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Facilitators Newsletter

N°2 - June 2019

From the Tapori team

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A column for the facilitators on the Tapori website

We started a column for the facilitators on the Tapori website so that the facilitators can share experiences. It is just a start and will develop according to your suggestions. Look at it; ask questions, give comments and suggestions; our team will take them into account for the next newsletters.

Dear Tapori facilitators,

We are pleased to write to you in this second issue of The Letter to the animators of Tapori. First of all, we would like to thank those who answered the questions proposed in the first Letter. In this one, we will obviously share some of the answers we have received. For that, we will be guided by the questions from Rozenn (p. 3-4), who, with her husband Ihab, leads a Tapori group in the Passamainty district of Mayotte. We're also going to talk about the new 2019-2020 Tapori campaign, "Act Together", a special edition around the 30th anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.



Visit of Rozenn, her husband Ihab and their son Kirani at the International Center in Mery sur Oise (France), with Elda (right) and Gorettie (left) who are part of the Tapori international secretariat team.

The Convention of the Rights of the Child speaking about the Convention.....

November 20 will be the 30th anniversary of the Convention of the Rights of the Child. It took ten years of consultations between all the nations of the world, religious leaders, non-governmental Organizations (NGOs) and other institutions, for the UN to come up with the final text of the Convention that was approved on November 20, 1989. Since then, November 20 has become the World Day for the Rights of the Child. The Convention is a Treaty between the member States of the United Nations Organization (UN). This treaty recognizes the basic human rights of children. The countries that agreed with the text, signed it. By signing it, they commit themselves to execute its recommendations. The Convention became a Law in 1990 after it had been accepted and signed by all the countries. To this day, all countries, except the United States, have signed it. The Convention is also a way for the countries of the world to dialogue about the Rights of the Child and to find solutions for all children to live in the best conditions possible- that is to ensure that everywhere in the world, all children benefit from what they need, like housing, health, education, etc..

● . Tapori Campaign 2019-2020 “Let's Act Together”

This year marks the 30th anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Within this framework, Tapori launches a special campaign 2019-2020 with the theme “Act together”. First, it seeks to prepare children to speak out about their reality, their commitment, what they want for their lives and the lives of others. All this requires a process that begins with self-knowledge, abilities and weaknesses. It will then be easier to open up to other children, find their place and feel like they belong to a Tapori group and finally open up to the world. Second, it is composed of four stages consisting of stories, games, activities, which will help children realize their personal aspirations and turn them into a collective struggle. During the writing, we felt that some activities can be complicated for the smaller ones. That is why we have decided to add some tips to help you accompany them as well as possible by pointing out the difficult parts to you and inviting you to prepare them and experiment in advance. Don't forget to take pictures and film the children during the various meetings and actions.



The first Tapori newsletter of the Campaign, N° 421 - “What children need” suggests some activities that help children see the rights, starting from their needs. The text with the orange background on page 1 will help you speak of the Convention with the children. In the N° 421 newsletter, there will be two small posters about the Rights of the Child and what children say about them. The posters can support the Campaign. Also the children are invited to make a small bag in which they will put things they make throughout. At the end of the Campaign, the bags and their contents are to be sent to Tapori.

The second Tapori newsletter, N° 422 - “Tapori Member, who are you?” - is centered on the children, their origins and identity. Two of the activities might be too difficult for some children: “My identity plant” and “The sentences of history to link to the rights of the corresponding child”. It might be good to practice before hand and to help some of the children.

The third Tapori newsletter, N°423 - “Tapori Everyday” - proposes a photo-language activity. Each child is invited to choose one photo among many. The objective is to help children focus on what is happening around them and to point out the injustices children are experiencing depicted by the photo. We chose some photos related to the environment (pollution, deforestation, renewable energy). You might add to or change some. The important thing is that each child identifies a situation that is unjust, either because they know children who are suffering from a given situation, or because the situation is detrimental to their future.

The fourth Tapori newsletter, N°424 - “Tapori, All to Action”, contains the proposal for October 17 and November 20. After reading the “Funny Lesson” story, the mayoral candidacy activity invites you to set up a “change project”. Children will go out into their neighbourhoods, observe and note the problems and their causes before formulating desired changes with proposed solutions. It would be desirable to do this individually, but we have to think about the small ones. Subsequently, it is proposed to put together children with the same main theme. The work becomes collective. Cooperation is one of the keys to the activity. Each working group presents its project in front of the others. Later, it will be with local authorities (town hall...) and institutions like UNICEF. Everything that has been prepared in the previous steps will help them to prepare those moments. We offered the children a small flag the size of a decorated A4 sheet, with a message that the Tapori group will write, as well as one of the children's propaganda posters. One flag symbolizes a country. This is to represent the fair and supportive world that children dream of. Don't forget to make an appointment as soon as possible to meet with the authorities and institutions near you. Given the delay, it could be after November 20. The most important thing is the gesture.

● Looking for stories for the Tapori mini-books

In order to offer contemporary tools, our team is looking for new true stories for the collection of mini-books.. We invite you to write to us if you are aware of or have experienced a story that answers to the following criteria:

- A story that shows the life and courage of Fourth World children
- A story that shows what children did to bring some positive change.

FIVE STEPS FOR BUILDING A STORY:

- 1. Introduction**
Context, environment
- 2. Problem**
Situation that needs to be changed
- 3. Change**
What brings up a positive change to the situation
- 4. Resolving the issue**
Change doesn't come by magic. Make clear at what conditions the change was possible.
- 5. Conclusion**
Open to new perspectives that are real, not just ideal. For example, if we had said that the situation of a school has completely changed, we would be in the ideal situation, it is not real. If we say there is a beginning of questioning, that is more real.

PRINCIPLES:

- One main idea
- Clearly situate the actors of the story: first name, age, siblings...The story should include the difficulties but also the resources.
- Do not give sordid descriptions; do not turn the story into a heroic tale. Real situations are never all good or bad.
- Explain the context that influences the story (economic or social situation..) the city, the neighborhood, the neighbors (links, situation..), the family (work, relationship to school..)
- Give significant details of everyday life.
- Show the emotions
- If you get blocked, stop, let some time go by to think the story over, and go back to it with renewed energy.

DRAWINGS

- 7 to 10 drawings for one mini-book.
- Don't show negative stereotyped traits (ripped clothes, dirty children..)
- Show the context of the children's lives (children are interested by how other children live).

What to do with younger and older children during the activities:

Rozenn (Mayotte) - “There are always younger children staying by the door when we have Taponi activities. And the older kids refuse to come. There is only a 13-year-old girl; the others are 7 to 10. In fact, when the children start secondary school, they don't want to take part in activities with younger children any more.”

Caroline
(Mauritius Island)

“The children are 5 to 16 years old. This wide margin presents some challenges to propose activities appropriate for all ages. Ideally, Taponi's age is from 7 on. Should we tell younger children not to come? Be stricter? Or propose activities that fit their age? One of the Taponi facilitators proposes two meetings a week, one for the older ones, and one all together with the older kids helping the younger ones. In fact, we don't have much choice. Somebody suggested that we split into two groups to solve this question. After thinking about it, this seems to be the obvious solution. This way, we can propose activities that suit each group; we can bring other people on board to do so, and we can even imagine having two different locations for the two groups.”



Caroline with young people, Mauritius Island

Taponi facilitators
(Democratic
Republic of
Congo)

“Children younger than 7 come because of their brothers and sisters who are Taponi members. We cannot ignore them. Often the big sisters have to take care of their younger siblings and when they come, they have to bring the little ones with them. And there are some parents who want their younger children to be part of Taponi and grow with the Taponi spirit. But at about 13 or 14, children are embarrassed to meet with younger children. Our way to handle this is to give them responsibilities. For instance, they can gather the children and make them sit on the mat to wait for the facilitators. They can start a song, teach some games, or take care of the tools we bring: the notebook with the reports of the meetings, the Taponi newsletters, the mats, and even take notes of the meeting, or keep the money that was collected for activities of solidarity. In fact, this proved to work very well; the older children have done those tasks very well. After 15, they can join the ATD Fourth World group of young people and become full-time facilitators.”



Taponi youth facilitators, Democratic Republic of Congo

Speaking to children about October 17 and the Rights of the Child.

Rozenn (Mayotte) - “We have not spoken of October 17 this year because we didn't know how to tackle it. To speak of the Rights of the Child, I used a book that a teacher lent me. These are complex issues; we are not educators and don't have the tools that would help us introduce such delicate subjects.”

Faustin, Jérôme
and Adama
(Burkina Faso)

“Often, October 17 is the result of a year-long mobilization with the help of the pedagogical tool that is “the Taponi Campaign.” The children discover and think further about the theme and the history of the day; and they do the activity that is proposed in the Taponi Campaign. For example, in 2009, the theme of the campaign was “By meeting together, we are building the world.” The story was that of Mackenson, a child from Haiti. The activity was to make “the train of friendship”. On October 17, in front of the adults and another group of children, the Taponi children recited some poems, composed messages that follow the theme, and made a sketch about the theme of the campaign. They also showed the fruit of the activity they had prepared, the train of friendship, and silhouettes that they had made together. On that day, the children co-animated a radio program about what they are doing to build peace, sharing and solidarity within the community. They can also decide to visit an elderly person who is among the poorest people of the neighborhood. Taponi children find many different ways to celebrate October 17.”



Faustin, Jérôme and Adama
(Burkina Faso)

Prisca
(Madagascar)

“We mark October 17 by joining with other associations that have similar goals in doing activities about themes such as Overcoming Poverty or fighting for the Rights of the Child. This gives more strength and a wider impact to our actions, and more weight to work with authorities... And it doesn't prevent each association to keep its own identity.

The project “Civil Society's Action for the Promotion of the Rights of the Child in Madagascar” is composed of several associations in the Civil Society's Platform in favor of Children. Its objective is to observe and follow the state of protection of children and to promote their rights in Madagascar. See the site:

<http://www.pfsce.org/index.php/fr/la-pfsce>



Prisca, Madagascar

Caroline
(Mauritius)

The Rights of the Child as seen by children's

"On November 20, during our Taponi meeting, we wanted to work on the Rights of the Child with the Taponi group. But we wondered how to do it. I thought that it would be interesting to start from what the children experience and then enlarge it to what other children experience. In looking on the Internet, I found a document from Unicef. It was a questionnaire with a question for each category of eight of the rights. For the rights to an identity, a name and a nationality, the question was: What is your full name? By answering this question, the children discovered that their first and last names are important. For the right to be protected: What makes you feel protected (parents, social workers, police, justice, peace..)? In some neighborhoods, drugs are very present and often the police turn a blind eye to it. The children might feel that the police don't protect them, especially when their families are the victims of dealers. For the right to education: What is the name of your school and what are you studying? The relationship of children with the school system shows a mixture of hopes and deception because the system is often unequal; it does not consider the individuals. The older children (12 to 16) much appreciated the work, as did the younger ones (8 to 11). It made them more aware of the reality of their country in a very concrete way. They also learned that it could be different elsewhere, better or worse."

Manal and
Azzedine
(Algeria)

Starting from the local context to speak of the rights

"Since February, the political situation in Algeria has influenced our activities. Therefore we introduced the concept of citizenship with the Taponi group; we have to prepare today's children who will be tomorrow's adults, to exercise their responsibilities in all domains: political, social, economic, etc... We want to prepare the children to assume individual and collective responsibilities; they need to comprehend and assume the rules of life in society in reference to the values of democracy and human rights. Therefore, we handed a list to each child of the ten Rights of the Child, explained each one in detail; then we turned to the children for comments and questions. In parallel, we had an activity called "Identity Card" to make them understand the right to an identity from birth. Each person has the right to have an identity and the identity affirms a person's existence within a society. Then we distributed a questionnaire about the right to an identity and each child had to answer on his or her own. We went over the children's answers. You can find all the elements of this activity on the Taponi site at:

<https://fr.taponi.org/animer-un-groupe-denfants/>
(in French).

Tapori and Street Libraries – What is the difference?

Rozenn (Mayotte) : *"I know that the team in Mauritius Island has some street libraries and some Taponi groups in the same neighborhood. How can we articulate these activities to complement each other?"*

The International Taponi team was able to travel to Spain at the beginning of the year; we met the facilitators and the Taponi children in their own locations. The facilitators told us what Taponi means for them. Here is what they said:



"My name is Elsa.

For me, Taponi, this is a place for children to learn to express themselves, to have confidence in themselves, to be able to defend their ideas and, of course, always in the dynamic of the fight against poverty. It is also a place to learn how to be actor of one's own life, even as a child, in order to find out how to take a stand every day against exclusion and other injustices. It is not only a network of friends for friendship sake, but to create a network between all the Taponi groups. This gives more strength to all to denounce injustices and prejudices, and fight against them at the children's level. It is also a way to discover the reality of other countries. One of the Taponi newsletters reported on children in Madagascar who had conducted interviews in their neighborhood. Children here knew about Madagascar and Africa, but their views had been shaped by television and they had images of extreme poverty, people dying of hunger. It was interesting to have an opening on something else, to see that there is more than that in those countries. I think that it is not easy to facilitate a Taponi group because it is demanding. We need to meet with other facilitators, to see each other, to speak to each other, to exchange our practices or difficulties.."



My name is Rocio.

I think that we have to help each child to think about what he or she can do. Then we have to bring it all together in a common action. When I speak of an action, I mean that the children have to always think from a situation that's happening around them. Let's not forget that Taponi is part of ATD Fourth World, and in all it does, ATD Fourth World's goal is the eradication of extreme poverty. I would say that Taponi is part of a current to overcome extreme poverty. This definition might seem too grandiose as we are working with children; but it is what it should be. What we want to accomplish is how children can learn to be involved in building a more just society through what they observe, listen to and think. Through Taponi, the children learn to think by themselves; they develop a way of expressing themselves that they will need later in life. I wish that all the Taponi facilitators be ambitious in their way of supporting the children to think by themselves and to express the ideals they carry in them."

The next Letter to the Taponi Facilitators

- Let's help Rozenn and others to distinguish between Taponi meetings and street libraries.
- After reading what Elsa and Rocio told us, let us know what it evokes for you. Taponi has fifty years of experience. How would you define it for today's world from what you are experiencing in your group?
- We count on you to share with us your questions and your experiences, both positive and negative. Your contributions constitute the material needed for this Letter to exist. **Contact us !**