



GLOBAL CHILD FORUM | ACTIONLAB 1

UNDERSTANDING MARKETING,  
PRODUCTS & SERVICES THROUGH A  
CHILD RIGHTS LENS

# Summary of Discussions – Key Takeaways





# Executive summary

KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM DISCUSSIONS AT GLOBAL CHILD FORUM 2024:  
ACTIONLAB 1 - UNDERSTANDING MARKETING, PRODUCTS & SERVICES THROUGH  
A CHILD RIGHTS LENS

## UNDERSTANDING IMPACT

- *Challenge:* There is a disconnect between companies and youth: lack of holistic approach, including not hiring younger people or having processes in place to get insights in an inclusive (and not instrumental) way.
- *Solution:* Education and creating a “coalition of the willing” who work together to start engaging more with children and youth.

## ENGAGING WITH CHILDREN AS STAKEHOLDERS

- *Challenge:* There is hesitancy towards involving/consulting with children around products and marketing: a fear of getting it wrong. Lack of resources and understanding at board level.
- *Solution:* Expert advice and guidance is important. Kids co-labs: create inclusive and child-friendly spaces. Combine it with fun! Educate and inform at board level – increased awareness.

## THE ROLE OF DISCLOSURES IN DRIVING BEHAVIOURS

- *Challenges:* Transparency/reporting on downstream (products/marketing) impact is low because it's linked to risk and compliance.
- *Solutions:* Data and transparency as an opportunity: data keeps you honest and your important stakeholders informed. Use data to drive behavioural change and to inform product development



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THROUGH A CHILD RIGHTS LENS

# The Challenges

Summary of discussions and responses from participants

# Topic: Understanding Impact on Children and Teenagers

I4NATURE | KEY TAKEAWAYS CHALLENGES (MORNING SESSION)

*How is your reference pattern built up in comparison to that of children and teenagers?*

*When do you feel understood? And taken seriously?*

*How can you postpone a voice of judgement?*

How do we move from policy to process: it is not enough to view children as stakeholders, there needs to be a process for doing the work of involving them

There is a general sense of disconnect from youth and "youth culture" at many companies which can partially be viewed by a perceived lack of youth talent: companies do not hire young people yet want to engage with them as customers keeping them out of sync with them as a target group

What are the ethical considerations in engaging children as stakeholders, when they are brought in to improve a product? Are we asking children to develop their own products?

# Topic: What are we missing out on when not engaging with children?

EUROCHILD | KEY TAKEAWAYS CHALLENGES (MORNING SESSION)

*What are advantages for involving children and what are the challenges?*

Child safeguarding: need examples

How you communicate on working with children?

The boundary of exploitation (for market research vs. meaningful engagement).

See as opportunity to engage children

Age groupings? 0-18=challenging

Advantages: Link to mental health + self-esteem

Learn a lot from talking to children

Be more inductive -> e.g. gaming, avatars

Challenges: Finding time. Too many things going on in the world. Reputational risk when not?

Investors: should ask businesses to invest in child participation

Lack of understanding as to how a business can relate to children as stakeholders holistically

Investment perspective -> flexible working, breastfeeding support, family support -> child wellbeing

Easier if organisations support diversity

# Topic: What does the reporting / legislative / disclosure landscape look like, and how will it impact companies going forward?

GLOBAL REPORTING INITIATIVE | KEY TAKEAWAYS CHALLENGES (MORNING SESSION)

*What does the reporting/legislative/disclosure landscape look like, and how will it impact companies going forward?  
What is missing today?*

Too much focus on risk management, see reporting as an opportunity. Reporting enables better decisions. Data keeps companies honest, sets measurable targets. Data informs helps investors with allocation decisions

Increased legislative pressure is resource-heavy short term (less time for "nice to have" and strategic thinking). However, in the long term, increase in legislation is positive and will fill the existing data gaps for both companies and investors






Broad support for mandatory reporting through CSRD to track progress, but a clear call to broaden children's rights considerations beyond child labour

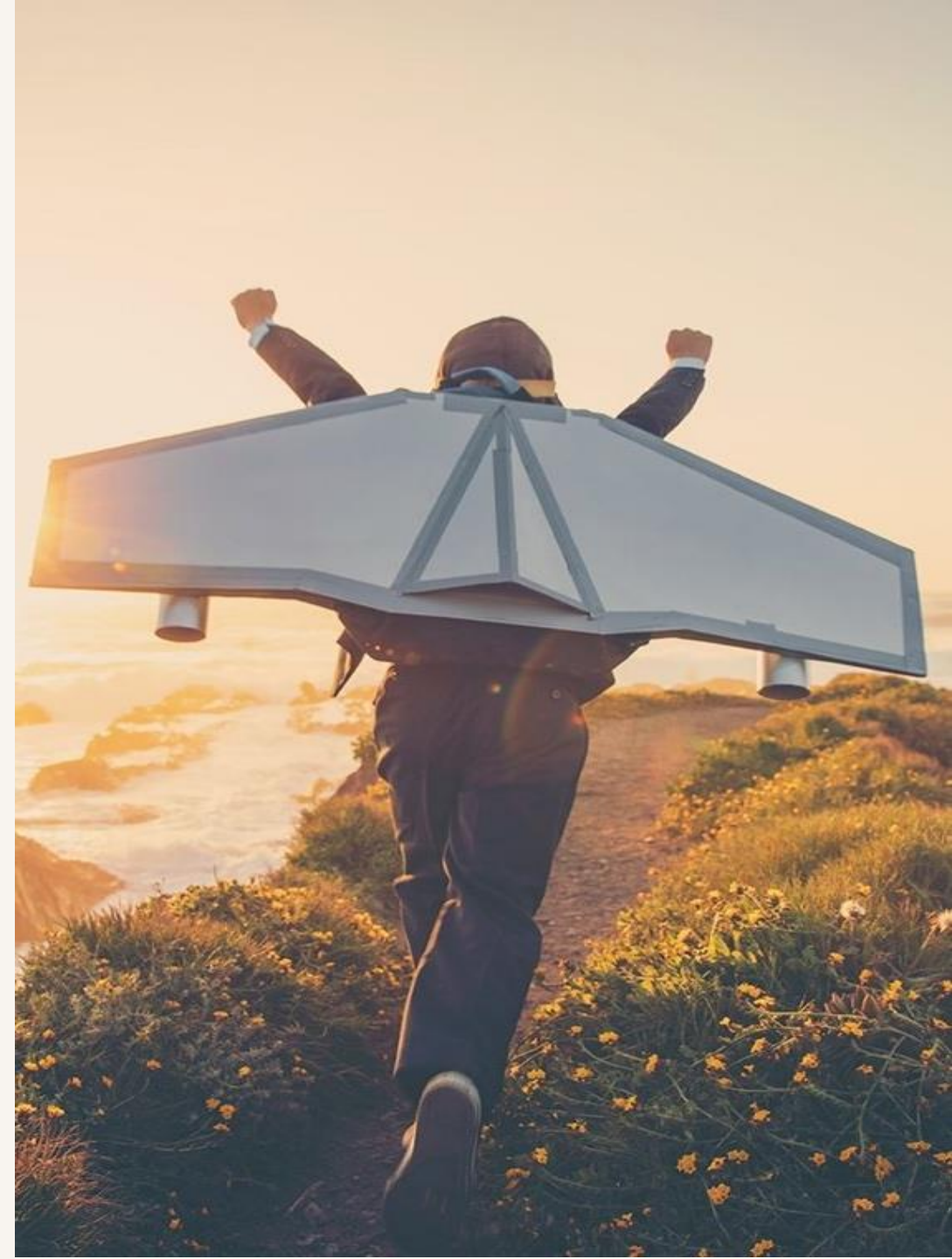
# Menti summary

**Question: What is the main challenge to improve your organisation's impact on children's lives?**

23 participants / 35 responses

## Overall summary of responses:

-  ***Legal obstacles and regulations***
-  ***Effective child engagement***
-  ***Data and impact assessment***
-  ***Prioritising children's issues***
-  ***Recognising children as stakeholders***



# Menti summary – grouped responses

WHAT IS THE MAIN CHALLENGE TO IMPROVE YOUR ORGANISATION'S IMPACT ON CHILDREN'S LIVES?

## Prioritising children's voices

- Consider children/youth as an “equal” voice
- Priorities
- Start considering children as stakeholders and NOT only consumers – Start listening to more kids while accelerating on education in relevant matters
- To be able to approach children and ask for their voices there is often a significant amount of steps and processes to have the legal research aspects in place
- Engage early with children
- To have the research funding that allows for research on children’s rights
- Advising groups with children within the company
- Ability to prioritise among many important issues
- Effective and meaningful engagement of children in practice
- Prioritising social over environment
- Making it as big a priority as climate
- How to approach children? Legal aspects, for example.
- Legal requirements making children's aspects as stakeholders mandatory. A national agency with children wanting to engage would make it easier to test
- Proper way of getting children’s views
- Marketing legislation vs child participation



# Menti summary – grouped responses

WHAT IS THE MAIN CHALLENGE TO IMPROVE YOUR ORGANISATION'S IMPACT ON CHILDREN'S LIVES?

## Awareness and understanding

- Awareness
- Understand
- Identify effective actions
- Clear approach for HOW to interact
- Courage (being vulnerable)
- Raise global visibility of children as key stakeholders vs. all other global challenges we are facing (global warming etc)

## Data collection

- Data
- Frameworks to educate on ideas for activity, and to support reporting
- Adhesion
- Age

## Stakeholder engagement

- Stakeholder
- Driving Boards to engage

# Menti summary – grouped responses

WHAT IS THE MAIN CHALLENGE TO IMPROVE YOUR ORGANISATION'S IMPACT ON CHILDREN'S LIVES?

## Legal obstacles / Regulatory challenges

- Legal obstacles
- Legislation differs country by country
- Regulations
- Transparency about challenges

## Cost considerations

- Potential costs
- Practicality

## Senior leadership buy-in

- Senior leaders recognising the value of engaging with children as stakeholders and having appropriate data to assess the impact
- Make it part of the daily job



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# The Solutions

Summary of discussions and responses from participants

# Topic: What are we missing out on when not engaging with children?

I4NATURE | KEY TAKEAWAYS SOLUTIONS (AFTERNOON SESSION)

*How do you take children's perspective in 2024?*

*What are possible touch points with your organisation's ambitions?*

*What can you expect of children's performance relating to 'grown ups'?*



# Topic: What are we missing out on when not engaging with children?

EUROCHILD | KEY TAKEAWAYS SOLUTIONS (AFTERNOON SESSION)

*How to engage with children in a rights-based and meaningful way?*

*What can companies do to involve children?*

Child project group: involve  
in all project/documents  
Kids co-labs: in a child-  
friendly way. Involve  
professional facilitator &  
create inclusive spaces -  
Combine it with fun

Focus groups -> consider  
stakeholder  
Cooperate with CSOs and  
schools  
Professional facilitator/youth  
worker

Educate children on food  
-> healthy food + eating  
habits  
Use child-friendly  
documents  
Best interest of the child at  
the centre  
Peer-learning with those  
who work/interact with  
children

# Cont. Topic: What are we missing out on when not engaging with children?

EUROCHILD | KEY TAKEAWAYS SOLUTIONS (AFTERNOON SESSION)

*How to engage with children in a rights-based and meaningful way?*

*What can companies do to involve children?*

Be more informed by children

Take time to understand your goals + framing: What to talk about in company with children? Then discuss how.

Restrict marketing, instead include as much as possible in developing projects

Dilemma! Involve children in "unhealthy products" like chocolate

Do other things with children ->educational aspect

Need to defend why you involve children

Need to be collaborative (CSOs+companies+ legislators involve children to discuss the dilemma; include industrial platforms)  
Children can be shadowing companies

Buy-in is crucial: at highest level!

Work on awareness at board level

Staff training

Incorporate child rights into DEI training

Children at the centre—  
summer camps—  
volunteering staff of companies

# Topic: How can companies support the role of legislation in driving behaviours? How can disclosures be used to drive change?

GLOBAL REPORTING INITIATIVE | KEY TAKEAWAYS SOLUTIONS (AFTERNOON SESSION)

*How can companies (and others) support the role of legislation in driving behaviours...*

*(right to nutrition – child guarantee in the EU – what is the private sector's role?)*

*How can disclosures be used to drive change?*

Call for more guidance on how to integrate children's rights considerations in, for example, materiality assessments beyond child labour, and a call for harmonised reporting globally

Board engagement is key; it's the role of the board to move from compliance to strategy informed by data and drive a mindset change in the organisation






Use data to drive behavioural change and to inform product development (not data for data's sake or compliance reasons only)

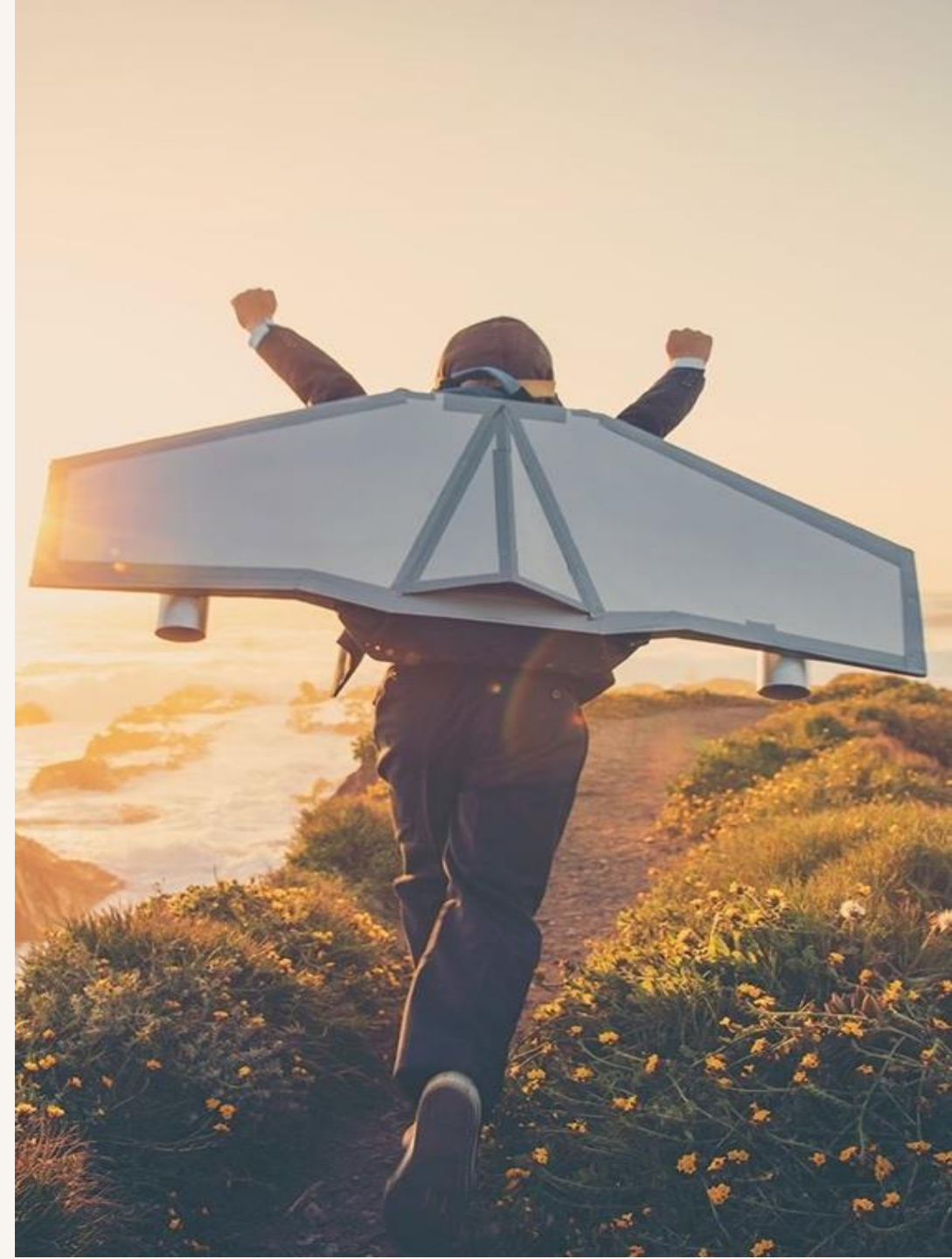
# Menti summary

**Question:** What is the most pressing action you can take after this Forum to improve your organisation's impact on children's lives?

14 participants / 22 responses

## Overall summary of responses:

-  **Educate team and leadership**
-  **Engage children in decisions**
-  **Identify impact metrics**
-  **Advocate for children's rights**
-  **Collaborate with Global Child Forum**





# Menti summary – grouped responses

WHAT IS THE MOST PRESSING ACTION YOU CAN TAKE AFTER THIS FORUM TO IMPROVE YOUR ORGANISATION'S IMPACT ON CHILDREN'S LIVES?

## Youth engagement/children's voice

- Create more opportunities for children and youth engagement
- Create a youth advisory group to provide input and feedback into key decisions
- Develop products with insights from children
- Work closer together with Global Child Forum
- Improve youth and children participation but in their own environment

## Leadership education/training

- Learn from the other organisations participating here and their successful examples of engaging children
- Identify clear metrics on positive impact for children
- Agency for children's voices
- Children have great ideas, we have to be open to listen to them.
- Double materiality assessment (DMA) child lens
- Educate leadership
- Educate my team on the issue
- Make children's right a focus area for 2025 - leadership training, awareness
- Educate
- Train my executive committee

# Menti summary – grouped responses

WHAT IS THE MOST PRESSING ACTION YOU CAN TAKE AFTER THIS FORUM TO IMPROVE YOUR ORGANISATION'S IMPACT ON CHILDREN'S LIVES?

## Awareness

- Awareness of the topic at Board level
- Raise awareness and identify potentials where and how to increase inclusion of children into business across functions

## Business advocacy/policy

- Be a business advocate for children's rights
- Make the business case
- Establish policies/safeguards

## Responsible sourcing

- Continue responsible sourcing efforts
- Identify long-term targets on the relevant children's rights issues linked to our business



[globalchildforum.org](http://globalchildforum.org)