

# Voice for Change Final Report 2020-2021

DOWN TO ZERO ALLIANCE

terre des hommes   
stopt kinderuitbuiting



Girls first



DEFENCE for  
CHILDREN 



 **Down to Zero**  
Fighting commercial sexual exploitation of children



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## Abbreviations and acronyms

BBB	Building Back Better (DtZ Alliance)
CPS	Child protection system
CSO	Civil society organisation
DtZ	Down to Zero
LEA	Law enforcement Agency
MoFA	Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs
OSEC	Online sexual exploitation of children
SEC	Sexual exploitation of children
SRHR	Sexual and reproductive health and rights
VfC	Voice for Change
YVfC	Youth Voices for Change

# Executive summary

This is the final report for the Voice for Change (VfC) programme: eliminating sexual exploitation of children (SEC) carried out by the Down to Zero (DtZ) Alliance. This alliance is a partnership with the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, led by Terre des Hommes, with Defence for Children-ECPAT, Free a Girl, ICCO (part of Cordaid) and Plan International Netherlands. The programme is implemented in Colombia, the Dominican Republic, India, Indonesia, Nepal, the Philippines and Thailand. The goal of this programme is to amplify the voices of children and youth for them to be central to the activities of child protection systems to enhance child- and gender-sensitive prevention of and response to SEC.

**The first chapter** describes **the context** in which the programme has been implemented: a tumultuous context, due to a combination of the global Covid-19 pandemic and other environmental and/or political challenges that all countries are facing at the same time. This has meant that the programme activities, including the budget lines and the planning, had to be adapted to fit the new situation. Showing a strong sense of urgency and adaptability, the alliance partners have managed to reach important achievements in following the goal of the programme.

**The second chapter** addresses **the progress** that has been achieved within the course of the programme. It looks at **the two outcomes of the programme and the cross-country component to promote a victim-centred approach to response services**. For the first outcome, training and support to children and youth has been carried out to build their knowledge of SEC and skills for advocacy, and they have been connected to others to be part of a network where they can learn from each other. In doing so, children and youth have been empowered to play an active role in protection against SEC. For the second outcome, lobbying, advocacy and capacity-building activities have been carried out to strengthen child protection systems. As such, law enforcement agencies, governments, civil society organisations and communities have been informed about SEC and related issues, and engaged to improve the protection of children and youth against SEC. Lastly, the cross-country component has worked on training professionals who work with child victims and children at risk to strengthen the child victim-centred approach.

**The third chapter** looks into **the learning agenda under VfC: this includes learning on gender-transformative programming, the pilot project Youth Voices for Change and training on safeguarding**. The first combined different methods (training, self-assessment, exchange sessions etc.), whereby country teams have gained knowledge on how to include gender and inclusion in all steps of the projects that they have been starting to implement under the programme. The Youth Voices for Change pilot project aims to work with child and youth advocates to strengthen their communication and advocacy skills, while connecting them by making use of a digital communications platform. Lastly, the safeguarding training had a very practical focus and ensured that all alliance members would have the same knowledge of principles for safeguarding children and youth, would adhere to the same standards and would know how to act in this respect.

**The fourth chapter** addresses questions of **the programme's sustainability**. Capacity-building and empowerment of children create long-lasting effects.

Challenges and opportunities are addressed in **the fifth chapter**. They include the challenges of a short programme that already faces many contextual challenges, but also the ingenuity shown by the alliance partners and the opportunities that online activities offer to cover larger numbers of participants and allow information to be exchanged all around the world.

**The sixth chapter** looks into the **programme partnership**, which had the benefit of already existing for the five-year DtZ 1.0 programme, and collaboration and implementation of processes could continue along the same lines as before.

**The seventh chapter** looks into **communication materials** that have been produced under the programme. An overview is shared in the annex.

**The eighth chapter** discusses the **financial reporting of the programme**, whereby budgetary changes have had to be implemented to reflect the changes made to programming as a response to the contextual changes that have occurred.

# About the programme

The programme Voice for Change (VfC): eliminating commercial sexual exploitation of children (SEC) was implemented from March 2020 to June 2021. The programme was active in Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Indonesia and Thailand, with cross-border activities in India and Nepal. Additionally, the programme was implemented at international level, with cross-country activities. Also, activities which followed a different path from the other countries were also implemented in the Philippines: an online application for child and youth advocates was developed with the intention to ultimately use it in several countries. The initial proposal was funded in response to the Voordewind/Kuik 35300-XVII amendment. The programme was funded under the Flex fund modality by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) of The Netherlands and had a total budget of €2 million. The programme was implemented by Terre des Hommes, in cooperation with Defence for Children-ECPAT, Free a Girl, ICCO (part of Cordaid) and Plan International Netherlands. The goal of this programme is to amplify the voices of children and youth for them to be central to activities of child protection systems (CPS) to enhance child- and gender-sensitive prevention of and response to SEC. The programme provided opportunities to a vulnerable group of children and youth to shape their future, by giving them a voice and skills to act.

## Chapter 1: Changes in context in 2020–2021

The VfC programme was developed before the onset of the global Covid-19 pandemic, and had to be adapted to a drastically changing context from the start of its implementation. Due to the pandemic, all implementing countries faced recurrent serious confinement or lockdown measures introduced by their government, restricting travel and banning face-to-face events. Furthermore, many governments have switched their attention to the immediate crisis response (in the form of direct medical/social support, distributing protective equipment and initiating vaccination campaigns) and away from long-term and structural child protection measures and the fight against SEC. Many households have found themselves under tremendous economic stress due to job losses, increased care burden and/or health problems. For children, the situation has worsened dramatically: schools have been closed on a large scale and for long periods of time – moving to, for example, online, radio or modular courses, with limited support, guidance and accessibility for all children. Children found themselves confined at home in, too often, difficult situations. This situation also led to an increase in school dropouts,<sup>1</sup> child labour,<sup>2</sup> SEC,<sup>3</sup> child trafficking<sup>4</sup> and child marriages<sup>5</sup> around the world.

Besides the Covid-19 pandemic, the implementing countries also faced other difficulties, such as cyclones and serious flooding in India in July and September 2020 and May 2021. Both India and Colombia have been facing increased migration flows from Nepal and Venezuela, respectively. Colombia has seen widespread protests due to social discontent, which have been met with force by the government. The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights even reported the killing of 87 young people in the context of a national strike in the country. Similarly, protests in Thailand in October to November 2020 were met with a tough response

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<sup>1</sup> See the UNESCO report on school dropouts and education disruption related to Covid-19: UNESCO, One year into COVID-19 education disruption: Where do we stand?, 19 March 2021 (<https://bit.ly/38xP1rs>).

<sup>2</sup> See the International Labour Organization reports on the effect of Covid-19 on child labour: International Labour Organization, 'COVID-19 impact on child labour and forced labour: The response of the IPEC+ Flagship Programme', Geneva, 2020, <https://bit.ly/38rZuEN>; and International Labour Organization and UNICEF, Executive Summary, 'Child Labour: Global Estimates 2020, Trends And The Road Forward', Geneva and New York, 2020 (<https://bit.ly/38tUAXA>).

<sup>3</sup> See the report by the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the sale and sexual exploitation of children in Covid-19 times: United Nations General Assembly, 'Impact of coronavirus disease on different manifestations of sale and sexual exploitation of children', 46th session of the Human Rights Council, New York, 22 February–19 March 2021 (<https://undocs.org/en/A/HRC/46/31>).

<sup>4</sup> See the press release by Save the Children on child trafficking in Covid-19 times: Save the Children, COVID-19 crisis has pushed child traffickers online and out of sight, 27 July 2021 (<https://bit.ly/3t2l23b>).

<sup>5</sup> See the UNICEF press release on the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on child marriage: UNICEF, 10 million additional girls at risk of child marriage due to COVID-19, 7 March 2021 (<https://uni.cf/3ytRygl>).

from the army and the police, causing concern for the well-being of young people. In the Dominican Republic, presidential and congressional elections led to changes in leadership in most public institutions.

In this context, the implementing partners of the VfC programme had to respond rapidly and adapt their activities to the limitations of the diminished levels of availability of important stakeholders and the target groups: (local) governments, law enforcement agencies (LEAs), communities, and children and youth themselves. Many planned activities have been changed. In some cases they were simply delivered in an alternative form by being moved online, for example; in others, different actions were carried out altogether. The budget has had to be adjusted to reflect the changes in the activities. The timeline of the planning of activities and implementation also had to be adapted due to delays in contracting before the start of the programme. Despite a challenging context, the alliance members and implementing partners have shown strong commitment, flexibility and resilience in adapting the programme where needed, and ensuring they met the intended goals of the programme. Some concrete examples of the adaptability of the country teams are given in the boxes below. They demonstrate two ways in which implementing partners have taken action in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, and typify the experience of all alliance partners, which have also faced similar challenges and adapted their activities.

In Thailand, for example, a support centre for child victims and children at risk of SEC had to be closed for several weeks in 2021, and the support provided had to be reduced: only emergency support services were still available, such as provision of food, facemasks and sanitiser gel.

However, awareness-raising and advocacy campaigns were redesigned to be fully implemented online. The campaign for reporting SEC was one such campaign that moved completely online. It was met with high levels of engagement from social media users. Moreover, the alliance partner has indicated an increase in the number of cases reported to its helpline over the VfC implementation period. This can be attributed in part to the successful campaign but is also, unfortunately, the result of a higher incidence of SEC during this period, related to the move by children and young people to online environments due to the country's lockdown measures.

In Nepal, while activities concerning government stakeholders, the judiciary and LEAs were postponed or cancelled, campaigns changed to become digital awareness campaigns. Moreover, the distribution of relief materials (e.g. health and safety kits, food) to 300 high-risk girls was used to keep in touch with them during lockdown periods, and to raise awareness of ways to protect themselves from SEC during or after the lockdown.



## Chapter 2: Programme progress 2020–2021

The progress achieved in the duration of the VfC programme will be discussed here. The programme has worked on two outcomes, which will be addressed here while highlighting the progress of each VfC country. The work on the cross-country component to promote a victim-centred approach to response services will also be addressed in this chapter.

### OUTCOME 1: CHILD VICTIMS AND CHILDREN AT RISK OF SEC ARE EMPOWERED TO SPEAK OUT AND PLAY AN ACTIVE ROLE IN THEIR OWN PROTECTION AND THAT OF THEIR PEERS

All countries have worked on the first outcome and made substantial progress: child victims and children at risk of SEC have been empowered to raise their voices and act as agents of change. In doing so, they have increased their knowledge on sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) and SEC in particular, and are thus able to stand up against SEC. They are also better equipped to play an active role to protect themselves and their peers from SEC. Most implementing countries have also participated in the Youth Voices for Change (YVfC) pilot project which is part of the learning agenda of this programme. This pilot project has united and trained youth leaders from different countries to raise their voices and act as advocates for a world free from SEC (see more below under Chapter 3: Learning agenda).

In **Colombia**, 42 young people (26 girls and 16 boys) from the ECPAT International Children and Youth Advisory Committee (EICYAC) network received training and support to reinforce their advocacy skills. This included tools, concepts and strategies to prevent SEC and online sexual exploitation of children (OSEC) in different contexts (community, school, political, digital and peer-to-peer), as well as several SEC and OSEC prevention campaigns on social media. These young people showed their leadership skills in holding five regional virtual events for Latin America where they exchanged experiences and knowledge about SEC, trafficking, children's rights, and the lack of institutional response during the pandemic. As of the end of the project, 112 children, adolescents and youth (73 girls and 39 boys) were participating in the national EICYAC network. This was followed, in 2021, by a youth-led advocacy activity called the 'National Meeting of the EICYAC Youth of Colombia: 20 years of standing against SEC', intended for the Congress of the Republic and child protection institutions. The event generated new spaces in the form of round-table discussions with representatives of institutions tasked with preventing, protecting against, investigating or prosecuting SEC, and in the form of youth engagement with the Congress of the Republic. In the latter, the EICYAC network presented a manifesto that it had written to the Congress of the Republic to call for coordinated action to prevent SEC.

Institutional representatives recognised young people as key players and made commitments for a cross-sector response to address and prevent the issue. To this end, public officers committed to take into account all the recommendations made by young people in the manifesto, and to open up other spaces for dialogue to follow up on these state responses.

In the **Dominican Republic**, three provincial youth networks were strengthened and further connected with other networks of children and youth advocates. Moreover, 73 members of networks received technical assistance for working on their advocacy strategies, and 86 children and youth participated in training to strengthen their skills and knowledge in respect of communication, violence prevention (including SEC) and gender-transformative advocacy, among others. The work that was done by these young advocates was presented in a national online discussion with authorities and representatives. Ten representatives of institutions in local protection systems expressed their interest in supporting children and youth in their advocacy actions, and some even indicated commitment to give them greater participation in their planning processes, to better include the perspectives of young people in their community.

Additionally, training was developed to be delivered to students when working with schools. It focuses on advocacy skills that enable children to protect children's rights and mobilise others to participate in addressing issues related to SEC. The course material developed focused on human and children's rights, self-protection and personal growth, and support information for developing and managing social skills. In 2021, 405 children (259 girls and 146 boys) have been able to follow these sessions. This training was followed by training on awareness-raising techniques that enable children to implement peer-to-peer education with regards to SEC. This training was undertaken by 780 children (536 girls and 244 boys) in 2021, thanks to the support of teachers and children themselves, who would invite more children to participate.



The **India-Nepal** partners divided their focus between locations on both sides of the border, to address cross-border trafficking, with those in Nepal focusing only on the second outcome (see below), while those in India worked on both outcomes. A total of 489 children (250 boys and 239 girls) have attended sessions on how to raise issues of SEC among their peers. Through a snowball effect, more and more children attended the VfC activities and became increasingly involved in discussing children's rights, child protection and SEC-related issues with each other and with their families, as well as reporting cases and potential threats. These children and youth also joined networks with other children and youth to address similar subjects, and some have even started to form new youth clubs in areas outside the VfC intervention areas. Also, they have identified the right authorities to leverage for the promotion of children's rights. For instance, children raised their collective voice against the violation of their rights, demanded a park to play in and school enrolment, and identified and reported high-risk and SEC cases to the authorities. Additionally, some changes have been made in respect to the perception of gender in relation to SEC: on the one hand, boys have started to alter their behaviour towards girls, approaching them with more respect, advocating for support for girls' rights and encouraging them to attend youth club meetings and undertake activities together. On the other hand, youth groups and communities have realised that boys can be victims of sexual exploitation as well.

In **Indonesia**, children and youth have been trained on advocacy on children's rights and SRHR, including protection from SEC (481 participants: 290 girls and 191 boys), and on giving training to their peers (358 participants: 142 girls and 216 boys). The training used a youth advocacy manual from another alliance funded by the MoFA, the Girls Advocacy Alliance. Children and youth groups adapted the manual to make it fit their context and level of understanding. They filmed this process, and it has been a huge learning curve in relation to developing advocacy strategies and training peers. Children and youth have been connected with each other, and a network has been created to strengthen their voices. In addition, strategies for advocacy at the local and national levels have been developed together with the children and youth, which they have started to implement. These activities have been mobilising the participation of children and building commitment while also equipping them with skills to expand and spread their knowledge and continue taking action against SEC.

In the **Philippines**, a digital platform has been developed for children and youth to have a safe space where they can exchange information and advocate on their issues and needs, especially related to SEC. This VFC app was developed in consultation with children and youth themselves, to ensure that their needs are met. The app can be found [here](#) (on the Google Play Store), and an explanatory video can be found [here](#). A total of 334 children (134 boys and 200 girls) participated in a series of training sessions which developed their capacities to become child and youth advocates – i.e. on children’s rights and protection, policy formulation, peer-to-peer learning, exchange with other children and youth organisations, and use of (social) media for advocacy. The children and youth also learned about the subject of OSEC. OSEC youth responders benefited from training to acquire more skills, knowledge and tools to respond to reports of OSEC.

In **Thailand**, activities have focused on training and empowerment of child victims and children at risk of SEC to lobby key decision makers at national and regional levels and obtaining results from their lobbying efforts. Capacities were built of 30 young activists on advocacy techniques and on innovative ways to raise awareness on SEC by developing creative Information and Communication Technology (ICT) material shared through social media. The knowledge and skills they acquired and the support they received from their communities have given them confidence to continue mobilising their communities and peers towards preventing SEC risks and training other youth groups in other provinces to spread the initiative. In addition, recommendations from children and youth advocates were given to, and used by, on the one hand, the Thai government in its Action Plan on Protection of Children from OSEC and, on the other hand, by organisations involved in the alternative report for the Universal Periodic Review on Thailand.

## IN CONCLUSION

All implementing countries have provided training and support to children and youth to build their knowledge of SRHR, including SEC, and skills for advocacy. Spaces for dialogue and exchange have been established, connecting children and youth with others. This enables them to benefit from peer-to-peer learning and find ways to amplify their voice. As such, the children and youth participating in these activities are being empowered to act as agents of change: raising their voices against SEC, and sharing recommendations and demands for change at different levels. Different topics related to SEC have been addressed, and awareness has been raised on SEC and OSEC, not only among the children and youth participating in the VFC activities, but also among their peers, their communities and authorities that get to hear from these children and youth. Children and youth are able to play a more active role in their protection and that of their peers against (re) victimisation of SEC. These activities lead to concrete results such as more reporting of SEC. Moreover, the Covid-19 pandemic, including the related economic and social consequences, has had a significant impact on the children and youth who participated in the programme. For this reason, in addition to the activities directly related to SEC prevention and care, resilience and emotional support processes have also been developed for the children and youth, to accompany them in the recovery of their emotional health, and that of their families.

## OUTCOME 2: CHILD PROTECTION SYSTEMS ARE STRENGTHENED IN FIVE COUNTRIES THROUGH LOBBYING, ADVOCACY AND CAPACITY-BUILDING

The implementing countries, apart from the Philippines, also worked on Outcome 2, whereby they aimed to strengthen CPS through lobbying and advocacy activities and capacity-building. In all VFC countries, activities have also been carried out as part of the international, cross-country interventions that also tie into this outcome in relation to strengthening CPS, but they will be further discussed in a separate chapter below.

In **Colombia**, a structured process for training and strengthening government officials and other strategic allies was carried out through a certification course with the University of La Guajira. This process was carried out with 47 participants, expanding their knowledge of the victim-centred approach, human rights perspective, gender perspective and other related concepts. It also included technical support for some of the participating institutions to improve the response and approach to victims of sexual violence and sexual exploitation and strengthen inter-institutional cooperation.

Moreover, 34 child victims (31 girls and 3 boys) were identified during the course of the programme, and care and support were provided by the children’s home of the alliance partner in Riohacha. Here, measures were taken to protect these children and restore their rights – with integral support in the shelter for eight months where they receive psychological, health, educational and family reintegration services. The process of



approaching victims during the pandemic required the development of new strategies because the dynamics of SEC moved in large parts to digital environments – as exemplified by the large number of online child sexual abuse videos that were recorded. Lastly, a situation analysis of the impact of commercial SEC was performed and shared with decision makers to guide them on the need to provide measures to restore rights that match the needs of survivors. This includes, for example, referring them to the children’s home of the alliance partner when reintegration with their family is not possible because parent figures are the exploiters or when they are members of illegal armed groups. These measures contribute to creating better restorative and protection systems for survivors of SEC.

In the **Dominican Republic**, two courses were organised in partnership with the University Iberoamericana (UNIBE) on prevention and care for children and adolescents in situations of violence. The 47 participants were members of the local protection systems (regional offices, the municipal directorate and the local protection boards). The aim of this training is to promote greater cohesion, coordination and an understanding of the assumption of roles in the dynamics of response and attention to SEC cases in their localities. Key subjects addressed were violence, the legal framework, prevention, critical care route, psychosocial care, victim detection and assessment, and care. Some of the participants then also took part in two focus groups that conducted an assessment of the local protection system to identify possible improvements in the case management of victims of violence. This led to the commitment of both regional offices of the National Council for Childhood and Adolescence (Consejo Nacional para la Niñez y la Adolescencia – CONANI) to organise awareness-raising activities and address the deficit of human resources in the services for the treatment of children with a history of complex trauma. They have also encouraged good collaboration with the other main actors, as the local protection networks in the different provinces need to be reactivated after the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Finally, audio-visual products were developed for the communication and dissemination of the project, highlighting the experience of empowering young people as rights-holders and the impact of carrying out joint actions with actors of the local protection system, involving community protection networks and actors of the protection system. These communication materials help raise awareness, and can inspire members of CPS to play a role in protection systems.



In **India**, work on this outcome has led to the commitment of many stakeholders to take action against SEC, and to adopt child-friendly procedures in SEC cases. For example, LEAs and the border security force proactively contact the alliance partners for support in relation to SEC cases. Training on addressing SEC cases and performing rescues was requested by a police department which has consequently been implementing the lessons learned. The border security force has created an Anti-Human Trafficking Unit, and tackling SEC in the border area has become one of its priorities. Moreover, online sessions have been held with civil society organisations (CSOs), LEAs, legal experts, government officials and community members to sensitise them on issues of SEC and engage them in protecting children, especially during and in the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The rapport and collaboration with the local self-government (LSG) of different communities has been strengthened during the course of the programme, as illustrated by the invitation to youth representatives and country team members to participate in the LSGs' monthly meetings. After collaboration with the VfC programme on establishing child safeguarding mechanisms in the community, the LSGs have taken ownership of these mechanisms. The LSGs have also committed to contribute to creating a community-based child protection mechanism to prevent SEC.

Through advocacy, linkages were established with district-level child protection units and the state commission for the protection of child rights. Following a request from these actors, the alliance partners conducted training on child protection mechanisms and on the implementation of the current laws related to the tourism sector. Furthermore, a CSO anti-human trafficking network was created to prevent child trafficking and SEC along the India–Nepal border. At the national level, a national conference on child protection was organised, where representatives of 11 states showed engagement to implement the guidelines on child protection in travel and tourism.

In **Nepal**, lobbying and advocacy meetings have been held with different government officials to set up municipality-level anti-human trafficking committees. The committees control and coordinate anti-human trafficking efforts at grass-root levels, including budgeting, planning and reporting to the district-level trafficking committees. As a result, three new committees have been formed by the local governments in different districts. Furthermore, through meetings with government officials at different levels, the coordination between LEAs and CSOs on SEC and human trafficking cases in the border areas has been strengthened.

Some of the in-person cross-border interactions and partner networking could not be conducted due to the second wave of Covid-19 in India and Nepal. However, under the VfC programme, the alliance partner in Nepal managed to rescue 339 female young adults from SEC and provide services to them, and intercept 230 girls before SEC could occur. To do this, the collaboration between the VfC border teams and the Armed Police Force of Kanchanpur played an important role. More multi-stakeholder interactions with CSOs, government and LEAs also resulted in improved coordination. And, through capacity-building and training by the VfC programme, a stronger child victim-centred approach to border surveillance was promoted.

In **Indonesia**, children and youth groups in various regions have been developing research into children's rights as part of their advocacy materials. The results of this research are then presented in the form of Children's Rights Situation Analyses (CRSAs), based on data, their experiences and perspectives, and accompanied by facilitators. This process helps children and youth understand more about the issue of children's rights violations, including SRHR and SEC, and strengthens their abilities in regards to discussing and problem-solving. Different CRSAs have been brought together to develop advocacy messages for national lobbying on trending issues on children's rights in general, and on SEC more specifically, including the root causes of SEC and contributing factors, and their recommendations to the government at the national level.

A total of 74 children have been active in the lobbying activities at local and national levels. Here, they have been receiving support from alliance partners in the preparation of advocacy plans, and in developing their lobbying and advocacy skills. One of the highlights has been the presentation of the CRSA results to relevant stakeholders at national levels. These stakeholders included several relevant ministries, such as the Ministry of National Development Planning (BAPPENAS), which indicated the will to use the results of the CRSA created by the children and youth groups in the development and planning of Indonesia's National Medium-Term Development Plan 2021–2024.

The VfC project has played a key role in strengthening CPS in **Thailand**, with a specific focus on northern Thailand and the Bangkok area. As a follow-up to specific research conducted by an alliance partner, tools and training materials were developed to build the capacities of key stakeholders involved in SEC cases, such as the

Cybercrime Bureau – a newly established police unit in charge of all cyber-related crimes, including OSEC. Also, alliance partners, in collaboration with the Thailand Institute for Justice and Save the Children, used the findings and recommendations from an action-research to fund, develop and produce 300 copies of a toolkit and board game to be used as a tool for CSOs, social workers and psychologists in their work. These toolkits and board games aim to develop cognitive skills of children vulnerable to, or victims of, sexual abuse and exploitation. They also served as a means to conduct lobbying activities at the national level.

As a result of project interventions aimed at improving CPS, over 273 children who are survivors of SEC or at risk of being abused or exploited have been able to access adequate services. While the support has moved online, 200 children (140 girls and 60 boys) have received counselling services. Alliance partners have seen an increase in the demand for counselling from a growing number of children suffering from mental health issues, due to an added layer of pressure caused by the pandemic (e.g. family pressure to contribute to the family income but fewer opportunities to find paid employment due to the economic crisis; bullying and harassment online; and cases of sexual abuse and domestic violence within families).

For the lobbying and advocacy activities, the project has developed an online campaign aimed at encouraging community members, children and young people to report cases of SEC through reporting mechanisms that exist among all CPS, and to urge CPS to ensure that a rapid response is given to each case. In Q2 of 2020, campaign content posted on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter reached over 500,000 people. This campaign represented an opportunity for young people to disclose the abuse they have suffered, and encourage others to do the same and report their cases.

## IN CONCLUSION

The VfC programme activities to strengthen CPS have focused on lobbying, advocacy and capacity-building. They have relied heavily on research that has also included the perspectives of children and youth, and that has been conducted so as to better inform lobbying, advocacy and capacity-building activities while doing what is really needed for children and youth. The research conducted in this context was also key to developing evidence-based lobbying on the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on children and youth in relation to SEC. During the course of the VfC programme, a good rapport has been built with authorities, LEAs and governments. This has been instrumental in creating commitment among these stakeholders to change their approach and policies, and to adopt more child victim-friendly approaches to addressing SEC. Many CPS actors have (verbally) indicated their commitment, but it will need to be evidenced in future actions – which will take place after the end of the programme. Here, themes of resilience-building and emotional health support have been included in training, to address the challenges that the officials have been facing. They have been witnessing an increase in the number of cases of violence and risks, while at the same time experiencing budget reductions that have put a lot of pressure on them. Additionally, through advocacy and awareness-raising activities, changes have been made among communities and other stakeholders, which are becoming better informed about SRHR and alert to the risks of SEC in times of crisis and whose engagement to act to protect children has increased.





## CROSS-COUNTRY COMPONENT TO PROMOTE A VICTIM-CENTRED APPROACH TO RESPONSE SERVICES

The availability of internationally recognised best practices in providing services to victims, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, the realities in countries of poor implementation and enforcement of human trafficking laws, limited investment in protective services and lengthy court proceedings in all countries where the DtZ Alliance operates justified the inclusion of a cross-country component within VfC. The aim was to promote a victim-centred approach to response services among front-line professionals, thus improving justice for children. The Covid-19 pandemic impeded in-person training; therefore, training was redirected online, eventually allowing a far greater number of participants than anticipated beforehand. The number of countries benefiting from this programme therefore also increased, including other countries within the regions where DtZ operates, beyond the implementing countries, ensuring that professionals at different sides of borders were trained and acquainted with each other.<sup>6</sup> Given the impossibility of conducting the original activities, the DtZ Alliance managed to transform obstacles into opportunities, resulting in successful outcomes.

A DtZ Alliance technical partner developed and facilitated a 20-hour specialised online training course for local child protection actors and CSOs professionals,<sup>7</sup> and 46 selected participants<sup>8</sup> from 16 countries<sup>9</sup> trained in the victim-centred approach were certified as agents of change. The interaction among front-line professionals that was encouraged by the trainers, and the high-level tools developed to support the training, enabled a deeper understanding of the gaps, challenges and opportunities existing in each country. After the training, the participants committed themselves to implement concrete actions to reduce re-victimisation and incorporate multidisciplinary approaches in their countries, thereby ensuring the implementation and sustainability of the lessons learned. The participants were selected professionals from LEAs, representing the police and the judiciary, and also social workers.

In addition to the above, a partnership was created with the International Centre for Missing & Exploited Children to contribute to the capacity-building of professionals working in SEC, by developing a free online course on SEC and the victim-centred approach. The world's most experienced children's rights leaders and practitioners, from the WeProtect Global Alliance, UNICEF, the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child, EUROPOL and others, contributed to its development. In addition, youth leaders shared their experiences and recommendations, as well as part of this online course. The course serves as fundamental training on SEC and is available on the well-known platform EdX in four languages (English, French, Russian and Spanish) to all professionals who are keen on expanding their knowledge and experience. The online course ensures learning continuity over the project duration, enables participants to progress at their own pace and allows the DtZ Alliance to make changes later, such as adding new modules to the curriculum as necessary.

<sup>6</sup> In addition to the countries implementing VfC, the following countries took part in this activity: Bolivia, Cambodia, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Maldives, Mexico and Sri Lanka.

<sup>7</sup> Participants were as follows: LEAs and judiciary (48), government officials (44), case managers at non-governmental organisations (74), United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (5) and the Office of the Dutch Rapporteur on Trafficking in Human Beings and Sexual Violence Against Children (1).

<sup>8</sup> The transition from in-person to virtual activities allowed an increase in the number of countries involved from 6 to 16 countries and 300% of the initial number of target beneficiaries to be reached.

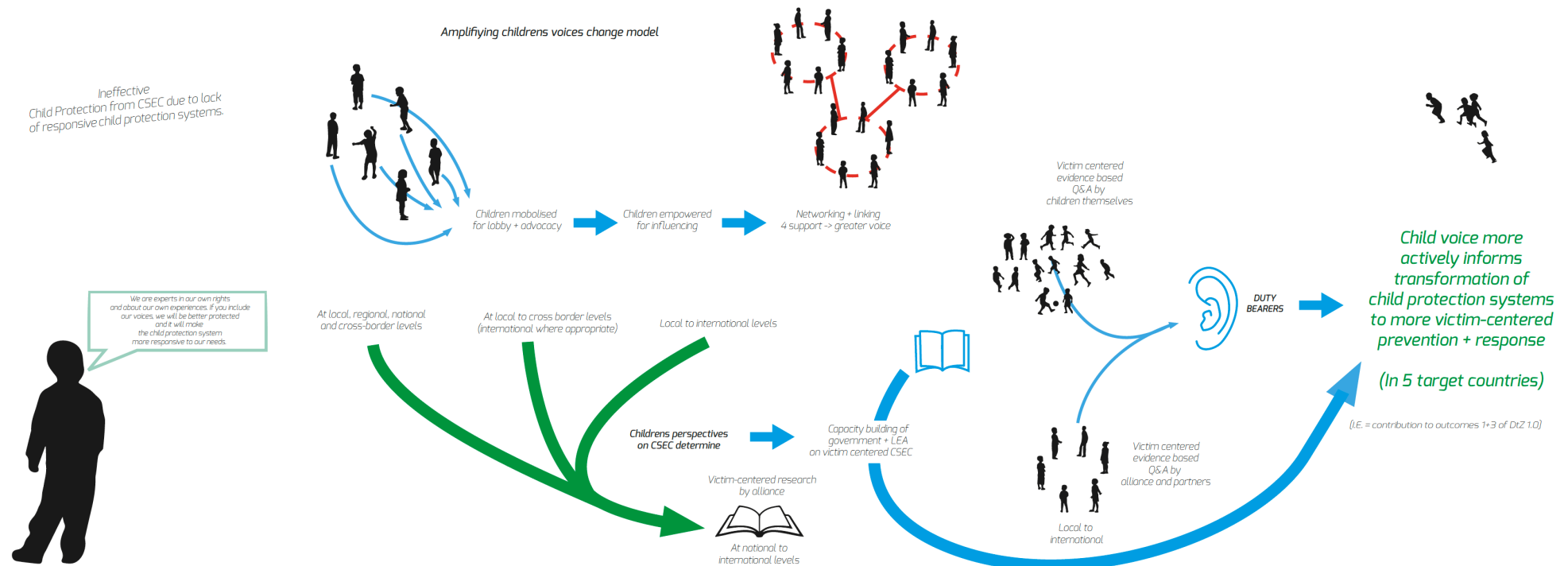
<sup>9</sup> The countries implementing VfC and those mentioned above.

## REFLECTIONS ON THE THEORY OF CHANGE

The Theory of Change (ToC) of the VfC programme was built on the assumption that sustainable solutions to SEC should be built with the involvement of children and youth themselves. However, the ToC also noted that children and youth alone cannot bring about change without the active commitment, involvement and engagement of other social players such as law enforcement agents, community members, the private sector and the government. Therefore, the programme's critical focus has been on mobilising children and youth for lobbying and advocacy, increasing their knowledge on SEC and its root causes, and empowering them to influence a range of stakeholders to change norms and policies. To be able to strengthen and amplify the voices of the rights-holders, the VfC programme connected children and youth with each other and linked them for support, as per the ToC.

At the same time, at national and international level, the alliance has conducted victim-centred research to develop evidence-based solutions and programming. The results of this research capture children's perspectives on SEC,

which has been used to better inform the capacity-building of governments and LEAs on an approach to SEC that is victim-centred (such as for the training of the Cybercrime Bureau, and the toolkits and board games for CSOs, social workers and psychologists in Thailand). The programme has also ensured that the voices of children and youth are heard by duty-bearers, through lobbying and advocacy activities such as different types of sessions with important stakeholders (such as the presentation of the CSRA by the Indonesian youth and children to the different ministries, or the youth manifesto presented to Congress in Colombia, among others). As intended in the ToC, victim-centred research and training has been also used to inform lobbying and advocacy materials (such as the information from the CSRA that has been used to create advocacy material by youth and children). Overall, the programme's ToC has guided the programme to enable children and youth to actively participate in and contribute to the transformation of CPS into more victim-centred prevention and response.



# Chapter 3: Learning agenda

For the DtZ Alliance's VfC programme, running from March 2020 to June 2021, the topics selected as the partnership learning are: gender equality and inclusion, building the capacity of youth advocates, and safeguarding.

## GENDER AND INCLUSION

Considering the diversity of alliance members and partners in the VfC programme, a common understanding of and a joint approach to the concepts of gender equality and inclusion were sought. To build on their gender knowledge and skills and to make their work on SEC prevention and response more gender-sensitive and gender-responsive, a practical tool has been used that enables all actors to integrate the concepts in all phases of their project cycle. Therefore, alliance members and their implementing partners underwent extensive training on the gender-transformative approach. The training combined different methods of learning such as individual online learning sessions (UN Women gender course), organisational self-assessment, country team discussions, regional sharing of experiences of gender in programming, and training on concepts such as the gender-transformative marker, followed by a regional-level joint reflection after putting it all into use. The different teams were able to apply the concepts to their own context and organisations, and to the subject of SEC, while exchanging knowledge and learning from each other.

In Colombia, for example, the team felt that this learning process demonstrated the need to form ties with feminist social movements in the political arena with a view towards cultural, economic and social transformation to reduce gender gaps and inequalities. Also, the team decided that this approach should govern social relationships within the organisation, and to integrate it into training provided to the community, government officials, children and youth, and private businesses. In the future, the team in Colombia aims to transform organisations through awareness-raising activities that adopt this approach, in different sectors, and by applying the gender-based approach within different organisations. This work thus encourages the public sector, civil society organisations and society in general to embark on a process of change and inclusion.

In Indonesia, the team witnessed a further increase in knowledge, skills and resources related and dedicated to gender-transformative programming. The perception of gender is much wider now: gender is included in social analyses, and gender-responsive strategies are being developed as a basis for programming. The team is convinced that its use of the gender-transformative approach will, in the long run, address adverse gender norms that still exist in some parts of the country.

*"The activities in Voice for Change will form a perspective and understanding that every child has the same rights as a human being and that all forms of crimes they experience, including sexual exploitation, are not because of their gender identity. Through this understanding, it will improve the condition of the victim, both from within themselves and the conditions created by their environment. The victim will not blame themselves anymore, and the society will not blame the victim based on their gender identity. That will increase the quality of their life in several aspects and will bring a better future for them."* (Final report, Indonesia, July 2021)

In the Dominican Republic, training workshops included reflections and practices in three domains: personal, work and community, which increased participants' understanding of gender equality in the project and in the project management cycle. This in turn, will have an impact on the subsequent initiatives of each organisation. Some discussions focused on their personal work experiences, which allowed for very deep reflection, inviting further critical reflection questioning and challenging gender norms.

Furthermore, the insights from gender marker evaluations have served to focus greater effort on strengthening capacities for a gender-sensitive protection system in the Building Back Better (BBB) programme. This is to ensure that the gender equality work that is carried out with communities, children and youth is complemented by a protection system that offers prevention, care and response to address the diverse needs of children and adolescents who are victims of or at risk of violence, helping to reduce the gender gap.

In the Philippines, VfC carried out research, followed by the development of an app with the participation of children and youth. Ideas and feedback from both genders were taken into consideration while developing the platform. Girl advocates actively shared their ideas for the technological features of the digital app, proudly acknowledging their technology skills and refuting the mainstream perspective that technology is a man's world. The digital app creates a safe space for all children, and will enable child advocates to actively challenge gender norms and address existing gender inequalities in the years to come.

The success of the learning about gender-transformative programming and its supporting tool is because it is applied learning. Alliance members and implementing partners have deepened their understanding and have been able to apply new insights and use the gender marker during the project.

In Colombia, one of the project's major accomplishments was to incorporate the topic of people with non-heteronormative sexual orientations and gender identities into the training for young leaders. For these individuals, the difficulty of their families and social environment to accept their sexual orientation represents a risk factor for SEC. To address this issue, it was necessary to approach families and establish activities to enable both young people and their families to recognise the need for adolescents to freely develop their sexuality, without stigmatisation or prejudice that could harm their physical or personal well-being. Additionally, the youth who participated in this process had an opportunity to receive training on gender, reflecting on the roles of the sex/gender system, new masculinities and other topics. These issues sparked discussion about the challenges they face in different contexts (family, community, region, school), and they will now be in a position to advocate for and promote inclusive policies and measures.

The team in India has benefited from the training to identify opportunities and ways to integrate gender transformation into the different phases of its programme. It has achieved noteworthy results in regards to gender such as: an increase in the cooperation between boys and girls in addressing issues related to SEC; more boys advocating for children's rights, including those of girls; providing safe spaces for girls to talk about sensitive topics; improving girls' agency through their participation in youth clubs and taking on leadership roles; and increasing awareness of boy victims of sexual exploitation.

In the VfC project in the Dominican Republic, adolescents and young people were trained with the Champions for Change methodology developed by Plan International to promote gender equality and address issues such as new masculinities and gender-transformative advocacy. The aim is that they can communicate, from their perspective and in their own language, new ways of establishing healthy and egalitarian relationships between boys and girls that break patriarchal stereotypes.

## YOUTH VOICES FOR CHANGE

The YVfC project was set up as a pilot project within the VfC programme to work with child and youth advocates to strengthen their communication and advocacy skills while connecting them through a digital communications platform. This pilot project seeks to position young leaders as central agents of change through the creation of transmedia content for the prevention of SEC. It allows young leaders to jointly network, build their knowledge on SEC and create a meeting space to practise their media skills and promote critical and investigative attitudes to SEC.

The YVfC project was implemented in Colombia, the Dominican Republic, India, Indonesia and Thailand, and worked with 25 youth leaders (between the ages of 15 and 25) across these countries. The strategic actions undertaken aimed to strengthen the capacities of young leaders both technically in four communications formats (social media campaigns, photography, creative writing and video making) and in their empowerment and advocacy processes in digital media for the prevention of SEC.

The results of this pilot project were notable: not only did it result in several social media products produced by the youth leaders themselves (see the learning platform [here](#) for the materials produced by the youth leaders), but it also had a positive impact on the participants themselves. The products made by the youth leaders have been varied: from photography shoots, to blogs, social media campaigns and videos. More than 150 technical and human rights workshops have been organised, including various subjects such as youth mobilisation, gender and SEC prevention. Through the different social media platforms (Instagram, Facebook, YouTube and the learning platform itself) 2,928 followers have been reached. The youth leaders report feeling empowered by the project and appreciate that YVfC has created a safe space for reflection, exchange of ideas, learning and co-creation. Their communication and advocacy skills have been strengthened, giving them tools with which to raise their voice and be heard. Moreover, their knowledge on how to address SEC and fight for their SRHR and a world free from SEC has increased significantly.

*“I felt comfortable talking about topics that I was nervous to talk about. I shared things I hadn’t shared before.” (Young leader from Colombia, July 2021)*

*“The workshops allowed me to learn more about the issues and problems, reflecting and understanding how the problem affects me, to then have an impact on others.” (Young leader from Dominican Republic, July 2021)*

*“Listening to the stories of my peers was very important for my reflexion process because it broadened my perspective.” (Young leader from Indonesia, July 2021)*

As part of the YVfC project, a **video** has been made that captures the voices of all the youth leaders and indicates the impact they can have in their role as youth leaders – especially in raising their voice against SEC. This video not only aims to show the power of these young leaders, but also to mobilise more young people to become involved in the fight against SEC. Due to the success of the pilot project, it will also be implemented further within the BBB programme. This continuation not only gives an opportunity to scale up the YVfC initiative to other countries and more youth leaders, but also to bring it to the next level in reaching the key stakeholders targeted by this advocacy.

## SAFEGUARDING TRAINING

Training was organised for all partner organisations and alliance members on the essentials of safeguarding children and young people. This participatory, online training was carried out with the aim that everyone working on the VfC programme would have the same knowledge and understanding of essential concepts and practices of safeguarding and would know how to respond to safeguarding issues.

Furthermore, as more and more people, including children and young people, had to move to online environments for work, schooling and entertainment as a result of Covid-19 restrictions, risks for the safety of children and young people increased. To tackle these growing risks, additional training has been organised within the programme about safeguarding, focusing on programme activities and the online environment. This training was provided to the partners of the VfC programme, as well as to youth leaders working with social media as a platform to raise their voices. The training introduced a pragmatic approach to safeguarding, and included a risk assessment and management planning, with a focus on online youth advocacy activities.

Learning on safeguarding and communications was also catalysed when alliance members raised their concerns about a story, and accompanying photographs were prepared to follow up with young people who participated in the programme; this was part of a follow-up to the ‘This is me’ campaign from 2018. What emerged was a rich discussion about how to handle safeguarding dilemmas where the child safeguarding policies of different organisations working together do not match exactly, and what may be acceptable to one organisation represents a breach of policy to another. In the end, the decision was made to also include young people up to 24 years in the alliance’s safeguarding principles, and not to publish photographs that identified a young person along with their accompanying story that revealed their history of sexual abuse. In addition, the alliance drew up a list of principles to guide the development and sharing of future communications materials. The article was published, but without identifiers in word or image.





## Chapter 4: Sustainability

An important part of the programme is capacity-building, with the aim to strengthen the skills and knowledge of different actors for their benefit in the long term. The capacity-building targets the partners of the alliance that have participated in exchange sessions and received training and coaching on multiple subjects such as those mentioned in Chapter 3. Also, capacity-building has gone beyond the training of partners, to include other actors such as the young leaders being trained in technical and advocacy skills, and the training of front-line professionals working within the justice system (from CSOs and government) to apply a child victim-centred approach to victims of SEC. This training has been moved completely online to adapt to the Covid-19 pandemic, with the added benefit of being recorded and reusable in the future. Similarly, children in Indonesia contextualised manuals about advocacy. In doing so, they made them their own, making them easier to use in the future to engage more children and youth in youth advocacy.

Furthermore, as youth leaders have been empowered to raise their voice against SEC, and spaces have been opened up for dialogue, an important step has been taken to raise awareness on the subject. Through their lobbying and advocacy campaigns, they contribute to breaking a culture of silence and impunity surrounding SEC and promoting a change in attitude among communities in support of zero tolerance for SEC. Moreover, as the young leaders are networked together around the world, they can count on each other's support and on that of the volunteers who have been involved in the programme with them – support that does not stop when the programme stops. Together they are also reaching out to other children and young people, mobilising them and spreading not only awareness but also the will to stand up and raise their voices. The development of the app in the Philippines also helps in this respect: creating a space for children and youth while using a technological tool that is fit for future use and can also be rolled out to other countries under BBB.

## Chapter 5: Challenges and opportunities

During the course of the VfC programme, alliance members and implementing partners have had to deal with many challenges related to the tumultuous context of working in a Covid-19 pandemic, societal and environmental difficulties facing the different implementing countries, and a delay in contracting at the start of the programme. These challenges resulted in some delays in the implementation of certain activities, and the transformation of other activities to be better suited to the new context. The latter implied a new form of working where most of the activities had to be moved online. Of course, many of the partners had already done some online activity, but never on this scale and in (almost) all aspects of the work – from contact with the target group, awareness-raising campaigns and training, to meetings and exchange sessions with other alliance members and implementing partners. Here, the challenge not only lies in the technical and practical move to an online environment, but also brings with it the additional changes in how to communicate effectively online, and how to really ensure that the message reaches its audience.

While this adaptation definitely posed challenges to all alliance members and implementing partners, it also created opportunities. Many alliance partners have, for example, indicated that they could provide training to more children than originally targeted, with no limitations on attendance numbers, due to schools being closed and activities being online. Similarly, the recording of sessions, and moving training material online also enabled partners to reach more participants in training courses that were developed, even at a later stage. Also, while face-to-face regional meetings have not been carried out in this programme, several online exchange events have been organised for alliance members and implementing partners. Although online sessions may not always achieve exactly the same results as face-to-face meetings, the advantage has been that these sessions were planned regularly, throughout the duration of the programme, and were not dependent on location and travelling requirements.

Moreover, the quite short duration of the programme, 15 months, and running in parallel with the other DtZ programmes, creates challenges in itself. Activities had to be developed, prepared and implemented very rapidly – and sometimes at the cost of in-depth reflection and the application of possible improvements as the programme progressed. At the same time, other activities had to be implemented in the same countries for other DtZ programmes, which did not allow for overlaps. This increased the workload for the country teams and could limit the sustainability of the programme.

## Chapter 6: DtZ partnership

The VfC programme benefited from the strength of the DtZ partnership already established, and could follow the same structure and processes as under DtZ 1.0, albeit with fewer country teams and implementing partners. It could build on existing relationships, expertise and experience, as well as the networks of implementing partners and alliance members, which facilitated communication and collaboration within the programme in general. Many processes could also be followed according to the models set up under DtZ 1.0, albeit in a slightly altered form to adjust to both a shorter overall timeline and the changing context within which VfC has been implemented. This helped ensure smooth implementation of activities and accompanying tasks (planning, budgeting, reporting etc.), as most of the actors were already familiar with the processes.

Similarly, the DtZ Alliance could build on its relationship with the MoFA, as a positive and constructive relationship had already been established in the course of DtZ 1.0. Open and transparent communication continued at the Netherlands level, which has been highly valued by the DtZ Alliance to move forward with the programme.

As part of the partnership between the DtZ Alliance and the MoFA, the VfC programme links up with the MoFA's SHRH framework as described in the table below.

### Result 1: Better information and greater freedom of choice for young people (10–24 years old) about their sexuality

	MoFA objectives	VfC ToC outcomes	Outputs 2020–2021
A	Promote active and meaningful involvement of young people in policy- and decision-making	Children are empowered to speak up and play an active role in their own protection and that of their peers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>51 lobbying and advocacy activities by youth and children to positively influence the CPS</li> </ul>
C	Boost access to and use of youth-friendly SRHR and HIV/AIDS services	Children (in particular child victims) access specialised services that protect them, help them rehabilitate, reintegrate and reduce their vulnerability to SEC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>730 boy SEC victims receiving specialised services (e.g. shelter, health services, educational services, legal aid)</li> <li>906 girl SEC victims receiving specialised services (e.g. shelter, health services, educational services, legal aid)</li> </ul>
D	Prevent and halt all forms of harmful practices against children and adolescents, including child marriage and female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C)	All VfC outcomes contribute to this objective because it is in line with the VfC final impact (prevention of and response to SEC)	

**Result 4: More respect for the sexual and reproductive rights of groups who are currently denied these rights**

	MoFA objectives	DtZ ToC outcomes	Outputs
A	Strengthen and promote the use of global and (inter)national human rights frameworks for SRHR and HIV/AIDS	Capacity-building of governments, LEAs and CSOs for transformation of CPS generates change and secures avenues for advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o <b>3,006</b> CPS personnel (e.g. government officials, police officers, social workers) trained on SEC</li> <li>o <b>31</b> CSOs using child-centred action research for lobbying and advocacy</li> <li>o <b>73</b> CSOs supported in creating lobbying and advocacy plans for implementation</li> </ul>
B	Improve the enabling environment for SRHR for all	Child victims and children at risk of SEC with an interest in contributing to lobbying and advocacy are networked together for peer-to-peer learning and to create a more powerful voice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o <b>287</b> children and youth (males) trained to advocate for child rights and protect against SEC</li> <li>o <b>516</b> children and youth (males) trained to raise issues of SEC among their peers</li> <li>o <b>444</b> children and youth (females) trained to advocate for child rights and protect against SEC</li> <li>o <b>509</b> children and youth (females) trained to raise issues of SEC among their peers</li> </ul>
		Advocacy skills of children and youth networks are strengthened to enable them to advocate for a child- and gender-sensitive protection system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o <b>373</b> child and youth networks supported by the programme</li> <li>o <b>621</b> children and youth (females) joined established networks</li> <li>o <b>413</b> children and youth (males) joined established networks</li> <li>o <b>78</b> action plans/advocacy strategies developed by child and youth advocacy networks</li> </ul>
D	Help to end violence and discrimination against key populations, women and girls in relation to SRHR	Child victims and children at risk of SEC engaged in lobbying and advocacy to transform CPS in their country	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o <b>51</b> lobbying and advocacy activities by youth and children to positively influence the CPS</li> </ul>

	MoFA objectives	DtZ ToC outcomes	Outputs
E	Strengthen communities and advocacy networks to promote SRHR for key populations*	Supportive lobbying and advocacy by the alliance and its implementing partners to transform CPS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o <b>232</b> lobbying and advocacy activities conducted by alliance members and their implementing partners</li> </ul>
Child victims and children at risk of SEC engaged in lobbying and advocacy to transform CPS in their country		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o <b>31</b> of pieces of child-centred action research developed</li> </ul>	
Child-centred action research developed to inform lobbying and advocacy on SEC		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o <b>35</b> pieces of child-centred action research used for lobbying and advocacy activities</li> </ul>	

\*Note: The MoFA's SRHR results framework does not provide a definition of 'key populations'. The VfC programme also considers SEC victims and children who are vulnerable to SEC as key populations, so that is how the DtZ Alliance contributes to Objective 4E.

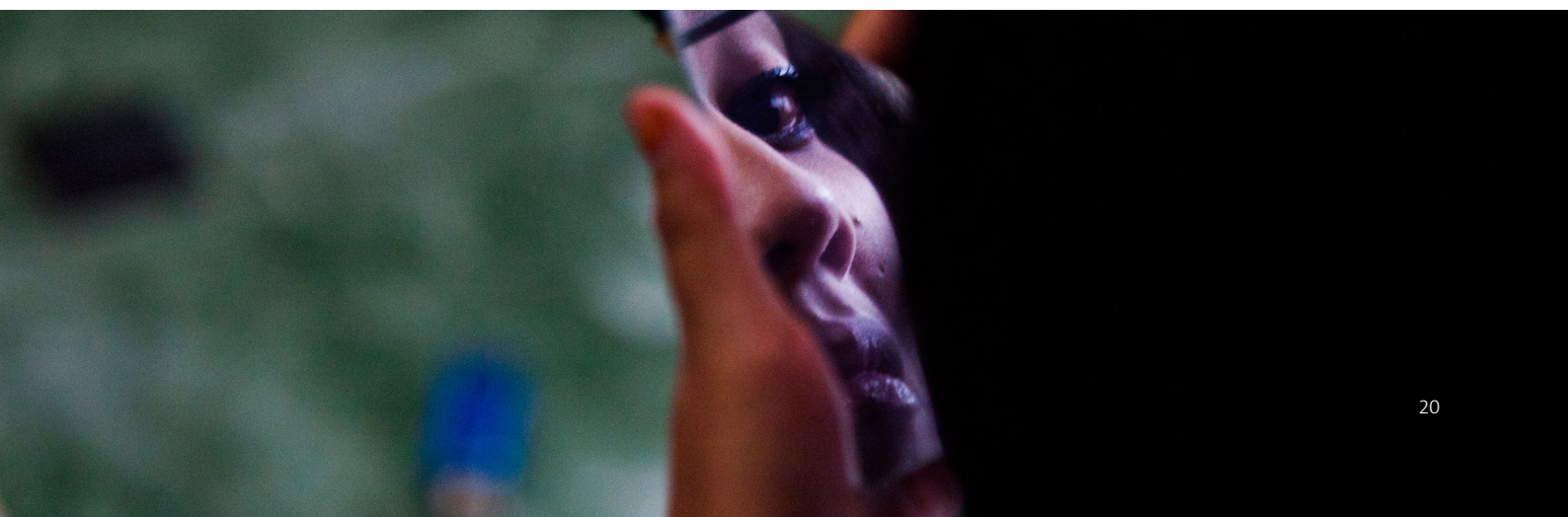
## Chapter 7: Communication

Since the main goal of VfC is to amplify voices, communication has been a central and integral part of the programme. A wide range of communication materials have been produced, varying in respect to both the media channel and the form of the product. This includes articles published in the Dutch media about the VfC programme – such as [this article](#) in AD magazine – various videos such as the one about the [YVfC project](#), and the stories about the programme's experiences from the Dominican Republic and Thailand published on the websites of alliance members. Moreover, as part of the YVfC project, youth leaders themselves have produced various communication materials.

Further to the DtZ 1.0 programme, an online version of the end-term evaluation report has been produced to present the results of the evaluation and the lessons learned from the five-year programme and ensure that they are followed up in the DtZ Alliance's different programmes. An overview of all the communication materials can be found in Annex 3.

## Chapter 8: Financial report

The budget for the VfC programme is €2 million. The budget consists of country budgets and a shared alliance budget for alliance management, PME and learning and communication. The total expenditure is €2.031,383, which is 102% of the total budget. This slight over expenditure is mainly due to exchange rate profit and small own contribution by the alliance members. Due to Covid-19 measures the budget had to be adjusted, resulting in adjusted budget lines and less expenditure for some result areas, for example result area 1.3: Influencing skills of children and youth networks strengthened, to enable them to advocate for a child- and gender-sensitive protection system. See for more information on the financial report, [Annex 2](#).



# Conclusions

During the 15 months of implementing the VfC programme, the alliance members and implementing partners faced many challenges in all countries, related to the global Covid-19 pandemic, local political and/or environmental changes and initial contracting delays. Nevertheless, they demonstrated a strong sense of adaptability and innovation by adjusting the programme's activities and achieving considerable progress in amplifying the voice of children and youth and placing them at the centre of efforts to enhance child- and gender-sensitive prevention of and response to SEC and strengthen CPS.

All countries have worked extensively with children and youth by providing training and support to increase their knowledge on SRHR and SEC and strengthen their advocacy skills. They built their technical and practical advocacy skills by producing influential advocacy and communications materials enabling them to promote a world free from SEC. The VfC programme enabled children and youth to connect and engage with each other through different networks. These networks play an important role in allowing children and youth to learn from each other, connect with others and spread awareness of issues related to SEC.

The voice of children and youth has also been at the heart of the alliance members' other activities – for example, in the research that was conducted in Indonesia, Thailand and the Philippines. The research in Indonesia has been used to lobby national stakeholders such as different ministries, which are now taking into account the results presented by the children and youth in their analysis. The research in Thailand has been used to build the capacities of police units, social workers, CSOs and psychologists to prevent and respond to SEC, while the research in the Philippines was used to build a digital application which offers a safe space for children and youth to communicate with each other, exchange information and advocate on issues related to SEC.

Further capacity-building was centred on other LEAs and professionals that work with child victims and children at risk of SEC, with the focus on further strengthening CPS. This training had an explicit child victim-centred approach, enabling professionals to act in the best interests of child victims and to focus on their needs. While VfC activities focused on making the CPS more child-sensitive, it also made them more gender-sensitive. All alliance members and implementing partners followed training on gender-transformative programming and have started to integrate this into their (future) programming. For instance, in the Philippines, girl advocates have played an important role in the development of the app, challenging the stereotypes of technology being a male-dominated activity. In Colombia, the topic of non-heteronormative sexual orientation and gender identities has been incorporated into training, and these topics have been addressed when approaching families and communities.

The capacities developed, skills learned and empowerment of children and young people ensure sustainability of the programme. Many activities focused on youth empowerment and advocacy, and strengthening the CPS will continue under BBB. Activities such as the YVfC pilot project will also continue, and will even be scaled up to include more countries and more youth leaders.

Under the VfC programme, important progress has been made in empowering children and youth and ensuring that their voices are heard so that they can play an active role in protecting themselves and their peers against SEC.

The alliance members and implementing partners are of the opinion that work on reducing SEC needs to continue under and beyond the BBB programme, especially in light of the Covid-19 pandemic, which has put, and continues to put, pressure on the CPS and increases opportunities for people to sexually exploit children and young people globally. It, therefore, remains extremely important to continue to act against SEC.

# Annex 1: Results Framework

DOWN TO ZERO ALLIANCE VOICE FOR CHANGE: COUNTRY RESULTS FRAMEWORK					
CONSOLIDATION of Down to Zero Voice for Change final report 2021					
Contributes to Result Area 1 and 4 of the SRHR Policy of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs: Young People and Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights					
Impact: Ensure the Voice of children and youth are amplified so that they are central to enhancing child- and gender-sensitive prevention and response to CSEC by Child Protection Systems					
Target Group: Child victims and children at risk of commercial sexual exploitation (SEC)					
Indicators: e.g. knowledge about child rights, knowledge about reporting systems, child and youth networks engaged					
Outcomes by 2021	Output Indicators	March 2020 to June 2021		Percentage reported	Explanation of variances bigger than 25%
		Target (plan)	Realised (report)	Report	
Child victims and children at risk are empowered, act as agents of change and are able to protect themselves from (re) victimisation of CSEC	Number of children and youths (females) trained to advocate for child rights and protect against SEC	400	444	111.0%	
	Number of children and youths (males) trained to advocate for child rights and protect against SEC	308	287	93.2%	
	Number of children and youth (males) trained to raise issues of SEC among their peers	345	516	149.6%	In Colombia, initially Plan did not have this indicator, but through the training of young people using the Champions for Change methodology, adolescents and young people were prepared to address the issues of prevention of sexual exploitation among their peers, as well as advocate for the right to child protection. In India and Nepal there was a huge increase because the activity was done online, due to Covid-19. Therefore, more children could join in as schools were closed, which was an 'advantage' as children wanted to take part in activities. In Indonesia, some children's and youth groups had been established under Down to Zero 1.0, such as in Batam, Jakarta, and Lombok. They remained interested in the VfC activities. This was similar for India, where they found more boys and girls that were willing to become advocates than expected.
	Number of children and youth (females) trained to raise issues of SEC among their peers	425	509	119.8%	

Outcomes by 2021	Output Indicators	March 2020 to June 2021		Percentage reported	Explanation of variances bigger than 25%
		Target (plan)	Realised (report)	Report	
Child victims and children at risk are empowered, act as agents of change and are able to protect themselves from (re) victimisation of CSEC	Number of child and youth networks supported by programme	178	373	209.6%	In Thailand, it was agreed that the activities carried out under the indicators # <i>Number of girls/boys who joined established networks</i> would better fit under the indicator # <i>Number of child and youth networks supported by the programme</i> . The pandemic indeed made it difficult to have children joining new/ established networks.
	Number of children and youths (females) who joined established networks	308	621	201.6%	In Dominican Republic there was huge response from females to participate in activities. In Thailand the training strategy was developed in cooperation with public institutions that had access to educational institutions where the number of girls and adolescents is higher, so in each training session, more girls and female adolescents participated.
	Number of children and youths (males) who joined established networks	277	413	149.1%	In India and Nepal, more boys and girls participated in the activities hence the higher number. In Indonesia, every child and youth who participated in VfC project activities joined a new/established network.
	Number of action plans / advocacy strategies developed by children and youth advocacy networks	39	78	200.0%	Highest increase was observed in Dominican Republic, they had planned for three provincial networks. However, these consisted of 8 local (community) youth networks and each group prepared an action plan.
Child protection systems strengthened in 5 countries through lobby & advocacy and capacity building	Number of child-centred action researches developed	23	31	134.8%	There are 4 additional child rights situation analysis (CRSAs) from Jakarta because the VfC team from KOMPAK Jakarta carried out CRSAs from 5 locations. Then, in Lombok, the children's and youth group expanded the research to district level, including CRSAs done at community or village level.
	Number of child-centred action research used for lobby and advocacy activities	36	35	97.2%	
	Number of CSOs using child-centred action research for lobby and advocacy	21	31	147.6%	In Thailand, the number of CSOs interested in using the toolkit and board games developed by the Alliance partners was higher than expected; since the workshops/trainings to present the tool were done online due to Covid-19.

Outcomes by 2021	Output Indicators	March 2020 to June 2021		Percentage reported	Explanation of variances bigger than 25%
		Target (plan)	Realised (report)	Report	
Child protection systems strengthened in 5 countries through lobby & advocacy and capacity building	Number of child protection system personnel (e.g government officials, police officers, social workers) trained on SEC	3480	3006	86.4%	
	Number of boy SEC victims receiving specialised services (e.g. shelter, health services, educational services, legal aid)	718	730	101.7%	
	Number of girl SEC victims receiving specialised services (e.g. shelter, health services, educational services, legal aid)	950	906	95.4%	
	Number of lobby and advocacy activities by youth and children to positively influence the child protection system	84	51	60.7%	In Indonesia, due to the Covid-19 pandemic. In Lombok and Jakarta, lobby and advocacy activities were conducted more online and less offline.
	Number of CSOs supported in creating lobby & advocacy plans for implementation	30	73	243.3%	In India and Nepal, they were able to include more NGOs than planned in the programme's activities such as cross border meetings, awareness raising sessions and national day celebrations. There were some lobby and advocacy activities that were jointly conducted by NGO networks in some districts which led to a higher participation from CSOs.
	Number of lobby and advocacy activities conducted by Alliance members and their partners	227	232	102.2%	



# Annex 2: Financial report

Annex 2. Voice for Change Financial overview		Reporting Period 01 March 2020 to 30 June 2021							Reported prepared on 16/09/2021	
Voice for change: eliminating sexual exploitation of children (CSEC)	Budget in EUR	Colombia	Dominican Republic	Indonesia	India/Nepal	Thailand	Cross Country	Total EXP in EUR	Variance	Comments
<b>Approved Budget per country</b>		263,668	173,130	281,112	380,753	264,104	337,560	1,700,327		
Intervention level										
Goal: The Voice of children & youth are amplified so that they are central to enhancing child- & gender-sensitive prevention and response to CSEC by Child Protection Systems										
<b>Outcome 1: Child victims and children at risk of CSEC are empowered to speak out and play an active role in their own</b>	347,217	62,870	60,824	47,754	125,087	25,361	0	321,896	93%	
<b>Results</b>										
<b>Result 1.1:</b> Child victims and children at risk of CSEC with interest to contribute to lobby & advocacy are mobilised	68,606	34,844	26,565	5,011	15,088	4,908	0	86,416	126%	More children and youth have been trained to advocate for their rights, fight SEC and raise these issues among their peers than planned.
<b>Result 1.2:</b> Child victims and children at risk of CSEC with interest to contribute to lobby & advocacy are networked together for peer learning and more powerful voice	160,982	5,778	26,539	3,370	102,841	4,800	0	143,328	89%	Activities have been moved online due to the Covid-19 context requiring less costs than physical activities. Some physical activities could not be performed due to emergency health restrictions
<b>Result 1.3:</b> Influencing skills of children and youth networks strengthened, to enable them to advocate for a child- and gender-sensitive protection system	117,629	22,248	7,720	39,373	7,158	15,653	0	92,152	78%	Activities have been moved online due to the Covid-19 context requiring less costs than physical. Some physical activities could not be performed due to emergency health restrictions
<b>Outcome 2: Child protection systems improved in 5 countries through lobby &amp; advocacy and capacity building</b>	966,892	142,302	38,967	156,596	294,387	185,814	145,510	963,576	100%	
<b>Results</b>										
<b>Result 2.1:</b> Child-centred action-research developed to inform lobby & advocacy on CSEC	57,276	42,288	0	19,823	0	7,608	0	69,719	122%	The approved budget for this activity was only 57K and it was under budgeted. We had more activities for this result than initially planned
<b>Result 2.2:</b> Capacity-building of Governments and LEA for transformation of Child Protection Systems generates changes and secures avenues for influencing	614,157	32,958	38,967	80,782	204,499	126,250	145,510	628,966	102%	
<b>Result 2.3:</b> Child victims and children at risk of CSEC engaged in lobby & advocacy to transform Child Protection Systems in their country	143,743	29,096	0	34,310	58,485	4,529	0	126,420	88%	Activities have been moved online due to the Covid-19 context requiring less costs than physical. Some physical activities could not be performed due to emergency health
<b>Result 2.4:</b> Supportive lobby & advocacy by the Alliance and its partners to transform Child Protection Systems	151,716	37,960	0	21,681	31,403	47,427	0	138,471	91%	
<b>Other Direct &amp; Indirect Project costs</b>	490,891	86,058	90,489	92,945	93,824	89,397	98,037	550,750	112%	
Other Direct Project Costs	229,940	29,945	48,024	44,930	45,084	31,155	78,682	277,820	121%	
Administration & Other Operational Costs	130,110	29,945	21,484	23,637	21,701	31,201	14,121	142,089	109%	
Overhead of all Alliance members (7%)	130,841	26,168	20,981	24,378	27,039	27,041	5,234	130,841	100%	
<b>Total Expenses per country</b>	1,805,000	291,230	190,280	297,295	513,298	300,572	243,547	1,836,222	102%	
Variance actual expenditure versus approved budget		110%	110%	106%	135%	114%	72%	108%		
<b>Alliance Shared costs</b>	195,000	32,527	32,527	32,527	32,527	32,527	32,526	195,161	100%	
Alliance Management	85,000	14,167	14,167	14,167	14,167	14,167	14,166	85,000	100%	
PME & Learning	80,000	13,245	13,245	13,245	13,245	13,245	13,245	79,470	99%	
Communication	30,000	5,115	5,115	5,115	5,115	5,115	5,115	30,690	102%	
<b>Grand Total Budget &amp; Expenditure</b>	2,000,000	323,757	222,807	329,822	545,825	333,099	276,073	2,031,383	102%	The over expenditure is due to exchange rate gains and own contribution by the alliance members.

## Annex 3: Overview of DtZ products and visibility

- o AD magazine: **Een stem tegen seksuele uitbuiting** [A voice against sexual exploitation], March 2021
- o AD magazine: **Meisjes uit Venezuela extra kwetsbaar voor seksuele uitbuiting in Colombia** [Girls from Venezuela extra vulnerable to sexual exploitation in Colombia], June 2021
- o **Storytelling from the Dominican Republic**
- o Storytelling from Thailand: check the story of health professionals [here](#) and [here](#), of LEAs [here](#) and of different youth [here](#).
- o Regional video about the YVfC project: **Video YVfC**
- o **YVfC learning platform**, which includes the communication materials developed by the youth leaders. A short presentation of the youth leaders and their communication material can be found [here](#).
- o Online Tool for the End Term Evaluation of Down To Zero 1.0: **Online Tool ETE**
- o The VfC app from the Philippines can be found [here](#) (on the Google Play store) and [here](#) (in the browser), and an explanatory video can be found [here](#)
- o **Stories Behind the Numbers**: Voices Behind the Fight Against Sexual Exploitation

# Annex 4: YVfC end evaluation

See document attached 'Evaluation Report Youth Voices for Change'.

