Being Heard Advisory Group
Terms of Reference

Introduction

This document outlines the framework for the Being Heard Advisory Group, the role of which is to provide guidance, advice and oversight of the Being Heard project.

These terms of reference aim to provide information to help ensure a clear understanding of the project, the scope and purpose of the group, key roles and responsibilities and what participation in the advisory group might offer those who participate.

Being Heard – an overview

‘Being Heard’ is a collaborative project between the Sexual Violence Research Initiative and the International Centre:

- **Sexual Violence Research Initiative**: The [SVRI](http://www.beds.ac.uk/intcent), is a global initiative hosted by the South African Medical Research Council. The SVRI is one of the largest global research networks. As knowledge managers in the field, the SVRI gathers, develops, distils and disseminates knowledge for improving practice. We facilitate knowledge exchange and sharing by providing colleagues with a variety of digital and face to face communication platforms to network, learn, discuss, influence and develop innovations to strengthen prevention of and response for sexual violence and related types of violence in low and middle income countries.

- **International Centre (IC)**: The IC [http://www.beds.ac.uk/intcent](http://www.beds.ac.uk/intcent) researches child sexual exploitation abuse and trafficking and is based in Bedfordshire University in the UK. The IC is committed to increasing understanding of, and improving responses to, child sexual exploitation, violence and trafficking in local, national and international contexts.

The goal of Being Heard is to promote ethical and meaningful participation of children in research on sexual violence, and build the knowledge and skills of SVRI members and affiliates to undertake participatory research on sexual violence against children. Further, this project will enable young people who have been directly affected by sexual violence to be involved as equals in an international academic event ([SVRI Forum 2017](http://www.beds.ac.uk/intcent)) in which, typically, they would
rarely get a voice. It will offer an important opportunity for researchers, practitioners and young people to actively engage on how to realise the rights of children to meaningfully and ethically participate in research and the application of research. It will give an opportunity for researchers from children’s rights and the VAWC fields to ensure appropriate tools are developed to guide researchers, donors and those designing research projects on how to engage children on sexual violence research. It will also provide space for colleagues from regions of the world where limited research is available in the peer review literature on VAC and VAW, to share their work, hear what is being done in the VAC and VAW fields and to network with like-minded colleagues from around the world.

Core Project Staff and Roles

The Being Heard project is led by the SVRI in partnership with IC. Core project staff include:

- Co PI: Elizabeth Dartnall, SVRI Project Manager. Based at SVRI/SAMRC
- Co-PI: Professor Jenny Pearce, Founder and Joint Director of the International Centre. Based at IC
- Children’s Participation Coordinator (Ellen Hagerman): based at SVRI/SAMRC
- Senior Researcher (Silvie Bovarnick and Camille Warrington): based at the IC.
- Brazil based consultant on safeguarding children (to be recruited by SVRI / SAMRC).

The Senior Researcher (based at IC) is responsible for a global scoping on participatory research on sexual violence and for developing tools for researchers on engaging children in research on sexual violence. The Children’s Participation Coordinator (based at SVRI/SAMRC) is responsible for organising the participation of ten young people and 5 guardians from E. Europe, Africa and Latin America who have been involved in participatory research on sexual violence to share their experience at the SVRI Forum 2017. The Brazil based consultant will develop safeguarding guidelines and tools for participation of young people at research conferences.

Project Timeframe

Being Heard is a twelve month project which will run from January 2017 to December 2017 and is funded by the Oak Foundation.
Being Heard Advisory Group: Aim and role

The overall aim of the advisory group is to provide strategic guidance and advice on ethical, safe and meaningful participation of young people in research events and activities on sexual and intimate partner violence.

The role of the advisory group is to:

- Act as ambassadors for the project, promoting the findings and outputs to global stakeholders
- Review and feedback on key project documents
- Identify opportunities (collaborations, advocacy, funding, dissemination, etc.) that will strengthen the project
- Advise on the implementation of the project
- Provide oversight of the monitoring, evaluation and learning of the project

Members will be expected to provide comments and feedback on documents within two weeks unless otherwise specified.

Not all members of the Advisory Group will be expected to perform all these roles, and input will range from full group meetings, to smaller discussions or individual consultation.

It is also anticipated that Advisory Group members may signpost the project team to others outside the group with useful expertise, or recommend additional Advisory Group members.

The advisory group’s role is advisory; decision making power rests with representatives of SVRI (Elizabeth Dartnall) and the International Centre (Jenny Pearce).

Meeting frequency

The advisory group will meet virtually two-three times during the course of the project for about 2 hours, at most, with email discussions, and ad hoc meetings (as required). From time to time project advisors may be asked to work with the project team in small groups on specific tasks. The SVRI team will submit reports to the advisory group prior to each meeting.

Where possible or geographically appropriate, we would strongly encourage advisory group members to attend project events such as the SVRI Forum 2017. The project is unable to financially support attendance at these events.
What Participation in the Group Offers Members

- Opportunities to engage in other events and knowledge exchange facilitated by the IC and SVRI
- Opportunities to share and disseminate members’ own work
- Monthly reports from the staff team about ongoing and planned project activities

Membership criteria

Advisory group members will represent the following domains and areas of expertise, in any combination. They may be individual experts or representatives of organisations in appropriate roles.

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<th>Domains</th>
<th>Expertise</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academia</td>
<td>Sexual abuse and exploitation of children</td>
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<tr>
<td>Practice</td>
<td>Children’s Participation</td>
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<td>Regions</td>
<td>NGO practice in Africa, Eastern Europe or Asia</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Academia in Africa, Eastern Europe or Asia</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Monitoring, evaluation &amp; learning</td>
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The group will be co-ordinated by Elizabeth Dartnall, SVRI Project Manager.

Connections to the Global Programme Advisory Group

It is hoped that 1-2 members of the Being Heard Advisory Group will be willing to participate in the International Centre’s Our Voices Programme Advisory Board – which oversees a number of participatory international projects that the International Centre is running. The representative of the Being Heard Advisory Group would act as a liaison point between the project and other international, participatory projects being run under the programme.