



Norwegian Ministry
of Foreign Affairs



OFFICE OF THE SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON
VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN



“IT TAKES A VILLAGE TO RAISE A CHILD!”

HIGHLIGHTS FROM INTERNATIONAL EXPERT CONSULTATION ON STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES TO SECURE CHILDREN’S RIGHT TO FREEDOM FROM VIOLENCE

Organized by Special Representative of the UN Secretary General on Violence Against Children and Plan International, Sponsored by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Oslo on 3 – 4 September 2015. Brought together 70 experts including ministers and community chiefs to academics, UN, WHO, I/NGOs, networks and young people. Presented here are key highlights.

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Background

The scale of violence against children is immeasurable, not least because abuse and exploitation often remains invisible, and is not reported or documented. The groundbreaking United Nations Study on Violence against Children in 2006 (UN Study) estimated shocking levels of physical and sexual violence and exploitation across all regions of the world. In spite of various international, regional and national efforts since the study, the Global Survey on Violence against Children, undertaken by the SRSG on Violence against Children, reports that every year over 500 million to 1.5 billion children around the world are affected by some form of violence. Violence often has a lifelong impact on children. It affects their physical, emotional and social development and destroys families and communities. Beyond the harm caused to children, violence undermines the economic development of a society due to the long term negative consequences on physical and mental health, education and employment, and social harmony.

The UN study's recommendation that "all States develop a multi-faceted and systematic framework to respond to violence against children"¹ provided the impetus for a number of agencies to adopt a more comprehensive "systems approach" in their programme strategies for child protection.²

A systems approach recognizes the inter-connectedness of children's rights and the complex causes and consequences of violence. It seeks to contribute to comprehensive, lasting social change, led by governments that fulfill their primary responsibilities as duty bearers for all children in their country.

The SRSG and Plan works with governments, civil society organizations, communities and children to promote the development and implementation of strong and sustainable national and community-based child protection systems.

There is as yet no internationally recognized definition of a systems approach. However, based on the emerging consensus in the sector, Plan defines a child protection system as:

¹ UN Secretary General, 2006. Report of the independent expert for the United Nations Study on Violence against Children. UN General Assembly.

² UNICEF, 2008-2013. Global Child Protection Strategy; Save the Children, 2009. Building Rights-Based National Child Protection Systems: A concept paper to support Save the Children's work; World Vision, 2011. A Systems Approach to Child Protection: Discussion paper.

A comprehensive, interactive and sustainable series of functions and structures including laws, policies, and services (at all levels) within a country with the purpose of preventing and responding to all forms of violence against all children in that country.

Community actors play a critical role in implementing child protection through identifying and monitoring at-risk children, mediating family and community disputes, and providing direct support for children in need of protection. They can also refer children and their families to more specialized services. Community structures may not only help prevent and respond to child protection issues, but also act as pressure groups on the state for political and budgetary actions. Community-based mechanisms can either function in isolation, or are linked with formal government and NGO services. They can be child protection specific, or inter-sectoral. Many community protection mechanisms rely on external contributions, while others depend entirely on internal resources.³

According to Plan's definition, a community-based child protection mechanism (CBCPM) ***is a network or group of individuals at community level who work in a coordinated manner towards protection of children from all forms of violence, in all settings. Such mechanisms can be endogenous or externally initiated and supported. They may be more formal or informal in their structure and functioning. CBCPMs are linked and contribute to national child protection systems.***

Regardless of whether the mechanisms are run by state or non-state actors, they're all required to respect and protect children's human rights standards.

Purpose for the International Expert Consultation

In order to enhance learning and provide further guidance on how to strengthen community-based child protection mechanisms and ensure a link to the national child protection system, the SRSG and Plan organized an international expert consultation that brought together experts from different regions for cross-regional learning and partnerships. It benefitted from previous developments, good practices within a variety of communities in different countries and regions.

Objectives

- Identify good models and practice of CBCPMs supported by various international and local NGOs in communities across different regions.

³ http://www.unicef.org/wcaro/overview_6417.html

- Provide an overview of legal frameworks for CBCPMs across different countries and regions
- Formulate clear guidance on what communities and children can effectively do in sustainable CBCPMs.
- Devise a plan to work towards regional, national and local implementation strategies for scaling up of relevant CBCPMs

The consultation included discussion on (among others);

- Explorations of national legislations versus CBCPMs and legal pluralism
- Extent of linkages between CBCPMs and national child protection systems, including oversight mechanisms
- How to support effective participation of all children in CBCPMs
- Positive practices of CBCPMs supported by various organisations
- Cultural sensitivities CBCPMs
- Ensuring sustainability for CBCPMs
- Specific roles and responsibilities of Governments, INGOs, local NGOs, community leaders etc. in CBCPMs

Expected Outcomes

1. A thematic report with concrete recommendations on how to strengthen CBCPM through law reform, policy development and scaling up of promising practices
2. Strategy for follow-up in different regions and at international level, which includes awareness raising and advocacy efforts, and continuing to build and leverage this international network
3. Guidelines for CBCPMs

Participants

1. Community leaders, including traditional and religious leaders
2. Civil society, including grass-roots organizations
3. Child protection professionals
4. Children's rights justice providers, paralegals

5. Government reps from national and local level
6. National human rights institutions on children's rights
7. INGOs
8. Regional child rights mechanisms and organizations
9. UNICEF, CRC Committee
10. Academia

Participants had

- Experience from relevant law and policy processes, development and strengthening of a systems approach at national level;
- Experience from child sensitive counseling, reporting and complaints mechanisms at community level; and from oversight and monitoring mechanisms
- Hands-on experience from implementing CBCPM programs at the local (community) level

Opening remarks and welcome

Her Excellency Ms. Solveig Horne, Minister, Norwegian Ministry of Children, Equality and Social Inclusion



Stated that our common goal should be that no children are subjected to violence. The Norwegian government wants to take part to combatting violence, nationally and globally. The CRC is implemented in Norway through the HR act. Violence is used in upbringing in many parts of the world. In Norway it is banned. Last year, on the 25th anniversary of CRC, a large conference in Norway set renewed agenda for Norway's policy on children and families – new action plan to address violence against children. We need initiatives at the local level where children and families live. Recent studies show that violence

affects many children and youth in Norway. HE Ms. Horne mentions the importance of good preventive measures. Good parenting is the most effective preventative strategy. Norway is implementing a parenting programme. To combat violence we need measures at local level. It is also important to involve the private and voluntary sector. She strongly believes in preventative measures and good parenting. Important to combat violence during pregnancies. Important with family counselling. We are launching national wide training programme on how to talk to children on violence and sexual abuse. We need to get children themselves engaged. They need knowledge about their body. There is a national training programme on how to talk to children about violence and sexual assault.

Her full speech can be read at [the Ministry's website](#)

Her Excellency Minister Ms. Yohana Yambise, Minister, Ministry of Women Empowerment and Child Protection, Indonesia

Indonesia is one of the world's most populist nations with more than 250 million inhabitants of which 33 % are children (80 million). Child Protection function is under the Ministry of Women Empowerment. Several activities involve children. In 2009 children's rights enshrined in legal provisions including becoming part of Ministry of Women's Empowerment. 510 women and children's units in police stations in Indonesia. National child leaders and national consultations with children. Child friendly cities since 2006. Every municipality and village is required to establish



community –based child protection mechanism. For some of the local discussion on development planning, children are also invited. She also mentioned that the field visit to Norwegian child protection programmes on 2nd (prior to consultation) was an eye opener for her and they would like to pick up examples from Norway.

Mr. Roland Angerer - Plan International Regional Director East and South Africa



Roland formally welcomed the delegation on behalf of Plan International. He stated that the strategic focus areas for Plan globally are education and protection. We take a systems strengthening approach to child protection, not only focus on symptoms but also on the underlying root causes. Four areas of intervention where child protection is relevant. 1. Children themselves. 2. Family level. 3. Community level. 4. The state. Plan acknowledges CBCPMs as a tool for linking all these. These are also a tools to guarantee children's rights. The levels/circles don't act individually, there is interaction.

Mentioned OP 3 CRC – optional protocol allowing children a complaints mechanism at international level. This consultation meeting an opportunity to work together on strategy and implementation. He quoted “If you want to walk fast, go alone; if you want to walk far, go together”.

Ms. Marta Santos Pais, Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary General on Violence against Children – the keynote presentation

Marta said that this is timely moment after the member states finalised 2030 agenda for sustainable development which we hope will be adopted formally by UN in September. Children contributed to the shaping of this agenda. More than 800,000 participated, the clear message is that violence is a major obstacle to child development. High levels of violence is affecting their lives and there is different types of violence in different areas; protection from violence needs to be a cross-cutting concern.



This is the 10th Expert Consultation which the Office of the SRSG is organising. The latest one was on the prevention and response to armed violence in the community. Human Rights standards have an important role in guiding state laws, policies, budgets and strategies. We now approach the 10th anniversary of UN study on VAC. The study launched a new awareness, but progress achieved has been too slow and too fragmented. Many studies have highlighted that although many countries have adopted legal provisions and CP systems at national level, implementation has in many cases been poor at local level.

The recent Global Progress Survey⁴ conducted by the office of the SRSG has taught us that many problems remain, but if we engage together this can lead to change. She also talked about different forms of CBCPMs. Noted the involvement of the UN, various different processes, for example forthcoming meeting on UN Habitat III⁵. Stated the need to bring together all the sectors that can contribute to addressing violence against children. Mentioned parental role and family support.

This meeting can identify good practices; provide an overview of legal frameworks to support CBCPMs; how to overcome tensions between statutory systems and plural systems; integration of CBCPMs into national CP systems including importance of oversight mechanisms; child participation; how can we best respect cultural sensitivities; roles of different actors. We would like this meeting to inspire follow-up – e.g. a thematic report with examples from many different orgs and settings; use to mark the 10th anniversary and also contribute to sustainable development agenda.

Documentary from Malawi – an informal film shot in August 2015 in Malawi looking at how CBCPMs are working in the field.

The film is a genuine depiction of how community based child protection mechanisms operate at the field level. Shot in far flung communities of Mzuzu District of Malawi, Africa, the film also portrays how and where the community based mechanisms come in contact with other elements of the larger child protection system and what challenges are faced at each level. The film is based on interviews with different stakeholders in the child protection system, including children.

Rt. Hon. Mr. Thomas Okoth Nyalulu, Deputy Prime Minister, Tieng Adhola Cultural Institution (TACI), Uganda

Presentation on culture based causes for VAC as well as positive aspects of it. Introduction to situation in Uganda, ratified CRC in 1989 etc, child protection enshrined in national law. However VAC still remains high. He presented the challenges for such mechanisms:

- over reliance on voluntarism
- lack of defined minimum standards to guide CBCPMs
- strengthen links with national CP systems
- how to move from informal to formal system.
- tradition based CP systems

Many are based on verbal transition of tradition and cultural beliefs handed down from generation to generation; naturally respected, strongly believed and accepted; some are in conflict with the law (e.g. FGM, “rape and marry” and forced child marriage). Need more research on role of traditional CP systems – still playing an important role; initiatives that ignore these will not be effective.



⁴ SRSG Global Progress Survey

http://srsg.violenceagainstchildren.org/sites/default/files/publications_final/toward_a_world_free_from_violence.pdf

⁵ <http://unhabitat.org/habitat-iii-conference/>

Presentation by Ms. Susan Bissell - Global Child Protection Fund-Partnership to End Violence Against Children, UNICEF



Susan Bissell, UNICEF, she is now leading the Global Child Protection Fund Partnership to End Violence Against Children. Partnership and associated fund will work to end abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against children. Made analogy with a wildebeest – animal looking like it is made up of different parts of other animals. She stated the need for partnership and said that the field is fragmented, field is starved of resources; together the efforts of many are greater than the sum of their parts. Quoted a book – we have actor power, ideas, cost effective solutions, and the capacity to measure – equals a perfect storm. Also the targets of a Sustainable Development Agenda. Make violence prevention a policy priority; create a virtuous cycle – measurable reductions in violence which will create political will for greater prevention and response; strengthen investment case; increase capacity to implement evidence based strategies; build a powerful movement that will work to keep children safe and in which children will themselves play a central role. Showed Vision, Mission and Principles of

partnership. Working together: Inclusive, Results, Transparency, Learning. Listed some “building blocks” Idea of “Pathfinder” countries to have champions from the outset – quick wins in first 5 years. Establishment of associated trust fund – UK seed funding has been provided. Consultation on draft strategy up to end of 2015; early 2016 launch partnership; 2017 the Solutions Summit. Website www.16-2endviolenceagainatchildren.org.

Panel discussion 1 Key components and building blocks of CBCPMs

Session Moderator: Ms. Marta Santos Pais

Mr. Edi Suharto, Ph.D, Director for Child Social Welfare, Ministry of Social Affairs, Indonesia

Shared that Indonesia did national survey on VAC in 2013. He presented PKSA the Child Social Welfare Programme that was established in 2009. Describing institutional based care with capacity building; also some family based and community based approaches. Issues and challenges presented by him were inadequate database; lack of budget; regulation; inadequate

social workers; institutional based services (more than 5575 childcare institutions in

Indonesia even though most children have at least one parent). He explained ways of addressing these issues to improve community-based approaches.



Mr. Robert Alexander Butchart, WHO Prevention of Violence Coordinator, Management of Non communicable Diseases,

Disability, Violence and Injury Prevention (Key components for preventing violence against children)

He presented public health approach to addressing violence against children, focussing on evidence based approaches. Mentioned maltreatment (0-18 years) and youth violence (adolescents). Defining evidence- reviews, independent investigators, etc. Things that are easy to do often don't have any evidence for effectiveness. Presented CDC Thrives: core strategies to prevent VAC with a number of agencies working together.

Dr. Mike Wessells, Professor at Columbia University and practitioner-researcher on Community Driven Child Protection (Importance of community level mechanisms)

Wessells presented lessons from ILI initiative in Sierra Leone. He emphasised that focus on systems and legal side is important, but the real work is in families and communities – are we doing enough to support them? List of reasons why CBCPMs matter – e.g. fill gaps, risks are prevalent at community level; reach children where they live; scale of support; support for vulnerable families; sustainability – particularly local endogenous CBCPMs; mobilise civil society. Mentioned the seven effectiveness factors and said the number one factor is community ownership. Presented dos and don'ts of community ownership. Threw out challenge to meeting – are we ready to really work from the bottom up rather than imposing solutions. Mentioned the community child protection exchange www.childprotectionforum.org.



Claudia Martinez, leader of community in Peñalolen, Chile



Presentation ppt. in Spanish. Explained policies for protection of children in her community with children at the centre. High level of poverty and exclusion (25% of children). Model developed with the participation of children. Prevention programme includes sport and healthy lifestyles; art and culture; use abandoned spaces which become positive community spaces. Child advisory council. System of early detection of problems including school drop-out. Addressing sexual abuse – have done training of teachers. Have different centres which work together to ensure “restitution of rights”. Positive results include: sustainability, management and coordination, flexibility etc.

Anne Lindhoe, Ombudsperson for children, Norway

Showed short video for children on the work, focussing on what to do in school or at home if you have problems; also explaining child rights and how children can participate themselves. National monitoring mechanism which oversees



protection of child rights. Gave examples of Ombudsperson initiatives to improve the experience for children in relation to health services, family counselling services; children's houses for vulnerable children.

Discussion:

Sumnima Tuladhar, Nepal: Issue of donors requiring their logo to be shown in the field so the focus is on priorities of the donor not the priorities of the local people and does not take account of child rights and "do no harm". Mike Wessells responded and emphasised the need for respect for local people and not arrogance of those coming in from outside. Marta Santos Pais suggested that this could lead to a recommendation to donors coming out of this meeting.

Bill Forbes, WV: follow up on same issue – how to go forward on this issue without imposing external methods and priorities? How do we get from where we are now to a new approach? Alex Butchart commented that reconciling evidence based and community bottom up approaches. Mike Wessells said that evidence can be collected systematically in the field; balance child rights and experience at community level. Importance of listening and learning. Marta- importance of documenting what is happening.

Strengthening partnerships to support CBCPMs

Session Moderator: Ms. Sheila Donovan, Child Helpline



Mr. Yakobus Theodorus Kolo, CBCPM Leader, Indonesia

Emphasised the importance of starting with a situation analysis. Include assessment in village development action plan. Thereafter they elect members of KPAD (the CBCPM). Process is facilitated by Plan but carried out by local people who brief and inform the local community about what kinds of violence are ongoing. Work together with community members to decide what to do. Awareness raising initiatives. Use local resources to protect children. Children

belong to the village and the village needs to protect them. Networking at sub-district and district level. Interested in the Global Partnership – need help at broader level - how to scale up to 74,000 villages?!

Susan Bissell, Head of the Global Child Protection Partnership and Fund

She was asked by the session moderator - how the Global Partnership Fund will secure support for CBCPMs within its earmarked budgets? How can CBCPM leaders contribute to the Global Partnership and reflect reality on the ground?

Global Partnership will help link local with national initiatives. Also provide information about private finance possibilities, they will also be looking at costing issues and how to cost different types of interventions. Susan said they have been consulting on the partnerships and more time is needed for this, she has asked the UNICEF leadership for more time for online and bilateral consultations. Also asked Indonesia to consider being a pilot country. Susan has only been working on this full-time for a week (she was Chief of Child Protection at Unicef

Headquarters before this). The partnership intends to engage extensively with faith based groups who often have extensive outreach at community level. Also, they are looking at how to engage young people in an effective way – referred to an organisation which has experience in India at local level.

Ms. Anna-Mochabi Mubukwanu-Sibanze; Senior Social Welfare Officer - Ministry of Community Development, Mother and Child Health; Department of Social Welfare, Zambia

The moderator asked how are partnerships formed to support CBCPMs in Zambia? Anna in turn asked the audience a number of questions about what areas they have worked in relating to child protection. Anna stated that programmes are driven better with government involvement. She said they work through different levels to reach the community – national, municipal, community. Zambia has just completed a health and well-being of children survey (avoided using the word violence). Different levels of technocrats at national level who local people can engage with and who will push initiatives forward. She then asked how important is collaboration amongst ministries, religious groups, civil society etc. in providing support to CBCPMs. Anna referred to document National Social Protection Policy. Also noted that a project with Plan was about to end and how could the work be taken forward. Also referring to negotiation with USAID about including rural areas in their funding which was originally confined to urban areas.

Mr. Bill Bell Child Protection Advisor – Global Save the Children

The moderator asked him to describe how Save works with partners to support CBCPMs. Bill said the whole practice of partnership is a difficult area; we have learned some lessons and are implementing learning in some areas. Referred to Mike Wessel's presentation on the ideal – a respectful collaboration – sometimes INGOs have not been as respectful as they should be nor always respectful of governments. If there are existing community groups then we should be working with them not creating groups. Local NGOs are a critical partner and help them support CBCPMs. Often INGOs do not coordinate enough. Also we do not work enough with governments to help them reach the community level. However we don't want to see the government co-opt or replace community based mechanisms – we want to create a partnership between the two, sometimes it might mean helping the CBCPM become part of the national system. Sometimes it might mean helping strengthen institutions – capacity building, support IT, supporting transport.

A whole range of partners need to be involved. INGOs need to help governments do what they want to do – that is our role to support then be able to pull out. The moderator asked what should INGO role be in Global Partnership – Bill said INGOs can work closely with UNICEF and others in the Pathfinder countries with govts and business etc. Also can assist with sharing learning.

The question about whether there is a contradiction between Global Partnership looking for quick wins and points that have been made about evidence base, slow process, not being donor driven etc. Susan said that quick wins would be difficult if we were starting from scratch – we are already in dialogue on this with number of countries where we can build on existing initiatives and learning.

Bills said that the issue of whether INGOs should be creating CBCPMs, that's a key question, we asked ourselves that a few years ago, now it's a bit late as we have been doing it. However we will see what comes out of the ILI initiative and evidence from Sierra Leone.

Question from Alex at WHO about partnership with the police. Zambia – key element of CP system. Indonesia representative said that the police are the partners of CBCPMs. Child sensitive reporting mechanism.

Uganda Prime Minister (of Tieng Adhola Cultural Institution -TACI) talked about planning from bottom-up, but CP issues are not coming out of requests to communities to prioritise their issues. So there is a need for capacity building.

Sumnina Taludhar (Nepal) – reflection on partnership. Sometimes INGOs do not respect partnerships with local NGOs. Then they ask about the sustainability – but the burden of this should not be on the local NGO who implements your programmes for 1-3 years.

Panel discussion 2

Strengthening CBCPMs to build safe communities and to prevent VAC: lessons learnt

Session Moderator: Mr. Rasa Sekulović – Plan International

Introduction by Rasa. Requested Marta Santos Pais to set ground for discussion. She highlighted 3 points from previous sessions:

- No single actor can address the issues in front of us, need collaboration and role of many different actors, work together people like police can be key in creating trust and making prevention possible
- Need shared values and a shared commitment and vision to achieve change. Competition is out of the question. No creating parallel initiatives.
- Unique possibility to take this all forward with the Sustainable Development Agenda. No longer is there the need to convince people – the opportunity is there now. More than 90 countries have a strong legislation relating to children. Despite the difficulties, there is much to build on. But even when we have the tools, the services are not yet well-placed to assist children and we have not yet found the way to strengthen these.



Ms Inga Marte Torkildsen, civil society representative /former Minister, Ministry of Children, Equality and Social inclusion

Hearing from young people from Norway supported by Inga Marte Torkildsen former Minister from Norway, part of project called Factory of Change. Facilitated in the form of an interview. Introduced themselves. She referred to three year project called My Life which involved young people. She talked about consultations with large number of young people to get feedback on CP system. Focus on lack of love in the child protection system – stone faced role of social workers etc. Now there is a committee of children which meets with Minister,

proposing a new child protection act for children by children. Includes proposals relating to love, behaviour, need to listen and ask questions of young people themselves, allow them to express themselves. If you just take away the behaviour, then they need another way to express themselves. Also stressed the importance of confidentiality – young people proposing that law should be changed to allow confidentiality. If you want to change children's lives, they need to be involved in any decision – it's their life.

Rasa invited comments or sharing of good practices in CP at community level. Sheila Donovan noting the role of child helplines. Some rare examples of peer counselling in child helplines – e.g. UK, Aruba. Importance of listening and of confidentiality, but also the responsibility to report if a child is actually at risk.

Patrick from Plan Uganda – involving children in their own protection against violence in schools - through anti-violence clubs in schools; children's courts in schools relating to violence, including advocates and run by children; need to make sure children do not misuse this power. Rasa noted that children have been extensively consulted in Nepal in relation to new legislation affecting them. Senait Gebregziabhen Country Director of Plan Bangladesh, referred to high rate of child marriage, youth groups campaigned against the reduction of age for marriage (govt had proposed to reduce from 18 to 16); collected signature of young people; adults wanted the change but not the children; with the support of international orgs now it seems that the govt is reconsidering keeping the age at 18. So the voice of the young people has been successful. Brechtje van Lith Plan Country Director for Dominican Republic – always include children in any structure we create – but sometimes then their safety can be at risk.

Mr. Ec. Francisco Carrión; Technical Secretary ; Consejo del Intergeneracional, Ecuador

Noted that we have to listen to the rights holders. We need to translate the rights into happiness. Violence rates in school and home have been reducing in Ecuador, particularly in relation to younger children. Highlighted legal provision in Ecuador related to child participation. Showed slides of integrated system for protection of rights. Mentioned community defense boards and systems for access to services. Multi-sector approach.

Ms. María Rosa Manobanda ; President of Committee on the Health, Equity, Gender and Rights
Gobierno Autónomo Descentralizado Parroquial Rural de Simiatug, Ecuador (*Overcoming non-
discrimination and gender stereotypes*)

On parish system for rights promotion and protection.
Presentation ppt. Mostly indigenous population with own traditions and customs. 7 out of 10 children suffer from forms of abuse. Showed system of community based child protection mechanism in 20 communities. Involves training front line volunteers who pass on the information. Validated as reps of community, link to local formal system. Wanted to thank Plan for giving her opportunity to be here as in our communities women do not have many rights. We have projects which encourage girls to express their feelings and be empowered through economic entrepreneurship activities.



Intervention from Turid Heiberg importance of listening to young people and role of Global Partnership in taking forward the issues raised.

Ms. Justa Mwaituka, Executive Director at Kiota Women Health and Development Organisation,
ECPAT (*Tanzania Traditional Practices*)

Traditional CBCPMs in Tanzania include local chiefs, clans etc. Often integrated into national CP system. Use community mechanism such as Most Vulnerable Children Committees to reach out to local communities. There are 132 tribes in Tanzania.

Dr. Karen Devries BSc PhD; Senior Lecturer in Social Epidemiology/researcher, London School
of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (*Children with Disabilities and Child Protection Research*)



Has just been engaged by Plan International to look at child protection relating to violence against children with disabilities. Presentation ppt. Most data related to children with disabilities is from high income countries. Children with disabilities are less likely to attend school, but most do. Has some data from Uganda - overall levels of violence are very high – nearly 100% - disabled children slightly more likely to experience violence. Schools intended to be the main field of intervention. Perpetrators of physical violence are often in school. Sexual

violence more likely outside school. So key to address violence in schools. Since 2012 have been testing the “Good School Toolkit” developed by a small Ugandan NGO Raising Voices – improve teaching techniques, increasing child participation, change to school culture, encouraging people to reflect on their power. Evaluation



of effectiveness of toolkit (given to some schools not others in sample) – found that schools with toolkit had reduced the violence in schools. Now Plan has asked us to see if this programme is accessible to children with disabilities, can they participate and benefit. So far it has been found that the intervention reduces violence across all groups, no statistical difference. So it seems that this toolkit is effective in reducing violence against children.

Ms. Agustina Erni Director for Violence Against Children Ministry of Women Empowerment and Child Protection, Indonesia

Stated that community based child protection is a new concept for us. Indonesia very diverse with 34 provinces and 17,499 islands! Noted the legal bases for community participation in child protection. Intend to develop a model in 4 provinces taking account of practices from Plan, UNICEF, WV, etc. in cooperation with Women Study Center, CSO and local government. Model to include establishing coordination mechanisms, guidelines on budgeting, and cartoon for disseminating successes. Referred to 280 CBCPMs supported by Plan International in Indonesia, want to scale up good practices.

Rasa summarised – importance of listening, need to collaborate, space for everyone to be involved, and importance of hope.

DAY 2 - Friday 4 September 2015

Summary points from day 1 (reflected later in the conclusion section of the report) were presented by Mary Robinson, Global Child Protection Services and Ms. Sumnima Tuladhar, Executive Coordinator, CWiN Nepal later asked participants to reflect on Day 1

Comments: Alex/WHO: collect evidence from communities around the world – what are they actually doing to protect children - most evidence so far has been collected by northern organisations from projects they are involved with.

Collaboration and participation: needs to be more than just coordination, we need a real partnership where organisations are not competing with each other.

Intervention from CONIDE, Niger: Importance of putting children at the centre and listening to them

TDH/ Look at challenges faced when working with CBCPMs. How far do we want community groups to be engaged in individual cases.

Southern Africa experience – importance of involving local people in advocacy – partnership in capacity building, empowering local people to speak out.

Costa Rica – challenge of how CBCPMs can operate in difficult contexts with organised crime. In CR which is a safe country we have started working with pregnant teenagers many of whom have got pregnant by drug barons, dangerous situation for community work. How can we interact with governmental systems to create safer environments.



Panel discussion 3

The role of the justice system, including informal justice and traditional conflict resolution mechanisms

Session Moderator: Ms Turid Heiberg, Head of the Unit for Children at Risk (CAR), Council of the Baltic Sea States –Secretariat



Recap from hearing young people yesterday - need to introduce other fundamentals to our discourse — need to stop the violence now; listen to us; respect confidentiality; involvement in taking decision, being informed about what is happening next.

Ms. Ann-Kristin Vervik, Expert Consultant, SRSG-VAC

There is a wide variety of justice mechanisms linked to child protection. Child justice is not just about juvenile offenders but is also about their rights when they are victims or witnesses, child protection in civil and administrative procedures. Stopping a child marriage. In many countries 80% of issues will be resolved through informal justice systems. Mapping of informal justice systems done by UNICEF, UNWOMEN and UNDP. Carrying out mediation and restorative justice may often be done by CBCPMs. It's important to get more guidance on how formal and informal justice systems can complement to safeguard the rights of the child and ensure their access to justice.

Mr. Desmond Mhango; Vice Chairperson for Southern Africa Child Protection Network Southern Africa

Many ethnic groups in Southern Africa. Formal judicial system is shared amongst the countries – which have adopted similar laws. Informal justice was based around the welfare of the child – the child has made a mistake and needs to be corrected. Today things are changing, more children are vulnerable to committing offences, formal justice systems built around commitments to CRC and ACRWC – but in practice countries do not really comply with these standards and guidelines.

Mr. Bill Forbes, Director, Child Protection, Child Development and Rights Team, World Vision International

Interplay between formal and informal justice systems. Drawing on a 4- country study looking a CP theory of change, and study of most vulnerable children. Working out roles and responsibilities of informal and formal systems – e.g. of Indonesia, conversation about values; traditional leaders focussed on harmony; religious leaders around morality; government statutory requirements relating to crime and security. See what could agree on - led to a formalised agreement. Local byelaws can also be effective – local leaders work out together what can be done locally based on national law – what can we do here, what will be enforced here. Bringing cultural practices into play – developed of a local alert mechanism e.g. if a child has disappeared or a planned child sacrifice, the child is saved due to alert by local drumming; mother being bribed to retract her testimony but community CP people (in this case a church) came to her and said we don't do this anymore – they would walk with her to pursue justice for the perpetrator. After question from TH – what is role of faith leaders and organisations – WV works with Christian and Muslim leaders to collaborate and determine roles at local level.

Mr. Alberto Padilla ; Head of Department of Policies and Regulations; National Council for Children and Adolescents, Government of Dominican Republic

Described links between formal and traditional/alternative justice systems. For local people the formal justice system is about power – issues don't go to court as seen as too complicated and long. However in alternative justice, if violence not see as too severe then people gradually forget about it. Alternative justice is more direct and immediate – based on dialogue and mediation, focussed on avoiding repetition. Community always interested in issues to do with children. Described creation of local boards and participatory process. Brechtje van Lith CD of Plan described creation and strengthening community networks on CP in border region of DR while capacity building of local municipal boards for good connections and interaction. Project has now finished although Plan is still working in the community.

Panel discussion 4

Social mobilization, communications and public engagement to support CBCPMs

Session Moderator: Mr. Bill Bell, Save the Children



Ms. Aissatou Alassane Moulaye Sdikou ; Head of Child Protection Unit at Ministry of Social Affairs; Chair of African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child ; Government of Niger (system of community protection of children in Niger)

2008 situation analysis. National mapping 2010. Pilot project on CBCP put in place with 3 NGOs supported by UNICEF. Working with local communities looking in depth at traditional practices. (NB this project is described in the

mapping study by Plan WARO – field visit to Niger).

Mr. Roland Angerer: Regional Director: Region of East and South Africa, Plan International

Examples from E Africa. Showed slide of *bodaboda* taxis – often driven by young boys, community see as a threat as bad reputation including as perpetrators of sexual violence. Met with drivers, formed an association, had CP training, came up with code of conduct. Now ambassadors for CP – looking out for any CP issues in the community. Get training from government appointed community volunteers. Secondly described Virugu Mapper info system from Kenya, reporting by cell phone.

Dr. Rinchen Chopel, Director General South Asia Initiative to End Violence against Children (SAIEVAC); South Asia

Regional initiative to bring together people working together on violence against children. Started 2000. Described history and challenges of working with governments and UN system, and institutional mechanisms. Working on 5 main forms of violence such as child marriage, etc. A regional organisation with good intergovernmental contacts. Good participation of NGOs and of children.

Ms. Sumnima Tuladhar, Executive Coordinator, CWiN Nepal,

Highlighting examples of children taking control of their lives. Child clubs located in villages, making voices louder. CWiN works with government structures and with children. Run child helplines, take on challenging issues. Children promote their rights through creative means – art, drama, on their own initiatives and ownership. Teachers now convinced to be facilitators of child clubs; children part of school management committees. Take up issues with families, e.g. relating to planned child marriages. Good example of children's leadership at community level.



Senior Chief Kachindamoto from Malawi

Chief since 2003, overseeing leaders of 51 communities. Strongly encouraging women as chiefs. Duty to promote peace and security in her area including use of community byelaws. Encourages young mothers to go back to school and complete education. Mobilised communities to fight against child marriage. Initiated system of checks to ensure that girls are over 18 if they are to marry – there has to be a check by community leader as well as religious leader. Also working to ensure that girl can go back to school even if she gets pregnant and has a child. Sees her role as spearheading change in the communities she is responsible for and called for support from the international community.

Discussion:

Tanzania – asking more about Virugu mapper system. Also talking about compensation for victims through the justice system. RA said Virugu mapper is only a part of the whole system, in a pilot stage.

Ecuador – Maria Rosa – question relating to Asia – we share some realities but we don't have the same laws. Question what is the difference between the community and the village? Reply from Nepal – yes, we have so many laws; a village is a geographical unit, whereas the community is one where people from different walks of life live together and there are systems which bring people together. BB said we should come back to the issue of what is a community this afternoon.

Question from Samuel Musyoki, Plan Zambia, about whether informal justice is a threat to children's justice. How can formal laws enforce justice but keep positive aspects of informal justice mechanisms.

Break-out groups

Reflection on good CBCPM practices from different countries

Addressing violence at family level. Presentation by Mirela – ppt. Described example of “door to door “ campaign leading to a decline in child involvement in tobacco industry. Neighbourhood cell – Uganda, girls dropping out of school. Indonesia – reaching out to families. Other examples – get Mirela's presentation.

Addressing violence in schools. Presentation by Barbara, SOS. Importance of training at every level. When violence is banned in school then other systems can come into play – zero tolerance is essential. Examples of anonymous reporting mechanisms – but in fact sometimes there was nowhere for these to go and there were examples of teachers breaking into box first and seeing complaint. Child rights clubs with links to crime prevention processes.

Group on community setting (facilitated by Mary R). Presentation done by Samuel (Zambia) with ppt.



Group on Sustainability Devt Goals agenda.

Looked at critical policy questions and how use lessons learned at community level to inform dialogue with governments. Discussion about how to connect different levels, what are asks from the governments – this still needs to be followed up to clarify. Then discussed collaboration, common agenda for both civil

society and government. Great intention to work together but difficult in practice – reality in which different agencies are funded by different donors so that may put us in competition. Action point – need to engage donors better. Also focussed on how SDG targets on violence can be monitored at community level. SD goals are not yet well known – need dissemination. Discussed data for monitoring violence against children – there is data being collected by govt and NGOs that could be better utilised – eg SOS hotline data. Important for civil society to hold govts accountable for implementation of SDGs and we all need to support monitoring and data collection at community level. Innovative ways of collecting data via internet.

[Group work - good practices](#)

Questions/discussion

Underlined importance of cooperation between govts, NGOs and communities (Bjorn Bredesen). Framework is CRC. Monitoring and audit systems key.

Moderator/ Key is linking from bottom to top. What are the similar issues highlighted between the four groups? A number of responses were given. Participation. Partnership. Governments to come in more deeply – suggested neighbourhood watch. Research and evidence. Ownership by community. Use of IT. Norms. Scaling up the rich experience. Sustainability.

Moussa Sidikou – what is role of culture? Role of the artist?

Nancy – children's views on justice. Is punishment always justice?

Presentation of Plan's study and Launch of the Global Practice Guidelines

By Ms. Nidhi Pundhir, Global Advisor, Child Protection in Development, Plan International



Global synthesis of mapping exercises and Community Action for Child Protection. Mapping covers all regions – Asia, Africa and Americas. Put together key lessons. Presented some elements from Global Synthesis – showed action cycle and went through it. In relation to Community Action for Child Protection, Nidhi presented the principles, then the eight criteria for good practice. Documents distributed – also on [Plan website](#)



Key conclusions

Themes that emerged during several deliberations were:

- a. **Child participation** including listening to children and young people came through very strongly. Moving input from two young people from Norway who were very courageous in coming long to give their experience. This highlighted the need for respect, listening, confidentiality and proper engagement
- b. **Child rights:** importance of link to CRC. We were reminded of the important monitoring role provided by ombudspersons and similar roles.
- c. **Good parenting and family support** are keystones of child protection.

- d. **Community ownership:** laws and systems are important, but the real work is with communities and families. We were reminded of the research from 2009 which identified seven factors for effective mechanisms is community ownership being the most important one.
- e. **Traditionally based child protection mechanisms** – based on verbally communicated traditions and beliefs are handed down over generations. Initiatives that ignore these will not be effective. This was a strong message from Uganda, also examples provided from Tanzania.
- f. **Partnership and collaboration:** needed at all levels; with governments; stressed by many speakers; multi-sectoral approach important; also agencies such as the police; no single actor can achieve change alone; engage together; should not have parallel initiatives; importance of walking together not alone.
- g. **Evidence base:** this is vital and much more is needed. We had interesting presentations from WHO and the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. It was noted that some interventions which are quoted as “good practice” are not supported by evidence.
- h. **Justice mechanisms:** Informal justice mechanisms could play a vital role. It is important to understand the interplay between formal and informal justice mechanisms.
- i. **Learning:** linked to the above, essential to document what we are doing, what works, what are the challenges. Learning and sharing together is the way forward (easier said than done).

Opportunities

- a. **Sustainable Development Goals:** this is a key moment when the SDGs to 2030 have been established, with planned adoption by the UN later in September. There is the chance to be part of implementing these and to have the support and commitment of the UN and states.
- b. **10th Anniversary of the UN VAC study:** this will be next year (2016). Much progress has been made but there is much still to do. Opportunity to review, take stock and enter a new phase of action
- c. **Global Child Protection Fund Partnership** is to be launched to end Violence Against Children. Methodology: Inclusive, Results, Transparency, Learning. Focus on measurable reductions in violence to create political will for greater prevention and response.
- d. **Many governments are committed to addressing violence and against children.** Examples were given, such as Indonesia requiring every municipality to establish CBCPMs; and a request for ongoing support from Zambia.

Challenges

- a. **Implementation still inadequate** despite laws in many countries incorporating the CRC etc. Governments are responsible for child protection, but need support
- b. **Limited resources and funding** – as usual; however there may be new ways to be found through the Global Partnership
- c. **Community ownership** of CBCPMs is still a challenge
- d. **Donor led and INGO led priorities** and requirements which can be in conflict with local priorities and child rights/ “do no harm”.
- e. **Poor coordination**, including between INGOs
- f. **Reconciling community, bottom up initiatives and evidence-based approaches** – this need not be in conflict but require long-term efforts not quick fixes

Challenge for this meeting: how to go forward with a new approach, which really takes account of evidence about what is effective and supports community-led approaches linked to national government child protection systems.

Key reflections by participants

Moderated by Dr. Mike Wessells

- Would like this type of meeting more often for sharing information. Need to consider the rights holders.
- Continue all our efforts to change situation of our children.
- Need strengthened alliances between NGOs and communities
- Child is the future. Collective responsibility to protect them, including proper planning and budgeting.
- Need to remind and support each other to continue the action back home
- Collaboration to ensure best practice – how to ensure this
- Looking at effectiveness of our work. Government ultimately needs to take the lead
- Remember also regional organisations. Policy and services are duty of the state.
- How do we tap rich traditions and experiences for the protection of children
- Excited by hearing about creative practice, opportunity to do more on evidence collection and getting information from children about how they have experienced services and initiatives
- We have known what makes effective CBCPMs since 2009 – need the next stage of evidence. Hope this is the start of better info sharing between key agencies. Need for some pilot projects to engage in depth with traditional mechanisms
- Solidarity needed
- Need support for state interventions. Key roles for children needed.
- Much progress on working with governments on CBCPMs
- Very exciting to meet all people from all over the world – all for child protection, will go back to his village to report back
- Very encouraging that there is an appetite to work together
- Realised that CBCP is complicated – need to work together
- Importance of human rights and considering relevance of CBCPMs to urban areas
- Child participation vital and more work needed
- Work more strongly with donors
- Thanks for Plan for taking lead, hope to now proceed together
- Need to include religious leaders and wider sectors
- Need for advocacy at high level to support work at community level
- Evaluation challenge – suggest delivering five outcome evaluations such as door to door, peer mediation, neighbourhood watch
- Cross sectoral work key
- General agreement on successful and fruitful event
- Could there be a contradiction between CBCPMs and governments' HR obligations?
- Suggest follow-up meeting in South Asia next year so that S Asia can benefit from the exciting discussions
- Activism for equality is needed in spirit of partnership not competing for resources
- Lack of interpretation into/from French impeded some communication
- Importance of involving children and young people (eg those from Norway yesterday)
- Financing is needed for micro-projects to take all this forward
- Analogy to glassworks where we went last night: beautiful products require a long haul approach and work in teams

- Empowerment and ownership – sometimes communities are empowered more than they would like – we need to shift to allowing communities to lead the way with our support. Shift focus onto strengthening local accessible CP services. In any future meeting CBCPM leaders should take the front seat
- Plan works in partnership with civil society – need shared understanding and continued reflections. Should not impose ideas
- Change is happening and good practices coming out; glad to have report and guidelines, now need to build evidence
- Meeting has been a great success with active participation. Would like to emphasise positive parenting and child participation
- Very impressed by chief from Malawi who took initiatives to stop child marriage
- Protection of children from violence is everyone's responsibility
- 3 C's: Convergence, Collaboration and Coming Together. Need to move more towards a movement
- Centre of our work is the community – Maria Rosa has reminded us of this.
- More power to the communities; a bottom-up approach is needed to respect child rights.



Closing; strategic follow-up of the expert consultation

By Marta Santos Pais Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General on Violence against Children UN

- A thematic report is planned as a follow-up to this meeting. Will be collecting documents from all agencies and put on website – please send information
- The UN Habitat III conference will take place in October 2016 on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development. Opportunity to take the thematic report and input information on safer communities
- 10th Anniversary of the UN VAC study is in 2016. MSP requested help in generating a process of review, discussion and reflection including children. This will coincide with the beginning of the development of the Sustainable Development agenda and Global Child Protection Fund Partnership. All countries should be Pathfinder countries! – requested to support this.

Roland Angerer gave vote of thanks. Noted that 33 nationalities represented at the meeting. Requested all participants to say thank you in their native language and there were thank yous in many languages.



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