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Technical Assistance for the Support for Children's Rights in Türkiye

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Activity 1.3. Organising awareness-raising seminars

Mersin Workshop

21 – 22 June 2023



WEglobal





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INTRODUCTION

This report describes the "Mersin Awareness Raising Workshop" held on 21-22 June 2023, the final workshop in a series of four to increase the awareness-raising and advocacy communications capacity of CSOs working in child welfare and protection in Ankara, Bursa, Istanbul, Izmir, and Mersin.

"Technical Assistance for the Support for Children's Rights in Türkiye," known as the Özne Çocuk Project, is financed by the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance 2014-2020 (IPA II). The Ministry of Family and Social Services is the primary beneficiary, and the Ministry of Labour and Social Security is the co-beneficiary. The project's lead institution is the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Directorate for EU Affairs (DEUA). The Central Finance and Contract Unit (CFCU) is the contracting authority.

Experts Ms Dilek Ertükel and Mr Altug Akin designed the two-day interactive workshop programme to "stimulate a mindset shift towards a pro-active, systematic, evidence-based, result-oriented and well-planned approach to outreach and communications" as defined in the Terms of Reference. The curriculum is based on the "Step-by-Step Guide to Public Awareness Advocacy Planning" and "Özne Çocuk Public Awareness Strategy" prepared by Ms Ertükel and Mr Akin, respectively, and incorporates three learning methodologies:

- Peer-Learning: Facilitated open discussion in which participants share their views and experience about public awareness raising and advocacy on child rights;
- Information-Sharing: Expert presentation of information covering core concepts and practices of public awareness advocacy, followed by questions and answers;
- Experiential Learning: Role plays through which participants gain experience raising awareness using direct communications methods. Experts provide feedback and facilitate discussion to extrapolate lessons learned and practical techniques.

MERSIN WORKSHOP: EVENT AND PARTICIPANT MANAGEMENT

The Mersin Workshop was held at the Ramada by Wyndham Hotel. The hotel's facilities, technical infrastructure and food and beverage services contributed to a productive and seamless experience. Each participant received a copy of the "Step-by-Step Guide to Public Awareness Advocacy Planning."

56 people participated in the workshop representing 36 CSOs. Women represented 64% and men 36% of participants.





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MERSIN WORKSHOP AGENDA

Mr Bayram Ince, Head of Department, Research and Development Department at the Ministry of Family and Social Services, opened the workshop by welcoming participants and discussing the Özne Çocuk Project in the context of the Ministry's efforts to protect children. Mr Emre Ertekin and Mr Sertan Türk, Social Policy Expert at the Research and Development Department at the Ministry of Family and Social Services, İbrahim Konuk, Deputy Labor Expert, representing the Ministry of Labour and Social Security and Ms Ayşegül Gülkeser representing the General Directorate on the Status of Women observed the workshops and responded to participant questions.

21 June 2023	
10:00-10:30	Workshop Opening Welcome & Presentation
10:30 – 10:45	Overview of Workshops Aims and Logistic Details
10:45-11:30	Icebreaker (Get-to-Know) Exercise
11:30-12.30	Why do we need to communicate and raise awareness about child protection and rights? What change are we trying to achieve? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Interactive discussion activity• Summary of consensus points
12:30-13:30	Lunch
13:30 -14:15	What is public awareness-raising advocacy? Introduction to the Public Awareness Raising Guidebook <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Presentation• Q&A
14:15-16:30	Let's Raise Awareness: Simulation and Role Play Exercise <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Small Groups and Instructions• Group Preparation• Role Play• Feedback
16:30-17:00	Wrap-up Discussion
17:00	Workshop closing

22 June 2023	
10:00-10:45	Practical Communication tools and implementation
10:45-13:00	Let's Design a Public Awareness Activity! <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Small Groups and Instructions• Small Group Work



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13:00-14:00	Lunch
14:00-16:00	Activity and Live Presentations <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Feedback
16:00-16:30	Good Examples: Public Awareness Raising for Child Rights Wrap-up discussion: observations, lessons learned, possibilities for the future
16:30	Workshop closing

HIGHLIGHTS

22 June 2023:

- Opening statements by ministerial representatives provided valuable context by discussing the purpose of the workshops and conveying the importance of cooperation between public authorities and civil society. Representatives emphasised the Ministry's openness to more regular contact with civil society.
- Following the ice-breaker activity, experts facilitated a discussion among participants about their needs and priorities for communications and public awareness-raising on child welfare issues. The discussion helped set the workshop's tone, encouraging participants to express themselves freely and helping them discover common ground. Experts gained insight into the diversity of participants' perspectives and experience levels. The top needs and priorities communicated by participants included:
 - *Trainings on mental well-being and improvement of the wellbeing of women and children*
 - *Skills development trainings for parents and families*
 - *Facilitation of group processes*
 - *Advanced advocacy*
 - *Technical support on communication for the staff working with children*
 - *Support for women in labour*
 - *More meetings on coordination of NGO and public institution*
 - *Project cycle management*
 - *Legal perspectives on child rights violations*
 - *Peer bullying and the right to privacy*
- After the discussion, experts made a PowerPoint presentation defining core concepts, approaches and tactics for communications and public awareness advocacy. Experts responded to questions and invited participants to share insights from their experiences. Experts' concluded with an introduction to the "Step-by-Step Guide to Public Awareness Advocacy Planning."



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- Following lunch, participants were divided into four groups. Each group prepared for a mock public awareness meeting with a community leader, including an editor of a large mainstream media outlet, the mayor of Mersin, the CEO of a leading international holding from Mersin, or a youth association representative. Role plays followed where each group, one by one, met with their assigned community leader (played by different experts and participants) while other workshop participants observed. After each role-play, experts facilitated a self-assessment and provided feedback and guidance for improvement.

23 June 2023:

- Experts started the workshop's second day with a presentation of good examples and resources available in Turkish – tactics, activities and tools for awareness-raising developed by CSOs in Turkey and worldwide. Participants also contributed to the resources and tools they found helpful in these examples.
- Participants were divided into four groups and given two hours to prepare an awareness-raising strategy and presentation for an assigned target group (foster parents, volunteer psychologists, senior government officials and high school students). Groups were provided with computers, drawing tools, flip chart paper and other materials to prepare presentations. Each group presented to a live audience in which other workshop participants played the role of the target audience. Experts facilitated a self-assessment and provided feedback and guidance for improvement.
- At the workshop's end, experts shared lessons learned and observations. Bayram Ince concluded the workshop by thanking participants and inviting them to share their views and perspectives on the topic with the Ministry.

PARTICIPANT EVALUATIONS

35 of 56 participants completed and returned the online evaluation form.

Below is a summary of the quantitative results:

- "How would you rate the quality of training on a scale of 1 to 5 (5 being the highest)?"
18 participants strongly agreed (56%), 13 participants agreed (40%), and 1 was neutral (4%) to this question.
- "I would recommend this training to others (1 strongly do not recommend, 5 strongly recommend)."





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22 participants strongly agreed (67%), 9 participants agreed (27%), and 2 were neutral (6%) to this question.

- "Participatory and inclusive methods were used during the training."
24 participants strongly agreed (72%), 8 participants agreed (24%), and 1 was neutral (4%) to this question.
- "I received one-to-one attention from the trainer(s) and interacted with the trainers."
23 participants strongly agreed (73%), 6 participants agreed (18%) and 3 were neutral (9%) with this statement.
- "The balance of theory and practical implementation of the topics covered was appropriate."
18 participants strongly agreed (56%), 11 agreed (34%), and 3 were neutral (10%) with this statement.
- "The resources/examples in training were sufficient."
19 participants strongly agreed (64%), 9 agreed (30%), and 2 were neutral (6%) with this statement.
- "Thanks to this training, my awareness of children's rights and advocacy has improved positively."
17 participants strongly agreed (51%), 15 agreed (45%), and 1 was neutral (4%) with this statement.
- "I think the group work implemented in the training was practical."
22 participants strongly agreed (69%), 8 participants agreed (25%), and 2 were neutral (6%) with this statement.
- "This training contributed to the knowledge and skills needed to fulfil my duties in my work organisation."
16 participants strongly agreed (50%), 11 agreed (34%), 3 were neutral (10%), 1 disagreed (3%) and 1 strongly disagreed (3%) with this statement.

Below is a sampling of comments shared by participants:

- *"I would like to attend more trainings and can support the workshops' organisation."*
- *"It was impactful."*
- *"I am so glad that I attended this workshop; it was fruitful."*
- *"Trainers were able to balance theory and practice. Also, they were excellent moderators."*
- *"The emphasis was on raising awareness, but the legal perspective and children's rights should be included."*
- *"I learned a lot from the workshop."*
- *"Group work and dynamics were useful and moderated very well."*
- *"Trainers were inclusive, and they encouraged participants to talk."*



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NKE OBSERVATIONS

Participants

Workshop participants included civil society organisations and local branches of state agencies working on child protection. The event provided a space for these actors to come together around the same table to exchange ideas and experiences; there was a balanced representation from NGOs, local administration and public institutions. From an engagement perspective, participation was high, implying that the workshop format and content were appropriate to their needs and interests. Participants were inspired by the group work, resources shared in their field and good examples.

Capacity

Mersin workshop participants indicated significant advocacy efforts in their daily work; however, they were unfamiliar with the terminology around advocacy and other communication tools (such as Decision-maker relations, Communication for Social and Behaviour Change, Communication for Development, Risk Communication and Community Engagement). Overall, participating organisations lack sufficient communication capacity regarding techniques and human resources – communications is typically one of many tasks carried out by a limited number of staff/volunteers who run the organisation. Hence, organisations need technical and resource support as well as skill development. The workshop appears to have contributed to building their technical and practical knowledge.

Ministerial – CSO Relations

During the closing ceremony and bilateral talks, Ministry representatives expressed satisfaction with the workshop and outcomes, mentioning the need for such capacity-building efforts. Participants were invited to take a proactive approach to reach out to Ministry representatives at the local level.

Opportunities for Future

Potential action points for the future could be:

- Conducting similar capacity-building activities on communication and decision-makers relations.
- Exploring the potential and enthusiasm among participants to cooperate on theme-based issues such as peer bullying and mental well-being, among others.
- Organizing activities on the legal side of child protection, including training families on the relevant topics.





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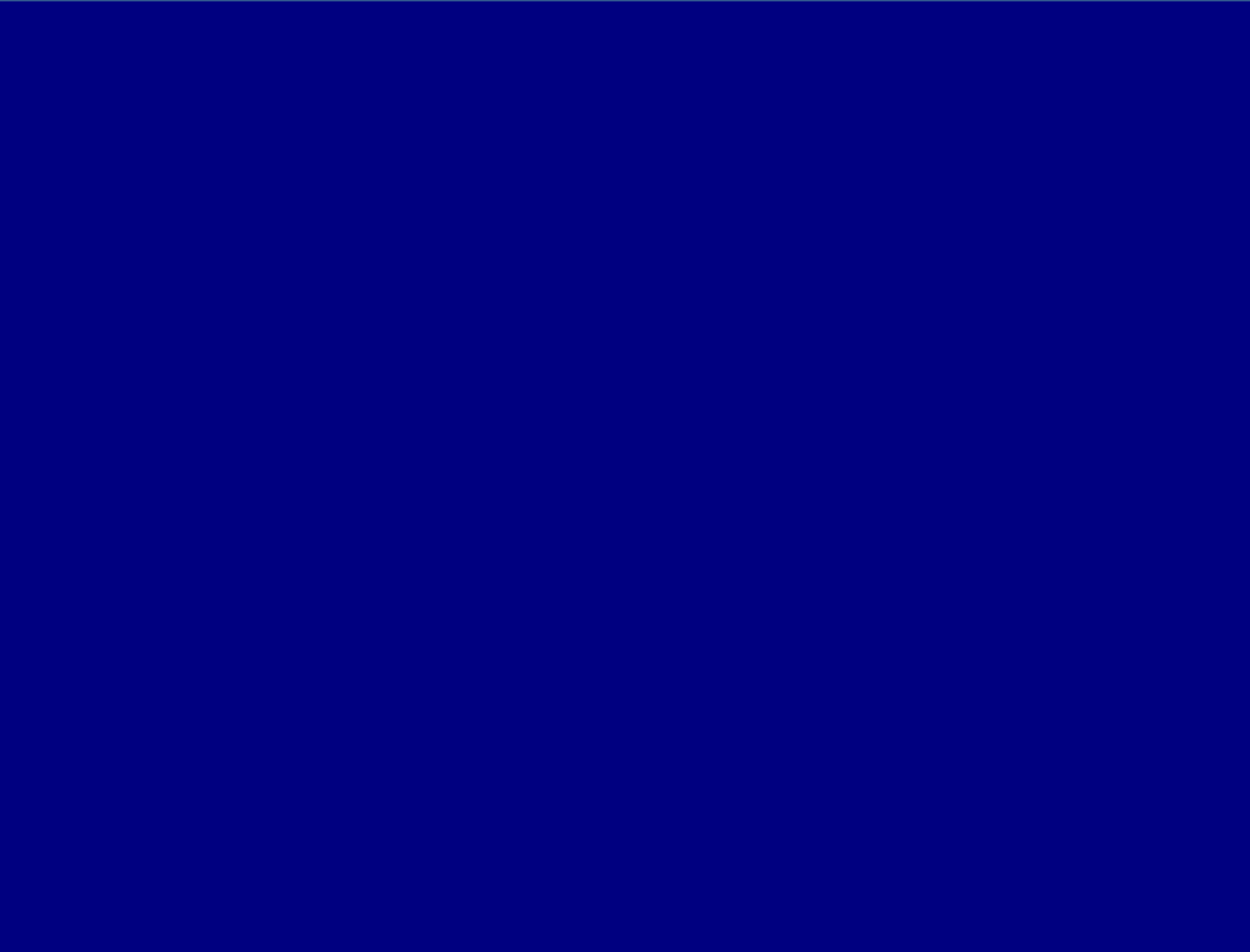
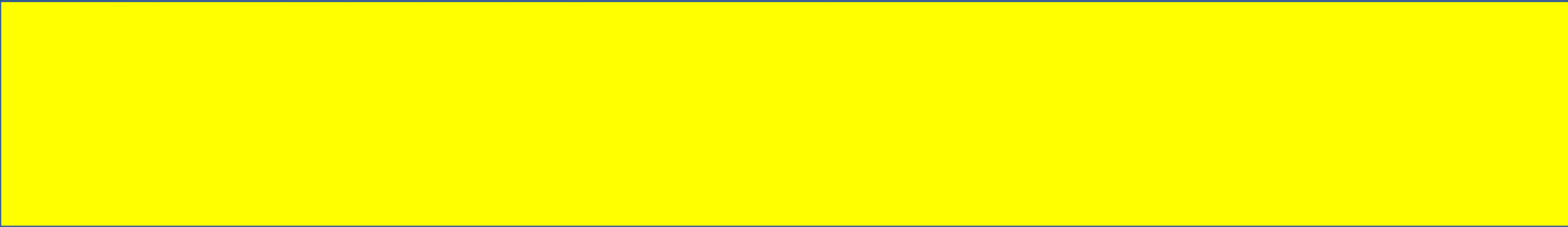
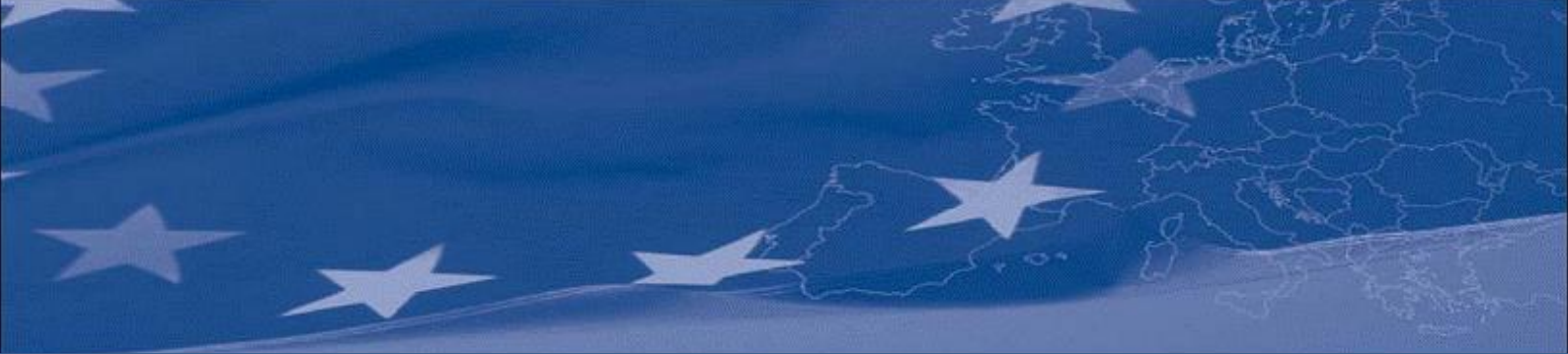
- Conducting activities to increase interaction and enable communication and connections between civil society and decision-makers.
- Keeping contact with participant organisations and actively engaging with them for relevant interventions of the Ministry and other capacity-building activities.

In response to the evaluation forms question “What topics would you like to see for future workshops and trainings?” respondents shared the following ideas.

- Effective communication and diverse techniques for coping with children’s rights violations
- Women’s rights, violence against women and equality
- Forming local groups and letting them determine topics based on their needs
- Participation of women and social activities
- Empowerment activities for families
- Disabled people’s rights, quality education, families of disabled children
- Child neglect and abuse

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE FUTURE ACTIVITIES

- Based on the lessons learned from the workshops in Ankara, İstanbul, İzmir and Mersin, revise and integrate versions of the workshop to upcoming project activities.
- Actively promote the advocacy guidebook on social media to encourage participants to disseminate the guide within their networks.
- Share recordings of role plays and presentations with participants.



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