ideally be **full-time,** as while groups may only meet once a week, for example, there will still be lots of planning and networking to support the advocacy element of the programme. Be sure to also grade the post at a level that reflects the expertise required and ensure adequate budget is available for this.

OVERHEADS

VoiceMore is likely to require the support of other staff members within the organisation, for example, technical support in a thematic area or time from line managers and others in leadership teams to help push advocacy aims externally. Budgeting for internal cost recovery is therefore helpful.

COMMUNICATION AND CONNECTIVITY

For practical and safety reasons, the dedicated staff member must be able to connect and communicate throughout the project lifecycle. This will mean they need a phone and adequate data to contact groups members, their families, advocacy targets, or other members of their team. The staff member will also require a laptop to record information about the work, conduct research for advocacy, and produce documents the young people may need.

MATERIALS

Young people will need a **flip-chart, pens, paper,** etc., for their regular sessions. They may also need the ability to **print** materials they create for their advocacy, for example, posters or leaflets. Each VoiceMore group also normally produces their own **report** to support their advocacy. Setting aside budget for producing this, including **translation** and **professional printing,** is also recommended.

EQUIPMENT

VoiceMore does not require any significant equipment to realise; however, for example, having a **dictaphone** can be very helpful during the research phase (for young people to record and transcribe during data collection) and for low-level literacy groups (where parts of the programme discussions can be recorded and re-played as reminders). A **basic camera** can also be useful for taking photos of flip-chart sheets as a record or photographing things for their advocacy report. However, if such devices are to be used, it is essential they are stored safely, with confidentiality and **data protection rules** adhered to regarding any images or recordings made.

STAFF TRAVEL

Regular face-to-face meetings with youth groups are likely to require travel for the supporting staff member. Budgeting should, therefore, include money for **vehicle use, fuel or public transports costs.** During the advocacy phase, the staff member is also likely to need to travel to meeting with advocacy targets; setting aside budget for some **regional or national** travel is also, therefore, useful.

YOUNG PEOPLE'S TRAVEL

In many locations, young people are likely to need **support to get to the meeting venue.** Not providing support for travel, particularly in remote locations, will present a significant barrier to participation. Offices will need to decide the most appropriate way to provide this support safely and in line with wider protocols regarding out-of-pocket expenses and renumeration. Consideration should also be given to **safe travel for females and persons with disabilities**, particularly in areas where walking long distances is dangerous. Budgets should consequently include fuel and **vehicle hire or public transport costs** for young people. Groups or representatives from the group are also likely to need to **travel to meetings with stakeholders** during the advocacy phase. Budget should be set aside to help facilitate this.

MEETING SPACE

Young people will need to be able to meet on a regular basis in a **safe space** throughout the programme. This should be somewhere quiet where they can discuss issues confidentially, without lots of people around. Given the nature and ethos of VoiceMore to support positive working between different groups and present an impartial voice on issues, the space should also be one that is neutral within the community (for example, not using churches or mosques or any other building that has a particular association, such an office of a political group). Spaces need to have safe latrines and have been risk assessed for any hazards. Budget should be set aside for **hiring a space** if needed. Budgeting for **building a space** can also be an option; however, such plans need to consider the long-term plans for the space after the programme has finished, how providing such a building might impact on the understanding of the programme locally, and wider community use and ownership. Ideally, existing suitable spaces should be utilised.

REFRESHMENTS

VoiceMore is a long-term programme that requires considerable meeting and training time for young people. It is recommended basic, local refreshments are provided for regular meetings (e.g., water and a small snack), particularly for longer meetings. For training days, especially if they are to be organised into full days, lunch is also recommended; budget for **basic refreshments and small lunches** can, therefore, be included. However, **it is important that the provision of refreshments is sensitive to other programming in the area and does not create any tension** between young people within VoiceMore and other projects an organisation might have.

ADVOCACY ACTIVITIES

During their advocacy phase, young people are likely to want to organise something within their community to **raise awareness** of the issue they are working on, to **facilitate discussion or debate** on a particular topic, or to **convene a meeting** to convince key people of a need for change. Budget should be allocated to support community activities to host meetings, presentations, or roundtables, and to support activities they decide upon after their research phase.

CONTEXT AND SECURITY ANALYSIS

Before committing to running VoiceMore in a particular area, it is important to have **first conducted an adequate context and security analysis**, findings of which should **inform where the programme is run, how it is supported and what kind of timeframes or resources may be required**. This should take into account the following:

- **Environmental factors, such as:** How remote an area is and what is it like in terms of accessibility, what dangers are presented by travelling in the area (e.g., rains produce mudslides, flooding, no suitable roads, military checkpoints, etc.), how changeable and predictable conditions are, what kind of organisations/groups operate in the area surrounding where activities will take place, etc. Also consider connectivity. In places where there is little or no phone signal, contingency plans for communication with young people will need to be organised.
- **Socio-cultural factors, such as:** Local attitudes towards children and youth, how strong notions of elder leadership are, what different religions co-exist in the area and any tensions between them, any pre-existing ethnic conflicts between groups or clans, what traditional practices are prominent (e.g., early marriage), who the most excluded groups in society are, attitudes towards gender and girl's participation, and feelings about the presence of international or national non-government organisations (I/NGOs), etc.
- **Economic factors, such as:** Levels of existing poverty, how many young people are engaged in income generating activity, and what types of work and labour they engage in, etc.
- **Political factors, such as:** The presence and dominance of state actors in the area, level of paranoia and suspicion state holds towards activists, the possibility of freedom of assembly and to voice concern about issues publicly, the level to which the government can act with impunity, how many political parties operate and how they are viewed, what risks membership or association with political groups can bring, and when the next elections are, etc.
- **Security, such as:** How volatile the area is, levels of violence and the possibility of protection, how quickly incidences can escalate, the possibility of a peaceful period, and anticipated flash points, etc.

Conducting a thorough context and security analysis is **not because only the 'easiest' places to run the programme should be selected**. To do so would potentially exclude large numbers of children and youth from speaking up and acting on issues. It is instead to help **ensure the right kind of preparation can be put in place to avoid risks and overcome obstacles to participation and delivery**.

It is, however, important to be realistic about our ability to run a programme like VoiceMore in some contexts. **If they are extremely unstable and risk factors very high, it may not be the right time to attempt the programme**. VoiceMore is more suited to situations of recovery and peace building or development contexts. **It is not suitable for early onset emergency or extremely unstable and volatile settings.**

PART 4: PREPARING FOR VOICEMORE

CASE STUDY: VOICEMORE CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC (CAR) - CAMPAIGNING FOR SAFER SCHOOLS FREE OF COERCION AND CORRUPTION

In 2016, War Child set up the first VoiceMore pilot in Bangui, Central African Republic. Participants there reported to War Child that demands for sexual favours and money from teachers in state schools was their biggest concern, as it was having a detrimental impact on many children's education and well-being. The group reported incidences of this type were common, and children were intimidated, upset, and frustrated at the way in which this was happening. This pertained to two practices inparticular: the 'selling of notes' and 'sex for grades'.

'Selling of notes' refers to children being asked to offer money in exchange for the marking of papers, exams or other moments when tests or gradings are concerned. 'Sex for Grades', or as local children refer to it 'sexually transmitted grades', relates to teaching professionals asking for sexual favours from children in exchange for any of the above activities.

The group also described children being asked for payment just to attend regular classes, get necessary photocopies for class, or access information about up-coming syllabuses. The group reporting the issue decided they wished to work to combat this by raising awareness and demanding better systems to protect children and deter these kinds of behaviours in schools.

The group designed and conducted their own research to try and ascertain the scale and extent of the issue in their area. From 100 child respondents in 10 state schools in Bangui who participated in the research, 75% of children reported the 'selling of notes' was happening in their schools. 73% of students reported that 'sex for grades' was occurring in their classrooms, with 83% of correspondents saying this happened secretly, with teachers being the most implicated. Girls were much more likely to be impacted by requests for sexual favours. 95% of the children interviewed said they felt these practices were bad for education in CAR.

After completing their research, the group organised their advocacy action. The children met with The Ministry of Education in CAR and the UNICEF coordinated Education Cluster to raise their concerns. They also designed their own sensitisation activities for schools and broadcast a series of national radio programmes to raise awareness. One member of the group presented the project and recommendations at the UN Day of General Discussion on Children as Human Rights Defenders in Geneva, while another presented to UN member states at an Elevating Education in Emergencies event organised by the Global Education Cluster. Several members of the group are still working as activists in Bangui.

To hear more about the project, visit: **www.warchild.org.uk/our-work/what-we-do/innovative-programmes/voicemore/central-african-republic** where you can download the report and also watch the group's advocacy video.


Photo credit: Christian Jepsen

PART 5

Ensuring Inclusive Programming

UNDERSTANDING AND REMOVING BARRIERS TO PARTICIPATION

There are a multitude of reasons why taking part in a programme like VoiceMore could be challenging for some young people, especially for those affected by conflict. These will relate to **practical issues, such as a lack of time or money**, or **social ones**, such as **being excluded because of gender or ethnic group**. If an organisation is seeking to invite young people to participate in a project like VoiceMore, they have a responsibility to consider what those barriers might be and how they can best be mitigated.

VoiceMore should aim to be **representative of the local population**. This means aiming for a 50/50 split in terms of gender (unless for cultural/religious reasons a single sex group might be necessary) and ensuring all groups/people are represented.

When planning for the programme, make sure staff are **considering potential obstacles**, such as those outlined below, and **what can be done to help support the young people who face them**.

DISABILITY

Poverty and conflict are factors that seriously impact the severity of disabilities, whether visible or invisible, and young people with disabilities are commonly excluded from programmes. The reasons for this are multiple, both practical and social; for example, they may not get to hear about opportunities so easily, it might be harder for them to apply, they might face barriers in getting to and from venues, they might struggle to communicate, or others might reject them because of stigma. Although the barriers for young people with disabilities are significant, we strongly encourage efforts to include young people with disabilities in the programme. Consider their capacity to engage in the programme, and where possible, make adjustments and adaptations to support participation.

LOW EDUCATION, LITERACY AND NUMERACY

Possessing a low level of literacy and numeracy should not impact on participating in VoiceMore. Priority should never be given to young people based on the qualifications they hold or what age they left school. Efforts should be made to adapt the programme and session plans for those with no or low literacy (see 'adaptations' section). If a group consists of young people with very mixed abilities, be careful not to create a hierarchy, with those who can read and write regarded as the leaders or the 'best' participants. Instead, encourage less writing and more discussion, and encourage a supportive and inclusive atmosphere.

WORK COMMITMENTS

Many young people around the world need to work in order to support themselves and their families. It can be more challenging for them to engage in programmes like VoiceMore because they are busy or have irregular hours, particularly when working in the informal economy. Efforts should be made to ensure they can still participate and fit activities around their work. This may mean running the programming flexibly in terms of hours, or it might mean running shorter trainings over a longer period of time. Safe work (age appropriate, with limited hours, in safe environments, which offers opportunity for learning and growth) can bring many benefits to young people's lives. However, if we know young people in the programme are engaged in child labour or the worst forms of child labour[14], we should see what steps we can take to support them, and their families, out of this.

14 ILO: https://www.ilo.org/ipec/facts/lang--en/index.htm

PART 5: ENSURING INCLUSIVE PROGRAMMING

MINORITY GROUPS

Most of the settings where War Child works are complex. In the communities where we operate, there is likely to be a variety of subgroups of the population with unique social, religious, ethnic, racial, and/or other characteristics that may differ from those of the majority group. Participation for such minority groups can be difficult. They may be excluded from positions of power and influence, they may be stigmatised, or they may be seen as a threat in some way. This might affect the willingness of majority groups to interact and be-friend them. VoiceMore should, however, be an inclusive and representative programme. This will mean careful thought will need to be given to how minority groups can engage in the programme and how sensitivities or even potential tension between members will be managed and navigated. This will mean having clear messages about the programme from the outset, helping the young people understand and overcome their own preconceptions, creating an egalitarian atmosphere in activities, and addressing any small issues between members before they escalate. If tensions between some groups in communities is severe, however, conduct a thorough risk analysis before attempting to bring young people together.

GIRL'S PARTICIPATION

Gender is a significant barrier to participation in many contexts around the world. Social, cultural and religious values and beliefs will have a **strong influence over the freedoms a girl experiences in her life**. Females are often expected to play passive or submissive roles, **where openly expressing their own ideas or opinions is not encouraged**. Girls are also often **excluded or dissuaded** from pursuing activities outside the home, including those related to education and work.

Types of barriers girls in particular face include:

- **Exclusion from Decision-Making and Positions of Power:** Females will often not hold the same political rights or access as males. They may be excluded from voting, joining particular groups, or applying for certain jobs. In many communities, women may not be represented in structures where decisions are made and will find it harder to have their voices heard within male dominated hierarchies. Within the home, daughters may also not be able to influence as much decision-making on family or economic matters as sons can. **Growing up in an environment that does not favour, or value, female participation will impact on how girls engage in the programme**. For example, males may not feel comfortable sharing equal status with females during activities, and girls may not be accustomed to being asked for their opinion on matters, making them more reserved or shy in a group, or when meeting with decision-makers, they may not take what female participants might be saying as seriously.
- **The Domestic Burden:** Females around the world normally bear **much higher levels of domestic responsibility**. Girls will be expected to cook, clean and keep up household chores, on top of any education or income-generating work they might have. This can mean the number of hours they are busy is higher than their male peers, making it difficult to find time to join activities. It will also mean they need to be at home during fixed hours of the day (for example, in time to prepare dinner). To help ensure girls can take part, consideration needs to be given to the timing of activities, how long they are, and how they can be adapted around such pressures.

- **Caring Responsibilities:** Many girls will be expected to **shoulder care responsibilities within their household, for example, for younger siblings or elder relatives**. Girls may also have their **own dependant babies or children to look after**. Having extra care responsibilities, or being a parent themselves, should not exclude a young person from joining the programme. Speak to the any young carers or parents about what support they have at home and what can be done to help them join activities. **Gender discrimination is a strong excluding force preventing girls' participation and should not be underestimated**. It cannot be expected that girls will easily be able to hear about, apply and join a programme like VoiceMore without War Child making efforts to actively reach out to them and make sure they are able to participate. **Activity should always be considered from the perspective of how it can potentially include or exclude females.**

THINKING ABOUT LANGUAGE

The language and the terminology used during sessions is a major factor in adequate understanding of the work and of good dynamics in the group. Therefore, the **facilitator will have to pay attention to the words and terminology he/she is utilising in addition to the translation that might be necessary for sessions.**

Terminology

The facilitator will have to be careful with the terminology and words he/she is using in order to:

- **Make sure that the concepts and definitions are well understood by all the participants.** Certain linguistic concepts may not exist in some places, meaning there will be a need to find out which ones do and are understood widely. Participants will also have different levels of literacy and understanding, which can be a struggle when addressing complex concepts. Before the session, facilitators must consider what words in the activity might be difficult for the young people to understand and think about ways to explain these simply. Rather than urging young people to repeat technical 'NGO' language, encourage them to feel confident in finding their own words and terms that make more sense to them.
- **Not using words that might be discriminatory.** Participants should be a diverse group and represent the community they live in. The language used during the session should avoid any terms that are discriminatory or might increase stigmas.

Translation

In a programme like VoiceMore, where groups are often mixed, there might be different languages spoken by members, or participants might speak more than one language or dialect and be more proficient in one than another.

It is essential that plans are put in place to help overcome this potential barrier to communication and comprehension. **The facilitator will need to ensure adequate translation is available during sessions. This includes looking at the session plans beforehand and thinking about how to translate instructions or activities.** Also, think carefully about how specific key words are translated, like 'advocacy' or 'stakeholders', as these can be difficult to explain, and if meanings in translation differ greatly, then there will be confusion and further issues later.

During planning and programme set-up phases, if working in several languages or dialects is going to be a definite during the programme, **ensure adequate resource is included,** for example, budgeting for a translator during the training days.

Important Note on Inclusive Programming

It is essential to remember that if we want to deliver truly inclusive programming, all the areas outlined in this chapter need to be thought about before the programme starts. It will not be possible to effectively overcome them once activities have commenced. During the planning stages, make sure you have considered all the barriers outlined in this chapter and what you are going to do to try and overcome them. Then, include the necessary budget to support this.

ADAPTING THE PROGRAMME

While VoiceMore is a structured programme with specific phases and session plans, **the programme and activities should be adapted to suit groups need when necessary**. For example, in this handbook, there are suggested timetables for the training days. These can be split up and delivered over a longer period if needed. For all planned activities, **facilitators should always read the session plan beforehand** and think about any adaptations that need to be made for the group. **The programme and activities should always be adapted in the following circumstances:**

Young people with low or no literacy

Many of the session plans in VoiceMore involve some reading and writing. If young people have very low reading and writing skills or if they are completely illiterate, **activities should be adapted to remove the need to read or make notes**. There are lots of different ways to do this.

Below are some examples:

- **Use drawings and symbols:** Representing ideas visually is a great way to remember things, and many young people enjoy drawing. During sessions, **instead of making written notes on flip-chart paper, ask young people to draw what they have talked about**. They can then use the drawings during presentations to help remind them what they discussed or decided. As groups will be working together for a long time, they could also agree on a set of symbols to represent common things they talk about: a 'code' they can use. When facilitators are explaining things to the group, they can also use drawings (and still make their own notes of what was discussed to help inform future sessions).
- **Verbal Repetition:** Good facilitation always involves summarising and recapping to make sure everyone remembers what has happened and where they are going next. For sessions where little or no note-making is being made, **encourage the groups to summarise verbally their points and all repeat them to each other**. It can be fun to do this in a **short song or rhyme or add hand/body gestures to key points to help group members**.
- **Discourage personal note-taking by participants:** It is common for young people who can read and write to want to take notes on their own notebooks during the training and sessions. It is recommended that (even for groups with good literacy) **this is discouraged as it can create a 'school-like' atmosphere, and people become too occupied with what they are writing and stop actively participating**. For groups where some young people can read and write but others not, it is even more important to avoid personal note-taking. It can create a split in the group, leaving those who are illiterate feeling less confident or even inadequate. **Speak to the group before the programme starts** and emphasise the need for full attention for active participation, which is why we discourage personal note-taking. Emphasise group notes and drawings will be made anyhow to help remind everyone of what they learnt or discussed.

Young people with limited or no formal education or experience with training

- **Lower the intensity of the programme:** Most of the VoiceMore activities require a lot of concentration from young people. As a participatory programme, they will be asked to take lots of time to think, discuss and reflect on topics or questions. **These kinds of activities require lots of brainpower and team-working, which can be tiring.** For young people who have never been to school, or only for a limited time, or for those who have never taken part in any training or programmes like VoiceMore before, their ability to concentrate for extended periods might be lower. They might be less accustomed to activities like those in the programme, and they may need longer to adjust to a new way of interacting or working. **Make sure the trainings and activities in the programme are adjusted if young people are finding it difficult to concentrate and focus. Add lots of energisers and games, and split the training into shorter days with some break days between.** This is also true for groups of young people who might be working long hours outside the programme.

"After the training workshops, my mentality changed, my reactions have changed and my character, too. I don't like to live in war anymore. I want to live in peace and my country be at peace. I have begun to think of higher ideas and on things occurring in the world. My desire is that the world be in peace. After the training, I can talk to or advise people on peace so that unity may come back in divided nations, and the voices of children are heard by important people internationally so that children live a happy life all over the world."

Jean, 17, Central African Republic

CASE STUDY: VOICEMORE UGANDA - PROTECTION OF UNACCOMPANIED AND ORPHAN CHILDREN

In 2018, War Child set up VoiceMore Uganda in the Bidi Bidi refugee settlement in the Yumbe region. Youth who expressed interest from the South Sudanese refugee community and the Ugandan host community were brought together into two mixed groups.

After completing their training, each group discussed the issues facing children and youth in their area. Both identified the abuse and neglect of orphan and separated children as being a serious issue, resulting in them deciding to work together jointly to try and tackle the issue. They reported how orphan and separated children were being forced to work, either doing dangerous jobs or spending hours on domestic labour, with some female orphans as young as 12 engaging in 'survival sex' for money or food. These children were not able to access services in the same way as other children, such as school or health services, due to fees and the requirement to be accompanied or enrolled by an adult. The children also showed signs of significant neglect, such as lacking clothes to wear or scavenging on the street.

The group decided to conduct their own research into the issue in the form of a household survey that could help track and prove the high numbers of children. They also conducted some interviews to gather more qualitative data on the issues host families were facing. Using random sampling, the group found that NGOs and the government were underestimating the number of orphans and separated children: 54% of households were found to have had at least one orphan or separated child (58% in the refugee population and 51% in the host community), 25% of all children in the settlement were orphans or separated, and only 12% of refugee households and 4% of host community households with orphans were receiving any form of support.

The groups then worked together to develop their recommendations and create a joint advocacy plan. Examples of their activities include conducting care-giver meetings in the community and with local host community and refugee community leaders to raise awareness. To encourage enrolment and support in education, they worked with local head teachers and the district authority for education, who committed to creating a tracking and referral system for the children and offering more support to help them engage in school. The group worked with local hospitals and health services, getting them to commit to not turning unaccompanied children away, and convinced local councils to include orphan and separated children from the host community, as well as refugees, in their welfare plans. Two representatives attended a conference in Kampala on child protection, and one young person presented the work and recommendations at a conference.

Young people in the group came together at the end of the project and formed their own community-based organisation called 'Similar Ground'. This organisation continues to work with orphaned and separated children in Yumbe and members of the group to advocate at the local and international level for greater child protection.

Visit: www.warchild.org.uk/our-work/what-we-do/innovative-programmes/voicemore/uganda to download the report and watch the group's advocacy video.

Photo credit: Christian Jepsen

PART 6

Guidelines for the Recruitment and Selection of Participants

The selection and recruitment of young people to take part in VoiceMore is an important stage. It is essential it is carefully organised and sensitively conducted to ensure the success of the programme and equality and diversity within it. It is vital to consider all the elements below.

ADVERTISING AND PROMOTING THE OPPORTUNITY

Think carefully about where and how you will advertise and promote the opportunity to engage in VoiceMore. Advertising very widely might produce more interest than can be handled and create the possibility for community tension, while advertising in a very limited way does not support the possibility for inclusion and community support. **A targeted promotion** will most likely work best. **Consider existing networks** your offices and staff have and **how to communicate the opportunity so a mix of people can hear about it**.

The aim should be to encourage diverse interest to represent the community, including the most marginalised. Also, consider the local context and any sensitivities. For example, **recruiting from only one group within the community could contribute towards conflict**.

Below are some examples of where the opportunity could be advertised and promoted:

- Local community organisations
- At local community gatherings
- Secondary schools
- Youth centres
- Community centres
- Places in the community where young people gather, e.g., to play sports
- Other NGOs working in the area
- Child protection networks
- Places where lots of young people may work
- Places where young females gather
- Approaches homes where certain young people live, for example, those with disabilities

It is important **not to rely on just one or two of these**. For example, if you only advertise in schools, you will be excluding young people out of education. If you only advertise via other NGOs, any young people not already involved in a programme are unlikely to hear about it. **Try and aim for a range of these options.** Remember, when you are reaching out to external organisations, partners and or stakeholders, you need to always make sure to **respect your organisation's child safeguarding policy.**

> "It feels good to work with VoiceMore because it helps me to make things change. VoiceMore has helped me to develop my intellectual capacity, so I know how to express myself and how to react in certain situations. I feel more able to bring some change, even in a complicated situation. That is basically what I like about the programme, that it has given me such capacities to defend my present and my future."
>
> **Jonathan, 16, Central African Republic**

APPLICATION PROCESS

There are many ways a young person could apply for the programme. **Make sure that you are not asking for an application method that will exclude some young people**; for example, asking for a written application will exclude those who cannot read or write. Below are some of the ways young people could 'apply':

- Express an interest verbally to a staff member
- Be referred from another source (e.g., a community organisation suggests some young people who are interested in joining)
- A text message or phone call to an agreed number
- A short note or message confirming interest

Think about what the most accessible and appropriate ways to recruit are going to be for your context. For example, you could **advertise the opportunity verbally** in spaces in the community where young people can be found, **then invite them to a meeting to hear more detail about what the programme entails**.

Another option would be to ask **community leaders to reach out to young people in their area and invite them all to hear more about the programme**. If you are going to work with external groups or community leaders, however, be clear about what the process will be and **be careful to avoid any potential favouritism or nepotism**. For example, those referring young people might only put forward their own family members, or in a group meeting, express their personal preferences for who should be selected.

Once a young person has heard more about the programme and you are sure they understand it, then **they can confirm interest to take part, and this confirmation can be considered the 'application'**. Take down their basic details and speak to them and their families again to understand more about the young person and ensure we have consent (if needed) from relevant carers or family members. (For further information, see consent section of this handbook.)

SELECTION CRITERIA

There should be **no criteria for joining other than interest in and commitment to the programme**. Young people need to:

- Understand the programme is quite long and be willing to commit to the whole duration.
- Be interested in working in a team with other young people.
- Have an interest in learning about advocacy and trying to change something in their community.
- Be willing to work respectfully and in an open-minded way with others.

The overarching aim during selection should be ensuring the group is representative of the local community. This will, therefore, normally mean a 50/50 split between male and female members and ensuring the group represents the local community proportionally in other ways, e.g., ethnic groups, religious groups, etc. (Unless there are cultural or risk related reasons that might hinder this or make this kind of group make-up too risky – see chapter on context and risk analysis.)

In addition, War Child is also committed to respecting the humanitarian principles and the principle of independence. The selection of participants must, therefore, remain **autonomous from any political, economic or military objectives**, as this would jeopardise our neutrality and create potential risk. External persons (those outside of War Child) should, therefore, not exert any major influence over who is selected and why.

In areas where there might be few opportunities for young people, there could be lots of interest in the programme. **This needs to be handled carefully to make sure the young people not eventually selected do not feel rejected and resentful.** Make sure the local community **totally understand the programme and what War Child is trying to do** as this well help avoid tension.

If very high numbers of young people are interested, they could be asked to vote among themselves on who should join the programme. If you do try and support this method of recruitment, however, it must be handled sensitively. The wider group must understand it still needs to be representative (e.g., 50% still need to be girls, and people from minority groups need to be included, etc.). Other adults should not be involved in this process, or at least to a limited degree. **Try and work collaboratively with the community during this phase as much as possible.** Think about how the process can be managed to secure wider support and avoid future friction.

INFORMED CONSENT

Informed consent is vital to the programme. Potential participants need to have expressed an interest in taking part and to understand completely what the programme is about and what they can expect before they sign up.

This might mean repeating information about the programme to young people more than once before they formally join, as young people can forget messaging, especially when it is only verbal and not written down. **It is the responsibility of staff to make sure information about the programme is clear and understood.**

It is also imperative young people know what they will and will not get from joining. **It should be stressed that the role is voluntary, and no payment or other material resource will be given in return for their participation.** Young people should be told **what support is included,** however, such as reimbursement of transport costs.

Young people need to be completely clear that **if their circumstances change or they decide they no longer wish to take part in the programme, they can leave at any time, and there will be no negative repercussions for them if they choose to do so.**

For **young people under the age of 18, consent will also be required from care-givers or family**, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Even if a young person does not need family/care-giver consent because they are over 18, you may need to still consider meeting with or speaking to their family. For example, for females in some contexts, it will be challenging for them to join a programme unless their family are first reassured about the programme and their safety.

What is Informed Consent?

'Informed consent' means that before someone agrees to something, they completely understand what it is about and what any consequences or impacts of taking part will be.

If a person has not received all relevant information before they say 'yes' to something, then that is not informed consent.

It is important to remember a young person also has the right to withdraw their consent at any time, before, during or after a programme or activity, and this decision should be respected.

GROUP SIZE

VoiceMore is an intensive and very interactive programme with lots of participatory group activities, such as discussing, presenting and designing, etc. Trying to work with very large numbers of young people in such a way is very challenging. It will take too long to run activities, keeping up concentration levels will be hard, the facilitator will struggle to be able to follow and support all members, and it will be difficult to ensure everyone feels meaningfully engaged.

The ideal size for a VoiceMore group is, therefore, between 10–20 young people. Trying to facilitate trainings and regular meetings with more than 20 young people would be difficult to coordinate and manage. If the numbers are below 10, however, it would make the workload and pressure on those few members much higher and sustaining energy and motivation trickier.

Remember, **while recruiting more than one group is possible, this will increase the workload** as each might choose a different theme for their project. Even if groups do select the same issue to work on, they will still need to coordinate with each other, which will require increased input from support staff.

VoiceMore was not designed to be run with high numbers of young people; however, that does not mean the overall reach and impact of the work is limited. There will be a core group directly impacted by the programme, but because their work will be intended to reach and support other children and youth via their advocacy, the potential wider impacts are much greater. This is why the advocacy element of the programme is so important.

AGE RANGE

Taking part in a programme like VoiceMore will require a certain level of maturity and the ability to engage in fairly complex conceptual thinking. Designing and leading an advocacy project can also be challenging. For this reason, **VoiceMore is not suitable for young children and not recommended anyone under the age of 15**. It is acknowledged that age is not the only determining factor in a person's level of maturity or capacity, but for the purposes of this programme, a minimum age is still required. While no one under the age of 15 should be recruited, consideration still needs to be given to the capacity of those over this age to ensure they are ready to participate.

The overall suitable age range for participation in VoiceMore can be anywhere between 15 – 25. However, groups should not have such a wide range of ages within them. For example, it will not be suitable to have a 15-year-old in the same group as 25-year-old.

Group age ranges are recommended as either between 15 – 17 (older children) or youth (18-25). Remember, under 18s are legally children and over 18s are adults, which means mixing these ages presents some additional safeguarding considerations. Having children in the same group as youth can also create an unequal power balance, with older members exerting more influence and control, which will impact the programme negatively.

In some contexts where War Child works, it will be difficult (or even impossible) to confirm a young person's age. They may not have any birth certificate or know when their date of birth is. This can obviously make recruiting based on suitable age range very challenging. If it is anticipated that this will be the case, carefully consider ways in which this lack of information could be overcome. **Take time to try and validate age (and level of maturity) as best you can.** This might mean speaking to families or other community members. If there is a need to make calculated guesses, still ensure there are no obviously large age gaps between members.

PROGRAMME ATTENDANCE AND GROUP MEMBERSHIP

War Child works in many settings where populations are 'on the move' or transient. Running the programme in such environments could be challenging. **Consideration should be given to the communities you plan to set the programme up in and if they are likely to be able to engage for the kind of timeframes recommended in this handbook.**

Sustaining young people's interest and motivation is also essential to the success of a long-term programme like VoiceMore. If members start to miss lots of sessions, it will make progressing the project challenging and can negatively impact group dynamics; those who missed sessions will not understand where work has got to, while those who are attending more regularly might feel resentful that others in the group are not putting in as much effort.

Work with the young people before the programme starts to discuss what they feel their group rules should be about attendance. Ask them if they feel they should have a rule about how many sessions someone can miss before they should not stay in the programme. **Ask them to create and sign their own in 'group contract' for how they want to work together, stating a commitment to the programme.** Remember that some young people might be struggling with competing priorities in their life, and **non-attendance might be a sign they are struggling to fit the programme around their responsibilities**. Speak to the young people to understand if this is the case and what can be done to help support them.

In all programming with young people, no matter how well organised or supported it might be, it is normal for there to be some drop-out of group members. Young people might decide they are no longer interested in the work, and it is their right to remove themselves if they so wish. If only a couple of people have dropped out, then re-recruitment is probably not needed; **ending up with slightly fewer young people than you started with but who are active and engaged is probably preferable to repeatedly returning to the recruitment and selection phase.** If, however, a large number of young people leave the group, then the re-recruitment of new members will be necessary. Remember, they will need to be supported through the training programmes in the same way the other young people were. Before re-recruiting, also try and work out why so many young people may have left in the first place. This may reflect that something in the programme is not right and a change of approach is required.

CASE STUDY: VOICEMORE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO - THE RECRUITMENT AND USE OF CHILDREN IN ARMED GROUPS

In 2020, War Child started supporting a VoiceMore group in Masisi territory, North Kivu. The group decided to focus their project on the recruitment and use of children and youth into armed groups, as this was the issue they felt most concerned about. Members of the group were particularly concerned about the impacts this has on children, which include injury, disablement, death, and psychological trauma, while those who manage to leave face social exclusion and stigma in their communities.

After completing all of their VoiceMore trainings, the group decided to conduct their own research so they could find out more about what other members of the community thought about the issue and how to it could be prevented. In total, the young people spoke to 278 people, including children, youth, parents, community leaders, civil society representatives, local authority representatives, and some security personnel. War Child also conducted its own review of literature on child recruitment to complement the group's research and understand findings in a more global context.

The young people's research identified poverty, lack of employment and livelihood opportunities, access to education and land to cultivate as the main driving factors to child recruitment in the area. The impacts on the community was found to be recruitment producing high levels of fear: fear of the armed groups attacking communities, of the threat of revenge from the armed groups on children who leave, and the fear communities felt of children who had exited groups. People who participated in the research emphasised the important role family could play in preventing recruitment.

The group conducted advocacy with local leaders and community members to raise awareness and present their recommendations for preventing recruitment and ways to help reintegrate children when they leave. The young people also presented their recommendations at a UK government-supported event on children and armed conflict and participated in two podcasts outlining the need for greater participation of youth in reintegration programme design, presenting suggestions of how to improve existing reintegration programming in DRC. To find out more about the project, visit: **www.warchild.org.uk/our-work/what-we-do/innovative-programmes/voicemore/democratic-republic-of-congo** where you can download their report and listen to the podcasts.

Photo credit: War Child

PART 7

Preventing Risk and Staying Safe

Research and advocacy activities have the potential to be risky for young people if they are not supported and managed correctly. VoiceMore asks young people, often living in volatile areas and in challenging circumstances, to identify problems in their community and take action to try and bring about change. This combination of activities means there is a vital need for careful risk assessment and mitigation throughout the programme, as detailed in the following sections.

RISK ASSESSMENTS

The safety and security of the young people and their community is of paramount importance throughout the programme and should never be compromised for any perceived advocacy or communications opportunity.

All staff are responsible for young people's safety; however, the VoiceMore support person will play a key role in making sure risk is carefully managed and communicating any concerns within their wider team. Young people themselves also share responsibility for their own actions and following mitigation measures, something that needs to be clearly explained to them during their training and before any activities in the community.

When we speak about safety, this refers to the **physical, mental and/or emotional well-being of our staff, the young people in the group, of any other young people they might work with as part of the programme, their families, and the community**. Risk assessments should also consider any potential organisational or reputational damage that may be brought about by an activity.

It must be recognised that both risk and vulnerability are not static; they will not stay the same throughout the project. This means **risk assessments are something that need to be happen throughout the programme life cycle, and they need to be responsive to changing environments and contexts**. Consider vulnerability both now and in the future and how it might change for members of the group or others.

At an absolute minimum, in-depth risk assessments will need to be done and signed off for the following situations:

- Before the training phase, including the venue, travel, safeguarding, interaction with and between youth, etc.
- When deciding where regular meetings are to take place, including the space to be used, the immediate environment, how young people are going to get there, etc.
- When the young people decide on the advocacy theme for their project.
- When the young people plan their research activities in the local community. A risk assessment will need to be done for each activity to ensure the right risk mitigation measures are in place.
- As the young people define their advocacy strategy and targets: the risks of approaching certain groups or individuals, etc.
- For every event that requires travel outside the local community, new venues, with overnight stays, or when there is a change in the context, e.g., elections, conflict resurgence.

Participatory risk assessments are extremely beneficial in youth programmes, particularly in challenging contexts. **Once young people have completed their training, make sure they are consulted on the risk assessments the organisation carries out.** The VoiceMore support staff's role must include drawing attention to, and helping young people comprehend, possible negative consequences or risks associated with their advocacy action.

PART 7: PREVENTING RISK AND STAYING SAFE

Reasons for young people to be involved in this process are:

- Young people will know their area well and may have access to information that staff teams do not.
- Participants might be more conscious of or concerned about certain risks than War Child.
- Young people might not have considered some of the risks War Child raises.
- Compliance to risk prevention measures will be greater if young people understand the rationale behind them.

Jointly conducting risk assessments with the young people will help ensure everyone is clear about what is going to be possible and not possible during the programme. **Learning how to analyse risk is also a helpful skill that young people can use outside of the programme** in other areas of their day-to-day lives.

Remember that perceptions of risk are personal and cultural. They are also influenced by the environment and circumstances a person grows up in. **For young people who are growing up in an area of instability, their personal threshold of what they consider 'risky' might be much higher compared to those in other places. This, however, should never influence risk mitigation measures and planning**. Even if a young person or group insist they are comfortable with a certain level of risk, that does not mean an activity should go ahead.

All VoiceMore activity must operate on a 'do no harm' basis. Once everyone is satisfied with measures to manage any risks, the group should be informed of these parameters and further planning can take place. **Managers should also ensure that VoiceMore support staff are sufficiently appraised of, and linked into, wider security discussions** within their organisation in case any changes to security affect planned activities.

If the environment where the project is being delivered is very challenging and several activities the young people suggest cannot go ahead, **remember that some of the most powerful advocacy happens in quieter spaces – behind closed doors in meetings, in anonymous information sent on behalf of an unknown group (rather than directly presented), or taking evidence and testimony to international decision-making spaces**. Help the groups appreciate the value of advocacy action outside their communities, as it might not seem as tangible or meaningful to them straight away.

Finally, if during the VoiceMore programme there are 'near misses' (where something serious did not happen but could have), this should be documented for future learning. **Not documenting and discussing near misses means losing a valuable opportunity to learn and stop future harm.** Ensure young people are safe, and discuss this incident with your team. You also need to involve the young people in these discussions so they are clear about any future constraints to activities.

Finally, if anything did happen that could directly or indirectly harm a child or young person, **this should be reported as soon as possible as a safeguarding concern/incident**.

ASSESSING INDIVIDUAL NEEDS

Participation in certain activities could be riskier for some young people than others. This could be due to one or several compounding factors, such as age, gender, disability, or even something as simple as the distance they must travel to get to the activity site. **When analysing the risks associated with any activities being planned, also consider any heightened risks particular members of the group might face and what can be done to help lessen or avoid these.** It will be important for the VoiceMore staff to work with the young person to identify these needs and adapt activities based on them.

It can be helpful to conduct a simple personal needs assessment. This should be done sensitively directly with the young person/persons. **Remember, if a young person does have additional support needs, this should never serve to exclude them from the programme; instead, reasonable adjustments should be made.**

SAFEGUARDING AND PREVENTING SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND ABUSE

Safeguarding and Preventing Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) is an important part of VoiceMore. Young people who join the programme should never be exposed to any form of abuse or exploitation from other programme participants, staff, volunteers, or associates. **In conflict affected settings, it is likely many young people who participate in programmes have compounded vulnerabilities, which increases their risk of this abuse. It is essential that organisations running the programme have all the necessary policies and practices in place to adequately protect and support young people taking part and any other children or youth the programme might interact with.** This includes having safeguarding and PSEA policies, codes of conduct, and reporting and investigating mechanisms in place.

Relationships Between Youth

As a group of adolescents and young adults, it is possible that relationships between programme participants could form over the course of the programme. It is important VoiceMore staff ensure the following:

- **Relationships are consensual:** Both people are involved in the relationship because they want to be. They are doing so willingly, without pressure and in a way they are happy with. The VoiceMore programme looks at what informed consent is, both at the programme start and during the research phase. As consent also applies to personal relationships in our lives, those sessions might be a good time to raise this and emphasise how important consent is to healthy partnerships.
- **Relationships are age-appropriate:** If there is a known relationship between one member of the group who is under 18 and one who is over 18, staff should take into account relevant national laws and their organisation's own policies. Regardless of national law, relationships should always be consensual, and if staff suspect this might not be the case, they will need to ensure this is carefully managed in line with child protection and safeguarding protocols. This should be done in a sensitive manner, which takes into account gender sensitivities.
- **Relationships are not with staff:** Staff members should never engage in a relationship with a programme participant, even if the participant is an adult or has finished the programme. **Even if the person is over the legal age of consent, relationships between staff and programme participants are not appropriate.** If you suspect a staff member is in a relationship with a programme participant, this should be reported to your safeguarding team.

In some of the contexts in which VoiceMore takes place, LGBTQ+ relationships are illegal and/or stigmatised. In all contexts, organisations should act to support the best interests of the young person and adhere to the 'do no harm' principle. Therefore, **if a staff member becomes aware of a VoiceMore participant being in an LGBTQ+ relationship, the information should be kept confidential**, recognising that by reporting them to authorities, they would be exposing the young person to potential abuse and harm. **However, as with any relationship, if the staff member is concerned about the relationship being abusive, it should still be reported to the organisation's safeguarding team.**

REPORTING MECHANISMS

As part of the safeguarding for VoiceMore, supporting organisations should have established reporting mechanisms in the case of an incident occurring. **VoiceMore staff should work with the safeguarding and protection teams to make sure the programme is also aligning with these.**

- **Young people in the group will need to know that they can report any concerns regarding abuse of others, or if they are experiencing any abuse themselves, to the organisation.** During the introductory sessions of the programme, speak to the group about this and make sure they understand. Explain the different ways they can report. Also ask them for their feedback on how child/youth friendly they feel these ways are (and any other methods they think would work well for children and youth). Remember, when facilitating this process, that suggestions must allow for confidential reporting accessible by everyone in the group, e.g., a comments box in an office will not work if there are illiterate youth, if the room is not accessible for young people with disabilities, or if the box cannot be accessed without asking a staff member to use it.

Do not forget:

- Do not investigate the concern yourself, and do not ask probing questions to the young person if they are directly disclosing abuse to you.
- You must only report the concern/incident to your safeguarding staff member or focal point. Do not tell anyone else about the allegations.
- Do not promise confidentially to the young person. Explain you must report to another person in order to keep them safe.
- If you suspect the young person is in immediate danger, get them to safety first.


Photo credit: Arete

PART 8

VoiceMore Methodology

HOW TO USE THESE TRAINING MATERIALS

Session plans contained in this guide are to be **delivered in sequence and as a full package**; collectively, they will help provide a strong foundation of confidence and understanding the group's ongoing advocacy projects can build on. **Cutting out sections, only partly delivering activities, or leaving unnecessarily long-gaps between trainings and phases will reduce learning potential**, young people's readiness for the activity, and the overall quality of the programme.

Before embarking on VoiceMore, therefore, make sure you:

- **Read this guide and the session plans thoroughly before starting**, and make sure other supporting staff also do so.
- Make sure each training component is delivered to all necessary supporting staff and participating young people.
- While sessions can be adapted for group based on needs, do not cut any out entirely from the programme.
- Sessions should be delivered in the order outlined in this pack.
- Have enough time factored in for each training component and phase.
- Suggested times for each activity are given; however, these are flexible and should be adapted for the group if needed.
- Each activity has a suggestion for young people with low or no literacy. Facilitators need to ensure they consider in advance how to make the session accessible for the young people they are working with.

Daily Evaluation During Trainings

In the suggested training timetables, there is time set aside at the end of each day for a quick evaluation and feedback. **It is up to the facilitator to decide how to organise this.** It could be a group discussion, participants could discuss their feedback in pairs, or more formal methods of feedback could be used, for example, filling out anonymous forms. For ideas on quick evaluation techniques, speak to your monitoring and evaluation team (see the monitoring and evaluation chapter for more guidance). For end-of-training evaluations, more formal sessions are suggested in specific session plans.

> "During conflicts, children are totally lost. Some children are hurt, and most of them are not protected at all. Since I have been with VoiceMore, I have learnt a lot of things that have encouraged me and given me the strength to keep on going. To defend the rights of other children everywhere in the world."
>
> **Rose, 16, Central African Republic**

DELIVERING QUALITY TRAINING – TIPS FOR FACILITATORS

Delivering quality training to young people requires good facilitation skills. **The VoiceMore training should not be like 'school'!** Sessions are designed to be interactive and to encourage participants to think for themselves. It is well known that we can learn more effectively when we are encouraged to find answers to questions rather than just being told them. Likewise, discussing how to do something and then practicing it helps people remember things better. Below are some top tips for delivering quality training.

Prepare, prepare, prepare! A good facilitator should know the sessions inside out. If you have not read the session plans properly before the activity, you will find it much harder to deliver the training, and the quality of the programme will be affected. Make sure you allow enough time to read over materials and prepare resources. You will also need to create a planned timetable for each day of the training to help guide you and ensure you stick to your times. At the start of the training, share an overview of the day with the young people so they know what to expect.

Adapt sessions as necessary. Before you start, think about the young people in your group: Will you need to adapt anything from the session plans? For groups with no or low literacy, this is especially important. You will need to find ways to adjust the sessions so there is no or less reading and writing involved (see 'adapting the programme' section for more detail).

'Read' the room. A good facilitator is observant. You should be watching the group through all activities to see how energy levels are and to spot those that might need more support. If you are not paying attention to the group and how they are interacting and working together, you will not understand how the group dynamics are developing. As facilitator and their support, it is important you can see and understand how relationships and team-work are developing in the room.

Energy and focus. If the facilitator of the training does not have any positive energy and is not focused, then the rest of the participants will also not have any either! A facilitator's energy levels have a big influence on how the training will feel. Make sure you are conscious of how you are coming across to the young people. They will take your lead in engagement, focus and energy.

Adequate breaks. Think about when you will take breaks in the training. It will be important for young people to get a short rest after each couple of sessions or between longer ones. Be careful of frequency and length – too short, and it will feel very rushed; too long, and people start to lose energy and focus.

Layout of space. Good facilitators think about the layout of the room they are running their training in, as this can support learning and participation or hinder it. Rooms should not be organised in a 'school style', with chairs in rows and people sat at desks. During group discussions, use a circle formation, and in breakout sessions, encourage young people to use a similar formation. Make sure everyone can see and hear. De-clutter the room and post flip-chart sheets and notes on the walls as reminders of what they have done.

Summarising and reminding. A facilitator's role is not to 'tell' or give the answers but to help young people find answers and conclusions themselves (see staff training session plan 'Facilitation Versus Teaching'). To help the group stay focused, you should summarise the points they have made and paraphrase these to help remind them. At the end of each session, it is also helpful to ask participants themselves to summarise the main points they came up with to help them stick in their minds.

Keep flip-chart sheets and records of each session. Make sure you keep the flip-chart sheets from the training sessions, as these are useful evidence and records of the work participants have done. Later in the project, when they are writing up any activity, these will be needed. When repoprting to donors, they can be great evidence. Finally, the young people will need chances to remind themselves of what they have done, and the sheets will be helpful.

Seek feedback. It will be important to check how participants finding the training and any suggestions they have for improving it. Feedback and suggestions should be sought at the end of each training day and then via a more structured activity at the end of training. Creating space for honest feedback will also help build trust for the rest of the programme and make sure participants know their thoughts and feelings are valued.

Finally, make it fun! The trainings sessions are a chance for the young people to get to know each other and make friends. While participants will need to pay attention during these activities, it should not be too serious all the time. The VoiceMore group will work better together if there is a good feeling and rapport between members, so do not be afraid to make time for fun and laughter!

Games and Energisers

Icebreakers and energisers are essential to good participatory programming with children and youth. They help young people build relationships important for team working, increase energy levels before, during and after sessions, keep concentration levels higher, and help young people release tension after activities where they have had to concentrate for a long time.

- Make sure you have set aside time during the training for 'getting to know you' games at the start of the programme to help young people feel more comfortable as a group and build friendships.
- Use energisers at the start of training days or regular meetings. Also, use one after lunch and breaks when energy levels can be low.
- Before you start the training, prepare a set of different icebreakers and energisers you could use. Make sure they are culturally appropriate and suitable for the group. Ask young people what games they know and like, too.

> "Some care-givers, whenever these children are sick, they don't take them to hospital because they feel ashamed accompanying a child who has dressed in very dirty old clothes to hospital with fear that health personnel will quarrel with them for dressing a child poorly. They often send the children alone. Unfortunately, when the child reaches the hospital, they are then just sent back to their care-givers and do not receive any treatment at all."
>
> **VoiceMore Participant, Uganda Protection of separated and orphaned children project**

CASE STUDY: BEATRICE

"Before the VoiceMore program, I was under-informed about the rights of children and young people. My life was worthless because I had no contribution to someone's life. I neglected the other young people in the neighborhood, I did not know how to speak in groups, and I feared the masses. But when I came to participate in the VoiceMore programme and became a spokesperson, I changed all the bad thinking I had. My behavior changed, I started to collaborate with others, I learned how to live in a group, I learned the know-how, and I had a good morals.

After the programme, I am sure that I will be an example for the other young people in the neighborhood and share with them all the experiences I had to benefit from in the group and in the VoiceMore programme. I will start advising other children and young people that their life is not to be associated with armed groups but to go to school and stay with their respective families."

Beatrice, 21, Democratic Republic of the Congo

Photo credit: Ellie King

PART 9

VoiceMore Staff Training

OVERVIEW

Support staff should not start working with VoiceMore groups before they have completed the full VoiceMore staff training package contained in this chapter.

The training **should be delivered by someone with experience in youth engagement and in facilitating training**.

Please note, **the staff training is designed to be delivered to a small group**, as this will help stimulate thinking, the sharing of ideas and ensure a more dynamic learning experience.

As the number of direct VoiceMore staff might be low, most likely just one or two people, **it is recommended to include wider staff in the training**. This could be those who work with young people in other programmes, staff with linked responsibilities and line managers who will also have responsibility for the programme. Inviting members from the wider team will also provide other benefits. **Many of the sessions are applicable to youth programmes in general,** and if more members of a team understand the work and what it is trying to achieve, it is more likely to be successful.

This chapter contains the below session plans:

Session 1	Introduction to the training and VoiceMore
Session 2	'Agree – Disagree'
Session 3	Understanding Participation
Session 4	'Power Steps'
Session 5	Informed Consent and Setting Group Expectations
Session 6	'Comfort, Stretch, Panic' Theory
Session 7	Safeguarding, Confidentiality and Data Protection
Session 8	Participatory Risk Assessments and Risk Mitigation
Session 9	Experiential Learning and Facilitation
Session 10	Facilitation Skills Role Play
Session 11	Practice Sessions - VoiceMore Programme
Session 12	Training Evaluation

Please note, the following timetables can be adapted depending on the needs of the group; training days can be shortened and activities spread over a longer period of time. However, make sure they are still delivered in the same order as outlined here, and do not leave long gaps between training days as ideas will be forgotten, making building on learning from one session to the next challenging.

SUGGESTED TIMETABLE FOR DELIVERY

STAFF TRAINING: DAY ONE

Time	Session	Objectives
9am - 11.30am	**Introductions to Training and VoiceMore**	• To make sure everyone understands programme aims, structure and expectations regarding participation. • Understand the expectations of the training participants. • Understand how the role of the staff changes throughout the VoiceMore training.
11.30am - 12pm	**Break**	
12pm - 1pm	**'Agree – Disagree'**	• To stimulate discussion and create energy for the programme. • For the facilitator to get a sense of the different attitudes, beliefs and values of staff prior to the programme starting. • To introduce some wider questions and topics.
1pm - 2pm	**Lunch**	
2pm - 3pm	**Understanding Participation**	• To frame what 'participation' really means and build an understanding and awareness among support staff. • To ensure staff are aware of the different levels of participation and what they might look like in practice.
3pm - 3.30pm	**Break**	
3.30pm - 4.30pm	**'Power Steps'**	• To get the group reflecting on the importance of power in society and how a lack of it can limit your ability to do certain things, including participating. • To emphasise how age, life-stage, gender, disability, ethnicity, and other factors can influence this.
4.30pm - 5pm	**Questions, Evaluation and Feedback**	• To round off the the day and make sure key points are understood. • Feedback to help shape the next stages of the programme and work moving forward.

STAFF TRAINING: DAY TWO

Time	Session	Objectives
9am - 9.15am	**Welcome and Overview of the Day**	• To set expectations. • Recap of the first day.
9.15am - 10.15am	**Informed Consent and Setting Group Expectations**	• To ensure support staff understand the importance of informed consent both for young people in the group and any other children who may take part. • To discuss how to set group expectations and ensure the programme is inclusive for every member of their group.
10.15am - 11.15am	**'Comfort. Stretch, Panic' Theory**	• To help participants consider how challenging the programme should be for young people. • To help them reflect on the signs that young people might be finding it too difficult or too easy.
11.15am - 11.30am	**Break**	
11.30am - 1pm	**Safeguarding, Confidentiality and Data Protection**	• To make sure staff understand expectations regarding safety and safeguarding in the programme. • To make sure staff understand basic principles of confidentiality and data protection they will need to follow.
1pm - 2pm	**Lunch**	
2pm - 3pm	**Participatory Risk Assessment and Risk Mitigation**	• To ensure staff understand what risk assessment is, how it applies to a programme like VoiceMore, and what is expected of staff supporting groups. • Support participants in thinking through different risks and how to assess them.
3pm - 3.30pm	**Break**	
3.30pm - 4pm	**Participatory Risk Assessment and Risk Mitigation - Continued**	• To ensure staff understand what risk assessment is, how it applies to a programme like VoiceMore, and what is expected of staff supporting groups. • Support participants in thinking through different risks and how to assess them.
4pm - 4.30pm	**Questions, Evaluation and Feedback**	• To round off day and make sure key points understood. • Feedback to help shape next stages of training.

PART 9: VOICEMORE STAFF TRAINING

STAFF TRAINING: DAY THREE

Time	Session	Objectives
9am - 9.15am	**Welcome and Overview of Day**	• To set expectations. • Recap of the first day.
9.15am - 10.45am	**Experiential Learning and Facilitation**	• Build knowledge of experiential learning and its relevance to participatory programming. • Start to explore how it impacts on facilitation techniques and approaches.
10.45am - 11.15am	**Break**	
11.15am - 12.15pm	**Facilitation Skills Role Play**	• To help embed learning from previous sessions. • A practice opportunity for participants to reflect on their own strengths and weaknesses in facilitation.
12.15pm - 1.15pm	**Lunch**	
1.15pm - 3.15pm	**Practice Sessions – VoiceMore Programme**	• Support familiarisation with the programme approach and content of young people's training components. • Emphasise the importance of following the handbook in programme delivery.
3.15pm - 4.15pm	**Closing Evaluation**	• Final questions and feedback. • Group reflection on learning.

STAFF TRAINING SESSION PLANS

SESSION ONE: INTRODUCTION TO TRAINING AND VOICEMORE

Total Duration: 2 hours

Learning Objectives:
- To clarify what the training will entail and offer a chance to express any concerns and expectations.
- To make sure everyone understands the programme, including its aims, structure, and participatory approach.

Materials required: Flip-chart paper and pens, VoiceMore summary document (translated version) and hard copies of the VoiceMore Handbook.

Time	Description
15 mins	**Part One: Introduction** Start by welcoming everyone and offer an overview of how the training will be organised over the coming days. (It can be helpful to print off a copy of the timetable and show this to the group.)
30 mins	**Part Two: 'Hopes and Fears' Activity** *Note to facilitator: Keep hold of the post-it notes because they will be needed on the last day of the training during evaluation.* Explain that before we start, we are going to think about what our hopes and fears for the training. Hand out post-it notes to each person in two colours. Ask them to write on one colour anything that concerns them about the training or about what they will be doing on the training. On the other colour post-it notes, ask them to write things they are excited about in the training, including what they want to learn and gain. Allow some quiet time for everyone to complete this task. When ready, take all the post-it notes and group the 'fears' and 'hopes' separately on the wall. Take some time to read these over and discuss each with the group. Try to alleviate any of the fears expressed. What can be done to make sure that does not happen? Acknowledge the hopes the group have, as these will help you understand what they want to get out of the training (and can be reviewed after the training to see if they were all met).
30 mins	**Part Three: Working Together** Ask the group to set their own group rules (how they want to interact and work together during sessions). Ask them to jointly discuss and decide these before recording them on a flip-chart sheet for reference. Bring the group back together and ask them to quickly present what they decided. If not already covered by the group, emphasise the training should be a space where people feel comfortable to ask questions, share ideas, and develop learning together. This will require everyone's participation and focus. Although it is tempting to look at our phones, ask participants to try and keep their phones on silent and away in their pocket or bag so they are not distracted or distract others during sessions.
45 mins	**Part Four: Programme Overview** Hand out the translated VoiceMore Programme Summary sheets and allow everyone time to read it over. Explain the objectives of the programme and give an overview of what each phase of the programme entails.

Time	Description
45 mins	**Part Four: Programme Overview Continued...** When finished, present some examples of previous VoiceMore projects. This can include showing them the War Child website pages, watching some VoiceMore videos, and looking over reports from previous groups' projects. Have hard copies of the VoiceMore Handbook available and offer these to participants to read over in their own time. Ensure those who will be primarily responsible for the programme have their own copies to keep for reference. Before finishing, allow time for questions. Are there any aspects of the programme methodology that are not clear? Are there any parts of the programme they think are exciting or aspects that would concern them? Facilitate a short discussion and offer clarifications as needed.

SESSION TWO: 'AGREE – DISAGREE'

Total Duration: 1 hour

Learning Objectives:
- To stimulate discussion and create energy for the programme.
- For the facilitator to get a sense of the different attitudes, beliefs, and values of staff prior to the programme starting.
- To introduce some wider questions and topics.

Materials required: None, but have the below statements for the group printed and available for the trainer to read.

Time	Description
10 mins	**Part One: Introduction** Participants are asked to imagine there is an invisible line across the room. Explain that one end of the line means 'strongly agree' while the other end stands for 'strongly disagree'. Explain that you are going to read out a set of statements, and they need to go and stand in a place along the line that represents their views. They will then be asked to explain why they stood at that point on the line.
40 mins	**Part Two: Debate** Read out the statements one at a time. Facilitate a discussion around each statement, exploring differing opinions and perspectives. Carefully negotiate contentious subjects. Do introduce different viewpoints (by playing 'devil's advocate') if views end up being very one-sided. • Young people should be allowed to make decisions for themselves. • Children do not know what they need. • We should call all people under 18 'children'. • Children are more vulnerable that adults. • The most important thing for young people to do is listen. • Young people play an important part in shaping our society.
10 mins	**Part Three: Debrief** After the last statement, draw the session to a close by asking if anyone was surprised at the views in the room. Have they changed their perspectives on anything after hearing what others had to say? Ask how they think some of the statements might be relevant to a programme like VoiceMore.

SESSION THREE: UNDERSTANDING PARTICIPATION

Total Duration: 1 hour

Learning Objectives:
- To explore the meaning of the term 'participation' in programming and build understanding and awareness among staff.
- To ensure staff consider different levels of participation and what they might look like in practice.

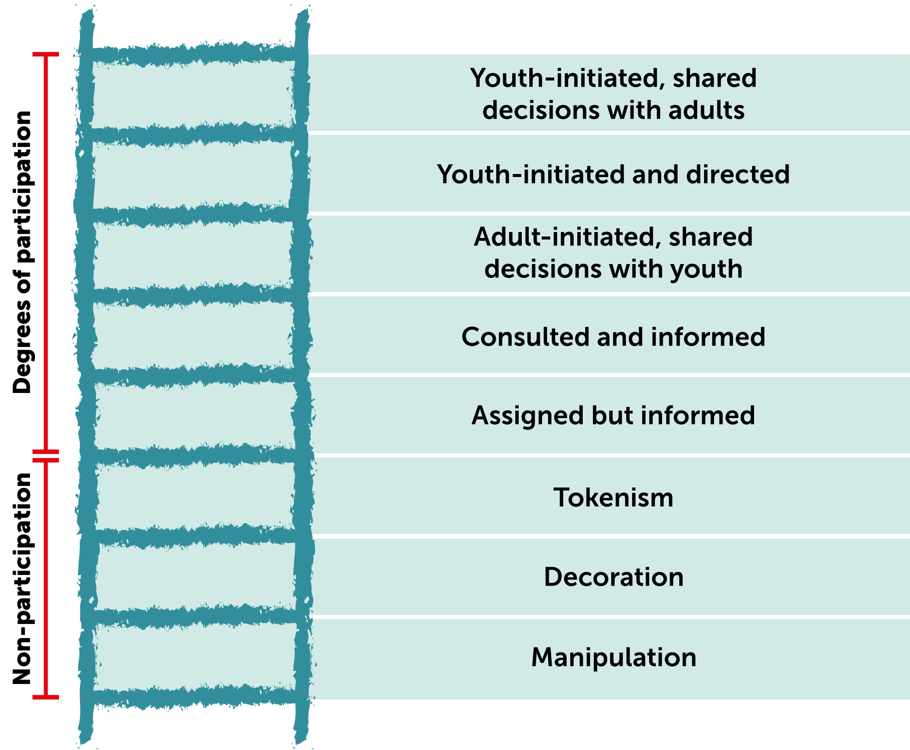
Materials required:
- A translated and printed copy of the ladder diagram.
- Statements for the activity, translated, printed, and cut into individual strips. You will need one set per pair. It can be helpful to put each set of strips in an envelope beforehand to keep them from getting muddled with other copies.

Time	Description
15 mins	**Part One: Introduction**

Explain to the group: *In the last few decades, 'participatory' approaches have become increasingly important to organisations working with children and youth. The term 'participation' gets used a lot, but now we are going to explore what this means.*

Hand out a translated copy of the Ladder of Participation (as below).

LADDER OF YOUTH PARTICIPATION



Adapted from Hart, R. (1992). Children's Participation from Tokenism to Citizenship Florence: UNICEF Innocent Research Centre.

Split the group into pairs and give them ten minutes to look at and discuss the diagram. Bring pairs back and let them know they will next look at different ways adults and young people might interact on a project and where that would be on the ladder.

Time	Description
20 mins	**Part Two: Sorting the Statements**

Explain we are now going to look at some statements that describe different ways adults could interact or work with young people on a project. You will hand out a set of statements, and they need to organise them in order of how participatory they think they are.

Hand out the cut-out strips of paper with each of the descriptions below. Ask participants to get back into their pairs and take ten minutes to discuss and organise the statements.

PHOTOCOPY AND CUT OUT

Young people design, organise and coordinate their own project. Adults are only involved if the young people ask them for help.

Young people organise their own project and take the lead in decision-making but with support from adults.

Young people organise a project, and decision-making is shared between them and adults equally.

Adults talk to the young people and carefully consider their viewpoints and opinions. The adults make sure they definitely take the young people's views into account before they make decisions.

Adults invite young people to give their ideas for the project but then make decisions on their own terms.

Adults decide on all aspects of the project; then, afterwards, young people are allowed to input into small, unimportant aspects of the work.

Adults decide on all aspects of the project, and young people are invited to sing, dance and perform at some point during it.

Adults decide what to do on the project, and children are asked if they agree (but feel pressured to agree).

Adults rule and make decisions about the project. Children are told what will happen, with an explanation and reasons why.

Adults rule and make all decisions about the project. Children are told what they must do.

Note - the above statements are in order from top to bottom. This is the order the pairs should try and find.

25 mins	**Part Three: Debrief** Invite the pairs to show what they have come up with. Re-organise strips if required. Then, facilitate a discussion about what different 'levels' might look like in practice, particularly: • Thinking about projects they have done with children and youth before where might they sit on the ladder? • Would it always be suitable to be at the top of the ladder? • When might it not be suitable? • What are the negative things about the bottom of the ladder? • What are the challenges of trying to get to the top of it? Explain that levels of participation can vary; they might be suitable for work with some young people some of the time, but not all of the time. Levels of participation will also depend on capacity; higher levels will be more realistic with older children, adolescents, or young adults. All participation is also dependant on young people being interested and willing to take part, You cannot force or pressure young people to try and achieve higher levels! Ask the group to think back to the morning, when we discussed power in relation to participatory work. How do they think that was relevant to the ladder? Where do they think a programme like VoiceMore should sit on it? What kind of things can they do when they are supporting the project to make sure it is participatory?

SESSION FOUR: 'POWER STEPS'

Total Duration: 1 hour

Learning Objectives:
- To get the group reflecting on the importance of power in society and how a lack of it can limit your ability to do certain things, including participate.
- To emphasise how age, life-stage, gender, disability, ethnicity, and other factors can influence this.

Materials required: Translated and printed profiles listed below, cut into individual strips so each participant gets just one. Do not give more than one to each participant, as this will confuse their ability to move depending on what they think the person in the profile can or cannot do. If there are not enough people in the group for all the profiles, just remove some.

Time	Description
15 mins	**Part One: Introduction** Ask the group to stand side by side in a line in the middle of the room, all facing the same way. Give each person a strip of paper with a description of a person on it. Ask them to read this and keep it to themselves; they should not show or tell anyone else what it says. **Profiles:** • I am a middle-aged businessman. I am not married, and I own my own house. • I am a girl aged 15. I'm not in school, and I live with my family in a refugee camp. • I am an old, elderly man, and I live in a small house in a village where I spent my whole life. My family look after me. • I am a ten-year-old boy, and I live on the street. I survive by cleaning car windscreens, and I sleep there at night with my friends.

15 mins	**Part One: Introduction Continued...** • I am a young man who just got married. I work in an office for an insurance company. • I am a single mother of five children. I work in the market selling vegetables from a small stall. • I am a boy aged 14. I am disabled, and I have to use a wheelchair all of the time. My disability is physical, only my legs are affected. • I am a male politician. I have worked in politics for over 20 years in my city. • I am a little girl aged five. I lost both my parents in an accident, and now I live in an orphanage.
20 mins	**Part Two: Activity** Explain to the group you will now read out some statements, and: ***'If you think the person on their profile could easily do the thing I say, then you should take two steps forward. If you think they might be able to do it, but only sometimes, take one step forward. If you think is not likely they can do it, then you should take one step back. If you think they definitely cannot do it, then you should take two steps back. There is to be no discussion. The exercise must be done in silence.'*** Check the group understand what they need to do before reading out the statements. **Statements to read out:** • When I speak, people listen to me. • I can move freely around wherever I like. • People often ask me for my opinion. • I can make my own decisions without asking anyone else. • It is easy for me to find employment and work outside the house. • I am in control of my own money. • In my family, what I think can change things. • I am in charge of deciding what to do with my time. • I am the person who makes decisions about my future. Allow time for participants to think and move between each question. When you have finished, ask them to take a look around them at where everyone is stood. Ask everyone to stay where they are for the debrief.
25 mins	**Part Three: Debrief** **Facilitate a discussion using the below questions:** • What do you think happened during the activity? • What happened to children and youth during the questions? Where are they standing now? Are they at the front or the back? • What happened to females during the questions? Where are they standing? • What happened to the person with a disability? Where are they standing? • What can the new positions tell us about the power and influence the person in their profile had? • How do you think people at the back might feel about their inability to do the things in the statements?

25 mins	**Part Three: Debrief Continued...** Once everyone has given their thoughts and feedback, summarise by saying this activity is designed to make us think about how things like age, gender, disability, and poverty, etc., will impact the power and influence a person has, including on decision-making in their own lives. Now ask the group how this might also apply to VoiceMore. How can we apply this concept to the programme? Take answers, then explain the programme is about empowering young people. To do this, we need to be aware of the power structures in our society and culture and how, for some people, making decisions and being heard can be more difficult.

SESSION FIVE: INFORMED CONSENT AND SETTING GROUP EXPECTATIONS

Total Duration: 1 hour

Learning Objectives:

- To ensure support staff understand the importance of informed consent, both for young people in the group and any other children who may take part.
- To discuss how to set group expectations and ensure the programme is inclusive of every member of their group.

Materials required: Printed Consent Form. Flip-chart paper and pens.

Time	Description
20 mins	**Part One: What is Consent?** Ask the group to take 15 minutes to work together to draft their own definition of what 'informed consent' is. Ask the group to write a summary on a piece of flip-chart paper once they have agreed. When they are ready, ask a volunteer to present the summary back. Now read out to the group the summary: *'Informed consent means, when we agree to something, we understand completely what it is about, what it will involve, and what the consequences of taking part will be. Informed consent can apply to taking part in something, like a programme, or it can be about handing over personal information, like agreeing to have your story told.'* Facilitate a short discussion: How similar are the definitions? Is there anything present in one and not the other? Check the group understands and take any questions before moving to part two.
15 mins	**Part Two: Reviewing the War Child Consent Form** Show the group War Child's consent form and ask them to take ten minutes reading it over in pairs. When they are ready, bring the pairs back into one group and ask for any thoughts on the form; is there anything they do not understand or that is not clear? If needed, explain how the form works (including how we gain consent for people who cannot read and write, etc.).

25 mins	**Part Three: Gaining and Withdrawing Consent** Break the group into two. Ask one group to take ten minutes discussing at what point in the programme they think it will be necessary to get consent from the young people. What things might happen in the programme that will necessitate this? Ask the second group to take ten minutes discussing if they think young people should be able to withdraw their consent after they have given it. Is that OK, or when might it be OK? Allow both groups time to discuss, then bring them back together into one circle. Ask each group to present their conclusions, then facilitate a discussion around the answers. Confirm that: • For VoiceMore, they will need to get informed consent at the start of the programme. • If there is any media activity, for example, they are going to be interviewed for a newspaper, they will need to seek consent again to see what they are happy with. • Young people can withdraw their consent at any time during the programme. They do not need to give a reason, and we must respect their decision.

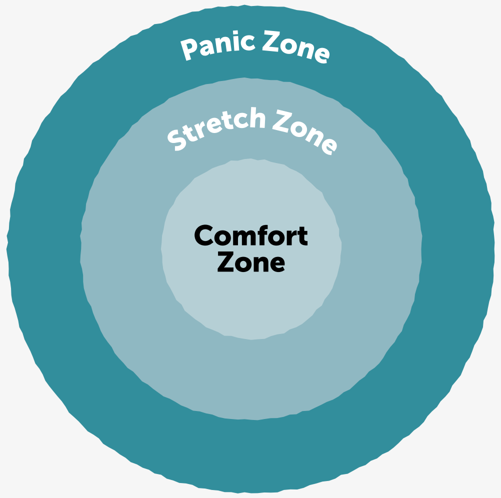
SESSION SIX: 'COMFORT, STRETCH, PANIC' THEORY

Total Duration: 1 hour

Learning Objectives:

- To help participants consider how challenging the programme should be for young people.
- To help them reflect on the signs that young people might be finding it too difficult or too easy to participate.

Materials required: Flip-chart paper and pens. Translated, printed out copies of the diagrams, ideally in colour.

Time	Description
20 mins	**Part One: Introduction to the Model** Bring the group together and explain in the session that we are going to think about how challenging a programme like VoiceMore should be for young people. Show the group the diagram below. Ask them to take five minutes with the person sitting next to them what they think it means. What do they think each circle represents? 

Part One: Introduction to the Model Continued...

When the pairs are ready, bring the group back and take answers.

Explain that the diagram represents the different levels of people's comfort when they are learning[15].

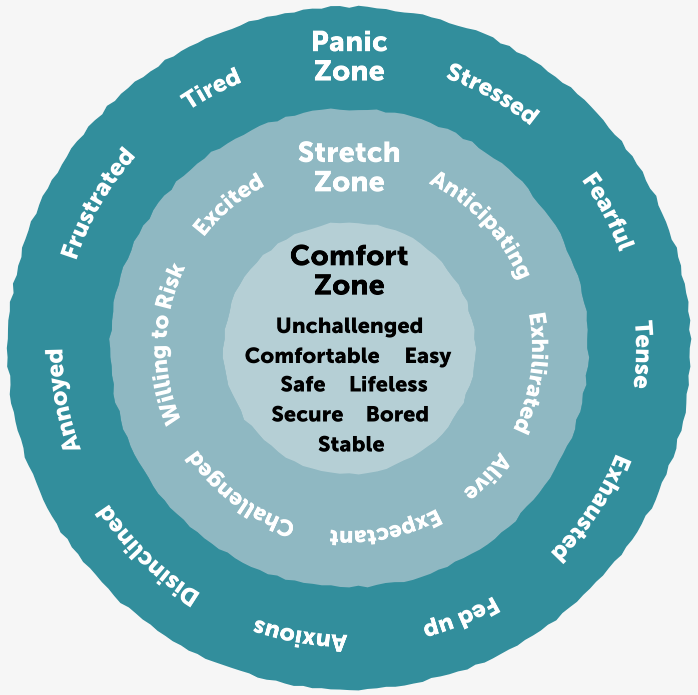
- The inner circle (the 'comfort zone') is where an individual will feel comfortable and safe as things are familiar. Within this zone, there are no challenges to start a learning process. There is little reflection or learning in this 'safe zone' as individuals are unchallenged. Things stay the same, often unquestioned.
- The outside circle (the 'panic zone') is when a person feels very uncomfortable and overwhelmed. In this zone, we experience stress, fear and challenge in a way that makes learning impossible. All our energy is spent on managing and controlling our fear and panic.

Check the group understand the above explanations. Then, ask what they think the 'stretch' zone therefore represents?

Take ideas, then explain to the group:

- The middle circle ('stretch') represents activities that might feel unfamiliar, but you do not feel panicked or bored by them. In this zone, positive learning can occur. It is the zone where you can 'stretch' yourself to try or learn something new. A person in this zone will feel challenged, but what they are doing does not make them panicked or stressed. This is the best zone for positive learning and personal development.

Now show the group the more detailed version of the model below. Ask them to get back into their pairs and take ten minutes discussing the different emotions and feelings listed for each zone. Can they remember a time when they were learning and felt themselves experiencing any of these zones?



15 Ryan, A. and Markova, D. 2006

Part One: Introduction to the Model Continued...

Allow the pairs time to discuss and then bring them back together as a group. Take thoughts and feedback on the model and check everyone understands the concept before moving on to the second part of the session.

20 mins

Part Two: Relevance for VoiceMore

Explain we are now going to start thinking about how we can apply this concept to a programme like VoiceMore. Ask the group why they think we might need to consider these learning zones when we are supporting the programme.

Take ideas, then explain:

'For young people who have never taken part in something like VoiceMore before or have never undertaken any advocacy, the programme could be challenging at times. For example, speaking in front of someone important can be intimidating and scary.

It will be important to make sure young people feel like they are stretching themselves to learn new things, but not so much they are in the 'panic' zone. This does not mean they should avoid challenging activities, just that we need to make sure they are ready.

We also do not want the programme to be so easy that they never come outside their comfort zone. If they stay in that zone for too much of the programme, then they could get bored or demotivated.'

Check the group understand, then ask: Will everyone's zones be the same? Are young people in the group likely to have the same comfort, stretch and panic zones?

Facilitate a short discussion around this. Explain that the young people as individuals will have their own thresholds, and we need to be mindful of this. They will need support to build up confidence so they can increase their 'stretch' zone over time.

20 mins

Part Three: Signs and Signals

Now split the group into two, and ask each group to take ten minutes discussing what they think the signs and signals could be that a young person is in each of the zones.

What kind of things might a young person say or do if they are in the panic zone? What might indicate to us they are stuck in their comfort zone? How can we tell if they are feeling challenged and stretched in a good way? Give each group a sheet of flip-chart paper to make notes.

Allow time for groups to discuss and decide, then bring back together and ask each to present what they have come up with. Finish by facilitating a discussion around what we might do to help young people come back to a positive stretch learning zone. What do they think could help with this?

SESSION SEVEN: SAFEGUARDING, CONFIDENTIALITY AND DATA PROTECTION

Total Duration: 1 hour 30 mins

Learning Objectives:

- To make sure staff understand expectations regarding safeguarding in the programme.
- To make sure staff understand the basic principles of confidentiality and data protection they will need to follow.

Materials required: Flip-chart and pens.

Time	Description
10 mins	**Part One: Introduction** Note to facilitator: All new starters to War Child should receive training in safeguarding and confidentiality/data protection before they start work. This training session is not designed to supplant this training. It is focused on recapping on aspects of safeguarding and data protection policy and practising and relating it to VoiceMore specifically. All staff should have completed their basic War Child training before they undertake training for VoiceMore. Explain to the group that in this session, we are going to look at safeguarding and confidentiality at War Child, particularly in relation to VoiceMore. Break the group into three, with each one representing one of the following: 1. Children and young people 2. Parents, garegivers, and family 3. Staff/facilitators Ask groups to remember their profile for the next part of the session.
25 mins	**Part Two: Reporting Safeguarding Concerns** Ask the three groups to now spend 15 minutes discussing how they think their profile should report a safeguarding concern, i.e.: How should children report? How should parents and families report? How should staff report? What should each do? Allow time for the groups to discuss for their profiles, then bring them back into a circle together. Ask a volunteer from each group to summarise what was discussed. If not covered, emphasise that: • Young people in VoiceMore can tell us if they are worried about their safety or the safety of another child or young person, and if they do, we must act on that information. • In the VoiceMore, there are sessions on safeguarding and confidentiality that cover this (which all VoiceMore staff will need to deliver). • Parents, care-givers and families should also be able to approach an organisation to report concerns, and if they do, we still need to act on them. This includes any adults involved in VoiceMore or related to young people in the programme, etc. • If a staff member receives a concern or disclosure, it is essential they escalate this as soon as they can to the safeguarding person in their team. If participants have questions that need to be explored in more depth or that you cannot answer, follow-up with the person in charge of safeguarding for your team or organisation.

25 mins	**Part Three: Remembering Confidentiality** Ask participants what they remember about the topic of confidentiality in relation to safeguarding. What do they think confidentiality means in relation to disclosures and reporting concerns? Take answers and facilitate a short discussion. Then emphasise to the group: *'You cannot promise confidentiality if someone makes a disclosure, but you can say only people essential to investigating the concern will be told.'* Explain to participants this applies to all safeguarding reportin, but should be distinguished from other areas of confidentiality in the programme. For example, during the research phase, they will gather information from respondents on issues and will need to ensure their confidentiality is maintained. For example, this means not sharing data without it being anonymised. If, however, during the research, they receive a disclosure or hear something that concerns them about a child or young person, this would still require attention and follow-up. If this happens, they should follow the safeguarding procedures.
30 mins	**Part Four: Data Protection** Explain to participants we are now going to focus on data protection in VoiceMore, what they need to think about and do, with all the information they gather and use. Check with the group they have seen and been introduced to their organisation's data protection policy. Ask the group to work together to discuss what kind of data they think they might collect and need during VoiceMore. Allow around ten minutes for them to do this. When ready, bring the group back and ask them to present what they decided. If not included, suggest the following: • Personal information regarding participants, for example, their names, ages, contact addresses, and phone numbers, etc. • Consent forms for VoiceMore participants. • Information gathered during the research phase of the programme, such as: consent forms, details of respondents for case studies, focus groups, or files with feedback on, such as recordings. • Details of stakeholders contacted during the advocacy phase and person correspondence from them during advocacy activities. Now ask the group how they think this information should be stored and how long they think it should be kept for. Allow the group around ten minutes to discuss this. When ready, ask them to summarise what they think. Emphasise the below, if not included. **VoiceMore Participants Personal Data** They should: • Keep the personal information of VoiceMore participants in a safe place and password protected, for example, on a laptop or phone that requires as password to enter. • Information on participants should be backed up in case it is lost, for example, should be kept on an organisation's servers.

Part Four: Data Protection Continued...

- Keep their consent forms in electronic format (scanned or photographed) in a protected file. These should be kept after the programme for five years because without them, we cannot use any images, quotes, case studies, or other content the young people may produce during the programme.
- They will need to keep (and update) this information until the programme finishes. It is best to keep contact details a little past the end of the programme in case they need to follow-up on anything; then, after that, it can be deleted.

Information From the Research Phase

They should:

- Keep any hard copies of sheets (such as for surveys, questionnaires, notes from interviews, and photos, etc.) in the office in a locked cupboard.
- If we record anything (for example using a dictaphone), keep the voice recording on a password-protected laptop.
- Keep the consent form copies (for example, from focus groups) in a safe place locked away or password protected.
- Identifying information is not kept with things like notes from interviews or focus groups, so even if someone sees the notes, they cannot connect to individuals.
- When the research is finished, all raw data is destroyed.

Information from the Advocacy Phase

They should:

- Keep information on target stakeholders in a safe place (for example, on a password-protected laptop).
- This information only needs to be kept for the duration of the advocacy and any follow-up phases; then, it should be deleted.

> "First of all, VoiceMore gave me the strength to be a leader. I have learnt how to lead and to be honest. VoiceMore helped me to know my rights and duties. VoiceMore has taught me how to defend myself and defend others as well. I learned how to plan things and how to achieve goals, how to reach goals in an appropriate way."
>
> **Jean, 18, Central African Republic**

SESSION EIGHT: PARTICIPATORY RISK ASSESSMENTS AND RISK MITIGATION

Total Duration: 2 hours

Learning Objectives:

- To ensure staff understand what risk assessment is, how it applies to a programme like VoiceMore, and what is expected of staff supporting groups.
- Support participants in thinking through different risks and how to assess them.

Materials required: Scenarios printed out, printed copies of the 'questions to ask', copies of a risk assessment template to look at, flip-chart and post-it notes.

Time	Description
15 mins	**Part One: Introduction** Start by giving an overview of what we mean when we say we need to 'risk assess' work: • To try and work out if the activity is going to feasible and safe. • To make sure we have thought through all of the possible risks beforehand. • As a methodical way of deciding what steps need to be taken. • Helps ensure objectivity and to create space for reflection. It is the responsibility of staff working with young people to ensure programmes are safe for the group and any other people, particularly children, who also might be involved. Now we are going to look at some scenarios and then at a risk assessment template we can use.
45 mins	**Part Two: Scenarios Discussion** Break the group into three and hand each group a scenario. Ask each group to read and discuss what they think the risks are with the activity planned; what do they think could go wrong? What could any dangers be? Allow ten minutes for groups to discuss, then ask each to spend a few minutes feeding back what they concluded.

Scenario One	Scenario Two	Scenario Three
The VoiceMore group want to organise a community party to raise awareness of the negative effects of domestic violence. They have organised for it to be in the centre of their village, on one of the main shopping streets. They will put up a small stage and perform a play to the public, showing the negative impacts of a man hitting his wife. This will be on a Friday during the daytime.	As part of the Advocacy training, the VoiceMore group are going to discuss the problems children and young people face in their refugee camp, thinking about their own experiences and stories they have heard in the community. The normal VoiceMore space is being used for an emergency meeting, so you have been asked to do the session outside in the playground.	The young people are going to conduct their own research into the impact lack of school equipment is having on children in the community. For this, they will be interviewing 60 young children in a school and recording their opinions to make a report for War Child. War Child will then use this information in a campaign they are running in partnership with a newspaper.

Part Two: Scenario Discussion Continued...

Now present each group with the list of questions below to ask. Going through these questions, can they think of any more risks in the scenarios they looked at?

Questions to Ask When Risk Assessing Activities

Environment

- What venue are you going to use? Who can enter the venue? Can outsiders look in or hear what is being said inside?
- Where is it? Is it near any places where problems often happen?
- Does it have toilets? Are they safe? Are they well-lit, and do doors have locks?
- Who owns the venue or runs activities there? Could we be seen as promoting any organisations, political or religious views by working in this space?
- Is it accessible for any children with disabilities?
- Does it have a fire exit? Does it have fire safety equipment?
- How will the young people get to this space? Would they be walking or taking public transport?

Staffing

- What is the ratio of staff to children attending? Are you likely to need extra support?
- Have other staff been briefed beforehand? Do they know want to expect and what their role will be? Does the relevant Programme Manager know when and where this is all happening, even if they are not attending?
- Is anyone going to be present with First Aid skills?
- Have you spoken to the security officer?
- Do you have all the relevant contact numbers for the group and staff in the office? Can you contact other members of the team if you need to?

Social

- Is there any chance the topic of the activity will be controversial? If so, how will it be sensitively approached?
- Will the activity expose the young person/s to any negative reactions from others afterwards? What are you going to do to follow-up with the group?
- Have you made sure the group feel ready? Do their families and carers know about it? Have they given permission?
- Does the activity expose young people's personal details, e.g., where they live?
- What will you do if there are problems during the activity? Have you discussed with the group what the protocol will be? Does everyone know what to do if there is an emergency?

Take a break before moving to the next part of the session.

30 mins — **Part Three: Using the Risk Assessment Template**

Hand out a copy of a risk assessment template (whatever template your office normally uses). Explain how the form works, including sign-off (via programme managers, safeguarding focal points, etc.) and incident reporting. Then, ask each group to take ten minutes to practice filling it out for the scenarios just discussed (it does not matter if all the risks are not included; the main aim is to get more familiar with using it).

Support each group as required. Then, ask them to feedback how they found the form and process of thinking about risk in that way.

30 mins — **Part Four: Participatory Risk Assessments with Young People**

Ask the group why they think it might be important to include the young people in our risk assessment processes. Facilitate a discussion.

If not mentioned, suggest the following:

- Just like your colleagues, they bring a different perspective and might have an idea you had not thought of.
- It will increase the chances of young people in the group following any necessary rules; if they understand why they are needed, it will make more sense to them.
- They have a right to be included in decisions that will affect them, and how you agree to rate the danger of an activity will impact on how they can do their programme.
- It will help young people start to assess risk in their own lives outside the programme differently; by thinking through risk in the programme, they can become more accustomed to thinking in a risk-adverse way.

Explain that while they (the VoiceMore staff) would be responsible for completing formal risk assessment paperwork, they will need to get feedback from young people on what they think the risks are, too, to help inform this. This information will be gathered in participatory risk assessment exercises during the programme.

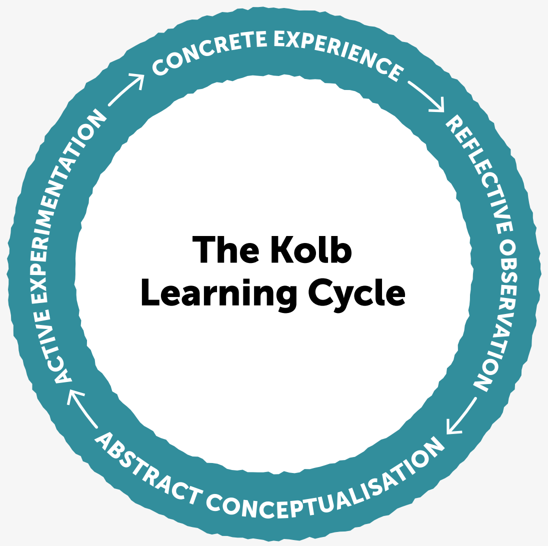
"VoiceMore has really helped me and opened my mind, so I see things clearly. It's helped teach me how to defend my rights and defend other young people's rights that are not being respected. VoiceMore has taught me a lot of things, starting with how to be an advocate for others and how to be a spokesperson who is truthful and presents the facts. I've learned how to understand things and defend young people in different situations."

Carene, 17, Central African Republic

SESSION NINE: EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING AND FACILITATION	
Total Duration: 1 hour 30 mins	
Learning Objectives: • Build knowledge of experiential learning and its relevance to participatory programming. • Start to explore how it impacts on facilitation techniques and approaches.	
Materials required: Print out of the bike image, the Kolb model and scenarios (all translated if needed).	
Time	**Description**
30 mins	**Part One: Understanding Kolb** Start by showing everyone a picture of a bike:

Ask who can ride one. How did you learn? Take feedback from the group. Then ask, when they fell off, what did they do? Take feedback from the group. Ask if anyone has ever heard of something called 'experiential learning'.

Now show the group a copy of Kolb's learning cycle below:



Part One: Understanding Kolb Continued...

Explain that Kolb, an American Education Theorist, published his theory of experiential learning in 1984. His theory stresses how our experiences, thoughts, emotions and environment impact the learning process.

Ask the group to take ten minutes to discuss in pairs how they think this diagram works and what each stage means.

Bring the group back together and take comments and interpretations. Explain that the diagram shows how we learn many things more effectively through a process of experimentation and practise.

According to Kolb's theory, a person cannot learn by simply observing or reading. *Emphasise: 'The goal is for the individual to actively participate in the experience so they can learn from it. This is often called* ***'"earning by doing'"****.*

Explain each stage below:

- **'Concrete Experience'**: Having a new experience/doing something new.
- **'Reflective Observation'**: We think about the experience we just had and reflect on it.
- **'Abstract Conceptualization'**: The reflection helps us find new thinking or ideas about that experience.
- **'Active Experimentation'**: Put into practice the new idea and thinking, and test these out by doing the experience again.

Check the group understands. Then emphasise:

'This kind of learning happens all the time, unconsciously but also consciously. Humans learn from infancy by experimenting and trying out new things. A lot of the time, this is automatic: We are not aware of how we are reflecting and applying our learning.'

30 mins — **Part Two: How is this relevant to working with young people?**

Ask the group why they think Kolb's learning cycle could be important to the role of a facilitator. Take ideas and facilitate a short discussion. Then, offer the below summary:

'The role of a facilitator in a youth programme is to help young people reflect on what they are doing and to learn from it. *When we are doing new things, we are often not conscious of our 'reflection' stage. However, if a person is encouraged to think carefully about what happened and what they feel they could learn from it, they have a better chance of gaining some valuable new insights.*

We can use a metaphor of learning to ride a bike as representing 'experimental learning'. *You can read a manual on how to ride a bike or attend a class where someone tells you how to ride a bike, but ultimately, the only way to be able to do it is to try it for yourself! This is an example of 'learning by doing'.*

Facilitation should follow this kind of learning approach: ***It is not about 'telling' or 'instructing' young people what to do. It is about helping young people reflect on their experiences and learn from them themselves.'***

Check everyone understands this concept and take any questions.

	Part Two: How is this relevant to working with young people? Continued... Split the group into two and ask each group to spent ten minutes discussing the scenario: *The VoiceMore group have organised a presentation to a local leader in their community. They have planned to present information about their project and some recommendations to help solve the issue they are worried about. The meeting happens. At the next VoiceMore meeting, you have two options:* *a) You prepare a list of things the group should have done. When the group meet, you read out the list of things you think they need to do next time and what you think the strengths and weaknesses of their presentation were.* *b) You ask them to take some time as a group to discuss what they felt went well and not so well. You ask some more questions about their ideas. You then ask them to reflect together what they would do differently if they had that chance again; what would they change and why? They present their thoughts to you. You agree as a group how they could improve in the future.* Bring the groups back together and ask them to quickly present their thoughts. Confirm to the group that Option B is an example of supporting experiential learning. Finish by summarising the process described in Option B is called 'guided reflection'. Guided reflection is something good facilitators should use in the projects they support.
30 mins	**Part Three: Teaching versus Facilitation** Explain in this last part of the session that we are going to think about the differences between teaching and facilitating. Ask the group how experiential learning and facilitation differs from how we learn in school. Take ideas and elicit the two key points below: • Learning in school normally involves being told information, which we write down or record. • It often focuses on theories rather than practice. With experiential learning, we are supporting the person learning for themselves through their own cycle of trying, reflection and trying again, whereas in traditional schools, we are normally told facts and information, which we passively absorb. Now split the group into two and give each a sheet of paper. Ask them to draw a line down the middle to divide into two columns. In one column, they need to write down all the things they think describe 'teaching': what approach a teacher commonly uses, style and tools, etc. In the other column, ask them to write down everything they think describes 'facilitating': the approach, style or tools a facilitator commonly uses.

	Part Three: Teaching versus Facilitation Continued... Allow around 15 minutes for the groups to work on this. When they have finished, bring them back together and ask them to present what they have come up with. Also suggest the following if not included: **Teaching:** • Lectures • Information radiates out from teacher • The teacher is the centre of attention • Large classroom • Might use a chalk board, PowerPoint slides • Direct control of the class and activities • Young people are passive **Facilitating:** • Discussions • Facilitator participates and guides • Students are the centre of attention • Participants are the centre of attention • Supports things like scenarios (role play) and group activities, etc. • Indirect control of the class and activities Summarise to the group: A teacher has more power and dictates learning; a facilitator helps people learn for themselves. They do not tell young people what is 'right', what to think, or how to do things. Helping people learn this way is more empowering. Finish by asking the group why they think understanding the difference in these approaches is important for VoiceMore. Take answers. Highlight that VoiceMore is a youth empowerment programme, so the way we approach learning is important. The programme should not be 'like school', and as support staff, their role will be to act as facilitators to help participants develop their skills as spokespersons for themselves and allow them space to act as leaders.

SESSION TEN: FACILITATION SKILLS ROLE PLAY

Total Duration: 1 hour

Learning Objectives:
- To help embed learning from the previous session.
- A practice opportunity for participants to reflect on their own strengths and weaknesses in facilitation.

Materials required: Flip-chart paper and pens.

Time	Description
5 mins	**Part One: Introduction** Explain that in this session, we are going to explore the qualities and approaches of a facilitator via some role play. It is important everyone tries to get 'into character' and not to feel too self-conscious. This will be an interactive and fun way to explore the topic!

30 mins	**Part Two: Preparing and Performing** Split the group into two. Ask one group to think about the attributes of a 'good' facilitator and the other group a 'bad' facilitator. They need to create a very short role play or 'drama' demonstrating this (no more than a few minutes). Each will present this to the other group, followed by a joint discussion. Allow both groups around 10-15 minutes to discuss and prepare their role play or performance acting out their character. When they are ready, ask each group to perform. Ask the 'audience' to pay attention to the other group's scenario because they will need to feedback what they feel was interesting. When both groups have finished, bring them back into a circle ready for debrief.
25 mins	**Part Three: Debrief** Ask participants what they thought of the performances. What did they think was most interesting about the 'good' versus the 'bad' facilitator? What kind of qualities and approaches did each demonstrate? Facilitate a discussion. If the group do not cover the points below, also suggest the following: **A 'good' facilitator will:** • Ask open questions to help young people reflect. • Allows space for young people to discuss and form their own ideas and opinions. • Be a good listener. • Be approachable and friendly. • Be engaged and prepared for sessions. • Help ensure young people all have an opportunity to speak and lead. • Make sure everyone has the possibility to participate. • Support good group dynamics and team working. **A 'bad' facilitator will:** • Not ask any open questions or help the group reflect. • Dictate to the young people what they think they should do. • Give their own opinions on things and try to enforce those opinions. • Be late and unprepared for sessions. • Lack focus, for example, using their phone during sessions. • Raise their voice to the group. • Use aggression to discipline the group and leave some youth out of activities. • Force youth to do something they do not want to do. • Disappear out the room during sessions for no reason. Finish by asking the group to think about other projects they have seen or worked on in the past. Can they think of an example of a good facilitator? Would they be happy to share this with the group? If we also think about the ladder of participation discussed yesterday, how do they think good facilitation approaches can support higher levels of participation?

SESSION ELEVEN: PRACTICE SESSIONS - VOICEMORE PROGRAMME

Total Duration: 2 hours

Learning Objectives:
- Support familiarisation with the programme approach, and content, of young people's training components.
- Emphasise the importance of following the handbook in programme delivery.

Materials required: Hard copies of the VoiceMore Handbook, one for each participant.

Time	Description
10 mins	**Part One: Introduction** Explain to the group that in this last session, we are going to review the VoiceMore Handbook and get a feeling for what the training sessions with young people are like. Then they will have a chance to practice delivering two of the sessions of their choice as a group. Because the programme comprises of three different training components, which each contain lots of sessions, it will not be possible to practice more of them during this training. However, they can take the handbook copies with them, and those responsible for delivering sessions with young people should take time to carefully read them after this training.
1 hour	**Part Two: Reviewing the Handbook** Hand out a copy of the handbook to each person in the group. Ask participants to move so they are sitting with more space somewhere in the room. Ask them to now spend 30 minutes quietly reading and reviewing the handbook by themselves. Explain that afterwards, there is going to be a quiz to test some of the knowledge and learning they have gained from the handbook and during the training. When the time is up, bring everyone back together in a circle. Then, start the quiz! Keep it light-hearted and fun; it is just a chance to see what participants can recall from what they just read and the training. Questions for the quiz

Questions	Answer
In VoiceMore, there are three training programmes for young people: the role of a spokesperson, advocacy training and research training – true or false?	True
What is the recommended age range of participants in VoiceMore?	15- 25
What is the recommended group size for VoiceMore?	10-20
What is the minimum duration for the programme?	18 months

Part Two: Reviewing the Handbook Continued...

Questions	Answer
How many phases are there to the programme?	Nine: Planning and Preparation, Staff Training, Recruitment and Selection, Young People's Spokesperson Training, Young People's Advocacy Training, Young People's Research Training, Research Gathering, Advocacy Action, Evaluation and Close Down.
The levels of participation are often described as what?	A ladder.
What does 'informed consent' mean?	*Informed consent means when we agree to something, we understand what it is about, what it will involve, and what any consequences of taking part will be.*
Why don't we want young people to be in the panic zone?	Because they will feel stressed, will stop learning and will not feel good in the programme.
If you receive a safeguarding disclosure, who should you report it to?	Your local safeguarding focus point or manager (if they are implicated themselves).
Confidentiality is about ensuring we keep information secret, no matter what: true or false?	False: We can break confidentiality if we think a child or someone else is at risk.
All data we collect should be kept on our laptops for as long as possible: true or false?	False: The type of data will determine how to store it and how long to keep it.
Who is responsible for doing risk assessments during the programme?	The young people will give their views via participatory risk assessments, but staff supporting the group need to lead and get them signed off internally.
What is experiential learning?	A person cannot learn by simply observing or reading. The goal is for the individual to actively participate in the experience so they can learn from it. This is often called 'learning by doing'.

PART 9: VOICEMORE STAFF TRAINING

Part Two: Reviewing the Handbook Continued...

Questions	Answer
Name three qualities or attributes a good facilitator should have.	Any of the following: • Asks open questions to help young people reflect. • Creates space for young people to discuss and form their own ideas and opinions. • A good listener. • Approachable and friendly. • Engaged and prepared for sessions. • Helps ensure young people all have the opportunity to speak and lead. • Makes sure everyone has the possibility to participate. • Supports good group dynamics and team working.

Check to see if anyone has any questions before moving on the final part of the session.

90 mins

Part Three: Practice Sessions

Ask the group to select one session plan from the handbook that they will now practice delivering. Explain they have 90 minutes to complete this in. It can be from any of the three training components (spokespersons, advocacy or research).

They should not only read the session plan and discuss it but deliver the activity as a group! One person should act as facilitator and the others as 'participants'. During the activity, they should swap so that others have a chance to try out being facilitator. By the end of the practice session, everyone in the group should have had a chance to do this. Allow the group to self-organise and run the activity themselves. Observe how the group is getting on, as this will be helpful for the debrief.

20 mins

Part Three: Debrief

When they have finished the session, bring the group back into a circle for debrief.

Start by asking how they found the activity. What did it feel like to run the session? Was it easy to remember how to be a good facilitator? How do they think they did? What do they think it will be like to run sessions like this with young people?

Facilitate a discussion. Try and encourage participants to reflect on their strengths and weaknesses.

Before finishing, emphasise staff who will be responsible for the programme (working directly with the young people) will be responsible for reading the entire handbook in depth before they start VoiceMore. **The programme should not be attempted before they have done this.** It is also essential that line managers allow staff time to fully read and absorb the documents before they commence planning for recruitment selection.

Also, highlight they will need to keep the handbook with them throughout the programme, and **before any training sessions, they should re-read relevant session plans and print and take a copy with them as a reminder and guide**.

SESSION TWELVE: TRAINING EVALUATION	
Total Duration: 1 hour	
Learning Objectives: • To help participants reflect on what they have covered and learnt during the training. • Understand what aspects of the programme were strongest and where improvements could be made. • Create space for any final clarifications or questions.	
Materials required: Flip-chart paper and pens.	
Time	**Description**
20 mins	**Part One: Review 'Hopes and Fears'.** Stick the 'Hopes and Fears' post-it notes from the first morning of the training on the wall. Group all the hopes together and the fears together. Invite everyone to stand up and re-read them. First, ask the group if they feel their 'fears' for the training came true. Are there any that they think did occur? If so, what were they, and how could we try and avoid them in future training? Then, move on to the 'hopes' post-it notes. Are they feeling satisfied with what they have covered and worked on together? Are there some hopes that were not met? Why? What could we do after the training to try and ensure they are still met?
30 mins	**Part Two: Remembering the Training** Ask each participant to spend ten minutes reflecting on the questions below: • Which aspects of the training have you found most useful, and why? • Are there any aspects of the training that you think could be improved? How? • What are the key learning you feel you gained? Allow everyone time to think and formulate their answers. Then, bring them back into a circle and ask each person to give feedback. Take note of their points as this is valuable feedback that can be used after the session. Before finishing, ask if anyone has any other comments or suggestions related to the training that they would like to share.
10 mins	**Part Three: Questions and Next Steps** Finish the training by asking if anyone has any final questions they want to ask. Are there any aspects of the training or the VoiceMore programme that they are still unsure about? Take questions and ensure, if they cannot be answered immediately, they are followed up. Outline the next steps for staff who will be continuing to support VoiceMore groups directly.

CASE STUDY: RICHARD

"Before the VoiceMore training, I was too shy to talk in public or a group. After War Child trained us on being a spokesperson, I gained skills and knowledge, and I can express myself. I can raise challenges affecting children, share the information with stakeholders, partners who hold power, and can bring change in the community.

I gained a lot of skills and experience particularly to do research. We mapped out orphans and abused separated children in our community. This has made me confident, and I feel I can do any kind of research when I am asked to.

As a result of speaking out, now children are not chased or sent away from the Health Centres like before; when they go, the health personnel call the caretaker of that child, and then the child is given medicine, unlike in the past.

Furthermore, since orphans are vulnerable and cannot speak for themselves, we were able to speak on their behalf through VoiceMore. Other children within the community have benefited from clothes, scholastic materials like books, soap, etc., all provided by partners we identified because of our advocacy work. Others also benefited from the meetings we conducted with care-givers in the community, and as a result, child abuse cases have reduced in the community."

Richard, 21, Uganda

Photo credit: War Child

PART 10

VoiceMore Spokesperson Training

OVERVIEW

This document contains session plans related to the first VoiceMore training for young people. Session plans are numbered from 1 – 10 and designed to be delivered in that order.

The ten session plans for this module are:

Session 1	What is VoiceMore
Session 2	Being a Spokesperson
Session 3	Confidentiality, Consent, and Safety
Session 4	Body Language and Non-Verbal Communication
Session 5	Active Listening
Session 6	Public Speaking: Breath, Pace, Volume
Session 7	Values and Beliefs
Session 8	Interviewing Skills
Session 9	Understanding Our Rights
Session 10	What is Dialogue?

Adapting the Activities: It is the facilitator's responsibility to read the session plans before the activity and consider any adaptations that might need to be made for the group they are working with. This includes making sure visual aids are prepared. Where you see the book symbol to the left in a session plan, this is a suggested adaptation that can be made for young people with no or low literacy.

Please note: The following timetables can be adapted depending on the needs of the group; training days can be shortened and activities spread over a longer period of time. However, make sure they are still delivered in the same order as outlined here, and do not leave long gaps between training days as ideas will be forgotten, making building on learning from one session to the next challenging.

SPOKESPERSON TRAINING: DAY ONE

Time	Session	Objectives
9am - 9.30am	**Welcomes, introductions, and getting to know each other/ icebreaker game.**	• To help everyone feel welcome and comfortable.
9.30am - 10.30am	**Session One: What is VoiceMore?**	• Get to know the group and build rapport. • Make sure participants understand VoiceMore and have realistic expectations. • Create space to answer any questions about the programme they might still have. • Establish group rules in a participatory way.
10.30am - 11am	**Break**	
11am - 12.45am	**Session Two: Being a Spokesperson**	• To define what a spokesperson is (and is not). • To be able to say what kind of personal qualities and skills a spokesperson should have.
12.45am - 1.45pm	**Lunch**	
1.45pm - 3.15pm	**Session Three: Confidentiality, Consent, and Safety**	• Understand what confidentiality is. • Understand how important safety is to VoiceMore. • Feel more confident saying if something is worrying them during the programme. • Understand they have the right to leave any time they wish.
3.15pm - 3.30pm	**Break**	
3.30pm - 4pm	**Questions, Evaluation and Feedback**	• To round off the day and make sure key points are understood. • Feedback to help inform next day of training.

SPOKESPERSON TRAINING: DAY TWO

Time	Session	Objectives
9am - 9.30am	**Welcomes and warm-up games**	• To help everyone feel energised and ready for the training day.
9.30am - 10.30am	**Session Four: Body Language and Non-Verbal Communication**	• Develop greater understanding of positive body language and non-verbal communication. • Think about their own body language and be more self-aware.
10.30am - 11am	**Break**	
11am - 12.15am	**Session Four (continued): Body Language and Non-Verbal Communication**	• Develop greater understanding of positive body language and non-verbal communication. • Think about their own body language and be more self-aware.
12.15am - 1.15pm	**Lunch**	
1.15pm - 2.45pm	**Session Five: Active Listening**	• Describe what 'active listening' is and understand its importance in good communication. • Appreciate why it is needed for a programme like VoiceMore. • Be more self-aware of their own ability to listen.
2.45pm - 3pm	**Break**	
3pm - 3.30pm	**Questions, Evaluation and Feedback**	• To round off the day and make sure key points are understood. • Feedback to help inform next day of training.

SPOKESPERSON TRAINING: DAY THREE

Time	Session	Objectives
9am - 9.30am	**Welcomes and warm-up games.**	• To help everyone feel energised and ready for the training day.
9.30am - 11am	**Session Six: Public Speaking, Breath, Pace, Volume**	• Feel more confident in themselves and their ability to speak in front of others. • Understand what makes a good public speaker. • Increase self-awareness.
11am - 11.30am	**Break**	
11.30am - 12.30am	**Session Seven: Values and Beliefs**	• Describe the difference between a value and a belief. • Understand the importance of being sensitive to differing values and beliefs. • Understand what prejudice is and the dangers of pre-judging others. • Greater awareness of how our own values and beliefs will affect the way we think about others.
12.30am - 1.30pm	**Lunch**	
1.30pm - 2.30pm	**Session Seven: Values and Beliefs – Continued.**	
2.30pm - 3pm	**Break**	
3pm - 3.30pm	**Questions, Evaluation and Feedback**	• To round off the day and make sure key points are understood. • Feedback to help inform next day of training.

SPOKESPERSON TRAINING: DAY FOUR

Time	Session	Objectives
9am - 9.30am	**Welcomes and warm-up games**	• To help everyone feel energised and ready for the training day.
9.30am - 11am	**Session Eight: Interviewing Skills**	• Explain 'open' and 'closed' questions. • Understand good interview techniques. • Feel more confident in speaking to people and conducting a structured interview.
11am - 11.30am	**Break**	
11.30am - 12.30am	**Session Nine: Understanding our Rights**	• To introduce participants to the UNCRC and its different articles. • For the group to reflect on what they think about the rights contained in the Convention.
12.30am - 1.30pm	**Lunch**	
1.30pm - 3pm	**Session Ten: What is Dialogue**	• Describe the difference between dialogue, debate and argument. • Have reflected on how our own opinions and beliefs can affect our ability to hear and appreciate other people's perspectives. • Feel more confident about how to engage in dialogue.
3pm - 3.30pm	**Break**	
3.30pm - 4.30pm	**Final Evaluation of Spokesperson Training and next steps**	• To reflect on the whole training and gather feedback. • Ensure participants are clear about next steps.

VOICEMORE SPOKESPERSON TRAINING SESSION PLANS

SESSION ONE: PRACTICE SESSIONS - VOICEMORE PROGRAMME

Total Duration: 1 hour

Learning Objectives:
- Get to know the group and build rapport.
- Make sure participants understand VoiceMore and have realistic expectations.
- Create space to answer questions about the programme they might still have.
- Establish group rules in a participatory way.

Materials required:
- Ball (not essential), sheets of flip-chart paper, marker pens.
- Pre-prepared flip-chart with programme stages written down or (for non-literate groups) photos/images to show/represent each stage.

Note to facilitator: Before joining the programme and this training, the young people should already have a basic overview of what the programme is about and what taking part will entail. This information should be presented to young people during the recruitment and selection phase (see part six of this handbook: Guidelines for the Recruitment and Selection of Young People). This session is a chance to recap with them and offer some more detail on the programme phases.

Prepare cards with pictures or drawings that can represent the different phases of VoiceMore. As you are explaining these, use the visual aids to help explain what they can expect during each part of the programme.

Time	Description
30 mins	**Part One: Introduction** Bring the group together in a circle and explain: *VoiceMore is a programme designed by War Child. The objectives of VoiceMore are to:* • *Support young people to identify challenges they, and other children and youth, face where they live and undertake advocacy to bring about positive change in their communities.* • *Enable young people to improve their well-being by gaining confidence, knowledge and skills to honestly express their views, needs and rights.* • *Promote the participation of youth in decision-making, and raise the voices of young people affected by conflict to those in power.* *War Child developed the programme because we believe young people can, and should, play an important role in combatting issues. The programme is organised into different phases. It starts with some training, then you select a problem you are concerned about that is negatively impacting children or other young people where you live. After this, if you want to, you can conduct your own research. We will then help you use that evidence to try and bring about change on that issue.* Check that the group understand and if they have any questions before continuing.

	Part One: Introduction Continued... Now share copies of the programme stages with participants (as below): Programme Stages: 1. **Spokesperson Training:** Learning about being a spokesperson, improving communication skills, and building your confidence. 2. **Advocacy Training:** Learning about advocacy, identifying an issue you want to work on. 3. **Research Training:** Learning about research and planning ways you can gather your own evidence. 4. **Conducting Research:** Collect your data, analyse it together, and agree on your recommendations. 5. **Advocacy and Awareness raising:** Take your findings and recommendations and try to bring about change on the issue. 6. **Evaluation and Close-Down:** Evaluating the work you did, preparing to finish the programme and thinking about what's next. Ask if anyone has any questions about the phases before moving on. Explain War Child has supported other VoiceMore groups in the past. Show the group some examples of previous projects. You can access information about these on the War Child website, including videos and reports.
30 mins	**Part Two: Group Agreement** Tell the group we are going to think about how we want to work together as a team. As it is their programme, it is important they all decide and agree on some rules, a 'group contract', for how they want to work together. Ask the group to discuss what they think these groups rules should be as a group. When they are ready, bring them back into a circle and ask them to summarise. Make a note of each rule on the flip-chart paper. If the below are not included, ask if they would also consider including them: • Being respectful to other people in my group • Not using/looking at your phone during sessions • Turning up on time • Listening to others • Actively participating in activities • No mocking, intimidation, harassment, or discrimination of others Once the group are happy with their list, ask them if they each would like to sign/add a thumb print or mark to confirm they agree. **Keep the flip-chart with the group agreement on and put it on the wall during all activities.** If the group start breaking any of the rules, show them it as a gentle reminder of what they all said they wanted to stick to when the programme started. **Respecting Privacy and Keeping Safe** Before closing the session, explain to the group that VoiceMore should be a programme that is safe for their group and any other children or young people we work with during the programme.

	Part Two: Group Agreement Continued... There are two things they should remember: **1. Keep personal stories confidential.** *'During VoiceMore, we might talk about the personal experiences of people in our community, including problems they have experienced. We need everyone to promise to keep what is shared confidential and only discuss it during VoiceMore time. This is important because it could put someone in danger or hurt them if we break this promise.'* **2. Do not judge or belittle at the ideas and suggestions of others.** *'VoiceMore is a space for everyone to learn, and we will do our best if everyone can contribute without fear of being disrespected or laughed at. You don't always have to agree with other people's suggestions, but we should still be respectful of each other.'* Finish by explaining what they can expect from you as their facilitator: • To help them build their skills and do the best project they can • Be respectful, non-judgemental and listen to group • Always have their safety and well-being as a priority • Keep them informed of what is happening in the project Ask if anyone has any questions before finishing.

SESSION TWO: BEING A SPOKESPERSON

Total Duration: 1 hour 45 mins

Learning Objectives:
- To define what a spokesperson is (and is not).
- To be able to say what kind of personal qualities and skills a spokesperson should have.

Materials required:
- Very large sheets of flip-chart paper.
- Marker pens.
- Two sets of post-it notes or stickers in different colours.

Time	Description
15 mins	**Part One: Introduction** Ask the group *what a spokesperson is.* Write down their answers on flip-chart paper and facilitate a short discussion about their answers. Then, explain you are going to read out a summary of what a spokesperson is: *'A spokesperson is someone who is elected, or offers, to speak on behalf of others. The role of a spokesperson is to represent a groups views and opinions, not just their own. Spokespersons are normally people who have a good understanding of issues, often because they have their own personal experience of it. They must be willing to stand up and speak to a variety of different people.'* Check the group have understood this definition. Read it out loud again if need be. Then, ask why they think this might be important to the VoiceMore programme. Take answers from the group. If not covered, ensure you add: • Because VoiceMore is not just about telling their own stories but also relaying the opinions and experiences of other children and youth in their area. • Because in VoiceMore, we must think about issues that are affecting lots of children and young people, not just us.

Note to facilitator: If the group is mixed gender, then make sure groups are respecting personal boundaries. For some groups in some cultural settings, it might be better to create the template yourself and present it to them to fill out.

60 mins

Part Two: Creating our Spokespersons

Tell the group we are now going to do an exercise together. Divide the group into two or three groups. Using tape, stick some sheets of flip-chart paper together to make one big sheet, big enough for a person to be able to lie down on from head to foot. (To make things quicker, you can pre-prepare the sheets beforehand). Each group will need one. Lay the sheets on the floor on different sides of the room and ask each group to stand by their sheets.

Explain we need one volunteer to lie down on the paper on their back with their arms by their side. We are going to use them as a template, so the person needs to stay very still while we draw around them. Remind the groups to be careful of the persons clothes and not to get too close to their body! We just need an outline.

When they have finished, explain this template figure is going to represent a 'spokesperson' for the VoiceMore programme. Inside the figure, they should draw or write all the personal qualities and skills they think it would be good for a spokesperson to have. For example, if they think they would need to be good at listening, then can draw a big pair of ears. Try to encourage the group not to just write lots of words; they can use symbols or drawings to show what they think.

They need to work together as a group to decide on what to put. This means they should be actively discussing it together and not just have one person drawing while others watch in silence. Encourage them all to be active.

Allow the groups around 20 minutes to do the activity. When they have finished, ask them to stick them on the wall and take turns explaining to the other groups what they have come up with: *What qualities and skills do they think a spokesperson should have?*

When each group has finished, suggest the below if not mentioned:

- Good listener
- Non-judgemental (explain what this means if need be)
- Interested in communicating with others
- Happy to work in a team
- Passionate about trying to make things better
- Empathetic (trying to 'put yourself in another's shoes' to understand how they might feel)
- Caring and compassionate
- Dedicated
- Knowledge of issues (or willing to learn if they don't know)
- Ability to communicate points clearly
- Confident

Part Two: Creating our Spokespersons Continued…

If the group have included any of the points below, challenge these and ask them to reconsider:

- A spokesperson can only be a man. (Not true! Girls and women can also be spokespersons.)
- A spokesperson can only an adult. (Not true! It can be harder for young people to speak up, but children and youth can be spokespersons, too.)
- A spokesperson can only be someone educated, who has been to school and can read and write well. (Not true! Having educational qualifications is not necessary.)
- A spokesperson can only be someone rich and important. (Not true! Any person can be a spokesperson, not just people with money.)
- A spokesperson should not be someone with a disability. (Not true! A person with a disability can still be a spokesperson.)

Check the groups understand and are happy with their new spokesperson profiles. Leave them stuck on the wall for the final part of the session.

30 mins

Part Three: Debrief

Bring the group together into a circle. Ask them to look at the spokespersons on the wall. Explain we are now going to take a few minutes to think about what our own strengths and weaknesses might be.

Hand out to the group two sets of stickers/post-it notes. Explain one of the colours represents *'things I would like to develop more'* and the other colour stands for *'things I am good at already'*. Make sure each person has a few of each colour sticker/post-it notes.

Ask them to take a few minutes to quietly reflect, then to stick one colour post-it note/sticker on the qualities or skills they personally would *like* to get better at and the other colour stickers on the things they think they are *already good at*. Allow a few minutes for everyone to finish.

Now ask if anyone wants to comment on why they stuck the stickers where they did. What do they think they could improve, and what do they think is already a strength? Do not push individuals to answer this if they don't want to because it is a personal exercise, and they might not feel comfortable. Where they have placed the stickers already will tell you something about where to focus attention during the programme and what they might want more support with.

Finish by asking the group *how they are feeling about becoming a spokesperson*, excited, nervous, etc.

Reassure the group that the purpose of VoiceMore is to help them to develop these skills and confidence. They don't need to be great at all of these already! No one is expecting them to be very confident at the start. We will get more confident and learn new things as the programme develops.

SESSION THREE: CONFIDENTIALITY, CONSENT AND SAFETY

Total Duration: 1 hour 30 mins

Learning Objectives:

- Understand what confidentiality is (keeping their personal information safe).
- Understand how important safety is to VoiceMore.
- Feel more confident to say if something is worrying them during the programme.
- Understand they have the right to leave any time they wish.

Materials required: Very large sheets of flip-chart paper. Translated pieces of paper with the scenarios on (if the group cannot read, just read out loud the scenarios out loud to each group).

Time	Description
5 mins	**Part One: Introduction** Explain to the group that we will now be looking at how to make sure they feel safe and happy while they are doing activities that are part of the VoiceMore programme. Let them know it is important they are honest and open about what they think; there are no right or wrong answers!
20 mins	**Part two: Confidentiality** Bring the group into a circle and ask them if they have ever heard of the word 'confidential'. What do they think that means? Take answers, then explain: *'The word 'confidential' means keeping things private. When organisations like War Child use the word 'confidentiality', we mean keeping people's information private. For example, who they are, where they live, and who their family are. It means we are not going to publicise or share that kind of information with lots of people.'* Check the group understand, then ask: Why do you think War Child does this? Why do you think we keep people's personal details private? Take answers, then explain: *'War Child does this because we want to make sure all the children and youth we work with are safe. We have rules that we can never share a child or young person's real name or where they live publicly. If people are talking about difficult or dangerous things that have happened, we also won't show their face for example in a photo. We will hide any information that could be used to identify them.'* Check that the group understands, then explain that this means in VoiceMore any time we do an activity that is public; for example, an article in a newspaper, a radio show, anything that is on the internet, we will use a fake name for them. We will never use their real name in any media work. Tell the group they can choose their own fake name to use! They can think about this during one of the breaks, and we can make a list of the name they have chosen. This needs to be a name that already exists in that country; they cannot just choose any word!

20 mins	**Part Three: Consent** Explain to the group during the VoiceMore programme that they have the right to say no to taking part in any activities. Just because they are a member of the group does not mean they have to say yes to everything we are doing. For example, sometimes, we might ask them if they are interested to participate in something like an interview with a journalist. It will always be up to them to decide whether they are happy to or not. If they do not feel like they want to say yes, it will not impact on them still being in the group. Also, explain that they are free to leave the VoiceMore programme at any time if they do not want to take part anymore. If something about the programme is worrying them or if something is making it hard to continue taking part, we ask them to please tell us before they leave, however, because we might be able to do something to help solve it. Check that the group understand, and ask if they have any other questions about saying yes or no to things in the programme.
30 mins	**Part Four: Keeping Safe** Explain to the group that keeping them and other children safe is our biggest priority. Their safety and well-being is always more important than the project they are working on. Tell the group we are going to think about what we should do if something happens that worries them or if they think something might put them, or any other young person, at risk of harm. Ask the group to split into four smaller groups. Hand out one of the scenarios below to each group to discuss. ***Scenario One:*** *Somebody outside the project threatens you because they aren't happy you are taking part in VoiceMore. They think they should have had the opportunity instead of you. What should you do?* ***Scenario Two:*** *A friend in the group tells you someone is hurting them. No one else knows. They have only told you. What should you do?* ***Scenario Three:*** *Another member of the group starts to bully you. No one has noticed. You are thinking about leaving the programme because the person is upsetting you so much. What should you do?* ***Scenario Four:*** *Someone in your family is angry that you are taking part in the programme. They don't want you to go anymore. What should you do?* Ask them to take ten minutes in their groups to discuss what they think they should do. When they have finished, bring them back into one circle and ask a volunteer from each group to tell everyone what they discussed.

Part Four: Keeping Safe Continued...

Once everyone has presented their feedback, suggest the following for each situation:

Scenario One: *You should let your VoiceMore staff member know what happened. You might want to suggest the young person comes to speak to the War Child staff member to explain why they are upset. Do not get into an argument with them, and explain they can speak to War Child if they like.*

Scenario Two: *If you are very worried about your friend and you think they or anyone else are at risk of harm, then you need to speak to a War Child member of staff. Find a quiet time and place and tell them. Do not start discussing it with others in the group; respect their confidentiality.*

Scenario Three: *Bullying is not tolerated in the VoiceMore Programme. All members have to respect each other, and we should never speak harshly or cruelly to our fellow members. In your group agreement, if you don't already have no bullying included, you can add it in. Anyone who is found to be bullying someone else (saying mean things, pushing or punching them, making threats, etc.) will be asked to leave the programme. If this is happening, you should tell your VoiceMore support staff.*

Scenario Four: *If someone in your family is upset about you taking part, then you should tell your VoiceMore staff member. They can try and speak to them to see what is concerning them. It is important to War Child that your family support you taking part in the programme and should not make things at home difficult for you.*

Finish the activity by emphasising their safety and well-being is a priority to us, and taking part in VoiceMore should never expose them to any additional risk or danger. *'If something worries you about taking part it or if something has happened that makes you feel uncomfortable or concerned, it is vital you let your supporting staff member know.'*

Close the session by asking the group if they have any more questions or comments related to keeping safe.

SESSION FOUR: BODY LANGUAGE AND NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION

Total Duration: 2 hours 15 mins

Learning Objectives:

- Develop greater understanding of positive body language and non-verbal communication.
- Think about their own body language and be more self-aware.

Materials required: Flip-chart paper and pens. Print outs of the photos.

Time	Description
30 mins	**Part One: Introduction**

Start the session by letting the group know we are going to look at communication that happens without speaking – which is called 'body language'. Read the statement below.

'Body language is all about the way a person's body and face might express the way they are feeling or thinking – without them actually saying anything.

This can be things like the facial expressions they have, the way people move their hands, arms or legs, how they sit, stand or walk, or how they make eye contact. All of these things can send different messages, and they are very important to human communication and how we build relationships with others.'

Part One: Introduction Continued...

'It can be useful to be aware of what our own body language is 'saying' when we are trying to speak to someone or a group of people. It is also good to be aware of what their body language might be telling you.'

Check that the group understands, then emphasise that body language works in two ways:

- Your own body language reveals your feelings and meanings to others.
- Other people's body language reveals their feelings and meanings to you.

You can have this written on a flip-chart as a reminder and stick it on the wall at the end of the introduction.

Also explain to the group:

- People 'read' other people's body language subconsciously (without realising it) and can also do so consciously (by deliberately paying attention to it).
- Body language comes from our culture, society or the environment we live in. This means body language can have different meanings in different cultures or countries around the world. However, quite a lot of it is the same and has the same meanings for people no matter where in the world you are from.

Check the group have understood the last points. Ask if they have any questions. Then, tell the group we are now going to see if we can read what people are thinking or feeling by looking at some pictures.

Time	Description
30 mins	**Part Two: Facial Expressions**

Show the group each photo (see below) one at a time and ask them: What do we think these facial expressions are 'saying' to us? How do you think that person feels? Facilitate a short discussion about each picture.

When the group have finished discussing the pictures, explain we deliberately picked ones that showed happiness, sadness, fear, shock, surprise, anger, and boredom. That is because these are emotions that all humans can feel, and you do not need to be from the same place or speak the same language as someone to be able to 'read' and understand it in their face.

30 mins	**Part Three: Eye Contact** Let the group know we are now going to look at the role eye contact plays in communication. ***Note to facilitator:** This next exercise might not be appropriate for some mixed-gender groups depending on culture. This will need assessing first. Ask the group to get into pairs and sit with their chairs opposite each other. Tell them they now need to look into the other person's eyes for as long as they can without looking away. They need to keep trying! Allow the group a couple of minutes to do this. People will start laughing, and this is a normal reaction when people feel uncomfortable. Encourage them to keep trying, then after five minutes or so, as the group to come back together in a circle, ask them: • What was it like? • How did it feel? • How much eye contact do they think most people are comfortable with? • What if someone doesn't make any eye contact at all when we are speaking to them? What might we think? • Do they think eye contact is important for communicating with people? If so, why? Facilitate a discussion around the above questions, drawing out interesting points and comments. Try to get the group to come to a consensus on their own about what feels good or appropriate for them, then emphasise that: *'Eye contact is a vital part of how all human beings communicate with each other. Our eyes can express emotions and feelings without us using words. Different cultures might have different ways it is acceptable to make eye contact. For example, no eye contact at all can be interpreted as respect in some cultures, while in others, it is seen as a sign someone is hiding something or they are scared. In many places, very long direct eye contact can be seen as confrontational or rude.'* Ask the group if they would agree with this. What's it like in their culture? What do they think is 'good' eye contact? Do they have any other points they would add?
30 mins	**Part Four: Posture and Gesture** Tell the group that we are now going to look at another very important way we communicate with people without saying anything: the way in which we use our bodies, our posture, what we do with our head, hands, legs, and feet. Ask the group to sit in a semi-circle. Put two chairs at the front and ask for one volunteer to sit in the chair opposite you. Let the group know that we are now going to test some different types of body language towards the other person. Ask them to say what they think is 'positive' or 'negative'. Demonstrate some different postures to the other person and group, for example, sitting far back with your arms crossed, sitting forwards and upright, sitting with your hands resting in your lap, sitting at an angle facing away from the other person, or with your head in your hands, etc. You can also demonstrate the same body language but while standing up. Ask the group what they think of all these different postures and gestures. How are they viewed in their culture? Will they be good to use in VoiceMore? Keep going with examples and facilitate a short discussion about each. Ask participants if they want to demonstrate what they think is positive and negative posture and gesture to the rest of the group, too.

15 mins	**Part Five: Debrief** Get the group into pairs and ask them to take five minutes to practice all the positive body language they have been discussing in the session today while chatting to their partner. When they are finished, bring them back into a group and ask them the following question: • Why do you think body language and eye contact are important for us to think about in the VoiceMore Programme? Take answers, then emphasise to the group: *'In VoiceMore, there will be times when you are going to be speaking to individuals or groups of people about your project. They might be people in the community or decision-makers, like local leaders. It is important for you to be aware of what your body language is saying to them. We want you to come across confident and friendly and show them that you are listening. If we do all of this, they will take us more seriously.'* Check everyone understands before closing the session.

SESSION FIVE: ACTIVE LISTENING

Total Duration: 1 hour 30 mins

Learning Objectives:
- Describe what 'active listening' is and understand its importance in good communication.
- Appreciate why it is needed for a programme like VoiceMore.
- Encourage more self-awareness of own ability to listen.

Materials required: Chairs, one for each person. Flip-chart paper and marker pens.

Time	Description
25 mins	**Part One: Introduction/Instructions** Explain to everyone that this session is going to be all about practicing speaking and listening. Split the group into two evenly-sized groups and ask one to stay inside the room while the other half leaves with a second facilitator. They must go outside and far away enough that they cannot hear or see what is happening inside the room. **Group One – Inside the room: 'The Listeners'** Once the other group have left the room, explain: *'The group outside are being told to think of something they really care about and feel passionate about. They have been told they must come back inside and sit opposite someone who will be their partner for the activity. They have been asked to talk as much as possible about their topic and why they love it so much. What we want you to do is deliberately not listen. You need to show this by subtlety using your body language, posture, and eye contact, etc. You can say a few words, like 'yes', 'no', 'really', etc., but you must not speak too much. Our aim is to show them just with our bodies and eyes that we are not really listening to them. You cannot tell them that you have been told not to listen! It should be a secret. However, it needs to be quite subtle; you cannot just get up and walk away or completely turn your backs.'*

Part One: Introduction/Instructions Continued...

Once everyone understands, organise the chairs in pairs around the room so they are facing each other. The pairs of chairs should have enough space between them so that each pair cannot hear what the ones next to them are saying. Do not use tables because that would block them being able to see their partner's body language.

When the chairs are in place, ask the listeners to take a seat with one empty chair in front of them and to wait until the other group come inside.

Group Two – Outside the Room: 'The Speakers'

The other facilitator should read the below passage to the group outside the room and before they come back inside.

'The group inside is preparing the room for you to come back inside and speak to them. Their job will be to listen to you while you talk about something you really care about. You each need to decide on a topic you want to focus on, something you feel passionate about. This exercise is about them listening to you, and they are not meant to be talking; it is not an interview, so keep going even if they aren't speaking.'

Give them a few moments to think about what topic or thing they wish to speak about. It can be a hobby they love or a happy or funny story from their past. Help anyone who seems stuck and cannot think of one.

When they are all ready, bring them back inside the room and ask them to sit in an empty chair opposite someone.

When everyone is sat down, tell them all to start.

Let the pairs do the activity for around 5-8 minutes.

20 mins

Part Two: Group Discussion

After stopping, ask the speakers group: *'How was that? Do you think your partner was listening to you?'*

Let different pairs respond. Encourage those who were speaking to explain what happened and how they felt.

When they have finished, reveal what was really happening. Explain that the 'listeners' were told to deliberately be bad listeners! Check the speaking group understand.

Then, ask the group:*'What are the signs that someone is not listening to you? What kind of things did your partner do to show they were not listening?'*

Take some answers.

Then, ask the pairs to switch roles (listeners become speakers) and try again, but this time, the listening person should be a good listener. How can they show this time that they are really interested and listening?

PART 10: VOICEMORE SPOKESPERSON TRAINING

45 mins

Part Three: Debrief

Now facilitate a discussion in the group using the following questions:

- How did it feel to be a speaker during the exercise?
- What emotions did you have when you were trying to speak to the other person?
- If we think about life outside this training, what does this tell us about the importance of listening to people?
- How do you think people feel when they are not listened to properly?
- How do you think this exercise relates to VoiceMore and your role as a spokesperson?

If the group are struggling to discuss the exercise, you can use examples of the things you observed during the exercise to help remind them (do not name specific people because it might make them feel uncomfortable – keep comments general).

At the end of the debrief, highlight the points below to the group:

- Listening is very important, but it is not something humans are very good at! Some research suggests we only remember 25 – 50% of a conversation on average.
- When you listen carefully to what someone is saying and try to understand what they mean, this is called **'active listening'**. *Active listening means listening well and with good attention.*
- Check the group understand, then ask them what kind of things stop us from actively listening to someone. Allow time for the group to suggest some of their own answers and facilitate a short discussion.

If not mentioned, suggest the following:

- Listening can be hard when you are tired or hungry.
- Listening can be hard if you are bored, distracted or not interested in what the person is saying.
- When we are angry, we often focus too much on what we will say next, which means we have also stopped listening.

Emphasise:

- The best active listeners are those who are self-aware; they are aware of when they are not listening and try to pay more attention.
- Active listening is not just about 'pretending to listen' and just changing your body language. You need to open your ears and actively try to understand what the person is saying to you!

Finish the activity by asking the group to come up with their own tips for making sure they are actively listening. What do they think would help them listen better?

SESSION SIX: PUBLIC SPEAKING - BREATH, PACE, VOLUME

Total Duration: 1 hour 30 mins

Learning Objectives:
- Feel more confident in themselves and their ability to speak in front of others.
- Understand what makes good public speaking.
- Increase self-awareness.

Materials required: Flip-chart paper and pens.

Note to facilitator: If the group cannot read (or read very well), then just repeat the Martin Luther quote out loud several times. Ask the group to join in until they have memorised it.

Time	Description
30 mins	**Part One: Introduction** Explain to the group that we are now going to look at how the way in which we say our words, not just the words themselves, can influence communication. We are going to think about how to speak in front of people with confidence. Show the group the flip-chart paper with the quote below written in their local language.

> **If you can't fly, then run.**
> **If you can't run, then walk.**
> **If you can't walk, then crawl, but whatever you do,**
> **you have to keep moving forward.**

Explain to the group that this is a quote from someone called Martin Luther King. He was an African-American peace activist who campaigned for equality of people of colour in the United States. He promoted peace and did not believe in violence.

Now clear some space at one end of the room and organise some chairs 'theatre-style' facing a pretend 'stage'. Ask the group to sit on the chairs facing this. Explain to the group they are going to take turns standing up and saying the quote to the rest of the group. Everyone is going to have at least one go!

Remind the group they must encourage each other and support each other positively. No one is to make negative comments or noises when someone is speaking. Remind them of their own group rules that they decided upon (respecting each other, listening to each other, etc.).

Time	Description
30 mins	**Part Two: Practice** Check everyone understands, then start. Let people volunteer to come up and try when they feel ready. Do not pressure shyer members of the group. After some people have had a go, pause the activity and ask the group what they think would make their presentations better. What do they think they could adjust to make the way they are saying the quotes better? Suggest to the group: *What about the volume?* What are the problems with speaking too loudly (shouting!) or too quietly (whispering)? Emphasise we need to speak loud enough so people in the room can hear us, but not too loudly because it can seem aggressive. *What about the speed?* Explain to the group that when people are nervous, they often talk too quickly. It can be helpful to slow down, and don't be scared to pause between your sentences. *What can we do if we are nervous?* Explain that breathing is their number one friend when it comes to public speaking! When we are nervous, we breathe less deeply, and this can affect the oxygen we are getting to the brain, making it harder to think clearly and stay focused. If they are feeling nervous, they should take some deep, steady breaths, which will help make them feel more ready. Tell the group we are going to try again, but this time remembering to think about volume, the speed, and to pause and take good breaths. Ask if anybody wants to try. If anyone has not yet tried, encourage them to stand up and have a go. Allow some more time for practice. Make sure each person is applauded and others are reassuring them. After everyone has tried, ask the group to sit back down in a circle.
30 mins	**Part Three: Debrief** Ask the group how they found the activity. Did they feel different speaking out loud at the end? Take feedback and thoughts. Remind the group of these tips again: • Remember to breathe. • Do not rush. • Do not be afraid to pause. • Remember to speak clearly and loud enough so people can hear. • Good body language and eye contact. • Know what you are going to say – prepare and practice beforehand. Finish the session by asking the group why they think we did this activity. Explain that spokespersons often have to speak to groups of people and maybe even audiences. In the VoiceMore programme, there might be times where they must do this, which is why we did this practice. However, we will not be doing this all the time, and when presentations are necessary, they will have lots of time to work together to prepare and practice what they want to say. They will not be expected to go on their own to speak to groups of people, and we do not encourage them to do that. They must only do it when it is an official VoiceMore activity.

SESSION SEVEN: VALUES AND BELIEFS

Total Duration: 2 hours

Learning Objectives:

- Describe the difference between a value and a belief.
- Understand the importance of being sensitive to differing values and beliefs.
- Understand what prejudice is and the dangers of pre-judging others.
- Foster greater awareness of how our own values and beliefs affect the way we think about others.

Materials required:

- Summaries of the definition of values and beliefs written up in a local language on flip-chart. When they have finished brainstorming you can stick these up as a reminder during the session.
- Printed pictures of the camel/hippo and flip-chart paper and pens

Note to facilitator: Before the activity, decide which of the animal pictures you will use, the hippo or the camel. You only need to choose one of the animals. Pick the one you think they will be most familiar with. Make sure to print Picture 1 and 2 of your chosen animals separately. Also, make sure they are large enough for everyone to see and preferably are in colour.

Time	Description
30 mins	**Part One: Introduction**

Explain to the group that we are going to look at what values and beliefs are, why they are important, and how they might influence the way we communicate and interact with others.

Start by asking the group what they think the word 'value' means. Take answers. Then, ask how they would describe 'beliefs'. Take answers.

If the groups can read and write, you can write their suggestions on a flip-chart.

When they have exhausted all their ideas, summarise the following:

- *A belief is something we hold to be true, even though it might not be proven.*
- *A value is a measure of worth or importance a person attaches to something.*

Facilitate a short discussion on the above, checking everyone understands 'value' is, not just things like monetary value, and 'beliefs' aren't just referring to faith (explain this does include religion, but the session should not only focus on this).

Offer some examples:

Examples of Beliefs: *'I believe all people are equal', 'I believe family is very important', 'I believe it is wrong to steal', 'I believe in God'.*

Examples of Values: *'I value equality', 'I value family time', 'I value the rule of law', 'I value the teachings of my faith'.*

Check the group have understood these definitions before moving to the next part of the activity.

Time	Description
30 mins	**Part Two: What we do and do not know**

Ask the group: *'If you were walking down the road and a stranger was coming towards you, before you speak to them, what kind of things might you be able to know about them straight away, just by looking at them?'*

Take answers from the group. If they do not come up with these, you can suggest:

- You might be able to see what gender they are.
- You can see if they are young or old.
- You might be able to see if they have a certain religion, for example, if they are wearing a cross or hijab.
- You might know their job if they are wearing a uniform.
- You might be able to see what ethnic group or clan they belong to if they wear different clothes, etc.

Make notes on the flip-chart. Then ask, *'What is similar about all of these?'*

Answer: They are all physical clues. We can only make presumptions based on things our eyes can see, like what someone is wearing.

Now ask the group: *'How easy it is to see a person's values and beliefs?'*

Take answers from the group. Then, explain:

'Sometimes, we might be able to see something that gives us a clue about what a 'person believes or what is important to them, if, for example, they wear something that shows us they follow a religion, but most of the time, it is not possible to just 'see' these things.'

Ask the group if they could know the following just by looking at someone:

- What they think about family and if they think family is important.
- What they think about friendships, and what kind of friends they have.
- What their political ideas are and how they might vote.
- What kind of God they believe in.
- What they think is beautiful in the world.
- What they think is fair and just.
- What their life has been like, for example, what has happened to them in the past or what their experiences have been.

Facilitate a short discussion on the above.

Then, show the group Picture 1 and ask what animal this is.

Take answers. Then show them Picture 2 and ask again, *'What animal is this?'*

Answer: 'Hippo!'/'Camel!' (depending on which one you are using.)

Explain to the group: *'When we first meet a person, we do not know much about them. We know they are a person, but many things about them are hidden from us, just like how the rest of the hippo is hidden in the water/the camel is hidden in the tent.'*

'If we spend more time with them – and get to know them better – we will eventually learn more about them. We will know what their values and beliefs are and what they think and feel about the world. Eventually, their values and beliefs will be less hidden – just like the hippo outside the water/camel outside the tent.'

Check the group understand the concept before continuing. Ask if they have any questions or comments about this idea. If needed, facilitate a short discussion.

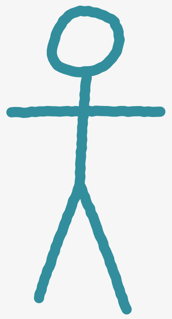
Summarise by explaining: *'There are many things we cannot know about someone just by looking at them. It is very difficult to know their values and beliefs by just doing this.'*

30 mins

Part Three: Where we get our values and beliefs from

Draw a stick person in the centre of the flip-chart. Explain to the group: *'We have talked about what values and beliefs are and how easily we can know them in someone new to us. Now we are going to think about where people get their values and beliefs from. Where in life do you think we get our values and beliefs from? What kind of things influence our values and beliefs?'*

Take answers and note them down around the stick figure on the flip-chart. If they do not think of them, suggest the following:



- Our family
- Our education/school
- Our government
- Our culture
- The media/TV/radio/social media
- Our friends
- The community
- Our experiences
- Our religion

Add these to the sheet drawing arrows, connecting them to the person.

Explain to the group: *'For most people, there are a lot of things that will shape their values and beliefs throughout their life. Some might be more influential than others, for example, family and religion, but for most people, they will have had a lot of influences. They will also be unique to everyone.'*

Now ask the group: *'Do you think these beliefs and values can change? Do you think people ever change their values and beliefs in life?'*

Take answers and facilitate a short discussion before moving to the final part of the session.

30 mins

Part Four: Debrief

Ask the group: *'Why do you think we have talked about all of this? How do you think this all relates to taking part in the VoiceMore programme?'*

Take answers. Then explain:

'As spokespersons, we must be aware of what we do not know so that we can be respectful and keep an open mind. Spokespersons should not pre-judge others – that is what prejudice is.'

'Values and beliefs are also very personal to people, and people can become upset, uncomfortable or angry if they are challenged in an insensitive way. We must remember that just by looking at someone that we do not know what they think and feel about many things.'

'This means that when we are trying to get people to think differently about an issue, for example, in our advocacy projects, we must do so in a respectful and sensitive way.'

Facilitate a short discussion with the group about this concept: What do they think about this idea/assertion? What are their thoughts on prejudice?

PICTURE 1

PICTURE 2

PICTURE 1

PICTURE 2

SESSION EIGHT: INTERVIEWING SKILLS

Total Duration: 1 hour 30 minutes

Learning Objectives:

- Explain what 'open' and 'closed' questions are.
- Understand what good interview techniques are.
- Feel more confident speaking to people and conducting a structured interview.

Materials required: Pre-prepared questions written on flip-chart in local language. Ball (not essential), sheets of flip-chart paper, marker pens.

Time	Description
15 mins	**Part One: Introduction** Start by asking the group, *'Why do we ask questions?'* Take answers, then explain that: *'We ask questions to get information and understand things better. During the VoiceMore programme, there might be times when you will be asking other young people, people in the community, or even adult decision-makers some questions. Interviewing someone is a skill, and the type of questions you ask will affect the answers you get back.'*
30 mins	**Part Two: Open and Closed Questions** Show or read the group some sentences and ask them to say what they think the difference is between them. • *'Do you like football?' Or 'Why do you like football?'* • *'Are you going to the shop today?' Or 'Why are you going to the shop today?'* • *'Where do you go to school?' Or 'Tell me about your school?'* Take answers and ideas. Then, explain they are examples of either 'open' or 'closed' questions. Read out the following summaries: • *'**'Closed'** questions (the ones on the left) are questions that just need a 'yes' or 'no' answer.'* • *'**'Open' questions** (on the right) require more detail and information to respond to – you cannot answer them with yes or no!'* Check everyone understands. Then ask: *'Why might we try and use the open questions? Why do you think they can they be useful for interviewing someone?'* Take ideas and comments. Then explain: *'Open questions are good if you want to know more about something because the person has to explain things in more detail. In interviews, this is useful because we want to help people open up to us and speak more.'* Check everyone understands. Then ask: 'When might it be good to use closed questions?' Take ideas and comments. Then explain: *'Closed questions (where someone can just say 'yes' or 'no') are good for things like questionnaires or surveys. They are useful if we want someone to confirm something quickly and clearly. In interviews, they are not so helpful because people can easily stay quiet and not say as much.'* Emphasise to the group: *'Good interviewers will think about the questions they are going to ask beforehand. Their aim is to make the other person feel comfortable, so they will feel happy speaking and explaining things.'*

30 mins	**Part Three: Practice Interviewing** Tell the group that they are now going to practice interviewing using all the skills they learnt in the previous sessions (body language, positive facial expressions, good tone of voice, etc.) and by using open questions. Pair up participants. Tell them that they are now going to take turns 'interviewing' each other about their happiest memory; something they remember that still makes them laugh and feel good. First, before starting, they need to take five minutes on their own to think about some questions they could ask. If they want to, they can write these down so they can remember them. Remind them they need to be open questions only, something the person can't answer just 'yes' or 'no' to! Allow some time for them to get ready, then start. Keep an eye on the time and give a warning when it is time for them to swap over and the other person becomes the interviewer.
15 mins	**Part Four: Debrief** When they have all finished, bring the group back together in a circle and ask them how they found the exercise. Take feedback. Ask the group: • *What did it feel like being interviewed?* • *Was there anything their partners did in the interview that was good? What was it?* • *How did it feel to be asked questions in that way?* • *As an interviewer, was it helpful to use open questions?* Finish the activity by explaining that in the VoiceMore programme, there might be times when we need to go and speak to people in the community or other young people to find out what they feel and think about something. This is why understanding interviewing skills is important. Highlight they should only go and conduct interviews with people when they are agreed beforehand and part of a VoiceMore activity.

"The day I joined VoiceMore, I was scared because I found myself in a youth group. It was the first time I met them. After a few days, we started getting along, and the fear ended when we started training. I discovered myself as part of the whole, that we are all one, and then I learned what VoiceMore is. I learned that VoiceMore is young people chosen by their peers to defend their fellow youth. Through the training, I now know how to be an advocate and how to raise awareness. I also have the power to defend; defending children who are deprived of their rights."

Baraka, 21, Democratic Republic of the Congo

SESSION NINE: UNDERSTANDING OUR RIGHTS

Total Duration: 1 hour

Learning Objectives:
- To introduce participants to the UNCRC and its different articles.
- For the group to reflect on what they think about the rights contained in the Convention.

Materials required: Print outs of a translated, child-friendly version of the Convention (make sure it is just a simple summary, as reading the full text for all Articles will take too long).

Note to facilitator: If the participants in the group are over 18, then let them know adults also have rights but under different sets of laws (for example, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is one of the oldest, created in 1948). If the programme is taking place within Africa, then it is also useful to introduce the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child.

For low/no literacy groups, try to find a version that has pictures and explain verbally while showing the pictures/illustrations that represent the right.

Time	Description
20 mins	**Part One: Introduction** Bring the group together in a circle and ask if they have heard of people having 'Rights'. What do they think this means? Facilitate a quick discussion. Then explain: *'When we talk about 'Rights', we are talking about legal or social things a person should have. They are kind of 'rules' about what is allowed or owed to people legally, socially or ethically. There are lots of different types of Rights, but today, we are going to talk about a set of Rights that are specifically aimed at children.'* Ask the group to see if they have ever heard of Children's Rights before. (The below explanation will need adjusting based on existing knowledge.) Explain that: *'In 1989, governments from all over the world came together and decided they wanted to create a set of laws to protect and support children everywhere. They all agreed on 54 different 'rules' (called 'articles') and signed a contract (a declaration) saying they would make sure that everyone under the age of 18 in their country would have them.* *This is called the 'United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child'. It explains what all countries must do to make sure children grow healthily, can learn, are protected and have their views listened to. Almost every country in the world has now signed this agreement. It is the biggest piece of international law in the world.'* Check the group understand and ask if they have any questions before continuing: *'All children, no matter where they are from, if they are a boy or a girl, if they are from one tribe or another tribe, if they have family or no family, if they are disabled or not disabled are entitled to have these Rights. No one should be discriminated against.'* Check the group understands and ask if anyone has any questions.

25 mins	**Part Two: Thinking About These Rights** Hand out a child-friendly summary of the Convention in their own language. Split the group into smaller groups and ask them to spend some time discussing the following: • What do they think of these rights? • Are there any they do not understand? • Are there some Rights they think are better than others? Why? • In your country where you live, do you feel they are being achieved? Support the group in reading and understanding them. Make sure each group is taking time to discuss the points among themselves.
15 mins	**Part Three: Debrief** When they have finished, bring everyone back together and ask each group to feedback what they think. Facilitate a short discussion based on the above questions and try to stimulate some debate. Highlight to the group that while many countries have signed this agreement, they do not always uphold or enforce these rights. It can also be difficult to hold governments to account. However, because the countries have formally committed to the UNCRC, they do have a responsibility to follow and try and realise the rights within it.

"At the beginning, the communities held the same concerns and fears as the young people; however, seeing the young people working together on a project that benefits both communities has helped show the community around them that they can work peacefully towards progress. Other stakeholders, including the local government, have commented on how fantastic it is to see these young people as role models and help counter the stereotype of young people being involved in the conflict between the communities."

Local NGO staff member, Uganda

SESSION TEN: WHAT IS DIALOGUE

Total Duration: 1 hour 30 mins

Learning Objectives:
- Describe the difference between dialogue, debate and argument.
- Have reflected on how our own opinions and beliefs can affect our ability to hear and appreciate other people's perspectives.
- Feel more confident in how to engage in dialogue.

Materials required: The dialogue statements at the bottom of this session plan translated, printed out, cut up into individual squares of paper and put inside an envelope. You will need enough copies (and envelopes) for each pair to have one. These will need to be prepared before you start the activity.

Note to facilitator: Check before the session that you can effectively translate the word 'dialogue'. Misunderstandings about the meaning of the word will impact the session. The activity with the statements will need adjusting based on the group's literacy level.

For low/no literacy groups, this activity should be simplified. Reduce the number of statements and add a symbol or drawing that can represent the meaning (see examples below). Prepare these beforehand and make sure they are on the printed versions. Read out the statement and show them the corresponding image/symbol. Do this for every statement and check everyone remembers them before starting. Then, continue with the rest of the activity as outlined.

ANSWERS

Is Dialogue	Is not Dialogue
Asking questions to find out more about the lives of others, listening carefully to what others say, and responding to them.	An interview.
Trying to understand a different way of looking at something.	Making friends with someone else.
Trying to find out how we are different and understand those differences.	An argument.
A discussion where I feel safe enough to ask difficult questions/share difficult experiences.	The same thing as a debate.

10 mins	**Part One: Introduction** Bring the group together and explain that we are going to spend some time thinking about something called 'dialogue'. Ask the group if anyone has heard of this word before. Take ideas from the group, then summarise: *Dialogue is a conversation or discussion with specific aim to resolve a problem.*
30 mins	**Part Two: Sorting the Statements** Split the group into smaller groups of around 3-4 people. Hand each group a copy of the pre-prepared dialogue statements in the envelopes. Explain that inside each envelope is a set of different statements. Working together in their groups, they need to separate these. ***They need to put all the statements they think ARE dialogue together and all the statements they think ARE NOT dialogue together.*** Check the groups understand, then allow some time for them to sort the statements. Check with any who seem to be struggling. Once everyone has finished, walk around the room and review how each group has organised the statements. Have they all done the same? Or are there any differences? Show the group (or read out) the answers below. Ask the groups to compare this to how they organised the statements.

ANSWERS

Is Dialogue	Is not Dialogue
Trying to find out how we are different and understand those differences	Reading prepared statements to other people
Asking questions to find out more about the lives of others	Trying to find out how we are all the same through discussing similarities
Trying to understand a different way of looking at something	Making friends with someone else
Listening carefully to what others say and responding to them	The same thing as a debate
Working together to find solutions to shared problems	An interview
A discussion where I feel safe enough to ask difficult questions/share difficult experiences	An argument

PART 10: VOICEMORE SPOKESPERSON TRAINING

30 mins	**Part Two: Sorting the Statements Continued...** Bring the group into a circle and facilitate a discussion on what is or is not dialogue. Below are some notes on why certain ways of communication are not considered dialogue. Explain these to the group. Finish this part of the activity by sticking the answer sheet on the wall as a reminder to the group of what is/is not dialogue. **Explanations for Discussion** Below are some explanations you can share with the young people during the discussion.

'An argument': When people argue, they get angry. People get upset and stop listening to each other. Dialogue should be calm with good listening. It cannot be dialogue if someone has lost their temper!

'A debate': The purpose of a debate is to try and convince another person of your viewpoint. In dialogue, we are not trying to do this, and it does not matter if you finish with them agreeing with you or not.

'Finding out how we are the same': Dialogue is not about focusing on why we are similar. If we just focus on doing this, we cannot start to explore things we might not agree on and why. Dialogue is about understanding our differences.

'An interview': The focus of an interview is on trying to get more information from only one person. In dialogue, both are equal and offer information.

'Making friends': Dialogue is not about having to make friends with someone. It does not matter if you finish and you are not friends, just that you act respectfully towards each other.

20 mins	**Part Three: Debrief** Now sit the group back into a circle. Ask the group how they found that exercise. Was it difficult? Was there anything that surprised them? Then, introduce a summary definition of what dialogue is: *'Dialogue is when you are talking with someone who might have different opinions, values and beliefs to your own. It is a way of talking with someone that helps you to understand their lives, values and beliefs better, and they come to understand your life, values and beliefs better, too.'* Ask the group what they think of this definition. Explain dialogue is more than just chatting or conversation! It is a way to deliberately trying and listening and thinking carefully about what people are telling you. We can only say it is dialogue when people are really trying to understand each other's perspectives and viewpoints. Explain dialogue is: • Approaching a conversation calmly and with patience. • Trying to understand beliefs, values and opinions that are different from your own. • Setting aside any assumptions, fears, preconceptions, or prejudices you might have. • Setting aside any desire to 'win' the conversation.

Part Three: Debrief Continued...

Remember, in dialogue, no one loses, no one wins, but both gain a new understanding of each other.

Totally agreeing with each other at the end is, therefore, not necessarily the aim. *You can agree to disagree.* The most important thing is you have created space in your mind and heart to listen to their reasoning and feelings. Check everyone understands before moving to the final part of the activity.

Note to facilitator: You will need to think carefully about what topic you can use before starting this part of the activity. The following are just examples; you will need to check how appropriate and understood they are. Be careful not to choose a topic that will be too difficult for the group or one they are not ready to talk about together. It needs to be something that divides opinion, but not to the extent it causes an argument.

30 mins

Dialogue Practice

Explain to the group that they are now going to spend some time practicing dialogue. They need to think about the qualities of dialogue they just discussed and try to use them in this practice. They will do this in pairs.

Before starting, chose one of the statements below for the group to discuss. It needs to be one that you think the young people will have mixed opinions about.

- *'Girls should be able to inherit land.'*
- *'People of different religions should be able to marry.'*
- *'A woman should be able to be the president of the country.'*
- *'Children should be banned from work.'*

To organise the pairs, get everyone to stand then read out the statement. If they agree with it, ask them to stand on one side of the room, and if they disagree with it, stand on the other side.

If there is not a roughly a 50/50 split on each side, you can try another statement and ask people to move depending on their opinion. The aim is to find one statement that divides the opinion of the group more or less evenly.

When you find a statement that does it, match people into pairs, one from each side of the room together (each pair needs to have two people with different opinions on the statement).

Before they start discussing the statement, emphasise that '*this is not a debate or an argument*'; they must listen carefully to why the other person thinks and feels like they do, then explain why they think and feel the way they do.

Allow the group some time to practice. Observe the room and how each pair are getting along. After ten minutes or so, bring the group back together in one circle. Ask how they found that activity: Was it hard to stick to speaking and listening like this? Did they find anything difficult about it? Why?

Finish the session by asking the group why they think dialogue could be useful in the VoiceMore Programme. Why might it be good for them as spokespersons to be able to use? (For example, because they will need to understand other people so they can advocate on their behalf about things.)

PHOTOCOPY AND CUT OUT

Reading prepared statements to other people

Trying to find out how we are different and understand those differences

Trying to find out how we are all the same through discussing similarities

Asking questions to find out more about the lives of others

Making friends with someone else

Trying to understand a different way of looking at something

The same thing as a debate

An interview

Listening carefully to what others say and responding to them

Working together to find solutions to shared problems

An argument

A discussion where I feel safe enough to ask difficult questions/share difficult experiences

Photo credit: Christian Jepsen

PART 11

VoiceMore Advocacy Training

OVERVIEW

This document contains session plans related to the second VoiceMore training module for young people. Session plans are numbered from 1 – 8 and are designed to be delivered in that order.

The eight session plans for this training module are:

Session 1	What is Advocacy?
Session 2	Choosing our Advocacy Theme: Part 1
Session 3	Choosing our Advocacy Theme: Part 2
Session 4	Analysing the Situation
Session 5	Stakeholder Mapping
Session 6	Ideas for Advocacy Activities: Part 1
Session 7	Ideas for Advocacy Activities: Part 2
Session 8	Measuring Success

Adapting the Activities: It is the facilitator's responsibility to read the session plans before the activity and consider any adaptations that might need to be made for the group they are working with. This includes making sure visual aids are prepared. Where you see the book symbol to the left in a session plan, this will be a suggested adaptation that can be made for young people with no or low literacy.

Please note, the following timetables can be adapted depending on the needs of the group; training days can be shortened, and activities spread over a longer period of time. However, make sure they are still delivered in the same order as outlined here and do not leave long gaps between training days, as ideas will be forgotten, making building on learning from one session to the next challenging.

ADVOCACY TRAINING: DAY ONE

Time	Session	Objectives
9am - 9.30am	**Welcomes and warm-up games**	• To help everyone feel energised and ready for the training day.
9.30am - 10.30am	**Session One: What is Advocacy?**	• Explain what advocacy is. • Stimulate ideas for advocacy activities. • Help the group think about what kind of change can be brought about by advocacy.
10.30am - 11am	**Break**	
11am - 12am	**Session Two: Choosing Our Advocacy Theme (Part One)**	• To discuss a variety of different issues impacting children and youth in their area. • Have discussed many different aspects of these problems.
12am - 1pm	**Lunch**	
1pm - 2pm	**Session Three: Choosing Our Advocacy Theme (Part Two)**	• Group reflect and decide jointly on one theme they will focus their advocacy project on.
2pm - 2.30pm	**Break**	
2.30pm - 4pm	**Session Four: Analysing the Situation**	• To better understand all the causes and impacts of the issue they have chosen. • To reflect on how multiple issues can be interrelated. • To better understand what the wider benefits of reducing or stopping the issue could be.
4pm - 4.30pm	**Questions, Evaluation and Feedback**	• To round off the day and make sure key points are understood. • Feedback to help inform the next day of training.

ADVOCACY TRAINING: DAY TWO

Time	Session	Objectives
9am - 9.30am	**Welcomes and warm-up games**	• To help everyone feel energised and ready for the training day.
9.30am - 10.30am	**Session Five: Stakeholder Mapping**	• To understand what a 'stakeholder' is. • Raise awareness of who might support, and who might resist, their project. • Consider who different stakeholders for their project are.
10.30am - 11am	**Break**	
11am - 12am	**Session Five Continued: Stakeholder Mapping**	• To understand what a 'stakeholder' is. • Raise awareness of who might support, and who might resist, their project. • Consider who different stakeholders for their project are.
12am - 1pm	**Lunch**	
1pm - 2.30pm	**Session Six; Ideas for Advocacy Action (Part 1)**	• To explore ,and decide on, advocacy activities they can undertake in their project. • For these to be informed by the previous sessions in the training. • To finish with a summary of planned activities to further build from after the research phase.
2pm - 3pm	**Break**	
3pm - 3.30pm	**Questions, Evaluation and Feedback**	• To round off the day and make sure key points understood. • Feedback to help inform the next day of training.

PART 11: VOICEMORE ADVOCACY TRAINING

ADVOCACY TRAINING: DAY THREE

Time	Session	Objectives
9am - 9.30am	**Welcomes and *warm-up games***	• To help everyone feel energised and ready for the training day.
9.30am - 11am	**Session Seven: Ideas for Advocacy Action (Part 2)**	• To consider the strengths and weaknesses of the ideas they came up with in the previous session. • To have a clearer sense of what the next steps for their project could be.
11am - 11.30am	**Break**	
11.30am - 12.30am	**Session Eight: Measuring Success**	• To consider what success will look like for them in their advocacy project. • To have realistic and clearly defined goals for their project. • Help the group manage their expectations for their work.
12.30am - 1.30pm	**Lunch**	
1.30pm - 2.30pm	**Session Eight Continued**	
2.30pm - 3pm	**Break**	
3pm - 3.30pm	**End of Training Evaluation**	• Support group to reflect on learning from the training. • Create space for participants to offer feedback.

VOICEMORE ADVOCACY TRAINING SESSION PLANS

SESSION ONE: WHAT IS ADVOCACY?

Total Duration: 1 hour

Learning Objectives:

- Explain what advocacy is.
- Stimulate ideas for advocacy activities.
- Help the group think about what kind of change can be brought about by advocacy.

Materials required: Translated copies of the 'What is Advocacy' box below, either printed or written up on a flip-chart.

For low/no literacy groups, leave out showing them the advocacy summary in the box below and instead ask them to work together to draw the main points they discussed in the session on a sheet of flip-chart paper. This will create a personalised 'picture representation' of what advocacy is and what advocacy activities are. Keep the sheet and use it as a reminder in later sessions.

Time	Description
15 mins	**Part One: Introduction** Bring the group together and explain that we are going to begin by looking at what advocacy is. Start by asking them what they think the word means. Allow the young people time to think, take answers, then summarise the following: *'Advocacy means trying to get support for something. It is used to argue for a cause, to support or defend something. It is about helping those who have less power to talk about issues affecting them and to raise their voice.'* Check everyone understands and see if there are any questions before moving on.
15 mins	**Part Two: Advocacy Activities** Now ask the group: What kind of activities do you think are advocacy activities? What kind of things do people do when they are advocating about something? Allow the group time to think and come up with their own suggestions. Take their ideas, then, if needed, summarise: *'Advocacy activities are activities that aim to influence people who make decisions, for example, politicians or community leaders or organisations. They are activities that help people understand a problem better and feel more motivated to change it. Advocacy activities can include media campaigns to raise awareness (e.g., radio or newspapers), speaking to audiences at events or in public, organising private meetings, conducting research, and producing evidence and testimony (real-life examples from affected people). '* Check the group understand before moving on.
30 mins	**Part Three: Why Advocacy?** Now explain to the group: *'We have talked about what advocacy is and what advocacy activities might be, but now let us think about why we do it. Take ten minutes to discuss what kind of things people are trying to change when they do advocacy.'*

Part Three: Why Advocacy? Continued...

Check the group understand and allow them time to discuss. Then, bring the group back together and ask for their ideas.

If the group do not mention the following, suggest:

We do advocacy to...

- Change the way people think about something and their attitude towards an issue.
- Change government policy or law.
- Change community practices.
- Change international organisations, policy or law.
- Make governments, communities, and NGOs pay more attention to a problem.

Summarise to the group:

'The aim of advocacy is, therefore, to raise awareness, convince people that change would be positive, and to make people with power commit to help.'

Check if there are any questions. Can they think of any advocacy they have heard or seen in their community/area before? What was it about?

Then, show the group the translated summary box below.

What is Advocacy Summary

Advocacy seeks to ensure people, particularly those who are most vulnerable in society, to:

- Have their voice heard on issues that are important to them.
- Defend their rights.
- Have their views and wishes meaningfully considered when decisions are being made about their lives.

Advocacy is a process of supporting and enabling people to:

- Express their views and concerns.
- Access information and services.
- Defend and promote their rights and responsibilities.
- Explore choices and options.

This might mean:

- Getting laws or policy changed.
- Sensitisation activities so people understand a problem better.
- Trying to change peoples' attitudes about a problem.

Keep this and stick it on the wall as a reminder during later activities.

Finish the session by emphasising group safety. Explain that:

'Doing advocacy can be risky if you are not careful. In the VoiceMore programme, your safety, and the safety of other children, is the most important thing. We will be talking about keeping safe in this training. We never want you to do any advocacy activity without us all first agreeing and assessing any risks together. If we think any advocacy activity is too dangerous, we will not be able to do it.'

Check if participants have any further questions or suggestions before closing.

SESSION TWO: CHOOSING OUR ADVOCACY THEME (PART 1)

Total Duration: 1 hour

Learning Objectives:
- To discuss a variety of different issues impacting children and youth in their area.
- Have discussed many different aspects of these problems.

Materials required:
- Very large sheets of flip-chart paper and marker pens.
- A notebook for the facilitator to take notes or a dictaphone to record the session on.

Note to facilitator: The facilitator should not express their own personal views in this activity. Their role is to ask the group questions and make sure everyone is getting a chance to say what they think. If the group is happy for you to, it is helpful to record the discussion on a dictaphone/phone so we have a record of their feedback. Be careful not to lose this file; it needs to be kept safe. If you cannot record it, ask one of the other facilitators or a volunteer participant to make notes during the discussion so that you have a way to remember what was talked about. Make sure the focus group is taking place in a quiet space with no interruptions. Also, be sensitive to how females might feel about certain issues being raised. Depending on the group, a separate female-only focus group (ideally with a female staff member) might be better.

Time | **Description**

50 mins — **Part One: Introduction**

Bring the group into a circle and explain that they are going to take part in something called a focus group discussion. A focus group is when a group of people talk about any subject they wish openly and in depth. The facilitator might ask a few questions, but it will be up to them to keep the discussion going.

Explain there are some rules for the discussion we need to follow:
- Everyone needs to get a chance to speak.
- We need to treat everyone's views and opinions with respect.
- One person needs to speak at a time; there should be no interruptions or speaking over people.
- We need to respect people's privacy. If they want to use examples, do not use real names of people who might have been affected or harmed, even if you know them.

When everyone is ready, start the focus group by asking: *'What kind of issues affect children and youth here in your area?'*

Allow the group time to explain what the issues are. Ask follow-up questions to find out more information. For example: Can you tell me more about that? Why do you think that happens? What do people think about this problem? Does it happen all the time? How bad is the problem? Who is worse affected? How long has it been happening? Does it happen to lots of people or just some people? Etc.

Keep the conversation going by asking questions. The aim is to find out as much as possible about as many issues as possible. When the group has exhausted all their ideas, bring the discussion to a close.

10 mins — **Part Two: Summary of Issues Raised**

Finish this part of the activity with a summary; list all the different topics they have talked about as a reminder. Explain that in the next session, they are going to have to select just one of them to work on for their advocacy project.

SESSION THREE: CHOOSING OUR ADVOCACY THEME (PART 2)

Total Duration: 1 hour

Learning Objectives:
- The group reflect and decide jointly on one theme they will focus their advocacy project on.

Materials required:
- Notebook and pen for facilitator so they can take notes.

Time | **Description**

5 mins — **Part One: Introduction**

Bring the group into a circle and remind them again of the main issues they discussed in their focus group activity before. Explain that we now need to make some decisions.

Emphasise that it is important that by the end of this session, everyone feels happy with what is chosen. It cannot be a decision made by just a few people in the group – they are a team!

25 mins — **Part two: Group Discussions**

Split the group into two and ask them to sit at opposite ends of the room, creating two groups. Explain both groups need to discuss together which theme they want to work on. Remind them they need to consider the following:
- Advocacy is about helping the most in need and those with the least voice.
- They need to pick something they feel enthusiastic and passionate about changing and working on.

Explain they need to discuss together their ideas and then select one issue. They then need to prepare a presentation for the other group, where they explain the following:
- What problem they have chosen.
- Why they have chosen it.
- Why they think it is an important issue to address.

After their discussions, each group will have just ten minutes to present to the other group.

30 mins — **Part Three: Presentations and Decisions**

Allow the groups around 25 minutes to discuss and prepare. When groups are ready, bring them back into a circle and allow each group to present what they discussed.

If the groups have chosen different themes, they will then need to take some time as one big group discussing which they should select. If the feelings are very strong, then help the group have a constructive discussion. It might be good for them to vote for their favourite final choice.

When they have finished, confirm this is now the theme of their project. For the rest of the training, we are going to spend time thinking about this problem in more depth.

SESSION FOUR: ANALYSING THE SITUATION

Total Duration: 1 hour 30 mins

Learning Objectives:
- To better understand all the causes and impacts of the issue they have chosen.
- To reflect on how multiple issues can be inter-related.
- To better understand what the wider benefits of reducing or stopping the issue could be.

Materials required: Flip-chart paper and pens. Prepare the diagram for the activity beforehand (as opposite) adding in a summary of the issue they have selected in the centre.

For low/no literacy groups, print off a picture that symbolises the issue they have chosen and stick this in this in the middle of the diagram. Add other pictures at the top and the bottom that can represent 'causes' and 'impacts', then verbally explain what they mean to the group. Ask them to draw something to represent each of the causes and impacts they identify.

Time	Description
30 mins	**Part One: Introduction**

Remind the group of the theme they chose for their project. Explain that in this activity, we are going to think more about what the causes and impacts of this problem might be so that we can understand it better.

We are going to do this by brainstorming all the things that contribute to the issue happening and what the consequences of the issue are. Check the group understand.

If needed, read out the following summary of what we mean by cause and impact:
- Cause: something that is contributing to the problem happening or is making it worse.
- Impact: the results or consequences that come from the problem.

Time	Description
30 mins	**Part Two: Identifying Causes and Impacts**

Hand out two translated copies of the causes and impacts diagram, on the following page, for them to look at. Help the group understand by explaining what it says. When they are ready, split the group into two and give each group one of the flip-chart sheets and some pens.

Explain to the groups that they now need to work in their teams to fill out each side. In the space under causes, discuss and list all the ones they can think of. Above impacts, discuss and list all the ones they can think of.

If the groups are struggling, help them by asking some questions. Encourage them to keep thinking back to where it could have stemmed from, e.g., what happened in the past, what other problems preceded it, etc. For impacts, do the same; what are the immediate impacts, but also how are those impacts contributing to more problems in the future?

When both groups have finished, post both sheets on the wall. Gather both groups around these, ready for a discussion.

Part Two: Identifying Causes and Impacts Continued...

Causes

Short Description of the Problem Here

Impacts

Time	Description
30 mins	**Part Three: Debrief**

Ask for volunteers from each group to explain what they have added to their sheets and why. Compare what each group came up with. Does each group everyone agree with what the other included? Can they think of any more they might want to add?

Then, ask the group why they think we have done this activity. Why is thinking about causes and impacts useful for an advocacy project?

Take answers. Then explain:
- There are always many reasons why problems happen. If we are going to solve a problem, we need to think about where it comes from.
- Making this diagram helps us to see how causes and impacts are connected.
- If we have not considered all the different causes and effects of a problem, it will be difficult to try and find solutions.
- When we speak to people about our project, we need to be able to explain what all the negative impacts are, as they might not have thought about them before.
  We can also show them what the wider benefits of stopping the problem will be.

When they have finished discussing, let the group know the two sheets will be combined into one. It will be a document they can use again later in their advocacy planning for reference and to answer the above questions.

SESSION FIVE: STAKEHOLDER MAPPING

Total Duration: 2 hours

Learning Objectives:
- To understand what a 'stakeholder' is.
- Raise awareness of who might support and who might resist their project.
- Consider who the different stakeholders for their project are.

Materials required: Flip-chart paper and marker pens. Translated and printed copies of the table opposite (printed as large as possible). Alternatively, prepare the charts by hand beforehand on flip-chart paper.

Note to facilitator: You will need to check how to translate the word 'stakeholder' into a local language to help avoid confusion. Find a way to describe this term that is simple and easy to understand.

For low/no literacy groups, during the mapping activity, instead of writing, draw the issue and all the stakeholders they come up with. Then, instead of using the table in the supporters or resistors section, split the group into pairs or small groups and allocate one stakeholder to each. Using a new piece of flip-chart, ask them to draw the stakeholder(s), and then discuss what kind of things they think that person/those people would say about the issue they are trying to address. What do they think their opinions and feelings about it would be? Then, they need to add drawings around the stakeholder 'character' that depict these attitudes and feelings. When finished, each group presents their sheets to the others. Then, move to the debrief section of the session.

Time	Description
15 mins	**Part One: Introduction** Explain to the group that in this activity, we are going to start thinking about all the people who will be important for us in our advocacy project. That is all the people we might need to speak to, or work with, to help make our project a success. We call these people 'stakeholders'. *'Stakeholders are anyone who has some kind of interest in our project or will be impacted by it. For example, they could be a person who is creating the problem or someone who is affected by it.'* Check the group understand and ask if they have any questions before moving on.
30 mins	**Part two: Mapping the Stakeholders** Remind the group of the advocacy issue they have decided to work on. In the centre of the flip-chart, write the issue and circle it. Now ask the group: *'Who are the different people who are involved or affected in some way?'* Take answers and add them around the issue on the flip-chart. If the group are struggling to think of many, encourage them to consider wider groups who might be affected, for example, other family members or peoples' friends. Also, make sure the group have considered adding government or local leaders, etc. When the group has finished and cannot think of any more, explain that you are going to consider why they each of them might like our project or why they might not like it.

PART 11: VOICEMORE ADVOCACY TRAINING

45 mins	**Part Three: Supporters or Resistors?** Explain that we are now going to try and work out why each of these stakeholders might want to support our project or why they might want to stop it. We are going to think about what their personal interests are in it. Split the group into two or three groups and hand out a copy of the table below to each group. Explain to everyone what each column is for: • In the first column, they write each stakeholder they have identified. • In the second column, they discuss and write down why they might support their project. • In the third column, they discuss and write down why they might not support their project. • In the last column, they discuss and write down how important and *powerful* that person is/group are. Check the groups understand how to fill out the table. Then, ask the two groups to move to different sides of the room and work together to complete it. Make sure they are all discussing stakeholders as a group before deciding before they write anything down, as this is a team activity!

Who are the stakeholders?			
How are they involved in the issue?			
Reasons you think they will support what you want to do on your project?			
Why might they be pleased with you stopping this issue from happening?			
Reasons you think they might not support your project?			
Why might they not be pleased with you stopping this issue?			

30 mins

Part Four: Debrief

When each group has finished, bring them back together into a circle. Ask each group to present what they came up with. When each has finished presenting, facilitate a discussion about their tables. Ask the group:

- Who do we think are going to be our supporters for this project?
- Who do we think are going to be against us?
- Are there any people that we think will dislike our project so much it might be dangers for us to try and work with them? Who are they?

Now ask the group: '*Why do they think we did that activity? Why was it relevant for our project?'*

Facilitate a short discussion. If they do not mention the points below, then suggest:

- In advocacy, we always need to think about who is going to support us and who might try resist us.
- We need to make sure we have carefully considered how each group of people (stakeholders) feel about the issue we are going to try and work on.
- When we understand what motivates people, e.g., what their personal interests are, we will know how to make them listen to us more.
- If we spend time thinking about these issues, it helps us to avoid any danger.

Check the group have understood and take any questions. Emphasise that if there is anyone we think is not going to like our work, then we need to be careful and not approach them, especially alone or without support.

SESSION SIX: IDEAS OF ADVOCACY ACTION (PART 1)

Total Duration: 1 hour 30 mins

Learning Objectives:

- To explore and decide on advocacy activities they can undertake in their project.
- For these to be informed by the previous training sessions.
- To finish with a summary of planned activities to further build from after the research phase.

Materials required: Flip-chart paper and pens. Make sure to also have the flip-charts from previous sessions in the advocacy training available and posted on the wall before the session as a reminder.

For low/no literacy groups, swap the writing parts of the activity to drawing. Keep a note of what each drawing means, however, and add this to the sheet when the group has finished. This will help remind yourself and the group later in the training and make sure no ideas are lost.

Time	Description
30 mins	**Part One: Introduction and Reminders** Explain that they are going to start thinking about what kind of activities they could do for their advocacy project. Today, we are going to decide on some we think would be good; then, after the research phase, we can re-visit our plans and make any necessary adjustments or changes (depending on what our research tells us). Check everyone understands before continuing.

Introduction and Reminders Continued...

Start by explaining that you have put all the flip-chart sheets from the advocacy training up. Ask participants to spend five minutes walking around looking at these and remembering. When they are finished, bring the group back together and explain:

'Before we start designing advocacy activities, we need to remember some of the things we have already talked about. We need to consider the following:

- *Who each activity will be aimed at and why? (Think about the stakeholder mapping session we did.)*
- *How will it help prevent some of the reasons the problem happens? (Think about the causes and impacts session we did.)*
- *What kind of change we want to see (e.g., law, policy, practices, attitudes, opinions – think about the what is advocacy session we did).'*

Check the group understands. Explain that they need to keep this in mind during the next part of the activity.

1 hour

Part Two: Ideas for Advocacy Action

Split the group into three and give each a flip-chart paper and some pens. Ask them to now spend around 20 minutes discussing the different advocacy activities they would like to do. They need to try and think creatively and to choose a variety of them.

Ask the group to write or draw these on a flip-chart sheet. They do not need to add lots of detail, just note down the idea/summarise it. When they are finished, they will come back and present to the other groups. Each group will have maximum of ten minutes to present, so remind them to decide who will be presenting and to keep to time.

When the groups are finished, bring them back together and let each one present their ideas. Then, facilitate a short discussion between all participants asking:

- Did they pick the same or similar activities?
- Now they have seen them all, are there any other ones they think could be added?

Check the group understands. Explain that they need to keep this in mind during the next part of the activity.

"In VoiceMore, we have learned lots and lots of things we didn't know before, and it has increased our knowledge and clarified certain topics we knew very little about. For example, how to address our problems and work on solving them for us to find ways to improve our current conditions."

Tayma, 16, Jordan

SESSION SEVEN: IDEAS OF ADVOCACY ACTION (PART 2)

Total Duration: 1 hour

Learning Objectives:
- To consider the strengths and weaknesses of ideas they came up with in the previous session.
- To have a clearer sense of what the next steps for their project could be.

Materials required: Flip-chart paper and pens.

Time	Description
15 mins	**Part One: Introduction** Stick the summary sheet from the last part of the activity first on the wall. Explain that they are now going to work together to review the ideas based on three aspects: 1. How varied are the activities: Do they reach a variety of different stakeholders? Are there any stakeholders who are important but will not be targeted in the planned activities? 2. Do the activities use different types of advocacy (e.g., raising awareness/sensitisation, facilitating meetings, presentations, events, etc.)? 3. In the time they have left to do their project, are there too many or too few activities? Are there a realistic amount for them to focus on?
35 mins	**Part Two: Group Discussions** Split the group back into three (try to mix them rather than the same groups as the last discussion). Ask each group to focus on discussing one of the questions. For example, group one answers question one and so on. Ask them to think about this for all the activities listed on the sheet. The group do not need to prepare notes and should remember their main points to feedback to the whole group after. Allow the groups around 15 minutes to discuss; then, when they are ready, bring them back and ask them to present their conclusions to the wider group. Check if they think any activities should be changed based on their discussions: Are there any adjustments or additions they want to make now?
10 mins	**Part Three: Debrief** Finish the activity by explaining that in the programme, after their research phase, they will return to these ideas and plan them in more detail. It is important that they do not try to start them now! They need to wait until later to ensure we have correctly organised them in a safe way. This will include doing a risk assessment for each activity and organising everyone in the group into different roles and responsibilities.

PART 11: VOICEMORE ADVOCACY TRAINING

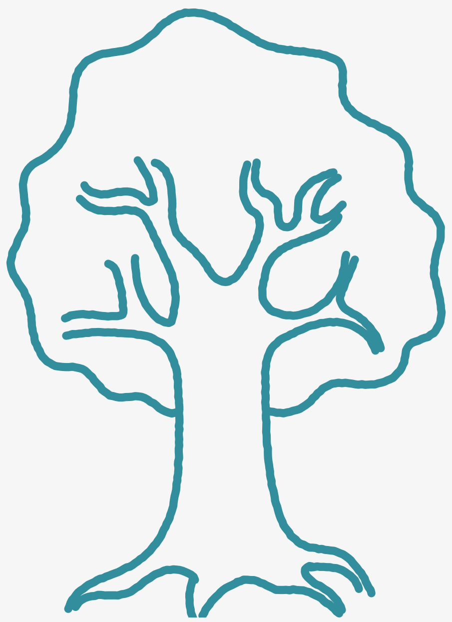
SESSION EIGHT: MEASURING SUCCESS

Total Duration: 2 hours

Learning Objectives:
- To consider what success will look like for them in their advocacy project.
- To have realistic and clearly defined goals for their project.
- Help the group manage their expectations for their work.

Materials required: Flip-chart paper and pens. A printed copy of the tree template printed as large as possible.

Time	Description
30 mins	**Part One: Introduction** Bring the group into a circle. Explain that in this activity, we are going to think about how we can measure the success of our project. *'When planning advocacy, it is important to think about what our goal is going to be. If we do not have a clear idea of where we want to get to, we will not know it when we get there!'* We are going to start by thinking about what our aim for this work is. By the end of this project, what do you want to have achieved? Ask the group to take time discussing this together. When they have finished, ask for a volunteer to summarise what they decided. Make a note of this.
30 mins	**Part Two: Setting A Realistic Goal** Explain to the group that you are now going to spend time thinking about how possible this goal is. Ask: • How realistic is the goal you just decided on? • Is it too general? (Does it relate specifically to the issue you chose?) Allow the group some time to think and respond. If the group are struggling, also ask: • Do we think we can really stop this problem totally? Or would it be better to say we are going to try and reduce it? • Are you talking about this problem everywhere? Or just in your community or country? Take answers and ideas from the group. Then explain: *'We need to be realistic about what we can achieve in the time we have for this work. We can still have a positive impact on the problem, but we might not be able to eliminate it completely. If we set our goals too high, we will not be able to reach them.'* Offer the group an example. Below are two goals. They are for the same project, but can they see the difference in them? **Project Theme: Crime** **Goal: To end all crime.** **Project Theme: Crime** **Goal: To try and reduce the amount of robbery in our community.**

	Part Two: Setting A Realistic Goal Continued... Answer: The goal on the left is too big. It would not be possible for one group of young people to stop all crime. The goal on the right is better. It says they just want to reduce it, and they have been specific about what kind of crime (e.g., robbery) and where (e.g., in their community). This is a more realistic goal. Check the group understand this concept. Now ask them to now work together as a group to edit the goal they came up with before. What can they change to make it more realistic and specific? Their goal should only be one sentence! Allow the group ten minutes to do this together, then bring them together into a circle and ask them to confirm what their new goal is. Record this on a new piece of flip-chart paper.
45 mins	**Part Three: Tree of Success** Now introduce the template of the tree. Explain to the group that the tree is going to represent their project. The roots of the tree are all the activities they will do to try and combat the problem they have chosen, and at the top of the tree, we are going to put our final goal. All the activities underneath must contribute to achieving this, and combined, they will help achieve the impact we want.  Check the group understand. Ask the group to work together as a team to discuss and add a summary of their activities to the roots and leaves of the tree (they can look at their advocacy activities sheet from the last session to help them do this). Make sure everyone is participating and everyone's views are being taken into account.
15 mins	**Part Four: Debrief** When the group have finished, bring them back together in a circle. Stick their final tree of success on the wall. Ask the group how they feel about the project. What was it like thinking about the goals they want to achieve? Facilitate a short discussion. Explain that during their advocacy project, they should always remember what their goals are and make sure all their activities are helping them move towards them.

> "The young people have shared their own stories of how, before they worked together as a mixed group, they were fearful of the other community or made stereotypical assumptions. South Sudanese spoke about not feeling safe walking through the Ugandan areas, and the Ugandans spoke of anger towards the refugees as they were seen to be able to access more NGO services than them. However, as they worked together, they became friends and were working together on joint initiatives. They have now set up the organisation together, and some of the groups share farmland and work together. There was no longer a divide between the groups, and many of them have learnt each other's or common languages."
>
> **Community Leader, Uganda**

Photo credit: Christian Jepsen

PART 12

VoiceMore Research Training

OVERVIEW

This document contains plans related to the third VoiceMore training module for young people. Session plans are numbered from 1 – 7 and designed to be delivered in that order.

The seven session plans for this training module are:

Session 1	What is Research?
Session 2	Defining the Research Question
Session 3	Deciding on a Research Method
Session 4	Finding and Working with Our Respondents
Session 5	Staying Safe
Session 6	Consent, Confidentiality and Data Protection
Session 7	Analysing the Results

Adapting the Activities: It is the facilitator's responsibility to read the session plans before the activity and consider any adaptations that might need to be made for the group they are working with. This includes making sure visual aids are prepared. Where you see the book symbol to the left in a session plan, there is a recommended adaptation that can be made for young people with no or low literacy.

Important: Data Gathering Phase
After completing sessions 1 – 6 of the research training module, the young people will then need to finalise their plans for their data collection. Please note, there is no specific session plan for this, as it will depend on the types of methods they have chosen, the scale they are aiming for and the locations it will take place in, etc. The facilitator will need to organise time for the young people to discuss and plan with their support. Use the information from the young people in sessions 5 and 6 to inform the formal risk assessment you will do for each data-gathering activity.

Please note, the following timetables can be adapted depending on the needs of the group; training days can be shortened, and activities spread over a longer period of time. However, make sure they are still delivered in the same order as outlined here and do not leave long gaps between training days as ideas will be forgotten, making building on learning from one session to the next challenging.

RESEARCH TRAINING: DAY ONE

Time	Session	Objectives
9am - 9.30am	**Welcomes and warm-up games**	• To help everyone feel energised and ready for the training day.
9.30am - 10.30am	**Session One: What is Research?**	• Describe what research is in a simple way. • Describe what the difference between quantitative and qualitative. • Understand the benefits and limits each approach has.
10.30am - 11am	**Break**	
11am - 12am	**Session One: What is Research? (Continued)**	• Describe what research is in a simple way. • Describe what the difference between quantitative and qualitative. • Understand the benefits and limits each approach has.
12am - 1pm	**Lunch**	
1pm - 2.30pm	**Session Two: Defining the Research Question**	• To help the group consider what they really need to know for their project. • To help the group understand the need to make their research question specific and feasible to answer.
2.30pm - 3pm	**Break**	
3pm - 3.30pm	**Questions, Evaluation, and Feedback**	• To round off day and make sure key points are understood. • Feedback to help inform the next day of training.

RESEARCH TRAINING: DAY TWO

Time	Session	Objectives
9am - 9.30am	**Welcomes and warm-up games**	• To help everyone feel energised and ready for the training day.
9.30am - 10.30am	**Session Three: Deciding on a Research Method (Part One)**	• Explain to the young people what different data collection methods are. • Help them reflect on which ones would be best for their research. • Group to decide on the methods they will use.
10.30am - 11am	**Break**	
11am - 12am	**Session Three: Deciding on a Research Method (Part Two)**	• Explain to the young people what different data collection methods are. • Help them reflect on which ones would be best for their research. • Group to decide on the methods they will use.
12am - 1pm	**Lunch**	
1pm - 2pm	**Session Three: Deciding on a Research Method (Part Three)**	• Explain to the young people what different data collection methods are. • Help them reflect on which ones would be best for their research. • Group to decide on the methods they will use.
2pm - 2.30pm	**Break**	
2.30pm - 4.15pm	**Session Four: Finding and Working with Our Respondents**	• Group to reflect on how they will identify suitable respondents and engage them in their data collection.
4.15pm - 4.30pm	**Questions, Evaluation, and Feedback**	• To round off the day and make sure key points are understood. • Feedback to help inform the next day of training.

PART 12: VOICEMORE RESEARCH TRAINING

RESEARCH TRAINING: DAY THREE

Time	Session	Objectives
9am - 9.30am	**Welcomes and warm-up games**	• To help everyone feel energised and ready for the training day.
9.30am - 10.30am	**Session Five: Staying Safe**	• To Make sure participants understand the principles of 'do no harm' in research. • Ensure the group have considered the potential risks associated with each data collection method. • To generate feedback that will be used for the formal risk assessments.
11am - 11.30am	**Break**	
11.30am - 12.45am	**Session Six: Consent, Confidentiality, and Data Protection**	• Build understanding of consent, confidentiality, and data protection in research practice. • For the group to feel more confident in communicating their research.
12.45am - 1.45pm	**Lunch**	
1.45pm - 3pm	**Session Six: Consent, Confidentiality, and Data Protection (continued)**	• Build understanding of consent, confidentiality and data protection in research practice. • For the group to feel more confident in communicating their research.
3pm - 3.30pm	**Break**	
3.30pm - 4pm	**Questions, Evaluation and Feedback**	• To round off the day and make sure key points are understood. • Feedback to help inform the next day of training.

RESEARCH TRAINING: DAY FOUR

Time	Session	Objectives
9am - 9.30am	**Welcomes and warm-up games**	• To help everyone feel energised and ready for the training day.
9.30am - 11am	**Session Seven: Analysing the Results**	• To review results from all research activities. • To compare findings and reflect on what they tell us about the problem. • To summarise learning and apply it to their existing advocacy plan.
11am - 11.30am	**Break**	
11.30am - 12.45am	**Session Seven: Analysing the Results (continued)**	• To review results from all research activities. • To compare findings and reflect on what they tell us about the problem. • To summarise learning and apply it to their existing advocacy plan.
12.45am - 1.45pm	**Lunch**	
1.45pm - 3pm	**Session Seven: Analysing the Results (continued)**	• To review results from all research activities. • To compare the findings and reflect on what they tell us about the problem. • To summarise learning and apply it to their existing advocacy plan.
3pm - 3.30pm	**Break**	
3.30pm - 4pm	**End of Training Evaluation**	• Support the group to reflect on learning from the training module. • Create space for participants to offer feedback.

VOICEMORE RESEARCH TRAINING SESSION PLANS

SESSION ONE: WHAT IS RESEARCH?

Total Duration: 2 hours (with a break between parts one and two)

Learning Objectives:
- Describe what research is in a simple way.
- Describe what the difference between quantitative and qualitative data is.
- Understand the benefits and limits each approach has.

Materials required:
- Pre-prepared copies of the qualitative and quantitative cards translated and printed out.
- Pre-prepared copies of the research stages cards translated and printed out.
- A small ball.

Note to facilitator: The words 'quantitative' and 'qualitative' can be challenging to translate, so make sure you have thought about this before the session and found the best words to describe them.

In Part Two of the activity, create cards with images on that can visually represent the two types of research in addition to the words. Below are examples. Make sure you still verbally explain the summary descriptions and examples, as the groups will need this information for the discussions.

Group one

Quantitative Data...

Group two

Qualitative Data...

Time	Description
15 mins	**Part One: Introduction** Ask if anyone knows what research is. What do we mean when we say we want to research something? Take answers and explore what the young people think. Then explain to the group: *'Research is trying to find out more information about something in a methodical and organised way, with an aim to learn new things and expand our knowledge.'* Now ask the group why they think research might be relevant for advocacy. Again, take answers and facilitate a quick discussion. Then explain: *'Most advocacy projects start by having some evidence about the problem they are trying to solve. If we do not have any evidence or information, it might make it harder to get people to listen to us.* *We can use information that already exists about a problem. Or if no information about that problem exists, we can try and find out and get the information for ourselves by doing our own research.'*

Part One: Introduction Continued...

'That is why in VoiceMore, we often do some basic research before we start our advocacy activities. We do not need to organise a huge research project! But it will be good for us to take some time to try and find out more about the issue you have chosen.

There are also other reasons we might want to find out more about the problem we have selected. If we have a deeper understanding of how people think and feel, we will be able to design our activities to help them. '

Check the group understand and if they have any questions or comments before continuing to the next part of the session.

45 mins

Part Two: Research Stages

Explain to the group that research normally consists of different steps or stages. Ask participants if they can think what they might be. Encourage answers and ideas. Then, read out the boxes below:

Pose a question

Decide what it is you want to find out.

Think about how you can answer it

What kind of ways can you get this information?

Get the information

Go out and gather the information using your chosen method/s.

Analyse the information

Make some conclusions from it.

Now ask everyone to now get into pairs. Hand each pair set of the translated and printed cards. Ask them to spend 15 minutes in their pair discussing the different research stages. Ask them to organise the cards into the correct order: What stage do they think should come first, second, third, and last?

Allow the pairs time to discuss and organise their cards. When everyone has finished, ask if any pairs want to volunteer to explain the order they chose and why. Then, confirm the stages as below:

- Stage One: Pose a question, decide what it is you want to find out.
- Stage Two: Think about how you can answer it, how can you get this information.
- Stage Three: Get the information, go out and gather the information using your chosen method(s).
- Stage Four: Analyse the information and make some conclusions from it.

Check to see anyone has comments or questions. Do these stages seem logical to them? Is there any aspect of this that is confusing or unclear? Facilitate a short discussion before moving on to the next part of the session.

45 mins

Part Three: Different Types of Research

Explain to the group:

'We have discussed what research is and what the different stages are; now we are going to start thinking about the different types of information we can collect.

In research, the information we collect is called 'data'.

There are two different types of data we can collect from people: counting things (using numbers or adding up answers from a list) and feelings or opinions (using the respondent's words). One is called 'Quantitative' (involving numbers) and the other is called 'Qualitative' (using words).'

Now split the group into two. Hand one group the pre-prepared flip-chart sheet for quantitative and the other a pre-prepared sheet for qualitative (or use printed versions of the cards below).

GROUP ONE

Quantitative Data...

Is data related to numbers – anything mathematical, for example, counting things, then making statistics or percentages from it. It can also include choosing an answer to something from a list (and then adding up all those answers).

Types of quantitative research can include:

- Surveys
- Questionnaires

GROUP TWO

Quantitative Data...

Is anything that relates to people's feeling or opinions about something. It is when we try and find out reasons why people might think and feel like they do.

Types of quantitative research can include:

- Interviews
- Group discussions

Explain what is written on each sheet, and check the group understand the differences and examples. Then, ask them to spend fifteen minutes in their group discussing what they think could be positive and negative about their type of data collection. Why might it be good to gather information in this way? What could the downsides to it be?

Allow the group time to discuss in their groups, then ask them to come back and present their thoughts.

Part Three: Different Types of Research Continued...

If the group do not come up with the ideas below, suggest these to them and see what they think:

Quantitative Research:

Positives

- Is good if we want to create statistics to back up our arguments about the problem (i.e., adding up answers and providing a percentage or totals).
- Is good if we already know what the different answers could be and we just want people to choose so we can add them up or categorise them (for example, questions like "how old are you?")
- Is good if we want to find out information from lots of people quite quickly (e.g., questionnaires and surveys can be done quite fast with more people).

Negatives

- Is not so good to understand why people might think or feel a certain way or why the problem is happening (e.g., in a survey, there is no time to find out lots of information or to ask open questions).
- Is not so good if we don't know what the answers could be or they could be so wide-ranging that we can't make them into a list (for example, "What was your life like growing up?").
- If you want to get questionnaires filled out in person (i.e., approaching people in the community or public spaces), this is fine if an area is safe but more difficult if it is a sensitive topic or taking place in a dangerous area.

Qualitative Research:

Positives

- Is good if you want to understand more about the reasons behind a problem (what is happening, getting understand the root of the issue).
- Is good to help provide examples of how a problem is affecting people real lives (e.g., providing stories and quotes).
- Is more private – it can be done in a closed room, like a community centre or another quiet space indoors.

Negatives

- It is not so good if you want to get lots of feedback from high numbers of people as it takes longer to speak to them in more detail, and this would limit the number of people you can reach.

Explain *a research project can use a mixture of both*; one might complement the other.

15 mins — **Part Four: Debrief**

Finish the session with an active summary. Get the group into a circle standing up. Explain that whoever is holding the ball will answer the question. You will read out questions, and if they want to try and answer, they should clap once (or click their fingers/make a noise) to get the ball. Then, if someone else also wants to try and answer or to add something, they should clap so the ball is passed to them, and so on. Encourage everyone to have a go at answering/adding to at least one of the questions.

- What is research?
- What are the steps in research?
- What is quantitative research?
- What is qualitative research?
- What is data?

When finished, explain that they have a basic understanding of what research is; in the next sessions, you are going to start thinking about how we might be able to do it.

SESSION TWO: DEFINING THE RESEARCH QUESTION

Total Duration: 1 hour 30 mins

Learning Objectives:

- To help the group consider what they really need to know for their project.
- To help the group understand the need to make their research question specific and feasible to answer.

Materials required: Flip-chart paper and pens.

Time	Description
30 mins	**Part One: Introduction**

In the last activity, we looked at what research is and the different types of data we can collect are. In this activity, we are going to start thinking about what it is we want to find out. If we are going to do some research before starting our advocacy project, what is it we want to know?

Ask a volunteer from the group to summarise what they have chosen as the theme of their advocacy project. Write/draw a summary on the board as a reminder.

Explain to the group, while they have identified this as a problem for children and young people in their community, we need to ask a few more questions before we move to the advocacy stage:

- What causes the problem?
- Does everyone agree this is a problem?
- Who does it effect? How?
- Does it impact everyone in the same way?
- Is this problem specific to a certain area, time, location?
- Is the problem as severe/bad as they think?
- Is it happening on a significant scale?
- Can this problem be prevented?
- What could potentially mitigate it?

Part One: Introduction Continued...

If we can find out more about the above, we will be able to make *a better argument for change* in our advocacy project (because we will have evidence and feedback on the issue).

We will also be able to *design better solutions for overcoming it* (because we will have a better understanding of the problem from different perspectives).

Check the group understand before moving to the next part.

50 mins

Part Two: What is the key question for our research?

Split the group into two and hand each one a piece of flip-chart paper and some pens. Ask them to spend ten minutes discussing the below question:

- What would they like to find out in their research?

Ask them to *summarise what they decide in a short sentence*. When the groups are finished, bring them back together. Ask:

- Did both groups come up with the same answer?
- What are the differences between their ideas?

Encourage some discussion and debate.

Ask them to make sure the question is *specific*; if it is too general, it will be difficult to answer. Below is an example that can be read out/shown to the group to help them understand.

Example: a specific research question

Problem: *We think too many children in our community are working in hard labour in the fields.*

Research Question Example One: *Why do children work?*

Research Question Example Two: *What is causing so many children to work in the fields in our community, and what are the impacts of this work on those children?*

Answer: The first question is too general! It would be too big for them to try and answer. Research Question Two is more specific. It states which type of work they will look at and what aspects. That makes it a better research question.

Also ask the group to make sure it's measurable and realistic.

Part Two: What is the key question for our research? Continued...

Below is an example that can be read/shown to the group to help them understand.

Example: a measurable and realistic research question

Problem: *There is too much violence against girls.*

Research Question Example One: *Why is there violence against girls all over the world?*

Research Question Example Two: *What are the causes of domestic violence against adolescent girls in our community?*

Answer: The first question would require being able to gather and look at data from all over the world, which would be too difficult for this project! It would not be possible for us to answer such a big question. The second question is better because it is more measurable and realistic for a project like ours. That makes it a better research question.

Check everyone understands, then ask the group to work together for around ten minutes to combine their ideas and make one research question they can agree on. When they are ready, bring them back and ask them to present their final research question.

If the group have written their question down, keep the flip-chart sheet. If the group cannot read or write, then write down the question they have verbally presented and keep this. The flip-chart sheet will be important later to help remind the group of the final question they chose.

10 mins

Part Three: Summary

Finish the session by summarising what the next step will be:

'Now they have agreed the main question they want to answer, the next step will be working out how to gather this information. It is also helpful to consider what information about this problem might already exist. We can help you find this out, and we can compare it to anything else you find out during your own research.'

Note to facilitator: After the research training, you will need to take some time to investigate what information might already exist. Has anyone else already researched this issue in your region? Are there any useful reports online that could help inform the work they will do? Remember that most official research reports are likely to be too difficult for the groups to read, so you will need to summarise in an accessible and easy to understand way.

SESSION THREE: DECIDING ON A RESEARCH METHOD

Total Duration: 3 hours (with a break between each part)

Learning Objectives:
- Explain to the young people what different data collection methods are.
- Help them reflect on which ones would be best for their research.
- For the group to decide on the methods they will use.

Materials required: Translated pre-prepared cards of the different data collection methods (see opposite page). Print out two sets of the cards. One will be to put on the wall, and the other set will be used during the break-out part of the session.

Instead of using the cards with just the text opposite, use the picture versions below. Be sure to still explain the method type, including the 'how' and 'how many people' aspects as written on the opposite cards, to make sure they can fully follow the activity discussions.

Method:
Survey/Questionnaire

Method:
Observation

Method:
Case Studies

Method:
Focus Group Discussion

Method:
Individual Interviews

Important note to facilitator: In conflict contexts, the 'observation' research method should be very carefully considered, as it could be interpreted as 'spying' and, therefore, be unsafe for young people to do. It should only be used if it is deemed appropriate and after thorough risk assessment (see risk assessment and staying safe sections of this handbook for more guidance). Before running this activity, consider if this option of research method should be removed from the activity cards based on the local context and issue the group have selected.

Time	Description
1 hour	**Part One: What are the different data collection methods?** Remind the group of what they have covered in the first two sessions of this training: They have looked at what research is and then decided on their research question. The next step is thinking about the best way for them to collect data to answer that question. Explain to the group that we are going to start by thinking about the benefits or challenges of different data gathering methods. Put copies of the following summaries around on the wall of the room so young people can read them. Ask for volunteers to read each card out loud to the rest of the group. Check they all understand the five different methods the cards explain. Do they have any questions?

Part One: What are the different data collection methods? Continued...

Method: Survey/Questionnaire

What is it: Preparing a set of questions about the problem you have selected and offering people a selection of possible answers they can choose from.

How: People can fill out the forms themselves, or you can help by asking them the questions and ticking the boxes.

How many people: Filling out questionnaires can be quick if the questions are simple and not too many. You can complete them with lots of people.

Method: Observation

What is it: Going somewhere where affected people are and observing what is happening.

How: In pairs. Take notes (or just remember) of things you think are significant or interesting.

How many people: You can observe groups of people or individual people.

Method: Case Studies

What is it: Case studies are stories collected from individuals or small groups (e.g., like a family) that help illustrate how an issue impacts people. They are written down like a short story.

How: You need to find someone who is affected by the issue and then ask them to explain what has happened to them and how it has impacted their life. You need to record the conversation or make very detailed notes about what they say.

How many people: Case studies are designed to be in depth and lots of detail, so you will not need many of them.

Method: Focus Group Discussion

What is it: Speaking to a small group of people about their experiences of the problem at the same time, like a group discussion.

How: Prepare a set of questions you want to ask the group beforehand. During the discussion, you will need to get the group to debate and discuss questions together. Record the discussion or make notes on their answers.

How many people: Between 5 – 10 people normally join a focus group discussion.

Method: Individual Interviews

Type of research method: Quantitative (words)

What is it: Interviewing individual people about their experiences on the problem you want to investigate / know more about.

How: Prepare a set of questions you want to ask the person beforehand. Organise a time for the interview. Ask the person the questions and record their answers.

How many people: One person per interview. Interviews can take time to organise and conduct, so it will be hard to do it with lots of people. If you interview more than one person you can compare the answers different people gave.

	Part One: What are the different data collection methods? Continued...

VoiceMore Research Example: Uganda

The VoiceMore group in the Bidi Bidi refugee settlement in Yumbe, Uganda, were worried about orphaned and separated children in their community. They wanted to find out how many children were in this situation and what support they were getting.

To find this out, the group decided on conducting surveys (questionnaires) with households in the settlement they lived in. This was because it would allow them to collect lots of quantitative data, which was more relevant for their research question.

The surveys collected information such as how many orphaned or separated children lived in each household, their age, gender, and other basic information. They also asked what support each family was receiving. Because there were so many households, the group collected something called 'samples' from each village/area, which means they chose a smaller number of households that could represent the wider population.

Once the group had completed the surveys, they worked together to add up and analyse their findings. The results showed that there were very high numbers of orphaned and separated children (far more than the official records suggested) and very few got any support. This provided the group with useful evidence for their advocacy to campaign for more support for orphaned and separated children and their families.

VoiceMore Research Example: DRC

The VoiceMore group in Masisi, DRC, were worried about the recruitment and use of children into armed groups in their community. They wanted to find out what the reasons were for children to join and what would help prevent this happening.

To find this out, the group decided on conducting two different types of data collection: interviews and focus groups. This was because it would allow them to collect qualitative data, which was more relevant for their research question.

The group designed questions they wanted to ask in the focus groups to help guide discussions. They organised different focus groups with people in the community, some with children, youth, and the parents of children. They made sure each group included at least some children, youth or parents who had some direct experience of recruitment (because they had once been part of one or because their child had joined). They also wanted to speak to some security/government personnel, local leaders and civil society representatives. Because focus groups with them would be too difficult to organise, they instead conducted interviews and decided on their questions beforehand.

The group recorded the focus group discussions and interviews. Afterwards, they listened back to what was said and made notes. They then all read and reflected on the notes to help find out what the most important and common responses were. The War Child Office also helped them analyse this data.

Findings from the research helped the group understand the complicated reasons children were joining and how different people in the community felt about the problem. This helped them design their advocacy action more effectively.

PART 12: VOICEMORE RESEARCH TRAINING

<table>
<tr><td>1 hour</td><td>Part Two: What are the positives and negatives of each method?
Split the group into five and hand each group one of the summary cards.
Ask them to discuss their answers to the questions below. They need to make short notes or remember what is said because they will present back to everyone.
• What do you think is good about this method? What do you like about it?
• What is not so good about this method? What do you dislike about it?
Allow the groups time to work together discussing the above and preparing their answers. When they have all finished, bring them back into one group and ask each to spend just five minutes each presenting what they came up with. When each group has finished presenting, ask:
• Do you agree with the other groups' comments?
• Would you like to add anything?
Take answers and facilitate a short discussion before moving on to the final part of the activity.</td></tr>
<tr><td>1 hour</td><td>Part Three: What will be the best methods for their research be?
Now explain to the whole group that they need to decide what combination of data collection methods they want to use. They do not have to use all of them – it would be better to just select the ones they think are feasible and safe for where they live.
Ask them to discuss the questions below and decide on their answers:
• What methods would you like to use and why?
• How many will you aim to do of each? (For example, how many questionnaires will you collect, or how many interviews will you aim to do?)
• What areas/places would you go to collect the data for each method?
• How many weeks or months do you think this all might take and why?
Check the group understand the questions. Allow time for them to discuss. When they are ready, ask for a couple of volunteers to present their conclusions to everyone.
If necessary, help the group reflect on their answers. For example, are the numbers they have chosen too ambitious? Will there be enough time to do what they want?
Allow them to change their answers if they want to. Make a final summary on a sheet of flip-chart and stick this on the walls as a reminder.</td></tr>
</table>

SESSION FOUR: FINDING AND WORKING WITH OUR RESPONDENTS

Total Duration: 2 hours 15 minutes

Learning Objectives:
- Support the group in reflecting on how they will identify suitable respondents and engage them in data collection.
- To encourage critical thinking about the benefits and challenges of working with each group and using different data collection methods.

Materials required: Flip-chart paper and marker pens. Sheet from last session stuck on wall as a reminder. Translated and printed questions for part three of the activity.

Time	Description
15 mins	**Part One: Introduction** Explain in this activity that we are going to think about ***who*** we need to find for our data collection and ***how*** we are going to find them. *'The first thing you need to think about is **how many different perspectives** you want to collect.'* • *Would it be useful for your research to hear from lots of different types of people, for example, those involved or affected by the issue, as well as those who are not?* • *Or would it be better to stick to a smaller number of people and focus on just their perspectives, for example, only the people most affected?* *The benefits of speaking to lots of different types of people is we can understand more varied and wider perspectives on an issue. The disadvantages are that it takes more time, and you will have lots of more data to analyse and compare. It is up to your group to decide what is best.* *Once you have decided who you want to speak to, you also need to work out where you can find them and how you are going to speak to them safely. In this activity, we are going to explore the answers to both these questions.*
45 mins	**Part Two: Who?** Split the group into four and give each group a sheet of flip-chart paper and a pen. Ask each group to discuss the following questions and write or draw their answers on the sheet. • Who do you think you should speak to about the issue? Which groups of people/representatives? • Why would they be good to speak to? • How will their perspectives or answers help you understand the problem better? Allow the groups around 20 minutes to discuss these questions, then bring them back together. Ask them to stick their sheets on the wall next to each other, then look at the sheets together and facilitate a discussion based on the questions below: • Has each group picked the same, or different, people to speak to? • Do you agree with the reasons groups have given for why they would be good people to speak to? If not, why? Now ask the whole group to work together to finalise the list of people they want to reach for their data collection. Keep a record of this before moving on to the next part of the activity. Let the group know that in research, we call people we speak to 'respondents' – that's what we can now call them.

30 mins	**Part Three: Which data collection method for who?** Explain that in this part of the session, we are going to match up our data collection methods to the different respondents we want to speak to. We are going to do this in an interactive way. Put the flip-chart sheet from the last session (session three, data collection methods) on the wall. Also, put the sheet from the second part of this session next to it (who they want to speak to). This will help remind them what they decided previously. On new peices of flip-chart paper, write (or draw) each data collection method they decided upon. Use a separate peice of paper for each method (for example, if they chose three methods, there should be three peices of paper with one on each). Now clear any chairs and tables to side of the room to make space. On the floor in each corner of the room, put one of the new flip-chart papers with the research method on. Explain that as you read out loud the respondents they chose, they need to go and stand next to the research method they think would be best suited for that group. For example, if they want to speak to children about the problem, which of the methods on the floor would be best for this? They need to move and stand next to that method. If participants don't agree, facilitate a discussion and ask them to try and convince others why that method would be best. Keep doing this process until they have decided on a research method for every respondent they outlined in part two of this activity. Make a note on the flip-chart sheets on the floor of what target respondent group will go with each method.
45 mins	**Part Four: Where and when?** Explain that in this last part of the session, we are going to do some planning. Split the group to the same number of data collection methods as they agreed upon (for example, if they agreed on three different forms of data collection, split them into three groups). Give each group one of the flip-chart papers off the floor from the last part of the activity. Then ask each group to discuss the below questions together for their allocated data collection method and respondent group. Ask them to note down or drawn their answers to these questions. Note to facilitator: Either write these questions in the below box on a flip-chart where the groups can see or hand out the questions printed on a sheet of paper as a reminder. If the group are non-literate, read them out loud and repeat several times. **Questions for each group** • Where can they find these people in the community? • How can they invite them to take part? • How private should the data collection be? Does it need to happen in a safe and quiet space, or could it happen in a public space like the street or market? • What do they think would be the best weeks/days/times to go and get the data? • How long do they estimate it might take?

30 mins — **Part Four: Where and when? Continued...**

Allow around 20 minutes for each group to discuss and prepare their answers, then invite them all back into a circle. Ask a volunteer from each group to present what they decided and why.

When each group has finished, ask if anyone would add anything: Do they agree with other groups plans for each data collection activity? Is there anything they would change?

When the whole group is satisfied and agree, stick the notes on the wall.

Finish by explaining to the group that the next step will be thinking about how to stay safe when we do these activities. Remind them *no one should start doing these activities alone*. VoiceMore research activities will always happen with the supervision of the facilitator or other staff member to make sure it is safe for everyone.

SESSION FIVE: STAYING SAFE

Total Duration: 1 hour 30 min

Learning Objectives:

- To make sure participants understand the principles of 'do no harm' in research.
- Ensure the group have considered any potential risks for each data collection method.
- To generate feedback that will be used for the formal risk assessments.

Materials required: Flip-chart paper, pens and post-it notes.

Time	Description

30 mins — **Part One: Introduction**

Start by explaining to the group that this session is going to focus on all the ways we need to make sure we are being safe when we do our research.

Emphasise that *'we need to make sure what we do is safe for us and for any other people who take part.'*

Ask the group if they can think of any ways that research activity could be dangerous or risky. Take answers. Suggest the following if not covered:

- In research, we often ask people questions that could be quite personal. If we do not do it in a careful way, they could get upset or offended.
- Because we are going to start looking at an issue in the community, there might be some people who do not want us to. They might be implicated and be annoyed we are trying to find out more about it.
- If we are going to work on a very sensitive topic, it might be difficult for people to talk about. It might be something private or where people affected experience stigma and shame.
- People going around asking questions could raise suspicion. The government, armed groups or local leaders might be distrustful of us and think we are spying.

Ask the group what they think about these dangers: Do they think there is a possibility this could be the case in their community and for their project? Facilitate a short discussion.

Explain that before we start our research, *we are going to have to think carefully about how we can avoid risk and what to do if experience any danger.* Our research activities will need to be planned so they are safe.

30 mins — **Part One: Introduction Continued...**

All researchers should also follow one very important rule, which is called '*do no harm*'. This means the research they plan or carry out should never cause any harm to anyone, and people who volunteer to take part should never be negatively affected in any way.

Check the group understand before moving to the next part of the session.

1 hour — **Part Two: Carousel Activity**

Place all the sheets the group developed in the last activity on the floor in different corners of the room.

Ask participants to get into the same groups as the last activity.

Give each group some post-it notes. Ask each group to stand next to one of the sheets on the floor. Explain that they need to read the sheet and then write down or draw any dangers they can imagine might happen because of that activity, to them or anyone else.

Ask the groups to think about:

- What could go wrong?
- Is there anyone who might not like them doing the activity?
- Is the area they would do the activity in dangerous in any way? Why?

The groups should repeat this for all the sheets, moving around to the next one after finishing the previous one. By the end of the activity, each group should have commented on all the data collection methods, and the sheets should be full of post-it notes.

Explain to the groups that they need to only add new dangers to each sheet, so if they can see a previous group has added it already, they should not add it again.

Check everyone understands and allow time for them to complete the task. When they have finished, put all the sheets on the wall again and ask everyone to stand up and have a look at all the different post-it notes that have been added.

Ask the group how they feel about the research now they have identified some of the risks:

- Can they think of any way to help overcome these risks?
- What could they do?

Allow the group some time to discuss and make note of the ideas they come up with.

When they are finished, explain to the group that what they have just done is a risk assessment. They have considered what could go wrong and how they will try and avoid it. Let them know that War Child will also do its own risk assessment and will take this information and include it.

Note to facilitator: It is important to keep the flip-chart sheets and post-it notes as you can use these to help you filling out the risk assessment paperwork. The young people's feedback on risks and risk prevention should form an important part of the office's own risk assessments. You will also need to use this when the group, with your support, are planning for carrying out the data gathering activities.

Finish by explaining to the group that in the next session, we are going to look at some other aspects of doing good research: confidentiality, consent and protecting our data.

<table>
<tr><th colspan="2">SESSION SIX: CONSENT, CONFIDENTIALITY AND DATA PROTECTION</th></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Total Duration: 2 hours 30 mins (with break between parts two and three)</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Learning Objectives:
• Build understanding of consent, confidentiality and data protection in research practice.
• For the group to feel more confident in communicating their research.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Materials required: Flip-chart paper and pens.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Time</td><td>Description</td></tr>
<tr><td>15 mins</td><td>Part One: Introduction
Recap what they covered in the last session, i.e., thinking about how they would do their data collection and avoiding dangers. Put the previous flip-chart sheets on the wall as a reminder. Explain that in this session, we are going to focus on three different aspects of research that are also important to keeping us and others safe.</td></tr>
<tr><td>30 mins</td><td>Part Two: Consent
Ask the group if anyone can remember (from the start of VoiceMore training) what 'informed consent' is. Take answers. Confirm to the group that informed consent means that when we agree to something, we understand completely what it is and how that information will be used.
Explain: 'Informed consent is important, not just to programmes like VoiceMore but also to research. All researchers must get informed consent from the people they want to speak to or interview or work with on their research. That means all individuals and groups we approach for their research need to know what it is for and what you are asking them to do.'
Check the group understand this concept before moving on.
Then explain: 'The way we will need to get consent will depend on the form of data collection':
• For questionnaires/surveys, we just need to ask them to tick as box on the sheet saying they are happy to take part. We should not collect people's names, addresses or other identifying information for surveys.
• For interviews, focus groups and case studies, we will need participants to fill out a consent form. This is because we will be collecting more information and details from them. If under 18s are taking part in any of these activities, then their parents or care-givers need to agree. Only in exceptional circumstances (for example, if a young person under 18 is living independently or does not have any parents/care-givers) can this be left out.
• For observation, it is generally better to get consent from the people you want to observe; however, this can be difficult, especially if it is in a more public place, for example, the street. Please refer to the note in session three regarding the safety of this method.
Show the group a translated copy of a consent form. Let them spend some time looking over it. Check if they have any questions before moving to the next part of the session.</td></tr>
</table>

<table>
<tr><td>30 mins</td><td>Part Three: Practicing Introducing Their Research
Explain to the group: 'When you are doing your data collection, it is important you feel confident to explain who you are and why you are doing the research to people. We will now do a role play activity. We are going to pretend we are approaching people to ask them to take part in our questionnaire. We are going to practice introducing ourselves and our research.'
Ask the group to think about what they might want to say. Suggest including the following:
• Who are they?
• What are they doing and why?
• What are they asking the person to do?
• How will their information will be used?
Check the group understand. Write the questions on a flip-chart or remind the group verbally during the activity if needed.
Ask the group to now stand up. Explain they are going to move around the room until you say 'stop'. Then, they need to turn to the person immediately next to them and introduce themselves and their research project. Each person should try once with their partner and then swap over so the other person can try, too. When they hear you say 'go', they need to move around the room again until they hear 'stop', then try again with someone new, etc.
Check the group understand and start the activity (you could play music during the 'moving' part and stop the music at the moments they need to get into pairs). Encourage the group to keep trying, even if they find it hard at the beginning. Allow enough time for everyone to have a few tries, then bring the group back together into a circle.
Ask how they found the activity. Was it hard to know how to introduce themselves and what they are doing? Take answers and feedback. Explain that before they go out into the community, they can practice this again. They can even agree as a group a short script they can use.</td></tr>
<tr><td>30 mins</td><td>Part Four: Confidentiality
Ask the group if anyone can remember what 'confidentiality' was in the previous VoiceMore training they did. Take answers.
Confirm to the group: 'Confidentiality means keeping information private and respecting people's privacy. In research, people will share information about their lives and how they think and feel about things. We can record that information, but we will need to make sure it is used in the right way.'
In our research, we need to make sure we:
• Anonymise any information we publish (not use real names or any information that can identify people)
• The things we hear and know from our research should not be spread around. We should not gossip or talk about what people have told us outside the group.
• We keep the information gathered in our research just in our group. All recordings, notes, or questionnaires need to be kept safe and not shared with anyone else.
• All materials/recordings from our research should be kept by a staff member in a secure place.
• After we have analysed and anonymised it, we can publish it more widely, for example, in a report.</td></tr>
</table>

Part Four: Confidentiality Continued...

Emphasise to the group that there is *only one time that we might break confidentiality*: '*If a child or someone taking part in our research says something that makes us thing they are being harmed or in danger or harm or harming others, they should let a member of staff know.*' It is responsibility of the organisation supporting VoiceMore to make sure children and participants in the research are safe. VoiceMore group members should not try and act on what was said themselves or alone.

Ask the group if they have any thoughts or questions about keeping confidentiality in their research. How do they think they could help ensure they follow this? Facilitate a short discussion before moving on to the final part of the session.

30 mins

Part Five: Data Protection

Explain that there is one more thing we need to think about together: How are we going to look after all the information they collect, and how we can make sure it is safe and protected. This is called 'data protection'.

Ask the group if they can name some of the reasons we need to make sure we protect data. Take answers, and if not mentioned, suggest the following:

- So we can maintain confidentiality.
- To make sure we do not expose anyone to any danger. For example, someone says something about a sensitive topic and others see it.
- To protect the identity of the people who take part in our research.
- Because if we lose our data, we will have to start again! And it will slow our project.

Now hand the group some flip-chart paper and pens and ask them work together as a team, coming up with some ideas for how they could keep the information they collect safe. What do they think they could do for each data collection activity they have planned?

Allow the group time to discuss and note down their ideas, then bring them back into a circle and ask for some volunteers to present. Try and encourage the group to critique the options carefully. For example:

- If the group suggest keeping the notes or sheets at their own house, ask them what could be the danger of this. What could go wrong with that system (family could read it, it could get lost, etc.)?
- If the group suggest keeping it on their private phones, ask them what could be the weakness of this (it could expose them to issues if it is sensitive in nature, etc.)?.

Finish by explaining that as an organisation, we must follow some international rules and laws about data protection. This means for the project, we will need to:

- Keep any hard copy sheets (such as surveys, questionnaires, notes from interviews, photos, etc.) in a locked cupboard.
- If we record anything (for example, using a dictaphone), we will keep the voice-recorded file on a password-protected laptop.
- We will keep the consent form copies in a safe place locked away or password protected.
- Identifying information is not kept with things like notes from interviews, focus groups, etc. So even if someone sees the notes from the meetings, they will not know who said what.
- When the research is finished, we will destroy any information that could identify participants.

30 mins

Part Five: Data Protection Continued...

Ask the group what they think about these precautions. Do they agree with what is proposed? Do they have any questions about how we will practically go about doing this?

Note to facilitator: It is the supporting staff member's responsibility to make sure consent, confidentiality and data protection are all adhered to during the VoiceMore research and advocacy action. While the group need to be mindful and follow agreed rules, overall responsibility lays with organisation staff.

15 mins

Part Six: Debrief

Finish the session with a quick summary exercise. Bring the participants into a circle and ask for a couple of volunteers to summarise what consent, confidentiality, and data protection are.

SESSION SEVEN: ANALYSING THE RESULTS

Total Duration: 3 hours, include a short break.

Please note, further time may be necessary for this activity, depending on how much data they have gathered and how long it takes to review and analyse.

Learning Objectives:

- To review results from all research activities.
- To compare findings and reflect on what they tell us about the problem.
- To summarise learning and apply it to their existing advocacy plan.

Materials required: Flip-chart and pens. Translated versions of boxes on following pages (if group can read); otherwise, read out loud/explain what each box says.

Important: If the groups have used voice recordings (for example, on a dictaphone) to capture information, they will need to listen back to the recordings together to analyse what has been said. This can take some time. Make sure they can do this (i.e., have something to play recordings on that it is charged/have spare batteries, etc.).

Before this activity, think about the capacity of the group:

- If they are likely to struggle with mathematics, then you can prepare the results from the quantitative (numbers based) research beforehand yourself. For example, add up all the results and create summary percentages. You could also make it more visual by using things such as pie-charts, which might be easier for the group to understand. If you need support with this, you could ask a member of your Monitoring and Evaluation Team to help.
- For groups with low literacy, do the same with the qualitative (word based) data. Read over notes or transcripts from the activity (for example, from the focus groups) and draw symbols or write very short summaries that represent the main points respondents raised, which you can verbally relay. If doing this, be sure to be objective and thorough; you will be controlling an important part of the data analysis.
- If the group are going to analyse the raw (original) data themselves, make sure they have all the original surveys/questionnaires, notes or recordings from focus groups or interviews, notes from observations or from case studies, etc.
- If the group have used recordings for their data, then they can listen to this together or in smaller breakout groups. If they cannot read and write summaries from their discussions, they can instead assign a couple of people in each group as 'rapporteurs' – those responsible for carefully remembering and being ready to repeat back what the group discussed later.

15 mins

Part One: Introduction

Explain to the group that in the next session, we are going to review the results from our research and see what this tells us about the problem we were investigating.

Recap with the group the reason they were carrying out research: *'To understand the problem and other people's perspectives better so their advocacy can be more successful.'* Also, read out loud the original research question they developed as a reminder. Explain that for each type of data collection they did, we will analyse the results a bit differently.

Highlight that when we are analysing information, it is important to keep an open mind and not let our own biases influence what we think it is telling us too much. For example, if we believe something about a problem, we might want to look for responses that fit with our opinion. If the results are different to what we expected or wanted, that's OK, and we must be open to that.

Note to facilitator: The group could be split into smaller groups to look at each set of data. However, this might limit opportunity to get varied perspectives during analysis, so make sure they still share their interpretations with the wider group, then everyone can feed into conclusions.

2 hours

Part Two: Reviewing, Summarising and Analysing their Data

Explain that in this part of the activity, we are going to review and summarise information from each data collection method first; then, after we have done that, we can start to interpret it.

Hand out the translated cards below. Select boxes relevant for the research the young people did. For example, if they only did questionnaires and focus groups, only do those boxes.

Support the group in reviewing the material, creating their summaries, and agreeing on conclusions as outlined below.

Analysing Questionnaires/Surveys

Add up all the different answers to each question on all the questionnaires to make totals. Work together to do this and record them on a separate sheet of paper. It is a good idea to have one group counting and another double-checking to make sure they have been counted correctly. When they are finished, they will have a total number for each question. The group can just look at these totals if they like. They will tell them what the most popular answers were.

If they want to try and calculate further, percentages can be created by taking the frequency in the category divided by the total number of participants and multiplying by 100%. For example, if 150 people were surveyed and 39 said 'yes' to a question, then calculate 39 ÷ 150 x 100 = 26%.

Once they have the summarised results, put these on the wall so everyone can see and facilitate a discussion.

Analysis Questions: FIRST, answer the following:

- Overall, what were the most popular answers?
- Overall, what were the least popular answers?
- Were answers mostly evenly split or very one-sided?

PART 12: VOICEMORE RESEARCH TRAINING

30 mins

Part Two: Reviewing, Summarising and Analysing their Data Continued...

Interpretation Questions: SECOND, answer the following:

- What can these results tell us about people's thoughts, feelings and opinions on the issue?
- Are they surprised by any of the results they got?

Analysing Interviews

Analysing interviews will require listening back to recordings of the session or reading notes that were made at the time. The whole group should review these and try and decide the following together:

Analysis Questions: FIRST, answer the following:

- What were the main points people made in their interviews?
- Were there any similarities in the things people said?
- Were there any differences in what people said?
- Were there any big differences in feeling or opinion between people based on gender, age or another factor?

Interpretation Questions: SECOND, answer the following:

- Were they surprised by any of their answers?
- What can these results tell us about people's thoughts, feelings and opinions on the issue?

Ask the group to agree and record a summary of their answers to the above questions.

Analysing Focus Groups

Analysing focus groups will require listening back to recordings of the session or reading notes that were made at the time. The whole group should review these and try and decide the following together:

Analysis Questions: FIRST, answer the following:

- Were there things that most people in the focus group agreed on?
- Were there things that most people in the focus group disagreed about?
- What were the main, repeating points that focus group participants made during the discussion?
- Were there any big differences in feeling or opinion between people based on gender, age or another factor?

Interpretation Questions: SECOND, answer the following:

- What can this summary tell us about people's thoughts, feelings and opinions on the issue?
- Were they surprised by any of their answers?

Ask the group to agree and record a summary of their answers to the above questions.

Analysing Observation Notes

If the group decided to use observation as a research method, they will need to review notes they made at the time or for those who undertook the observation to describe what they saw.

Ask the group to record a summary of their answers to the following questions.

- What did you observe?
- Did what you see influence your thoughts and opinions about the problem? If so, how?

45 mins	**Part Three: Applying the Findings** When the group have finished, ask them to reflect on the advocacy plans they already started making in previous sessions: • How can these findings help improve their plan? • Should these findings/conclusions change their planned messaging or advocacy in anyway? Why? How? Support the group in exploring their answers to the above questions. It is important that the research findings are used in a meaningful way and that the feedback they gathered in the research (even if different to what the young people were expecting to hear) is not ignored. Make sure the conclusions/decisions the group decide during this last part of the session are also recorded for later planning. Explain to the group that we can support them by creating a short report summarising their project and the research. Having the project and research summarised in one document can be helpful for their advocacy. If they want us to do this, make sure the summary documents are in their local language and printed so they can present it to any stakeholders they select.

"Before the VoiceMore programme, I didn't have wisdom, and I didn't have patience with others. I couldn't live in a group, I was lazy, but VoiceMore just taught me how to work in a group without problems. It taught us how to have good behavior because we can't advocate for others when we have bad behavior in the community. VoiceMore also taught me how to solve the problem of other young people, how to advocate for children and young people in my community, and how to interact with others and listen to their problems."

Gloria, 23, Democratic Republic of the Congo

CASE STUDY: JOSEPH

"Before VoiceMore started, I was a shy boy and was unable to report any problem to any authority. I was unable to express my musical talent because I could hardly mix with people freely. Secondly, I was not aware of my rights. I was so traumatised after the war that I was never settled or comfortable in the refugee camp. Also, I used to force my siblings to do heavy chores. I was very rough on them because I didn't understand how to live in the camp peacefully. I always threatened to beat them all the time.

Then, I received training that changed my life and perceptions from negative to positive. After joining VoiceMore, I was able to showcase my talent and influenced positive change in the community through creating awareness on issues affecting orphaned and separated children. I am now respected by my community members and able to represent the youth in the community. This has all been because of my involvement with VoiceMore work. Now my family is proud of me for being able to promote development in my community. I am also proud to be a VoiceMore member."

Joseph, 23, Uganda

Photo credit: War Child

PART 13

Advocacy Action

The purpose of advocacy is to bring about change. Through advocacy, we might want to change people's understanding of a problem; we might want them to pay more attention to it or to change the way they think and feel about what is happening. It is also about changing the way leaders and people in power act on an issue. Through advocacy, we want to:

- Change knowledge, attitudes or behaviours about an issue.
- Change policy or laws so an issue can be better addressed.
- Encourage the provision of more funding or resources to help address an issue.

In VoiceMore, young people will be dedicating lots of time to exploring a problem they have chosen, researching it, and developing a set of recommendations. **The advocacy phase is it an extremely important stage of the programme, as it is the phase where this evidence and preparation should be used to help bring about change.** It is, therefore, important not to neglect this stage of the programme and for supporting staff and your organisation to be willing to put effort in to make this successful!

As an organisation, make sure you:

- **Leave enough time for the advocacy phase:** Make sure when planning for VoiceMore, there will be enough time to implement a meaningful advocacy phase. Having only a couple of months or so left at the end for this is not likely to be enough and can result in disappointment and limited ability to make good use of the evidence gathered.
- **Dedicate staff time outside sessions with the young people:** Don't leave all planning and coordination to just the time you have with the youth group. There will be helpful planning and coordination support staff can be doing between and after meetings with the VoiceMore youth. For example, investigating relevant people to speak to, getting their contact details, calling up offices and chasing meetings. Be willing to put the time in to help them identify opportunities and secure meetings that support the action the young people have identified.

PREPARING THEIR ADVOCACY PLAN

Once young people have completed their advocacy and research training and have collected and analysed their data, **they will need to be supported to create a plan for their advocacy action.** During the advocacy training, it is likely they already started to come up with ideas for activities they would like to do and people they want to speak to. Their research should inform these plans, so **make sure they are thinking carefully about how their research findings might influence their advocacy targets, who they should approach, what they talk about, and what they want to ask for.**

When you are organising planning sessions with the young people, help them take the following into consideration:

- **Thinking strategically:** Everything the group want to include in their advocacy plan should have a purpose. All activities, meeting, events, etc., should be working towards addressing the issue they have identified. Support the young people in having clear ideas about why they are talking to someone or organising an activity, and what the objectives are, before including it in their plan.
- **The time they have:** Help the group consider how long they have to conduct their advocacy and if their plans are realistic in the time frames they have. This includes reflecting on how much free time they have for each activity and how long it will take them to organise.
- **How 'balanced' their plan is:** Support the group in considering if they have included a good mix of activities in their plan. For example, some community sensitisation but also some private meetings with power holders. Remember, advocacy is a combination of changing attitudes and opinions about an issue, but it is also about creating policy and practice change. This will require working with diverse types of stakeholders in different ways.
- **What resources they might need:** The group will need to consider what resources they need to carry out the activities they want to do. Be clear from the beginning what budget and resources your organisation has to support the work they are doing to avoid disappointment. If these are limited, help the group explore ways the work could still be possible, for example, under a reduced budget or by securing things (services or materials) for free.
- **Include time for conducting risk assessments:** Every activity the group plan to do, especially any activities like events in the community, will need to be risk assessed. Risk assessments should be participatory, meaning you will need to work with the group to analyse risks together with them. Before conducting the activity, agree risk mitigation measures and make sure everyone sticks to them.
- **Include time for review:** Have the group included enough time in their plan for reviewing and evaluating after each activity? Help the group think about how they are going to do this during their advocacy phase. For example, do they want to set aside meetings each month to discuss how things are progressing or one immediately after each advocacy action or event?
- **Keep a record:** Encourage the group to consider how they can capture information and evidence about the advocacy action they take. For example, keeping a record of what happened, who attended, what their responses and feedback were, any new learning made, and what the group felt went well or not so well. This can be used later to help the group reflect on how successful the programme was before they finish. It is also useful for any donor reporting.
- **That the whole group feel enthusiastic and engaged:** Is everyone in the group equally happy with the advocacy plan they have come up with? Make sure all members of the group feel comfortable and happy with the plan they develop, as this will be important for keeping up motivation and helping them work well together. Ask them to consider who will take on which tasks and to make sure they all feel they have a meaningful role to play in the plan.

TOP TIPS FOR ADVOCACY

Once the young people have started their advocacy, make sure staff are carefully supporting and following the work. Below are some top tips for successful advocacy projects with youth to keep in mind.

- **Facilitate tactical meetings, not just 'presentations'!** When young people are meeting with stakeholders, make sure they are not just 'presenting their project' or 'the work they have been doing'. The young people should be supported in considering how they are going to get that person to commit to taking further action. Make sure they have researched the person, that they have developed some key messages for that person, and that they have a set of requests they want to make. The focus of the meeting should not be just asking for praise and applause for the young people's project but how to get the audience to really commit to taking further action themselves.

- **Things rarely go to plan...** It may take a longer than expected to secure meetings with the people you have identified as targets. They may agree to a meeting, only to cancel or to substitute a junior representative instead of the person you want to meet. Invest in research on how best to reach your targets, for example, the best location and time to reach them and build in enough time to contact and schedule the meetings. If they prove elusive, do not give up! You may have to meet less influential targets and build up to meeting and lobbying your ultimate targets.
- **Build allies with like-minded people, organisations and movements:** The group should be aware of who their supporters and resistors will be. It will be better for them to try and create longer-term relationships and solidarity with their allies. This can include individuals but also organisations and other movements/groups of people in the community. Help them establish and build on these, as they will help their advocacy, as well as the long-term suitability and potential of their work.
- **Prepare to be reactive:** Successful advocacy normally means following leads. The events and meetings the young people organise might not, therefore, be an end point; if they go well, it is likely there will be some follow-up that is required and further action that can be taken. For example, a stakeholder might suggest another meeting with a different audience or ask for more information. If this happens, it is imperative to act on this and support the young people in following through. Successful advocacy often comes from being opportunistic and seeing new chances as they arise.
- **Be flexible:** Make sure that during the advocacy phase, the young people are supported to reflect on how it is going. If things are not going as planned, helped them re-evaluate and revise their plan. Do this in a way that is encouraging and helps them embrace the challenge and not feel demotivated by any blockages they have come across. Also, make sure the group, staff and the organisation are open to any opportunities that present spontaneously. Advocacy is about good planning, but it is also about being flexible. If a good opportunity to further their cause comes up that was not planned, then help them pursue it.
- **Conduct follow-up:** After meetings, follow up with the person or people the group have spoken to. Help the young people plan and organise ways to do this. If the stakeholder made a verbal commitment to something or said they would get back with certain feedback, chase this up. Follow-up is important to advocacy to both try and push for more change and to see if commitments are acted upon.
- **Appeal to each target's interests:** During their advocacy training and planning, the group should have discussed and decided on key messages for their target stakeholders based on what their interests and motivations are. Be consistent, and make sure the group do not forget these. Encourage participants to think carefully about how they can help their targets understand what benefits reducing or stopping the issue might bring to them, their work or community.
- **Remember to celebrate success!** Celebrating success is important to acknowledge everyone's efforts and to highlight that change through advocacy is possible. You may want to acknowledge and celebrate the actions of that power holder who has responded positively to calls from the VoiceMore group.

CREATING A VOICEMORE REPORT

To make the best use of the research the young people have conducted, **it is helpful to support them in creating a report for their advocacy**. Having a written report to show decision-makers will help their advocacy. It will be something concrete that summarises the issues, evidence and suggested solutions, which different stakeholders can take away as reference.

It is advised that **one full report** is developed, containing all the detail of the project, research, findings, and recommendations, but also **a short summary version** that can be read more quickly and easily.

Make sure both documents are **available in relevant local languages**. Having translated versions is essential if the advocacy and associated activities are to be accessible. For example, while a district level government worker may speak an international language like English or French, a local leader or members of a community-based organisation might not. **Consult with the young people as the documents are developed,** and make sure they have their own copies to read and disseminate during activities.

Once the report is ready, it can also be used for advocacy at an international level. It can be shared and disseminated in your organisation's networks and to other contacts. Consider adding it to your organisation's website or on other communication platforms. The report should become an important tool to help spread information about the project and continue to advocate on the issue the young people have raised.

Photo credit: War Child

PART 14

Monitoring and Evaluation

OVERVIEW

Monitoring and evaluation of VoiceMore will need to broadly focus on two aspects of the programme: the **personal development outcomes for young people** involved and the **impacts and successes off the advocacy action** undertaken.

Informal **evaluation and reflection on activities during the trainings and regular meetings** will also be required to help ensure facilitators are receiving regular feedback during delivery. Then, when the programme draws to a close, time for a workshop should be organised to gather **final evaluation and feedback**, using a variety of different games and tools.

This section is offers guidance on each of these areas. It will be important to work with your Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Team to share documents and learning.

Important Note: Remember, for groups of young people will low or no literacy, different versions of documents will need to be used and other feedback activities will need to be adapted. Make sure you have assessed what will be needed for your group before the programme starts and use these if necessary.

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT OUTCOMES

Participation in VoiceMore should offer young people a chance to develop their soft skills and confidence. To measure how levels of confidence and self-esteem might be changing and what soft skills they are learning or improving, a **VoiceMore Participant Survey** has been developed, **which needs completing three times during the programme**: before the programme starts, at the end of the training programmes, and at the end of the full programme. This is so we can **capture a baseline** for the young people and track how they are progressing as the programme continues and at the time it ends. **It is essential this is completed by all young people at the correct time.**

The survey will capture key information about the young person and information on their understanding of rights, interpersonal skills, critical thinking and problem solving, confidence, feelings of safety and well-being. It is important to **safely store the forms** and to **share them with your Monitoring and Evaluation staff**.

Key Document Required: VoiceMore Participant Survey.

TRAINING EVALUATION

During the training programme, the VoiceMore facilitator should be aiming to **create an atmosphere where young people feel confident to express their views and make suggestions**. Introducing **short, daily evaluation and reflection activities** is a great way to do this. At the end of each training day, set aside around 30 minutes for the group to come together and discuss how they feel the day went and what they are learning. **At the end of each training module (spokesperson, advocacy and research), organise a longer session to discuss how they feel it went and clarify next steps.**

You can do the daily and end-of-training evaluations in a group discussion format, but also try and use games or other interactive methods, too, so it does not become too repetitive.

During daily evaluations, ask the group to reflect on things such as:

- How they have found activities that day.
- If there was anything they did not understand.
- If they would like more information on any of the topics covered.
- Any suggestions or changes for the training/regular meetings.
- What they feel they learnt as individuals and as a group.
- How they feel they are getting along as a team.

During evaluation at the end of each training module, ask the group to reflect on:

- How they feel the training went.
- If there are any sessions they wish to repeat in order to better understand better concepts or ideas.
- How different they feel from the start of the training; what they have learnt and how they might have changed.
- If they think their group is working effectively as a team.
- How confident they feel about the next steps of the programme.

Remember, it will be important to **act on what the young people say**. If they ask the facilitator for more information on a topic, suggest reasonable changes to the training, or express concerns with how they are interacting as a group, the facilitator will need to **take this information and consider what changes need to be made**. Asking for feedback and then not acting upon what you are told damages trust and will negatively impact the programme. Ideas for daily activities and games and training evaluation are available in the **VoiceMore MEAL Toolkit**.

FEEDBACK DURING REGULAR MEETINGS

On an on-going basis **during the young people's regular meetings, time should be made at the end of each day for feedback.** This should not take up too much of the session but instead be a quick opportunity to hear from the young people before they leave. Young people should be asked if they have any questions about what has been covered that day or what they will be doing in the next session. Also, let them know that if they have any concerns or wish to raise any issues, they can do so with the group or facilitator after the meeting.

FINAL EVALUATION OF THE PROGRAMME

Before closing the programme, a **minimum of one full day of evaluation** is required with all participants. This could be organised as one full day or split into two half days, depending on when the group can meet. Activities should be **interactive and use a variety of different methods** to gather feedback.

The final evaluation of the programme is extremely important. Feedback from young people will be **valuable for shaping the future of any activity,** and it will also offer a chance for facilitators to **ensure young people in the group feel confident and good about what they are going to do next**.

The final evaluation will need to:

- Ask the group to think about the entire programme, including all three training modules and all their advocacy work.
- To offer feedback on all sessions and activities in all three trainings: what they liked best and the ones they think need to be improved.
- To offer feedback on their regular meetings: how well they think they were conducted, attended and facilitated.

- To offer feedback on their advocacy phase; if they are satisfied with the work they did and what they achieved.
- Ask the group if they feel there is anything missing from the programme that would be beneficial to include in the future.

It will also need to help the group reflect on:

- How they as individuals might have changed through taking part in the programme.
- What they might have learnt and what skills they might have gained.
- If they perceive any changes in the way their peers, family or community now see or treat them.
- What their plans are for the future.

Ideas for activities and games for final evaluation are available in the **VoiceMore MEAL Toolkit**.

EVALUATING ADVOCACY ACTIVITY

Measuring change brought about by advocacy can be challenging. **Some advocacy activities might bring about an immediate change, but most of the time, it will be a slower journey.** Long-term transformations on an issue are normally brought about by a combination of factors that all convene together at the right time. In short, change is a complex thing to track and measure, including what part any advocacy activities might play in it.

However, **that does not mean efforts to record and analyse the impact of the young people's advocacy should be neglected.** From the point the advocacy activity starts, keep adequate records and reflect on the short- and medium-term outcomes the work might be having. Facilitators will need to ensure they are:

- Keeping careful and detailed records of all the activities the young people undertake; including who they meet with, when, what was discussed, and how the young people were received.
- The facilitator should record what promises and commitments were made by stakeholders approached and what follow-up might be required.
- For community-based activities, such a sensitisation, feedback from some community members could be gathered, i.e., what they thought of the event and how it might change their ideas or feelings towards the issue.
- Records should also be kept of any national advocacy action, even if the young people were not directly involved. For example, if a senior staff member goes to present the young people's concerns to someone in government.
- Records should be kept of any media coverage produced, including press articles, videos, blogs, etc.
- Records of how the work was used at an international level in sector networks or with other NGOs and agencies.

During the Final Evaluation Phase with the young people, the facilitator should **use these records to remind the young people of all the advocacy they have undertaken**. The young people should be asked to then evaluate how successful they feel the programme has been in terms of changing attitudes, feelings, policy, and practice regarding their issue. This should be based on their original objectives for the work (use their 'tree of success' note to help remind them of this).

Keeping records of the advocacy activity is also helpful for any **donor reporting** that might be necessary and for **internal reflection exercises** on the quality of programming and their impact.

TIMELINE OF EVALUATION DURING THE PROGRAMME

All the previously mentioned activities to monitor and evaluate the programme will need to happen **throughout the programme lifetime**. Below is a summary of each point in the programme when each monitoring and evaluation activities will need to take place.

WHAT ACTIVITY	WHEN	DOCUMENTS NEEDED
VoiceMore Participant Survey: this is to set a baseline to measure personal development outcomes against.	**Before the first training module starts:** complete immediately after introductions and welcomes sessions before any other sessions commence.	**VoiceMore Participant Survey document,** which can be found in the **VoiceMore MEAL Toolkit**. This is available in different languages. Adapted versions are available for groups with no, or low, literacy.
Daily Training Feedback: regular informal feedback on activities and how young people feel they are progressing.	**At the end of each day of training** during the spokesperson, advocacy and research training modules.	Examples of activities for short daily evaluation are available in the **VoiceMore MEAL Toolkit,** or facilitators can develop their own based on group needs.
End of Training Evaluation: covering what they think about the whole training and feel they might have learnt.	**At the end of each training phase** as the last session.	Examples of activities for end of training evaluation are available in the **VoiceMore MEAL Toolkit** or facilitators can develop their own based on group needs.
VoiceMore Participant Survey: this is to measure progress and change in personal development outcomes.	**At end of the research training phase, i.e.,** when all training is complete.	**VoiceMore Participant Survey document.** This is available in different languages. Adapted versions are available for groups with no, or low, literacy.
Feedback During Regular Meetings: creating space for feedback.	**At the end of the group's regular sessions** throughout the programme.	Can be **quick group discussions or short games**. To be decided by the facilitator.
Final Evaluation Activities	**At end of the programme** during close down phase.	Tools for final evaluation can be found in the **VoiceMore MEAL Toolkit**.
VoiceMore Participant Survey: this is to measure progress and change in personal development outcomes.	**At end of the programme** during the final evaluation session.	**VoiceMore Participant Survey document.** This is available in different languages. Adapted versions are available for groups with no, or low, literacy.
Evaluating Advocacy Activity: recording and tracking advocacy action throughout the advocacy phase.	From when the group develop their **advocacy action plan and start implementing their advocacy activities** until the end of the programme.	Facilitators should **record and collate** all information into one file ready to share at the end of the project.

Photo credit: War Child

PART 15

Exit Strategy and Close Down

OVERVIEW

Closing a youth programme like VoiceMore involves more than just evaluation activities. The young people will have spent considerable time and energy working together as a team on a topic they feel strongly about. They may have developed strong bonds with others in their group. They may feel they want to continue undertaking their advocacy or might have new ideas about what they want to do in the future. It will be important not to ignore this and to **dedicate time to thinking about how best to support your group manage the transition to the end of the programme and what kind of further opportunities might be suitable.**

In addition to thorough and robust reflection and evaluation using MEAL tools, a good exit strategy for a youth project should include the following:

- Clear discussion with the group on what will happen in the build-up to the programme finishing and after it has finished. This helps ensures fair expectation setting.
- Consideration to how to support young people towards taking positive next steps in their lives, including further opportunities and ways they can build on new soft skills and knowledge developed.
- Cultivate and communicate a sense of positivity and congratulations. This can include something ceremonial at the end, such as presentation of certificates, for example.

CLEAR MESSAGING AND EXPECTATION SETTING

Managing Emotions

If young people have been working together for a long period and have bonded well, they may feel worried about losing time with, and the support of, their peers. They may also have enjoyed the additional support and interactions with the organisation. **This can cause a sense of anxiety as a programme draws to a close.** They might be wondering how the project will wind down and what they can expect when it does.

Towards the end of the advocacy phase, start speaking to the young people about what the programme is going to look like between now and the end date. **Explain there will be an evaluation and feedback phase and that support staff will want to start working with them as individuals and a group to explore what they could do next.**

Be clear about what can and cannot be made available; do not promise or unfairly indicate we have funding for additional work if we do not. Do not promise the possibility of work or educational opportunities unless you know they are very likely. Create space for them to ask questions and take their ideas, and any reasonable requests, into consideration.

Staying in Touch

Young people may be keen to stay in touch, both with each other and with the supporting staff members. **It is likely they will ask about this during the close-down phase.**

Participants staying in touch with each other, if travel is safe and contact poses no other risk factors, is **something to be encouraged** as it is reflective of a new peer support network the young people may value or need.

Keeping communication open between the young people and the organisation after the programme closes can also be a positive thing. Although activity may have finished, some duty of care remains. Young people might have follow-up questions or want to raise concerns (for example, if something negative has happened in the community due to the project). This is valuable information and helps promote wider safety and well-being.

It is, therefore, recommended to keep an option of communication open for at least a few months after programme activity ceases. Let the young people know who they can contact and how. Make sure, however, that there is clarity over what support can and cannot be offered and what contact should relate to.

FURTHER PATHWAYS AND REFERRAL

Supporting participants to look for further opportunities is something that should always be explored. In many settings, particularly conflict affected settings, it is recognised these will likely be limited. However, this does not mean we should exclude the possibility, and efforts to explore what they could be and what we can reasonably help with should still be undertaken. To help facilitate this, the following steps can be useful:

- A one-to-one exit interview to discuss what the young person is thinking they might do next, what they are interested in and any ideas they have. Also, allow space in the discussion for the young person to raise any concerns they have about the programme finishing.
- A group discussion focused on what the young people are considering doing next and if they have any new, collective plans. This is a time where their interest in continuing activity might be raised (see section below).
- Based on what individuals or the group have told you, take some time to research what is happening in the area that could be of interest to them, for example, other programmes being run by NGOs, local organisations, community organisations, or local district authorities, etc.
- Consider how some young people might need to be supported in approaching their families or community leaders to advocate for them joining such opportunities.
- Facilitate a session where you signpost to identified opportunities and consider what kind of steps could be taken to help the young people in early stages of accessing them. For example, making an application or contacting the right people.
- Allow enough time for the above process. It is something that the supporting staff member will need to initiate weeks ahead of the final sessions if it is to be meaningful and useful.

Setting up their own independent organisation or group

If young people have become very motivated by the programme and are passionate about the issue they have been trying to address, **they may suggest wanting to continue activity independently**. This might be something they want to do informally, for example, by continuing to meet and finish off some small activities in the community, or it might be something more ambitious, such as setting up their own community-based organisation.

In terms of sustainability, young people continuing their own activities or even creating their own grassroots organisations or movements can be fantastic. However, there are several questions that should be raised if this is the case. Such as:

- **Safety and Protection:** Speaking up on an issue can be dangerous in some contexts, especially so without the support and guidance of an organisation. Help the young people consider any risks of independent activity and emphasise how they would need to be responsible for themselves and potentially other children and youth. If there are serious concerns about how activity would be received or the risks involved, have an honest conversation with the young people about these and ask them to reconsider trying to undertake activity alone.

- **How youth groups can be seen:** in some contexts, young people gathering or trying to undertake work that is seen as a challenge by elders or authorities is unsafe. They might be regarded as a threat and with suspicion (even if their intentions are completely commendable and benevolent). Young people should be supported to think about this and ways they can mitigate such risk when setting up their own work.
- **Being safe for others:** If the young people want to work with children or vulnerable groups, they might need help in thinking about their own safeguarding practice. They need to be aware that they will potentially be taking on responsibilities and duty of care.

Support staff need to find the right **balance between nurturing and encouraging young people's ambitions to start their own work but also ensuring the young people have considered some of the challenges and the potential risk factors such as those above.**

If deemed suitable, the following are examples of support an organisation we could potentially offer:

- Signposting young people to other external groups or departments that could support them.
- Helping them identify training opportunities that could be relevant to their aims.
- Match them to, or act as, mentors.
- Connect them with small start-up funding.

This should be discussed with the wider teams as soon as possible after young people have expressed an interest in continuation work to determine feasibility.

CELEBRATING AND RECOGNISING ACHIEVEMENTS

A final celebration at the end of the programme will be a great way to **create a sense of positive closure**. This does not need to be anything large in scale or expensive. It can be a small gathering to give thanks and come together with a celebratory tone.

If suitable, **inviting some of the stakeholders or representatives from the local community** can be beneficial. They may wish to thank the young people for their efforts, and it can help young people feel the wider value of their work. It might also be good for **close family members** of the young people to join, so they, too, can appreciate what their children have been dedicating their time to.

The focus of this time should be helping the young people **acknowledge what went well and what they are proud of**. It should not be time to attempt any further evaluation activity (which should already have been completed beforehand).

Many young people will appreciate something to take away with them, such as a **certificate of achievement and a copy of a group photo**.

> "My favourite part of the programme was the open discussion sessions that helped us get things off our chests and to show us things we didn't know about ourselves."
>
> **Rana, 16, Jordan**

CASE STUDY: CHACHA

"I am a fruit of two parents. By bad luck, my mother had left me as a result of the inter-ethnic wars when I was six months old. I had to be breastfed by another mother in my family. After a year, this woman handed me over to my older sisters because my father had become irresponsible. Life was really very difficult, and it pushed me to join the armed groups at the age of 10. I was heavily exploited by the armed groups by looking for firewood, drawing water, and being shown how to handle a weapon in case of wars. After this miserable life, I decided to leave the armed groups and resume life with my family. There, I returned to school, which was very difficult, but by grace, I managed to obtain my state diploma.

Through grace, I participated in War Child's VoiceMore programme. These activities de-traumatised me and pushed me to be considered and to consider myself in the community. Now I have a spirit of leading a group of young people, of advising other young people and children who are in difficult situations in the community. I am now able to carry out advocacy actions for my own problems and those of others with the politico-administrative authorities and other actors. VoiceMore taught me life in a group, and there, I live with others without problem... That is why we sensitise and advise children not to consider a life in the bush through joining armed groups."

Chacha, 24, Democratic Republic of Congo

To see examples of War Child's VoiceMore projects, including groups research and reports, visit our website here: **www.warchild.org.uk/our-work/what-we-do/innovative-programmes/voicemore**

For more information regarding the programme or this handbook, please contact Sophie Bray-Watkins on **sophie.bray-watkins@warchild.net**

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