PERCEIVED CONTRIBUTIONS OF PLAN INTERNATIONAL FINLAND CHILDREN'S BOARD PARTICIPATION TO ACTIVE GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP

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Abstract

Global education is a means to achieve sustainable development and respond to the global challenges of the 21st century. Earlier research has commonly focused on formal global education and global citizenship learning, while non-formal and informal global citizenship learning has attained less attention. This qualitative study that uses a survey and interviews as data collection methods studies non-formal and informal learning within the Children's Board programme of Plan International Finland. The Children's Board is a youth participation and advocacy group, a form of long-term volunteering, and a space for non-formal and informal learning of active global citizenship, which may contribute to the learning of the group members significantly. Considering that active global citizenship learning is a life-long and life-wide learning process, influenced by many factors, this study explores the programme's contributions to active global citizenship development among former Children's Board members instead of its impact. In the study contribution analysis is being applied to experiment how the method fits the exploring of qualitative retrospective accounts of perceived contributions. The findings indicate that the perceived contribution pathways and the perceived significance of the contributions entail variation, and no one contribution story, nor a theory of change, that would explain how the programme functions at a collective level, can be established. As a result of the contribution analysis leaning towards qualitative content analysis, it was possible to identify categories on the perceived contributions to the former members lives. The survey revealed contributions on an abstract level: a contribution to personal development, contribution to professional growth, and a social contribution, which were complemented by the contributions identified in the interview analysis: strengthened world-mindedness and global engagement, built advocacy toolkit, founded social relationships, fostered sense of social inclusion and agency, and springboard to NGOs. The results indicate that participation in the Children's Board has contributed mostly positively to the examined members' lives from the perspective of active global citizenship but also from the wider perspective of wellbeing. Additionally, the study uncovered several other contributing factors to the participants active global citizenship. The research suggests that non-formal global education in the form of long-term advocacy group participation helps to support the adolescent members' active global citizenship development.

Keywords active citizenship; contribution analysis; global citizenship; global citizenship education; global education; informal learning; non-formal learning; participation group

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Tiivistelmä

Globaalikasvatus on keino vastata nykyajan globaaleihin haasteisiin ja edistää kestävän kehityksen toteutumista. Suuri osa aiemmasta tutkimuksesta on keskittynyt formaaliin globaalikasvatukseen ja globaalikansalaisuuden oppimiseen, kun taas non-formaali ja informaali globaalikansalaisuuden oppiminen on saanut vähemmän huomiota. Tämä kyselyin ja haastatteluin toteutettu laadullinen tutkimus tutkii non-formaalia ja informaalia oppimista Plan International Suomen lastenhallitusohjelman piirissä. Lastenhallitus on nuorten osallisuus- ja vaikuttamisryhmä, pitkäaikaisen vapaaehtoistoiminnan muoto ja tila non-formaalille ja informaalille aktiivisen globaalikansalaisuuden oppimiselle, jolla voi olla suuri vaikutus lastenhallituslaisen kehittymiselle. Koska aktiivisen globaalikansalaisuuden oppiminen on jatkuvaa oppimista, mihin myötävaikuttaa monta asiaa, tutkimus käsittelee ohjelman vaikutusten sijaan sen kontribuutioita entisten lastenhallitusjäsenten aktiivisen globaalikansalaisuuden kehittymiselle. Tutkimuksessa sovelletaan metodina kontribuutioanalyysia laadullisten retrospektiivisten kuvausten koetuista kontribuutioista tutkimiseen. Tulokset osoittavat, että koetuissa kontribuutiopoluissa ja kontribuutioiden koetussa merkityksessä on variaatiota, ja koetuista kontribuutioista ei voi rakentaa yhtä kontribuutiotarinaa ja muutosteoriaa, joka selittäisi ohjelman kontribuutiota kollektiivisella tasolla. Sen sijaan, laadulliseen sisällönanalyysin kallistuvan kontribuutioanalyysin tuloksena oli mahdollista identifioida eri kategorioita, siitä miten ohjelma on myötävaikuttanut entisiin jäseniin. Kyselystä nousi esiin abstraktimman tason kontribuutiot: kontribuutio henkilökohtaiseen kehitykseen, kontribuutio ammatilliseen kasvuun sekä sosiaalinen kontribuutio, jotka täydentyivät haastatteluista nousseilla kontribuutiolla, jotka olivat maailmanmielisyyden ja globaalin vaikuttamisen vahvistuminen, rakennettu vaikuttamisen työkalupakki, sosiaalisten suhteiden muodostus, edistetty toimijuuden ja osallisuuden kokemus, sekä ponnahduslauta kansalaisjärjestöihin. Tulokset osoittavat, että lastenhallitusosallistuminen on myötävaikuttanut pääosin positiivisesti tutkittujen jäsenten elämään paitsi aktiivisen globaalikansalaisuuden, myös laajemmasta hyvinvoinnin perspektiivistä. Tutkimus lisäksi paljasti monia muita lastenhallitusjäsenten aktiiviseen globaalikansalaisuuteen myötävaikuttaneita tekijöitä. Tulokset viittaavat siihen, että non-formaalilla globaalikasvatuksella pitkäkestoisen osallisuus- ja vaikuttajaryhmätoiminnan muodossa voidaan tukea ryhmän nuorten aktiivisen globaalikansalaisuuden kehittymistä.

Asiasanat aktiivinen kansalaisuus; globaalikansalaisuus; globaali kansalaiskasvatus; globaalikasvatus; informaali oppiminen; kontribuutioanalyysi; non-formaali oppiminen; osallisuusryhmä

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ABBREVIATIONS

CA	Contribution Analysis
CB	Children's Board
CRM	Customer Relationship Management
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
EU	European Union
GCED	Global Citizenship Education
GE	Global Education
MFA	Ministry for Foreign Affairs
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
QCA	Qualitative Content Analysis
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
ToC	Theory of Change
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UWC	United World Colleges

FIGURES

TABLES

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1 INTRODUCTION

Significant global challenges characterise the world of today. To achieve sustainable development, many issues need to be tackled globally including, but not limited to, poverty, inequalities, and climate change (UN General Assembly, 2015). Active global citizenship, or simply global citizenship, which refers to every citizen's role to act for change, has become a popular term in the globalised world. Global citizenship considers individuals' overlapping citizenship in different regional levels and refers to the action of individuals and communities for the benefit of the whole global community (UN, n.d.), and thereby can be interpreted as the global dimension of active citizenship. The promotion of global citizenship through global education is included in the sustainable development goals, goal 4.7 (UN General Assembly, 2015, p. 17), and hence recognized, among other interventions like development cooperation, as an important way to drive positive global societal change towards sustainable development. There is an increased international consensus recognizing global education as an important part of quality education in different environments of lifelong learning (GENE, 2022, p. 4.), and a growing debate and research interest towards it (DERC, 2018).

Opportunities for civic participation can contribute to active citizenship development and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) can increase transformative learning towards active global citizenship (see e.g., Brown, 2013; Finlay et al., 2010). Through providing spaces for non-formal and informal learning of active global citizenship, NGOs can play a significant role in the building of active global citizens. Considering that youth is an important time period from the perspective of civic exploration (Finlay et al., 2010, p. 262), and that what people learn as children and adolescents matters to their life-trajectories, such opportunities in childhood and adolescence are important in terms of developing life-long active global citizenship. However, non-formal and informal environments of citizenship learning have not been studied as much as formal environments (Hoskins et al., 2012, p. 420; Le Bourdon, 2018, p. 105). Thus, there is a need to better understand how change happens within non-formal

global education programmes and informal processes of learning, and what aspects of programmes are related to positive outcomes.

This study attempts to explore non-formal and informal learning of active global citizenship within the direct influence of the *Children's Board* programme of Plan International Finland. Plan International Finland has been engaging children and young people through this interrelated participatory advocacy and global education programme already for over 20 years. The research arose out of the organisation's interest to understand how the Children's Board participation has contributed to the direct beneficiaries', i.e., previous board members' lives in the long term, a relevant question the Children's Board having celebrated its 20th anniversary in 2021[1].

Research objective and research questions:

The main objective of this study is to understand the perceived contributions of the Children's Board programme to its former members' lives particularly with respect to active global citizenship. This is explored among a subset of individuals who participated in the group during 2003-2021. The main research question is:

- How does participation in Plan International Finland Children's Board contribute to active global citizenship?

The following sub-questions as part of the main question are addressed:

1. How has active global citizenship evolved over the participants' lives?
2. In what ways has participation in the Children's Board contributed to active global citizenship?
3. What other factors, apart from the Children's Board, have contributed to the participants' active global citizenship?

Mostly the learning processes of citizenship competences are of interest in this study, however, other possible contributions to active global citizenship are also considered, such as direct contributions to active global citizenship practice. As part of the sub-questions, underlying mechanisms explaining the contributions are also being examined. The questions are being explored retrospectively through previous Children's Board members' perceived experiences. Thus, the study produces an understanding of the social reality of the studied individuals. Because some effects of programmes can only be witnessed within a longer time, the retrospective approach enables the examination of longer-term processes.

The development of active global citizenship is complex and rarely caused by individual factors only (e.g., Van Ongevalle, 2020). When there are external influenc-

[1] The study started simultaneously with Plan International Finland's efforts to build an alumni group for previous Children's Board members.

ing factors and their influence is not fully measurable, instead of evaluating an intervention's impact, it is possible to reduce uncertainty about an intervention's contribution to changes (Delahais, 2023; Mayne, 2001). Drawing upon this idea, in this study, I apply the contribution analysis approach (Mayne, 2001), and expand on it to explore perceived contributions to active global citizenship. Consequently, the study also has a methodological objective to establish an approach to study perceived contributions.

Overall, the study aims to make three main contributions. First, the study provides new information for Plan International Finland on the contribution of the Children's Board programme to the lives of its direct beneficiaries, as it studies the participation-wide contributions among members from different years and even decades of the action, and as it explores permanent and indirect long-term contributions in addition to shorter term contributions. Hence, the study applies a wider approach compared to usual evaluations and monitoring activities examining the sustainability of the programme, and the organisation may use this new understanding to develop their youth action towards more desired outcomes, as well as for communication purposes. Second, the study contributes to the wider ongoing academic discussion on the development and promotion of active global citizenship, especially among young people. It takes part in the active citizenship and global citizenship learning discourse, exploring non-formal and informal learning processes of active citizenship, and thus addresses the existing gap within research. The study especially explores the ways in which an innovative participatory programme within an NGO may contribute to young people's active citizenship, especially active global citizenship. Third, the thesis also contributes to the discussion of how the contribution of global education programmes can be evaluated. This methodological interest of the thesis is to experiment with contribution analysis to assess experienced contributions.

The thesis is structured as follows. In the next chapter, I introduce the main concepts of this study and explain the understanding of the concepts in relation to relevant literature. In the following chapter, I introduce Finland as a context for exploring active global citizenship learning, and introduce Plan International Finland as a research partner, and its programme which is under investigation in this study: the Children's Board. In the methodology chapter, I explain the notion of contribution through which active global citizenship learning is explored and introduce contribution analysis as the method which this study is inspired by, as well as explain the methodological choices made in this study. In the results chapter, I gradually build a more comprehensive contribution story based on the findings of the study, and in the final chapter, I draw conclusions.

2 THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The main concepts that guide this study are active global citizenship and learning of active global citizenship. In this chapter, I will provide background and definitions of these concepts as used in this study. First, I will elaborate the notion of active global citizenship in the intersection of the literatures of active citizenship and global citizenship. Second, I will provide a deeper understanding of the concept and articulate my idea of learning active global citizenship in relation to the literature on citizenship education and learning.

2.1 Active global citizenship

Active citizenship and *global citizenship* have been defined in various ways. In this study the concept of active citizenship is understood as an umbrella concept that involves global and more local dimensions, and *active global citizenship*, the main concept of this study, refers to the global dimension of active citizenship (see Figure 1.). This globally oriented active citizenship is commonly called global citizenship in academic, civil society and government discourses (see for example Coelho et al., 2021; GENE, 2022; Jääskeläinen et al., 2015; Oxfam, 2015), but also sometimes called active global citizenship (see for example AFS, n.d.; Lough & McBride, 2014; Oxfam, 2007; Reynolds et al., 2019; Siritheeratharadol, et al., 2023), like in this research, which highlights the engagement dimension of the concept – global citizen's active participation for a better world (see also Bourn & Brown, 2011, p. 12). In this study, drawing upon previous literature, presented in this and the following chapter, I understand that to be an active global citizen is to have the necessary active global citizenship competences to act in today's global world and to practise global citizenship, i.e., to take action for a fairer, more equal and sustainable global society, through many possible different levels and forms of participation in different spheres of life and regional levels.

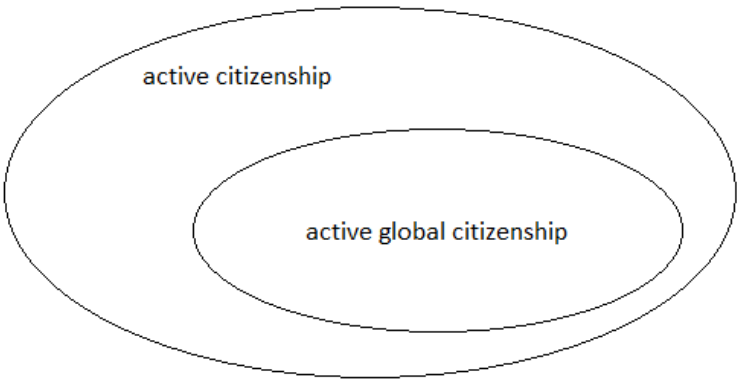

FIGURE 1 Illustration of the main concepts

To understand the concept of active global citizenship, first the concept of citizenship is examined. *Citizenship* as a concept has been defined in various ways throughout history, and the different understandings of citizenship also have different assumptions regarding what constitutes an *active* citizen. Historically it has been understood as a relationship between individuals and governing states entailing both rights and duties (Machon & Walkington, 2000, pp. 180-181). According to one of the widely cited conceptualisations by Marshall, citizenship is a status of community membership including three types of rights: civil rights, political rights and social rights (Marshall, 1950; see also Lawy & Biesta, 2006; Plummer, 2003). These understandings imply that citizenship is anchored to a location, the specific political state (Davies, 2006; Lough & McBride, 2014). However, the concept has evolved with time, and has been detached from the state, and understood in other ways. For example, Isin (2008) understands citizenship as an active process or event through which citizens establish themselves as citizens, referring to it as acts of citizenship, and this idea is echoed by Lawy and Biesta's (2006) conceptualisation citizenship-as-practise. Also, according to Korsgaard (2001, as cited in Laitinen & Nurmi, 2003), citizenship refers not just to a status but also to a role citizens play in the society. While the notion of citizenship as status is based on legal reasoning, the notion of citizenship as a role is founded on national identity or a cultural sentiment (Koorsgaard, 2001, as cited in Laitinen & Nurmi, 2003). This definition of citizenship as a role, or a socio-political practice can be seen as a lived citizenship that reflects a representation of personal agency (Lister, 2007, p. 695). These understandings form the basis for the concept of *active citizenship*, as the practice of citizenship and exercise of citizen rights (see e.g., Niemelä, 2012), and for the concept of participation, also known as engagement or community action, being a citizen's right, duty, or virtue, or a mix of these (Sant et al., 2018, p. 188). Furthermore, the discussion around citizenship has been expanded from the public sector to other sectors of society (Shultz, 2007, p. 249). The terms active cit-

izenship, political citizenship, and democratic citizenship relate closely with one another and partially intersect but while democratic and political citizenship refer only to the participation in decision-making at different regional levels, active citizenship is seen as a wider term that entails all collective action – different political and community participation forms (Hoskins et al., 2012, p. 422; Niemelä, 2012, p. 65).

There is no clear definition of active citizenship and the interpretation of what "appropriate" active citizenship is, varies in different cultural contexts (Nelson & Kerr, 2006). However, commonly the term is understood as taking responsibility voluntarily for common causes and participating for the benefit of the collective (Kersh et al., 2021, p. 3.; Laitinen & Nurmi, 2003, p. 123). This active citizenship practice can take many different levels and forms. Ekman and Amnå (2012) see participation as including collective and individual forms, as well as the forms of involvement and engagement, referring to attention and action, and they group participation into manifest political action, which entails formal political participation, and legal and illegal forms of activism, and to civil participation which includes forms of social involvement and civic engagement. Social involvement refers to paying attention to social and political issues, which can be seen as a necessary step for any other participation act (Ekman and Amnå, 2012). In addition, recently it has been argued that new lighter forms of participation have been established, that relate to the birth of the fourth sector, where citizens organise by themselves by using social media and engage directly (e.g., Ruuskanen et al., 2020). Within a broader perspective, active citizenship refers to all practice of active participation in our society – it is seen as occurring in different spheres of life, such as work life, political life, civil life, private life and social and cultural life (Laitinen & Nurmi, 2003; RAY, n.d.).

The discourses on participation entail, in addition to the different forms, a wide range of perspectives on what qualifies as active participation (see e.g., Reynolds et al., 2019). According to Westheimer and Kahne (2004) citizenship practice branches into three different levels. A personally responsible citizen acts as an individual responsible citizen in their community, for example recycles and volunteers to serve the disadvantaged, a participatory citizen is a citizen who participates actively in the collective – in civic and social life of their community at different regional levels, and a justice-oriented citizen is a citizen who analyses and understands the political, social, and economic relations that cause injustice (Westheimer & Kahne, 2004). Participatory citizenship thereby emphasises collective commitments in contrast to personally responsible citizenship which in turn highlights individual actions, and while justice-oriented citizenship calls for collective commitments like participatory citizenship, it adds a structural critique emphasising efforts to respond to social problems and injustices (ibid).

The concept of citizenship has further evolved along with the process of globalisation. Global citizenship, or world citizenship as sometimes called, is a concept that was already used in Ancient Greece (e.g., Dower, 2000, p. 553; Schattle, 2009, p. 3), but which in the current mostly used form was established along with the establishment of the United Nations (UN) and other consequent developments (Bachelet, 2018), and founded on the experiences and comprehensions of globalisation: the increasing interconnectedness of the world, entailing the system of capitalism and exacerbated environmental threats among others (Sant et al., 2018, p.13.). It has been understood that along globalisation, the dependency between the state and citizens has loosened and tying citizenship inside national boundaries limits the understanding of citizenship, which also should acknowledge that individuals feel connected to a global society (Lough & McBride, 2014, p. 458; Schattle, 2008, pp. 47–49). Indeed, the notion of global citizenship has generally been disconnected from global governance (see also Dower, 2000), and consequently it can be understood as more of a metaphor (Davies, 2006; Tawil, 2013). However, many scholars like Dower (2000), Lough and McBride (2014), and Shultz (2007) argue that global citizenship can be practised – through existing institutions, like multilateral institutions as well as international non-governmental organisations, and other global spaces of transnational collaboration. Indeed, there exists a global civil society, which can be interpreted as the space of society outside of the state and the market, which extends across national boundaries (see e.g., Bourn, 2022, p. 212-214). Space for active global citizenship may also be found nationally within national political structures and civic spaces that promote global change (Lough & McBride, 2014). This implies that one can also participate nationally and locally for a global change. The idea can be seen as based on the notion of glocalization, a comprehension that global change always originates from local action, and an acknowledgement of the present link with global and local processes (see e.g., Sklad et al., 2016, p. 327). These understandings form the foundation for the concept of active global citizenship, as being active citizenship with a global focus.

Also, with respect to the concept of global citizenship, there are various alternative ideas attached, and no consensus of its definition (Sant et al., 2018; UNESCO, 2016). It has been argued that our frames of reference impact the way we conceive globalisation and its implications (see e.g., Andreotti, 2006; 2016). Indeed, existing different interpretations of globalisation have resulted in different conceptions of global citizenship (Sant et al., 2018; Shultz, 2007). Shultz (2007) makes a division between neoliberal, transformationalist and radical global citizenship, by building upon McGrew's (2000) idea that globalisation can be seen from the given three perspectives. The neoliberal perspective to globalisation supports the existence of a single global market, capitalism, and liberal transnational trade (McGrew, 2000), and thus global citizenship is related to successful global economic participation (Shultz, 2007). From

the transformationalist perspective globalisation entails cultural, social, political, economic and environmental dimensions, and it leads to a crumbling of hierarchies between the North and the South, and to new dynamics of exclusion and inclusion (McGrew, 2000). Accordingly, as noted by Shultz (2007, p. 249) a transformationalist global citizen refers to someone who understands "their connection to all other people through a common humanity, a shared environment, and shared interests and activities" which is vital to achieve sustainable, fair, and democratic communities at different regional levels. Again, from the radical perspective globalisation is a new mode of Western dominance which, by using economic power, marginalises the Global South and creates inequality (McGrew, 2000). Aligned with this notion, a radical global citizen understands these oppressive processes and structures and feels responsible to challenge them (Shultz, 2007).

This study draws upon the transformationalist and radical perspectives, seeing global citizenship from the social change agenda. The study also draws upon the glocalization perspective, where local engagement can be equally important as action taking place far away (Sklad et al., 2016), and one can have a role as a global citizen while participating locally if the purpose of participation is to promote global justice and equality (Sant et al., 2018, p.188). This also means that not all global or international acts belong to global citizenship, but rather active global citizenship practice is constructive in nature (Lough & McBride, 2014). To understand better the concept of active global citizenship, which is often understood as a learning objective, and to understand the debate around it, which is tightly related to its promotion through education for citizenship, I next discuss the notion of education for and learning of active global citizenship as a basis for establishing a more comprehensive picture of what is meant by active global citizenship and its learning in this study.

2.2 Education for and learning of active global citizenship

As this study explores especially children's and young people's citizenship and learning of citizenship, it is relevant to acknowledge at this point that the relationship between citizenship and young people is more complex than that of adults and has been debated widely. Within these debates children's citizenship has been mainly associated with rights, not duties (Kiili, 2011, p. 171), and these rights have been discussed separately – it has been argued that children do not hold all the rights the definitions of citizenship frequently entail (Kiili, 2011; Millei & Imre, 2009). A common understanding also is that young people's citizenship is limited because they do not have the competences for efficient practice of citizenship (see e.g., Brooks and Holford, 2009, p. 88; Kersh et al., 2021, p. 3; Vromen, 2003). This perception comes from the notion of

citizenship-as-achievement, a mainstream idea that in order to achieve citizenship, young people should act in a certain manner, and achieve certain outcomes – the conditions the status of citizenship requires (Lawy & Biesta, 2006). Consequently, commonly childhood is understood as an interphase, which leads to full citizenship in adulthood, and where citizenship is learned and rehearsed (see Kiili, 2011, p. 171). So, in resonance with the notion of citizenship-as-achievement, citizenship refers to a status which can be achieved, through the acquisition of certain competences that are prerequisites for citizenship practice. Active citizenship competences can be regarded as competences that are "relevant in order to participate as active citizens and to live together with other citizens in a democratic community" and an ability to be an active citizen, as an ability to apply these competences (RAY, n.d.). This all implies that active citizenship is a potential that is learned, and which can be taught (see also Niemelä, 2012). The development of an individual's active citizenship, including global citizenship, is a learning process, which continues throughout one's life (Laitinen & Nurmi, 2003; Le Bourdon, 2018). Learning of active citizenship can be also considered a cumulative and sequential process where earlier events affect later choices (Flanagan & Levine, 2010; Laitinen & Nurmi, 2003). This sets one foundation for promoting active citizenship already at an early age. Furthermore, adolescence and young adulthood are seen as important time periods for citizenship competence development, as young people are still forming their opinions, identities, and worldviews (Finlay et al., 2010). Children learn quicker and they are more receptive to change of worldviews than older generations whose viewpoints are more locked (e.g., Gardner, 2004, p. 50). Thus, possibilities for active global citizenship learning can be considered wider among children and youth, and active citizenship of young people is often promoted through education.

The idea of promoting active citizenship through education in Europe began to be strongly pushed forward in the 1980s (Aldenmyr et al., 2012; Johansson, 2007). Especially as democratic shortfall and social unity have become a matter of concern in Europe, finding ways to promote active citizenship of young people has become an imperative (Hoskins et al., 2012). Indeed, the promotion of active citizenship can be seen as a way of ensuring democracy and guaranteeing everyone's, including children's, rights to be heard and participate in matters that consider them (e.g., Kiili, 2011, pp. 168-169; Nivala & Ryynänen, 2013). Furthermore, the promotion of active citizenship entails another perspective: while opportunities for participation are fostered among young people, also their marginalisation and exclusion are strived to prevent (see e.g., Nivala & Ryynänen, 2013, p. 13).

Many terms have been used to refer to the education that aims to promote active citizenship – civic, citizenship and democracy education have been commonly used at

the local level. Furthermore, the significant discussion on globalisation and the necessity to address global challenges through education, has contributed to a "sense of a global imperative in education" (Pashby, 2011, p. 428). Indeed, the nature of civic education has changed and the demands for it are more complex, as people now live in and feel connected to the global society and in this way the right for participation considers also global issues. Global education has entered national educational policies in Europe, as well as international educational policies (Hartmeyer & Wegimont, 2016). This global dimension of citizenship education has also been referred to with many terms, such as development education, human rights education, or peace education (Kivistö, 2008, p. 11). Also, sometimes a difference between global education (GE) and global citizenship education (GCED) is seen (see e.g., Fricke et al., 2015). Yet, drawing on the Maastricht global education declaration (Council of Europe/GENE, 2002, p.2.), which refers to global education as the global dimension of citizenship education, this study uses the term global education as an overarching term and as synonymous to global citizenship education, GCED.

Keeping in mind the many understandings of the concepts of active citizenship and global citizenship, also educating for citizenship can be understood from many perspectives. There exist a variety of views on which active citizens' and global citizens' competences should be taught. The already presented division into three global 'citizenships' made by Shultz (2007) partly aligns with Andreotti's theorization which distinguishes between technicist-neoliberal, liberal-humanist, and postcolonial orientations of GCED (see Andreotti, 2016: 202–203), or in more simple terms, the neoliberal, humanistic, and transformative perspectives. The neoliberal perspective considers GCED as a solution developed to address global market demands (Choi & Kim, 2018), thus, from this perspective GCED promotes neoliberal capitalism. Alternative ideas have been proposed by development organisations, and these come from a humanistic perspective (Sant et al., 2018). Oxfam who according to Sant et al. (2018, p. 17) has developed one important humanistic definition that has informed many global citizenship projects defines global citizen as someone who:

- Is aware of the wider world and has a sense of their own role as a world citizen
- Respects and values diversity
- Has an understanding of how the world works
- Is passionately committed to social justice; participates in the community at a range of levels, from the local to the global
- Works with others to make the world a more equitable and sustainable place
- Takes responsibility for their actions (Oxfam, 2015, p. 5).

Also, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) cultivates the humanistic approach (Stepanek Lockhart, 2016), and refers to global citizenship as "a sense of belonging to a broader community and common humanity", and the acts of global citizens as promoting a sustainable, just, inclusive

and peaceful world (UNESCO, 2015, pp. 14-15). Hence, from the humanistic perspective global citizenship is related to educating people about the systems in the globalised world and to build equality (Sant et al., 2018). Furthermore, as a decolonial response to global citizenship, which has been developed in Western frameworks, a new perspective to global citizenship has been introduced called an anticolonial or postcolonial perspective (Andreotti, 2016; Sant et al., 2018), and sometimes a transformative (e.g., Dyrness, 2021), or a critical perspective (e.g., Suša, 2016). From this transformative perspective GCED aims to build ethical forms of solidarity and critical global action to tackle prevalent unequal global power dynamics (Andreotti, 2016; Dyrness, 2021), and to educate learners to reflect upon their identity and belonging, to widen their frames of reference to see global development from different perspectives and to learn from the past (Andreotti, 2016; Pashby, 2012).

The perspectives can also be divided into two kinds of GCED: soft and critical (Andreotti, 2006; see also Dyrness, 2021). The soft approaches highlight a sense of common humanity and embracing of empathy and increasing of knowledge, while the critical approaches emphasise critical reflection, justice and enactment for change (Andreotti, 2006; also see Lehtomäki & Rajala, 2020, p. 116). The latter approach challenges existing power dynamics between countries, while the former reinforces them (Andreotti, 2006). For instance, drawing on Westheimer and Kahne's (2004) article, educational activities that promote personally responsible citizenship highlight characteristics and personal values, as well as the importance of volunteerism in making a better world, which reflects the soft approach (see also Dyrness, 2021). In turn, programmes that promote participatory citizenship, prepare learners to act in the collective, like equip learners with knowledge on how organisations work, and programmes that promote justice-oriented citizenship teach about social movements, critical thinking and analytical skills, as well as prepare learners to address social injustices and oppression, and to drive a systemic change (Westheimer & Kahne, 2004; see also Krutka & Carpenter, 2017). Thereby, the latter two approaches are more critical (Dyrness, 2021), and the justice-oriented approach can be considered the most critical. Similarly, post-colonial GCED presents the critical approach, compared to a softer humanistic approach. Coelho et al. (2021) articulate that, the perspectives also intersect – global citizenship can be at the same time for example humanistic and critical, forming hybrid forms of global citizenship (see also Suša, 2016).

The conception of active global citizenship in this study is a hybrid one, which draws upon the humanistic approach but intersects with ideas of the more critical, transformative approach. This study considers that promoting active global citizenship builds not just on the idea of realisation of participation rights, but strongly upon the idea that everyone's action is needed to achieve sustainable development, human rights, equality and equity, peace, and justice globally, and that the purpose of global

education is to give learners competences needed to advocate for these goals. This understanding of global education is founded on international declarations and global guidelines. According to Bachelet (2018) and Nikolitsa-Winter et al. (2019) some of the earliest of these frameworks can be considered the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UN, 1948), the UNESCO Constitution from 1945 (UNESCO, 1945), and the UNESCO (1974) recommendation regarding Education for International Understanding, Co-operation and Peace and Education relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms. Also, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UN, 1989) which sets a foundation for the promotion of children's participation (see e.g., Kiili, 2011, p. 168), can be viewed as setting one framework for global education. At the beginning of the 21st century Maastricht declaration defined global education as "education that opens people's eyes and minds to the realities of the world, and awakens them to bring about a world of greater justice, equity and human rights for all", and Development Education, Intercultural Education, Human Rights Education, Education for Peace and Conflict Prevention, and Education for Sustainability, as "being the global dimensions of Education for Citizenship" (Council of Europe/GENE, 2002, p. 2). Later, the Agenda 2030 brought global education also to the universal development agenda. The sustainable development goal (SDG) 4.7 characterises the objective of global education, as a shared commitment by the international community to:

> by 2030 ensure all learners acquire knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including among others through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship, and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development. (UN General Assembly, 2015, p. 17).

In 2022 the Maastricht declaration was replaced by the new European global education declaration, which established the European global education agenda up to 2050 with the aim to increase and encourage a better-quality global education (GENE, 2022). This Dublin Declaration builds upon the Maastricht Declaration, but has renewed the definition of global education, by taking the changing realities, definitions, and processes into account, and it considers the increased acknowledgement of critical perspectives to global education (GENE, 2022). In the declaration global education is defined as:

> . . . education that enables people to reflect critically on the world and their place in it; to open their eyes, hearts and minds to the reality of the world at local and global level. It empowers people to understand, imagine, hope and act to bring about a world of social and climate justice, peace, solidarity, equity and equality, planetary sustainability, and international understanding. It involves respect for human rights and diversity, inclusion, and a decent life for all, now and into the future. Global Education encompasses a broad range of educational provision: formal, non-formal and informal; life-long and life-wide. We consider it essential to the transformative power of, and the transformation of, education. (GENE, 2022, p.3.).

While the international community has committed to ensure that everyone learns skills and knowledge required to foster sustainable development (UN General Assembly, 2015, p. 17), it has not defined what these skills and knowledge are, nor have the global education declarations explicitly. The measures and indicators of young people's global citizenship learning are debated, under development, and only recently included more widely in international assessment (see e.g., Sant et al., 2018; Schulz et al., 2022). According to Pudas (2015, p. 53) the building of assessment policies is challenging as long as there is conceptual unclarity related to global education. In the recent past in Europe there have been efforts to build instruments for universal measurement of the competences – for example UNESCO has joined these efforts (Lehtomäki & Rajala, 2020, p. 116; UNESCO, 2014). According to UNESCO global citizenship competences refer to multifaceted global competences: knowledge, skills, and values and attitudes, which are grounded in human rights, environmental sustainability, social justice, gender equality and diversity (Stepanek Lockhart, 2016; UNESCO 2015; 2019). According to UNESCO (2015; 2019) these entail certain knowledge and understanding relating to the global world and sustainable development, cognitive skills like critical thinking or problem-solving, social and emotional competences such as values and attitudes of empathy, responsibility, solidarity, respect for diversity, care for oneself and the planet, and a shared sense of humanity, and collaboration and conflict-resolution skills, as well as behavioural capacities such as the ability to practically apply the competences, engage, and act ethically and responsibly in the global world. Also, Oxfam has made its own framework defining the competences, and distinguishes the "elements for developing active and responsible global citizenship" also as knowledge and understanding, values and attitudes, and skills. These entail a variety of competences such as knowledge of globalisation and interdependence, social justice and equity, human rights, sustainable development, and of power and governance, critical and creative thinking skills, cooperation and communication skills, and skills of empathy, and informed and reflective action, a sense of identity and self-esteem, valuing of diversity, a commitment to participation, social justice and to equity, as well as a belief that one can make a change (Oxfam, 2015, p. 8.).

Also, many scholars have touched upon the debates on active citizenship and global citizenship competences (e.g., Benn, 2000; Cantell, 2016; Davies, 2006; Hoskins & Crick, 2010; Yob, 2018), but the definitions depend on the perspectives from which they view the concept. For instance, Yob (2018) suggests ten competences of a social change curriculum be scholarship, systemic thinking and reflection, application, collaboration, advocacy and political engagement, and ethics, courage and commitment, the first three presenting the knowledge domain, the four in the middle the skills area, and the last four the affective dimension. Again, according to Hoskins & Crick (2010)

civic competence, which they define as the combination of learning outcomes needed to become an active citizen, entails skills to engage and interact with others, solidarity, and commitment to collective problem-solving. They build on Hoskin's (2006, as cited in Hoskins & Crick, 2010) work, according to which the combination of competences include among others: knowledge of human rights, diversity, political issues, history and current affairs, and of responsibilities and ways of engagement and advocacy, skills related to critical reflection and creativity, informed decision-making, problem-solving, advocacy, research, and many communication and collaboration skills, as well as agency. It also includes attitudes such as political interest, independence and autonomy, valuation of different cultures, responsibility, an openness to different opinions and to change, as well as values like sustainability, peace, justice, equality and equity, human rights and democracy (Hoskin's, 2006, as cited in Hoskins & Crick, 2010). Similarly, according to Sullivan and Transue (1999) tolerance is a needed competence in democracies. Hoskins (2006, as cited in Hoskins & Crick, 2010) also adds identity as one competence area which includes a sense of personal identity as well as a community identity at different levels.

Consequently, the characteristics of active citizenship can be understood as knowledge, understanding and awareness, attitudes and values, and skills, which form three competence areas, and finally participation, as the action to which the three mentioned competence areas lead to (see also Bárta et al., 2019; Ministry of Education, 2007). This is also in line with the argument by Hoskins & Crick (2010, p. 122), who refer to *competence* as "a complex combination of knowledge, skills, understanding, values, attitudes and desire which lead to effective, embodied human action in the world in a particular domain". However, this study considers desire and identity as part of values and attitudes: if one identifies as a global citizen and wants to make a change for a fairer global world, one has global citizen's values and attitude. It is relevant to note, that in this study active global citizenship is seen as one dimension of active citizenship, and thus, an active global citizen's competences are an active citizen's competences as well, combined with a global citizenship mindset. So, many competences are the same in both frameworks (see also e.g., Hoskins & Crick, 2010; Niemelä, 2012; Oxfam, 2015). Furthermore, it is relevant to note, that some scholars (e.g. Andreotti, 2006; Vaccari & Gardinier, 2019) suggest that the current frameworks for competences should be developed towards a more critical and postcolonial approach to global citizenship to address global inequalities.

Having now presented the idea of global education as aiming at a multidimensional change, and its purpose as understood in this study, I now turn attention to the dynamics of active global citizenship learning. The learning of global citizenship has often been linked especially to transformative processes of learning (Pudas, 2015, p.

76-77; see also GENE, 2022, p.2). According to O'Sullivan et al. (2002, p. xvii), transformative learning involves:

> experiencing a deep, structural shift in the basic premises of thought, feelings, and actions. It is a shift of consciousness that dramatically and irreversibly alters our way of being in the world. Such a shift involves our understanding of ourselves and our self-locations; our relationships with other humans and with the natural world; our understanding of relations of power in interlocking structures of class, race and gender; our bodyawarenesses, our visions of alternative approaches to living; and our sense of possibilities for social justice and peace and personal joy.

Transformative learning includes the pedagogy of giving space for one to think and reflect, and to critically question one's assumptions, values, and beliefs (Bourn, 2022; Mezirow, 2000). Hence, it entails a critical, pondering and reflecting approach, where learners engage deeply and question their assumptions, in contrast to transactional, and especially, transmissive learning strategies (Bourn, 2022, p. 126). According to some scholars like Andreotti (2006, p. 49), GCED is about giving the space for learners to reflect upon their own and others' context and beliefs, and thus it centres around transformative learning. Niemelä (2012) also highlights such learner-centred learning but argues that citizenship learning also requires some teacher-centred learning. According to Sterling (2003) and Laininen (2018, p. 28) a citizen's learning for social change happens in three levels: cognitive, which refers to the learning of knowledge and understanding, metacognitive, i.e., critical reflection of conceptions, beliefs and values, and transformative – the renewal of one's world view and conceptions, and Sterling (2003, p. 137) argues that for transformative learning to happen, probably the first two levels of learning must occur first. UNESCO's approach to GCED, resembles this notion, as it considers three core conceptual dimensions of learning: cognitive, socio-emotional, and behavioural (UNESCO, 2019). This sometimes-called head-heart-hand approach suggests that to enable transformative learning "knowledge must touch the heart and turn into action to bring about positive change" (UNESCO Bangkok Office & Asia-Pacific Regional Bureau for Education, 2017, p. 2). Accordingly, growth into active global citizenship requires learning at many different levels.

In addition, much of the literature on global education links transformative learning, and global education, to social learning (Pudas, 2015, pp. 76-77). Social learning theories have a socio-cultural perspective to learning and they consider that knowledge and possible transformation emerges as the outcome of social participation (Pudas, 2015), and hence social learning is closely related to participatory learning. Participatory, transformative learning is related to Freire's (1970) concept of praxis, which refers to "reflection and action upon the world in order to transform it" (p. 51) and implies that both critical reflection and collective action when in interplay, are needed to pursue social justice (see also Truong-White & McLean, 2015, p. 5; Kivistö, 2008). Also, Laininen (2018) argues that concrete action towards a sustainable future

deepens the meaningfulness of learnings, and Dyer and McNicol (2015, p. 11) state "the doing …offers the greatest potential for learning and growth". Additionally, according to Taylor (2008) critical transformational learning necessitates a learner-centred approach, experiential learning, the reflection of one's conceptions and the acquiring of new perspectives through dialogue and on-going long-term practice. This resonates with Mezirow's (2000, p. 7-8) idea that participation in social interactions, which leads to critical self-reflection, enables transformative learning. Based on such arguments, agency-centred, experience-based, participatory pedagogy is acknowledged as one of the pedagogical approaches that support transformational learning, and participation beyond formal education is understood to foster learning (see e.g., Brown, 2013; Laininen, 2018; Sant et al., 2018). It is also supported by studies that show that active citizenship competences are not best learned in restrictive environments such as classrooms (e.g., Hoskins et al., 2012). From the community-based learning perspective, it is thought that children can act for the benefit of the collective, and in the process their trust in themselves as change-makers increases, as well as their motivation to learn more (Smith, 2017). Indeed, a common comprehension is that young people's engagement with the society has positive consequences for their active citizenship learning.

Furthermore, learning through participation in social interactions can be seen as vital for active citizenship learning, considering that many active global citizenship competences like interpersonal socio-emotional skills become learned in interaction with others. This also applies to the prerequisite for developing active citizenship – care for oneself and others. Green (2015, p. 2.) has argued that "promoting active citizenship means building the power of citizens, starting with their internal 'power within' – self-confidence and assertiveness", and Värri (2011, as cited in Salonen & Bardy, 2015 and in Laininen, 2018) has argued that only someone who values themselves and their existence can value others and feel global responsibility, and that in this respect, community spaces where one can learn in a free, mutual and validating environment are important. In this way, a sense of social inclusion – a subjective personal experience which includes a sense of belonging to a community, the experience of equality, and of being heard and recognized as oneself among others (e.g., Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare, 2023) – can be regarded as a prerequisite for developing a caring attitude towards the wider global community and requiring social learning. Furthermore, it has been shown by many studies that engaging with diverse networks is important in youth programs (Brown, 2013; Finlay et al., 2010; Flanagan and Levine, 2010; Mahoney et al., 2009), also for active global citizenship learning. According to Brown (2013) and Bourn & Brown (2011) inspiring personal connections,

with other youth and adults who are mentors, matter for the deepening of an individual's engagement and the drive to learn[2]. Similarly, according to Mahoney et al. (2009), supportive activity leaders may increase positive learning outcomes, and positive peer relationships can support positive youth development, for example through model learning from competent peers, and according to Cantell (2008), peer-learning can empower young people to perceive that they have the potential to make an impact.

Considering the dynamics of active global citizenship learning, it is evident that learning for active global citizenship is not just a life-long, but a life-wide learning process, which takes place in formal, non-formal and informal learning environments, so within the school environment but also within education programmes and activities beyond school surroundings and in the everyday process of social participation (see also Bourn & Brown, 2011; Hoskins et al., 2012; Le Bourdon, 2018). Also, according to GENE (2022), Nikolitsa-Winter et al. (2019), and Oxfam (n.d.), global education is a framework that goes beyond formal education.

Non-formal global education is one form of fostering active global citizenship beyond formal education, being carried out by organisations, like NGOs (e.g., O'Loughlin & Wegimont, 2004). While formal education can make sure that everyone accesses global education, non-formal global education may influence the people it reaches. Organised youth activities offer important opportunities for youth development (see Mahoney et al., 2009), and thus also non-formal global education does. Additionally, Laininen (2018) argues that learning communities beyond formal education are not tied to the purpose of creating citizens that serve the economy, like formal education is, and this implies that non-formal education is needed, as it does not reproduce society but may renew it. Indeed, civil society organisations (CSOs) tend to bring in critical voices to social and political debates (Bourn, 2022, p. 214), and thereby global education provided by them may emphasise alternative perspectives compared to formal education. According to Brown (2013), NGO spaces may increase transformative learning and according to O'Loughlin & Wegimont (2004), generate a life-long commitment to global issues.

Furthermore, much of active global citizenship learning takes place also informally – although active citizenship is often promoted through education, its learning entails continuous informal learning processes that take place in different everyday environments (see Niemelä, 2012). In addition to the school environment these environments where active citizenship, including active global citizenship, is learned, entail but are not limited to the home environment, friend circles, recreational and civic participation environments, media and social media, and higher education contexts (Bourn & Brown, 2011; Cross et al., 2010; Mehtäläinen et al., 2017, p. 7; Laitinen &

[2] According to Bourn & Brown (2011) the youth advisory panel of Plan UK rests on this idea.

Nurmi, 2003). Also, international environments, i.e., engagement with different cultures and experiences abroad manifest as significant contexts for active global citizenship learning (see e.g., Bourn, 2022; Lough & McBride, 2014). Moreover, the learning is influenced by many factors like the culture and political culture of one's country of residence (Mehtäläinen et al., 2017, p. 7), and learners' individual characteristics and experiences (Bourn & Brown, 2011). According to Le Bourdon (2018, p.114), "informal spaces play a vital role in the individual's life-long learning journey as a global citizen".

In the context of this study, it is important to note, that while NGOs offer non-formal education, which can be considered goal-oriented and somewhat structured, they also provide room for informal learning which occurs in everyday interactions without a specific objective. These non-formal and informal spaces in NGOs are often connected to participation opportunities (e.g., Brown, 2013, pp. 264-265). Considering that participation is central for active citizenship learning, participatory spaces in NGOs give young people possibilities to learn *through* participation as well as learn participation (Brown, 2013). Children's participatory action in CSOs may provide important platforms for those interested to practise their citizenship, although it also should be acknowledged that it has been widely questioned whether the role of young people in CSOs is significant, i.e., whether the participation of young people in civil society is genuine participation or exploitative nonparticipation (Hart, 1992, pp. 8-14; Ministry of Education and Culture, 2011, p. 93). With respect to active citizenship learning, it is important that young people get experiences of genuine participation and inclusion, for them to become empowered to make an impact. According to Finlay et al. (2010), when young individuals see that their efforts are appreciated and have impact, it may build a sense of agency, and similarly Kivijärvi (2022, p. 35) argues that feelings of insecurities are a burden for young people's wellbeing that may frustrate and disempower, but if young people feel they can influence the issues, disempowerment can be avoided. A sense of agency is part of the sense of inclusion (see Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare, 2023), and refers to an experience that one is in control of one's actions, through which one can impact the surrounding world (Haggard, 2017). It is, thus, an experience of capability which leads to engagement. Hence, spaces where young people can participate may empower them to act also in the long-term.

Furthermore, studies show many benefits resulting from civic engagement at a young age: access to community engagement pertained from an early age reduces the risk for social alienation and is connected to many positive civic outcomes in future adult life (Augsberger et al., 2018; Finlay et al., 2010). Civic engagement can fulfil the need to belong, to feel purpose in life, build social connections, social capital, civic competences, and help youth find career opportunities (Flanagan & Levine, 2010, p. 160). Furthermore, a greater sense of social inclusion resulting from young people's participation in organisations (Kaunismaa et al., 2021), and stronger motivations for

civic engagement in adulthood result from community service engagement in adolescence (Metz & Youniss, 2005). Yet, it should be considered that in addition to enabling genuine participation, effective organisations should engage youth by challenging them in an appropriate manner to their skill level, like through opportunities for progressive responsibilities (Flanagan, 2004; McLaughlin, 2000).

In the past two chapters, the framework for examining active global citizenship and its learning has been established for this study. Drawing strongly on the European global education declarations, the frameworks of the UN, UNESCO and Oxfam, but also considering the work of scholars like Vanessa Andreotti, this study builds upon the humanistic and transformative notions of global citizenship, considering the concept from the social change agenda. To summarise the hybrid idea established, a global citizen is someone who takes action for a fairer, equal, sustainable, and more just world, in all areas of life and at all regional levels and has the competences to do so. Drawing on the work of GENE (2022), Le Bourdon (2018), Laitinen and Nurmi (2003), O'Sullivan et al. (2002), Oxfam (n.d.; 2015), and UNESCO Bangkok Office and Asia-Pacific Regional Bureau for Education (2017), the learning of active global citizenship is considered as an individual's personal transformation that continues throughout one's life in formal, non-formal and informal learning environments, and a sequential and cumulative process. It is understood as cognitive, metacognitive and affective and transformative learning of active global citizenship competences as presented earlier. Yet, in this study it is viewed that citizenship competence development exists in relation to citizenship practice: the competences are needed to practise citizenship through participation and this participation shapes the competences further. Indeed, active global citizenship is not seen only as an outcome of the learning path, but the learning is viewed taking place in the process of participation, as an ongoing practice which is in line with the idea presented by Lawy & Biesta (2006). According to Lawy & Biesta (2006, p. 45), "young people learn to be citizens as a consequence of their participation in the actual practices that make up their lives".

Also, by now I have pointed out that the debate on global education and learning has become increasingly noticeable in educational and academic, government, and civil society discourses (see for further reference ANGEL, n.d; Lehtomäki & Rajala, 2020). Many scholars (e.g., Hoskins et al., 2012; Le Bourdon, 2018; Reynolds et al., 2019; Stepanek Lockhart, 2016) agree that previous studies on learning active citizenship, have emphasised formal education as a means for educating for active or global citizenship more than non-formal and informal learning. There are studies which explore non-formal global citizenship learning in relation to international volunteerism (e.g., Allum, 2012; Bárta et al., 2019, Lough & McBride, 2014), but it seems the topic is less frequently studied in national non-formal education contexts. Furthermore, Bourn & Brown (2011) argue that the ways in which engagement and learning are related

should be explored further. I intend to add to the active global citizenship learning literature by exploring the potential ways in which participation in a national youth participatory advocacy group may contribute to active global citizenship, especially through non-formal and informal participatory processes of learning. Now that the main conceptual and theoretical framework related to active global citizenship and its learning as a life-wide and life-long process has been built for this study, next, I will set out the context in which learning of active global citizenship is explored in this study, and then, in the following methodology chapter, I explain how the exploration is done through the idea of contribution.

3 THE RESEARCH ENVIRONMENT AND RESEARCH PARTNER

As in this study active global citizenship learning is examined in the context of Finland, it is relevant to explore what active global citizenship means in the Finnish context and the citizenship and global education landscape in Finland. In this chapter I also introduce the main partner of this study, Plan International Finland, as a central non-governmental development organisation working in Finland, and the Children's Board programme which is under review.

3.1 Finland as a context for active global citizenship learning

Active citizenship must be tied to the context, when discussing it. Opportunities for active citizenship depend on policies and government infrastructure like the state of democracy, civic space and civil society (see e.g., Stepanek Lockhart, 2016, p. 5). Finland is a Nordic state, and can be considered as an egalitarian, and democratic society and a welfare state (Hoskins et al., 2012). The country has for long been committed to human rights, democracy, and open government (OECD, 2021, p. 8). The freedom of expression, as well as the freedom of assembly are guaranteed by the constitution of Finland and national laws (OECD, 2021). In Finland adult citizens may engage in social issues by voting, establishing, or supporting citizen and municipal initiatives, or by taking part in civil society organisations (Suomi.fi, n.d.), while underaged people are seen as targets of education (Gretschel et al., 2009, p. 17). Also in Finland, as part of Europe, citizen participation has been promoted, and attempts have been made to increase opportunities for participation since the 1970s (Salmikangas, 1998, p. 3). According to the Finnish constitution, public authorities are responsible for promoting citizens' engagement in the society and for giving them a voice in decisions that impact

them (Constitution of Finland, 1999/731), and thus the constitution establishes the foundation for civic education. Active citizenship is broadly promoted especially among young people in Finnish policy (Youth Wiki, 2023). Also under the current government, good practices of human rights and democracy education will be promoted (Finnish Government, 2023, p. 193), however, the government is cutting the relevant budget to implement this goal (Kylänpää et al., 2024).

Furthermore, Finland is committed to promote the SDGs (MFA, n.d.-a), recognizes the importance of global education and is committed to advance it (see e.g., FNBE et al., 2014; Ministry of Education, 2007). It has been recognized that global education must be integrated into formal and non-formal education and civil society sectors, at national and subnational levels (O'Loughlin & Wegimont, 2004, p. 35.). Global education and development awareness have been promoted by two key players in Finland: Ministry for Foreign Affairs (MFA) and development NGOs (O'Loughlin & Wegimont, 2004). The Government through the MFA fosters public awareness on development issues and development cooperation: the Ministry for Foreign Affairs executes development communication and gives financial support as co-financing to Finnish non-governmental development organisations, also to global education purposes (MFA, n.d.-b; O'Loughlin & Wegimont, 2004), which they partly execute in schools (Hartmeyer & Wegimont, 2016, p. 105). Hence, it supports non-formal global education, which blends partly with formal education in Finland (see Henriksson, 2022, p. 56). However, the funding that Finnish civil society organisations have received has been decreasing (Fingo, n.d.-b), and recently one important funding form was discontinued (Fingo, 2024), which affects the non-formal provision of GE.

In the arena of formal education, active citizenship and active agency of learners as well as elements of global citizenship are included in the national core curricula of basic education (Finnish National Agency for Education, 2014). In Finland, unlike in other European countries, global education has been treated as a cross-cutting theme in the national core curriculum since 2014 and viewed from a holistic approach (Hartmeyer & Wegimont, 2016; Lehtomäki & Rajala, 2020). Global education themes have been increasingly integrated into the curricula at all levels of formal education (O'Loughlin & Wegimont, 2004, pp. 35-36). Especially in the national core curriculum for general upper secondary education, renewed in 2019, global citizenship has been increasingly included (Finnish National Agency for Education, 2019; McAuley, 2020, p. 16). Considering that currently education is compulsory for all children and adolescents in Finland until they finish upper secondary education, or turn 18 years old, this provides a potential in terms of raising global citizens.

However, many scholars argue that the implementation of citizenship education is inadequate. There is also evidence that global education has not been implemented effectively and systematically in formal basic education (Pudas, 2015; Räsänen et al.,

2018). In Finland, education providers – local education authorities and schools – may specify their own targets in the framework of the national core curricula (Finnish National Agency for Education, 2014). Thus, schools have the right to decide on the ways in which they incorporate global education themes in teaching and educational methods and materials are decided by the teacher, while NGOs and the government have a central role to support these efforts (O'Loughlin & Wegimont, 2004, p. 28; see also Finnish National Agency for Education, n.d.). The implementation of the curriculum is based on individual teachers' interest, projects, individual courses and other short-term action (Lehtomäki & Rajala, 2020; Räsänen et al., 2018). Global education is not an explicit part of teaching, and there is a perception that global education is an additional burden in schools where resources are limited (Pudas, 2015). Consequently, there is variation in how different aspects of global education are taught in schools, and classrooms (Räsänen et al., 2018; Saloranta, 2017, p. 229). This may lead to limited, partial and biassed learning of global citizenship competences. As in formal education there may be limited resources, time, and tools to educate for global citizenship, the ever-larger importance of non-formal civic and global education, as well as the informal global citizenship learning happening outside of schools, becomes highlighted.

Furthermore, Kiilakoski (2015) states that extensive democracy education, where school entails aspects of social learning and learning through participation and experiences, is still now an objective. The participation of children and young people manifests only in the form of student and youth councils and in children's parliaments[3] (Kiilakoski, 2015). Also, according to Cantell (2016), and Kärnä et al. (2012), teaching is often focused on the cognitive transferring of knowledge, while practice and interaction from learning is missing from schools, and consequently young people are not activated and encouraged to engage. Also previous research, such as past International Civic and Citizenship Education (ICCS) studies, shows that even though Finnish youths' civic knowledge is relatively high and Finnish young people have certain attitudes that are in line with active democratic citizenship, their societal participation and motivation to participate is at a low level, as well as their trust in themselves as societal actors compared to other countries, meaning that the competences do not transform into active citizenship practice (see Kiilakoski, 2015; Mehtäläinen et al., 2017). Finnish young people don't see engagement in societal movements as very important, nor do they see political action, when compared internationally (Mehtäläinen et al., 2017). On the other hand, an experience of volatility and insecurity related to global threats has spread also to Finnish youths (Kivijärvi, 2022; Myllyniemi 2017, p.

[3] In Finland, through formal education children and young people can join structures like student bodies, youth councils, and children's and youth parliaments (Hurmeranta et al., 2016; Ministry of Education and Culture, 2011).

49–53), and this burden creates possible disempowerment (see Kivijärvi, 2022). This highlights the need to empower young people to take action and learn participation.

Also, the Ministry of Education and Culture (2011, pp. 93-94) of Finland has recognized that children's participation in CSOs and other civil society needs strengthening, and new participation methods should be fostered. With respect to global participation it is relevant to note that, although there are many Finnish CSOs and movements that work for a fairer world (see Fingo, n.d.-a), where young people can participate at a certain age, considering that participation opportunities tend to increase by age (see Ministry of Education and Culture, 2011), there seem to be fewer participation possibilities for children that relate to global issues, no CSOs led by children and young people, and only a few participation groups specifically targeted to children and young people, where young people can advocate for global issues. Some of the currently existing possibilities are presented by the MFA (2024). The Children's Board of Plan International Finland presents one of the unique innovative opportunities for children to engage with global matters and for non-formal active global citizenship learning, and it is presented in the following chapter.

3.2 Plan International Finland and the Children's Board

Plan International is a development and humanitarian organisation which promotes children's rights and equality for girls (Plan International, n.d.-a). It is a child's rights organisation focused on improving the lives of the most vulnerable girls globally (Plan International Finland, n.d.-a.). Plan International works in over 80 countries with children and young people (Plan International, n.d.-b), engaging young people in its structures of governance (Plan Finland, 2014).

Plan International Finland, earlier Plan Finland, in the thesis also referred to as *Plan* to shorten the length, is one of the national organisations, within Plan International (Plan Finland, 2008, p. 32). It is its own legal entity – a Finnish development organisation, established in 1998 (Plan Finland, 2008, p. 32). Plan International Finland works in addition to programme countries also in Finland, where its action has strongly been centring around advocacy and global education (Plan Finland 2008; 2011; 2014; Plan International Finland, 2017; 2021a; see also Figure 2.). Indeed, the different national organisations within Plan International foster global responsibility and global civic engagement through enhancing individuals' awareness and comprehension of child rights and human rights (Plan Finland, 2011, p. 6). Through its global education programme Plan International Finland aims to contribute to the the global strategy goal, realisation of child rights and equality for girls, by increasing individuals' and communities' participation, by supporting

advocacy work, and by strengthening skills and knowledge of citizens in the civil society (Pensala & Tran-Nguyen, 2018, p. 10). The purpose of Plan's global education has been to increase the participation of individuals to take positive action for the realisation of children's rights and global justice (Plan Finland, 2011, p. 14), and for development cooperation and human rights and to support the development of critical citizens "who have knowledge and skills to act in the globalising world as part of their own community" (Plan, 2008, p. 11). It is to foster global civic responsibility (Plan Finland, 2011). Indeed, Plan aims to build active citizenship among Finnish people, with a particular focus on globally oriented active citizenship. According to Henriksson (2022, p. 118) the organisation's main orientation to global education is development education, and based on Plan's programme documents I understand that the global citizenship Plan aims to promote is aligned with the humanistic notion of global citizenship, that highlights such aspects like a sense of shared humanity and knowledge, but also the transformative notion, as it aims to encourage for critical awareness and enactment for global justice.

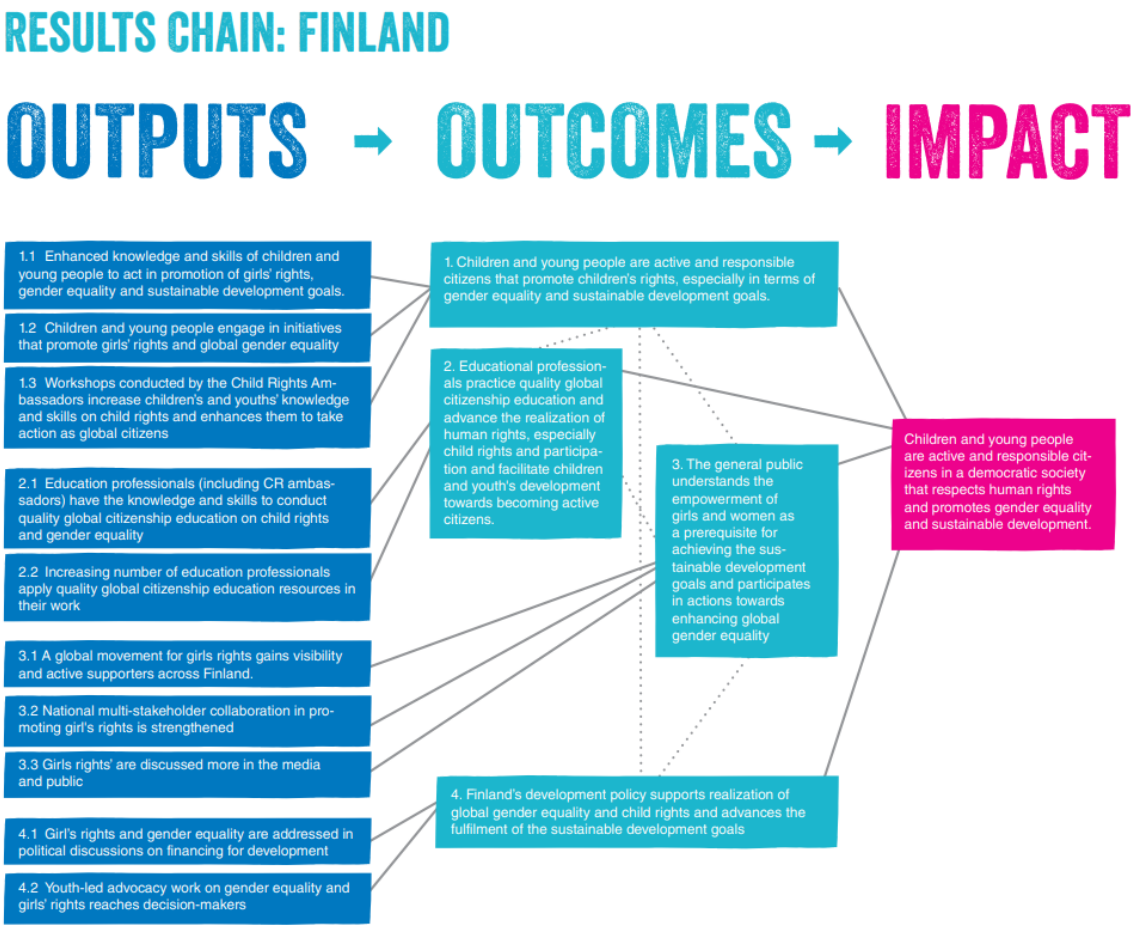

FIGURE 2 Results chain of Plan International Finland's domestic action.

Plan engages and raises awareness in the wider public through its development communication and advocacy work, by collaborating with formal education to provide global education in schools, and also, by executing global education action outside of schools, in the form of youth groups (e.g., Plan International Finland, 2017, pp. 161-165). According to Plan, through the provided participation opportunities "a continuum from awareness raising and education to participation and advocacy" is being built (Plan Finland, 2014, p. 29). According to Plan International Finland, engaging young people in its action is valuable, as it makes decision-making more informed, diverse and representative, as young people are powerful role models for peers and ambassadors for child rights, and as they can have expertise different to that of adults (Plan Finland, 2014, p. 9). Indeed, during its existence, Plan has developed channels for children's and young people's participation to ensure their engagement as equal members of society (Plan, 2017, p. 163). One central form of youth engagement and non-formal global education is the Children's Board.

The Children's Board[4] (*lastenhallitus* in Finnish), later referred to as CB, is an international concept taking place in different countries where Plan International works (Plan International Finland, n.d.-b).[5] In Finland it was established in 2001 (Plan International Finland, n.d.-b), and thus has been running for over 20 years - across different programme cycles. The CB is a children's advocacy group for children and youth aged between 11 and 18 years [6] (Plan International 2017; 2021a). Although called the *Children's Board*, all participants can be considered adolescents, as adolescence is seen as a phase from ages 10 to 19, between childhood and adulthood, and participants who are over 15 years old can be also regarded as youth (WHO South-East Asia, n.d.). However, as childhood can cover years 0-18, it is important to note that the concepts of *children*, *adolescents* and *youth* overlap and are all used in this study. To establish a picture of the CB programme, relevant programme documents, such as Plan International Finland's partnership applications and some other documents, were revised, and the programme was discussed with a youth activities planner working in the organisation. The programme is explained as follows :

Approximately 20 adolescents have participated in the group during every programme period and a minority of the board members have been boys (Pensala & Tran-Nguyen, 2018, p. 14). The group involves adolescents from different parts of Finland, however, the coordination and main action take place in Helsinki. The young people apply to the group on their own initiative whereafter a selection process takes place. Currently, the selected members are voted by the CB members and the selection process is anonymised and aims to maximise members' diversity (personal

[4] officially Plan Children's Advisory Board (CAB) (Plan Finland, 2001)
[5] The concept is internationally called Youth Advisory Panel (YAP), and targeted for young people approximately 15–25 years old (personal communication with Plan employee, 13.5.2024)
[6] Earlier the age scale has been slightly different: 12–18 years (Plan Finland, 2011).

communication with Plan staff member, 13.5.2024). In social media, the CB defines itself as a youth group under Plan International Finland which informs about children's rights and the everyday life of children in developing countries (Plan Children's Board, n.d.), and according to Plan International Finland (2017, p. 163), the CB is a "forum for learning about children's rights and mobilising this knowledge to campaigning and advocacy work". It is a space for young people to impact the society: to promote child and girls' rights, equality, and sustainable development over all (Plan International Finland, n.d.-b). Thus, the action can be considered youth-led advocacy, but also non-formal global education for its direct beneficiaries – the CB members. While the programme engages adolescents in Plan's advocacy and communication work, it also enables their active global citizenship learning. As such the CB programme aims to have an impact in different levels: at the direct beneficiary level it aims to impact the members of the board themselves, and through the action the members lead, impact the wider society. Thus, the indirect beneficiaries are formed by the population reached by the multifaceted awareness-raising activities conducted by the CB such as other Finnish children and young people. A significant funder of the programme has been the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland (Plan Finland 2008; 2011; 2014; Plan International Finland 2017; 2021a; personal communication with Plan staff member, 13.5.2024), which is a funder of the action of Plan International Finland (MFA, 2021). Thus, Plan's work reflects the priorities of Finnish development policy, and consequently has been in line with the Millenium Development Goals, and is in line with the SDGs. However, the work in Finland like global education, and youth and advocacy action has been also funded from other sources such as by the Ministry for Education and Culture, the Finnish National Agency for Education, as well as private funders (Plan International Finland, 2020 ; 2021b; 2022; 2023).

According to Plan (2017, p. 164), the organisation's role in the CB is facilitative: while it provides expertise and training, as well as channels for advocacy and communication, the board members enjoy ownership in the planning and execution processes of its action. Hence, drawing on Flanagan & Levine (2010) who classify youth action as youth-led activism when youth decide on objectives and lead the initiatives but adults provide support, facilitation, and training, the action can be regarded as youth-led activism, and is recently being developed more to that direction (Plan International Finland, 2021a). Plan supports the group by giving e.g., advocacy training for the members (Plan Finland Foundation, 2008), support to produce material (Plan Finland, 2011), training on communication, media and campaigning skills, as well as on campaign contents like girls' rights and development cooperation (Plan International Finland, 2017). Plan also facilitates platforms and channels for the CB to engage directly with ministers and other members of parliament in discussing

issues like gender equality and development cooperation, and supports advocacy efforts to not only reach decision-makers but also peers (Plan International Finland, 2017). Thus, the action includes structured educational elements, like trainings and workshops, but the focus is on learning by doing and participating.

The advocacy work projects the CB plans and executes entail events, workshops and campaigns among other activities (Plan Finland, 2011; Plan International Finland, 2017; n.d.-b). The initiatives have been on different themes: for instance, in 2012–2014 the thematic focus was on education, child protection, and youth economic empowerment, and gender as the cross-cutting issue (Plan Finland, 2011), while in 2018–2021 the focus was on gender roles and climate change (Plan International Finland, 2017). The CB advocates directly and indirectly delivering its messages to decision-makers and by using media channels (Plan International Finland, 2021a), and the advocacy work takes place in different environments like schools and public events (Plan International Finland, 2017). Moreover, the CB organises expert discussions and national and local election panel discussions for politicians (Plan Finland Foundation, 2008; Plan International Finland, 2017). The action takes place at different regional levels: national and local, as well as international (Plan Finland, 2011; Plan Finland Foundation, 2008). The basic structure of the CB is national: the board meetings, an important regular part of the action (Plan Finland, 2001; 2011), happen at national level, and in 2007 the CB action was widened to include local level activities (Plan Finland Foundation, 2008). Additionally, the group has engaged and cooperated internationally, like with other Children's Boards abroad (Plan Finland Foundation, 2008), and other youth groups such as with Kenyan youth organisations (Plan Finland, 2008) and Ugandan youth network (Plan International Finland, 2017). Earlier intercultural globally located action, such as travels to other countries, also to countries of the Global South, were more common, whereas later the focus has been shifted to international collaboration with youth groups in different countries (personal communication with Plan staff member, 13.5.2024). In addition, the CB is also an advisory body to the Board of Trustees of Plan International Finland (Plan International Finland, 2021a, p. 161), and enables the provision of a youth perspective on the organisation's actions (Plan International Finland, n.d.-b).

As in this study the contribution of the CB programme is investigated among participants from different participation years and even decades, it must be noted that the CB action has changed somewhat over the years, as has Plan's overall action, according to Plan's programme documents (Plan Finland, 2008; 2011; 2014; Plan International Finland, 2017; 2021a). The ways in which the CB has been embedded in the action of Plan has developed from forming the basic structure for the organisation's global education, to providing opportunities for participation and youth advocacy work, when Plan International Finland has started to develop better

mechanisms for youth participation. What else has changed over the years, is a thematic focus: since 2012 gender has been a crosscutting theme included in the action, however, within the past 10 years the focus has been shifted from promoting general children's rights to promoting especially girls' rights, and climate issues have also increasingly been incorporated in the action according to the programme documents (Plan Finland 2011; 2014; Plan International Finland, 2017; 2021a). The increased incorporation of climate issues in the action was initiated by the CB members themselves (personal communication with Plan staff member, 13.5.2024).

Participation in the CB programme can be an important experience that has a powerful effect on the identity of a young person (personal communication with a Plan employee, 3.2.2022). According to the Plan employee, in the CB adolescents usually engage for the longest period, compared to other youth groups within the organisation. Considering the age scale, members may spend several years of their adolescence, as well as experience the transition from adolescence to young adulthood, while participating in the group. In the face of adulthood young people undergo shifts in their sense of belonging and autonomy in relation to others like their peers, families, and wider society (Repo et al., 2023), and they establish their identities, worldviews and opinions (Finlay et al., 2010). Accordingly, the time of adolescence, and emerging adulthood, is a significant period in terms of youth development, and the CB being a form of long-term volunteering which involves sustained nonformal and informal learning, may contribute significantly to its members' development, including active global citizenship development, considering that learning of global responsibility needs continuous long-term action (see Cantell, 2016). The programme has been assessed and evaluated to some extent previously (see later Chapter 5.1.) but not from a long-term perspective nor from such a holistic perspective which considers participants from different programme cycles, and the whole duration of their participation. This study aims to explore the contribution of the CB programme from these perspectives. Next, I explain how the contribution of the programme to the previous members' lives with respect to active global citizenship is explored in this thesis.

4 METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY: ANALYSIS OF PERCEIVED CONTRIBUTIONS

To explore the contribution of the Children's Board (CB) participation to learning of active global citizenship, I established a unique research design based on contribution analysis, an approach established by Mayne (2001), where I, inspired by the qualitative research approach, combined an element of perceived contribution. In this chapter, I first discuss contribution analysis as a prevalent approach in the impact evaluation literature and introduce its methodological steps mostly drawing upon the work of Mayne. Second, I explain how it guides the examination of active global citizenship learning and how it is applied to my analysis of participants' retrospective accounts on the contributions of the CB.

4.1 Contribution analysis – a softer approach to causality

Public and nonprofit programmes are often funded and implemented based on the assumption that there is a good likelihood to achieve the planned results (Mayne, 2011, p. 55). There is no guarantee of expected results, and the program might be only one of the ways to get to the desired results (Mayne, 2011, p. 55). The managers and funders of a programme or project will be interested in knowing if the desired results at different levels were achieved after the programme has run for some time (Mayne, 2011). Therefore, projects and programmes are typically evaluated. Through programme evaluation it can be examined if a programme achieved its outcomes and how they were achieved (Tatian, 2016), though according to Mayne (2011, p. 56) evaluations often focus only on the first question. Mayne (2011) emphasises that the need for evaluation does not limit to results, but there should be discussion on cause and

effect, i.e., what caused the outcomes – the project activities, or other factors. According to Mayne (2011) evaluations should explore the reasons for the occurrence or non-occurrence of results, as well as if one can conclude that the program importantly contributed to achieving the specific results. This means programs should address attribution (Mayne, 2011).

The question of attribution is: "to what extent are observed results due to programme activities rather than other factors", according to Mayne (2008, p. 1). The attribution question must be considered in a situation where it is difficult to demonstrate that the programme in question has made the difference observed and when the outcomes might have occurred even without the program (Mayne, 2001, p. 3.). In a usual situation there are other factors that have a role to play (ibid). Programmes often have different levels of influence: at the direct control level, usually at output level, the programme has direct control to results, at the direct influence level, usually immediate and intermediate level, through direct contact the programme influences expected results, and at indirect influence level the program has less influence on the results, as there might be major influence of other factors or/and programme might have less direct contact (Mayne, 2008, p. 2; see also Montague et al., 2003). At the levels beyond the direct control level, the attribution problem appears (Mayne, 2001). For an organisation to be accountable for the outcomes of its programme, managers must understand and report attribution and causality (Mayne, 2011).

Causality – its meaning and how to assess it – has been discussed for a long time (Mayne, 2011, p. 58). Some claim that assessing and establishing causality is only possible through randomised controlled trials, experiments that use the counterfactuality principle (Mayne, 2011, p. 58), and when the attribution question is considered in program evaluation, it is traditionally overcome by using controlled comparison in some form (Mayne, 2001, p. 4). These experimental and quasi-experimental designs are often impractical or infeasible (Mayne, 2001, p. 5; 2008, p. 1). When there is no possibility to use these designs, other solutions must be used to tackle the attribution issue (Mayne, 2001). New softer ways of conceptualising and assessing causality have been proposed, and the discourse has changed from deterministic causation to a probabilistic one, and the latter has been recognized ever more widely (Goldthorpe, 2001; Iverson, 2003; Mayne, 2011). In line with the probabilistic notion, Mayne (2011) argues that because often cause-and-effect relationships involve uncertainty and proving causality is difficult, concluding about causality can be about reducing uncertainty about the cause-and-effect relationships. From the probabilistic perspective to causation, it is always possible to gather more information that reduces uncertainty and increases understanding about a program, and consequently measure the contribution a program is making, even when absolute proving of impacts is not possible (Mayne, 2001, p. 6).

Based on these ideas, Mayne has developed a methodological approach called contribution analysis (Mayne, 2001; 2012), later referred to as CA, which according to Delahais and Toulemonde (2012) is a pragmatic approach on how to apply a theory-based evaluation. CA is a new way of understanding causal chains and a theory of change behind a programme, and of critically assessing contribution of a programme, instead of attribution, which is traditionally assessed (Uusikylä, 2013, p. 26). In CA attribution is examined through assessing contribution of the programme to results (Mayne, 2008), i.e., the focus is on building a credible explanation about the attribution of a program (Mayne, 2001, p. 7). Like other theory-based approaches to evaluation, that use programme theory, assess its outcomes, the mechanisms of processes and factors involved in program implementation to understand programme functioning (INTRAC, 2017; Weiss, 1997), also CA uses this approach to understand past performance and to improve future performance of programmes (Mayne, 2001). The theory of change (TOC) is the central analytical tool in CA (Mayne, 2011, p. 67), which is being tested against evidence and logic (Befani & Mayne, 2014). A theory of change, which entails a results chain, illustrates the chain of outcomes: what is supposed to happen at immediate, intermediate, and final outcome levels after programme activities and subsequent outputs are produced, i.e., how the program ought to work (Mayne, 2001; 2011; Weiss, 1997). In addition to the results chains, it sets out assumptions behind the causal links, and risks related to the assumptions – stating what conditions should exist for the causal link to occur and what are the related risks, when it would not occur (Mayne, 2008; 2011; 2012). Furthermore, according to Mayne, it should also set out other influencing factors (Mayne, 2011), and thus CA takes other influencing factors to the outcomes into account. According to Mayne (2001, p. 8), discussing other factors that play a role may help to understand the program itself (Mayne, 2001). CA also takes into consideration the lack of intended results, as well as existence of unintended results (Mayne, 2008). According to Mayne, in CA causality is concluded from a few key points, which are: the programme is based on a theory of change, where assumptions are stated and accepted widely, the activities have been implemented as planned, there is evidence that verifies the results chain, and other influencing factors have been assessed and their relative contribution or little contribution has been acknowledged (Mayne, 2008, p. 1). Consequently, if these come true, it can be concluded that the programme made an important contribution to the expected results (Mayne, 2008). Based on the by now presented literature, in contrast to influence, which refers to some kind of a change, contribution is the notion that the influence of a factor is one among various factors that contribute to a change, and exploring a programme's contribution requires the examining of intended and unintended outcomes, and causal mechanisms, which entail the influences of the programme, but also the

influences of other factors. When these factors are understood better, contribution can be stated. This thesis is founded on this idea.

CA has a structured approach, which includes continuing and iterative testing of theory with new knowledge (see e.g., Delahais, 2023). According to Mayne (2011, p. 63), it includes six steps, which to complete when building the *contribution story*, and these are:

Step 1: Set out the cause-effect issue to be addressed
Step 2: Develop the postulated theory of change and risks to it
Step 3: Gather the existing evidence on the theory of change
Step 4: Assemble and assess the contribution story, and challenges to it
Step 5: Seek out additional evidence
Step 6: Revise and strengthen the contribution story

At the first step when the causal issue to be addressed is set, the question of attribution is acknowledged - that causality issues need to be considered. One must also ask at this step what is really being asked about attribution - what is the specific causal question addressed (Mayne, 2011). According to Mayne (2011, p. 64), traditional causality questions are such as "To what extent has the intervention caused the outcome?", and contribution questions such as "Has the intervention made a difference?", while management questions are such as "What does the preponderance of evidence say about how well the intervention is making a difference?". When choosing the question, the specific context should be considered and what is relevant to know, as well as if the question is possible to answer (Mayne, 2008). In many cases the traditional causality question is difficult to answer, and contribution and managerial type of questions are usually more fitted for CA (Mayne, 2008). Exploring the nature and extent of the expected contribution is important, for the sake of knowing what kind of evidence will be sufficient to claim that the contribution of the program is significant (Mayne, 2008; 2011). According to Mayne (2008; 2011), the question is also what kind of evidence is satisfying when it is known that other factors also have an influence on the results. Here it must be noted that setting the expected contribution is simpler at the output level, but less straightforward at higher levels of the results chain (Mayne, 2008; 2011).

Mayne (2004, p. 32) argues that "It is not possible to assess performance either for managers or for the public without knowing first what level of performance was expected". Aligned with this common idea in evaluation, in CA the prior expectations in the form of ToC are set first, and afterwards compared to the observed ToC, which refers to the results that occurred (see e.g., Mayne, 2011). In the case where there is no ToC that explains the programme, the ToC can be established retrospectively during programme evaluation (Befani & Mayne, 2014, p. 21). This building of the theory of

change is the second step in CA. Theories of change are typically established based on earlier research on the field, programme document reviews, discussions with central stakeholders and logical analysis (Mayne, 2011, p. 69). Recognizing that programmes have different levels of influence, also different kinds of contribution analyses can be conducted: a minimalist CA that examines results at output level, CA of direct influence, or CA of indirect influence (Mayne, 2011). Thus, it is possible to limit the ToC to explore only some of the outcome levels. Measuring outcomes at the first two levels is more feasible, as the theory of change will entail clearer expectations at those levels (Mayne, 2001; 2011).

After producing the ToC, it will be mirrored to existing evidence (Mayne, 2001; 2011). Hence, evidence gathering is the next step. In CA at step 3 the focus is on gathering secondary evidence, i.e., already existing evidence, and collecting new evidence is done later at step 5 (Mayne, 2011). The available evidence can be searched from earlier performance measurements and evaluations, and relevant research that has been previously conducted (Mayne, 2001; 2011). Evidence should be gathered on the results stated in the ToC, on the other influencing factors, and on the assumptions (Mayne, 2001; 2008; 2011). The evidence base should cover all the causal links according to Delahais & Toulemonde (2012). Recognizing if key results, i.e., outputs, immediate, intermediate, and final outcomes, have occurred or not, is an important initial step when analysing the contribution of the programme, and hence finding evidence on the occurrence or non-occurrence of the results starts the analysis of the contribution to these results (Mayne, 2008, p. 3; 2011, p. 75). Evidence of the occurrence of more immediate short-term outcomes is important and even critical to build the performance story (Mayne, 2001), therefore it is also examined whether the assumed short-term outcomes occurred, and not just the longer-term outcomes. Furthermore, there should be evidence showing that the assumptions in the theory are at least reasonably valid, and the evidence should build some idea of how much influence the other factors may have (Mayne, 2008). There should also be certainty that the program was implemented as planned, meaning that the activities and following outputs were undertaken (Mayne, 2011).

The fourth step of the analysis is assembling and assessing the contribution story (Mayne, 2011). Based on the gathered existing evidence, and its analysis, *the contribution story*, or *the causal claim* - is set out so far (Mayne, 2011). It includes the observed results, the assumptions of the links and the likely affecting other factors, and the story will explain the reasons to assume that the program actions and outputs have contributed to the outcomes observed (Mayne, 2001). The strengths and weaknesses in the premised theory of change will be assessed at this stage (Mayne, 2011). The weaknesses of the story point to the parts where further evidence is needed (Mayne, 2001). If needed, the theory of change will be updated, refined, and adjusted (Mayne, 2011).

According to Mayne (2001; 2008; 2011) it should be examined if the results that were observed validate the theory produced, as well as if reasonable people see the story as credible and agreeable. In many cases at this moment the certainty of the extent of the contribution is little, and it is best to acknowledge it, states Mayne (2001).

In CA at step 5 additional evidence is sought (Mayne, 2011). The assessment done in the previous step has identified the weaknesses and determined the type of additional evidence that is needed to make the contribution story more credible. The collecting of further evidence will improve the understanding of the theory, and address the weaknesses identified in the story (Mayne, 2001). There are many possible ways to collect the evidence, such as through reviews of relevant literature, surveys, focus groups, or field visits (Mayne, 2001).

At the final step of CA, step 6, the contribution story will be finalised based on the collected evidence. Mayne (2001, p. 9) argues that by gathering new evidence and assessing it, a stronger and more credible contribution story will be produced – optimally a story that a reasonable person will more likely agree with.

In this study the steps 1-4 are seen as preparation of the study, where the causal question is set, the ToC is established and tested against already existing secondary data, which leads to an establishment of an initial contribution story. At step 5 new evidence is gathered, through data collection in the form of a survey and interviews, and after analysing the data the final contribution story is established. However, the steps as suggested by Mayne are adjusted in this study and next I explain why and how they are adjusted.

4.2 Towards exploring perceived contributions

In the field of global education, it has been considered if evaluation is even appropriate and how it should be conducted (e.g., O'Loughlin & Wegimont, 2004, p. 23). In relation to GCED programs, where complex social processes are being addressed and multidimensional change aimed at, evaluation often entails difficulties (Van Ongevalle, 2020). Measuring behavioural and transformative change is challenging, as long-term and complex processes take place (van Gerwen et al., 2017). Furthermore, when assessing global citizenship learning as a life-wide process, the results chains become more complex than those related to formal learning only, and there are more influencing factors to be considered, when assessing cause and effect. According to Stepanek Lockhart (2016), the factors are challenging to control in informal learning. Also, with respect to the CB programme it was acknowledged that the members were inevitably changing, and their active global citizenship development considered as a life-wide and life-long process under the influence of many factors. In cases where

there are many influencing factors, it makes no sense to try to prove that a program alone causes the change, but rather, optimally it can be shown that the program made a difference – contributed significantly to the results – but that other factors also did (Mayne, 2011, p. 59). Thus, what was considered feasible to explore in this study, was the contribution of the programme. Indeed, in this study the aim is to gain some insight on how the CB has contributed in shorter and longer term to the building of active global citizenship among its members, while proving attribution is not the focus of the analysis. In CA more important than accuracy is to increase understanding, as Mayne (2001, 2011) states, which is the aim in this study. Mayne (2011) also argues that the approach works in a situation where the ToC exists or can be established, and when a programme has been running for some while. The CB programme has been running for over 20 years, and an idea of how it aims to bring about change in theory could somewhat be established. Based on these claims, CA was viewed to suit this study. Additionally, the softer approach to causality using the CA approach, was applied because experimental or quasi-experimental designs to assess causality were not practical nor feasible within the framework of this study.

How to address the attribution question in this study, has now been discussed. Another relevant question was how can we *know* about the contribution the programme has had? The contribution of a programme can be studied in different ways. In this study, which examines the contribution of the CB programme to its direct members' active global citizenship development, what is feasible to study is the conceived contribution – the participants' ways of experiencing the contribution. Consequently, the research subject is the perceived contribution (subjective) with respect to active citizenship development rather than the contribution per se (objective). As such, it is socio-culturally built. Qualitative research serves the purpose when the aim is to understand the human experience and the social world (Leavy, 2014, p. 1), and thus this study follows the qualitative approach. People have different perceptions and experience the world differently (Leavy, 2014), and the interest in this study is to understand the ways in which the participants construct their experiences. The study explores the variation and patterns of the experienced contributions of participation in the CB with respect to active global citizenship within a specific group of participants, and the purpose is to describe and understand these participants' experiences related to the participation and its contributions. Thus, the study does not focus on generalisation. What is more, the perceived contributions are studied through retrospective descriptions. The benefit of the retrospective qualitative approach is that it enables the long-term contribution focus - it allows the participants to reflect upon their lifepaths and the role they perceive the CB participation has played in their lives from a distance and thus, traces the relative contribution of the programme to the members' active

global citizenship development compared to other factors. These methodological choices were made also because no base-line data from the starting point existed.

Traditionally, the objective in CA is to build one story which is credible: scholars like Mayne (2001) argue that the aim of CA is to produce a plausible, evidence-based narrative that a reasonable person would be likely to agree with. However, in this study, the CA method is applied to qualitative analysis of people's perceptions and experiences. I examine contribution through qualitative accounts of perception, and therefore, the question is not about whether the story is convincing, but rather, the focus is on exploring the qualitative differences and patterns in perceiving: the different kinds of perceived contributions and personal experiences. The CB members may have experienced the time in the programme differently and reflect upon it and its contribution to their lives and development differently. Due to the data which consists of qualitative accounts about people's experiences, it is acknowledged that one coherent contribution story might not be able to be established. Consequently, the CA was adjusted to the purpose of the study, and the approach differs in some ways from Mayne's model. In this study it is seen that there might be a different kind of perceived contribution for each participant, and no singular theory of change where all links would be confirmed with evidence, can be produced. Therefore, the theory of change I constructed for the study is utilised more as a visualisation tool, that visualises the way in which I expect the programme to function in theory, but it is acknowledged that the perceived realities will likely not fully follow the theory. Therefore, instead of claiming that the ToC is the theory that explains how the program functions as experienced and instead of focusing on generating a more precise theory, the focus in this study is on building a more comprehensive contribution story, a narrative of variation, by revealing variation in perception. Furthermore, the steps have been adjusted, and CA works more as an inspirational approach than a method that is followed in this study precisely. This kind of adjustment of the approach and combining it with other qualitative methods, to my knowledge, has not been applied in this way before. Consequently, this study is an attempt to imagine how CA can be applied to analyse qualitative accounts of perceptions, and the contribution of a programme as experienced.

4.3 Data collection

In the collection of primary data, this study used both a survey and interviews, data collection strategies that according to Tuomi and Sarajärvi (2018, p. 84), are based on the idea that an understanding of an individual's ways of thinking or action can be built by asking questions of the individual concerned. Considering the purpose of this

thesis, asking the former members about their experiences and perceptions was seen as the most fitted method for data collection.

4.3.1 Survey

An online survey was the first data collection method. It was chosen as it enables the collecting of both qualitative and quantitative data on participants' opinions and experiences, and it was a practical, inexpensive, and a relatively quick option. Indeed, although this is a qualitative study, it is worth noticing that when first designing the study, a mixed methods approach was planned. The purpose of conducting the survey was to establish a good overview of the topic, as the survey aimed to reach an extensive number of CB participants, as hoped.

An online questionnaire was established through the Webropol tool (https://webropol.co.uk/) provided by the University of Jyväskylä. The questionnaire, which was in Finnish, included two different types of questions: half of them were close-ended questions and another half open-ended questions. As a result, both quantitative and qualitative data were produced. Furthermore, some close-ended questions included an opportunity to specify answers openly. The open-ended questions permitted the respondents to describe their experiences and perceptions – to produce a written narrative on their lived experiences, so they were seen as especially useful for the study. The emphasis was on the open-ended questions, yet, close-ended questions were also included, as they are quicker to answer and a way to collect relevant background information simply. However, too few participants were reached, and this quantitative data was insufficient for a proper quantitative analysis, due to which the survey analysis was limited to the responses to the open-ended questions.

Factors affecting the motivation to participate were considered when forming the questionnaire, following Valli's (2001) suggestion. The mixture of closed- and open-ended questions was planned to make responding quicker, more pleasant, and motivating for the participants. The questionnaire was formed in a way that there was a possibility to leave some questions unanswered, to avoid respondents from dropping the questionnaire halfway, which would result in getting no answers at all. Furthermore, the order of the questions matters according to Valli (2001) and Hesse (2018), and hence was considered. The survey followed mostly an inverted funnel format– meaning that the questionnaire begins with narrow questions and proceeds to wider questions in the end (see Hesse, 2018). To refresh the participants memory, and to draw a continuum, the questionnaire began with questions that considered short-term contributions and proceeded to wider questions considering longer term contributions later. However, to avoid a possible effect of fatigue, the most important questions regarding the study were not all placed at the end. In addition, the length of the questionnaire was considered, as it should according to (Valli, 2001). The questionnaire

was planned so that answering would take 15-20 minutes. There were 8-10 open questions, and 20-23 questions in total. Some questions were combinations of close- and open-ended questions, so the number of questions can be determined in two ways.

When collecting the data, the ToC was already formed and the initial contribution story established (see Chapter 5.1.), in accordance with the steps of CA. Thus, the questions of the questionnaire were formed keeping in mind the established theory of change and the initial contribution story, with the intention to address the weaknesses identified in the story. Thus, the questions were partly based on goals Plan International Finland has set for the programme and already noticed learnings, and partly on other general goals of global education, and especially on the conceptualisation of active global citizenship made in this study. When establishing the questionnaire, youth activities planner in Plan International Finland was consulted, whose advice was considered. For feedback gathering purposes, at the end of the questionnaire, there was a chance to give feedback to Plan, and suggestions on how Plan's participatory activities for children and young people could be developed. However, these answers were not used as part of this study, unless they were related to the aims of the study. The questionnaire template, which is translated in English, is attached in Appendix 2.

According to Collins (2003), it is important to test the questionnaire, before spreading it to the participants, to avoid incoherence. Accordingly, a sample test was conducted among several testers, to ensure the usability and clarity of the survey before finishing the final questionnaire. To find the actual survey participants, convenience sampling, which is based on the participant's easy accessibility (see Golzar et al., 2022), was used: the online questionnaire was sent through Plan International Finland's networks to all the former members who had participated in the CB since its establishment till the end of the last programme period before beginning this study (years 2001-2021), and whose contact information had been saved to Plan's records. According to Plan's Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system, 118 members had participated during these 20 years, however only 78 members' contact information was saved in the system. A message where the former members were asked to participate in the survey, with the link to the survey, was sent through the CRM. According to the system data, the message was delivered to 58 former members, and thus the contact information of 20 persons was likely invalid. The questionnaire was held open for more than two months, during 23.9.2022-30.11.2022, and reminders to respond were emailed to the participants. When establishing the questionnaire, the objective was to reach at least 50 respondents and participants from all programme periods. It was assumed that many earlier CB members would be motivated to respond to the questionnaire, as they have been earlier civically active and as the questionnaire considered their personal experiences and perceptions and provided an opportunity to give feedback to Plan. However, only 21 previous members responded to

the questionnaire, which is approximately one in six of the CB alumni. Hence, of the participants that were reached, only a minority responded to the survey.

4.3.2 Interviews

Because a representative sample of the target group was not reached through the survey, the study design was accommodated during the research process. As the evidence produced through the survey was rather scarce, further qualitative evidence was collected in the form of interviews to enable a more profound examination of the experiences and perceptions of the previous CB participants. The additional data increases the richness of the data. It can be considered that the interviews create the main data, the survey being the complementary data source, because the sample of the survey turned out to be small. Regardless of which one is considered the main data and which one complementary, the two data complement each other.

Data collection through interviews suited the study, as it enables the acquiring of information of the interviewees' perceptions, opinions, and experiences. Thus, it allows one to "enter into the other person's perspective" (Patton, 2002, p. 341). In the interviews it was explored if the interviewees' experiences were in line with already collected evidence, and what further insights they gave on the topic. They served to better understand the participants' experiences and perceptions, and to explore further variation in the perceptions. The interviews in a way suited the study even better than the survey, and added value to the study, as they allowed the participants to describe their perceptions and experiences in a broader, more open way than the survey allowed. Like Tuomi and Sarajärvi (2018, p. 85) state, interviews enable the asking of further questions and a possibility for clarifications, unlike the survey. The interviews therefore enabled the collecting of more in-depth data on cause-and-effect: on how the CB participation has contributed to each person's learning and life paths.

Eight semi-structured individual online interviews were conducted during March- June 2023. The interviews were held in Finnish. Individual interviews suited the purpose better than focus group discussions not just for practical reasons but also considering the research object – the focus was on the interviewee's perceptions and experiences, as well as individual life paths. I considered that in individual interviews the interviewees would be more willing to share their experiences and perceptions, as there is no peer pressure, and the individual interviews enabled an in-depth focus on each interviewee. The interviews were conducted online, through Funet Miitti (Zoom) service, which was provided by the University of Jyväskylä. In the interviews the participants could choose to use or not use camera connection alongside audio connection. Online data collection methods, such as interviews through Teams or Zoom environments have become more common, especially in the post-coronavirus pandemic 2019 era, and they have both cost and time-saving benefits (Tomás & Bidet, 2023). They

seemed appropriate with respect to the purpose of the interviews and were practical as the participants were situated in different locations, some were interviewed during workday hours, and no costs were involved.

As I needed to guide the interviews towards the knowledge interest, the purpose of the interviewees, yet give space for the interviewees to describe their perceptions and experiences, I chose semi-structured interviews for the data collection. They suited the purpose, as they included aspects of an open interview yet enabled keeping the interviews on track, so that the data answers the research questions. Tuomi and Sarajärvi (2018, p. 87) define a semi-structured interview as a synonym for a thematic interview. In-semi structured, i.e. thematic, interviews the questions and themes of the questions have been set beforehand, but the interviews enable some flexibility: there is open space for answers, the questions may be posed slightly differently depending on what is discussed, and additional questions are posed in addition to the original questions (Hyvärinen et al., 2021). In this way the interviews do not follow just the researchers' way of perceiving reality but give room for exploring the interviewees' construction of reality (Hyvärinen et al., 2021). The interviews were conversational, and this openness enabled posing of further questions, and bringing more depth into the interview. In the beginning it was clarified that the interviewees could at any point add anything that comes to their minds regarding the themes and leave questions without answering if they want to. The interviews were also flexible and adjusted to the situations: planned further questions were posed or left without posing if the answer was already comprehensive. The prepared interview questions have been translated into English and can be found in Appendix 3. Additionally, follow-up questions, regarding unclear parts, were established during the interview. The objective was to get answers regarding all the main themes. The main questions were repeated for every participant. However, these were adjusted to the situations, and a certain question may have been skipped, if the topic was already fully covered during another question. The order of the questions may have varied, in a way that suited the situation. This kind of adjustment regarding the order of the questions is possible in thematic interviews and can be decided by the researcher (Tuomi & Sarajärvi, 2018, p. 85). The follow-up questions varied, depending on the interviewees' answers. Furthermore, some common questions were asked when answers were otherwise short, however, these were not asked from all, due to long answers and as for some the topic was already discussed in other parts. It is acknowledged that this may increase biases to the study, and to increase transparency of the study these common further questions, that were not asked from all, are also listed as commonly asked questions in the Appendix 3. According to Tuomi and Sarajärvi (2018, p. 88) semi-structured interviews vary in the level of uniformity. This study entails a lower level of uniformity, as not all the questions were posed to everyone. It was seen that it is not so important to

have a high level of uniformity, as the focus was on revealing variation, and not in comparing and counting. However, the main questions, i.e. themes, that were formulated based on the research questions, were discussed with every participant, to make the interview stick to its purpose - finding answers to the research questions.

Indeed, the interviews were built in line with the research questions. The interviewees were asked to reflect upon the different ways the CB and other influencing factors have influenced them with respect to active global citizenship. The interviews were structured so that the main questions considered the idea of contribution, focusing on the following components: the perceived influence of the CB with respect to active global citizenship and how the participants reflect upon the experience, their conception of active global citizenship and their perceived identity and identity development as active global citizens, and other significant contributing factors to their active global citizenship. Active global citizenship has been examined within the framework I established, but also based on the participants' comprehension. The interviews also entailed questions on the activities, settings, and different factors within the CB programme in order to identify cause-and-effect relationships and understand more in detail the perceived learning processes. The interviews were constructed in a way that they focused on aspects that were not covered with the survey data. Thus, the interview questions were partly based on preliminary survey findings[7]. In one part of the interviews the interviewees were asked to reflect if the claims regarding the programme's contribution, made based on the survey data, were true to them or not and in what ways. This choice was done to facilitate the interviews, however, the questions were not tied to the survey answers but there was space for openness and neglecting the already evidenced results. When planning the interviews, it was considered that most interviewees had participated in the survey: the interviews were built in a way that the questions were not fully the same as in the questionnaire, and so that they could provide further insights.

4.3.3 Description of the study participants and data

The survey sample consisted of 21 previous CB members, 20 female and 1 male, born during 1987-2004. Most of them had been born in the 2000s, six of them during the 1990s, and two in the 1980s. The respondents had participated in the group during 2003-2021 (see Figure 3., which illustrates how many of the respondents were active in each year). As none of the members who participated in the early years 2001 and 2002 responded to the survey, the time frame examined in this study was narrowed from the planned time frame (2001-2021) to 2003-2021. Majority of the respondents

[7] A preliminary analysis was done for the survey data before conducting the interviews, but later an in-depth survey analysis followed.

had participated during 2014-2019. Considering the period 2005-2008, and the years of 2013 and 2020, there were 3-5 respondents per each participation year, and of those who participated in the period of 2003-2004, or 2009-2012, or in 2021, only a few responded to the survey. Therefore, the data is the weakest considering these programme years. The length of the participation of the respondents varied from 1+ to 8 years, and most participated in the CB for several years. Some of the respondents also seemed to report the years when they engaged as support members for the CB after the official participation, which should be noted in the numbers. The 21 survey participants are referred to with codes P1-P21 in the results chapter.

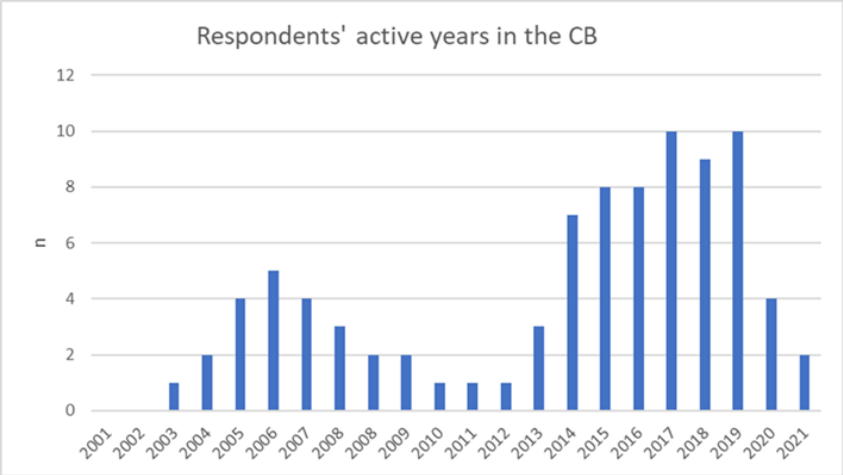

FIGURE 3 Years of participation of the survey respondents.

The background questions and some simple content questions provided some basic information about the survey participants. The respondents had participated actively in the CB: 15 participants reported having participated more often than monthly, four participants reported having participated monthly, and two reported a changing participation activeness, and no one had participated less than monthly. Majority of them (15) had participated also in other volunteering or advocacy action when they were children, such as in other NGOs, student bodies, youth councils, or political action. The data does not allow for the examination of whether they first joined other activities or the CB. Most of the participants (15) left the CB when they faced the age limit, but six had left the group earlier, mostly for time pressures, or for moving abroad. After the CB, the majority, 14 participants, had continued volunteering: 8 had continued volunteering in Plan, and 11 continued other volunteering, meaning some persons volunteered in many places. A majority, 17 participants, experienced that CB inspired them to continue volunteering, as well as that gaining competences in the CB empowered them to continue other advocacy work, while four experienced it did not inspire nor empower them in this way.

As only 21 people answered the survey, a representative sample of the target group could not be produced. The quantitative data therefore was not sufficient for statistical analysis. However, because part of the collected quantitative data gives some relevant insights about the contributions of the programme and the participants' active global citizenship as experienced during the survey, these insights are included in the Appendix 4.

Furthermore, the qualitative data provided insights of the activities the participants undertook in the CB, thus giving an overview of the implementation of the action. During the CB years, some participants engaged with different roles, like different positions of trust and rank-and-file and took part in different activities. The most commonly mentioned activities were participating in meetings and taking a role in them such as a secretary or chair role. A couple of participants had been representatives of CB in the board of Plan. Participating in #GirlsTakeover[8], a campaign of Plan International, where girls get the opportunity to step into leadership positions for a day (Plan International Finland, n.d.-c), was mentioned by several members, as well as participating in events in general and planning and organising them. Participating in panel discussions or other activities related to performing, and participating in training or workshops, were common. Activities related to different means of influence, such as producing social media content, different forms of writing, lobbying, signing petitions, fundraising, campaigns, and meeting decision-makers were also a central part of the action based on the answers. A few mentioned having participated in international action.

The main qualitative data of the survey included answers to the main open questions and some additional open specifications to the quantitative data. As there was a possibility to skip answers, some of the open answers were missing. Some answers were also scant and incomplete. Furthermore, although the survey did enable open answers, it did have restrictions due to text character limits. Thus, although the survey gave further evidence, the data was limited, not just due to the lack of respondents, but also due to its quality. The data enabled a limited comprehension of cause-and-effect, and especially regarding the other influencing factors. It was considered insufficient, and further evidence was gathered through interviews to enable a proper qualitative study.

Convenience participant selection was also used to find participants for the interviews, as there were limited possibilities to find participants. The participants were selected based on their own announcement of willingness to participate, as well as further contacting. While the survey was planned, a possible need to complement the

[8] #GirlsTakeover has been organised in Finland since 2017, and then it was part of the CB action, but since 2019 it's an independent action form to which CB members are encouraged to apply (personal communication with Plan staff member, 13.5.2024).

survey data with interviews was considered. Therefore, after filling the questionnaire the participants could leave their contact information through a different Webropol link, to announce their possible willingness to participate in further data collection through interviews. The questionnaire led to another questionnaire, where there was a possibility to leave contact information, and the contact information was not attached to the survey results. Nine participants left their information. I contacted all of them through email and with five of them I managed to arrange an interview. In addition, one more interviewee was found through the contact person of Plan International Finland, and from this interviewee I received the contact information of two other persons, with whom I settled an interview. The contact information was passed to me with the possible interviewees' permission and data protection issues were considered. Overall, the interviews were conducted with those who responded and volunteered after contacting them. The total number of interviewees was determined to be eight. Majority of the interviewees had answered the questionnaire: at least the five individuals whose contact information was received through Webropol, for certain.

As some of the participants were the same in both data gathering processes, and as the answers could not be connected for identity protection reasons, it poses some limitations for this study. It is natural that some aspects in the participants' stories are reflected in both the survey and interview data, which in a way increases the validity of the study, but in the analysis, I could not compare the different data regarding the specific individuals who participated in both data gathering processes, and thus I could not establish a holistic, comprehensive picture of these participants who participated in both data gathering processes. However, this was not considered to be a major problem, as identifying qualitative variation of experiences and patterns, across the data sets, was in focus, rather than exploring numerical evidence of how many experienced what.

The intention was to find interviewees that presented the different participation years and especially the years regarding which there was less survey data, however, the objective was not fully achieved. The eight interviewees present two different cohorts - an older and a younger generation of previous CB members. The earlier cohort represents participants who had participated in the board at some point during years 2003-2009, and the later cohort represents participants who participated in the year 2014 or later (See Table 1.). The participants of the first cohort were in their early thirties, in the 32-35 age range, while the second cohort consisted of participants aged 18-24 years, at the point of the interview. Young adulthood can be defined differently, but drawing on WHO's definition the young cohort still belongs to the group of youth, while the older cohort does not (WHO South-East Asia, n.d.). The duration of participation among the interviewees varied from 1+ years to 4 years. The year details may not be exact, as some interviewees were not certain of their participation years, and as

some participated after the CB as supporting members for the CB. It must be noted that the selection is not systematic. As the interviewees were from different age groups, and had retired from the CB in different times, the point from which they reflect on their experience differs. The participants were in different points at their lives, which affects this study. It was acknowledged that they may perceive the contribution differently because a different amount of time since their CB participation had passed absolutely as well as in relation to their life years.

As the interviewees could choose whether to use camera connection or not, some of the collected data was in audio format only, while in other interviews also video data was produced. Only the audio files were used when transcribing the data into text format. In the transcription process, a pseudonymization was done for the direct personal information: the participants were marked as P1-P8, and in connection with quotations when presenting the results it has only been noted if the specific interviewee belongs to the older or younger cohort to ensure anonymity. Gender was not asked from the interviewees, as this study does not explore differences by gender, and to avoid making assumptions, the participants are referred to as participants, respondents, or interviewees, and with pronouns they/them.

TABLE 1 Years of Children's Board participation of the interviewees.

	Participation years	**Participant code of interviewee**
Cohort 1	2003-2006	P4
	2003-2007	P3
	2005-2007	P1
	2005-2009	P8
Cohort 2	2014-2016	P5
	2014-2018	P6
	2014-2018	P2
	2019-2021	P7

The collected data consists of eight interview transcripts. The transcripts were approximately 10 pages long - their length varied from seven to 13 pages, except for one that was longer (17 pages). Accordingly, the interviews lasted approximately 30-60 minutes, but a few lasted longer than an hour. The transcripts were in Finnish, but relevant parts of the data regarding the analysis were translated into English later. According to Tuomi and Sarajärvi (2018, p. 97), time limits should be considered when choosing the number of participants for a study, as both data collection and data analysis take time. Because of the length of the interviews timewise and the length of the transcripts, I considered the collected data as sufficient in the framework of a master's thesis, considering I already had some qualitative data gathered through the survey. The interview data was even too extensive, and not all aspects of the data could be

analysed in this thesis. The parts that were the most relevant with respect to the research questions were analysed. However, the data also included some gaps, and three interview transcripts were complemented with written answers through email responses later, to make the data coherent.

4.4 Data analysis

Delahais and Toulemonde (2012, p. 287) suggest exploring the data in CA at the level of each causal link to see if they confirm or refute the ToC. Since in this study it was acknowledged that the ToC is difficult to establish in a way that would follow all the perceived realities, and since the point in this study was not to confirm the TOC and build one convincing contribution story, but to explore qualitative accounts about people's experiences, the data was not mirrored to the ToC, but rather a broader analysis of all kinds of contributions of the programme was conducted. Qualitative content (QCA) analysis was chosen as a pragmatic data analysis method for both the qualitative survey data and interview data, to examine the different contributions and other essential aspects in the data relating to the assumptions and other influencing factors. Thus, this study combines the CA approach with qualitative content analysis. Rather than refuting or confirming the ToC, this study aims to enrich the contribution story through qualitative analysis.

4.4.1 Qualitative content analysis

Qualitative content analysis is a flexible and systematic method of analysis for describing the meaning in qualitative data (Schreier, 2012). QCA is often understood answering the questions about *what* is being said, but it can as well answer to the question *how* something is being verbalised (Schreier, 2012, p. 19). In qualitative research knowledge cannot be detached from the context it was generated in (Braun & Clarke, 2013, p. 4, 21). Accordingly, qualitative content analysis goes beyond counting frequencies and enables interpretation of the meaning and context of the content, unlike quantitative content analysis (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). It can be used in studies that already have a theoretical framework or other idea that guides the analysis (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). In qualitative content analysis, all material is being examined, but the analysis is limited to those aspects relevant to the research question, and thus data is being reduced (Schreier, 2012, p. 7). Consequently, the method suited this study well, considering I had already established the idea of contribution that guided the analysis, and not all data was fully relevant regarding the research questions, but rather there was a need to limit the analysis on relevant aspects. The perceptions of the different

aspects of the contribution of CB to active global citizenship development were explored. The exploration focused on the variation and patterns of experiences the participants may have, while frequencies were not in focus. Furthermore, the ways in which factors like participation years, age during participation and during the study, the participants' background, and activities and roles taken in the CB explained the perceived contributions, i.e. how the context explains the variation, was considered. Especially regarding exceptional contributions, it was explored what might explain them. The purpose of the analysis was to understand the experiences of the individuals, to describe them, and to interpret them to build a more complete contribution story.

Qualitative content analysis consists of different steps, which were followed. The steps are the following according to Schreier, 2012, pp. 5-6):

1 Deciding on your research question
2 Selecting your material
3 Building a coding frame
4 Dividing your material into units of coding
5 Trying out your coding frame
6 Evaluating and modifying your coding frame
7 Main analysis
8 Interpreting and presenting your findings

The final analysis of the survey data and the interview analysis were done simultaneously but separately - keeping track of what was articulated in the survey and what in the interviews. The qualitative data of the survey was analysed through a simple qualitative content analysis, as the data was limited, while the interview data provided more insights. The analysis of the interviews was conducted quite similarly as the survey analysis: the main categories of the coding frame were mostly the same, and subcategories were established in a data-driven way in both analyses. This suited the case, as the research questions to be answered were the same for both the survey and the interviews. Yet, the interview data was wider and not all the aspects could be analysed, so more data was regarded as irrelevant. The interview data was also richer than the survey data in revealing new aspects and further explanations on the perceived contributions and perceived cause-and-effect relationships, which made the analysis deeper.

As I already had my research questions set, the relevant parts of the data could be selected. Material that had a bearing upon my research questions, was considered relevant, while the data that did not relate to the research questions was regarded as irrelevant for the analysis. Furthermore, data that provided some important background information, setting context for the study, was considered as relevant for the analysis. A coding frame was built next. QCA can be applied to both deductive and inductive analysis strategies (Schreier, 2012). The coding frame can be built partly deductively, but at least partly it is always built in a data-driven way, as the coding frame

must match with the material (Schreier, 2012, p. 7.). The combining of the strategies is common – such as building the main categories deductively based on prior knowledge, and the sub-categories based on the data (Schreier, 2012, p. 89), which is also the strategy used in this study. I combined a deductive and inductive strategy, focusing on what arises from the experiences, but using the notion of contribution as a guidance when categorising the main categories to maintain alignment with the research questions. The main categories, i.e. dimensions, present the aspects of the focus of the analysis (Schreier, 2012, p. 59). According to Früh (2007, as cited in Schreier, 2012, p. 59) usually these aspects, at least part of them, are also incorporated in the research questions. Indeed, the structure of the coding frame considering the main categories was guided by the research questions and the ToC, and the notion of contribution built in this thesis. My main categories were the perceived contributions of the CB, perceived contributions of other influencing factors, and current self-perceived active global citizenship. However, the self-perceived active global citizenship was qualitatively analysed only from the interview data due to limitations in the survey data, but the quantitative insights of the survey regarding the self-perceived active global citizenship were also explored. The most important main category that was focused on considered the different contributions of the CB programme. A set of subcategories for each main category were formed in a data-driven way examining what arises from the data.

The complexity of a coding frame – the number of subcategories, but also hierarchical levels the coding frame includes – depends on the research question (Schreier, 2012 p. 63). Each coding frame has at least two levels, but in this study three levels were used. The third level presents a more abstract level which defines the concepts, which are here the different contribution types. These form the main findings. The categories are usually at a more abstract level than the concrete data, and the specifics of the data are lost in the process of classification (Schreier, 2012).

To divide the material into units of coding, a thematic criterion was used, even when the data had an inherent structure, as the answers to the questions were not coherent. Therefore, the units of coding were identified by looking for changes of topic, i.e. by using a thematic criterion, which suits such a situation (see Schreier, 2012, p. 136). Therefore, the units of coding consist of sentences and parts of them, where perceptions are expressed, and not the full answers to the survey and interview questions, because the data was scattered. The coding frame was tried out, evaluated, and modified, and then the main coding was carried out. The coding was done manually. There were iterative cycles of analysis. When the main analysis was done, the quotes categorising the subcategories were searched, and findings were reported. The final subcategories are described, summarised, and illustrated with exemplifying quotes, in the next main chapter, where results are stated.

4.5 Ethical considerations

The study takes into consideration ethicalness and follows good practices. As the study participants are previous members of the Children's Board, they were adults at the point of data collection. By studying the youths' experiences retrospectively, any ethical problems related to studying underaged persons were avoided. Consent was asked from the survey participants to participate in the study at the first page of the questionnaire. Ethical issues were considered throughout conducting the survey, such as preserving the respondents' anonymity, information security and privacy protection. The Webropol tool was used as it was the best available option considering issues like privacy protection and security. The survey data was saved in a secure manner and will be deleted after publishing this study. Before conducting the interviews, privacy issues were considered. I checked that a data processing impact assessment was not required in the study. The Funet Miitti Zoom service provided a better platform regarding data protection than Teams, as it does not transmit the data outside of the European Union (EU), and therefore it was chosen as the channel through which the online interviews were conducted. The privacy notice and the research notification were emailed to the interviewees before the interview. The privacy notice and the research notification clarified how the data is being used and stored safely, and the documents can be found in Appendices 5. and 6. Consent for participation was asked from each participant in the beginning of the interviews, and the purpose of the interview was still briefly explained, and it was asked if there were any questions. When presenting the findings, participants' anonymity is aimed to preserve. Information that risks the protection of identity, such as names of people and countries of residence, are hidden from the quotes used. Because the value of the data should still be maintained (see Saunders et al., 2015), the data is only anonymised to the necessary extent.

4.6 Validity and trustworthiness of the study

Questions of validity and trustworthiness should be considered in a quality qualitative study. In this study it should be noted that the study explores the built realities of the participants which they describe retrospectively. Hence, the study builds upon the participants' metacognitive skills and memorising, and the knowledge produced is based on reflection made at a specific point of time. As learning entails processes that the learner is not aware of (Marton & Booth, 1997), the findings are based on participants' possibly inaccurate assessment of what they have learned at which point of

their lives. The retrospective approach may lead to a situation where newer experiences are valued as more significant than older experiences, and thus produce biases. It is relevant to consider the point of time when the interviews were held and from which the respondents reflect upon their past. For some it had been over 10 years since they participated in the CB, and for the others less than five years. As the study participants were of different ages, and relatively at different stages in their lives, it is natural they reflect on the CB experience differently and might result in a bias where more recently retired board members assess the relative importance of CB to their lives as more significant than those who have left the group earlier and gained more life experiences after. But again, the older participants might have more memory loss, and might overestimate the influence, as memories may grow sweeter with time. The study would be more systematic if all study participants had been studied when they were at a certain age.

What more should be considered in relation to validity and reliability, are questions of subjectivity and reflexivity. Subjectivity and reflexivity have a role in qualitative research (Braun & Clarke, 2013, p. 4.). The researcher's assumptions and interpretations, which are also tied to the researcher's positionality, influence the research. In this study, the already existing evidence, so the ToC and the initial contribution story reflect the prior assumptions before the main data collection. However, when collecting and analysing the data, I aimed to step aside from the prior story and live the participants' reality. The data collection entailed a space for the participants to openly describe their experience, and all possible, also unintended, contributions of the CB were considered. Further questions in interviews helped me to understand the interviewees' reality, however, while interpreting, there is always risk for misunderstandings. Through the quotations I have made it transparent how I have interpreted the participants' described experience. In the interviews I attempted to avoid guiding questions, yet sometimes making a bridge from one question to another. Still, my lack of experience in conducting interviews may cause some biases to the study. In the process, however, I improved my skills, and the later interviews had a better quality. Furthermore, because the interviews were quite open, and each interview was somewhat unique, what was talked about varied to some extent. While recognising that this affects the study, it is not seen as a problem, as this study aims to capture the variation of perceptions rather than focusing on quantities, such as comparing the experiences.

My positionality as a researcher needs to be acknowledged, as it influences the study. I have not participated in the CB programme and thus explore the experiences of the study participants as an outsider, which may have both positive and negative impacts. The positive side is that it decreases the chance of biases, as my examination is from an outsider's perspective: I do not have preconceptions of the action, and I

examine the CB from a neutral perspective. On the other hand, 'living' the participants' experience may be more difficult for me than it would be for an earlier member. Furthermore, it must also be acknowledged, that I see global education as something worthy, as well as consider global citizenship in this study mostly from a northern Eurocentric perspective, and through a western lens, which emphasises the humanistic approach, however, I have considered the decolonial analysis while framing the concept, and in this way included a critical approach to global citizenship in this research. Additionally, it should be considered that the concept of active global citizenship is not as settled as global citizenship and active citizenship, and even the concept 'global citizenship' is abstract and wide (e.g., Davies, 2006). In the interview, when the concept was used in questions, the study participants used it according to their own understanding, which may slightly differ from my conception of the concept (see Chapter 5.2).

5 RESULTS: TOWARDS A COMPREHENSIVE CONTRIBUTION STORY

In this study, the steps of CA were adjusted. The first stages, steps 1-4, are considered as preparation for the study, while steps 5 and 6 build new information and contribute mostly to the results of this study. However, steps 1- 4 are also important, as during them the analysis was prepared, and the assumptions and expectations were set in the form of ToC. The preparation gave the starting point for this study. Each step relates to the previous step, and its weaknesses: the steps are iterative. The step 5 of CA, which refers to the collection of primary evidence, or data, is the part where the thesis brings the most value. The primary evidence was collected first through a questionnaire, and later more primary evidence was collected through additional interviews, and the data were analysed through QCA. At the final step the survey and the interview results were both explored to make a more comprehensive contribution story. The steps 5 and 6 are presented later in this chapter, but next I explain how the preparation for the study was done and what it entailed in this study.

5.1 First stages of the contribution analysis: Building the initial contribution story

At step 1 the attribution problem was acknowledged to exist in the study: it was acknowledged that there are other factors at play that contribute to the examined young people's active global citizenship development, besides the CB participation. Other factors are likely to have influenced their learning already during their CB participation and before it, and especially after it during adulthood, as they have become rich in several experiences which may have contributed to their lives. I argue that always when assessing long-term effects there is an attribution problem, as many factors

come into play. One cannot conclude that if former CB members are active global citizens as adults, this can be fully attributed to the previous board participation, but rather the existence, or non-existence, of their active global citizenship is a result of many factors in their life paths. They most likely have learned active global citizenship competences also elsewhere, such as in other organisations, or through self-learning. Also, global education given in school might have had an influence on the development of active global citizenship during adolescence. After the CB participation, the young people have been exposed to several other influences that might have continued the building of active global citizenship that possibly occurred in the board or invalidated the possible contribution of the programme. The other influencing factors also include societal developments taking place. Considering the reach, it should be acknowledged that this study gives evidence of some of the perceived contributions. Some of these evidenced contributions may be, and most likely are, also perceived more widely in the group of all CB alumni, however, not necessarily, and thus the findings cannot be generalised. In this study the specific causal question addressed is: Has the CB intervention made a difference in developing the examined participants into active global citizens, as they perceive it? Like stated earlier, this is studied by examining the perceived contributions of the CB, the perceived contributions of other factors, and overall active global citizenship evolvement of the participants.

At step 2. I established the Theory of Change. Plan International has established a Theory of Change on a global scale (e.g., Plan International Finland, 2021a), and Plan International Finland has used logical frameworks in relation to different projects (e.g., Plan Finland, 2008; 2014), and built a results chain of the domestic programme (Plan International Finland, 2017, p. 29, also see Figure 2.), which demonstrate how the organisation aims to bring about change. However, a specific theory of change regarding the CB programme did not previously exist, and therefore, for the purpose of this study, I aimed to build a ToC to demonstrate how the programme is intended to function ideally at the direct beneficiary level. The theory of change was produced based on reviews of the programme documentation presented in Chapter 3.2., feedback from the organisation personnel, and prior literature on the learning of active global citizenship. I first produced a ToC regarding the whole programme including different outcome levels, and after that limited it to include just the direct beneficiary level, as this study explores only the individual changes in the CB members and is a CA of direct influence. A relatively simple ToC was produced, with a low level of detail. It includes a results chain at the different levels of results - shorter and longer term -, assumptions and other influencing factors. This ToC of the programme at the direct beneficiary level I established is presented visually in Appendix 1. and explained next:

Children apply to the CB and the chosen members actively participate in it. Overall, the CB provides a forum for children and youths of the Finnish civil society to learn about children's rights and gender equality and mobilise the knowledge into advocacy and campaigning work (Plan International Finland, 2017; 2021a). As the activities have a wide scale, the only 'activity', where all CB members are known to have engaged in, is the participation in the group, which entails various types of activities. The variation of the key activities that have taken place in different years have been explained in the context chapter. The activities each member engages in may differ from the activities taken by other members (e.g., Plan Finland Foundation, 2008; Plan International Finland, 2017). As not all members have participated in all the same activities, the action might have influenced outcomes in a variety of ways. Consequently, in the ToC the output is defined as "Approximately 20 adolescents annually participate in initiatives to improve global justice and are supported and trained to do so".

The programme outcomes, even within the direct beneficiary level can be considered having different levels. The outcomes in the ToC are divided into three levels: short-term outcomes, intermediate outcomes, and long-term outcomes. When considering the activities, and especially the training and support given by Plan, the consequent short-term outcomes relate to competence building: knowledge enhancement and skills development. The participation in the CB aims to increase the members' knowledge, understanding and awareness on global issues, and improve their societal awareness. According to Plan, children will be "increasingly aware of the interconnectedness of child rights and global development", understand "realization of child rights and social justice as part of global development" and development issues related to Plan's programme priority areas (Plan Finland, 2014, p. 29). Their knowledge is deepened on global matters (e.g., Plan International Finland, 2021a). However, the themes and issues related to awareness-raising have varied (e.g. Plan Finland, 2008; 2011), and accordingly, members in different programme periods may have learned about different issues. Their skills and abilities to participate on global matters will also be developed (Plan International Finland, 2021a). They will have "… capacity, skills and motivation to promote child rights and global justice and engage their peers for promotion of development related to Plan's programme priority areas" (Plan Finland, 2014, p. 29). Indeed, the participants' leadership, advocacy, negotiation, communication, networking, and organisational capacities to act for children's rights are improved (Plan Finland, 2008). According to Plan International Finland (2021a), the capacity building enables the members to plan and conduct their own initiatives for different audiences in different channels.

Based on the head-heart-hand approach of GCED, it is expected that the knowledge enhancement and skills development will ideally lead to the intermediate

outcomes, consisting of attitude, motivation, and behaviour change, i.e. transformative change. The participation for global responsibility in the CB will build active global citizenship of the youths. According to Plan International Finland (2017), the participants' attitudes on gender equality and sustainable development goals are planned to evolve. They will also have motivation to promote global justice and child rights (Plan Finland, 2014). The programme aims at its members' transformation to become "active and responsible citizens that promote children's rights, especially in terms of gender equality and sustainable development goals" (Plan International Finland, 2017).

By influencing the lives of the adolescents during their active participation years Plan International Finland hopes to have a long-term influence on the CB members, and consequently a wider impact to the society, as they will ideally act as active global citizens in the future. For example, as the members get to organise initiatives, they possibly continue to conduct initiatives also outside of Plan, and they have the capacity to plan and conduct initiatives also in the future. According to personal communication with an organisation employee (3.2.2022), the desire of Plan International Finland is that the CB members have gained tools from the action to contribute to a more just global society later in their lives. Indeed, although not stated in the programme documents, the longer-term objective of the programme among its primary target group seems to be to foster a life-long active global citizenship. A long-lasting positive contribution on the members' life paths, but also on the wider society through their later action, is desired. In the theory of change I established the long-term outcome as: "The Children's Board members become adults who practise active citizenship, globally and locally. They continue promoting sustainable development, children's rights, (and/) or gender equality". This means they continue playing an active role, participating in their communities, and advocating for themes of global justice, for example for gender equality, child rights and sustainable development. However, it is important to note that Plan has not defined in its programme documents that it would aim at having a long-term contribution, but mostly defined indirect outcomes at the society level, and shorter-term outcomes for the direct beneficiaries. Furthermore, although the long-term outcome is set here to life-long active global citizenship, it is considered that the members might find their own way to advocate in local channels, perhaps for more local issues, and if the CB has contributed to the members' lives by building their active citizenship, although more locally oriented, it has succeeded in its aims. Indeed, it is important to note that the long-term outcome is not defined in detail, but it is rather explored how and what kind of active citizenship has possibly been built if it has been built. No hypothesis is set which would determine what kind of exact active global citizenship is built.

In the theory of change also assumptions that lie behind the links, and the risks related to the links are included. There are assumptions at each level of the results chain. As adolescents apply to the CB, it is assumed that they are already interested in development issues, and they voluntarily apply, and participate. Thus, there is a good chance that they will commit to the action. During their participation, the members engage in the planning and implementation of activities (e.g., Plan International Finland, 2017), and therefore it is assumed that they get to participate on their own terms and according to their interests. It is also assumed that they "have space to express themselves both internally and externally and their views are respected" (Plan Finland, 2014, p. 29), and that they get enough support, as found by Pensala & Tran-Nguyen (2018). The action is relatively successful all in all. It is also assumed that once their capacity is built, they become empowered to participate and take action for global justice in the CB as well as externally. The theory of change does not discuss unintended impacts, but if the assumptions fail and the risks come true there might occur unexpected impacts.

Wierenga and Guevara (2013, as cited in UNESCO, 2014) have found out that participation in an intercultural project focused on dialogue had a more significant transformative effect on learning outcomes for those who participated for longer. Accordingly, it is assumed that as the CB members participate usually for several years, the action likely has a sustainable transformative effect on them, affecting their attitudes, motivation, and behaviour to advocate for global justice. Furthermore, the action will support their personal development and make them reflect upon themselves and their futures, and consequently it might impact their career and life paths in a great way. It is also assumed that they have been encouraged to continue volunteering in Plan or elsewhere later, and that the capacities and tools, and networks they have gained in the CB contribute to leading a life path of an active global citizen. It is assumed that when active citizenship is fostered in the CB, it will have a contribution at the long-term level when the participants act as active global citizens in the future. However, if the assumptions fail, these outcomes may not be achieved. The risks are related to the assumptions being the factors that jeopardise the program in the case when an assumption fails. There are several risks related to the program. The CB members have not applied voluntarily, or for the right reasons, and are therefore not as committed to the board. The action has not been successful, if the initiatives have failed. The action can fail for example if adolescents are not taken seriously by adults, like decision-makers. The failures might decrease the members' motivation to participate and to act towards global justice, and some may end their participation in the board. Especially if the member leaves earlier the probability for transformative learning decreases. As transformative and behaviour change is complex, there may be some

other reasons as well which play against the building of active citizenship. Furthermore, they may gain something else in the CB, such as skills, which might be of benefit for them, but which do not build active global citizenship. This can be seen as an unintended impact. Finally, at the point when the young people grow out of the group and become adults, even if they have gained important tools and capacities relevant for active global citizenship, other life events during adolescence and especially during adulthood may have decreased or invalidated the influence of the programme on their lives.

Indeed, the theory of change also recognizes the existence of other influencing factors that might contribute to the occurrence of their active global citizenship. According to Mayne (2001), the other influencing factors can be categorised into other programs, or social and economic trends. However, it is difficult to restrain and define all the other influencing factors in this study, as it considers the development of active global citizenship in relation to lifepaths. There are an unlimited number of possibilities and life events that might have affected the lives of the individuals – their citizenship competences as well as practice – by fostering or hindering it. It is acknowledged that the members are active young people who are possibly involved in other action as well, and they might have gained knowledge and skills relevant to active global citizenship from somewhere else, for example from other NGO action and volunteering, self-learning, or from school. Their attitude, motivation and behaviour change might have occurred for other reasons as well, for life events unrelated to Plan's action. While shifting into adulthood, they may have developed their citizenship competences and identity in different environments: some may have begun studying, and done international exchange years, may have shifted into work life, established families, and/or engaged in other civil society organisations among others. In addition to these life-trajectory-related factors, other influencing factors should consider social and political developments occurring in the world.

Considering all these factors, the establishment of the ToC was more like an intention to establish a ToC. As active global citizenship development is a multifaceted complex phenomenon that entails unpredictability (Van Ongevalle, 2020), the established ToC is quite general, and entails uncertainty. What adds to the uncertainty is the fact that the CB as an action form entails several activities which may have many kinds of contributions to the members. Furthermore, global citizenship learning is an individualised process for everyone, because of the interaction of learning processes occurring in different contexts (Bourn & Brown, 2011), and furthermore people perceive the world differently (e.g., Leavy, 2014), so the perceived learning processes of each individual are probably somewhat distinct from those of others, and hence also from the established ToC.

At step three of CA, the ToC was mirrored to existing, i.e., secondary evidence. There were only a few available data sources which could be used as evidence. Although the CB action is monitored internally annually, this data was not available for this study. One external evaluation report considering the CB was available[9]. The secondary data consists of this evaluation study, and in addition, stories used in Plan's communication.

In 2018 Pensala and Tran-Nguyen evaluated the global education programme of Plan International Finland, which included the CB and other parts of the programme, regarding the period 2015-2017. Some important conclusions of the CB action taking place during the specific programme period were drawn in the evaluation in relation to learning outcomes and the ways in which the programme contributes to the direct beneficiaries' lives. Pensala and Tran-Nguyen (2018), found out that almost all members having participated during the programme period said to have learned knowledge regarding children's and girls' rights, equality, related development issues, as well as advocating, and skills especially related advocacy skills, group work, event organising and planning. Furthermore, impacting decision-makers, and gaining friends and other social aspects were important impacts of the action. In addition, the trust in that one can have an impact and that children's voice matters were brought up by the participants (Pensala & Tran-Nguyen, 2018). This reflects a transformative change. The study informed about some other aspects of the programme as well. The CB members were interested in learning knowledge and skills as well as in advocacy work and almost 90 % fully or somewhat considered to have promoted issues important for them. They also considered getting enough support from Plan (Pensala & Tran-Nguyen, 2018). Motivation and confidence to advocate for these issues, to take action, and to bring their voices heard occurred also in many answers according to the evaluation (Pensala & Tran-Nguyen, 2018). Many had continued as volunteers in Plan International Finland after resigning from the CB, or even got employed in the development field. A majority were motivated to commit for many years and believed they would continue advocating for global development in the coming years. The action seems to have supported their personal development, and the sustainability of the programme at the individual control group level is good (Pensala & Tran-Nguyen, 2018). Some challenges of the programme were identified in the assessment (Pensala & Tran-Nguyen, 2018). A doubt about participants' real external and internal influence, and a wish to have more autonomy in the planning and implementation of the action were brought up. The CB perceived it was not taken seriously as adolescents by the decision-makers. Furthermore, although the majority considered having worked around issues mainly important to them, there have been some tensions and

[9] The CB action is evaluated as part of the ongoing project cycle (2022-), but this evaluation was not available during this study (personal communication with Plan staff member, 13.5.2024).

contradictions between Plan's strong focus on girls' rights and spectrum thinking related to gender identity and sexual orientation, which some board members cultivate (Pensala & Tran-Nguyen, 2018). It is important to consider that according to Pensala and Trang-Nguyen (2018, p. 19) the objectives Plan has had for its action including the CB have been wide, abstract, and high-flown, which influences their evaluation by weakening it.

In addition to the evaluation report, a part of communication and marketing material of Plan International Finland was utilised as secondary evidence. Plan International Finland had conducted interviews among former CB members, which were found in its social media (Plan International Finland 2021c; Plan International Finland Children's Board, 2020). It must be acknowledged that these interview stories were extracts used for communication and marketing purposes, for example to attract more people to the group, and thus may not be neutral, nor comprehensive, but keeping this in mind, they were still considered as useful evidence. Through a brief analysis of the content of the eight posts which formed the data, some insights can be summarised:

Several CB members perceived the participation in the group had increased their public speaking and performing skills and given an opportunity to speak or perform. Many also mentioned having got to make a difference, an opportunity to participate, or practise active citizenship and get one's voice heard. What was also mentioned was that climate anxiety was released due to having the opportunity to impact, which shows that the action can have an empowering effect. Furthermore, half of the stories revealed that the action imparted important useful skills with respect to the future. Also, there was significant evidence of the importance of the social aspect: new friendships or interaction with likeminded people that occurred. Learning argumentation, writing and advocacy skills as well as learning to make an impact and advocate globally, or the importance of these also manifested as perceived outcomes, as well as learning about topics like human rights, including children's rights, girls' rights and climate issues. Based on the stories, also some participants' courage, confidence, and self-esteem was developed in the CB, and half of the interviewees thought the participation had an impact on their vocation or professional life, and that it contributed to internationalisation. Several members had moved abroad and mentioned the CB having contributed to their choices. Furthermore, there was clear evidence that the engagement had made the young people more independent or otherwise contributed to their personal development. One respondent mentioned to have had interest in human rights, global issues, and the environment when having applied to the programme and stated that they met weekly with the core group and got along in the group. Majority of the members continued volunteering after leaving the group, either in other NGOs or in Plan. Additionally, in the stories some cause-and-effect relationships were manifested, and a few direct contribution statements were made. It was

mentioned that trainings have been useful, and the skills, experience and learnings gained in the CB have been beneficial in adulthood, and that the skills help nowadays to cope abroad. Through activities like events-organising and performing in them, the action has contributed to improved confidence and self-esteem, and taught to take responsibility. It was also articulated that travelling to the meetings as an adolescent developed independence, and thus supported personal development. Getting excited about advocacy and equality because of the CB had also contributed to a study path. The CB was mentioned as being a stepping stone to other volunteering activities. One previous member believed that without the CB experience the member would not have begun to think of the issues from those perspectives, and another participant would not have gone volunteering abroad without having learned from development issues in the CB. According to the stories the CB action may contribute to the members' lifepaths and have a longer-term contribution to their active global citizenship.

The secondary evidence has limitations. The evidence of the evaluation report did not cover all causal chains and gave no evidence on other influencing factors. It only scratched the surface of the long-term contribution of the programme to the previous members. Furthermore, the evaluation concerns only the specific programme period, namely years 2015-2017. More evidence is needed if these kinds of results occurred also during other years during the programme's existence. Pensala and Tran-Nguyen (2018) also noted that the monitoring of the CB action has emphasised the increase in knowledge, while increase in skills, motivation and independent action has received less focus. As they stated, evaluating only an increase in knowledge is not sufficient in terms of programme sustainability. Thus, more information of the programme's contribution to other competences is needed, to examine if transformative learning has occurred. Also, the interview stories did not cover all causal links nor provided evidence on other influencing factors, outputs, nor sufficiently evidence on assumptions. In addition, neutrality and comprehensiveness of the evidence is lacking, as stated. Consequently, it is seen that the secondary evidence here is weak.

At step 4, the initial contribution story was assembled, and briefly assessed. External influencing factors could not be assessed yet, as there was no evidence of other influencing factors. The contribution story built so far is presented next.

THE INITIAL CONTRIBUTION STORY BASED ON SECONDARY EVIDENCE:

Adolescents participate in the Children's Board (CB) once they have been admitted. It has been evidenced that the participants without exception participate voluntarily. The CB provides a platform for the members to engage and make a difference, an opportunity to participate and practise active citizenship and get one's voice heard. It gives an opportunity to speak or perform. Furthermore, it gives an opportunity to interact with like-minded people, and thus has a social contribution.

The CB participation especially increases the members' knowledge on human rights, including children's and girls' rights, climate issues, equality, and related development

issues, as well as on advocating. The programme may also contribute to critical and out-of-the-box thinking, yet this claim needs more evidence. While participating the CB members learn public speaking and performing skills, as well as argumentation, writing and other advocacy skills. They get opportunities for internationalisation, and while engaging as adolescents they may develop their independence. The participation may contribute to developing courage, confidence, responsibility, and self-esteem, and contributes to their personal development overall. The action may have an empowering effect, by giving an opportunity to impact and release, for example, climate anxiety. The action may result in increasing beliefs and trust that one can have an impact and that children's voice matters. Indeed, the action may result in a transformative change, i.e., a change in attitudes, beliefs, and action.

However, for this to happen and for a maximised effect, the CB action needs to be successful, and motivating for the participants. The trainings have mostly been perceived as useful, and the participants mostly have learned from important issues to them. They mostly have been motivated to participate, and the support has been sufficient. The participants usually are committed to the action for longer periods of time. However, the existent participants' doubt about their real external and internal influence, the lack of autonomy in the planning and implementation of the action, as well as decision-makers' attitudes towards them may result in decreased motivation to participate, and commit.

It is common that after leaving the board, the members continue volunteering in other NGOs or in Plan. It may be that the CB works as a stepping stone to other volunteering activities in Finland and abroad, however, it is not clear if the programme participation was the key factor that encouraged continuation. The CB participation may contribute to career choices, as well as to a decision to move abroad. The contribution of the action to moving abroad later in life seems strong based on the evidence. Getting excited about advocacy and equality because of the CB may contribute to choosing a career of societal significance. Quite certainly the action at least will make the participants reflect upon their futures. It is clear based on the evidence that the skills, experience, and learnings gained in the programme are beneficial in its members' future, yet the ways in which they are beneficial needs further specifying. Indeed, according to the evidence the CB does contribute to participants' lifepaths. However, what kind of longer-term contribution it has to their active global citizenship needs to be further studied. It is yet not clear whether the action contributes to the building of active global citizenship in a comprehensive manner.

Some weaknesses of the built contribution story and the links in the theory of change were identified. As stated, one clear weakness is that there is no evidence on other influencing factors yet. More evidence is needed on other influencing factors that may have contributed to their active global citizenship, as well as of other factors, such as life events that may have decreased the contribution of the programme. In addition, the long-term results will have to be further studied, as there is only some evidence on the long-term contribution. Also, some shorter-term outcome claims need more evidence, especially evidence on the skills gained and changes in behaviour and action, and some assumptions need to be assessed through further evidence. In addition, neutrality and comprehensiveness of the evidence is lacking, as stated earlier. Furthermore, there was no clear evidence on outputs. More evidence is needed to ensure the programme has resulted in certain short-term and intermediate outcomes and contributed to the building of its members' active global citizenship. Also understand-

ing of cause-and-effect related to the learning should be improved. The initial contribution story was considered rather weak and strengthening of the contribution story with new evidence was considered essential.

5.2 Occurrence of the expected final outcome

When assessing programs usually the first step is to see if intended results have been achieved. Here the final expected outcome, or rather desired, or assumed outcome, is that the participants have become active global citizens. However, this is hard to measure, and the data does not enable a comprehensive exploration of the participants current active global citizenship traits – competences and practices – although many traits seem to appear in the data. Yet, the occurrence of the final outcome could be analysed through the participants' self-perceived identities. Whether the participants identified themselves as fully or somewhat active global citizens during the data collection was explored from both the survey and the interview data.

The quantitative data of the survey presented some insights of the participants identities (see Appendix 4.2). Based on the survey participants' own identity estimation most respondents identified themselves strongly or somewhat as active citizens, and even more, almost all, identified themselves as global citizens. However not all had the perceived identity of an active or global citizen. A majority identified themselves somewhat or strongly as advocates[10] but some did not identify with the term. A minority of the respondents identified themselves as activists[11]. Also, when looking at the other answers to the statements reflecting active global citizen characteristics based on the conceptualisation of the term in this study, most of the respondents seem to be active global citizens (see Appendix 4.2).

From the interview data, the participants' self-perceptions of themselves as active global citizens were analysed through QCA. All interviewees considered themselves fully or somewhat active global citizens, and thus the general conclusion is that active global citizenship has been developed during their lives. One participant's self-perceived identity was, however, lower than the one of the others. The participant described not to be an active global citizen in that extent in which the participant perceives the concept, but probably "more active because of the background". The interviewee who belonged to the older cohort described also: "Many of those people have perhaps been politically active, or become somewhat activists, but I haven't done that really".

[10] *vaikuttaja* in Finnish
[11] *aktivisti* in Finnish

When asked how the interviewees' active global citizenship manifests, what emerged from the data, was a significant professional identity as a *change-maker*: half of the respondents perceived they mostly influence the world through their careers. These participants had engaged with professions in the global development field or other societally significant career: two advocated for global issues in work life, while one advocated for national issues, and another participant for national and international issues. Furthermore, it must be noted that not all respondents had entered career life yet, and a couple of participants were in the process of building a career – a career of societal significance. Also, active citizenship practices in other life dimensions, such as everyday and civic life manifested in the answers, like continuous learning, and thinking of solutions to problems, and efforts to take global responsibility in consumption choices.

Furthermore, the data shows that several participants while estimating their identity compared themselves to others, and therefore the identity seems to depend on what they perceive fulfils the definition of an active global citizen. For instance, one participant reflected: "It depends a bit on who I compare myself to… But yes, I feel I am an active global citizen". The data also shows that some participants related the identity of an active global citizen to limitless possibilities for action and a struggle that one could always improve, but many perceived they do their best. This was especially evident for the respondents who careerwise take action, but perceived their other participation in NGOs or activism was lacking. One participant describes:

> Yes, I do feel that I am quite active . . . certainly with respect to, that I am very aware of things, but for sure not enough, and that I try to act ethically, so one is of course the career choice. That I have chosen, or pursued that kind of job where I can try to advocate, so to use my work time to build a better world, and then on the other hand, so that in private life I try to make ethical choices, [but]for example I struggle with not having at this moment the time or resources to volunteer, and there is no way I could succeed or manage to find out all the effects of my consumption choices, so somewhat active but I have room for improvement like everyone. But then again, I also think strongly that the best would be if everyone does as much as they reasonably can. (interviewee, older cohort)

It must be considered that when asked directly if they were active global citizens, the interviewees based their perceived identities upon their understanding of the concept. Thus, their conceptions were explored, and they were mostly in line with the conceptualization of the concept in this study. Also, the respondents' perceptions of the concept of active global citizen were similar to each other, however they emphasised slightly different aspects. The respondents seemed to be quite familiar with the concept and could provide an answer when asked what active global citizenship means. Most of the respondents mentioned active global citizenship entails aspects of both global awareness, whether it refers to awareness on global issues or one's role in the global world and taking action or willingness to take action. One participant mentioned caring for the world instead of awareness, and another one did not mention

aspects of action but mentioned awareness and the updating of oneself with information as the most important aspect. Interest and continuous learning or information seeking was mentioned by more than one as aspects of active global citizenship. Indeed, the concept was understood as an entity consisting of awareness or responsibility at a global scale and involvement, like continuous learning. Most added a third dimension of action to the concept: participation, i.e. action to make a change. Several of the participants who mentioned engagement, said it can take many forms and be taken in many ways, either be more outward or inward action, and one mentioned different regional levels of practise. To assess if the CB has played a role in the participant's growth into active global citizenship, and to answer especially the sub-research question 2: "In what ways has participation in the Children's Board contributed to active global citizenship?", the perceived contributions are explored first based on the qualitative analysis of the survey and then based on the interview analysis.

5.3 Perceived contributions of CB participation based on the qualitative analysis of the survey

The general experiences the survey participants had from participating in the CB were briefly explored from the qualitative data, as they relate to the perceived contributions. Most survey participants expressed gratitude for the experience, and perceived the CB experience as positive, fruitful, and no one described a fully negative experience. Many expressed having established a sense of belonging in the group, as well as having a sense of autonomy in the action and felt they were taken seriously and appreciated by the adults. However, one participant associated the experience with a feeling of not belonging. Still the participant did not relate the experience as fully negative, but articulated that personal growth comes from exposure to different kinds of situations and described contentment to have participated. Some of the participants described the significance of the experience regarding their life. A few participants mentioned the experience had a significant, even "groundbreaking" impact on their lives. A couple of participants perceived only little contribution to their lives, and other perceptions situated in between these extremities – the experience had somewhat contributed to their lives.

The qualitative data of the survey reveals some variation and patterns in the specific ways in which the CB has contributed to the participants lives especially with respect to active global citizenship. These perceived contributions were the focus of the analysis. In my analysis I established three main categories of contributions: 1) contribution to personal development, 2) contribution to professional growth, and 3)

social contribution. Next, these main contribution categories, and how they relate to active global citizenship, is presented.

5.3.1 Contribution to personal development

One significant category that I identified in the data is *contribution to personal development*. The category of contribution to personal development entails several different contributions related to personal development. The programme seems to have contributed to each participants' personal development in a unique way, yet common contributions include a strengthened or changed understanding and awareness related to the world, strengthened values and attitudes and personal aspirations, as well as an increased sense of agency, self-confidence, and self-esteem.

Most of the survey participants mentioned some kind of change in awareness and level of thinking that the CB contributed to. The change in awareness related mostly to global issues, such as girls' rights, equality, climate change, as well as development cooperation. Participant #18 mentioned having learned "a lot about equality both in terms of Finland and the global level", so also comprehension on issues of a general level was established. The topics each member had learned about seem to somewhat differ depending on their participation years. The participants had widened their worldview, thinking and perspectives, as well as gained critical perspectives in the CB. Participant #20 described that the increased comprehension has then increased her activeness in taking part in social discourse. The following quotes illustrate the awareness and understanding that widened in the CB:

> The CB time increased my awareness of many global challenges. My thinking also expanded in many matters to see the world in a bigger picture than only here where I live. I also learned to question such ideas, like the one where we unilaterally help others who need help (P19).

> Along with the Children's Board I became more aware. Before getting into the Children's Board for instance I did not understand why girls' rights should be improved. . . . I learned a lot more deeply about climate change and the issues of equality. . . (P12)

Transformational learning processes seem to have occurred for many participants to some extent, and for one survey participant extensively. Participant #8 described a fundamental change in her way of existing in the world:

> My worldview increased a lot! I began to value the things in my life more …I started to become more strongly aware of my surroundings. My understanding of climate issues, gender equality, and the meaning of them both increased immensely. (P8)

> The Children's Board has contributed to the fact that I live such a conscious life today. I understand the meaning of my choices, I can step into other people's shoes, and I see the importance of development cooperation. (P8)

The data shows that the CB either strengthened, changed, or built the participants values or attitudes. While a few participants mentioned that participation in the CB did not change but supported or strengthened their mindset, others mentioned some change in values, and a few respondents articulated a clear change in values or attitudes. For example, participant #8 describes she "became a feminist" in the CB. The values and attitudes seem to have been shaped towards global responsibility, justice, equality, and humane values. The learning from peers had increased global responsibility for one participant. As some participants perceived the experience supported or strengthened their mindset, the experience manifests more as a natural continuum than something transformational for their growth. Indeed, it is important to note individuals in general apply to the Children's Board from their own initiative, and it must be considered that the participants' age and the time when they engage in the CB matter with respect to the contribution of the programme. In light of the data, it seems that if adolescents join the group early, perhaps influenced by their parents, instead of their own initiative, the contribution to mindset may be different. One participant who had begun participating in the CB at a very early age due to a parent's influence, perceived the contribution to values differently than others. She perceived that Plan raised her to the world, and described the mindset was built from scratch:

> … back then at the age of 11, I had not perhaps yet "defined" my values in life. Plan may not have so much modified the values, but strongly been building them for little [the person's name] . . . . the attitude and the behaviour patterns that Plan has created [for me] are actually the original ones. (P6)

Many participants perceived that they learned or realised that they can act and make a change, as well as gained a comprehension of tools for action. Although the CB increased the participants' understanding and awareness of global problems, which one participant called as a strengthened world-weariness, it seems that the action was perceived mostly as empowering as it contributed to a better comprehension of means for action. This increased active citizen attitude was an important contribution for several participants, and some mentioned the built belief that they can act has contributed to further strivings of change-making:

> Participation in the Children's Board and in other organisations has imparted such an active citizen attitude and reduced hopelessness in the face of global inequality and climate change, as I have found tools to advocate at a grassroots level for issues that are important to me. (P21)

> Being involved in the Children's Board opened up to me that I can act regardless of my age and place, as I come from a small town, where there was little activity. During [my participation in] the Children's Board and after it, I actively engaged in action related to development cooperation in my hometown. (P2)

However, it seems that one participant did not gain a belief that one can act. The participant articulated a lack of sense of belonging to the group for her less well-off a background, which created an opposite belief:

> The Children's Board gave me a bit of an impression that advocacy work is something for rich and well-off children and that others can then possibly start on it when they are older. I no longer completely agree with this, but when I was a minor, the thought bothered me a lot, because I felt that I came from a family that didn't make great trips nor regularly practised culture and therefore I didn't belong to the group. I constantly felt that I should be something big and great in order to participate in the activities of the Children's Board, so I constantly felt like a bit of an outsider.... (P11)

This different kind of perception reflects a sense of alienation. However, in general in the data, the CB manifests as a supportive growth environment. Several participants mentioned having gotten a feeling of acceptance and validation from the side of Plan's personnel or their peers. Many perceived they or their opinions were heard, recognised, valued, and encouraged, and they were believed in, as well provided with a space to act by themselves and to genuinely make a difference. One participant described these aspects particularly as making the action significant. Participant #5 describes: "The Children's Board offered me a really great accepting and encouraging opportunity to grow as an advocate and a young person" and clarifies later that this encouragement and acceptance also inspired her to continue advocating later. A few participants mentioned the CB provided them with a space to find a point of empathy with other like-minded young people who were concerned about the world and interested in making a change. Participant #8 describes this: "…When I got to learn and share thoughts together with other people of the same age, I noticed that it is not 'embarrassing' or weird to be interested and want to advocate…"

On the other hand, a couple of participants who lived outside of Helsinki, described that the CB was not only a place where to find like-minded people, but a place where to meet a versatile range of people, spend time out of one's earlier bubble, and widen one's own life circles. Furthermore, two participants perceived that the CB has or may have contributed to their decision to move abroad. The other participant clarified it was the diverse international action that had a possible encouraging influence. A contribution to self-confidence also manifested in a few answers. This increased self-confidence and courage seem to lead to widened participation in the society in general.

When looking more closely at the contributions on personal development, it can be concluded that the CB has contributed to strengthened active global citizenship. The increased global awareness and understanding as well as attitude and value development towards global responsibility and justice can be considered a strengthened global citizenship mindset. Also, the meeting of the diverse range of people may be seen as contributing to the mindset, as valuing of diversity and respect for people are part of it (Oxfam, 2015). The data shows that the programme has empowered many to

act by increasing the belief that one can take action and the comprehension of how one can act, which reflects an increased sense of agency, a part of civic competence (see e.g., Hoskin's 2006, as cited in Hoskins & Crick, 2010). Getting a space for autonomous action, recognition and encouragement, self-confidence, as well as a point of empathy from other peers seems to have supported the survey respondents' development of self-esteem, sense of personal value and sense of agency. The increased knowledge, the belief that one can make a change, and the increased self-esteem and confidence can be seen having contributed to the members' further activeness and citizenship practice. The contribution to the decision to move abroad does not directly show a relation with active global citizenship as understood in this study but requires further exploring.

5.3.2 Contribution to professional growth

Another contribution that emerged from the data was *contribution to professional growth.* This category entails contributions to the participants' career choices as well as skill acquisition.

The CB participation experience increased several members' interest towards some matters such as girls' rights, or motivation to advocate for them. However, one participant perceived the CB supported an existing interest towards global themes, development cooperation and sustainable development, but did not increase it. Also, for many participants the experience increased their motivation to make a change - also in their career life. The enlarged interest towards certain themes and motivation to make a change was, indeed, perceived to have probably contributed to career choices. On the other hand, a few participants specifically articulated it has given them a clearer perception of their place in the world and their choices related to identity development, including career choices. Again, one participant perceived that the CB had contributed to an increased global perspective, which then had contributed to her study choices.

Several participants had pursued a social impact career, through which they aim to make a change in the world by advocating for issues such as equality, human rights, and sustainable development, and some articulated clearly that the CB has somewhat contributed to their choices. Participant #3 described "… I believe my professions [of, the names of two professions] have at least partly been a result of engaging in the Children's Board, because I noticed how big of an importance values and attitude education has for the occurrence of changes", and participant #10 in the following way:

> I got inspired to work in equality issues, I now work in [a workplace] alongside my studies. I want in my studies to … study somehow women's and girls' opportunities for political influence. I am also very motivated to dedicate at least part of my career to equality… (P10)

Furthermore, participant #15 articulated that the experience probably increased her interest towards NGOs and a few other participants brought up that the CB participation drove them towards other NGO engagement, and indirectly contributed to their professional paths leading them to their fields – one to the political field, the other to a caring profession. On the other hand, one participant mentioned that the experience not just pushed her towards international advocacy but also was an advantage when applying to United World Colleges (UWC) education, a global educational organisation that strives for a sustainable future and peace (UWC, n.d.). This reflects the fact that the experience may enhance chances in being admitted to further engagement or education.

Consequently, the data shows that the CB has the potential to contribute in different ways to the participants' career paths. Yet it also shows that for all participants it has not had such a contribution. Seems that for two participants the CB could have had a contribution to their career paths as it increased their interest towards certain issues, but due to other factors, their career paths took another direction. Participant #9 describes:

> I applied to study development studies and regional sciences inspired by the themes, but eventually I ended up [in another] field. I was planning to advance my career to a career path in the Foreign Ministry, but eventually work opportunities opened up elsewhere . . . (P9)

Furthermore, several participants mentioned they have gained many useful skills in the CB. The acquired skills were perceived useful regarding later life – also professional life. These skills include advocacy skills, networking, communication, and performance skills, as well as meeting practice competences. These interpersonal and work life skills are skills that the participants may utilise in professional life, and thus also part of the participants' professional growth. Participant #12 described the contribution of the CB to the acquisition of these skills as a significant one: "I dare claim that also my current skills to advocate, communicate and perform mostly derive from Plan Children's Board".

The contribution the CB has had for participants' professional growth is related to active global citizenship development, as the skills gained are not just relevant professional skills, but also life-skills that the participants use when participating in the society. Advocacy skills can be considered an umbrella term for the other skills, like communication and performance skills, referring to skills needed in advocacy work. Communication skills are commonly perceived as one important active and global citizenship competence (e.g., Oxfam, 2015, Niemelä, 2012), whereas meeting practice competences may be considered professional communication skills, and skills required widely when engaging in CSOs. The increased motivation to make a change is an objective in global education widely, and the evidence proves this was reached for

some participants. Furthermore, as career life is one significant sphere of life where one can practise active global citizenship, the programme's contribution to the decision of some participants to pursue a career in change-making can be seen as a significant contribution from the perspective of active global citizenship. Yet, it is natural that the experience has contributed only to some extent, and for some indirectly, as commonly developing a career path is a process, rather than a result of a single event.

5.3.3 Social contribution

A third category that emerged in the survey analysis, in addition to the contributions to personal development and professional growth was a *social contribution*, which refers to an establishment of social connections. Most of the participants described that they gained some kind of social connections in the CB (also see Appendix 4.1 for quantitative insights). These encompass different levels of friendships and networks. Many of the participants had gained several friends, and close friendships, and many of the friendships had lasted until this day. Hence, for these participants a significant social contribution is evidenced. Also, networks were established, and were still present until this day. Some participants mentioned having gained both, like participant #12 who described: "From the Children's Board, important networks and friends have remained a part of my everyday life…".

However, for all the social contribution was not so significant, but rather limited to acquaintances, distant networks, or one friend that remained. For at least one participant the social contribution was only related to personal life, but seems the networks established may also benefit later engagement and career life. It was brought up by a few participants that the networks have been helpful in later engagement or in studies, and that like-minded people tend to reconnect later in life. This may reflect the fact that Finland is a small country and there is a relatively small circle of people acting around certain subjects. Participant #10 articulates:

> The Children's Board left me with good contacts to other advocate youths, across party lines. This has facilitated my action in a political youth organisation. (P10)

Although social relationships are not directly a part of active global citizenship, it is important to note, that friendships matter for one's wellbeing, including social inclusion (e.g., Korkiamäki & Elliott O'Dare, 2021), and thus may promote active citizenship, which is related to social inclusion. Furthermore, as evidenced, the social connections established may support later civic engagement, an important form of active citizenship practice. Moreover, I argue that identifying social contribution as one of the main contributions is important, considering that the possibility to engage in activities with friends enhances enjoyment of participation and increases the chance to continue participating (Patrick et al., 1999), and thus the social contribution may

boost other positive contributions which are likely to increase over the years of engagement.

5.4 Perceived contributions of CB participation stemming from the interview analysis

During the interviews the overall portrayal of the CB experience was positive. Most of the interviewees described the experience as positive or very positive, yet one participant had a more neutral perception of the experience. For the most part the interviewees were pleased with their participation and all perceived it gave them a lot, yet one participant described the action partly as pointless[12]. During the interviews some members articulated some critique towards the CB action, but these voices did not determine the experience as negative, but rather reflect the fact that the participants now as adults look back at parts of the experience with a more critical lens. The perceived significance with respect to the interviewees' lives varied from little to significant. Several participants perceived the experience as an important part in their growth, and that it has contributed to their life paths to some extent or extensively. Yet, one participant did not perceive much of a contribution. The following extracts from two interviewees illustrate the variation in the perceptions of the CB participation experience, and its significance to their lives.

> … so it really gave me a lot, . . . , when I think how the Children's Board has impacted my life, I don't even know if I can really break it down how it would not have impacted, or like so, so it must have had a great impact (interviewee, older cohort)

> Well, maybe not really significantly [has the CB impacted my life] ... So, it certainly was not a bad experience. But maybe my expectations somehow were too high with respect to what actually then goes on there (interviewee, younger cohort).

The fact that the perceptions articulated by the interviewees are in line with the experiences articulated in the survey data, is natural as some of the participants had participated in both data gathering processes, for which there exists overlapping *double data* for some individuals. Due to the problem of the double data, the focus in the analysis of the interviews was on the parts that revealed more insights and increased understanding on the factors behind the perceived contributions. Through the interviews a better comprehension of the perceived contributions of the CB to the participants' lives, could be produced. In the analysis I established five categories for the contributions articulated in the interviews: 1) Strengthened world-mindedness and

[12] The participant described having begun at a relatively old age in the CB, which contributed to a perceived desire "to do something more important".

global engagement 2) Built advocacy toolkit, 3) Springboard to NGOs, 4) Founded social relationships, and 5) Fostered sense of social inclusion and agency. Next, I present these five main contributions, and discuss how they relate to active global citizenship.

5.4.1 Strengthened world-mindedness and global engagement

One of the perceived contributions of the participation in the CB that were identified in the data was *strengthened world-mindedness and global engagement*. In many ways the participants' global awareness and understanding was strengthened and broadened, as well as advocacy for global challenges.

The CB provided the respondents with an important context of learning when it comes to their knowledge and understanding. Based on the analysis the awareness of the participants increased particularly on global issues. The interviewees mentioned having learned about development cooperation, which can be viewed as an umbrella theme, and issues like inequality – in general and especially gender inequality and minorities' rights, climate change, power structures, poverty, child labour and other child rights issues in developing countries, and HIV/AIDS (human immunodeficiency virus/ acquired immunodeficiency syndrome). Considering that the thematic focus of the activities has changed throughout the years, it is natural that the issues the participants learned about varies to some extent.

In the data the CB manifests as a space for concretization and deepening of knowledge, and consequently for an expansion of awareness and worldviews. The participants were already interested in the themes, and thus had some knowledge and awareness already, however, many participants mentioned they learned new knowledge that is more concrete, deeper, condensed, and accurate, and developed critical and below-surface thinking. The following quote illustrates this:

> I was certainly aware of some things, but maybe then it became concrete. Of course, at that age I didn't – what I had up to then somehow self-studied – for sure that kind of knowledge just increased and somehow deepened (interviewee, older cohort)

A couple of participants mentioned having learned about issues which they did not learn in school - issues in the Global South, such as female genital mutilation, other girls' rights related issues, or climate issues such as the El Niño phenomenon, and in this way gained a different global perspective - a perspective from the viewpoint of developing countries. A few interviewees also mentioned during the CB years having learned about the importance of promoting local ownership in developing cooperation instead of a top-down approach, and one participant clearly articulated having established an anticolonial perspective throughout the CB years:

> Or like at the age of 14 I didn't really understand anything at all, but anyhow [I learned] a lot of things that I might not have thought about otherwise. Or for example, if I compare myself to my same-aged peers . . . maybe one matter that I have become very strongly aware of through the Children's Board, is all this white saviorism, maybe I somehow see it through a more critical lens than, for example, many others. (interviewee, younger cohort)

The concretization of knowledge they described was related to different ways of learning: instead of just through listening or reading, i.e., passive assimilation of knowledge, it was mentioned by several members that they learned through interactions like discussions as well as diverse encounters – among the CB members, with the professionals, and in international encounters with people from developing countries. Especially participants from the older cohort who had engaged more in international and intercultural experiences as part of the action, as earlier international exchange was more common in the CB than recently, described these experiences as memorable, and that through these experiences they could more deeply reflect upon the realities of those people as well as their own, and thus widen their worldviews. A participant who perceived the CB as the first opportunity to discuss the issues instead of self-studying and to learn from more experienced people, describes the importance of the CB as a space for critical discussion and active learning:

> …. and I feel that especially, those conversations, at that stage, would it be that the youngest of us was 13 years old at the time, or something like that and the oldest were, like maybe 18 years old, so at that age it's a really big age range, although it actually isn't. And there were people who were in some way much more ready or had thought much more, or who had much more knowledge and experience, so I thought it was interesting to also get to discuss those things and to gain new perspectives as well. So, if before, before it [the Children's Board], there was no such reference group, one just self-studied, the absorbing of information is kind of more passive in a way, and now [then] again for the first time I was in a group or community, where the issues were also critically discussed, so it really has been an important thing. (interviewee, older cohort)

Also, other participants mentioned the experience provided different perspectives, also critical ones, and increased their worldview. This increased understanding of societal matters has given a good starting point and conceptual foundation for further learning and participation in other such strongly issue-driven action, according to one participant. Some also mentioned that in a way an existing sense of world-weariness was increased, which is natural, considering that their awareness of global problems increased.

On the other hand, a couple of interviewees mentioned most of the issues that were taught were already self-evident for them. One participant describes having learned about most issues from the news but that because in the CB they had to search for information, a more important gaining was an increased motivation to explore, study, and grow as a person more, as well as a recognition of the severity of issues, rather than the acquisition of factual knowledge. The participant describes: ". . . I definitely had such an awakening somehow, uh, that these are very serious issues,

and all these global challenges interrelate, I should study this further" and that "…it gave that kind of motivation to open that worldview even more". Another participant relates the self-evidence of issues to their relative old age compared to some other participants and perceived the trainings that were not "targeted to children only" as some of the best activities. Indeed, it comes evident that as the group may include participants as young as 11 and as old as 18 years old, some trainings may benefit younger participants more than older ones.

Also, a couple of participants illustrated a clear contribution to a change in self-awareness in relation to one's place in the world, which reflects changes in perceived identity. One interviewee shares:

> Yes for sure when I think about when I was active in the action, and compared [myself] to others of the same age, my own perception of my privilege and my own ability to perceive myself as part of the world changed a lot also, which is also very valuable, and particularly is valuable, if you think about future advocacy work as well, so then it gives different kind of starting points to that. And especially what I feel is a very valuable contribution from Plan, is that you can from a young age understand your own position in the world – and as a Finnish person in comparison to developing countries and the world. (interviewee, younger cohort)

Most interviewees articulated having had already established a value base that was aligned with Plan's values before their participation in the group. This is natural considering that they applied to the group from their own initiative and from a certain mindset. One participant explained further that due to their relative old age when applying quite strong values had already been built. Consequently, most participants perceived their values stayed similar, or became strengthened. It seems the values may become strengthened not only through the deepened understanding, but also through collective sharing of values. A few interviewees uttered that in the CB there were more experienced members, whose ideas resonated with their own ideas, and that the participation increased confidence about the values. One participant explains the collective sharing of values, and its contribution, in the following quotes:

> I would think that to a large extent no [the CB did not affect my values], but then again, maybe somehow I hadn't been in such an atmosphere before which emphasised these values, so it gave me the opportunity to express them better, in a way, ... I remember when I was told that, you can't call yourself a feminist or other things, so there I got a power somehow, that I - it is correct - it doesn't matter what others say, I am a feminist. I push forward– like- these values are important, so yes, that attitude grew . . . (interviewee, younger cohort)

> … in a way Plan is a very values-based organisation and people are there very like-minded, and advocate for the same objectives, so somehow I saw how smart and wonderful the people were who were around, and how they courageously expressed these values and told about their own experiences as well . . . in a way I saw a lot that kind of empowering examples of why it's worth speaking up for these values and in which situations you can do that, so somehow I got the feeling that this is right, and this is how many people think, and somehow yes, maybe that, that they [the values] were always there as a basic pillar, they weren't questioned at all, and – so maybe it was like that collective sharing of values which affected it [the attitude that grew] (the same interviewee, younger cohort)

Indeed, in the light of the data it seems values in the CB are shared and do not become questioned, which also implies that if a participant happened to diverge from these common values, he or she may want to leave the group or other conflict might likely occur. A few participants described some of the strengthened values and ideas that were shared among the group as global equality and responsibility, empathy, global solidarity, common humanity, and the idea that everyone can and should make a change. These values are in line with the global education agenda of Plan International Finland presented in Chapter 3.2., as well as the humanistic idea of global citizenship.

A few participants described that their strengthened values and attitudes, including opinions and perspectives, have contributed to their later action. One participant described through Plan's action having understood the value of development cooperation, a second participant having gained a strengthened motivation to advocate for issues of developing countries, and a third participant having understood the value of global feminism. Hence, a strengthened development cooperation perspective or a feminist perspective was built for some participants which was also perceived to have contributed to the issues they advocate for now. Participant who felt called to "somehow keep their life focused on making an impact", and especially in relation to global problems, explains the contribution of Plan for the development of a global perspective of advocacy the participant cultivates in the following quote:

> Through Plan, I may now understand even better why especially girls and women are those who suffer a lot from global problems, so, yeah I have gained a lot of passion in relation to this specific global challenge in question. So yes definitely, if Plan had only focused on municipal issues, maybe I wouldn't be so interested particularly in global activism. That's the thing that's on my mind all the time, so in that way definitely yes. (interviewee, younger cohort)

On the other hand, another participant from the younger cohort described the global perspective and global citizenship they were grown into in the CB, has pushed them concretely forward to a certain direction of action, like projects which entail a global perspective and a perspective from the viewpoint of developing countries, as well as contributed indirectly to their moving abroad. The participant clarifies "I think that as from a young age I kind of grew into that kind of global thinking and maybe that kind of global citizenship, it has affected many things." The participant describes that mostly their action entails a global perspective now, and that without the CB the emphasis on the issues they advocate for would be a bit different. This also implies that the programme has some long-term global impact, through the direct beneficiaries' later action, as some former members later, after the participation, continue advocating for global issues, however the examination is out of the scope of this study.

Furthermore, the data shows that the CB has fostered several members' internationalisation somehow, and especially to some extent strengthened several members'

international aspirations, such as aspirations to live and work abroad. Particularly through observational learning in the peer group some participants' visions to imagine alternative futures, especially regarding moving abroad, seem to become fostered. One participant from the younger cohort who perceived a contribution to their aspirations to work abroad in the future, and to international friend circles, shared that: "what stood out to me from the people I met in the Children's Board was that they were all going around the world when they were really young". Indeed, the CB manifests as a community where adolescents tend to be interested and engaged in moving abroad and serve as role models for other members, fostering their similar aspirations. One participant, from the older cohort, who perceived an encouragement due to the CB participation to make non-mainstream decisions – "like be different than the classmate who for example left for Australia to do a high school exchange" further explained: "So for sure, the desire and the decision to travel there [to a UWC school in a developing country] was impacted by the participation in the Children's Board, and that I had discussed those thematic areas and got to know people a lot and had that kind of a spark of interest in global engagement". However, this contribution was not clearly perceived by everyone. One participant acknowledged that many in the CB applied to the UWC education but was not interested in moving abroad at that point. Yet, the participant experienced that the CB experience may have contributed to their pursuing an international internship later in life, but mentioned the understanding of the related cause-and-effect relation is difficult to establish.

In addition, a couple of participants articulated that the CB contributed to their foreign language skills, by fostering English skills. The other participant describes the international encounters in the CB required for the first time the use of English beyond school life, as at that point of time using English was not so common.

The deepened understanding and awareness of global issues, the increased self-awareness of one's place in the world, and the strengthened values towards global equality and solidarity can be seen as strengthened world-mindedness – a global citizenship mindset. The increased comprehension of global issues from a non-mainstream perspective manifests as a promotion of justice-oriented citizenship, and transformative global citizenship, which contrasts with what the participants learned in formal education. Furthermore, the evidence shows that learning characterised under human rights education and development education seem to become emphasised in the CB, when it comes to the dimensions of global education, and that participatory learning through dialogue and experiences seems to have fostered their understanding. The data also shows that for some the CB has contributed to a strengthened global engagement, also understood as fostered active global citizenship practice, as the gained perspectives have contributed to their globally oriented citizenship practice.

The fostering of English skills can furthermore be seen as a minor contribution to possible global engagement and internationalisation. However, considering the English skills and the fostered international aspirations that were evidenced, it is worth noticing that mere moving abroad or international action, is not considered here as an active global citizenship practice, if it does not involve constructive action. The data yet shows, many participants' moving abroad has been related to career establishment or other constructive action from the perspective of active global citizenship (see later Ch. 5.5.), and thus these contributions indirectly seem to foster active global citizenship.

5.4.2 Built advocacy toolkit

A second perceived contribution I identified in the interview analysis was *built advocacy toolkit*. The CB built competences for its members which can be considered an advocacy toolkit. This toolkit includes many skills, such as organisational and project management skills, argumentation, performing, and critical thinking skills, but also knowledge and understanding related to politics, advocacy, and engagement. One participant described the advocacy tools to be a major long-term contribution of the programme, that has contributed to the participant's life up to the present.

A few participants mentioned the CB contributed to their comprehension of national political and societal issues, especially the exercise of power and politics. One participant who perceived a significant increase in their comprehension of the Finnish political system, describes having learned for the first time about party politics and exercise of power and advocacy in the process of organising an election panel in the CB. Also, a contribution to knowledge about engagement was perceived to increase. The CB seemed to show that "one can do a lot" to make a difference, and especially seemed to teach the participants how one can make an impact through NGO participation. Many also uttered that the experience inspired them to advocate, but more the participants emphasised they learned about concrete ways of making an impact, like the following quote illustrates.

> . . . although the enthusiasm [to advocate and make a change] was already there before with me, but the Children's Board perhaps concretely showed why it is necessary to advocate, how one can participate, like for example through organisation work... so somehow, I got such concreteness to it in a certain way, an understanding of what one needs to do to get a handle on the advocacy thing. (interviewee, younger cohort)

In addition, the CB contributed to the learning of concrete skills by enabling the practising of the skills. Most interviewees described that in the CB they got to plan and execute projects collaboratively with other youths, like organise campaigns, other projects, and events, only with the support of adults, and in these intensive processes, they learned many skills. The CB especially contributed through participatory learning to the members' organisational and project management skills. It seems that these

were skills not necessarily learned in school and skills that benefit further participation and career. One participant described in the CB having ". . . got to do a lot and learn a lot of things that have taken me forward later in life", and clarified later that especially the project management skills have manifested as useful later:

> So, I think that the Children's Board served me as a springboard to many other things. So, I ended up founding a start-up after my Children's Board years. . . and in a way, maybe those kinds of project management issues that, for example, were not taught in any school, were such – were the kinds from which I could get started also then in that start-up, for example. (interviewee, younger cohort)

Many participants perceived the CB contributed to their argumentation skills, including how to express one's opinion in speaking or writing, and self-confidence in relation to the expressing of one's own opinions. Many also perceived the CB had positively contributed to their performing and public speaking skills, self-confidence, and courage, and these have been beneficial in later life. Indeed, writing and performing skills were perceived to have been strengthened by many. The member's had been able to apply these skills in practice like when speaking at events and writing reports, but also mentioned having got performance trainings, and writing skills were strengthened also through feedback from the organisation personnel. It seems that especially those members involved in activities like the #GirlsTakeover that attract media's attention or other events where one needs to perform, as well as those who took on chairperson roles were able to practise their performing skills and confidence. Yet, it was also brought up that just being in the group as a shy person or interacting among new people in the CB meetings and in different events contributed to participants' performing skills or courage to speak and lowered the threshold to seek out new situations. The descriptions suggest that the activities have challenged many participants constructively, and through experienced successes and achievements self-efficacy has been built. To give an instance, one participant mentioned having learned in the CB "how to speak to a member of parliament" when interviewing politicians in the CB and perceived to have gained confidence to express one's opinions and promote them from a young age. However, another participant who perceived having developed performing skills did not perceive to have gained self-confidence when the participant relates the experience to confidence development later in life.

The CB also contributed to critical thinking skills for many. Yet, a few participants mentioned having reflected upon the action later with a more critical lens. One participant reflected that because Plan has a certain agenda, only some opinions were allowed in the CB and alternative political perspectives did not fully become explored, and thus perceived that critical thinking skills were not comprehensively fostered.

Moreover, some interviewees reflected that as the CB action entailed a lot of being and working with other young people and socialising with different kinds of people and people of different ages, within the group and in different events, it required

the practising and development of social competence, like social skills. Learning of social and interpersonal skills such as collaboration and leadership skills was for several participants an important perceived contribution of the programme. One participant perceived the gained leadership skills were one of the most important contributions that benefitted other aspects of life during the CB participation, and later in life.

The built advocacy toolkit seems to benefit the participants in general in their different spheres of life. Yet, it especially seems to be advantageous in later engagement in civic life, and later career life, notably an advocate career, like the quote from one interviewee illustrates:

> I feel a bit like in all areas of my life [the skills have been useful], in that sense, that I continued after Plan in many other organisations, and at the moment I'm working in a societal role in a leadership position, so there in a way, ... you need quite a lot of, for example, presentation skills, that kind of self-confidence, and you have to have really fluent ability to produce text, speaking and writing skills, so it's sort of highlighted there. And just like when I'm engaging in organisations, and there when we're dealing with some kind of promotion of interests, or other, which then requires these skills. (interviewee, younger cohort)

Based on the previously presented literature (e.g., Hoskin's, 2006, as cited in Hoskins & Crick, 2010; Niemelä, 2012; Oxfam, 2015, UNESCO, 2015), the skills acquired such as critical thinking skills, interpersonal skills like communication skills, which also include the skill to express one's own opinions and argumentation skills, are active citizenship and global citizenship competences that participation requires. Furthermore, according to Mehtäläinen et al. (2017, p. 35), the self-perception young people have of themselves as societal actors, reflects their self-confidence, which again influences their actions. Thus, self-confidence is an important element of active citizenship. Consequently, drawing on the analysis, the study suggests many active citizenship, and global citizenship skills were fostered through CB participation. Also, knowledge about power and politics are part of the competences according to Niemelä (2012) and Oxfam (2015), and the fostered knowledge about engagement, i.e. knowing how to participate and take action, is naturally needed for active citizenship practice. The built toolkit enables a better active citizen participation and may especially benefit career in the field of advocacy, but is beneficial also in general in life, considering that for example social skills benefit private life, and project management skills may benefit career life regardless of career orientation. Furthermore, as good social and socio-emotional skills in childhood predict a good adulthood (see e.g. Pulkkinen, 2017), the CB as a place to learn and practise social and emotional skills seems to foster a good life in general.

5.4.3 Springboard to NGOs

A third contribution that I identified in my analysis I named *springboard to NGOs*. In some participants' perceptions, the CB manifests as a springboard which begins a continuum of engagement, where the youths continue advocating in different contexts when they leave the board. Thus, in the light of the data, it seems that the CB can have an empowering effect that gives a 'head start' and begins a cycle of active citizen participation for the youths who already are interested in advocacy and participation but have few opportunities for participation. Yet it should also be noticed that opportunities for participation anyways increase by age.

Indeed, many interviewees had after the CB participation continued to engage elsewhere in the civil society, especially in NGOs, and perceived the CB had partly contributed to their later engagement by pushing them to that direction. In place of NGOs, one participant mentioned the start-up environment as the context to which the CB pushed them to in addition to other organisational action where the participant continued. For some the continuum had also led to a career in the field, an NGO career, however not all interviewees had made a career in NGOs, and some were still in the process of building a career.

The experience seems to work as a springboard by giving knowledge about the civil society sector and engagement possibilities, and competences that lower the threshold for other engagement, and/or by giving motivation to make an impact and trust in oneself as a societal actor. One participant described that the CB gave them information about participation opportunities, and in later engagement again new information of opportunities for participation was provided, which has created a continuum of engagement, as the next quote illustrates:

> I feel like through the Children's Board, . . . , from there I got the kind of opportunities that - you could also apply for this [programme], or that, and then in those in a way I moved forward, so then in them I was told that there exists this kind of programme and that kind of programme. So, it [the CB] is perhaps the one that has originally given such sources of information on where to participate later. (interviewee, younger cohort)

Another interviewee perceived having gained enthusiasm towards advocacy work in the CB but described to have "naturally continued" in other organisations, explaining that there are other youth organisations where one can work around similar issues and that there is the age limit in the CB. The participant portrayed that many CB members, particularly those who started at an early age in the group, began to think later where elsewhere they can engage and use the competences they have gained in the CB. However, the experience did not lead directly to other volunteering in NGOs for all. One participant did not engage in any positions of trust anymore, nor any NGO engagement right after the CB, because of a feeling of overwhelm "of being involved in everything" and due to a change in life situation.

Several interviewees described that they had learned knowledge linked to participation and citizenship: about different possibilities of action and opportunities in the world, as well as the civil society sector, and non-governmental organisations within and beyond Plan International, which seems to have contributed to later engagement. The increased awareness of NGOs was uttered by many as one main contribution of the programme. Some uttered the experience showed them concretely what it means to engage in NGOs and how they can make an impact by participating in NGOs. Some participants described the CB gave them an opportunity to see daily work in the NGO sector and get to know personnel working in the field, and thus concretised organisational work for them, as illustrated in the following quote:

> in a way, I feel that before you start engaging with advocacy work like that, you can only imagine what you might be able to do, and I probably wouldn't – if I hadn't been in the Children's Board – I probably wouldn't dare to think somehow that okay what if I go and work in an organisation, so in a way now I know what it perhaps is and I know that I'm interested in it, so in a way, I've seen what kind of tasks there are, for example. So, I got really interested when I saw what those adults over there at Plan do, so I thought . . . I could also be interested in this kind of work, hmmm and even in working at Plan, so I concretely saw what it means, what it requires, how one can participate, what the different tasks are (interviewee, younger cohort)

A few participants described that what lowered the threshold to engage later, was especially the familiarisation with board work, i.e. learning of meeting practice competences as part of organisational action. Indeed, in the CB gatherings official meeting practices take place, and several interviewees described having become acquainted with meeting protocols and practices, and organisation work in general, for the first time in the CB. Based on articulations of a few members, it seems that the experience not only lowers the threshold to apply for other organisational work, but also based on their opinion increases chances to be selected to different kinds of civic action forms, or opportunities related to work or studies. Also, in this way the experience works as a springboard: the CB may function as a prior career experience, which opens further possibilities.

One participant who had ended up working in the NGO field, described the CB experience as an "introduction to the job" and as a career start. Also, another participant who dedicated their career to advocacy, described it as a start of a continuum which eventually has contributed to career establishment. The participant describes:

> The work I'm doing at the moment comes from my many years of active participation in organisations and in the volunteering field. And similarly as I was the chairperson [in the CB], then I've been a chairperson also in many other organisations after that, and at the moment I am [in a societal role] in a leadership position, so it kind of, it kind of creates a basis for it, and also understanding the role of civil society and so – so it has been such a strong – it has contributed to it. Or just to my interest . . . that I want to do these things, that I want to work inside a certain frame. So, it was quite a strong contributor to it. (interviewee, younger cohort)

Yet, overall, the participants' perceptions on the contribution the CB has had to their career choices varied. Around half of the interviewees described they were inspired by the CB participation, so that they realised more clearly that they want to contribute professionally to a better society and pursue a career in related fields – fields related to international affairs, politics, global development, and the NGO field. This can be considered a significant contribution to career choices. However, for two participants who articulated having already had quite a clear idea of their interests and plans, the contribution was more like guiding or strengthening and characterised as an important piece on the path. For two other participants because of other intervening factors the CB did not have a clear perceived contribution to career choices – at least by that moment – as it should be noted that the other participant was still a student. Indeed, although the CB increased many participants' interest towards NGOs or international politics and global development, it did not have a long-term contribution to every participant's career paths. Also, it should be noted that some were at the age of studies or applying to studies, and each participant's career path keeps on shaping. What more should be noted is that the interview data shows that all participants had strong interest and curiosity towards topics related to international development, development cooperation, advocating, internationality and/or NGOs already before the CB participation, which they stated when explaining why they applied to the board, and one person also specifically uttered that the interest in NGO work was one reason for seeking admission. This is natural as all interviewees had also applied to the CB from their own initiative. Moreover, a couple of interviewees brought up that it is hard to determine exact cause-and-effect relationships in relation to career, but perceived the CB has had a significant contribution to their careers. One participant, from the older cohort, who had built a career in the NGO and the global development field, described: "... although it's difficult to say what leads to what, I would say that my Children's Board years have like – that my Children's Board years have basically led to studies and a career choice and so on."

As engagement in the civil society is an important active citizenship practice, the evidenced contribution of the CB participation to later community participation, shows a significant contribution to active citizenship. The evidence particularly shows that a participatory citizenship has been fostered among the CB members, as the programme provided them with knowledge on how organisations work and about different opportunities for civil society participation. Furthermore, the contribution to the establishment of a career in the global development field or in NGOs that some interviewees perceived reflects a contribution to long-term active global citizenship practice. According to previous research there is a lifespan continuity evidenced when it comes to civic participation (Finlay et al., 2010; Flanagan, 2004), and earlier events affect later choices in life when it comes to active citizenship learning (Laitinen &

Nurmi, 2003). This study promotes the argument that early civic engagement matters with respect to life-long engagement, as it shows that engagement in adolescence may lead to a continuum of engagement, by increasing competences and motivation and by showing the scale of existing possibilities, which then lower the threshold to engage later.

5.4.4 Founded social relationships

Founded social relationships was identified as one of the contributions that manifested in the interview data. Many interviewees described that in the CB there were nice and like-minded people – the other CB members and Plan's adults. On the other hand, in the data the CB also appears as an exceptional space for diverse encounters: a place where adolescents get to meet other adolescents from different parts of Finland and of diverse ages and experiences, outside of one's quotidian circles. Furthermore, some participants got to meet and network with people from abroad. Indeed, the CB manifests as both a place where to encounter like-minded people, and as a place where to meet young people coming from different kinds of circumstances. One participant described that getting to know people from different backgrounds has contributed to the participants' increased tolerance and open-mindedness towards others:

> … so when you've lived in that certain political bubble, and then you learned that those who have the other political position are just the same, or maybe not as much of bad guys as your own family has let you to believe, so yes, in general it's really interesting when there are those activists [referring to other CB members] there, so, I would probably be quite prejudiced against such people otherwise, if I didn't know what they are like as people. (interviewee, older cohort)

It seems that most interviewees had built a sense of belonging in the group. Like the survey analysis, also, the interview analysis revealed that the CB has contributed to the founding of social relationships on a variety of levels – from close friendships to knowledge about people in positions of power. A few participants described that the action was intensive, which contributed to the establishment of social bonds. Majority of the participants had made friends or networks within the group, and some had gained both. Most participants mentioned having gained many friendships in the CB, and a few articulated they gained close long-term friendships that still existed. One interviewee from the older cohort describes this kind of significant social contribution: "One of my best friends is someone I got to know in the Children's Board. . . and even though I don't regularly interact with the others, we had a really good group, and it was great to be in it, and we still meet each other from time to time".

Again, others mentioned having made good friends, with the close contact eventually fading away; nevertheless, some networking had still occurred. Some described the bonds they established were rather networks than friendships, meaning not all

had made close friends in the group. One participant explained that their moving abroad during the CB participation probably reduced the social contribution the action would have had otherwise. Furthermore, one interviewee articulated not having participated in the social side of the action much and not having made deep friendships due to a lack of sense of belonging to the group. Indeed, a sense of belonging was not established by everyone.

More than several people mentioned comfortable relationships with the other former CB members and said that they could reconnect with the others with a low threshold. Many also articulated that due to the CB they had some kind of point of contact with people in significant societal roles – not just the other previous CB members, but also the personnel of Plan, and that they could contact these people in need. Also, an establishment of social capital manifests in a few answers. One participant brought up that there occurs social contact, such as sharing of information, among current and previous CB communities, and that it is possible in the future to reach out old CB peers if there comes a need to execute some project, for example. Another participant, also, described having had concrete benefit obtained from the networks:

> And at the point when I graduated from high school, I moved to [a country] to do research and development, to see how that [start-up idea] would work in practice, and how I originally ended up there [in the country] was, in fact, through another Children's Board member who had volunteered there in one organisation and said that there is a really good group there, so try to ask them if they know some other people. And that's how I ended up there. (interviewee, younger cohort)

The social contribution in relation to active global citizenship was already discussed in Chapter 5.3.3., and the interview findings support the earlier discussion. The CB as a space for developing possible friendships may have long-term benefits through the promotion of wellbeing. Additionally, as the study shows there may occur concrete benefits from the networks, it supports the idea that participation in organisations can have later consequences, through possibly established social capital (see e.g., Flanagan & Levine, 2010). Furthermore, based on the interview analysis, it seems that the social connections made during participation, may enable the challenging of one's preconceptions and foster open-mindedness, the valuing of diversity, and tolerance. This tolerance can also be seen as part of an active global citizenship mindset, and an active citizenship competence, drawing on Sullivan and Transue (1999) who consider it as an essential citizen competence in democracies.

5.4.5 Fostered sense of social inclusion and agency

The last contribution of the CB participation I identified in the analysis was *fostered sense of social inclusion and agency*. The fostered sense of agency can be considered as one aspect of the increased sense of social inclusion (see Finnish Institute for Health

and Welfare, 2023). The group manifests as a space for most interviewees where their power within was built – where they got validation as young people interested in making a difference, and/or a belief that they and their action matters.

In the data the CB manifested as a support network for growth and a safe space for young people who are interested in making a societal change. Like already stated, most interviewees had established a sense of belonging in the group, and several participants perceived the CB provided an important supportive environment for their growth. They described the board as a community, where they could meet like-minded people who were interested in the same issues, that they collectively advocated for, and where they could take part in discussions and learn from each other, especially from the older and more experienced members, as well as from Plan's personnel. A few participants described that in their home environment or friend circles, it was not common, nor as one participant states "cool", to engage in civic action and advocacy work, and thus the CB established an important space for them to engage with their interests towards advocacy and global issues. One participant perceived one of the most important contributions the CB had for the participant's life was the "reference group" gained in the CB: same-aged and same-minded people who had similar goals and dreams, and who in this way worked as role models fostering the participant's already existing future aspirations and giving feelings of connectedness and social validation. The participants became respected and encouraged as adolescents who want to make a change, and thus got validation for their interest towards advocating. This presents a fostered sense of agency and sense of social inclusion: the belief that one's action and opinions matter, and a sense of belonging as oneself not just to the CB, but to the world. It seems that the support and encouragement from adults – the CB instructors and other adults they met through the CB like during the #GirlsTakeover –, as well as the general atmosphere among the CB group, have played an important role fostering their sense of social inclusion and agency. One participant mentioned the instructors were enthusiastic which spread the enthusiasm to the youths, and another one that they were "immensely encouraged". In turn, one of the participants described that for a few years they had a very good group, and they did intensive work, and inspired each other to many kinds of action. The following quote illustrates the fostered sense of agency and social inclusion in the group:

> Yes, there was such a collective experience somehow a lot, and the fact that there were so many really smart and wonderful people, and I admired many of them then, and I still admire them! So, it's been really, that kind of inspiring people, and it's been really interesting to hear their thoughts, and my thoughts have run well along with their thoughts. And when you think about it when there are people of that age, how big of a support network for that kind of social growth and in general for that kind of wellbeing it is, so it's just so immeasurably valuable. When you know that not everyone necessarily had the same opportunity, for example at home or at school, or had other friends, so that you had such an opportunity where you were validated, you gained more understanding and you could

> like hear thoughts of others, it's like super-wonderful, that you got to experience it (interviewee, younger cohort).

A belief that one's action matters and has impact, i.e. learning the importance of participation, and/or that one's voice matters, was uttered by most participants as one contribution of participating in the group, and many articulated it was one of the most significant contributions the CB participation had to their lives. The experience fostered these participants' belief in themselves as societal actors who regardless of their young age, have a voice that counts, and which they can use to try to make an impact. A couple of participants mentioned the participation also reduced their world-weariness in a way, as they could take some action. Many expressed that the belief was built permanently and has affected their lives later. One participant shared:

> I somehow feel that I must in some way keep my life focused on making a change, so in a way that . . . So yes, it was such an empowering experience that I feel that I can make an impact, and I feel that I must strive for that (interviewee, younger cohort)

According to many interviewees, the way in which the CB action is constructed, contributed to the fostered agency: as the members got to conduct a variety of activities and advocate for issues that were meaningful for them with the support of and facilitation by the adults, it fostered their belief that their action matters and has impact. Several participants brought up the fact that they could *genuinely* participate – plan and execute the action – but had the support from adults in the background, saying it played an important role in building the belief of being able to make an impact. This can be considered a sense of autonomy and young people's agency in the action. Also, the fact that Plan has wide resources and contacts, which enable unique participation opportunities, such as participation in #GirlsTakeover and meeting of decision-makers during election panels, and the fact that some of the action is largely visible action that gets media's attention, seems to contribute to building this belief based on a few descriptions. The following quote illustrates the built sense of agency in the action:

> Well, maybe above all, I learned that everything can be done, or all kinds of things can be done, like, for example, the fact that we interviewed the presidential candidates or organised an election panel and managed to get many media stories published... so it creates a belief that - of course it helps that Finland is a small country, but in general – that, even if you're young, you can really try to make an impact, and you can make your voice heard, and there's no threshold to things, even young people can interview politicians and young people can also bring societal issues to light and even young people can organise big events and such. Of course, there was the entire machinery of Plan in the background . . . if it had been a separate group, it would certainly have been much more difficult, if there had not been those adult employees supporting [us], and their skills available for that. But in general, or nevertheless, the biggest lesson was that it is possible to make an impact. . . (interviewee, older cohort)

Regarding the built sense of agency, another participant described ". . . so I got that kind of feeling, that like okay at least I do – that I can't claim that I wouldn't try to do something about these issues" which reflects that the participation contributed to a self-perceived identity as an active person and as an active global citizen. Furthermore, a couple of participants described a change in perceived power hierarchies that took place during the CB participation, which also fostered the belief that everyone can try to make a difference and empowered them to participate. One participant connects the change in perceived power hierarchies to a specific experience – the #GirlsTakeover campaign day, which made them realise that politicians and other celebrities are normal human beings and not as "higher level people" as "many may see them". The participant further describes the egalitarian realisation the CB contributed to:

> Then of course, in a way maybe, before I joined these efforts of change-making – the Children's Board – I had maybe a different picture of the world, I probably didn't realistically see what my place was or, at least I remember, I thought that I couldn't really make an impact, but somehow then maybe I got a different perspective on this, such that 'oh well politicians are just people too', and I can use my voice. So that was a pretty critical perspective on advocacy [before]: what it really means, what kind of work it requires, who is really there to decide on these issues, on these issues – yes, I got these kinds of perspectives, and they have guided a lot of my mental work somehow as well (interviewee, younger cohort)

However, one participant's enthusiasm for advocacy work was reduced as the participant did not get the belief that one can make an impact. This reflects an existence of doubt of real external influence, also identified by Pensala and Tran-Nguyen (2018). The following quote illustrates the participant's experience:

> Well, I feel perhaps more that the Children's Board dampened that enthusiasm to make an impact. So somehow, I feel that the main impression that remained was that it's just talk and not really any action. So, I guess it was a bit of a cynical attitude, and maybe I don't think that way so much anymore as I did when I left there. Hmmm so I value the action maybe more now . . . (interviewee, younger cohort)

This participant, however, also perceived that the CB action pushed them a bit more to the NGO world, so the experience still fostered the participants' further engagement. The perception, nevertheless, shows that the CB can have some negative contributions with respect to active citizenship learning. The perception seems to be at least partly caused by the fact that the impact sought through the CB action is indirect, and not visible. The participant expressed being annoyed by the fact that it was emphasised in the CB that young people can make a change, when the participant did not feel that, but rather felt the action as insignificant. Thus, a risk in the CB action was identified: if young people hope to see the impact of their work but fail to do so. Another participant described the action executed by the CB as "a small drop in the ocean" and acknowledged the impact-making is not direct, but still perceived the action as important and empowering as it enabled the channelling of their need to act. Moreover, a third participant described to have realised later, that the main objective of the

CB was not to have a big societal impact, but rather to have an impact on the direct beneficiary level through giving the CB members tools and confidence for later action:

> ...its purpose isn't really, to make like a big change, so that I perhaps realised afterwards, that it's not such strong promotion of interests or advocacy, but rather it's maybe more about getting such tools, and about developing that kind of self-confidence for the future also, because it is after all such a short period of time when you participate in it.... of course, at the same time you advocate and speak for certain values, which for sure is advocacy, not to downplay it in any way, but because of the fact that it is aimed at a certain age group, in a way that – what you gain there eventually – for sure the biggest takeaway is that it produces future decision-makers, and future advocates, and that from a young age such a foundation for that advocacy work and the related competence has been obtained. (interviewee, younger cohort)

Furthermore, a few participants mentioned a contribution to independence and responsibility from an early age on, especially when coming from another city to the CB meetings and events, as well as in relation to international travels. This increased ability to act independently can also be seen as increased personal agency at that age.

The fostered sense of social inclusion can be considered as fostered inclusion and participation (see Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare, 2024), and hence, fostered active citizenship. When young people get experiences of being appreciated and heard, it sets one of the foundations for the development of active citizenship (e.g., Värri, 2011, as cited in Salonen & Bardy, 2015). Being part of a sense of social inclusion, the built sense of personal value and the increased sense of belonging to the world as young people interested in making a change, can be seen as a prerequisite for developing active citizenship. Furthermore, the established belief that one's action matters and has impact, i.e., a fostered sense of agency as part of a fostered sense of social inclusion, is one of the most important active global citizenship competences, as without the belief and a sense of agency, one will likely not act for change.

5.5 The Children's Board as one contributing factor among other factors to active global citizenship

As this study explores contribution, it was acknowledged that other factors have also contributed to the participants' active global citizenship development before, during, and after the CB participation. To explore the contribution of the programme to the final outcome, these other contributing factors were addressed to some extent and the participants' overall active global citizenship evolvement was explored in both the survey and the interviews. This enabled the answering of sub-research questions 1. and 3. First the factors that arose from the survey data, and then from the interview data, are discussed next.

The qualitative data of the survey shows that the participants were partly competent global citizens already when applying to the board, which proves that other factors have already influenced their active global citizenship before their entry into the CB. Most of them reported an interest towards certain themes or advocacy as a reason for applying to the programme, which also shows that most had voluntarily, of their own interest, applied to it. Consequently, they already had some level of understanding on the issues and/or a realisation that change is needed. Also, the participants' value basis seemed to have been established partly or fully before, except for one participant whose values were built by Plan, as she started in the CB at a very early age. A few participants also mentioned having established awareness of their own privileged position and their place in the world. Indeed, for most respondents their transformational learning processes had begun before participation. However, it seems that they were not widely engaged in societal action when they applied - only a few participants specifically mentioned having had some experience of civic engagement already before the CB. Their citizenship practice before CB participation was limited, and the CB manifests as a place where many could for the first time take action according to their global interests. Participant #9 describes:

> Certainly, my interest was already oriented towards global and development cooperation issues beforehand (e.g., I have lived in developing countries as a child), but it is hard to say whether I would have been able to carry out anything related to it without the Children's Board (P9).

Also, other factors during, and especially after the CB participation, have contributed to the participants' active global citizenship which has kept on developing. The qualitative data of the survey allowed me to explore to some extent other perceived influencing factors that have shaped the participants active global citizenship: these factors were directly asked about. Other civic and political participation was one of the most important influencing factors. More than half of the survey participants named other NGO or political action or other volunteering as an influencing factor to their active citizenship, and most clarified it has in some way been a promotive factor. The other engagement may also shape their active global citizenship to a different direction, as participant #1 describes:

> My own change from Plan's core themes took place between the ages of 18 and 20, when my values emphasised the role of young people as advocates instead of children. Simultaneously, my own values have also "hardened" (along with party politics) more towards foreign and security policy. (P1)

Furthermore, several participants named studies or school as a factor that has contributed to their active global citizenship, and some clarified it has promoted it. A few participants identified travelling as a contributing factor. Living abroad was a factor that divided views: some perceived it has promoted their active global citizenship,

while others perceived it has hindered it. In light of the data, it seems that moving abroad was perceived to limit active citizenship practice, but it was also perceived to foster active global citizenship competences, such as values and understanding. Furthermore, inner circles, like friends and family as well as other encouraging adults, and a variety of people in general that one encounters in life, were mentioned as contributing factors to active global citizenship by a few participants. On the other hand, being ill or having otherwise limited physical resources for action was perceived by a few participants as a hindering factor for their active global citizenship. However, according to one respondent illness has not just hindered but promoted and shaped the target objective of advocacy work of the participant. Furthermore, a busy life situation, having children, other personal experiences and circumstances, which can cover a range of issues were found as other influencing factors, as well as social media and news. What is more, not from the perspective of active global citizenship, but rather from wellbeing, a few survey participants described, relating the CB experience to their lives, that the CB has been a supportive factor in their adolescence compared to other influencing factors that have risked their wellbeing. The participants mentioned the CB brought an important point of empathy and constructive content to their lives.

The survey data regarding other external factors was too limited to make a proper analysis. The ways in which the factors have contributed to the participants' active global citizenship, were not always clear. Also, only two thirds of the participants provided insights of the perceived other influencing factors. Therefore, the data does not provide a comprehensive picture of the perceived other influencing factors and related cause-and-effect. Furthermore, the data does not distinguish between factors that influence citizenship practice of those that influence citizenship competences.

The interview data provided more insights of the other influencing factors, and their relative importance compared to the CB experience. In the light of the interview data, similarly to the survey data, the participants appear to have been active global citizens within existing limits before the CB participation. Yet the CB has been the first participation group for all, and the first channel for advocacy for most. Already before the entry to the CB, an interest and self-studying seemed to take place: the interviewees described they had an interest towards the core issues of Plan's action or/and advocacy, but their active citizenship practice was mostly limited to student council practice, debating with family, or other practice within school, camps, or other hobbies, based on the descriptions. One participant had volunteered at Plan International Finland before joining the CB group. Several participants seem to have been civic-minded already as they described they took independent initiative to search for information and participation possibilities. Many articulated that they have learned after the CB a lot, thus indeed, many other factors have contributed to their active global citizenship. The interview data provides a better, but still not a comprehensive understanding of

the other influencing factors. The factors that emerged from the qualitative content analysis of the specific question were: 1) background, 2) studies and career, 3) other engagement, 4) international experiences, 5) other people, and 6) life situations and other commitments in life.

The participants' background, including influence of family, growth environment, and schooling has contributed to their active citizenship development positively and negatively. One participant perceived that parents' support for their interest has fostered their active citizenship, by giving a good starting point, while another participant perceived the early growth environment, including family, town, and school environments, had not been the most supportive and enabling, but rather limited the development of their active global citizenship. The participant describes the lack of support and opportunities before the CB participation:

> "so, maybe the lack of channels was the challenge throughout my life, and then, in a way, the lack of support, that... before the Children's Board there was no – there were ideas, but – no one who would've read through some opinion pieces or other writings. (interviewee, younger cohort)

What manifests in the data is an internally established interest towards the world, which cannot be directly attached to any single external influencing factor. Indeed, part of the participants' active global citizenship development may be attributed to innate characteristics. However, some contributions can be related to the exposure to otherness and internationality from an early age. Several of the participants had some international background, had lived abroad or in a multicultural environment at some point, had family from abroad, and half of the interviewees mentioned they had participated in international schooling. Some described their international background as having contributed to their active global citizenship. One interviewee whose parent had worked in humanitarian missions and who therefore had lived abroad as a child, as well as engaged in international schooling, clarifies:

> In addition to the Children's Board, living abroad and hearing about people's difficult living conditions from a young age, as well as studying at an internationally oriented private school, may have contributed to my global citizenship. Of course, it is difficult to know for certain how much such matters are dealt with in other schools, for example, and what the situation would have been if I had attended different schools. I believe that the topic has appeared in schools to an increasing extent only in recent years. Because of these factors, I most probably also applied to the Children's Board. (interviewee, older cohort)

Clearly, other later experiences have contributed to the participants' learning and development, considering the youths have grown into young adults after the CB. The data shows that a change in thinking and awareness has occurred after the programme participation, but a stable value basis manifested in the data: all interviewees perceived their values had remained until the moment, so they still identified with Plan's values. However, several participants described having gained over time, at

least some along with their career, an increased understanding of the complexity of global issues which has affected their thinking. One interviewee from the younger cohort reflected saying that in the CB issues were "black and white" and described having experienced a growth process after leaving the CB which entailed a shift of thinking to another direction with respect to solutions to some problems. Also, another participant described a bit similar experience:

> Of course, then like uh with life and the progression of my studies I then got still – as I understand how complicated many issues are and then critically look at certain things also, but for sure the value base is the same. It may be that some thoughts related to concrete issues have changed maybe, but certainly the value base and attitudes have stayed pretty much the same. (interviewee, older cohort)

Studies and work in the field, other simultaneous or later civic engagement, as well as international experiences, like living and studying abroad, manifest in the data as significant contributors to the participants' later development as active global citizens. The studies consider post-secondary education as well as one form of secondary education, the UWC education, to which a couple of participants had attained, and work in the field refers to the field of global development or NGOs. All the participants had engaged in some other volunteering experiences in their lives, and many had engaged elsewhere after the CB participation, or simultaneously with it, mostly in different NGOs. Many interviewees perceived those experiences have contributed to their lives directly or by leading to other action. It must, however, be noted that it was also brought up by many that it is difficult to identify when certain learnings have taken place – in the CB or later – which shows that the participants were not fully aware of their learning processes. One interviewee describes:

> Of course, it is difficult to specify what I have learned and at what stage. Since then, I have studied [a field related to politics] and during my studies I was a bit involved in organisation activities. But after that, I've ... worked in the organisational sector for about 8 to 9 years, so it does in a way [all affect] ... (interviewee, older cohort)

Some participants assessed the significance of the CB experience comparing it to other volunteering. One participant assessed the CB experience as of lower volume than later experiences and described it as a "springboard". Again, a couple of participants valued the CB more with respect to the other engagement because they felt they could make an impact, which reflects the realisation of real participation of young people. Their perceptions were related to the inclusion of young people in decision-making and the support and resources available for their own initiatives in the CB, that were mentioned in the previous chapter. Thus, an experience of genuine participation taking place in the CB manifests in the data. Furthermore, the motivated peer

group seems to matter. It seems the CB experience was perceived in this way unique.[13] One participant explains:

> . . . in other things I've been involved in, there hasn't existed the adult support in the same way, so in that way it perhaps made the projects weaker, so maybe in Plan the expertise also strengthened our message – like the means to channel that message to make a change – so I would say that in general the Children's Board has been the most motivating experience of these because the support has been there and other motivated Children's Board members, unlike in these other projects. And also, somehow the contacts in Plan, you somehow, you got the feeling that no matter what you come up with, or whatever you want to advocate for, there are ways to do it, whereas in other things I've been involved in, there have been so few contacts, resources, uh, so I've felt like 'help, I can't make an impact'. (interviewee, younger cohort)

Most of the participants described having had experiences abroad after the CB participation. Several participants mentioned their international experiences have fostered their active global citizenship by influencing their worldviews, also in a transformative way. Some of these experiences were related to studies or work in the field, for instance, one participant from the older cohort described having seen a different reality when working at a grassroot level in a development project. Many considered the significance of these experiences with respect to their active global citizenship to be high, e.g., one participant perceived living abroad for years was the most important contributor to her mindset. This reflects the fact that engagement with a different cultural environment may enable a reconstructing of worldview and sense of identity (see e.g., Bourn, 2022, p. 130). However, the data also shows international experiences formed a limiting factor for citizenship practice in the case of an international lifestyle, which includes moving from one place to another, creating a sense of alienation and difficulties of adjustment for some time.

Furthermore, interviewees mentioned other people as a contributing factor to the development of active global citizenship: some mentioned encounters with different kinds of people, especially people with a foreign background as a contributing factor to their mindset, one participant mentioned negative reactions of people may have slightly hindered their active global citizenship, and one participant brought up friends as an inspiring factor. Furthermore, time limits, other commitments in life and life situations, such as a more settled, stagnant lifestyle, or having children, were mentioned as main hindering factors timewise to active global citizenship by the participants. It seems that these were mostly factors that affected citizenship practice in a passivating way. Indeed, it is important to note the examination of the other influencing factors does not distinguish between contribution to citizenship practice and to competences. A few participants described a perception that at a young age it is easier

[13] Also, based on the quantitative insights of the survey (appendix 4.1.), it seems most participants perceived the learnings gained in the CB as unique, as they fully or somewhat perceived they would not have gained them elsewhere.

to engage while settling into an adult role at an older age may passivate, either increase the threshold to engage, or change forms of action into more passive types. However, no other significant hindering factors to their active global citizenship emerged. Something more that was reflected by a few participants was a need to perceive participation meaningful in order to participate, and two interviewees expressed that with experience their criticality about what they get involved in, has increased.

In addition to these named factors, social and political developments occurring in the world seem to have had some influence on the development of the participants' active global citizenship. For example, one participant mentioned COVID-19 shutdowns limiting participation. Furthermore, two interviewees from the older cohort who perceived the CB action as inspirational and empowering, mentioned that the world developments have played a role in their active global citizenship development. The other participant describes a difference in the world during their participation compared to the current moment, which also shows active global citizenship should always be discussed in relation to world developments. The participant described:

> I feel that then... in a way those things were so far from concrete life even though you thought about them a lot, maybe it's a little different than today if you think about the climate crisis - it's somehow so total and so close – so, so it was like, although knowledge increases pain, it wasn't then such a paralysing . . . . I haven't followed Plan's action so much, but I have understood that there climate and environmental issues have also been differently incorporated, so it may be that today also the things concerning the rest of the world are perhaps more clearly linked to our life and our present, but I feel that then when I was involved there still existed such a difference between us and them in a way. And definitely later on in life I have learned to link our lifestyle and society's impact also to the others. So, because of this then it was easier to experience less pain and more empowerment somehow because that link and that totality might not have been present then in the same way. (interviewee, older cohort)

Most of the respondents articulated clearly that the CB had extensively or somewhat promoted their active global citizenship. One participant who stated a definite contribution, related it to the competences it gave, and another participant to the first opportunity to use one's voice as a child. One interviewee described the experience as an important initial impetus for making a change in the world. Respondents especially from the older cohort, yet, tended to relate the experience more with later experiences, and evaluated the CB experience as one part of the growth process - a meaningful part in developing their competences and building of networks, during their adolescent years – and in the words of one participant "at that age when there were few opportunities to engage in such action". The following extracts illustrate these perceptions:

> Yeah. It [the CB] has [promoted my active global citizenship]. So, it definitely has... As I got that kind of knowledge, and that [ability] to find more information also, and yes it offered a lot of competence, and understanding, through the joint conversation and the conversation with the experts. Absolutely. And that's also what it aims to educate for in a way (interviewee, younger cohort)

> Hmm certainly on some level [the CB has promoted my active global citizenship], but as I said, I don't give it too much weight, but it has been one piece or one part of the factors that have been important for me in that growth process [into an active global citizen] (interviewee, older cohort)

Summarising the interview and survey insights on the participants' active global citizenship evolvement and other contributing factors to active global citizenship, many other factors in addition to the CB have contributed to their active global citizenship. The members' active global citizenship has been contributed by their early growth environment and schooling, and commonly characterised by an early interest towards global themes and advocacy. The internationally oriented background seems to have contributed to such interest of some participants. This supports the claim by Finlay et al. (2010) that family circumstances create civic advantage or disadvantage. It is also characterised by continuing competence development after the CB – for example, many had developed their active global citizenship in other civic and political engagement, those who had engaged with similar issues in studies or professional life had increased their understanding and critical thinking in those environments, and the interviewees who had lived abroad perceived those international experiences as significant contributing factors to their active global citizenship. The fact that the participants' thinking has been shaped later is natural considering that in career-related settings a more organised comprehension of the broader political and social frameworks may be created (Finlay et al., 2010), and the fact that political opinions often still become shaped during young adult years (see e.g., Flanagan & Levine, 2010; Jennings, 1989). Also, social and political developments, media, friends and diverse social encounters, and many life situations, have played a role in their active global citizenship evolvement, and in the framework of this thesis it is impossible to achieve a complete insight of all the contributing factors to the participants' active global citizenship, and the ways the factors have contributed to it. However, regarding the CB the general conclusion is that it has been for all at least an important place for learning in their adolescence, and for some a major fosterer of their active global citizenship.

5.6 A more comprehensive contribution story

The findings of the analysis of the survey and interview data increases understanding of the programme's contribution, as perceived by the CB members. The main categories identified in both analyses related to the different contributions of the CB programme are summarised in Table 2.

TABLE 2 Main categories identified in the analyses of the data

Categories identified in analysis of the survey	**Categories identified in interview analysis**
Contribution to personal development	Strengthened world-mindedness and global engagement
	Fostered sense of social inclusion and agency
Contribution to professional growth	Built advocacy toolkit
	Springboard to NGOs
Social contribution	Founded social relationships

When organised in a table, the results show that the categories identified in the survey analysis can be seen as upper main categories which entail and are supplemented with the categories identified in the interviews. Thus, the CB tends to contribute to personal development, especially by strengthening world-mindedness and global engagement and by fostering a sense of agency and social inclusion, contribute to professional growth through the built advocacy toolkit and by functioning as a springboard to NGOs, and have a social contribution through the built social relationships.

The new evidence enriches the initial contribution story, and consequently enables the production of a more comprehensive contribution story. The results also show that the ToC established in the beginning of the study is not comprehensive and does not reflect the lived experiences of the participants, and that there is more to consider when examining the contribution of the CB to the participants' active global citizenship. The results suggest that no theory can fully explain experienced contributions, as individual experiences are multifaceted, complex, and unique. The perceived contributions vary, and there seem to be different experiences and contribution paths, and it is not possible to establish one story that would be more credible. Instead, this study has revealed more variation of the experienced possible contributions, and increased qualitative understanding of the possible evidenced ways of how the CB may contribute to its members' active global citizenship. Based on the new evidence, i.e., the survey and interview findings, which are mirrored to what the secondary evidence revealed, a more comprehensive collective contribution story of variation was produced, that describes the many perceptions of the contributions, and is as follows:

THE MORE COMPREHENSIVE CONTRIBUTION STORY BASED ON EVIDENCE:

Adolescents have applied to the Children's Board (CB) mostly from their own initiative, or sometimes influenced by their parents, and most of them have at least partly established an interest towards global challenges and advocacy, values, and some awareness of the issues before applying. The participants, who have been chosen to the group, have participated voluntarily, and all have been committed to the action, yet the length of

their participation period differs. The CB provides the members with an opportunity to participate in the planning and execution of different activities, get support, and to be trained. The members have perceived the experience mostly as positive and to have got a lot of encouragement, support as well as autonomy. The action seems to be mostly motivating, but one participant perceived the advocacy did not go beyond rhetoric, perceiving they could not genuinely make a change and the action partly as meaningless. Furthermore, due to the large age scale of the group, and the fact that some awareness tends to exist before CB participation, some participants have perceived some of the issues the programme educates for as self-evident. The participation contributes to the participants' lives – citizenship competences and practice, as well as life-courses – in many ways as reflected by the participants:

First, the CB contributes to the members' personal development in various ways. For most participants the CB has been the first experience of engagement beyond formal education or hobbies, and without exception the first participation group the CB members belong to, thus being a space where adolescents who are concerned about the world may for the first time channel their need for action. The CB may present the first opportunity to discuss the issues of interest with other like-minded adolescents. The participants' understanding and awareness related to the world tends to become strengthened and widened: concretization and deepening of knowledge occurs especially in relation to global issues, like issues of inequality, human rights and climate change, and development cooperation as the umbrella theme, hence learning characterised under human rights education and development education mostly occurs in the CB. They may learn about non-mainstream and critical issues they would not learn in school, and widen their worldview, and perspectives, as well as self-awareness of their position in the world and the awareness of their environment. If engaged in international and intercultural experiences, the members may reflect upon the different realities more deeply. The participation may contribute to critical thinking from a developing country perspective, and for some strengthen their global perspective of advocacy – their will to advocate primarily for global equality. Thus, active global citizenship may be fostered in the long term, and from a young age. The CB may also somewhat support the participants' interest towards internationality and strengthen the participants' personal aspirations and impulse to become international, through peer learning and the different international experiences. The increased societal awareness may contribute to increased participation in social discourse by giving a good knowledge base to start with. The experience may also increase motivation to study the world and to grow more as a person. It also seems to foster English skills, which can contribute slightly to global engagement. The experience through collective sharing of values seems to strengthen, and sometimes change, the participants' values towards humane values, like equity, tolerance towards diversity, a sense of a common humanity, and feminism, and attitudes like positive attitudes towards development cooperation. Yet, if a person is involved at a very young age the values may be built from the scratch.

In addition, the CB manifests as a support network: it seems to support its participants' growth into their potential as young people who are interested in advocating, providing a different kind of stimulation and reference group than at home. The CB has given the participants validation, and encouragement, as well as role models, which foster their agency and inspire them for action. The participation also seems to increase many participants' sense of social inclusion by establishing the belief that they, their opinions and their actions matter regardless of their age, which is likely to build their self-esteem. The participants may also be able to alter their perceived power hierarchies and build a sense of agency especially when meeting decision-makers. They likely develop their independence as well while participating. The CB may also establish a belief that one can make an impact by participating, thus building an increased active citizen attitude and trust in oneself as a social and political actor. The autonomy and support for their advocacy, seem to foster this belief establishment. However, since the results of the advocacy work may not be visible, it is possible that this inhibits the contribution to a sense of agency, or even reduces the members' enthusiasm for advocacy.

Second, the experience may contribute to professional growth, by building the members' competences, and by contributing to their career paths. The trainings and especially the practising of skills provide them with an advocacy toolkit, which may benefit them in many ways but especially in an advocate career. The tools entail skills related to communication and other social interaction, like public speaking and performing, writing and argumentation, as well as critical thinking, and organisational and project management skills, and understanding related to ways of participation, advocacy, and politics. Additionally, participants' confidence and courage may increase – including the confidence to state one's opinions and to talk to authorities. The courage and confidence acquisition seems to be especially related to public speaking experiences, but also to engagement with new social situations. The increased confidence, courage and built self-efficacy may widen possibilities in later life.

While participating the CB members may increase their awareness of their place in the world and gain a clearer picture of their career choices and plans. The CB participation seems to strengthen or support an already existing interest toward change-making and NGOs, and towards some topics like equality, human rights, and sustainable development and/or motivation to advocate for them. Hence, it may also contribute to participants' choices to pursue a social impact career. It is common that after leaving the board, the members continue engaging in Plan International Finland or otherwise civically, and the CB may work as a springboard which starts a continuum of engagement. The possible strengthened interest towards NGOs, increased understanding of different possibilities and the ways of making an impact, as well as the built meeting practice competences may drive the participants to other engagement. The participation may also contribute to the establishment of a career in the advocate field, like in NGOs. Furthermore, the experience may improve likelihood in being admitted to further engagement or education opportunities in the field, and thus open doors to career life.

In addition to the contributions to personal and professional development, the CB is likely to have a social contribution for its participants, fostering friendships and networks that can last for a lifetime. The networks have the potential to benefit the participants later, especially when acting in political and civic life, also careerwise. The friendships and networks may also foster wellbeing and a sense of social inclusion of the individuals.

Although there may be some negative contributions, overall, the CB participation tends to contribute positively to its members' lives in the long-term, by providing the participants with constructive content in their adolescence, competences upon which they can build more later, and social relationships. Especially some members' fostered sense of agency, fostered global perspective for advocacy, and the provision of a springboard to NGOs are evidenced examples of the programme's positive long-term contributions to participants' active global citizenship. The competences as well as relationships not just contribute to active global citizenship, from the perspective of achieving a fairer world, but also benefit participants' career and private life, forming building blocks for a good life.

Yet, the CB only forms one factor that contributes to the participants' active global citizenship along other contributing factors, which may have an even more significant contribution to it. It seems that before and during the CB participation, as well as the later during critical years of young adulthood, many factors, such as early growth environment, other civic and political participation, schooling, studies and professional life, international experiences, as well as different social encounters and media, have contributed to the participants' active global citizenship as experienced. It is difficult to estimate the exact extent in which the CB has contributed to its members' lives, but the evidence shows that the CB experience has for many mattered somewhat or extensively with respect to forming of active global citizenship in their adolescence, and for some had clear perceived contributions to their lives in the long-term. Yet, the general conclusion is that there is variation in the perceived significance of the programme's contribution among the participants.

The story above is an intention to establish a story, which describes the CB programme and its collective contributions for all the members. It is important to note that the division of the contributions to different spheres of life, such as contribution to personal development vs. to professional growth, is a simplification and not fully comprehensive as different spheres of life intersect. For example, the CB seems to promote the enrolment to UWC education abroad, which is linked to personal aspirations but also career, and the fostered social skills pertain to the built advocacy toolkit as part of professional growth but also are important in terms of private and social life. The story is also clearly difficult to establish, as everyone's growth and the contribution the CB has had for it, is individual and unique. The study shows that learning citizenship is a strongly individualised process, affected by experiences and the context, such as learners' age during participation, background and earlier learnings, and the experienced sense of belonging to the community among other factors, and the processes become more complex when considered in the context of life trajectory. This is in resonance with the literature stating that the processes GCED aims to create, are often shaped by many factors that are not in linear interaction with each other (Van Ongevalle, 2020). Also, the facts that different participants have engaged in different activities and with different roles in the CB and that during different years Plan's action has been a bit different, and that the world has changed over the years, probably increase the variation in perceptions. Having now established the more comprehensive contribution story, in the final chapter I discuss how my findings relate to literature and draw conclusions.

6 CONCLUSIONS

The objective of this study was to explore how participation in Plan International Finland Children's Board (CB) contributes to active global citizenship. This was explored through former members' perceptions, using retrospective accounts. To answer the main research question, the objective of the study, the participants' active global citizenship evolvement in their lives, the ways in which participation in the CB has contributed to their active global citizenship, and other factors which have contributed to it, were explored. The study shows that the participants were already before the CB participation partly active global citizens and have in general developed active global citizenship. It also shows many other factors in addition to the CB have contributed to their growth into active global citizenship. Contributing factors were identified to be the participants' background and early growth environment, other civic and political participation, schooling, studies, professional life, international experiences, media including social media, other people and social encounters, as well as time constraints, health challenges and other life situations which especially affect citizenship practice. The study demonstrates that the CB has been an important space for its members' citizenship learning in their adolescence and contributed to their active global citizenship mostly positively, however, the study also shows that the programme has contributed to the members' active global citizenship in different ways, as experienced, and the perceived contributions vary from significant life path changing contributions to minor contributions. Based on the patterns and variation identified in the data analyses, I conclude that the programme participation may have a contribution to its direct beneficiaries' personal development as it can strengthen world-mindedness and contribute to later global engagement as well as strengthen a sense of social inclusion and agency, and have a contribution to their professional growth by building an advocacy toolkit, i.e., competences and tools needed in later advocacy work and overall participation in society, and by functioning as a springboard to the NGO world. Furthermore, it may have an important social contribution for the participants by providing

them with important friendships and networks. The evidenced contributions foster active global citizenship, but also overall wellbeing and a good life. Indeed, although this study has explored the programme's contributions from the active global citizenship perspective, I argue that the exploration comes to questions of contributions to positive youth development, wellbeing and good life, which cannot be distinguished from active global citizenship development. This idea is aligned with the notion that when participation is promoted, social inclusion is also promoted (Nivala and Ryynänen, 2013, p. 13, 30), and social inclusion again has implications for individual wellbeing (e.g., Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare, 2023).

6.1 Contributions to literature and Plan International Finland's action

The findings shed light on the CB as a form of global education and contribute to Plan International Finland's work by providing new information about the programme's contribution to the lives of its direct beneficiaries from different programme periods. The programme seems to have contributed to most participants' active global citizenship in a comprehensive manner, as it has contributed to the building of knowledge and understanding, values and attitudes, and skills to some extent, and instead of learning just knowledge, many participants gained the belief that they can make an impact and were able, through reflection and dialogue, to expand and shift their frames of reference and perspectives. Thus, although some transformational learning commonly seems to occur before, the CB offers opportunities for the continuation of transformative learning. Learning through engagement – the doing and interaction – especially has had an important role in the competence building, but also trainings, such as performance and knowledge-deepening trainings directed to a wider youth audience, were perceived as useful.

The study illustrates the kind of citizenry the CB promotes. The CB manifests as a space for active citizenship learning that enables a different kind of learning for the adolescents compared to their everyday surroundings. The programme is identified to foster a more critical, and justice-oriented global citizenship, by teaching the members about critical development issues they do not learn in school, and by fostering reflection and critical thinking of one's place in the larger processes and structures of power. Yet, soft competences like a sense of a common humanity and empathy, as well as knowledge were also fostered. Indeed, the findings indicate that not only soft but also critical active global citizenship competences become fostered in the CB. Especially, as some younger members articulated having gained critical competences, it may be that the critical competences have become more emphasised over time. This may reflect the fact that CSOs often present critical voices to societal debates (Bourn,

2022, p. 214), as well as the fact that the importance of bringing in critical perspectives to global education is increasingly recognized (GENE, 2022). Additionally, and notably, the programme tends to foster participatory citizenship in the long-term for its participants by offering them knowledge about further participation possibilities, and competences, including motivation, for further engagement, and thus prepares them to engage in collective community-based efforts. Indeed, the CB has educated the members towards active global citizenship by empowering the participants, by teaching them necessary competences for enactment and by promoting a global citizenship mindset. Yet, the contributions are positioned differently for every participant.

Some perceived good practices and a few risks of the programme were identified in this study, which reflect the functioning of mechanisms in the programme. One good practice seems to be the facilitated youth-led centred nature, which seems to increase motivation for participation and foster participants' sense of agency. Another is the safe space of support, entailing help and encouragement from the part of the facilitators and supportive and inspiring relationships with peers which seems to matter for many participants' growth. Hence, the support, both in the form of resources and contacts and in the form of socio-emotional support from the part of adults, combined with adolescents' autonomy seem to foster participants' active global citizenship development. Additionally, peer-learning seems to support positive results, such as the fostered active global citizenship values and attitudes. A few challenges, or risks, related to the programme were also identified based on some perceptions. One risk is that the CB advocates for invisible goals, which may endanger the belief-building that one can make a difference. Second, as Plan International Finland has a certain agenda and values are mostly shared in the CB, it should be ensured that reflection and critical thinking is fostered fully, and different perspectives allowed. One more issue to consider is that the wide age scale in the group contributes to different consequences: younger participants tend to learn from the older, and some activities may benefit them more when it comes to new learnings, and this may endanger the perceived meaningfulness of those activities among older participants. Yet, the analysis also shows that the older members gained important competences, especially those who engaged for several years, and took on positions of trust at an older age. This finding supports the idea that effective organisations provide opportunities for progressive responsibilities (Flanagan, 2004; McLaughlin, 2000), and reflects a good practice of the programme.

By having explored non-formal and informal processes of learning, an existing gap within global education research, this thesis contributes to the larger academic discussion on active global citizenship learning. The study supports earlier literature of active global citizenship learning as a complex life-long and life-wide process influenced by a variety of factors and environments (e.g., Bourn & Brown, 2011; Finlay et

al., 2010; Le Bourdon, 2018; Mehtäläinen, 2017), and suggests that non-formal and informal environments play an important role in active global citizenship evolvement, reinforcing the argument made by Le Bourdon (2018). The findings indicate that many active global citizenship competences become learned in social interactions and during participation. Thus, the study argues that participation is crucial for active global citizenship learning and supports the claims (e.g., Dyer & McNicol, 2015; Hoskins et al., 2012; Laininen, 2018; Taylor, 2008) that participatory pedagogy is an effective way to foster active global citizenship.

The research reveals that less formal global education in the form of innovative participatory youth-led action, where enactment, learning by doing, and social encounters have a central role, may efficiently foster learners' active global citizenship. The evidenced good practice related to genuine participation supports the idea of community-centred learning as fostering a belief in oneself as a change-maker (see Smith, 2017), especially in the context of a facilitated youth-led programme. The youth-led nature of the CB seems to play a significant role for the experiences of empowerment, as well as for participation motivation. Thus, the study endorses the arguments by Finlay et al. (2010) and Kivijärvi (2022), that young people may become empowered when they can influence issues which cause feelings of world-weariness and when they see the impact of their action. Yet, the analysis also shows that even if results of the advocacy work were not fully visible, the opportunity to be able to take action for causes that matter to oneself, may empower sometimes. However, the study also shows the empowering effect may also depend on an establishment of a sense of belonging to the group.

Moreover, the identified good practice regarding the supportive community space aligns with the argument by Värri (2011, as cited in Salonen & Bardy, 2015) that free mutual settings may foster positive outcomes such as the fostered sense of social inclusion, and resonates with the notion by Mahoney et al. (2009) that supportive connections with peers and adults are related to desired outcomes in youth development. The findings also show that having relationships with other active people may foster one's own activeness which follows the argument by Bourn and Brown (2011) and Brown (2013) that inspiring personal connections can strengthen engagement and the enthusiasm to learn. The analysis backs the idea of peer-learning as mattering for positive outcomes of youth programmes (Mahoney et al., 2009) and for efficient global citizenship learning (e.g., Cantell, 2008). Additionally, the study suggests that reflection through group dialogue may help to increase awareness and critical understanding, and thus advocates for Taylor's (2008) idea on transformative learning. The research notably gives evidence that active global citizenship can be fostered in a group of individuals of different ages and backgrounds, who share the same interest towards

global issues, through learning processes that on one hand challenge, and on the other hand reinforce worldviews and identities.

Overall, the study supports the earlier literature (e.g., Brown, 2013; Mahoney et al., 2009) as it confirms that participatory learning and organised activities of youth in NGOs offer important opportunities for less formal active global citizenship learning and positive youth development. It especially suggests that non-formal global education targeted to children can foster their growth into a critical global citizenship, as well as participatory citizenship, from an early age on and have a life-long contribution to them as active global citizens. The research proposes that opportunities for young people's engagement, starting from their early years when participation possibilities commonly are limited, have the potential to not only foster the 'building' of long-term active global citizens who promote sustainable development and a fairer, more just world, but also to positively contribute to their individual life trajectories.

6.2 Contribution to the evaluation discussion

The thesis contributes to the evaluation debate of global education programmes by having experimented with contribution analysis (CA), the approach established by Mayne (2001), to assess experienced contributions. Considering growth into active global citizenship is a multifaceted complex phenomenon, this study has sought to evaluate the contribution of the CB programme by experimenting with CA to analyse qualitative retrospective accounts of people's experiences on active global citizenship learning. The study shows that exploring the perceived contribution of a programme on learning entails inaccuracies, as the participants were not fully aware of the timing of specific learnings and cause-and-effect relationships, and this finding supports the argument by Marton and Booth (1997) that difficulties arise when learning is studied, as learners tend not to be fully aware of their learning processes. Regardless of the inaccuracies, the evidence shows that the CB has contributed to the participants' active global citizenship through different perceived ways, and thus, one coherent contribution story could not be established. I criticise Mayne's traditional model of CA as suiting only a limited number of situations and argue that when outcomes that entail a subjective experience are studied, the traditional requirement for one coherent credible story does not hold, but rather the final contribution story is a description of diverse pathways and different contributions. Moreover, the unpredictable complex nature of global citizenship learning processes adds difficulty to applying CA as suggested by Mayne. The study suggests that in the case of global education programmes a theory of change is difficult to establish and likely does not reflect the lived experiences and that, hence, the experiences should be studied in greater depth instead of

assuming the processes and mechanisms take place as assumed in theory. Furthermore, I claim that CA cannot be applied as such to a study that is qualitative and studies perceptions, but it needs to be adjusted and further developed. This study has contributed to the literature on the method by developing CA towards a qualitative analysis of contribution in one manner, and I wish that this study inspires other researchers to develop such an approach to CA further.

6.3 Limitations and recommendations for further research and policy

The study has several limitations. First, the study was limited by the constrained data. This in-depth qualitative study has explored perceptions of a selection of previous CB members, but the selection was small and based on those who volunteered for the study. Due to the restricted data, the findings are built on the perceptions of a limited number of individuals, and most likely the ones who have relatively had a good experience in the CB, as probably participants with good experiences have answered the questionnaire and volunteered for interviews. Consequently, it is likely that the study shows the positive and most significant possible contributions the group participation may have for the direct beneficiaries and does not fully grasp the experiences of those who were less active or had more negative experiences in the board. Thus, the study probably illustrates with examples the perceived contributions in *the best case.* A more representative sample would have enabled an even more comprehensive contribution story of the programme, and only if quantitative analysis among most or all former members had been conducted, the findings could be generalised.

Second, because the survey and the interview findings considering the participants who had participated in both data gathering processes could not be connected, the depth of the analysis is restricted. Third, this study is based on the notion of contribution, which also has its limitations – if information about impact, or accurate information about causal processes is needed, then different methodologies such as experimental studies should be used. Fourth, the study is based on retrospective descriptions of perceived learning processes which causes challenges as learning of active citizenship entails long-term and complex processes that the learner is not aware of, and the retrospective design entails a risk for memory loss. If the risk of memory loss, and biases caused by the passing of time, need to be minimised, the activities should be studied closer to them.

Furthermore, when stating perceived contributions, sometimes participants did not differentiate between the CB and Plan International Finland in general, as some volunteered in Plan beyond the official CB participation or even worked in Plan.

Therefore, the data entails inaccuracy with respect to perceived exact learning processes. Additionally, translations of concepts have challenged this study that was conducted partly in Finnish but reported in English. Partly the study limitations derive from the problematic of the research topic, while others derive from my lack of experience. Indeed, I acknowledge that conducting this study has been a learning journey of acquiring research skills for me.

While this study has provided valuable insights on non-formal and informal learning of global citizenship, it has left room for further exploration. I argue that these processes of learning need to be studied more, especially as the study has shown that processes of active citizenship learning occurring outside formal education, through active participation, matter and can be significant. It is relevant to note that this study did not explicitly evaluate how the different programme activities or the roles taken in the group explain the variation in the perceived contributions, although it shows these factors seem to be related to the variation. Furthermore, active global citizenship learning is impacted by individual factors, like learners' background and earlier experiences, age, social and environmental factors, and personal experiences like a sense of belonging, as well as societal developments that change with time, an idea also supported by this study. If future studies want to produce better understanding of non-formal and informal citizenship learning processes, these kinds of factors should be explored further.

Moreover, considering that the context matters, I suggest studying the contribution of Plan's youth programmes also in other contexts, given the fact that similar youth groups exist in many countries, yet I want to highlight that studies taking place in the Global South, necessitate a different approach to the concept of active global citizenship. Further studies may also want to consider the abstractness and breadth of the concept, entailing competences and engagement, explore the concept further, and limit related evaluations only to one of the two aspects. Furthermore, this study has explored advantaged people who apply and get chosen to the CB and shown that the programme participation supports these people's development of active global citizenship, but I recommend future studies to examine active global citizenship learning also among more marginalised groups, such as among youth who are not yet mindful of global issues and do not apply to advocacy groups on their own initiative. In the face of the current circumstances characterised by multiple global challenges, we need active global citizens more than ever, and global citizenship learning should be fostered in life-long and life wide arenas for all. Based on the findings of this study, I also argue against the current trends of budget cuts in Finland, and advocate for increased funding for CSOs that provide non-formal global education, as they play a vital role in enhancing participation and advancing sustainable development in our society.

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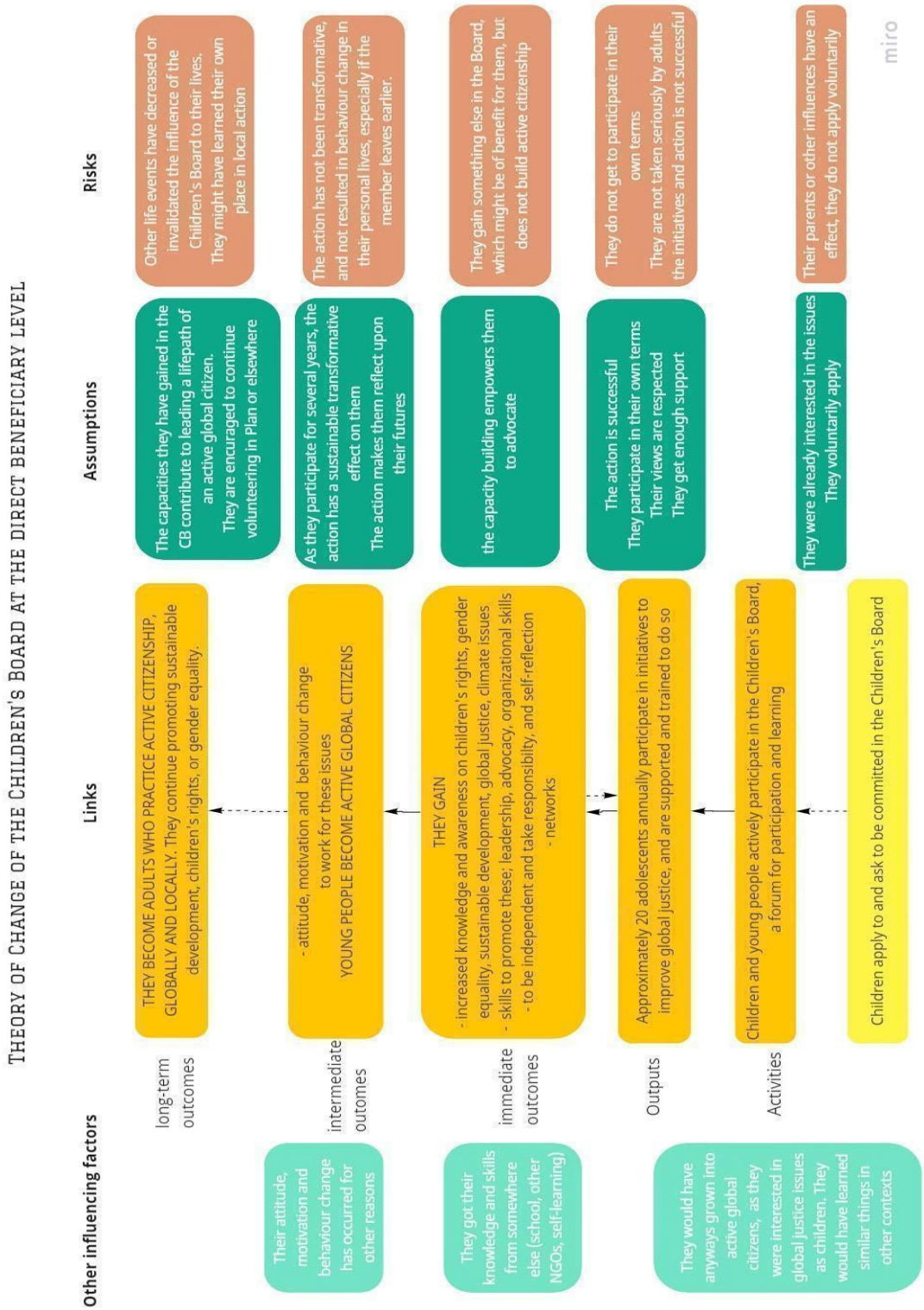
APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 – THEORY OF CHANGE



APPENDIX 2 – QUESTIONNAIRE TEMPLATE

The contribution of Children's Board activities on active citizenship and global citizenship: A survey for former Children's Board members

Dear former Children's Board member,

I am Ella Heikkinen, a master's student at the University of Jyväskylä. I am writing my master's thesis in collaboration with Plan International Finland on the topic "The contribution of Children's Board participation to the development of active citizenship and global citizenship". I collect data for the study with this survey, to which all former members who have participated in Plan International Finland Children's Board during previous programme periods (2001–2021), are requested to answer.

I kindly ask you, as a former member of the Children's Board, to participate in the research by answering the survey. The purpose of the survey is to retrospectively explore your participation-wide learning experience in the Children's Board, as well as the ways in which the participation has (or has not) contributed to the formation of your active citizenship and global citizenship in the short- and long-term. The questions at the beginning of the survey concern your time in the Children's Board, and the questions at the end concern the contribution of the programme to your life after participation from the perspective of active citizenship and global citizenship.

The survey will be implemented in the fall of 2022. Answering the survey takes about 20 minutes. Answering is done anonymously, and the responses are treated confidentially. No personal data is collected in the survey. The answers are analysed, and the results are presented while preserving anonymity of the respondents. Individual respondents cannot be identified from the answers, and all names and identifying information are hidden from the thesis. However, some direct quotes may be used to exemplify the results.

Participation in the survey is voluntary. You can refuse to participate in the survey or interrupt answering, without sending the survey. When participating, you can also leave some questions without answering. You can as well withdraw your consent to use your survey response in the study, by contacting me by the end of October 2022. No compensation is paid for participating in the survey. The data collected through the survey will be used for the purpose of this research, i.e. for writing the master's thesis and a summary made of it, and for the development of Plan Children's Board

activities. Lessons and direct quotes from the research can also be used anonymously in Plan's communications.

The survey is carried out using the Webropol tool. The tool enables secure processing of collected data (read more:https://webropol.fi/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Tietoturvakuvaus-Webropol-kyselypalvelut_FI_2020_.pdf). The information collected through the survey will be stored in a secure manner during the writing of the master's thesis and will be destroyed when the thesis is finalised.

Please answer the questions below (preferably all). Please reflect your experience as truthfully as possible, as much as you remember, and open your experience and perspectives as much as it feels good to you. However, I ask that you answer as comprehensively and openly as possible, because it affects the quality of the research data. The closed-ended questions give an indication of what type of information is being sought, but in the open-ended questions feel free to open up your thoughts also outside the established framework.

If you have any questions about the use of responses or the research, you can contact me or Plan: [contact information]

1. Your consent

- Yes, I have understood the purpose of the study, and I give my consent to use my answers anonymously in the study.
- No, I do not want to participate in the study. (If you tick this, please provide a reason why you do not wish to participate).

BACKGROUND QUESTIONS

2. My gender is
- female
- male
- other
- I do not want to answer

3. The year of my birth is
[options: 1982–2012]

4. When (in which years) were you active in the Children's Board? Tick all the years you were active
[options: 2001–2021]

CONTENT QUESTIONS

The following questions consider your time at the Children's Board.

5. What made you join the Children's Board?
_____

6. Openly describe your participation in the Children's Board. *

* For example, you can describe: Which activities did you participate in, and which ones did you particularly remember? What was your role, or how did you perceive your role, in the Children's Board? What kind of memories do you have from your time in the Plan Children's Board?
_____

7. How actively did you participate in the Children's Board activities? How much time did you spend on the action?
I participated
- less often than monthly
- monthly
- more often than monthly
- differently during different years (specify): _____

8. How did you end up leaving the Children's Board?

- I quit, when I had to drop out (at the end of the year I turned 18)
- I left before due to another reason (specify if you want): _____

9. Did you participate in any other volunteering or advocacy alongside the Children's Board activities or at any other time as a minor?

- I did not participate.
- I participated (in what and at what age?): _____

10. Rate what participating in the Children's Board gave to you and how it affected you (1=completely disagree, 5=completely agree)

- I learned about children's rights
- I learned about gender equality
- I learned about sustainable development
- I learned about climate change and climate solutions
- I learned influencing skills
- I learned cooperation, interaction and negotiation skills
- I learned media skills
- I learned performance skills
- I learned leadership skills
- I learned skills needed to advocate for global justice
- I learned to think critically
- I learned to express my opinions
- I learned that I can make a difference
- I was heard and respected as a child/youth
- I learned to take responsibility
- I learned about global responsibility
- I learned self-reflection
- I gained intercultural competence
- I developed the ability to empathise with those who suffer from inequality in the world
- I learned to appreciate difference
- I got motivated to take action to promote global justice
- I gained the confidence to act to promote global justice
- I made friends
- I was able to build networks
- I learned useful skills for future working life
- I got an idea of what I want to do when I grow up
- I was empowered to do advocacy work in the Children's Board through the new knowledge and skills I learned
- With the new knowledge and skills, I was empowered to do advocacy work outside of the Children's Board as a minor
- I would have learned the same things without participating in the Children's Board

Write here if you learned something else: _____

11. According to your own assessment, what changed permanently (if changed)

- in your consciousness
- in your thinking
- in your values
- in your attitudes
- in your motivation
- in your lifestyle and/or
- in your behaviour

because of participating in the Children's Board?

_____

All the following questions of the survey concern your life after the participation in the Children's Board, in adulthood.

12. Did you continue NGO or volunteer activities after leaving the Children's Board?

- I continued as a Plan volunteer
- I continued other volunteer activities (specify): _____

13. Did the Children's Board activities inspire you to continue other volunteering or advocacy action?

- Yes
- No

14. Did learning of knowledge and skills in the Children's Board empower you to do advocacy work elsewhere later in your life?

- Yes
- No

15. Reflect on your current everyday life. Does something from the Children's Board action remain in your everyday life now? (e.g. networks or themes you still engage in)

_____

Reflect on the time after the Children's Board, as an adult.

16. Assess how the following statements have come true in your life as an adult, when you have no longer been active in the Children's Board (1=completely disagree, 5=completely agree)

- I respect and value diversity

- I am passionate about social justice
- Human rights are an important value to me
- Sustainable development is an important value for me
- I identify myself as an active citizen
- I identify myself as an advocate
- I identify myself as an activist
- I identify myself as a global citizen
- I understand my global responsibility
- I take this responsibility for my actions
- I have a critical attitude towards the prevailing conditions in society
- I believe in the power of an individual to change the world
- I have the necessary skills to act to change the society
- I promote children's rights
- I promote gender equality
- I promote sustainable development
- I promote climate justice and sustainable development of the environment
- I promote global justice

If you chose to promote some themes, how have you acted to promote them?

_____

17. What different ways of participation and means of influencing typical for an active citizen have you practised as an adult? Complete your answers
I have…

- Followed the state of society and been interested in what is happening in the society
- Participated in politics as a voter
- Participated in politics as a candidate
- Participated in politics in other ways
- Done voluntary work in developing countries
- Participated in other international civic activities
- Participated in association or organisation activities in my home country
- Founded an association, organised a campaign, invention, initiative, or similar
- Participated in other volunteer activities
- Made a social impact in working life or in my career
- Influenced society by consuming responsibly
- Influenced in my private life as a parent and/or educator (e.g. by passing on values to my children)

- Donated to charity
- Contributed to charity in another way
- Participated in development cooperation
- Taken part in traditional activism (e.g. demonstration, boycott, strike, civil disobedience, occupations)
- Participated in digital activism (e.g. social media, citizen initiatives, addresses)
- I have not practised the above-mentioned methods of influence or ways of participation

Refine your answers here. Explain also

- What have you tried to advocate for, and in what way?
- Have you tried to promote global justice, or social justice on a non-global level?
- If you have participated in politics, at what level have you participated (nationally, locally, or internationally, e.g. EU level)?
- You can also tell about other forms of participation or advocacy that you practise.

Reflect on the turning points in your life and your life path.

18. Has your participation in the Children's Board affected your life course and choices in any way? If so, how?

_____

19. Which life events or other factors in your life (possibly in addition to participating in the Children's Board) have promoted or hindered your active citizenship?

_____

20. Other feedback to Plan regarding the Children's Board and suggestions on how Plan's participatory activities for children and young people could be developed:
Here you can also share if you think any essential question was absent, and you would like to add something related to these themes.

_____

APPENDIX 3 - INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

QUESTIONS POSED TO EVERYONE:

Background questions:

1. When were you a participant in the Children's Board?
2. How old are you now?

Orientating questions:

3. Could you please first tell about your experience in the Children's Board, for example, how did you end up getting involved, what did you do there, how did you enjoy yourself there?
4. What comes first to your mind when I ask what you learned in the Children's Board?

Main questions:

Then I would like to know more about how you experience the contribution of CB participation to your life, especially later life. The earlier survey I conducted brought to light some possible contributions of the Children's Board. If you could please reflect upon these: have you noticed these contributions to your life, and how have they become manifested in your life?

5. Did you get some useful skills? What kind of skills, and where have they been useful later?
6. Did it have an influence on a level of thought/worldview: Did your awareness, understanding on some issues and critical thinking skills increase?
7. Did your values or/and attitudes become changed or strengthened in the Children's Board?
8. Did the Children's Board have some kind of a contribution to your career/ study path?
9. Did it increase your internationalisation?
10. Did you make friends or establish networks in the Children's Board?
11. Do you perceive that the Children's Board inspired you to act for a change later in your life?
12. Have you continued in other NGOs/advocacy networks after the CB?
13. How do you aim to make a difference/advocate now?
14. What do you think that active global citizenship means?
15. Do you perceive yourself as an active global citizen?
16. Do you feel that the Children's Board has promoted your active global citizenship[14]?

[14] The question was "Do you feel that the Children's Board has affected your societal action" if the participant did not have a clear active global citizen identity.

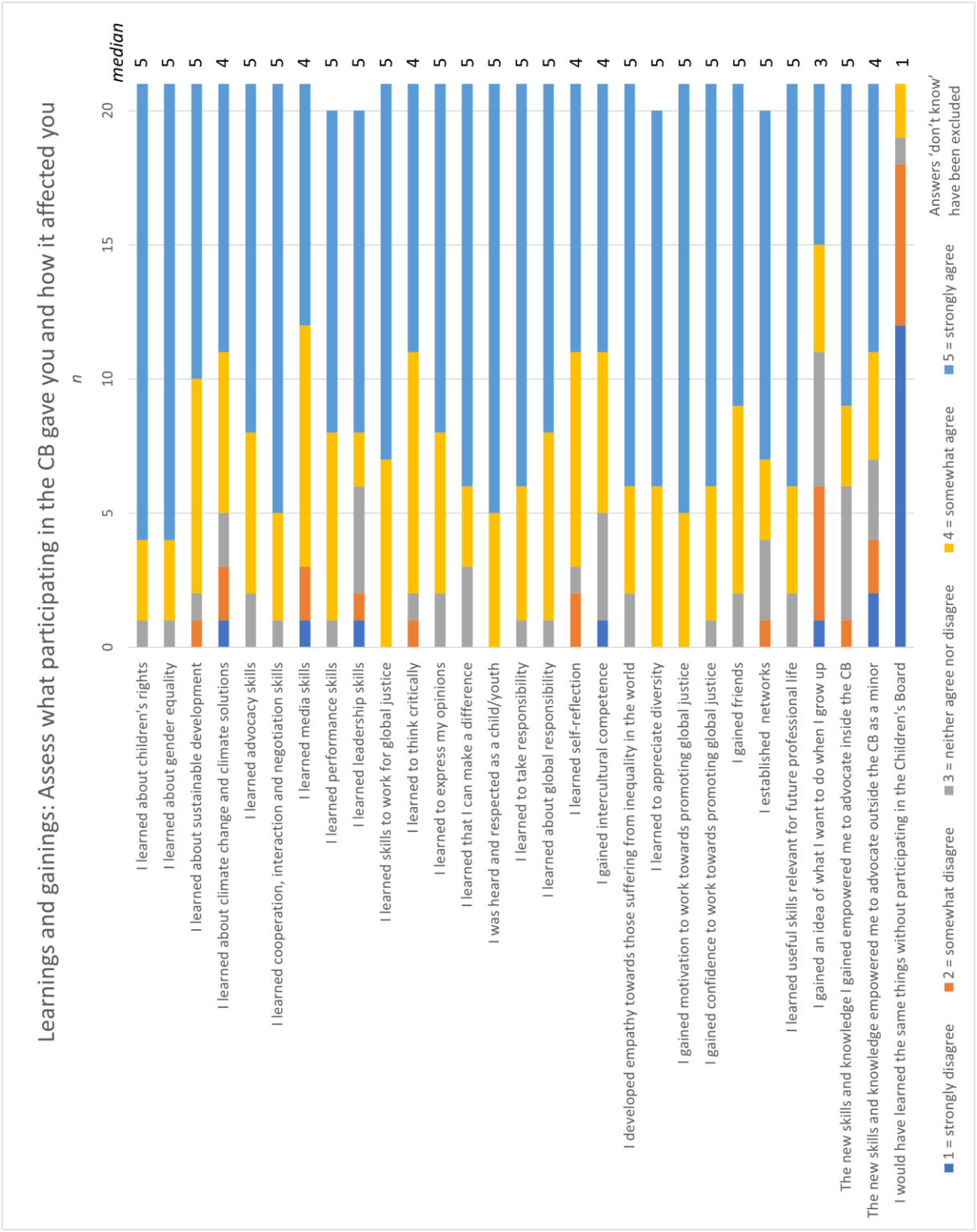
17. Are there some other factors that come to your mind which have promoted your active global citizenship?
18. Do any factors come to your mind that would have hindered your active global citizenship (or societal action)?
19. Do you experience that the Children's Board has had a significant influence on your life?
20. Do you have anything to ask or add?

OTHER COMMON FURTHER QUESTIONS:

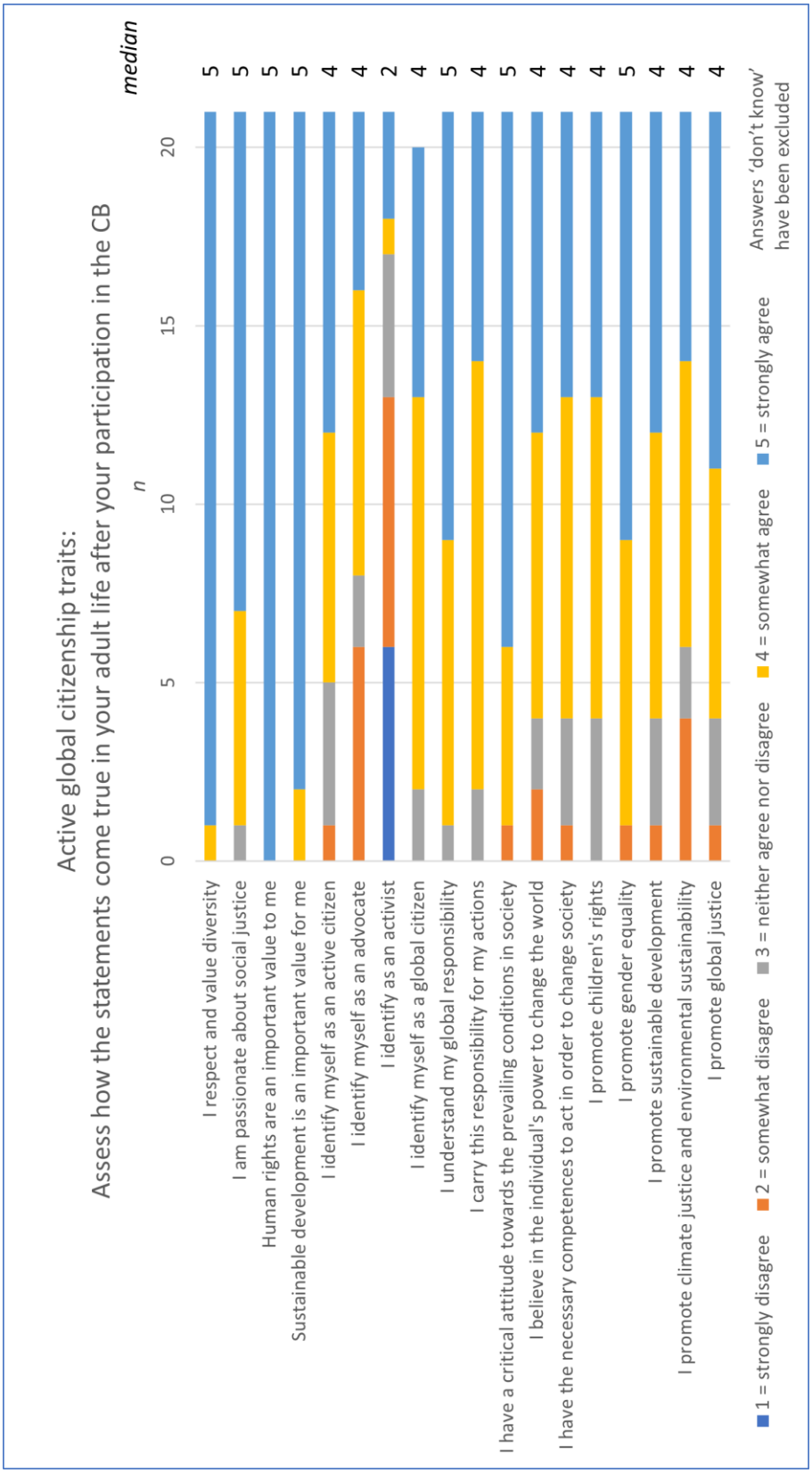
- Was there any specific part or factor in the action or activity that you perceived as especially impacting/memorable?
- Did the Children's Board widen your life circles somehow?
- Did the Children's Board expand your worldview?
- Do you still identify with the same values you had then, and what values are they?
- Did CB affect your sense of world-weariness, or was the action empowering?
- Did you gain tools to advocate or a belief that you can make a difference?
- Is there some other effect/impact that the Children's Board had on you?
- Did it have some impact on you to work in the group (– with like-minded/differently minded people–) in the Children's Board?
- Did your confidence increase?
- Were you before the CB active in any group/ was the CB the first of that sort of an experience to you?
- Did the CB and the other groups differ somehow in the way they influenced you? What distinguished Plan from the other engagement?
- What kind of issues do you aim to advocate for specifically?
- Do you perceive you try to make an impact in career life, civil life, politics, or private life?

APPENDIX 4. RELEVANT QUANTITATIVE DATA INSIGHTS

APPENDIX 4.1. LEARNINGS AND GAININGS



APPENDIX 4.2. ACTIVE GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP TRAITS



APPENDIX 5. RESEARCH NOTIFICATION FOR INTERVIEWS

JYVÄSKYLÄN YLIOPISTO

HUMANISTIS-
YHTEISKUNTATIETEELLINEN
TIEDEKUNTA

Pvm 27.3.2023

TIEDOTE TUTKIMUKSESTA

1. **Pyyntö osallistua tutkimukseen ”Growing into active global citizenship in the Children’s Board**”, ”**Entisten lastenhallituslaisten kokemuksia lastenhallitustoiminnan vaikutuksista elämäänsä aktiivisen globaalikansalaisuuden perspektiivistä”**

Sinua pyydetään mukaan Ella Heikkisen Pro gradu tutkimukseen *” Growing into active global citizenship in the Children’s Board*” [työnimi], jossa tutkitaan Plan International Suomen lastenhallituksen entisten jäsenten kokemuksia lastenhallitustoiminnan vaikutuksista elämäänsä aktiivisen globaalikansalaisuuden perspektiivistä.

Kyseinen tutkimus on sovittu Plan International Suomen kanssa.

Sinua pyydetään tutkimukseen, koska olet lastenhallituksen entinen jäsen.

Tämä tiedote kuvaa tutkimusta ja siihen osallistumista. Liitteessä on kerrottu henkilötietojesi käsittelystä.

Tutkimuksen haastatteluosioon osallistuu noin 10 täysi-ikäistä henkilöä.

Tämä on toinen osio gradututkimuksen aineistonkeruuta. Aiempi osio oli kyselytutkimus, joka toteutettiin syksyllä 2022.

2. **Vapaaehtoisuus**

Tähän tutkimukseen osallistuminen on vapaaehtoista. Voit kieltäytyä osallistumasta tutkimukseen,-keskeyttää osallistumisen tai peruuttaa jo antamasi suostumuksen syytä ilmoittamatta milloin tahansa tutkimuksen aikana. Tästä ei aiheudu sinulle kielteisiä seurauksia.

Keskeyttäessäsi tutkimukseen osallistumisesi tai peruuttaessasi antamasi suostumuksen, sinusta siihen mennessä kerättyjä henkilötietoja, näytteitä ja muita tietoja käytetään osana tutkimusaineistoa, kun se on välttämätöntä tutkimustulosten varmistamiseksi.

3. **Tutkimuksen kulku**

Haastattelut ovat yksilöhaastatteluja, jotka toteutetaan etäyhteydellä.

Haastattelussa tutkitaan entisten Planin lastenhallituksen jäsenten kokemuksia lastenhallituksessa sekä lastenhallitustoiminnan vaikutuksesta heidän elämäänsä lyhyt- ja kauaskantoisesti. Haastattelussa tutkitaan myös sitä, miten haastateltavat kokevat oman aktiivisen kansalaisuutensa/globaalikansalaisuutensa, sekä lastenhallituksen ja muiden tekijöiden vaikutuksen sen kehittymiseen.

Haastattelut järjestetään kevään 2023 aikana, arviolta maalis-huhtikuussa. Haastattelun kesto on arviolta noin puoli tuntia.

Haastattelut nauhoitetaan ja tallennetaan ääni- ja/tai videotallenteiksi, jotka tutkija litteroi kirjalliseen muotoon ja käännetään englanniksi. Tämän jälkeen kaikki video- ja äänitallenteet tuhotaan, jolloin kaikki suorat tunnistetiedot poistetaan. Litteroitu aineisto analysoidaan laadullisin menetelmin.

Haastatteluun osallistuminen ei vaadi erityistä valmistautumista.

4. **Tutkimuksesta mahdollisesti aiheutuvat hyödyt**

Tutkimukseen osallistumisesta ei ole sinulle itsellesi välitöntä hyötyä.

Yleisesti tutkimus tuottaa uutta tietoa siitä, millaisia lyhyempi- ja pidempiaikaisia vaikutuksia lasten ja nuorten osallistumisella järjestötoimintaan, joka pyrkii edistämään heidän aktiivista globaalikansalaisuuttansa, voi olla heidän elämäänsä.

Tutkimus myös tuottaa hyödyllistä tietoa Plan International Suomelle, joka voi käyttää tuloksia lastenhallitustoiminnan kehittämiseen tulevaisuudessa. Plan voi myös käyttää tutkimustuloksia toteuttamassaan viestinnässä tulevaisuudessa.

5. **Tutkimuksesta mahdollisesti aiheutuvat riskit, haitat ja epämukavuudet sekä niihin varautuminen**

Tutkijan käsityksen mukaan tutkimukseen osallistumisesta ei aiheudu sinulle mitään riskejä, haittoja tai epämukavuuksia.

6. **Tutkimuksen kustannukset ja korvaukset tutkittavalle sekä tutkimuksen rahoitus**

Tutkimukseen osallistumisesta ei makseta palkkiota.

7. **Tutkimustuloksista tiedottaminen ja tutkimustulokset**

Tutkimuksesta valmistuu yksi englanninkielinen pro gradu -tutkielma, ja siitä Planille tehty suomenkielinen tiivistelmä.

Plan voi käyttää tutkimustuloksia hyödykseen lastenhallitustoiminnan kehittämisessä, ja voi käyttää tuloksia (esim. suoria sitaatteja) omassa viestinnässään tulevaisuudessa.

Haastateltavien suoria tunnistetietoja ei julkaista osana tulosten raportointia. Tutkimuksessa toimitaan niin, etteivät osallistujia koskevat tiedot paljastu ulkopuolisille. Tutkimustulosten osalta pyritään siihen, ettei osallistujia voida tunnistaa suoraan taikka välillisesti tutkimustuloksista ja julkaisuista. Gradussa voidaan käyttää haastatteluista sitaatteja, kuitenkin pyrkien siihen, ettei niistä voida tunnistaa haastateltavaa.

8. **Tutkittavien vakuutusturva**

Jyväskylän yliopiston toiminta ja tutkittavat on vakuutettu.

Jyväskylän yliopiston vakuutukset korvaavat etänä suoritettavissa tutkimuksissa ainoastaan sellaiset vahingot, jotka liittyvät suoraan annettuun tutkimustehtävään ja jotka ovat sattuneet varsinaisen ohjeistetun tutkimustehtävän aikana. Vakuutus ei korvaa taukojen aikana sattuneita vahinkoja.

Jyväskylän yliopiston vakuutukset eivät ole voimassa etänä suoritettavissa tutkimuksissa, jos tutkittavan kotikunta ei ole Suomessa.

Vakuutus sisältää potilasvakuutuksen, toiminnanvastuuvakuutuksen ja vapaaehtoisen tapaturmavakuutuksen. Tutkimuksissa tutkittavat (koehenkilöt) on vakuutettu tutkimuksen ajan ulkoisen syyn aiheuttamien tapaturmien, vahinkojen ja vammojen varalta. Tapaturmavakuutus on voimassa mittauksissa ja niihin välittömästi liittyvillä matkoilla.

9. **Lisätietojen antajan yhteystiedot**

Lisätietoja tutkimuksesta antaa tutkimuksentekijä: Ella Heikkinen, maisteriopiskelija, Development, Education and International Cooperation, Jyväskylän yliopiston yhteiskuntatieteellinen tiedekunta,
ella.r.heikkinen@student.jyu.fi

APPENDIX 6. PRIVACY NOTICE FOR INTERVIEWS

HUMANISTIS-
YHTEISKUNTATIETEELLINEN
TIEDEKUNTA

Pvm 27.03.2023

JYVÄSKYLÄN YLIOPISTO

ELLA HEIKKISEN PRO GRADUN TIETOSUOJAILMOITUS

Olet osallistumassa tieteelliseen tutkimukseen (Ella Heikkisen Pro gradu- työhön). Tässä tietosuojailmoituksessa sinulle kerrotaan henkilötietojesi käsittelystä osana tutkimusta. Sinulla on lain mukaan oikeus saada nämä tiedot.

1. Rekisterinpitäjä(t)

Rekisterinpitäjä vastaa henkilötietojen käsittelyn lainmukaisuudesta tutkimuksessa.

Rekisterinpitäjä, pro gradu- tutkielman suorittaja (tutkija) ja yhteyshenkilö:
Ella Heikkinen, maisteriopiskelija, ella.r.heikkinen@student.jyu.fi

Tutkimuksen ohjaaja: Tiina Kontinen, Associate Professor in International Development Studies, Jyväskylän yliopiston Humanistis-yhteiskuntatieteellinen tiedekunta, https://www.jyu.fi/hytk/fi/laitokset/yfi/en/staff/kontinen-tiina

2. Henkilötietojen käsittelijä(t)

Henkilötietojen käsittelijällä tarkoitetaan tahoa, joka käsittelee henkilötietoja rekisterinpitäjän lukuun ja sen antamien ohjeiden mukaisesti. Henkilötietojen käsittelijän kanssa on laadittava tietojenkäsittelysopimus. Tässä tutkimuksessa henkilötietojen käsittelijöitä ovat:

Funet Miitti Zoom palvelun osalta käsittelijänä toimii CSC. Zoom-palvelu toteuttaa oikein käytettynä tietosuoja-asetuksen ja tietoturvan vaatimukset.

Tutkimuksen toteutuksen aikana rekisterinpitäjä voi käyttää myös muita henkilötietojen käsittelijöitä, joita ei pystytä nimeämään etukäteen. Käsittelijöiden kanssa tehdään aina tarvittavat sopimukset ja niiden soveltuvuus henkilötietojen tietoturvalliseen käsittelyyn arvioidaan ennen sopimuksen tekoa. Rekisteröityä informoidaan käsittelijän käyttämisestä erikseen, jos muutos on merkittävä rekisteröidyn näkökulmasta.

Tutkimustiedon oikeellisuuden varmistamiseksi rekisterinpitäjä voi antaa tietoja käsiteltäväksi (ensisijaisesti ilman suoria tunnistetietoja) ns. tutkimuksen monitoroijalle tai verifioijalle määräajalle, mikäli tämä on välttämätöntä. Nämä toimivat tutkimushenkilöstön valvonnassa ja heidän kanssaan tehdään tietojenkäsittelysopimukset.

3. Henkilötietojen muu luovuttaminen tutkimuksen aikana

Tämän tutkimuksen yhteistyötahona on Plan International Suomi. Haastatteluun osallistuvien nimi- ja sähköpostitieto annetaan myös tutkijan yhteyshenkilölle Planissa uusien haastateltavien etsimisen mahdollistamiseksi. Saat halutessasi tutkimuksen tekijältä tarkan tiedon siitä, kenelle tiedot on luovutettu. Tietojasi käsitellään luottamuksellisesti eikä niitä luovuteta sivullisille.

4. Gradututkimuksessa ”Growing into active global citizenship in the Children’s Board” käsiteltävät henkilötiedot

Henkilötietojasi käsitellään tiedotteessa kuvattua tutkimustarkoitusta varten.

Tutkimuksessa Sinusta kerätään seuraavia henkilötietoja: nimi, osallistumisvuodet lastenhallituksessa, ikä, sähköpostiosoite, tallenne etähaastattelusta (äänitallenne ja/tai videotallenne), haastattelumuistiinpanot. Tietojen kerääminen perustuu tutkimussuunnitelmaan. Osallistujien yhteystietoja ei yhdistetä haastattelun vastauksiin.

Tutkimuksessa käsitellään mahdollisesti seuraavia erityisiä henkilötietoryhmiä:

☒Poliittinen mielipide

Tämä ilmoitus on toimitettu tutkittavalle sähköpostitse luettavaksi ennen haastatteluun osallistumista. Kaikki tutkittavat ovat täysi-ikäisiä.

5. Henkilötietojen käsittelyn oikeudellinen peruste tieteellisessä tutkimuksessa

☒Yleisen edun mukainen tieteellinen tutkimus (tietosuoja-asetuksen artikla 6.1.e, erityiset henkilötietoryhmät 9.2.j)

6. Henkilötietojen siirto EU/ETA ulkopuolelle

Tutkimuksessa tietojasi ei siirretä EU/ETA -alueen ulkopuolelle.

7. Henkilötietojen suojaaminen

Henkilötietojen käsittely tässä tutkimuksessa perustuu asianmukaiseen tutkimussuunnitelmaan ja tutkimuksella on vastuuhenkilö. Tutkimuksen rekisteriin tallennetaan vain tutkimuksen tarkoituksen kannalta välttämättömiä tietoja. Tutkimuksessa toimitaan niin, etteivät osallistujia koskevat tiedot paljastu ulkopuolisille. Tutkimustulosten osalta pyritään siihen, ettei osallistujia voida tunnistaa suoraan taikka välillisesti tutkimustuloksista ja julkaisuista. Osana Pro Gradua voidaan käyttää suoria lainauksia haastattelusta.

Tunnistettavuuden poistaminen

☒Suorat tunnistetiedot poistetaan suojatoimena aineiston perustamisvaiheessa (pseudonymisoitu aineisto, jolloin tunnistettavuuteen voidaan palata koodin tai vastaavan tiedon avulla ja aineistoon voidaan yhdistää uusia tietoja).

Zoom-tallenne haastattelusta tallentuu tutkijan omalle tietokoneelle. Litterointivaiheessa suorat tunnistetiedot poistetaan aineistosta, ja litteroinnin valmistuttua äänite- ja/tai videoaineisto poistetaan, jonka jälkeen suoria tunnistetietoja ei enää ole.

Tutkimuksessa käsiteltävät henkilötiedot suojataan

☒käyttäjätunnuksella ☒salasanalla ☐käytön rekisteröinnillä ☐kulunvalvonnalla (fyysinen tila)

Tutkimuksesta on tehty **erillinen tietosuojan vaikutustenarvio:**

☐ Kyllä ☒ Ei, koska tämän tutkimuksen tekijä on tarkastanut, ettei vaikutustenarviointi ole pakollinen.

Tutkijat ovat suorittaneet tietosuoja ja tietoturvakoulutukset
☒Kyllä

8. HENKILÖTIETOJEN KÄSITTELY TUTKIMUKSEN *PÄÄTTYMISEN JÄLKEEN*

☒ Tutkimusrekisteri hävitetään tutkimuksen päätyttyä arviolta 06/2024 mennessä

9. Rekisteröidyn oikeudet

Oikeus saada pääsy tietoihin (tietosuoja-asetuksen 15 artikla)
Sinulla on oikeus saada tieto siitä, käsitelläänkö henkilötietojasi ja mitä henkilötietojasi käsitellään. Voit myös halutessasi pyytää jäljennöksen käsiteltävistä henkilötiedoista.

Oikeus tietojen oikaisemiseen (tietosuoja-asetuksen 16 artikla)
Jos käsiteltävissä henkilötiedoissasi on epätarkkuuksia tai virheitä, sinulla on oikeus pyytää niiden oikaisua tai täydennystä.

Oikeus tietojen poistamiseen (tietosuoja-asetuksen 17 artikla)
Sinulla on oikeus vaatia henkilötietojesi poistamista tietyissä tapauksissa. Oikeutta tietojen poistamiseen ei kuitenkaan ole, jos tietojen poistaminen estää tai vaikeuttaa suuresti käsittelyn tarkoituksen toteutumista tieteellisessä tutkimuksessa.

Oikeus käsittelyn rajoittamiseen (tietosuoja-asetuksen 18 artikla)
Sinulla on oikeus henkilötietojesi käsittelyn rajoittamiseen tietyissä tilanteissa kuten, jos kiistät henkilötietojesi paikkansapitävyyden.

Vastustamisoikeus (tietosuoja-asetuksen 21 artikla)
Sinulla on oikeus vastustaa henkilötietojesi käsittelyä, jos käsittely perustuu yleiseen etuun tai oikeutettuun etuun. Tällöin rekisterinpitäjä ei voi käsitellä henkilötietojasi, paitsi jos se voi osoittaa, että käsittelyyn on olemassa huomattavan tärkeä ja perusteltu syy, joka syrjäyttää oikeutesi.

Oikeuksista poikkeaminen

Tässä kuvatuista oikeuksista saatetaan tietyissä yksittäistapauksissa poiketa tietosuoja-asetuksessa ja Suomen tietosuojalaissa säädetyillä perusteilla siltä osin, kuin oikeudet estävät tieteellisen tai historiallisen tutkimustarkoituksen tai tilastollisen tarkoituksen saavuttamisen tai vaikeuttavat sitä suuresti. Tarvetta poiketa oikeuksista arvioidaan aina tapauskohtaisesti. Oikeuksista voidaan poiketa myös jos rekisteröityä ei pystytä tai ei enää pystytä tunnistamaan.

Profilointi ja automatisoitu päätöksenteko

Tutkimuksessa henkilötietojasi ei käytetä automaattiseen päätöksentekoon. Tutkimuksessa henkilötietojen käsittelyn tarkoituksena ei ole henkilökohtaisten ominaisuuksiesi arviointi, ts. profilointi vaan henkilötietojasi ja ominaisuuksia arvioidaan laajemman tieteellisen tutkimuksen näkökulmasta.

Rekisteröidyn oikeuksien toteuttaminen

Jos sinulla on kysyttävää rekisteröidyn oikeuksista, voit olla yhteydessä graduntekijään ella.r.heikkinen@student.jyu.fi

Tietoturvaloukkauksesta tai sen epäilystä ilmoittaminen Jyväskylän yliopistolle
https://www.jyu.fi/fi/yliopisto/tietosuojailmoitus/ilmoita-tietoturvaloukkauksesta

Sinulla on oikeus tehdä valitus erityisesti vakinaisen asuin- tai työpaikkasi sijainnin mukaiselle valvontaviranomaiselle, mikäli katsot, että henkilötietojen käsittelyssä rikotaan EU:n yleistä tietosuoja-asetusta (EU) 2016/679. Suomessa valvontaviranomainen on tietosuojavaltuutettu.

Tietosuojavaltuutetun toimiston ajantasaiset yhteystiedot: https://tietosuoja.fi/etusivu