THE COFFEES OF
THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

H.R.H. Princess Laurentien of the Netherlands

7 March 2018
THE COFFEES OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

Bringing New Perspectives to the OECD

Secretary-General’s Speech Writing and Intelligence Outreach Unit
Short Bio

HRH Princess Laurentien

Princess Laurentien received her secondary education in The Hague and later at the Lycée Français in Tokyo, Japan, where she passed the Baccalauréat A examinations. The Princess studied history at the University of Groningen, completing her foundation year in 1986. She received her Bachelor of Arts degree in political science at Queen Mary College, University of London, in 1989. In July 1991 she obtained her Master of Journalism degree at the University of California at Berkeley.

Besides her official duties as a member of the Royal House, Princess Laurentien's professional activities include being a Fellow of the European Climate Foundation, Special Advisor for Rewilding Europe for the WWF (World Wide Fund for Nature) and Senior Advisor to the Port of Rotterdam. In 2009 the Princess set up the Missing Chapter Foundation. In the same year she published the first in a series of children's books which centre on a character called Mr Finney and deal with issues such as sustainability and climate change. The second book in the series was published in February 2011, and the third in November 2013.

Since late 2012 Princess Laurentien has been the President of Fauna & Flora International (FFI), a nature conservation organisation focusing on the protection of threatened animal species and ecosystems worldwide. The Princess was first associated with the FFI in 2003, initially as a member of the Executive Committee and then as Vice-President until she was appointed President.

Until 2003 Princess Laurentien worked in international communications, for companies including Weber Shandwick and Edelman PR Worldwide. Princess Laurentien has been active in promoting literacy since 2001. Stichting Lezen & Schrijven (the Reading and Writing Foundation) was set up on her initiative in May 2004. The foundation’s objective is to prevent and reduce functional illiteracy in the Netherlands and worldwide.

On 24 March 2009 Princess Laurentien was designated UNESCO Special Envoy on Literacy for Development. In this capacity, she acts as an advocate for the cause of literacy all over the world. In February 2011 the Princess was appointed Chair of the European Commission’s High Level Group of Experts on Literacy. The Group published its Final Report in September 2012, which included recommended actions for a structured European approach to tackling illiteracy.

On 1 January 2014 Princess Laurentien was appointed Honorary Chair of the Reading and Writing Foundation when Maria van Bijsterveldt-Vliegenthart, former Minister of Education, Culture and Science, took over the role of chair. In her new position the Princess remains closely involved with efforts to tackle functional illiteracy, in which she mainly steers the foundation’s international activities. These include partnerships with the European Literacy Policy Network (ELINET) and the Public Libraries 2020 programme.

As a member of the Royal House, Princess Laurentien holds a number of honorary posts: Patron of Reading Unlimited (formerly the Dutch Listening and Braille Library (NLBB); Patron of the Dutch language society Genootschap Onze Taal; Patron of the Centre of Expertise on Disability and Study; Honorary chair of the Association of Public Libraries; President of Fauna & Flora International (FFI); and President of the European Cultural Foundation.

Reading and Writing Foundation Website:
http://www.readingandwriting.eu/

Missing Chapter Foundation Website:
https://www.missingchapter.org/
An interactive dialogue with children: ‘A new perspective on Inclusive Growth’

For the first part of the Coffees of the Secretary-General – organised with the Inclusive Growth Initiative – HRH Princess Laurentien facilitated an interactive dialogue between 15 children from the Dutch School of Paris (aged 11 to 15 years old) the OECD Secretary-General Angel Gurría and senior OECD officials. Princess Laurentien is an expert on intergenerational dialogue, having founded the Missing Chapter Foundation which facilitates dialogue between children and decision-makers in companies and the public sector. Some 100 companies in the Netherlands already have a Kids Council.

Dialogue with children is, according to the Missing Chapter methodology, a topsy-turvy world: children talk and decision-makers listen. The overall goal is to make child inclusion the new normal, to increase the quality and depth of dialogue between different worlds and ultimately, to make decisions more future-proof.

1 The original transcript of the presentation by HRH Princess Laurentien has undergone minor editing to ensure that the text published in this brochure is presented in a reader-friendly format.
Including young people into decision-making is only logical, says Princess Laurentien: “It is their universal right to be heard, according to article 12 of the International Convention on the Rights of the Child. In addition, children are the future parents, clients, consumers, employees. And they have to live with the consequences of our decisions and actions way beyond our lifetime. Children are much more than the future. They are, as the late Polish pedagogue Janusz Korczak said: ‘Not only the people of tomorrow but citizens of today’.”

The children analysed the following OECD dilemma: ‘What does the OECD need to do in order for its recommendations to be followed through?’ Princess Laurentien moderated the dialogue and the children shared their perspectives on how the OECD can ensure that its recommendations are followed through, on the ability to take and to provide advice, and on how to successfully lead an organisation.

**New perspectives and fresh ideas**

At the start of the session, princess Laurentien posed the question ‘Why is it important for adults to hear children’s perspectives?’ In response, several children expressed the importance of being able to hear new perspectives and fresh ideas. ‘Young people are more direct and straightforward when voicing their thoughts while adults will often think too much and look too far, when the answer is right in front of their eyes’, the children responded. ‘Children are more creative because they don’t know how things were always done.’ The children also insisted on the importance of always listening to different points of view, as adults are sometimes too ‘confined’ in their own perspectives. They stressed the importance of following one’s intuition: ‘Adults too often think about the consequences of what they do, instead of just doing what is right.’
The art of listening

What does the OECD need to do in order to ensure that its recommendations are implemented? Otherwise put, when do you take someone’s advice, and when not? The children gave several suggestions. Firstly, the need to want to receive advice: ‘I seek someone’s advice when I really do not know the solution or answer myself. If I already have a slight idea, I am less open to another opinion.’ Secondly, the importance of knowing each other. ‘You need to feel that someone is truly interested in you and takes the trouble to really get to know you. Otherwise, it is much harder to receive advice.

The art of listening was also at the core of the discussion. The children pointed out the importance of listening to a member country which may be hesitant to implement a recommendation and of ‘putting yourself in the shoes of the others’ in order to understand the reasons justifying their resistance. ‘If you want to know why they don’t take your advice, why don’t you ask them?’ said Driss (12). The children also insisted on the idea that asking questions and distancing yourself from a preconceived opinion will foster a constructive dialogue and lead to better outcomes.

When one of the senior OECD officials asked whether it was important for the OECD to base recommendations on statistics to strengthen arguments, Thijs (13) noted that ‘statistics are useful to understand what has happened, but not to predict the future – a good recommendation should consist of 25% statistics and facts, and the rest should reflect the intuition, the ‘small voice inside your head’.”
The actual life of people
Some children also expressed that while the OECD is an organisation made up of experts, getting advice from and listening to ‘everyday people whose lives are directly affected’ by its recommendations can be very effective to ensure that they are well-suited for a country. The children explained that as such, recommendations would be better adapted and thus benefit from a greater incentive to be implemented. Others suggested the idea of proposing the recommendation via a referendum in the country, to see how the people, who will be directly affected by the reform, perceive it. They insisted on the importance of adapting the recommendation to the ‘actual life of the people’.

Trust
The children then stressed that in order to give good recommendations and to be heard, building a relationship based on trust was essential. ‘If they don’t take your advice, and you have good arguments, then maybe it’s personal.’ They added that it is crucial to clearly state the arguments, to give some positive elements alongside the negative ones, to show examples of where such advice has worked before and to give valid reasons on the importance of implementing it. They also stated that offering help to implement the recommendation would encourage a country to follow through.

A good leader
Finally, the Secretary-General as the head of an organisation of over 3000 employees, asked how he can be a good leader. ‘A good leader needs to be kind, intelligent, and not overly-strict’, the children responded. ‘Otherwise people won’t follow you.’ They insisted that good leaders are open-minded, listen to various points of view and can have good dialogues with people working inside and outside the organisation. ‘Talk to people who don’t agree with you and find allies within the organisation who do agree with you.’ Some suggested that conducting surveys and asking for the staff’s perspectives on certain issues would help the leader to build a relationship based on trust and to make it easier to rally everyone behind a common objective.

Talk less, listen more
The Secretary-General and other senior officials were positively surprised with the richness of the dialogue through the dynamics of open questions and diverse answers. They complimented the children with the depth of their knowledge and indicated they should have such open and honest conversations with stakeholders more often. They acknowledged the importance of listening and of translating such human dialogue in the professional environment in order to foster relationships built on trust and, in turn, deliver better outcomes. Moreover, they explained that this experience taught them to better understand the link and tensions between the mind and the heart. As H.E. Ambassador of the Netherlands, Noë Van Hulst stated after the session, the main message from the children was ‘talk less, and listen more’.
It is a great pleasure to be here with you today. And thank you for asking me to have an informal dialogue with you. Let us pretend we’re at home, thinking freely and not in our institutional bubble. In our dialogue earlier today, with the 15 children from the Dutch School of Paris, the key dilemma we focused on was ‘what does the OECD need to do in order for its recommendations to be followed through?’ We also talked about the frustration people experience when they think they are right but need to convince others. What to do? The children gave us some useful insights: ‘do not use more and more arguments but listen more. Ask better questions. And put yourself in the shoes of those you want to convince. In addition, in order to receive constructive advice, the children said: dare to listen more. I think the officials participating in the dialogue are still digesting the advice they got from the children!

Now to get started, let’s do a short exercise that I do with all the Kids Councils and the many organisations we work with. May I ask you to close your eyes. (I know it’s difficult!). I will ask you three questions and would like you to raise your hands if you agree. I will be the only one who sees your answers in the room, so you can be honest!

1. Who regularly thinks ‘I know better’?
2. Who finds it difficult to ask for help?
3. Who finds talking easier than listening?
Aha, I see we have a smart group, with people who feel they always need to have the answers and who like to listen to their own advice. I say this without any judgment – in fact my questions relate to the issues we discussed with the children earlier today. I also want to share some of the insights that I developed over the years through my work with the Reading & Writing Foundation and the Missing Chapter Foundation, two NGOs which I both founded and actively developed.

I have been working for a long time both with decision-makers and with children. In a way, my work with children is symbolic for a dialogue with citizens more generally. To me, for example, refugees, unskilled and (functionally) illiterate people and former prisoners are much more than individuals with a scarred past. I see an advisor in everyone who is real, who has experienced so much in his or her life. The real question and the challenge is that when we receive advice from such advisers, do we possess the ability to really listen between the lines to what they are actually saying? More often than not, we don’t. It requires being humble. Putting inclusion to practice is hard work. What I do is translate human insights into – what I would call – effective solutions.

This afternoon I will focus on the methodology that we use and which I have built up over the last 17 years by speaking and listening to people on the ground. They are the ones who give us invaluable insights. In this context, I will provide some examples of how I believe you can take human insight and use it as a starting point to develop systemic change and solutions. Lastly, I will take a specific example of your inclusive growth initiative and connect it to my work on illiteracy.

The label that perhaps best describes my work is social innovation. I work on several societal issues, such as literacy, sustainability, youth inclusion, debt relief and poverty. I was delighted to read about the need for ‘people-centred solutions’ in your inclusive growth strategy. It may sound simple, but in fact it can be difficult to understand what this really means in practice. Most of all, it’s the ability to ask open questions, listen in between the lines and truly understand what is said. In short, we must ask what exactly somebody needs, and then use that as a starting point for the solution that we want to develop.

I did not realise 17 years ago, when I started working on literacy issues, that what I was doing in a way was disruptive design thinking. Most of what I’ve done to-date has been built up through intuition, practice and by reading a lot of insights from a wide range of people and listening to them carefully. The methodology can be best described as co-creation. Otherwise put: organised chaos. As it turns out, one of the hardest things for people who have knowledge is to not understand or know beforehand what an outcome will be. We want linear thinking, we want to understand at the outset what the end result is, we are fearful that people will judge us on the impact of our work. The reality is we co-create with people but cannot predict what people think; co-creation therefore is organised chaos. I hope you bear in mind this depth of ‘inclusion’ when you further develop your thoughts on ‘inclusive growth’.

I strongly believe that solutions developed for people will never be fully effective solutions. Developing solutions with people needs to become the new normal. After all, how can we develop solutions for refugees if we do not understand their sentiments? We can imagine what it feels like to be someone else, but we do not exactly know the deeper sentiments they go through. Real magic happens when you find an important insight in one seemingly small
sentence. When you hear it, you will recognise it as a key insight for developing the intervention that we need.

I would like to share with you three examples of how I have done this in practice. My first example comes from homeless people, many years ago when I was doing my Masters at Berkeley in California. As a privileged European youngster, I was stunned by how people could fall in between the cracks of society. I spent a few days living on Venice Beach outside Los Angeles with homeless people. At the time, a measure was developed to help homeless people get to work. Needless to say, it was designed by people who had never lived on the beach. The solution they came up with was to provide homeless people with bus tickets to go into town and pass job interviews. No one however used these tickets and this hugely costly programme failed. Why? Well, the answer lies in the experience of sleeping on a beach in the sun... When you wake up, you feel lousy, useless, worthless and dirty. Not exactly conducive to getting onto a bus and going into town. So a better solution would have been to install showers on the beach. But did anyone ever have a discussion with the homeless people, or even sleep on the beach for a few nights and experience their side? No. Did anyone ask them what they needed in order to go into town and get a job? No. If they had, they would have known that waking up like that would never give them the proper confidence to even go to the bus stop, let alone go into town and meet people. In short, these people were ashamed, and that is a sentiment as deep as mankind, and the only way to tackle it is by meeting them, by having a dialogue with them and by truly listening.

My second example concerns obesity and the advice given by one of the Kids Councils to a leading supermarket chain in the Netherlands. Around the globe, millions of Euros are spent teaching children to eat better and healthier. But children tell us: "I am not the one who goes to the supermarket and buys the food that I eat; I am not the one doing the cooking at home;
I know what I need to eat, but it's my parents setting the example.’ It is so logical, right? Listening to the children, it makes no sense to single out the children. A UK study by Bristol University has shown that awareness programmes solely aimed at children has zero effect on behaviour. To get this right, we need to develop a multi-target group programme that also involves the adults. We have to get beyond our fear of patronising adults (and why not be fearful of patronising children?). We are in the process of developing a family action programme whereby children are the change agents, getting into action with their entire family. And we are, of course, co-creating this with children and parents in the Netherlands. The aim is real behavioural change, reaching hundreds of thousands of families through schools. Awareness is a logical spin-off, but not the goal.

The third example of people-centred solutions is illiteracy. Here too, understanding emotions gained through in-depth conversations with functionally illiterate people take centre-stage in developing a sustainable solution. Systems solutions are developed from the perspective of highly skilled individuals: when wanting to close a knowledge gap, we tend to build knowledge institutes. But after many conversations with functionally illiterate people, I realised that shame was the emotion people tend to have in common. Shame and educational disappointments stand in the way of going to knowledge institutes.

This is exacerbated by the fact that we live in a digital society, in which everyone expects all people to read and write. No one talks about illiteracy, it is a taboo in policy-land and therefore people think they are the only ones with this problem. Due to this very understandable human sentiment, people hide their handicap. So I started wondering, inspired by an excellent programme I had encountered in the UK. What if we develop a system that stimulates learning using shame as a starting point for bringing organised knowledge near people, rather than people needing to go to acquire knowledge? Wherever people go, they carry such feelings with them – like banks, employment agencies, doctors’
offices. All these places can become places of intervention that can empower people to seek help. And indeed, we started a pilot programme, and this programme – once proven successful – became a national approach. The result? We reached tens of thousands more people than before, for limited funding. Instead of attaining 6,000 people, we now have organised regional and local ecosystems based on a human centred perspective and we have attained 60,000 people.

I believe, crazy enough as it may sound, that a simple human insight can actually be the starting point of building different types of solutions. And children understand this dialogue better than anyone else.

So my work mainly consists of listening between the lines, facilitating dialogue between different worlds. Whether it is debt relief or poverty, all these kinds of huge and complex problems are ultimately about people. So for you as well, understanding people is therefore key to understanding the depth of your work and appreciating the impact you may have. And member governments of course are driven by their citizens.

Now let me focus a little on the methodology that we have developed. If you co-create you need to begin dissecting the problem at hand. Too often we come up with solutions where we have listened, talked and thought-out the plan all at the same time. As the children advised us, we need to dissect and to assess a problem step-by-step.
Let me go through some of these essential steps:

The first step – something the Secretary-General also mentioned during his dialogue with the children – is understanding what the real problem that we are trying to solve is. One example was the Kids Council we held at an international accountancy firm. The dilemma that the Board of the firm put forward was: ‘How can we make sure that the financial sector can be trusted again?’ And indeed this is something we talk about in the press on a daily basis. But we knew that the children would have dozens of questions. Like ‘Who doesn’t trust whom?’ and ‘Who exactly is the financial sector?’ So in the end, the real question and dilemma was: ‘How do we, the accountancy firm, make sure that people trust us?’ We often think that we have the key issues in front of us, but the real question is in fact not that evident. It helps to ask why many times during this process in order to reach the core of the problem and to talk to the people who are at the core of the issues, the homeless and the illiterate.

The second step is the research phase. In our Kids Councils, the children do their own research – through documents and annual reports that they receive from companies – but it is important to also let them think freely and to not box them in. As you know, the minute you are boxed in, you cannot come up with innovative solutions.

The third step is the dialogue between the boards of directors and Kids Council. The dialogue is about rules of the game, something we also find quite difficult to grasp. I believe that in every Kids Council with the boards, without exception, Directors have always said that they could not remember a time when they listened and only asked questions. When listening to people, accountability is key. Very often we seek advice from young people but we do not really take it into account, perhaps because we do not understand it, and we certainly do not take the trouble to go back to these young people and to explain whether their advice will or will not be implemented.

The fourth step is implementation of advice. Children say that if you constantly want to be right, people will never trust you. I bet it must be difficult sometimes for your advice and policies not to be implemented. Accepting that we only have one piece of the puzzle is the hardest thing to do, and the more intelligent and knowledgeable we are, the tougher it is and the expectations from the outside world are higher. In our session with children today, the Secretary-General of a reputable International Organisation was exactly equal to a 10-year old child. Why? Because the Secretary-General has one piece of the puzzle and the 10-year old has another piece.

Some additional ideas put forward by the children include, putting yourselves in the shoes of the others, no narcissism and no arrogance. I once held a long conversation with children, dissecting the notion of leadership. They came up with the following definition: “leadership is letting go of thinking that you always have to be the best.” I think that is beautiful and if we dare to let go, then we leave room for questions, curiosity, and in this respect I think that institutes like the OECD are well positioned to show that kind of openness and transparency.
Questions and Answers:
Let me now open the floor to you. I would like to know whether something which I have mentioned today has resonated with you?

H.E. Ms Irena Sodin, Permanent Representative of Slovenia to the OECD:
‘If I could go back to your initial question, whether we believe that we are always right. My answer was no. I had a very long training with my daughter who very early on convinced me with arguments that I was not right. On your question whether the OECD thinks it is always right or whether more advice should be followed, here my daughter again told me, when she was 9 years old, that I could not expect her to learn from my mistakes and that she has to make her own. I think that we would perhaps make faster progress if we did learn from our mistakes. My question is: in your discussions with children and in the answers that you receive from them, do you find that social skills are neglected because of today’s technologies?’

HRH Princess Laurentien:
‘Indeed, we see children on their phones all the time, but it is in fact adults who are teaching children to be on their phones. I often refer to an interesting book called ‘Reclaiming Conversation – The power of talk in a digital age’ by Sherry Turkle, which focuses on this issue. She holds up a mirror to us, stating that we are in a crisis of empathy and how that is becoming a real threat to society. I believe that children deeply understand the importance of a true connection. Reading books is extremely important, but because of digital advancements and iPads, children no longer see adults reading physical books. I feel that some of the debates on digitalisation and society are too narrow-minded. We often focus on the downsides of technology but we do not sufficiently take into account the upsides of dialogue.’
'To focus on literacy, in 2012 I had the privilege of being asked by the then European Commissioner for Education, Mrs Androulla Vassiliou, to lead the High-Level Group on Literacy. At the time, I asked a group of 14 very experienced and knowledgeable scientists on literacy issues, to provide me with a very simple list of 10 myths about literacy. They unanimously said that every child could, in principle, learn to read and write. I then asked ‘what about dyslexia?’ It turns out that there are 27 different definitions of dyslexia. The experts said that we are talking about a mismatch between the way a child learns and the methodology we are imposing on children.

Looking more into this issue, I learned about an intervention that experts were doing in the UK, they shifted the learning process by identifying the moment a child hesitates. They focused on addressing that hesitation. This identified shy children, those who were hesitating and could not keep up with the class. To help them and to boost their confidence they gave those children theatre lessons and it worked. This programme provided additional insights for experts. In the Netherlands, on the other hand, we let children with dyslexia struggle by imposing a methodology that ends up exacerbating the problem. I am now working on a programme in order to put the insights of the UK academics into practice and to identify the solutions that we should put in place in order to make sure that every child will learn to read and write. I do hope I will be able to work on this with the OECD and with other countries.'

**Alice Holt (OSG):**

'We are looking into the area of gender stereotypes and how they may be holding girls back in certain areas such as science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) as well as leadership positions. Have you noticed this in the Kids Councils? Do you believe that girls are perhaps a little more shy and in the background than boys?'
HRH Princess Laurentien:
‘Every class is different and we tend to underestimate group dynamics. We aim to have very clear rules of the game for the groups and that tends to give confidence to all children and in turn neutralise feelings of shyness.’

H.E. Ms Monica Aspe, Permanent Representative of Mexico to the OECD:
‘When policy is open to co-creation, we sometimes do not get the ideal results that we hope for. Have you had any experience in this area and what recommendations would you give to overcome this challenge?’

H.E. Mr José Ignacio Wert, Permanent Representative of Spain to the OECD:
‘You define literacy in a much broader sense than the one used by the European Social Survey, which states that illiteracy in Europe is less than 1%. I am interested in your concept of illiteracy as a functional concept; to what extent is this related to a lack of capability of the education system to deal with diversity?’

Question from the audience:
‘In the Netherlands you have been the recipient of a large number of refugees, many of which are children and Muslims, what challenges do you face in assisting them, accommodating them and integrating them in society?’

Question from the audience:
‘The dyslexia issue is increasingly becoming a problem in Germany. Some people say this is partly because of digitalisation and the use of smartphones at an early age, and partly because of teaching methods. Is this also a rising problem in the Netherlands and how do you deal with it?’

Question from the audience:
‘You spoke about empathy and putting yourself in the shoes of others. However sometimes in society we have good intentions but do not understand the fundamental needs that we are trying to address – such as your example of the homeless people on the beach. So perhaps a main challenge in our work is to identify the fundamental needs of the people we are trying to help and building early on our policy advice. Have your experiences through the Kids Councils helped you in this respect? Perhaps a Kids Council at the OECD would lead to good outcomes.’

HRH Princess Laurentien:
‘Thank you for all these interesting comments and thoughts. I read your policy brief on inclusive growth and found it very insightful, particularly the statement that old economic models are not working and we need to fix this. So on the one hand, you have the right reflections, but on the other hand you say we need to re-write the rules of the economic system to make them work for everyone. Through my experiences to-date, that does not give me the confidence that you really dare to go one step further and to say, make them work with everyone.’
‘On policy creation, too often we look into policymaking through focus groups. So we come up with a solution and then ask people whether they agree with it. Co-creation is different. It is indeed formulating a clear problem at the outset and then giving people the space to come up with fresh solutions. We must accept that co-creation is not always going to lead to the outcomes we had planned for. Otherwise you might as well not do it. Co-creation is a difficult and dynamic process. But it is worth it.’

‘Looking at literacy issues in the Netherlands, we have recently begun to look at this challenge from a different perspective. We are in fact measuring the level of participation in society, the level of being able to take care of your health, the level of self-confidence. So we need to identify to what extent literacy is allowing people to function in society. UNESCO is now starting to look at these definitions and I spoke about these issues to the Director-General, Audrey Azoulay, this morning.’

‘Regarding dealing with diversity, dyslexia and early childhood development, we are facing significant challenges in the Netherlands, with some classes having up to 20% of their children with reading difficulties. Early childhood development at ages 0-4 is crucial in tackling this issue and therefore greater investment in this area is the best investment we can make, and I am happy to have read about this in your work on inclusive growth.’

‘Regarding Dutch refugee children: how we deal with refugees goes to the very heart of how human we can be and how truly inclusive and open society is. I believe that this is a great challenge we are facing and we need to dare to speak with refugees and ask ‘what do we need to do together for integration to work?’ Co-creating solutions with refugees – like others – makes sense, since they themselves understand best what the obstacles and opportunities for integration are.’

Lastly, putting yourself in the shoes of others, identifying needs and working on this from an OECD perspective, I believe that when you connect worlds that speak different languages, you need translators. I would advise you – as the OECD – that if you want to bring this perspective in your policy formulation, you cannot do it with the current mind-set. Listening to people and their needs requires a different skillset than designing statistics and doing research in a more cerebral way. In the Missing Chapter Foundation we are translators; we understand the needs of both the decision-makers and young people.’

‘To close, I would like to thank you, I appreciate your openness, you allowed me to bring in this strange – but necessary – dimension of human insights.

My last advice comes from children – 3 inspiring insights on the question ‘Why do adults have such a hard time solving problems? The children say:

- Adults always forget the first step.
- Adults always take steps that are too big.
- Adults always forget about why they do things.

Thank you.'
H.R.H. Princess Laurentien of the Netherlands

“A New Perspective on Inclusive Growth: Learning from Children”