Take Us Seriously: The Lack of Meaningful Child Participation in the Design Process of Child Friendly Integrated Public Spaces in Jakarta (RPTRA)

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Disclaimer:

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List of Acronyms

CCPA	Child-Centered Participatory Approach
RPTRA	Jakarta Child Friendly Integrated Public Space Initiatives
CRBA	Child Rights-Based Approach
CFC	Child-Friendly City
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CRPD	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
SSI	Semi-Structured Interview
DPPAPP	Jakarta's Office of Empowerment Child Protection and Population Control
WVI	World Vision Indonesia
FA	Jakarta's Child Forum
ECD	Early Childhood Education
CIBESUT	Cipinang Besar Utara

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Abstract

The primary objective of this research is to investigate the lack of an enabling environment for meaningful child participation in the design process of the Jakarta Child Friendly Integrated Public Space Initiatives (RPTRA). I employed a Child-Centered Participatory Approach (CCPA) involving 19 children (from RPTRA Jaka Teratai, RPTRA Cipinang Besar Utara, and RPTRA Anggerek) as well as 20 adults who worked with these children in the RPTRA design process. The research findings confirm that the lack of an enabling environment for meaningful child participation in the RPTRA design process was triggered by a lack of understanding of child participation among both the children and adults involved. This manifested in various issues including: discrimination in child recruitment; failure to enable equal participation for children from marginalised groups such as children with disabilities; and adult-dominated decision-making causing manipulation of the process and tokenistic child participation.

To address the failure to realize meaningful child participation in this kind of RPTRA activities, I argue for the child rights duty bearers involved in RPTRA to develop a comprehensive policy aimed at creating an enabling environment for meaningful child participation. This policy should revolve around five holistic elements: raising the awareness of children and adults about children's rights using creative campaigns as well as capacity building; utilising non-discrimination values; providing a monitoring and evaluation system for children; employing a task-based method that is friendly and fun for children; and developing a collaborative decision-making approach between adults and children.

Relevance to Development Studies

Like in other parts of the world, in Indonesia children are often not able to activate to the fullest the child right to participation stipulated in various legal instruments. Manipulation, tokenistic approaches and a strong urge to control among adults are some of the explanatory factors. This study zooms into the right to child participation in Child-Friendly City (CFC) interventions in Jakarta, Indonesia.

The child right to participate in decision-making, interventions, as well as policies that affect their lives is of primary importance for development studies. The virtually universally ratified Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) emphasizes participation as a right of all children and as brining obligations to duty-bearers. Both the CRC and the Sustainable Development Goals squarely place children at the centre of global and national development agendas and efforts. Thus, CFC interventions, are eminently supposed to integrate children's views and interests into their activities.

Keywords

Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), Child Rights-Based Approach (CRBA), Child-Centred Participatory Approach (CCPA), Meaningful Child Participation, Child-Friendly Public Spaces, RPTRA Jakarta, Indonesia

Chapter 1 The Lack of Meaningful Child Participation in the Design Process of RPTRA: Introducing the Research

1.1 Child-Friendly City (CFC) Initiatives in Jakarta: RPTRA

A Child-Friendly City (CFC) is a town, city or local system of governance that aims at realising the rights of children as citizens who have the right to articulate needs, concerns and expectations in relation to interventions, policies, and decisions that affect their lives (Wilks 2010:27; Malone 2015:412). The main focus of CFC initiatives is to improve the quality of life for every citizen by providing a safe and clean environment in which children in particular can develop and enjoy themselves (Adams et al. 2019:556; UNICEF 2019).

In 2011, Indonesia's Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection published Regulation No. 11, which instructed all provinces and cities in Indonesia to design and build Child-Friendly Cities where various child development programs could be implemented (Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection, Government of Indonesia 2011). Under Governor Regulation No. 196 (Jakarta Governor Regulation, Government of Indonesia 2015), in 2015 Jakarta's governor launched the CFC program 'Jakarta Child Integrated Public Spaces' (RPTRA).This program seeks to provide child-friendly public spaces for children (0-18 years old) in order to make Jakarta into a more child-friendly city (Jakarta Governor Regulation, Government of Indonesia 2015).

RPTRA focuses mainly on early childhood education (ECD), integrated healthcare centres, children's libraries, sports stations, playgrounds, and creative activities for children (Jakarta Governor Regulation, Government of Indonesia 2015).

The Jakarta government in 2015, launched six pilot RPTRA projects (RPTRA Cideng, RPTRA Cililitan, RPTRA Pulau Untung Jawa, RPTRA Sungai Bambu, RPTRA Gandaria Selatan, and RPTRA Kembangan Utara), and by the end of 2018 there were 290 RPTRAs (Permanasari et al. 2018,2019).

In 2017, World Vision Indonesia (WVI), a child focused Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) in Jakarta decided to support the mission of the Jakarta government to build RPTRA (World Vision Indonesia 2017:2). In the same year, along with their corporate donors, WVI built RPTRA Jaka Teratai.

Essentially, RPTRA requires meaningful child participation. Meaningful child participation is generally defined as the child's right to: participate and freely articulate views and interests during the interventions; be consulted and listened to; as well as influence decision-making processes that affect their lives (Bartlett 2005:38; Lund 2007:136). This is also reflected in Article 8 of Policy No. 11 issued in 2011 by the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection, requiring duty bearers to use their best efforts to invite, ensure, and encourage children from all backgrounds (for example including children with disabilities) to articulate their opinions about interventions that affect their lives, and to assure that the final decisions are in line with the children's interests (Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection, Government of Indonesia 2011). The Convention on the Right of the Child (CRC), ratified by Indonesia in 1990, in article 12 also stipulates that children have the right to have their voice heard, and to be consulted (in accordance with their age, maturity and capacities) in all matters affecting them (Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989: Art. 12).

There is no doubt that the CFC regulations as well as the CRC require meaningful child participation. Various studies on children's rights revealed that genuine, meaningful child participation undoubtedly improves the quality of the interventions, which then meets children's needs and interests (Carroll et al. 2017:275).

However, relevant studies and reports on the practices applied in the RPTRA design process of respectively six RPTRA pilot projects led by Jakarta's government in 2015, as well as one (RPTRA Jaka Teratai) conducted by WVI in 2017, revealed that children had only one explicit opportunity to express their ideas and were excluded from the final decision-making (World Vision Indonesia 2017:6; Permanasari et al. 2018:186). The reason for focusing on the RPTRA design process is that this was the most tangible phase of involving children. However, in the next section, I present various studies and documents that report a lack of meaningful child participation in the RPTRA design process.

1.2 Lack of Meaningful Child Participation in the Design Process of RPTRA: The Research Problem

As stated earlier, in CFC initiatives the voices of children from diverse backgrounds are supposed to be vital in the planning, design, and implementation phases (Carroll et al. 2017:277; Couzens 2011:157). However, the material available to me at the start of my study suggested that, in actual practice, the RPTRA design was mainly developed by the government of

Jakarta together with WVI, developers and corporate donors such as Hanwha Life Korea, and PT Jaya Konstruksi Manggala Pratama Tbk (World Vision Indonesia 2017:2; Permanasari et al. 2018:18). Community involvement and children's participation in the RPTRA planning and design process seemed to have been rather limited and mostly dominated by adults (Permanasari et al. 2018:185; Rahmaningtyas and Rahayu 2019:4).

Before conducting this research, I engaged and worked with children from diverse backgrounds in Indonesia for twelve years. I did so as a Sunday school teacher, as a volunteer teaching children in remote areas in Papua, and as an employee who worked for WVI that handles RPTRA work.[1] From these experiences, I witnessed the overbearing control of adults over children's actions, as well as decisions that affect children's lives made by parents and caregivers (e.g. teachers, community leaders, NGOs leaders).

My impression that in reality there was little meaningful child participation in the design process of RPTRA was strengthened by various reported features of the one meeting in which children participated (World Vision Indonesia 2017; Permanasari et al. 2018, 2019; Prakoso and Dewi 2018; Rahmaningtyas and Rahayu 2019; Faedlulloh et al. 2017). First, no explanation seemed to be available of the criteria applied when selecting the child participants. The profiles of the children that were involved in the RPTRA design process were not available either. Thus, there was no information on whether children belonging to marginalised groups, such as children with disabilities, were involved. Second, there was no data revealing whether children understood their right to participate in the RPTRA design process. Fourth, no information was available on how the Jakarta government and WVI, the designers of RPTRA, perceived and treated children's voices in the RPTRA's design process. Hence, it remained unclear to what extent the final decisions in the RPTRA design process were based on children's voices.

Hence, the lack of meaningful child participation in the RPTRA design process clearly is a problem. Firstly, it is not compliant with relevant legal instruments on children's rights. Secondly, it limits the opportunities for children to be aware of, enjoy and exercise their rights as an act of citizenship. Thirdly, it stops children from developing their competence and confidence to provide views, and interests in the decision-making processes that

1 My positionality and the implications of conducting this research based on my existing networks, including WVI, will be discussed in Chapter 3 (Methodology).

affect their lives. Equally importantly, this may lead to poor quality interventions, which do not meet the interests of children and, ultimately, those of the communities they live in.

1.3 Research Goals and Scope

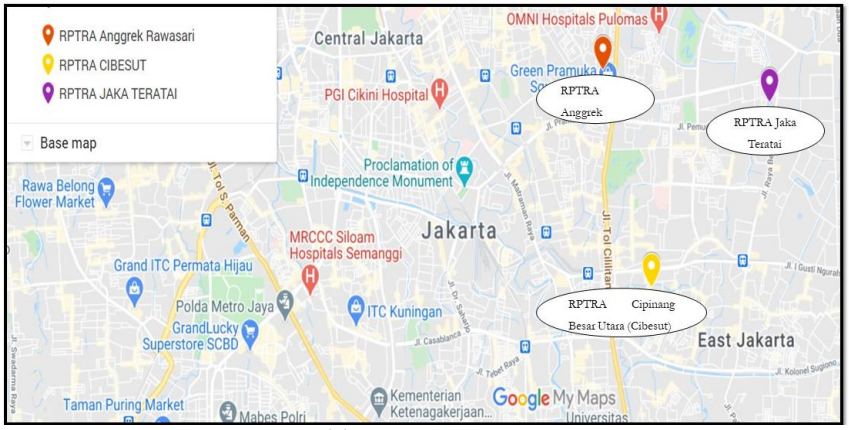
In the Kids Rights Index 2020, Indonesia ranked 110 out of the 182 countries that were assessed on their efforts to fulfil children's rights (Kids Rights Index 2020). The specific scores reveal concern on the side of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child about the implementation of child participation in Indonesia. This data underlines that the Indonesian government's record in fulfilling the children's rights to participation in interventions that affect their lives is still limited. This seems to be reflected in my research topic too.

Additionally, the number of academic studies on children's rights in Indonesia is limited. The specific studies on RPTRA that I found did not elaborate much on the child right to participation in CFC interventions at all. They mainly explored the process of developing RPTRA, and the facilities that were built for children.

Therefore, my research sought to establish whether the above-presented impressions about the lack of meaningful child participation in the design process of RPTRA is correct, and how actors involved perceived this process. In addition, I was interested in generating ideas on how the required enabling environment for meaningful child participation in RPTRA activities could be (further) strengthened in the future.

I was especially keen on bringing out the children's perspectives, since thus far that was done too little. Through listening to some of the children involved, I gathered valuable information and insights on how they perceived their right to participate, and how adults treated their voices in the RPTRA design process. Likewise, I wanted to understand the adults' perspectives (in this case extending to RPTRA administrators, staff of Jakarta's government, WVI, and several child-focused NGOs in Jakarta) and to get grip on how these adults perceived and treated the children's voices in the RPTRA design process.

I researched three RPTRAs located in densely populated areas in East and Central Jakarta: RPTRA Jaka Teratai in Pulu Gadung, RPTRA Cipinang Besar Utara (Cibesut) in Cipinang, and RPTRA Anggrek in Cempaka Putih. Through the kind assistance of WVI I could conduct online platform discussions despite the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The three RPTRAs were selected on the basis of recommendations by WVI and, more importantly, on the basis of the fact that children in these areas were involved in at least one meeting in the RPTRA design process.



MAP of RPTRA (Source: Google Maps)

Eventually, the main goals of my research are to further document the extent to which children participated meaningfully in the RPTRA design process, and to analyze the results and explanatory factors from both the perspective of children and adults involved in the process. Additionally, I explored to what extent there was an environment that enabled child participation in the RPTRA design process, and how that environment might be (further) strengthened in the future.

1.4 Research Questions

My main research questions are the following:

1) Did meaningful child participation take place in the RPTRA design process?

2) How did relevant actors perceive child participation in the RPTRA design process?

3) How might the required enabling environment for meaningful child participation in RPTRA activities be (further) strengthened in the future?

These require answers to the following sub-questions:

1. How did children participate in the RPTRA design process?
2. What were the results of their participation?
3. How did children perceive their rights to participate in the RPTRA design process?
4. How were adults involved in enabling child participation in the RPTRA design process?
5. How did representatives of the Jakarta Government perceive and treat children's voices in the design process of RPTRA?

6. How did WVI, Plan International Indonesia, Jakarta's Child Forum (FA), ChildFund International Indonesia, and UNICEF Indonesia staff perceive and treat children's voices in the design process of RPTRA?
7. Which strengths and weaknesses manifested, in terms of the enabling environment required for meaningful child participation in RPTRA's design process?

1.5 Structure of this Paper

This Research Paper is divided into five chapters. In chapter one I introduced the research problem. I also explained the reasons for undertaking this research, and presented my research objectives and questions.

Chapter two contains the theoretical framework used for analyzing child participation in the RPTRA design process. At the most generic level, my research was inspired by a Child Rights-Based Approach (CRBA). The meaning of the notions of 'meaningful participation' and 'enabling environment' for meaningful participation are also elaborated in chapter two.

In chapter three, I present my methodology: a Child-Centred Participatory Approach (CCPA). This approach encourages researchers to empower children through their research. Children's capability to be involved in, and to contribute to, research is based on their evolving capacity. Chapter three also reveals how I conducted online research (using Zoom) across countries (Indonesia and The Netherlands), with 19 children and 20 adults. I employed (all fully online) the following task-based methods: Photovoice, Drawing, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), and Semi-Structured Interviews (SSIs). Chapter three will also present ethical considerations and reflective remarks on the opportunities and challenges of doing research with children during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In chapter four, I present my online fieldwork findings on meaningful child participation in the RPTRA design process and on the enabling environment to stimulate and facilitate participation, according to children and adults' experiences, perceptions and views. I substantiate that there was discrimination in child recruitment, that both the children and adults involved lacked understanding of child participation, that children had no opportunity to monitor their voice and interests, that the decisions were dominated and controlled by adults, that duty bearers failed to meet their obligation to give equal participation rights to children from marginalised groups such as children with disabilities, and that children were

excluded from the final decision-making of the RPTRA design process. All in all, this led me to qualifying this participation process as tokenistic rather than meaningful.

Chapter five contains the conclusions of my study. These will pave the way for clarifying how the required enabling environment for meaningful child participation in RPTRA activities could be (further) strengthened in the future, rooted in the ideas and interests of both children and adults. In this regard, I will recommend children's rights duty bearers involved in RPTRA to develop a comprehensive policy revolving around five holistic elements to create an enabling environment for meaningful child participation in CFC initiatives.

Chapter 2 Theoretical Framework: A Child Rights-Based Approach to Child-Friendly City Initiatives

2.1 Introduction

Child participation is a key element of any Child Rights-Based Approach (CRBA). However, in many interventions that affect children's lives all over the world, child participation remains problematic and challenging. Studies revealed that both adults and children have a serious lack of knowledge in this area. Often children do not live in an environment that allows them to fully participate in interventions that affect their lives, and to freely articulate their ideas about such interventions.

Hence, it is crucial for my research to build a theoretical framework that elaborates a CRBA to Child-Friendly City (CFC) initiatives such as RPTRA. This encompasses elaborating the content of the notion of 'meaningful participation'. In addition, theoretical insights on how to build an enabling environment to trigger meaningful participation need to be mobilized. The resulting framework will be used for analyzing my fieldwork data (as presented in chapter four).

This chapter contains three sections. First, I explore some features of the CFC. Second, I elaborate on the principles of a CRBA, which stipulates and promotes meaningful child participation. Third, I develop key features to build an enabling environment for child participation.

2.2 Child-Friendly Cities (CFCs)

A CFC is an initiative aimed at fulfilling the rights of children as citizens to freely express their views about the interventions, policies, and decisions that affect their lives, to bring positive transformation within their communities (Adams et al. 2019:548; Wilks 2010:27). This requires local governments and authorities to build partnerships to promote and protect the rights of children and ensure that children are at the centre of the development agenda (Malone 2015:412).

CFC initiatives normally stipulate a CRBA to assure that children (regardless of for instance their gender, age, religion, disability, ethnicity, race, social or economic status) can fully participate and freely articulate their ideas and interests throughout the entire process of the initiatives (Save the Children 2005:46). Children from diverse backgrounds are seen

and treated as primary actors for gathering and providing information on the objectives and quality of the program in terms of meeting children's needs and interests (Carroll et al. 2017:275). In the end, they would be expected to influence the final design of the CFC initiatives involved (Lundy 2007:934).

I employed this framework to analyse the extent to which the duty bearers of RPTRA have seen children's voice as a main resource in the RPTRA design process. Subsequently, I used a CRBA to extend my analysis.

2.3 Child Rights-Based Approach (CRBA)

CRBA aims to improve the position of children in society by acknowledging and respecting children's rights, including the right to express ideas and interests in the planning, implementation and monitoring of interventions, decisions, policies or programs that affect their lives (Save the Children 2005:25). I will apply a CRBA to investigate how children and adults who participated in the RPTRA design process understood and treated the child's right to participate.

CRBA has three crucial elements, rooted in the general principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) to which Indonesia is a state party: participation, best interests of the child, and non-discrimination (Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989: Arts. 12, 3 and 2). In my study, these three elements come together in the notion "meaningful child participation", which I will discuss in more detail in section 2.3.1. While in section 2.3.2, I utilised these principles as the basis for developing the methods required to enable an environment for meaningful child participation.

2.3.1 Meaningful Child Participation

Meaningful child participation can be defined as providing children who are capable of forming their views the opportunity to freely express their views, concerns and interests, and to be involve significantly in decision-making that affects their lives (Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989: Art.12; Lundy 2007:934). In this regard, children's perceptions and interests are acknowledged to influence adults' decisions towards the issues that related to children lives (Bartlett 2005:32; West 2007:130). This means children's views are taken seriously and incorporated in the negotiation of the decision-making process (Hart and UNICEF 1996:44). Indeed, this entails commitment, assistance, and care, by adults to prevent for

example that children's voices will be misled or scripted by adult agendas (Carroll et al. 2017:276).

However, relevant studies on children's rights revealed that adults will only accept children's voice in decision-making processes that affect children's lives if the need to do so is conveyed in the right context, and if doing so corresponds with the collective values held among adults in the particular society involved (James 2007:267; Twum-Danso Imoh and Okyere 2020:6). Hence, child participation in decision-making and interventions that affect their lives often remain strongly influenced, represented, and dictated by adults (Twum-Danso Imoh and Okyere 2020:6; Lundy 2007:939).

While guaranteed in the CRC (Article 12) as one of the guiding principles, in practice child participation is hardly ever taken seriously enough (Biggeri and Karkara 2014:21). Children are frequently excluded from decision-making process on interventions and thus their views cannot impact the design and implementation of such interventions (West 2007:124). In this regard, children's participation in decision-making on matters that affect their lives depends among others on the ideas that adults have about children's competence to do so (Le Borgne and Tisdall 2017:122). However, the adult perception of the competence of children may be biased, which might lower the number of children who are seen as eligible to participate (Le Borgne and Tisdall 2017:123). As a result, child participation is sometimes practiced only with a particular, selective group of children that are perceived capable by adults (Liebel 2012:25).

In his studies on child participation, Hart (1996) introduced the metaphor of a ladder with rungs, representing eight levels of child participation: "manipulation, decoration, tokenism, assigned but informed, consulted and informed, adult-initiated, shared decisions with children, child-initiated and directed, and child-initiated shared decisions with adults" (Hart and UNICEF 1996:41). However, in this research, I use in particular the three selected levels of participation of Hart's ladder (manipulation, decoration, and tokenism) which will help me analyse the lack of meaningful child participation in the RPTRA design process. The other five levels will be elaborated hereafter, in the section on the required enabling environment for meaningful child participation.

Manipulation represents occasions in which adults deliberately utilise children's voice to carry forward their own agendas (Hart and UNICEF 1996:40). Most of the time children's voices are overruled and controlled by adults who have the power to decide. Similarly, decoration refers to occasions on which children are invited to participate in decision-making or interventions that affect their lives while they do not fully understand the subject of the

decisions or intervention and/or why they are participating (Hart and UNICEF 1996:41). Tokenism refers to those instances in which adults make a decision or design an intervention that affects children lives and pretend to give children the opportunity to influence that decision or intervention by articulating their views, ideas and interests while, in fact, children have little or no voice at all (West 2007:126; Twum-Danso Imoh and Okyere 2020:3). In this scenario, children might be consulted, but their ideas are not considered, dismissed, and/or completely controlled by adults (Hart and UNICEF 1992:9).

The above presentation of these three levels of child participation clearly shows that meaningful child participation is quite difficult to achieve. This underlines the importance of creating an enabling environment for meaningful child participation.

2.3.2 The Required Enabling Environment for Meaningful Child Participation

Various children's rights studies helped me to discover the following four key features of an enabling environment for meaningful child participation in CFC initiatives (West 2007; Hart and UNICEF 1992,1996; Arts 2014; Twum-Danso Imoh and Okyere 2020; Bartlett 2005; Couzens 2011; Liebel 2012; Biggeri and Karkara 2014; Ruiz-Casares et al. 2017; Lund 2007; Lundy 2007; Della Fina and Palmisano 2017; Tisdall 2017; Carroll et al. 2017; Le Borgne and Tisdall 2017; Bartlett and UNICEF 1999; Wilks 2010; Malone 2015; Adams et al. 2019; UNICEF and Save the Children 2011; Cheney 2011). Duty bearers need to:

- fulfil their obligation by creating and implementing policy that facilitates adult-child collaborative decision-making approaches;
- develop and conduct training on child rights-based approaches;
- develop an adult-child collaborative monitoring and evaluation system;
- use creative platforms to promote children's rights.

I will use these key features to analyse my fieldwork data in order to determine the extent to which an enabling environment for child participation existed in the RPTRA design process. These features are also useful for establishing how that enabling environment might be (further) strengthened in the future.

Feature 1: Duty Bearers Need to Make and Implement Policy

In her journal article on twenty-five years of CRC implementation, Arts (2014:281) clarified that the Convention (CRC, Article 4) requires states parties to take all possible legislative,

administrative, as well as other measures required for realizing the rights of the child. In doing so, they must pay special consideration to the most marginalised groups (Lundy 2007:935). In addition, regulation and policy practice at all levels should be compliant with the CRC (Bartlett 2005:20; Bartlett and UNICEF 1999:250). Since Indonesia is the location of this research and is a party to the CRC, it is important to find out how the Indonesian government, and more in particular Jakarta's city government, is promoting and realising the participatory rights of children through legal instruments and policy measures.

The child right to participate is guaranteed among others in Article 12 of the CRC, the Jakarta Governor Regulation on RPTRA of 2015, the Indonesian Constitution Article 10, as well as Article 8 of the CFC Policy that the Ministry of Women's Empowerment issued in 2011. These legal instruments stipulate that duty bearers must use their best effort to invite, ensure and encourage children from all backgrounds (in line with their age and maturity) to articulate their opinions and interests. Where relevant and possible, they must also act upon the voices conveyed (Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989; Jakarta Governor Regulation, Government of Indonesia 2015; The Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection, Government of Indonesia 2011; The Indonesian Constitution, Government of Indonesia 2002).

In 2011, Indonesia also ratified the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). As a state party, Indonesia, including its local authorities, thus must assure that Article 7 of the Convention is respected. This entails that the best effort available must be made to facilitate and entitle children with disabilities with appropriate assistance to fulfil their right to participate and freely articulate their voices and interests in the decision-making process that affects their lives (Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2011; see also Della Fina and Palmisano 2017). In follow-up, Indonesian Constitution No.8 adopted in 2016 (Art. 2, 5 and 28) prohibits any form of discrimination against children with disabilities (Indonesian Constitution, Government of Indonesia 2016).

There is no doubt that the Articles of the CRC, CRPD, The Indonesian Constitution, and the CFC Regulation provide a foundation for measuring the extent to which duty bearers met their child rights obligation in relation to child participation in the RPTRA design process. However, as stated earlier, literature on children's rights showed that, in many contexts, children still face difficulty in exercising their participatory rights.

In many cases, adults retain the position of the bearers of knowledge and of authority for giving children instructions (West 2007:127). They are accustomed to living and working in a hierarchical and cultural setting where it is assumed that they know what is best for their children (Cheney 2011:169). Because of this, children often are required to respect and obey them (Liebel 2012:22). Hence, it is obvious that unequal power structures between children and adults play a part in the lack of meaningful participation that often occurs in decision-making processes that affect children's lives (Biggeri and Karkara 2014:36; West 2007:124). Thus, children are regularly treated as people that are expected simply to take what adults instruct and they are not supposed to be listened to (Cheney 2011:168).

To address the issue of horizontal inequalities between children and adults, children's rights scholars proposed to develop policies that stipulate a new model of adult-child collaborative decision-making. This new model focusses on a bottom-up approach that considers the cultural contexts where children live (Ruiz-Casares et al. 2017:7). Collaborative decision-making provides a meaningful approach to partnerships and active engagement between children and adults at all stages of a decision or intervention that affects children's lives (Hart and UNICEF 1996:45; Adams et al. 2019:561 UNICEF and Save the Children 2011:148).

I employed an adult-child collaborative decision-making approach to generate recommendations for creating an enabling environment for child participation, based on common trust and safety between children and adults. This would support children in line with their age and capability, regardless of their background (e.g. race, ethnicity, religion, social and economic status, or disabilities), to have meaningful participatory exchanges with the key authorities at the local and national level on decisions and interventions that affect their lives (Biggeri and Karkara 2014:36; UNICEF and Save the Children 2011:149).

2. Develop and Conduct Training on Child Rights-Based Approaches

In general, children have limited knowledge of their rights and the notion of meaningful participation, and they rely on adults for this (Twum-Danso Imoh and Okyere 2020:3; Lund 2007:136). To address this shortcoming, state and non-state duty bearers (local and national government, as well as child-focused organisation) should conduct training on child rights-based approaches for both children and adults (Carroll et al. 2017:276; West 2007:131). For adults who work with children, such a training should develop their skills on how to

cooperatively engage with children, particularly marginalised groups such as children living in poverty, or children with disabilities (Bartlett 2005:29).

However, it is also crucial that parents (the non-state duty bearers) should also be made aware of children's rights through parental training, so they could encourage their children to express themselves and participate in decision-making or interventions that affect children's lives (Bartlett and UNICEF 1999:252). This is important because Article 5 of the CRC stresses that the role of parents in guiding children in exercising their rights (Arts 2014:298; Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989: Art. 5).

This feature is highly relevant in relation to formulating recommendations for future CFC interventions in Indonesia.

3. Develop an Adult-Child Collaborative Monitoring and Evaluation System

In all interventions, actions, policies, as well as decisions affecting children, whether lead by public or private social welfare organizations, or by government bodies including local authorities, the best interests of the child shall be a primary concern (Convention on the Rights of the Child: Art. 3; Arts 2014:279). To fully realise this requirement, it is vital to create a system in which children receive feedback to learn how their interests were considered, as well as the extent to which their views were taken into account and shaped the final outcomes of the intervention itself (UNICEF and Save the Children 2011:156).

However, in practice, giving appropriate feedback to children is often still missing (Tisdall 2017:61). Therefore, children's rights scholars encourage state and non-state duty bearers to develop a system in which children, in line with his/her evolving capacity, can monitor interventions that affect children's lives collaboratively with adults (Hart and UNICEF 1996:45; Couzens 2011:154). This would provide an opportunity for children to exercise their rights and enhance their capability to assess and monitor the decisions made by adults that affect their lives (Biggeri and Karkara 2014:37). This feature will guide me to investigate whether children in the RPTRA design process in Jakarta had/have chances to monitor the follow-up given to the voices they expressed during the design meeting.

4. Using Creative Platforms to Promote Children's Rights

CRC Article 42 requires state parties such as Indonesia to make the Convention widely known among adults and children "by appropriate and active means" (Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989: Art. 42; Arts 2014:283). This means that states, including local

authorities, have the duty to take measures to raise the awareness of their citizens, and in particular children, of children's rights including the right to meaningful child participation (Couzens 2011:138).

Arts (2014) reported that CRC article 42 encouraged states parties to translate the Convention into many different local languages as well as into metaphorical, symbolic and visual ways of expression such as photos, brochures, caricatures, and children's drawings (Arts 2014:283). The mass media can also be used to advocate and promote children's rights, for instance in TV and Radio shows (Bartlett and UNICEF 1999:251). However, these platforms always need to be adjusted to the local context and culture to which children belong, in order for them to better understand and relate to the material (Bartlett and UNICEF 1999:156).

I will use this feature when analyzing the current practices of children's rights promotion, as well as a basis for a recommendation in the realm of creating an enabling environment for child participation in CFC interventions.

2.4 Concluding Remarks

Meaningful child participation can be defined as a method and means of engagement and collaboration between children and adults, in which both parties are committed to listening to each other and understanding each other's views and perceptions, as well as to incorporating the views of both parties in decision-making processes that affect children's lives.

However, the literature study that I conducted as a basis for this chapter confirmed my impression that children's participation often remains dominated by adults who have authority to decide whether or not to invite, cooperate, and support meaningful child participation. In this regard, I note that the determination of children's capacity to participate in decision-making that affects their lives is often problematic. This is in part because that determination is completely reliant on adults.

Hence, it is crucial for CFC duty bearers to conduct a dialog with adults who engage with children to reflect on the power structure and culture that promote adult superiority. This aims at sensitizing adults on how to create an enabling environment for meaningful child participation. However, a crucial question that needs to be addressed is how to develop a creative method to promote meaningful child participation in cultures where children are likely to be expected to always obey adults. This question will be picked up in chapter four and five.

Chapter 3 Doing Online Research with Children During the COVID-19 Pandemic: Methodology

3.1 Introduction

I applied a Child-Centred Participatory Approach (CCPA) in my research. A CCPA encourages researchers to invite children to actively contribute to the design and implementation of the research. Accordingly, I treated children as primary research partners and prioritized bringing out their voices. I gave them space to influence my research design through an online session in which I listened to their perspectives on what the actual issues were in the design process of RPTRA.

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic I had to conduct this research fully online, using Zoom. I considered the possible additional ethical issues of doing research with children online (see section 3.5). World Vision Indonesia (WVI) assisted me in making all practical arrangements. Despite the challenging time, in July-August 2020 I successfully conducted 18 online discussions. I employed task-based methods, including Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), Photovoice, Drawing, and Semi-Structured Interviews (SSI). This clearly maximised children's readiness to fully participate in my research and to express their views freely and with confidence. The discussions were conducted with 19 children from the three targeted RPTRAs (RPTRA Cibesut, RPTRA Jaka Teratai, RPTRA Anggrek), and 20 adults who directly worked with children in the RPTRA design process.

Doing online research with children during the COVID-19 Pandemic and across countries (Indonesia and the Netherlands) was a challenging experience for me. However, this research confirmed that, even when using an online discussion platform, children have the competence to articulate their ideas.

3.2 Child-Centred Participatory Approach (CCPA): A Critical Discussion with Children

A CCPA treats children as social actors who have the ability and right to actively contribute and participate in research (Cheney 2011:170; Punch 2002:325). Using CCPA enabled me to prioritize children's voices by listening to their perspectives and experiences when participating in the RPTRA design process, by letting children influence my research design, and by communicating their views prominently in this RP which hopefully will be read by relevant

policy officers and thus could contribute to positive change (See Cheney 2011: 166; Ngutuku 2020:89).

In this research, I considered myself an outsider because I had never met the children before, and the research was conducted online without any physical contact. Thus, I needed to build trust and to make the children feel comfortable to engage with and participate in my research (Ampong and Adams 2019:5).For this purpose, I utilised an innovative task-based method, for example including drawing in the introduction session (Punch 2002:330). This method enabled the children to feel comfortable with me, and also triggered their confidence to express their views and interests (Punch 2002:328; Lobe et al. 2007:18).

In the first week of my online fieldwork in July 2020, I organized a critical online discussion (via Zoom) with children from each targeted RPTRA. The discussion aimed to elicit children's views on what the actual issue was in the RPTRA design process. Since I employed a participatory method, I was prepared to change the objectives and research questions that I had prepared at the time, in the children's responses would make changes appropriate (Kindon and Pain 2007:19). In this process, I used 'listening softly' as a tool, as suggested by Ngutuku (2020). Listening softly is a method which encourages the researcher to not only listen to the children's voices, but also consider their silence, their body language, and their hesitations expressed during the discussion (Ngutuku 2020:90). In this regard, the online platform Zoom employed in this research has a recording feature. This feature allowed me to go back and listen carefully to the children's voices multiple times and to observe their body language during the discussion.

Eventually, these critical discussions revealed that, according to the children, meaningful child participation was indeed the main thing lacking in the RPTRA design process. Since this was entirely in line with my research design, the research questions and goals remained as they were. However, of then they were partly based on what the children conveyed. The findings involved will be elaborated in chapter four.

3.3 Who Participated: The Selected Research Participants

The general principle of non-discrimination states that children have equal rights to freely participate in decision-making processes that affect their lives, regardless of, for example, their gender, class, ethnicity, or disability (Save the Children 2005:31; Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989: Art. 2). At the start of this study (in June 2020), I emphasised the importance of the non-discrimination principle when selecting the children in my exchanges

with WVI's field staff. Where possible, I employed this principle in my research which among other things aimed at revealing why certain (groups of) children are either excluded from, or included in a particular intervention, policy or program that affects their lives (Le Borgne and Tisdall 2017:123).

In total 39 persons participated in my research: 19 children from RPTRA Jaka Teratai, RPTRA Anggrek, and RPTRA Cibesut, as well as 20 adults from various child-focused NGOs in Jakarta, RPTRA administrators, and Jakarta's Child Forum (FA).[2] As a former staff member of WVI, I had an advantage in research participant recruitment. In the first place, WVI assisted me in recruiting 19 children (12 girls and 7 boys between the ages of 13 and 17). WVI's Jakarta area manager argued that children between 13 and 17 years old were the best candidates because children in this age range have a mobile phone and are familiar with using online platforms such as Zoom. Secondly, the majority of these children had also attended one of RPTRA's design process meetings.

The field staff of WVI who lived in and handled projects in RPTRA Jaka Teratai, RPTRA Cibesut, and RPTRA Anggrek recruited children who live in these areas. They collaborated with representatives of the Jakarta government, being the local leaders of each targeted RPTRA. WVI sent a letter to the local community leaders of each targeted RPTRA to ask their assistance in selecting the children. The community leaders then submitted the names of the children they selected to WVI and the administrators of each targeted RPTRA. This means that WVI had no direct control over the selection of the children. In fact, later I discovered that most of the children who participated in my research are family members of the community leaders for each targeted RPTRA. This implies that their feedback might be influenced and directed by the adults who selected them. Contrary to this assumption, however, most of the children involved criticised the adult control over their participation. In other words, they criticized their own parents who led the RPTRA design process meeting. Therefore, it is clear that the adults involved in the process (in this case WVI as well as local community leaders from the three targeted RPTRAs) did not completely influence the

[2] Jakarta's Child Forum (FA) is a child-focused organization initiated by the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection. It seeks to build partnerships between the government of Indonesia and children for realising children's rights to participate. Every village, sub-district, district, regency, city, and province in Indonesia has a FA.

children's views. The results of this research are to a significant extent based on the experiences and perspectives of the children themselves. I will elaborate this further in chapter four.

Since this study engages with activities of WVI and the Jakarta government, I spoke with officers of the Jakarta government, WVI staff, and RPTRA facilitators. I was in personal contact with the Deputy Governor of Jakarta, and she introduced me to Jakarta's Head Office of Empowerment, Child Protection, and Population Control (DPPAPP). This Office has controlled the RPTRA program since its launch in 2015. DPPAPP facilitated the recruitment of the adult research participants who were involved in the RPTRA design process. WVI's Jakarta area manager selected three WVI representatives (including herself) responsible for the RPTRA project, as well as eight facilitators from the targeted RPTRAs, to take part in my research.

Ultimately, to mitigate the control of information by the Jakarta government and WVI, I successfully invited four representatives of other organizations working on children's matters to participate in this research as well. These were: the program director of an international child-focused NGO in Jakarta, a Child Protection Specialist from an international children's organization in Jakarta, a Program Manager from Plan Indonesia, and a representative of the FA.

3.4 Operationalizing A Child-Centred Participatory Approach (CCPA): Techniques in the Online Discussion Forum

The specific CCPA techniques that I used in this study are FGDs, SSIs, Drawing, and Photovoice. Due to the Coronavirus outbreak, I employed these methods online, using Zoom. The aim of using these methods was to analyse, based on both the children's and adults' perspectives, the participation of children in the RPTRA design process, the factors that influenced this, and the enabling environment in which this took place. I found that these methods, particularly photovoice and drawing, maximised children's willingness to take part and their ability to freely convey their opinion during the online discussions. Each specific techniques is elaborated below.

3.4.1 Focus Group Discussion (FGD)

A FGD is a qualitative research method aimed at gathering views and perspectives of participants (King and Horrocks 2010:98). I employed this method online (in Zoom) for having a

live interaction with the participants (Kite and Phongsavan 2017:1). The online FGDs aimed to be venues for listening to the perspectives of children (as rights holders), and to the perspective of adults on the child right to participate, as well as on how the Jakarta government and WVI perceived and treated children's voices in the RPTRA design process.

An online discussion forum requires both the participant and researcher to have technical and computer literacy skills (Kozinets 2010:49). In support of the children, I asked the WVI field staff responsible for the three RPTRAs to assist the children from 'their' RPTRA. Thus, WVI staff provided the computer and the speaker that were used during the FGDs. Once the FGDs had started, I requested the WVI field staff to leave the room so that the children could express themselves freely.

I acted as a moderator and made sure that all children who participated in the research could express their voices and would be heard. I did not prepare structured questions for each participant to answer. Rather, I utilised drawing and photovoice, and discovered that these methods triggered the confidence of children to articulate and share their views.

I also conducted additional online FGDs separately with WVI and DPPAPP staff. I called all of these participants in the place where they lived.

3.4.2 Semi-Structured Interviews (SSIs)

An SSI is a flexible method that seeks to identify specific experience, perceptions and meaning from the interviewee using exploratory question lists (King and Horrocks 2010:109). In my research, I employed online SSIs (in Zoom) to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of how children participated in the design process of RPTRA by discussing this with eight RPTRA administrators from the three targeted RPTRAs, one FA Representative, and three staff of international child-focused NGOs in Jakarta.

3.4.3 Photovoice

Photovoice is a method that empowers and develops the participants' use of photography to express their values and perspectives, and to enable critical discussions around the topics and issues they are interested in. Photovoice is very suitable for amplifying the voices of marginalised or neglected groups such as children (Volpe 2019:363; Ebrahim 2010:297). My aim for using photovoice was to investigate the extent to which adults and children understand the notion of child participation, and also to explore how future CFC interventions could create a stronger enabling environment for meaningful child participation.

I asked children from each targeted RPTRA, as well as WVI and DPPAPP staff to take a photo that represented child participation in RPTRA from their perspective. Each child and adult that was involved in this research, shared and discussed their picture with the members of each group. Participants were requested to share why they took the photo involved. This generated a critical discussion and reflection on understanding the notion of child participation.

I discovered that children and adults were not familiar with this tool. Therefore, I had to explain what photovoice is, its function, and how to use the tool. The photovoice introduction session aimed at making sure that the research participants became interested in photovoice.

Considering the COVID-19 outbreak, I then asked the three groups to take a photo from the internet, as well as their own photo collections. Further to this, photovoice requires research participants at least to have a mobile phone to take a photo. At the first meeting, the children confirmed that they had and were familiar with using a mobile phone.

The photovoice session started with an online game (Kahoot). I prepared five questions on child participation.[3] These were shown in Zoom, and the three groups would be asked to choose the 'right' answer using their mobile phones. The three groups, and the children in particular, enjoyed the game. They were laughing, smiling, and screaming during the game. The winner from each RPTRA got a prize consisting of mobile data internet vouchers that I prepared with the assistance of WVI. I will discuss the ethical considerations of financial support to children in section 3.5.

3.4.4 Drawing

Drawing is a tool to assist and stimulate research participants, particularly children, to define, articulate and reflect on their experiences and to give meaning to them (Lobe et al. 2017:23; Punch 2002:331). The aim of using this tool is to enable children to freely express ideas that they might not plan to say (Ngutuku 2020:104).

I used this particular tool with children only. At the start I asked children to introduce themselves. To make the session more fun, I asked each of them to draw an object that represents who they are. WVI's field staff prepared the drawing tools for the children. I then

3 See Annex 2: Kahoot Game Questions.

discovered that children were not familiar with the method that I used. However, since this occurred in the instruction session, WVI's field staff were still in the room with the children. They took over in instructing the children and gave an example on how to approach my question. As a result, most of the children imitated the examples that the WVI field staff gave: a ball, chili, bicycle, and bus. In this regard, it seems that the children felt they should obey what the adults said. I will explore this further in chapter four.

I also asked children to draw the facilities that they have in their local RPTRA, as well as to mark their favourite facilities, and the ones they asked for during the RPTRA design process but that were never built. In this way I explored how much of the RPTRA design was the result of children's participation, as well as how children's voices and interests were listened to in the process.

3.5 Involving Children in Online Research During the COVID-19 Pandemic: Ethical Considerations

Doing online research during the COVID-19 Pandemic has been a valuable and memorable experience for me. Indeed, this crisis created various challenges, including that of conducting this research during the lockdown in Jakarta. However, the children who participated in my research were more than ready to meet this challenge and made their best efforts to make the research possible and successful.

Since this research was conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic, WVI's Jakarta area manager provided a letter to the community leader for each targeted RPTRA, by way of a guarantee that WVI supported the FGD process. In addition, during the group meetings, the children respected the Corona safety measures including distance, washing of hands, and wearing a facemask. This plan came about by using the ISS RP Corona Fieldwork Protocol, since the children had to gather in an RPTRA meeting room under the supervision of WVI field staff. In line with this, I applied for in-person fieldwork as instructed by ISS and received approval from the ISS Crisis Management Team.

To gain the participation of the children in the research, their consent, as well as approval from their parents/caregivers, were needed (Powell and Smith 2009:338). Due to the Coronavirus outbreak, I designed an electronic consent form (Kozinets 2010:143) and sent it by email to WVI's field staff. Children signed the consent form during a break between parts of the initial critical discussion session. The parents of the selected children gave authority to the local community leaders of each targeted RPTRA to be responsible for the

participation of their children in this research. Further to this, these community leaders gave authority to WVI for signing the consent form on their behalf.

Likewise, I talked to the children to get their consent for using their names and the pictures they took in the photovoice session, and also to record the Zoom sessions. The children from all three RPTRAs gave me the authority to do so. However, I will not directly publish the pictures they took in my final research paper if that could in any way cause harm to anyone involved. I also decided to give each of the children, and the FA representative who participated in this research a pseudonym (Ngutuku 2020:118) to avoid future criticism towards children that may be raised by RPTRA's duty bearers.

Since the organizations WVI and DPPAPP were involved in this research, I sent them the ISS' fieldwork letter and the online consent form. The twelve additional participants involved in the semi-structured interviews were also asked to sign the online consent form. Two of them asked me to not present the name of their organisations, while the other participants allowed me to use both their names and the organisations for which they work if necessary.

A last ethical issue is that I provided appreciation and small incentive payments. I used personal funds to pay for internet access, souvenirs, gifts for participants who won the online 'Kahoot' game, and lunch for the children. This financial support served to acknowledge, encourage and thank the children for their contribution to my research (Ethical Research Involving Children 2020). The funding involved was transferred directly to WVI's Jakarta area manager. I agreed with WVI not to inform the children that I covered the costs of the FGDs. This was mainly to avoid further financial requests from the research participants, which had happened earlier in my research. During the initial meeting, Budi (a 13-year-old boy) asked me to provide mobile data internet for him and his friends. Additionally, an administrator of one RPTRA asked me to provide more lunch boxes. In this regard, WVI then acted as the mediator and informed the participants that this research took place under WVI's financial support. I likewise stated to Budi that at the end of this research, WVI will provide mobile data internet for each participant. I informed the children that in the final meeting there will be a 'Kahoot online game competition' that allows them to win extra mobile data internet from WVI. The communication approach that I took here aims to convince the children that their participation in my research is acknowledged, as well as encouraging them to participate in my research. While talking to RPTRA's administrator, I argued that they should inform WVI about the quantity of lunch boxes that could be provided at

each session. Doing this shows that I care and appreciate their involvement, as well as securing their continued support for my research.

In addition, I also reimbursed the costs incurred by WVI's field staff for example for transportation, meals, and internet cost relating to their assistance for 9 online FGDs, drawing, and photovoice sessions with the children. DPPAPP stated that they did not need financial support for internet access, since they have internet available in their office.

3.6 The Opportunities and Challenges of Conducting Online Research during the COVID-19 Pandemic: Methodological Reflections

In many parts of the world children are assumed to be less able to provide meaningful views than adults are (Liebel 2012:11; Le Borgne and Tisdall 2017:123). In contrast, my research reveals that children are very capable human beings, who have enough competence to express and articulate their views on issues that affect their lives. By listening to them, I learned how to empower children to practice their capability and to foster their willingness to express their views, even in online research, using task-based methods.

Along my research process, I discovered various methodological challenges and opportunities that could be relevant for future research that involves children.

Opportunities

First of all, I discovered that online research was possible and affordable, even during the COVID-19 Pandemic. Online research lowers the financial and time cost. For instance, there is no need to fly to and from the research venue.

Second, using a task-based method such as drawing or photovoice turned out to be possible in an online setting as well. Although most of the children were not familiar with introducing themselves by drawing an object, in the end, they stated that they enjoyed the method that I used. The task-based methods used were fun and interesting for the research participants as well as effective in generating relevant data.

Ultimately, I realized that, even when research is conducted online, it is still possible to build a personal relationship with the children and adults who participate and to make them comfortable about doing so.

Challenges

The first challenge that emerged in my research, although more practical than methodological, was the poor internet connection. In at least five instances during the FGDs, SSIs, and photovoice sessions, the internet connection was interrupted. So, in doing online research, it is crucial to assure that the internet access of people involved is stable and accessible, and to find ways to resume online sessions smoothly after interruptions.

Second, the research was conducted across countries (Indonesia and the Netherlands). The time difference between Indonesia and the Netherlands is 5 hours. Most of the discussions took place at 10 am, Jakarta time. This meant that I had to wake up at 4 am, Amsterdam time, to start the discussion at 5 am. A photovoice session with RPTRA Jaka Teratai was planned on 25 July 2020 at 10 am (Jakarta time). However, I accidentally woke up late due to the time difference, so the session had to be rescheduled. I decided to let the children choose a timeslot that was suitable for them. By letting them arrange the schedule, I aimed to show that I respected the children, and gave them space to practice their ability to express their interest, instead of just following the schedule that adults set for them. In this way, I also emphasized that children could make their own decisions about participating in my research.

Third, after the first hour of discussion, children often were distracted by their phones and did not pay attention any longer when their peers were talking. I tried to get back their attention by calling their names and asking for their opinion on the discussion topic. Therefore, future online research with children sessions would best not last longer than one hour, including break time.

Fourth, I was confronted with the fact that terms which are self-evident to me may not be so for my research participants. Rini (a 17-year-old female) stated that the question that I expressed was difficult. She made me realise that I had to be sensitive to, and at times adapt, my language. For example, I asked what child participation is. However, not all children were familiar with this term. This impressed on me how important it is for a researcher to use age, capacity and context-appropriate language.

Eventually, during the initial critical discussion session, I discovered that seven children from RPTRA Cibesut who were selected for my research had in fact not participated in the RPTRA design process in 2016. To show my respect for these children, I automatically switched my research questions from the past to the current practice, so that they could still elaborate their understanding of child participation in CFC initiatives. I believed these

children still had ability, knowledge, and experience that I could learn from. The decision to keep them as my research participants was rooted in the CCPA that I employed in this research. Their inputs generated relevant general ideas on child participation in CFC initiatives and as such informed suggestions on how possibly to strengthen the required enabling environment for such participation. Obviously, these children could not speak to the RPTRA design process though. Hence, I asked them to become volunteers and interview some informants that had participated in the design process. I equipped them with several questions by way of a guideline for conducting a semi-structured interview. The children agreed to help me and shared with me that the opportunity to contribute to my research as a co-researcher encouraged them to be more confident about articulating their views freely and sharing them with adults.

Chapter 4 Take Us Seriously: The Lack of an Enabling Environment for Meaningful Child Participation in the RPTRA Design Process (Research Findings)

4.1 Introduction

This chapter elaborates the primary findings of my research relating to meaningful child participation in the Jakarta Child-Friendly Integrated Public Spaces (RPTRA) design process and the enabling environment for that participation. The findings centre on the children's and adults' experiences in participating in the RPTRA design process. To analyse my findings, I utilised a Child Rights-Based Approach (CRBA) and the notions of 'meaningful participation' and the required 'enabling environment' for such participation.

But first, since the RPTRA design process is the main subject of this research, it is necessary to explain the design cycle of the initiative. This will clarify how the child participation in the RPTRA design process took place.

4.2 The Lack of an Enabling Environment for Meaningful Child Participation: The Design Cycle of RPTRA

In meaningful participation, children who are capable of forming their views have the right to freely articulate their ideas and interests, to be involved in decision-making processes that affect their lives. Their views should be given due weight, in line with their age and maturity (Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989: Art.12; Lundy 2007:934). This means that the views and interests of children must be taken seriously, up to the extent of influencing adults' decisions about the issues affecting children's lives (Bartlett 2005:32; Hart and UNICEF 1996:44). In this regard, duty bearers must make their best effort to assure that children from all backgrounds can articulate their opinions and interests. This also means that, where possible, they should also act upon the voices conveyed (The Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection, Government of Indonesia 2011: Art. 8; The Indonesian Constitution, Government of Indonesia 2002: Art. 10).

My research revealed that children had only one meeting with the RPTRA duty bearers, in which they could articulate their ideas about the RPTRA prototype designed by the Jakarta government at the time (FGD with RPTRA Anggrek, RPTRA Jaka Teratai, WVI and DPPAPP; see also Permanasari et al. 2018). In this meeting, children were asked to construct

a RPTRA mock-up. This mock-up allowed them to draw and sketch the kind of facilities they wished to have. The children expressed that this task-based method was interesting to them.

However, their participation stopped after that meeting. The children were not invited to be part of, or even attend, the final decision-making meeting(s) of the RPTRA design process. Thus, they have no information about whether the voices and interests they expressed during the participatory meeting were taken seriously or not.

The RPTRA duty bearers (Jakarta's government through the local community leaders of each targeted RPTRA, and WVI) were the main actors who controlled and decided all phases of the design process of the two RPTRAs built by WVI in 2017 and 2019, and of the six RPTRA pilot projects developed by the Jakarta government in 2015 (FGDs with RPTRA Anggrek, and RPTRA Jaka Teratai, see also World Vision Indonesia 2017; Permanasari et al. 2018). For instance, the design process meetings with the children arranged by the duty bearers were conducted during school time and in the night (FGD with DPPAPP, 30 July 2020). In addition, children stated that they had limited space to express their ideas and interests in relation to the RPTRA design.

The above-mentioned data obviously is not compatible with the concept of meaningful child participation as elaborated earlier in this section. It is clear that RPTRA duty bearers did not fully meet their obligation to provide an enabling environment for meaningful child participation in the design process of RPTRA. This primary issue will be explored further in the next section of my paper.

4.3 Manifestations of the Lack of Meaningful Child Participation

The lack of meaningful participation manifested among others into a tokenistic child participation practice, and limited opportunities for children to monitor the extent to which their voice and interests were actually considered. While these manifestations will be explored in this section, the next will explain that/how the situation resulted from the lack of an enbaling environemnt for child participation.

4.3.1 Tokenistic Participation

Just providing children space to express their voices is not enough to realize the child right to be heard. In the photovoice session, a WVI field staff presented a picture taken when children got together with their parents and the architect to see the construction facilities of

RPTRA Jaka Teratai at a time when 80% had been constructed. In this phase, in his view, children had no real opportunity to express their concerns about the construction, because the design was already finalised by WVI, the corporate donor, and the local community leaders and the realisation of the project was nearly done. This course of events suggests that only tokenistic participation (Hart and UNICEF 1992:10) took place in the design process of RPTRA Jaka Teratai. Children were invited to express a voice in CFC interventions, but in fact had no voice.

The WVI Jakarta area manager argued that the initial RPTRA design was decided by the Jakarta government, and that WVI just had to follow this. Further, since the intervention was supported by corporate partners, WVI had to propose the final design of the RPTRA for approval from the donor before the construction process could start. Children did not participate in this phase. The meeting involved was limited only to WVI, the Jakarta government, and the local community leaders.

It is obvious that the right of children to actively participate in the decision-making process in CFC initiatives also remains tokenistic when children's voices and interests are not taken seriously by duty bearers (see Hart and UNICEF 1992, 1996). Further to this, I also discovered that most of the RPTRA facilities had in fact been legalised already under the Jakarta Governor Regulation in 2015. Thus, I do not see the reason for involving the children in the RPTRA design process in the first place. To me this suggests that the child participation in the RPTRA design process was manipulated since children were only invited to legitimize the adult CFC agenda (see Hart and UNICEF 1992:9). The children's voices in the RPTRA design process only to carry out the RPTRA's design that were developed at the first place by the Jakarta government.

Dedi, the representative of FA, highlighted that children were sometimes selected on the day of the meeting. This underlines that the involvement of children in the design process of RPTRA was more decorative than substantive. While children were invited, they could not prepare and had no idea about why they should participate (see Hart and UNICEF 1996:41).

In the photovoice session, a WVI field staff presented a picture that showed the design process meeting of RPTRA Jaka Teratai conducted in 2017 that clearly was led and dominated by adults. Children were not seen in the picture. I challenged him by asking "Where were the children?". The WVI field staff said that "Children were invited but they were late, and there were no empty chairs for them; therefore, they were playing outside the

building with their peers" (FGD with WVI, 25 July 2020). I then asked him "Why did the adults not share the chairs with them?" He stated that "Children were afraid to sit together with adults, and they thought the meeting was designed only for adults". Further to this, Dedi (FA Representative) underlined that "Adults tend to think that children only know how to play, and that they do not know how to form and express a good idea" (SSI with the representative of FA, 29 July 2020). These remarks clearly suggest that the child participation in the RPTRA design process was tokenistic. They also illustrate again that adults have a tendency to presume that children are incapable of articulating opinions in decision-making processes. This assumption in the end resulted in the exclusion of children from participation in the RPTRA design process.

4.3.2 Children Had No Opportunity to Monitor and Assess the Decisions Made

Meaningful child participation requires an enabling environment in which children can also assess the decisions that were made, whether their views and interests were taken seriously, and whether they shaped the final outcomes or not (Couzens 2011:154; Biggeri and Karkara 2014:37). In this regard, I asked children to draw the facilities they requested during the RPTRA design process meeting. I asked to give a mark on the facilities that were built and were not. Children from RPTRA Anggrek relayed that they asked for a swing set, a swimming pool, and a canteen. Yet, these requests were not followed up by WVI and the local community leaders, and no explanation was given to the children on the reasons why. The same thing happened to children from RPTRA Jaka Teratai who pointed out that they asked for a swimming pool and a volleyball field. These two facilities were not realized either and, again, WVI and the local leaders did not explain to the children why. Contrary to this, when I asked, WVI did explained the reason for not constructing the swimming pool. The field staff of WVI stressed that WVI could not accommodate this request because the prototype design determined by the Jakarta government did not include a swimming pool.

Obviously there was no mechanism in the RPTRA design process that provided opportunities for the participating children to monitor and sasses whether their voices were taken seriously or not, and to reflect on that. Not using the feedback and suggestions received from the children is likely to have impacted the quality and/or child-friendliness of the RPTRA facilities. The majority of the children involved in my research stated that ultimately the RPTRA facilities did not fulfil the needs of children and teenagers (FGD with the three targeted RPTRA). In their study on RPTRA, Prakoso and Dewi (2018:667) discovered the same issue. They argued that children between 12 to 15 years old claimed that the books that

were provided in the RPTRA library mainly suitable for young children/early childhood. In my research, children from the three targeted RPTRAs also underlined that most RPTRA facilities are suitable only for young children/early childhood. Examples are swings, slides, seesaws, playgrounds and climbers. More importantly, DPPAPP staff argued that from 321 RPTRAs in Jakarta, only 4 RPTRAs are certified as child-friendly playgrounds (FGD with DPPAPP, 30 July 2020). This is evidence to show that children's feedback is crucial in CFC interventions. As described in the CFC principles, the feedback from children ultimately will improve the quality of the interventions, as well as help to realize their interests (Carroll et al. 2017; Adams et al. 2019; Wilks 2010). Opportunities not only to influence the decisions made, but to receive explanations of how the children's suggestions were considered and why they very followed up or not are crucial elements of a proper enabling environment for meaningful child participation. The same applies to assessing and monitoring the decisions made.

4.4 Manifestations of the Lack of an Enabling Environment

According to my research findings, the lack of meaningful child participation in the RPTRA design process primarily was the result of the absence of an enabling environment for such participation. Thus, a lack of understanding of child participation and how to practice it could persist among both the children and adults involved. This manifested in various features. Child recruitment was discriminatory. Duty bearers failed to meet their obligations to involve children from marginalised groups such as children with disabilities, and most importantly, the final decisions were dominated by adults. All these aspects will be detailed below.

4.4.1 Lack of Understanding of Child Participation

In many contexts, the level of awareness of the child right to participate in decision-making on interventions that affect children's lives is low (Lund 2007:136; Twum-Danso Imoh and Okyere 2020:3). My research revealed that both the children and the adults who participated in the RPTRA design process had a serious lack of understanding of the meaning and implications of child participation.

To understand the above finding more clearly, I asked the children to share their motivations for participating in the RPTRA design process meetings that were held in 2017 and 2019. Most of the children from RPTRA Jaka Teratai and RPTRA Anggrek informed

me that they attended the RPTRA design process meeting simply because adults (the children's parents and/or their community leaders) assigned them to do so. In addition, they liked the fact that by participating they could also meet their peers to play together.

Additionally, in the photovoice session, most of the participants, children and adults alike, presented photos of outdoor children's activities (such as playing football, performing traditional dance, activities in the playgrounds), as well as pictures of children involved in social activities within their local community (such as a sports competition). These pictures, and the ways in which they were described by the participants in the photovoice session, conveyed to me that most of them saw child participation as an occasion for children to have a space and opportunity to undertake a pleasant and/or social activity. This finding is clearly not in conformity with the concept of meaningful child participation, which requires children to have the opportunity to freely express their views, concerns and opinions; to be consulted and involved in decision-making that affects their lives (Bartlett 2005:32; Lundy 2017:934). Hence, it is obvious that both the adults and children involved in my research had limited knowledge of what constitutes meaningful participation.

To gain a more comprehensive understanding of their lack of knowledge about the child right to participation, in the last meeting of this research, I conducted an online competition game (Kahoot) in Zoom in which I gave five questions about child participation. Contrary to the photovoice session, the Kahoot game revealed that the children did have some level of understanding about child participation. In this regard, the majority of the children expressed that they should have participated in the whole of the RPTRA design process, and that their voices should have been listened to and considered by adults. They also stressed that disabled children are entitled to participate in RPTRA design process meetings. To probe whether the children truly understood the concept of meaningful child participation that manifested through their answers, I challenged them by asking *"Why do you think children should participate and why should their voice be heard? Why do you think children with disabilities should participate in the design process of RPTRA?"* In response to these questions, the majority of the children stated that children should participate because adults assigned them to attend the meeting (FGD with RPTRA Jaka Teratai, 18 July 2020). I then realised that perhaps their answers in the Kahoot game were influenced by me, since the questions that I had prepared were based on the main topic of the child right to participate that was discussed during the FGD.

Undoubtedly, children and adults in my research have a serious lack of understanding about child participation. To check this impression, I asked each child from the targeted RPTRAs *"What comes up in your mind when you hear the word child participation?"*. Most of the children from RPTRA Anggrek and RPTRA Jaka Teratai answered that they did not know. I then tried to adjust my question, using the local language, and alternative words for child participation. I gave a clear explanation of the term child participation, but I still got the same *"I do not know"* answer. At this stage, I realised that pushing them to answer my question is a way to control the children. Children have the right to say that they do not know (Lundy 2007:937). In contrast, children from RPTRA Cibesut stated that child participation is when children are given space to express their opinions in a meeting. Their perspective on child participation thus was limited to the idea of children having a voice. In fact, children's rights scholars are criticizing this concept by stressing that meaningful child participation is not limited to children being invited and having a voice. Rather it is about children being consulted, and influencing the final decision-making on interventions that affect their lives (Carroll et al. 2017; Bartlett 2005; Twum-Danso Imoh and Okyere 2020; Lundy 2007).

The children from RPTRA Anggrek and RPTRA Jaka Teratai clearly had limited knowledge of the child right to participate, while children from RPTRA Cibesut evidently had basic knowledge about it. This might be caused by the fact that WVI has a branch in RPTRA Cibesut and that the RPRTA there has a Child Forum. The Child Forums of RPTRA Anggrek and RPTRA Jaka Teratai are not under the supervision of WVI even though WVI built the RPTRAs in these two areas. Instead, they are under the supervision of RPTRA administrators.

Additionally, the data that I gathered also suggest that RPTRA duty bearers have limited knowledge about the notion of child participation. According to Bagus Wicaksono, the Down to Zero[4] program manager of Plan Indonesia, the majority of RPTRA duty bearers (in this case mainly the community leaders) that he met seriously lack knowledge of children's rights. He stressed that children who were involved in the Down to Zero project were ignored by their community leaders and thus could not participate in the design process of RPTRA. However, they could use RPTRA facilities, such as the RPTRA meeting room, for conducting their activities. In 2019, Bagus and his team tried to encourage the local leaders of the areas where these children live, to invite them to attend the RPTRA design process

4 This refers to a program that caters for children who were commercially sexually exploited in Jakarta.

meeting. However, they failed, which affirmed that the awareness of duty bearers of the child right to participate remains low (SSI with the project manager of Plan International Indonesia, 6 August 2020).

Moreover, I likewise discovered that the Jakarta Governor Regulation on RPTRA does not provide for capacity building to raise awareness of children's rights. Rather, it requires a management training for RPTRA administrators. In the FGD conducted in August 2020, staff of the head office of DPPAPP stated that training is only prioritized for RPTRA administrators and that they will mainly be trained on how to manage RPTRA, for example on how to handle visitors. This evidence gives me the impression that the designers of RPTRA Regulation seemed to have limited knowledge of children's rights, or perhaps considered children's rights less important than management knowledge. Dedi, the representative of FA who was involved in the RPTRA design process for more than 5 years, shared my impression. He stressed that most of the duty bearers (in the Jakarta government as well as the local community leaders) who are handling RPTRA affairs do not fully understand the concept of child participation. Similarly, a child protection specialist, and the program director of an international child-focused NGO in Jakarta, also shared this perspective (as listed in Annex 1, SSI with Child-Focused NGOs No. 2 and 3, 11 August 2020).

Therefore, building capacity for child participation is vital both for adults and children (Carrol et al. 2017:276; West 2007:131; Bartlett and UNICEF 1999:252). Children should have known the precise reasons for their participation in the meetings of the RPTRA design process, and for the objective(s). This is a key feature of realising an enabling environment for meaningful child participation. FA representative, the child-focus NGO that was involved in this research suggested that it would be useful if the Jakarta government refined the content of the RPTRA Regulation in this regard.

Biggeri and Karkara (2014) added that the capacity building should also be available for parents (non-state duty bearers). They need to be aware and deserve to have knowledge of the child right to participate. As Arts (2014) indicated, the family has a primary role in guiding children in exercising their rights, as stipulated in CRC Article 5 (Arts 2014:298). The representatives of child focused NGOs who participated in my research shared this concern. They argued that a training for parents may raise their awareness of the importance of parental encouragement of child participation.

4.4.2 Discrimination in Child Recruitment

The CRC articles 12 and 2, as well as the CFC Regulation, imply that duty bearers should invite children from diverse backgrounds (and in line with his/her age and maturity) to participate and articulate their interests in interventions that affect their lives. However, in many contexts the competence of children to participate is determined and controlled by adults (Le Borgne and Tisdall 2017:122; West 2007:124). The way in which adults perceive the competence of children may be biased, incomplete or unfounded though, and this might lead to the neglect or exclusion of certain (groups of) children (Liebel 2012:25; Biggeri and Karkara 2014:36). As a result, child participation is sometimes recognised and practiced only with a particular, selected group of children that adults perceive capable (Le Borgne and Tisdall 2017:123). My research clearly revealed that adults have biases in determining which children are capable and which are not. In the RPTRA design process, I discovered that most of the children who were perceived capable of participating in the RPTRA design process were family members of community leaders in the involved RPTRA areas.

Children from RPTRA Anggrek emphasized that they were selected to participate in the RPTRA design process meeting in 2019 because the community leaders, through the youth leaders, recognised their capability to speak out in a discussion. In addition, the selected children were actively involved in local community activities such as Indonesia's anniversary celebration, in which children participated in the sports competition. Children from RPTRA Anggrek and RPTRA Jaka Teratai stressed that they were fully aware that other children, who also had the ability to express their views on the RPTRA design, were nevertheless not selected to attend the RPTRA design meeting. Le Borgne and Tisdall (2017:123) identified this phenomenon as "competence bias', by which adults exclude (a specific group of) able children who could make a useful contribution.

Dahlia (a 17-year-old girl from RPTRA Jaka Teratai), revealed that her mother is a community leader in Pulau Gadung, and *"she chose me to attend the RPTRA design process meeting"*. This same situation popped up a few times for others during the initial critical discussion session. In RPTRA Anggrek, local community leaders instructed the youth organization *Karang Taruna* to recruit the children. In this regard, I discovered that the children who were selected to be involved in my research also participated in the design process of RPTRA Jaka Teratai and RPTRA Anggrek that were held in 2017 and 2019. Amel (a 14-year-old girl) stated that *"My oldest brother is the chief of the youth leaders in Cempaka Putih. He chose me to participate in the RPTRA design process meeting"*.

The experiences elaborated above show that the selection of participants in the RPTRA design process was largely limited to a specific privileged group of children who had direct access to the community leaders. In line with this, Dedi (the representative of FA) argued that he attended several RPTRA's design process meetings between 2016 to 2019, and discovered that there were no children from minority groups such as children with disabilities, street children, poor children, orphaned children, or drop out children. He argued that these children were excluded because they lacked access to the leaders of the community in which they lived (SSI with FA Representative, 29 July 2020).

I also discovered that the majority of the children and non-state duty bearers, particularly RPTRA administrators, tended to label marginalised groups such as children with disabilities as "not normal children". The RPTRA Cibesut administrator argued that it is difficult to merge disabled children with non-disabled children in a discussion panel (SSI with Tatih, RPTRA Cibesut's administrator, 26 July 2020).

While WVI's Jakarta area manager underlined that the above-mentioned exclusionary child recruitment practice occurred because WVI did not accompany the community leaders in the selection process to assure that children from diverse backgrounds were invited (FGD with WVI, 28 July 2020). Moreover, she also realized that WVI had not provided clear criteria of non-discrimination in the letter sent to the community leaders of each targeted RPTRA. It is also important for WVI and the local community leaders of each targeted RPTRA to assure that marginalised children such as children with disabilities are confident and willing to attend a participatory meeting. Ahmad (a 14- year-old boy) from RPTRA Cibesut described that *"Disabled children seem afraid, shy, and not comfortable to participate in the discussion, because they have never been invited"* (FGD with RPTRA Cibesut, 26 July 2020). Dilva (a 15-year-ol girl) from RPTRA Anggrek seconded Dilva's description by stating that *"The family of children with disabilities are fearful and prohibit them to go to the public spaces because they are always being ignored by society"* (FGD with RPTRA Anggrek, 23 July 2020).

This data available above underlined that disabled children are often perceived as persons with lesser competence to develop an opinion than "normal" children (Lundy 2007:935). This seriously limits their opportunities to exercise their right to participate.

4.4.3 Duty Bearers Failed to Meet Their Obligation

The CFC Regulation of the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection of Indonesia requires duty bearers to invite children, using the non-discrimination principle,

and to assure that children (in accordance with their age and capacity) participate and freely articulate their interests in the whole process of CFC interventions (Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection, Government of Indonesia 2011: Art. 8). By the same token, Indonesia's Constitution No.8, in Articles 2, 5 and 28, prohibits any form of discrimination against marginalised children and children with disabilities in particular (Indonesia Constitution, Government of Indonesia 2016).

In fact, this research revealed that duty bearers (in this case, the Jakarta government through its RPTRA community leaders, and WVI) failed to meet their responsibility to ensure the participation of children with disabilities in the RPTRA design process. The administrator of RPTRA Cibesut shared that children with disabilities are treated only as beneficiaries that need support from the government (SSI with RPTRA Cibesut's administrators, 26 July 2020). They are invited only if the Jakarta government comes to their community to deliver financial support. This is, among others, a violation of Article 7 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) that Indonesia ratified in 2011. This provision indicates that local authorities must make their best effort to facilitate and entitle children with disabilities with appropriate assistance for fulfilling their right to participate and freely articulate their interests in decision-making processes that affect their lives (Della Fina and Palmisano 2017; Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2011).

The field coordinator of WVI, pointed out that *"Disabled children are the most vulnerable children, we have big concern for this group; but, we do not invite them in the design process of RPTRA"* (FGD with WVI, 27 July 2020). Accordingly children with disabilities had no voice in the RPTRA design process led by WVI in 2017 and 2019. While WVI asked the community leaders of each targeted RPTRA to select the children based on their age and gender, they did not specifically address the need to include marginalized children such as children with disabilities. Hence, it appears that WVI as a main non-state duty bearer involved in RPTRA did not make its best effort to assure that children from different backgrounds, including children with disabilities, are invited to participate. This goes against the CFC Regulation, Indonesia's Constitution No. 8, the CRC, as well as the CRPD.

DPPAPP staff of the Jakarta government emphasized that children with disabilities were not invited in the design process meetings of six pilot projects of RPTRA in 2015 because the meetings were conducted at night. They claimed that the timetable set up by the local community leaders limited access for disabled children. However, there was no effort on the side of the Jakarta government to adjust the timetable. Thus, it is obvious that both

the Jakarta government and the local community leaders did not meet their obligations to ensure the attendance of children with disabilities in the CFC interventions.

I discovered that financial issues were a factor too as regards the opportunities for children with disabilities to participate in Jakarta's RPTRA design process meetings. The representatives of child-focused NGOs who participated in my research believe that children with disabilities require funding for specific facilities. For instance, special transport is needed to take them from their houses to the meeting venue. Aside from that, some children with disabilities will need a facilitator to support their particular needs, such as communication support for deaf children. In fact, in the RPTRA design process the Jakarta government missed the opportunity to fulfil its obligation to provide special assistance for disabled children.

In my research, I asked the children to provide their views on how children with disabilities should be treated in RPTRA design processes. Children from RPTRA Cibesut expressed their opinion that the RPTRA duty bearers should design a mechanism to collect the voices of children with disabilities early on in the RPTRA design process (FGD with RPTRA Cibesut, 26 July 2020). According to them, it is vital to have these voices since, until today, RPTRA does not have facilities for this particular group. They were fully aware that inviting children with disabilities to come to the meeting will require special efforts. They suggested that the local leaders should design a mechanism to show that disabled children are important, respected and that their views should be heard. They also said that some children with disabilities could be asked to write a paper about their aspirations in relation to the RPTRA initiatives, assisted by their parents or caregivers and have them sent to the local community leaders.

These views provided by the children show that they have great capability to articulate ideas on how to create an enabling environment for meaningful child participation, which are in contrast with what duty bearers have done. Duty bearers in fact failed to create such an enabling environment. I discovered that, in the design meeting with RPTRA Anggrek in 2019, WVI did not explain why children should attend the meeting. Instead, they only explained about RPTRA itself (FGD with WVI, 28 July 2020). Dedi (the representative of FA) clarified that the community leaders selected the children to attend the RPTRA design process meeting without explaining to them why they were being selected and what they would do in the meeting (SSI With Dedi, FA Representative, 29 July 2020). This practice is not in line with the principle of meaningful child participation which emphasizes that duty

bearers have to inform the children of the reason for being invited, the objective of their participation, their capacity to be consulted and to express their ideas and interests, and their right to be involved in decision-making processes on matters that affect their lives (Bartlett and UNICEF 1999; Hart and UNICEF 1992, 1996; Biggeri and Karkara 2014; Lundy 2007).

Therefore, duty bearers must create a policy that emphasizes and assures a process to involve children in the design process of CFC interventions (Bartlett 2005; Couzens 2011; Ruiz-Casares et al. 2017). Arts (2014) urged that, according to Article 42 of the CRC, duty bearers must make their best effort to raise the awareness of their child and adult citizens of the CRC (Arts 2014: 283). She also suggested that duty bearers can use local languages for this purpose, as well as creative expressions that are suitable for children such as photographs, caricatures and drawings. My research too proved that children are happy to work with creative methods (see also Bartlett and UNICEF 1999:251; Arts 2014:283).

As I stated in chapter three, seven children from RPTRA Cibesut who participated in my research were not involved in the RPTRA design process meeting that was conducted in 2016. To still investigate what child participation looked like in the design process of RPTRA Cibesut, I asked them to help me interview informants that had participated in the design process. In this simple way I created an enabling environment for child participation and showed the children that they had the ability and right to participate in and contribute to my research as a co-researcher (see also Cheney 2011; Punch 2002; Ebrahim 2010).

Fikri (a 14-year-old boy) and Kiki (a 14-year-old girl) explained that, based on the responses by the informants they interviewed they found out that children were not involved in the design process of RPTRA Cibesut. They stated that the design process meeting was led and conducted only between the Jakarta government representatives and the local leaders in Jatinegara, the area where RPTRA Cibesut is located. RPTRA's Cibesut administrators confirmed this information. This again confirms the picture that, ultimately, the decisions in the RPTRA design process were largely dominated by adults and the child participation process was rather incomplete and selective. The former point is further elaborated in the next section.

4.4.4 The Decisions Were Dominated by Adults

Earlier studies on children's rights discovered that children's voices will be taken seriously only if they are in line with what adults think is best for children (James 2007:267; West 2007:127; Twum-Danso Imoh and Okyere 2020:6). My findings confirmed this. For

example, Ami (a 14-year-old girl) from RPTRA Cibesut argued that *"Adults usually rejected our idea because our idea was not line with their views"* (FGD with RPTRA Cibesut, 26 July 2020). Similarly, Helen (a 13-year-old girl) emphasized that "*Children should form an opinion that is in line with the perspective of adults if they want their ideas to be heard"* (FGD with RPTRA Jaka Teratai, 27 July 2020). WVI as a child focused NGO, likewise have been fully aware of the fact that the majority of the adults involved in the RPTRA design process had a tendency to steer children's opinions based on their own wishes and ideas on what was the best for the children. Dedi corroborated this finding by stating that the ideas expressed during the RPTRA design process meeting came first from adults and that children never expressed an idea without adult approval (SSI with Dedi, FA Representative, 29 July 2020).

The data reported above definitely shows that in the RPTRA design process adults were in the position to trump children's opinions (see also West 2007:127). They confirm once more that the child right to participate and the extent to which their voices are listened to and acted upon are largely (if not completely) determined by adults (see also Twum-Danso Imoh and Okyere 2020:6). Indra (a 15-year-old boy) added another dimension by observing that *"Children tend to imitate what adults say because adults know best"* (FGD with RPTRA Jaka Teratai, 18 July 2020).

To deepen these findings, in the drawing session with children I asked them to draw the RPTRA facilities that they requested during the design process meeting, and to share their experience of using the facilities that they drew. The online drawing session was held in the hall of the three targeted RPTRAs which also was the location of the RPTRA administrator's office. Inevitably, the administrators intervened in the drawing process by watching the children. As explained in chapter 3, the session was recorded using the video feature of Zoom. Through the video recording, I discovered that the RPTRA administrators tended to dictate answers to the children urging them to say they were delighted to have RPTRA. The children then followed what the RPTRA administrators instructed them to do. This certainly revealed the power relation between the children and the adults. The adults still hold the position of the bearers of knowledge and authority who give instruction to children and are considered to know best (see also West 2007:128). In many settings, children are simply expected to respect and follow adults. This practice clearly is not conformity with the principle of meaningful child participation though (Hart and UNICEF 1996:44; Bartlett 2005:32; Carrol et al. 2017:276; Lund 2007:136).

My research also revealed that the children were afraid of having a different view than that held by the adults, because the culture in Indonesia shaped them to believe that adults are more competent and know better than children (see also Cheney 2011:168). For instance, children from the three targeted RPTRA areas argued that the selected books provided by the Jakarta government in RPTRA libraries were not suitable for their age. I then challenged them to express their concerns about RPTRA facilities that were not in line with their age to the RPTRA administrators. However, they pointed out that they were not confident to express their ideas because they were afraid their ideas would be ignored by the RPTRA administrators (FGD with RPTRA Anggrek, 25 July 2020). In this regard, DPPAPP staff, as well as the child-focused NGO representatives that participated in this research argued that the culture in Indonesia disallows children to stand up against adults (FGD with DPPAPP, 30 July 2020). This again points at hugely unequal relations between children and adults (Liebel 2012:22; West 2007:127).

I also discovered that most of the times children were checking out the meeting room to make sure that the RPTRA administrator and/or WVI field staff were not watching them. Children often look to adults to get confirmation whether their answer was right or not. The children's body language that I observed revealed that they were not fully confident to evaluate adults. The children seemed not free in expressing their opinion, particularly when it came to criticism of adults. A field staff member of WVI who attended the RPTRA Jaka Teratai design process meeting, shared that the meeting was dominated by adults, and particularly the police officers (FGD with WVI, 25 July 2020). He pointed out that the children were afraid of expressing their concern during the meeting and feared being criticized or ignored by adults.

In addition, I found out that in the RPTRA design process, children were pushed to follow adults' timetables because the adults were only available during school time or at night. The majority of children openly shared with me that they sacrificed their school presence for attending the RPTRA design process meeting. Children from two RPTRA areas shared that local leaders organised the meeting schedule, both for the RPTRA design process meetings and also for my research meetings, without the children's input. However, they stated that adults are not obliged to consult the children about the timetable of the meetings. Children need to follow accordingly. This clarifies that children are continuing to be passive actors who are controlled by adults who have decision-making power (see also Tisdall 2017:66; Twum-Danso Imoh and Okyere 2020:6).

Ratna (a 15-year-old girl) challenged this situation when she asked *"Why do children always follow the schedule that is being set up by adults? Why do adults not align their schedule with ours*" (FGD with RPTRA Cibesut, 26 July 2020). Again, this clearly reveals the absence of an enabling environment for meaningful child participation. The children wished that in future interventions, the duty bearers would adjust their schedule to one that is suitable for the children. In this way duty bearers would give space for the children to articulate their views and interests, and they would act upon the preferences that children expressed. Certainly, much more meaningful participation will take place if duty bearers share some measure of their power with children, for instance to co-decide the best timeframe. In this regard, adults have to be open for a negotiation and should assure that children's voice will be taken seriously (Hart and UNICEF 1992, 1996; Ruiz-Casares et al. 2017; Biggeri and Karkara 2014).

In the end, to address the issue of adult domination in CFC interventions, children's rights scholars proposed adult-child collaborative decision-making approaches (UNICEF and Save the Children 201:148; Hart and UNICEF 1996:45). This requires an enabling environment that is safe for both children and adults, and that allows children to exercise meaningful participation through a dialogue with key authorities at local and national level on interventions that affect their lives, as is guaranteed in various legal instruments (Biggeri and Karkara 2014:36).

An adult-child collaborative decision-making approach provides for meaningful participation between both (groups of) actors at all stages of a decision-making or intervention process that affect children lives (UNICEF and Save the Children 2011; Hart and UNICEF 1992, 1996). As a matter of a fact, the aim of this approach is to limit tokenistic child participation.

4.5 Concluding Remarks

My research clearly confirmed that very little meaningful participation took place in the RPTRA design process. Examples of manipulative, decorative, as well as tokenistic participation exist. This situation came about because of the limited understanding of child participation among both the children and the adults involved in the process. In other respects as well, a culture that allows for an enabling environment for meaningful participation was lacking. Many of the relevant processes, including child recruitment, the meetings themselves, the time schedule for the meetings, the methods applied during the meetings, and the final decision-making on the RPTRA design were conducted, controlled, dominated, and decided by adults. Accordingly, it looks like the children's participation aimed only at legitimizing the agenda of the adult duty bearers.

Chapter 5 Conclusions: Bringing Adults and Children's Views Together

Meaningful child participation is a process in which children can freely articulate their views and interests, are consulted and enabled to negotiate as well as to influence and monitor the decisions made. Contrary to this, my research revealed that meaningful child participation in the RPTRA design process was challenging. A main explanatory factor for this situation is that both children and adults participating lacked understanding of what meaningful child participation is, and how to make it happen.

Manipulative, decorative, and tokenistic participation occurred in the RPTRA design process. At times, children's voices were used only to legitimize the RPTRA design that was established and legalized already in the Jakarta Governor Regulation on RPTRA. In these instances, children's voices were not meant to generate new perspectives and bring out their specific interests. Decisions in the RPTRA design process were decided and controlled by state and non-state duty bearers (the Jakarta government through the local community leaders of each targeted RPTRA, and WVI). Children were excluded from the final decision-making process on RPTRA designs. My research also revealed that local community leaders selected only their own children to attend the RPTRA design process meetings, and that for example children with disabilities were excluded. Both the state and non-state RPTRA duty bearers tended to believe that children, and in particular children with disabilities, are incapable of forming views relevant to the decisions to be made.

My research also revealed that culture in Indonesia, and particularly in Jakarta, supports adult domination and superiority. This culture legitimizes adults as perfect and superior, and unconsciously shaped the perspective of children on their own (in)competence to provide views. However, interestingly, this research showed that children were in fact quite capable of articulating critical ideas about RPTRA initiatives, facilities, leaders and procedures. During my online research I also witnessed that children managed quite well and had the knowledge required to contribute to my research as co-researcher.

The findings elaborated above clearly shows that the children's rights duty bearers involved in RPTRA failed to meet their obligations in terms of providing an enabling environment for meaningful child participation. Thus, they failed to deliver on the various applicable children's rights legal instruments such as the CRC, the Indonesian Constitution on Child Protection, the Jakarta Governor Regulation on RPTRA, and the CFC Regulation instructed by the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection of Indonesia.

Therefore, it is crucial that state and non-state duty bearers will gain a clearer and fuller understanding of the child right to participation. In this regard, the Jakarta Office of Empowerment Child Protection and Population Control (DPPAPP) is encouraged to develop a policy that could be added to the Jakarta Governor Regulation on RPTRA. The policy should aim at provide holistic principles to create an enabling environment for meaningful child participation in CFC initiatives.

Firstly, this policy should specify the obligation of duty bearers to raise the awareness of both children and adults of the notion of meaningful child participation. Adults in this context mainly refers to those working with children, for instance RPTRA's administrators, including parents (non-state duty bearers). The proposed policy should promote the child right to participate by using creative campaigns and capacity building activities. Drawing, caricatures, photographs or tv shows could be considered. Local language expressions might be useful too. It should be followed up by capacity building activities. These should among other thing focus on how to reflect and challenge the local culture which promotes the domination and superiority of adults. The trainings should also be made available for parents. Children depend on parents, and in many cases the family is the first place in which children learn and can practice their right to participate. However, it is crucial that state and non-state duty bearers develop an evaluation system to ensure that adults and children who follow the training are fully understood, as well as enforcing the child's right to participate in their everyday life.

Secondly, the proposed policy should act upon the non-discrimination principle which calls for participation by child representatives from diverse backgrounds including marginalized children such as children with disabilities. In this process, state and non-state duty bearers must assure that local community leaders or others who select children for participatory activities will go by the non-discrimination principle. They should also set clear selection criteria. In this regard, the criteria of children's capacity to form and express views in relation to CFC interventions that affect their lives remain problematic because they are very much under the (often biased) control of adults. Thus, it is vital that state and non-state duty bearers develop a mechanism to prevent adult biases and interests to dominate the recruitment process for child participation activities and events.

Thirdly, and as among others suggested by Ridwan (a 14-year-old boy), the policy should provide for a adult-child monitoring and evaluating system. State and non-state duty bearers could co-develop agreements on this system with the children, which even both

parties could sign. These agreements would then be used to monitor the extent to which the CFC/RPTRA facilities are responding to the children's needs and interests articulated and agreed during the design meeting phase.

Fourthly, the policy should demand that a design process meeting employs task-based methods which are fun and friendly to children from various backgrounds and (dis)abilities. During my research, I discovered that the children preferred and enjoyed the task-based method approach used in the RPTRA design process, for instance the exercise of constructing a RPTRA mock-up. They expressed that this task-based method was much more interesting for them than the traditional type of discussion dominated by adults. I also witnessed that the task-based methods (Photovoice and Drawing) that I used in my research maximized children's ideas and stimulated them to participate actively.

Finally, the policy should stimulate approaches that promote adult-child collaborative decision-making. This would allow children to 'live' the concept of children's participation within their social and cultural context. This approach challenges the power relations culture between children and adults in Indonesia, Jakarta included, by which children are expected to obey adults and their opinions. To achieve a break-through, state and non-state duty bearers will need to have political will to share some power with children who are capable of participating in decision-making processes relating to RPTRA/CFC initiatives.

Overall, my primary concern in this research has been about how to create spaces for meaningful child participation in decisions or interventions that affect their lives. Another concern is that of raising the awareness of both children and adults of the child right to participate. I hope this research will be utilised by state and non-state RPTRA duty bearers for performing their obligation to assure that children who are capable to articulate views and interests (in line with his/her age and maturity) meaningfully exercise their right to participate in the decision-making processes of interventions that affect their lives. Children's voices and interests should be a primary concern in CFC interventions because children themselves know very well what they need and want. This does not mean that children should have the last words and adults should always follow what children say. Rather, it is about how adults respect the views and interests of the children, open a collaborative dialogue, as well as give the children (who are capable and in accordance with their age and maturity) a space to negotiate, to influence and to assess decisions and CFC (and other) interventions that affect their lives.

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Annex 1: Research Participants

RPTRA Jaka Teratai

No	Children Real Name	Age	Gender
1	Rena Aulia Putri	14 years old	Girl
2	Desuannia Abiba Handi Louisya	15 years old	Girl
3	Nadya Rayhania	17 years old	Girl
4	Kayla Yuna Naura	14 years old	Girl
5	Bunga Annisa Safitri	15 years old	Girl

RPTRA Cipinang Besar Utara (Cibesut)

No	Children Real Name	Age	Gender
1	Muhamad Didan	14 years old	Boy
2	Nadya Nurhasanah	15 years old	Girl
3	Adelia Putri Annisa	14 years old	Girl
4	Aditya Putra Sutarli	14 years old	Boy
5	Chantica Wulandari	14 years old	Girl
6	Rouf Azaini	14 years old	Boy
7	Zein Nagita Kurniawan	15 Years old	Girl

RPTRA Anggrek

No	Children Real Name	Age	Gender
1	Ardi	13 years old	Boy
2	Muhammad Fachri	14 years old	Boy
3	Muhharam Haikal Alzidni	14 years old	Boy
4	Lina Febriyanti	14 years old	Girl
5	Tri Lestari	15 years old	Girl
6	Badiyah Putri Maharani	14 years old	Girl
7	Muhamad Arya Fadilah	14 Years old	Boy

World Vision Indonesia (WVI)

No	Name	Gender	Function
1	Asih Silawati	Female	WVI's Jakarta Area Manager
2	Tahan Panggabean	Male	WVI's Field Staff
3	Yonathan Leonard	Male	WVI's Project Coordinator

Jakarta's Office of Empowerment, Child Protection, and Population Control (DPPAPP)

No	Name	Gender	Function
1	Joko Santoso	Male	Secretary of DPPAPP
2	Gracia Manurung	Female	Child Development Head Section
3	Hendry Novtrizal	Male	Women's Empowerment and Child Protection Department Head
4	Kelik Mulyono	Male	Community Empowerment Department Head
5	Dwi Marjoko	Male	RPTRA's Administration Head Section

Child-Focused NGOs (Jakarta-Based)

No	Name	Gender	Function
1	Bagus Yaugo Wicaksono	Male	Project Manager of Plan International Indonesia

No	Name	Gender	Function
2	Grace Hukom	Female	Program Director of ChildFund International Indonesia
3	Dhiana Anggraeni	Female	Child Protection Specialist of UNICEF Indonesia

Jakarta's Child Forum (FA)

No	Name	Gender	Function
1	Fajar Pratama	Male	Jakarta's Child Forum Committee

RPTRA Administrators

No	Name	Gender	Function
1	Tatih Rukmawati	Female	RPTRA Cibesut's administrator
2	Rini Wulan	Female	RPTRA Cibesut's administrator
3	Joko Handoko	Male	RPTRA Jaka Teratai's administrator
4	Halim Abudlah	Male	RPTRA Jaka Teratai's administrator
5	Widia Permatasari	Female	RPTRA Jaka Teratai's administrator
6	Wati Hadijah	Female	RPTRA Anggrek's administrator
7	Yayu Sukmawati	Female	RPTRA Anggrek's administrator
8	Hendro Sanjoyo	Male	RPTRA Anggrek's administrator

Annex 2: Kahoot Game Questions

1. Do you think children should participate in the whole process of the RPTRA design?
2. Do you think children's voices should be heard by the Jakarta government and WVI?
3. Do you think children with disabilities should participate in the design process of RPTRA?
4. What does RPTRA stand for?
5. What is the meaning of child participation?