2. RESEARCH CONTEXT

Studies show that:
- Children have a strong desire to be heard in transitional justice.
- Children identify a need to tell their own stories. [1]

Despite this, however:
- Policy has failed to support contributions from children under the age of 18.
- This disregards the significance for children to express their views and be considered in processes concerning them (Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child). [2]

3. RESEARCH QUESTION

How can – and why should – meaningful child participation in transitional justice be facilitated in post-conflict environments?

SUB-QUESTIONS:
- How do the experiences of ‘ex-children’ of conflict, as ‘children of the past,’ make the case for the participation of ‘children of the present’ in transitional justice?
- How can a focus on ‘participation rights’ enable the child’s right to be heard in transitional justice mechanisms?
- What can we learn from the intergenerational effects of conflict on children to inform future practice?

4. RESEARCH METHOD

Phase One
- First comprehensive review of transitional justice mechanisms and their work with children.

Phase Two
- Fieldwork at two geographical case study sites with a history of extended conflict.
- Partnering with established organisations to undertake research - review documented evidence, observe and interview ex-children (if permitted).

5. SUMMARY

- Transitional justice should pay specific attention to children and their right to participate, BUT:
- Policy of transitional justice has not systematically embraced the participation of children; SO WHAT NEXT?!
- Ask whether, in looking to the past, lessons can be learned about the benefits of child participation in transitional justice now, and in the future.

REFERENCES


Photographs of children taken from Pixabay and Unsplash image bank websites.