

Save the Children Sweden



Regional Workshop May 9-12th, 2011 Amman, Jordan

Protecting the rights of Palestinian children affected by armed conflicts through community-based mechanism in the Gaza Strip and North Lebanon.



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Save the Children

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The picture was taken as part of a Child led advocacy campaign organised by Save the Children Sweden and the Palestinian Centre for Democracy and Conflict Resolution, 60 children from all over the Gaza Strip brainstormed and decided to address their campaign towards the hazardous forms of child labour in Gaza.

Our Vision

Save the Children's vision is a world in which every child attains the right to survival, protection, development and participation.

Our Mission

Save the Children's mission is to inspire breakthroughs in the way the world treats children, and to achieve immediate and lasting change in their lives.

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BACKGROUND INFORMATION

BC	BEDDAWI CAMP
CAAC	CHILDREN AFFECTED BY ARMED CONFLICT
CBO	COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATION
CC	CHILDREN'S COMMITTEE
CFC	CHILD FRIENDLY CENTRE
CPC	CHILD PROTECTION COMMITTEES
CPIE	CHILD PROTECTION IN EMERGENCY
CPN	CHILD PROTECTION NETWORK
CRV	CHILDREN'S RIGHTS VIOLATIONS
CRG	CHILD RIGHTS GOVERNANCE
CSA	CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE
FC	FAMILY CENTERS
GS	GAZA STRIP
HR	HUMAN RIGHTS
IBCR	INTERNATIONAL BUREAU FOR CHILDREN'S RIGHTS
IDP	INTERNALLY DISPLACED PEOPLE
LAF	LEBANESE ARMED FORCES
MENA	MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

MRM	MONITORING AND REPORTING MECHANISM
NBC	NAHER EL BARED CAMP
NCPSM	NATIONAL CHILD PROTECTION SYSTEMS AND MECHANISMS
NGO	NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION
OCHA	UNITED NATIONS OFFICE FOR THE COORDINATION OF HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS
OPT	OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORY
PTSD	POST TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER
SCS	SAVE THE CHILDREN SWEDEN
UN CRC	UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION OF THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD
UNHCR	UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSION FOR REFUGEES
UNICEF	UNITED NATIONS CHILDREN'S FUND
UNRWA	UNITED NATIONS RELIEF AND WORKS AGENCY FOR PALESTINE REFUGEES
UNSCR 1612	UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 1612
UPEL	UNION FOR PROTECTION CHILDHOOD IN LEBANON
WG	WORKING GROUP

This report documents the proceedings that took place over the course of a four-day workshop from May 9-12th of 2011 in Amman, Jordan. It describes the best practices developed by the workshop's participants, which address protection needs of children living in conflict-affected areas in addition to listing the recommendations developed by the different working groups. The report aims at strengthening regional information sharing and coordination for a more effective and comprehensive approach to child protection issues in the MENA region. This report will be disseminated amongst important stakeholders and different civil society organizations, particularly targeting organizations working on child protection in the MENA region and other regional child protection networks and forums.

The workshop was part of a two year project funded by the European Commission, entitled "Protecting the rights of Palestinian children affected by armed conflicts through community-based mechanism in the Gaza Strip and North Lebanon". Through this workshop the project aimed at developing a regional knowledge hub for community-based approaches for the protection of Children Affected by Armed Conflict (CAAC), setting seeds for networking among and the collaboration between civil society organizations. The workshop gathered various organizations, mostly from Save the Children, civil societies and other key stakeholders in the Middle East, that work with children in armed conflict and operating in different countries such as: the occupied Palestinian territory (OPT), Lebanon, Iraq, Yemen, Canada, Sweden, and Jordan. The participants were able to share experiences and lessons learned regarding children in armed conflict concentrating on the following topics: community-based child protection mechanisms in the context of armed conflict, monitoring and reporting mechanisms on child rights violations, communication and advocacy interventions.

The workshop consisted of games, activities, presentations and gallery walks. Each country described the violations taking place in their territories and the actions taken for the protection of the children at community level. In addition, each party shared the positive and negative outcomes of their monitoring and reporting mechanisms, as well as their advocacy and communication activities, which included child-led advocacy.

Children take part in recreational activities provided at one of the Child Friendly Centres in Gaza



THE PROJECT

In 2006, children in Gaza were facing a number of different kinds of violations. As a result, Save the Children Sweden (SCS) identified the need to begin working in Gaza as an independent initiative and respond urgently to incidents of violence against children. SCS worked with a local partner, who, in turn, brought together another twenty-one organizations. However, SCS' work was not limited to Gaza. Due to the conflict that took place in the Palestinian refugee camp Nahr Al Bared in Lebanon in 2007, SCS also sought to begin working on Child Protection in Emergency in that camp in the same year. Similar work was also initiated in Baddawi camp in Lebanon in 2007.

In May 2009 SCS and its four partners - Palestinian Centre for Democracy and Conflict Resolution (PCDCR), Nabaa (Developmental Action Without Borders), Ghassan Kanafani Cultural Foundation (GKCF) and Community Based Rehabilitation Association (CBRA) began the implementation of a two-year project funded by the European Commission, entitled "Protecting the rights of Palestinian children affected by armed conflicts through community-based mechanism in the Gaza Strip and North Lebanon". The project is implemented in the Gaza Strip and Nahr El Bared (NBC) and Beddawi Palestinian camps in north Lebanon. The principal objective of the project was to provide improved protection of the rights of Palestinian children affected by conflict through community based mechanism in Gaza Strip (GS) and Nahr El Bared (NBC) and Beddawi Camps (BC) in North Lebanon. Specific objectives of the project include: addressing short, medium and long term educational and psycho-social impacts of armed conflict on children and related rights violations, improving the capacity of two Child Protection Networks (CPNs) and the involved Community-Based Organizations (CBOs)/ Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) to identify and address child rights issues in better integrated and

effective programs, strengthening rights based advocacy work of CBOs and finally promoting the regional learning of child rights-based work by stakeholders with Palestinian children affected by armed conflicts. There were seven direct results for this project. First, enhancing the resilience, coping strategies and cognitive skills of up to 6,550 boys and girls aged 6-12 in GS. Second, strengthening the parenthood skills and capacity to respond to the needs of conflict affected children. Third, increasing the public authorities' awareness and accountability of children's rights, particularly those affected by armed conflicts. Fourth, establishing an operational referral system in GS through service providing NGOs and institutions, targeting children affected by armed conflicts. Fifth, improving/developing skills of targeted Community-Based Organizations-CBO/Non-Governmental Organizations-NGO in child protection programming and to provide education, psychosocial and counseling support to children most affected by armed conflicts. Sixth, increasing skill of targeted CBOs/NGOs to document and monitor child rights violations according to the UN CRC and UN SC Resolution 1612 within their respective communities. And finally, The Child Protection Networks have identified, shared and developed good practices for the protection of children affected by armed conflict.

THE WORKSHOP

The project aimed at developing a regional knowledge on Community based approach to protection of Children Affected by Armed Conflict, setting seeds for networking and coordination of civil society organizations with a child rights-based approach. Accordingly, the 2 Child Protection Networks in the Gaza Strip and North Lebanon directly involved in the project in addition to actors from Save the Children, civil society and other key actors in the Middle East met in Jordan to identify

practices in the field of children affected by armed conflict with a community based approach. All participants of the workshop were able to learn about different approaches and methodologies in child protection in addition to receiving capacity building on the international norms, resolutions and standards related to the protection and promotion of children's rights in the context of armed conflict. The lessons learned and recommendations identified by the participants during the workshop are documented in this report.

The workshop goals were to:

- Reflect on and discuss children affected by armed conflict from a local and regional perspective (Yemen, Lebanon, Iraq and oPt)
- Present the results of the EC funded project and other implemented projects in the Middle East and identify best practices:
 - o Sharing experiences, challenges, success stories and lessons learned on community based mechanisms, monitoring and reporting mechanisms, advocacy and communication activities
 - o Developing greater understanding of the different UNSCR 1612 projects implemented and formulating principles of best practice for further dissemination
- Providing an environment for interaction, sharing of information and resources, and the development of collaborative efforts
- Bringing to light issues of cultural sensitivity, applicability and relevance
- Bridging advocacy and communication including child-led advocacy with successful project implementation



Representatives of the Child Protection Network in Lebanon present their work on Children Affected by Armed Conflict in Lebanon



09-10

Participants in the workshop included key partners and staff working in Child Protection from all over the Middle East and North Africa region



THE PARTICIPANTS

- The Project's implementing partners and representative members of the CPNs in the Gaza Strip and North Lebanon
- Program and Management staff from Save the Children Head Office, Regional office and Yemen, Jordan, oPt, Lebanon and Iraq country offices
- Key partners in the above mentioned countries implementing community based child protection
- United Nations International Children's Fund (UNICEF) and United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)
- International Bureau for Children's Rights (IBCR)

In what follows, the workshop is outlined and briefly explained. Further on, the report describes the different activities and projects implemented in the MENA region, especially in Gaza, Lebanon, Yemen, & Iraq. Presentations from different countries covered the following topics: community-based child protection mechanisms, monitoring and reporting mechanisms, communication activities and materials developed locally and regionally and finally the advocacy activities at local, regional and international levels. For each topic, the lessons learned and recommendations developed by the participants are outlined. Finally the background to the project is explained.

Community-Based Children Protection Mechanism In The Context Of Armed Conflict

Children from Nahr el Bared and Beddawi Camps take part in a training on child-led advocacy as part of the project



A. COUNTRY PRESENTATIONS

The community based CP mechanism in north Lebanon Background

The Child Protection Network (CPN) mainly works in North Lebanon in Nahr Al Bared Camp (NBC) and the Beddawi Camp (BC). NBC and BC are situated in the northern part of the country, 15 km and 5 km away from Tripoli. The two camps were established in 1948 following the mass exodus of Palestinians from their country mainly to Jordan, Lebanon and Syria. NBC was more economically established with agricultural fields and factories running until May 2007.

The situation in Lebanon has been, and continues to be complicated showing internal strife, political discord, religious persecution, and failure to achieve democratic reforms. This situation has spilled over to affect the Palestinian refugees in Lebanon limiting their rights and freedoms. On 20 May 2007, NBC was destroyed and its adjacent areas heavily damaged after a 105-day battle between the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) and the Islamist militant group Fateh Al Islam. The battle and resulting mass destruction of NBC led to the displacement of approximately 30,000 Palestinians and Lebanese civilians who were forced to evacuate NBC. The majority of displaced sought temporary shelter in the neighboring Beddawi Camp (BC). In BC, families were hosted in schools, mosques, kindergartens and with host families which put a serious strain on both the infrastructure of BC and the goodwill of the BC population. To this day only 15,000 displaced people have been allowed by the LAF to return to NBC in temporary shelters located on the outskirts of the camp. Nevertheless, the displacement first and return after, have has a strong negative effect on the wellbeing of children and their families. Poverty and unemployment rates have alarmingly in-

creased, as well as domestic violence and the number of children suffering from post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Furthermore, since then the LAF have taken charge of the security around the camp and are responsible for issuing permits to residents of NBC camp as well as to other external actors involved in the humanitarian response and other activities. The internal security control remains with the Palestinian popular and security committees.

Save the Children Sweden (SCS) started working in Nahr El Bared and Beddawi during the 2007 emergency. Through a network of local organizations from the two camps but working in Beddawi, a child protection mechanism was put in place, which is responsible for detecting children at risk or victims of different forms of violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation, providing them with adequate response such as psychosocial response, referral to mental health care and material support. The involved organizations also contributed to the setup of a database of cases of child abuse and violence. Furthermore, SCS supported the establishment of a coordination group involving all International and National Governmental Organizations and UN agencies involved in the protection response to children displaced from their homes. This coordination group, which also involved all SCS partners, contributed to providing a holistic and well-coordinated response to children's protection needs. One year after, this coordination group became the so called Child Protection Network (CPN), composed of 12 local organizations in addition to UNRWA as an observing member. SCS continues to support the work of the CPN and the activities implemented by its members until this day.

The community based CP mechanism

Through the “Protecting the rights of Palestinian children affected by armed conflicts through community-based mechanism in the Gaza Strip and North Lebanon” project, a community based child protection mechanism was established in NBC/BC to respond to children at risk or survivors of violence, neglect, abuse and exploitation.

Members of the CPN provide direct services to affected children and those at risk, e.g. boys and girls in need of psychosocial support, children with physical disabilities and learning difficulties, pre-school aged children and children in need of school tuition living in the new temporary shelters and overcrowded areas of the two refugee camps. Targeted children are identified as being at risk or as victims of domestic violence, discrimination (in the family or school environment), neglect, sexual abuse and a great amount of psychological stress are therefore in need of psychosocial support.

Detection of children in need of services provided by the CPN is done through:

- Family visits carried out by social workers from each organization
- School teachers
- Educators implementing extracurricular activities
- Other organizations operating in the two camps and referred to the members of the CPN
- Families approaching the members of the CPN

Members of the CPN carried out early intervention and family support activities for children identified as being at risk or victims of violence, neglect and abuse. These consisted of psychosocial activities with children, family visits for parenting support in cases of domestic violence and neglect and school

visits if children are considered at risk of neglect and discrimination in the school environment.

Response actions addressed child victims of violence. In this case the services provided are:

- Counseling with the child and the family and psychological therapy;
- Referrals to other professionals providing mental health care;
- Referral to the other members of the CPN for a holistic response;
- School tuition and educational support for children not performing well at school;
- Support within the school setting through mediation with teachers and other students.

With regards to preventive actions, the members of the CPN organized a series of regular events for the community such as festivals, contests and community awareness raising meetings all focusing on CP issues related to children affected by armed conflict. The scope of these events was to provide children and their parents with quality time and establish a link between the members of the CPN and parents and children not attending the regular activities. Through these events the CPN members are able to further support these families with their problems. Furthermore, such events have increased the visibility of the regular activities undertaken by the members of the CPN and of the network itself. It is important to note that members of the CPN carried out case management for the children in need. Documentation forms, assessment and progress reports of each case are confidentially kept in the office of each organization. When certain cases are in need of a more holistic intervention, they are then further discussed within the CPN and referred to other members in the network or outside of it (if the service needed is not provided by any of the CPN members) for intervention.

Challenges

Several factors have hindered the work of the members of the CPN. Below are some of those factors:

1. Lack of national and/or international duty-bearers with a protection mandate.

UNRWA is the main UN body entrusted to provide humanitarian assistance to Palestinians in Lebanon and other countries in the MENA region, although it does not have any protection mandate. According to international law the Lebanese government is in charge of the protection of children within its territory. National legislation regulating protection of children from violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation is limited in Lebanon to the law known as Law 422; this law mainly addresses children in conflict with the law and provides only limited provisions for the protection of child victims of violence and child witnesses of crimes. The Union for Protecting Childhood in Lebanon (UPEL) is the agency entrusted by the Lebanese Government to provide a response for children in contact with the law. However, the lack of access by the Lebanese police to the camps and the limited resources of UPEL have been obstacles to ensure legal protection to Palestinian children in NBC/BC. Individuals are left alone to ensure the protection of their children; civil society organizations have taken a leading role in this but they are facing serious difficulties. In the camps the influence from religious and political groups is very strong on the existing NGOs/CBOs. Daily, civil society organizations are attacked by these influential members in the community and accused of challenging religious traditions and political powers when organizing activities for boys and girls together, when denouncing cases of sexual abuse and when denouncing cases of domestic violence or abuse of psychotropic substances by

children and care-givers. In the camps there is simply no official mechanism to ensure the protection of the child victim of violence or abuse.

2. Security and economic condition of families living in NBC/BC.

NBC/BC are the only Palestinian camps in Lebanon where internal security is the responsibility of the Lebanese Armed Forces. These forces are in charge of issuing permits to enter the camp for the residents and others (including humanitarian agencies), and to ensure the enforcement of the Lebanese laws within the camps. Such security measures have resulted in limiting freedom of movement for many residents and former residents as well as limiting opportunities for economic growth of the camp. NBC remains only partially reconstructed with a small minority of its residents living in homes and others living in temporary shelters which are overcrowded and do not respect adequate standards of hygiene. While security and economic growth are not restored, any action to prevent violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect will remain unsuccessful.

3. UNRWA schools do not provide quality education and access to all children.

During the destruction of the camp, the schools established by UNRWA were heavily damaged. Today the schools are established in pre-fabricated compounds without access facilities for children with physical disabilities. The educational environment is not enabling and teachers face severe challenges in managing the classrooms. Educational tools are missing, the physical environment is not appropriate and many children express behavioral problems due to their problematic living conditions. In order to ensure a full recovery for affected children, co-operation with the education sector is essential.

4. Limited participation of fathers in the CP prevention and response services offered.

Few fathers were involved in the prevention and response actions implemented by the project and the members of the CPN. Socially it is believed that children's psychosocial wellbeing is the responsibility of mothers while the decision-making on important issues belongs mainly to the father.

The Community Based approach to CP in Gaza Strip

Children participate in recreational activities at a Child Friendly Centre in the Gaza Strip



Background

Over 1.5 million Palestinians live in Gaza. Over 55% of the population are children under the age of 18. Since September 2000 and the beginning of the second Intifada, children living in Gaza have been constantly exposed to an intensifying conflict characterized by internal divisions and tensions. 1,346 children have died in the occupied Palestinian Territory (oPt), of which 985 were from the Gaza Strip (GS), due to clashes, air ground attacks, assassination attempts, random gun fire, unexploded ordnance and home demolitions. Over 20,000 children have been injured, and 1,500 are permanently disabled. Furthermore, restrictions to movement of people and goods imposed by Israel since June 14th 2007 through the total closure of all access points in GS, have heavily affected the whole population, aggravating socio-economic conditions, preventing access to services and marginalizing rural communities. The World Bank reports that there has been an increase in chronic disease and malnutrition among children less than five years. Studies further show an increase in children suffering from diarrhea, insomnia and anxiety.

SCS and PCDCR have worked together in the GS since 2006, setting up community based structures to prevent and respond to CP. Between 2006 and 2008 three Child Protection Committees (CPC) were established in the south of GS, targeting the areas most affected by the conflict: al Shoka, Qarara and Khoza'a. The CPCs were elected by community members in the three targeted areas. They include influential members of the community such as teachers, doctors, religious leaders, mukhtars, representatives of Community Based Organizations (CBOs) and NGOs, police officers and others. The committees are in charge of managing and supervising awareness raising activities implemented through volunteers, being the focal

points for parents asking for support and referring them to counselors or to other subcommittees. A number of sub-committees have been organized, including the school sub-committee in charge of liaising the work of the CPC and schools, the fathers sub-committee in charge of ensuring the involvement of fathers in the response plan for their children and mediating problems between fathers and children or between spouses and the emergency preparedness sub-committee responsible to develop a community emergency preparedness plan and follow up with this. Through PCDCR, counselors have been deployed in the communities providing their services twice or three times per week in the available CBOs. Furthermore, PCDCR trained volunteers in each location who are responsible for carrying out capacity building sessions with children and parents, focusing on topics such as how to recognize abuse, violence, neglect and exploitation and how to protect themselves, child development and behavioral problems caused by stressful events, and conflict resolution. Finally, a referral mechanism to health, mental health and legal service providers has been established.

During the same time, SCS and PCDCR established a Child Protection Network CPN of 21 NGOs and CBOs from all over the Gaza Strip. The scope of the CPN is to advocate together for the protection rights of children in the GS, addressing governmental authorities, key decision makers within the community, international bodies and community members.

The Community Based approach to Child Protection

In 2009, following Israel's Operation Cast Lead in the GS, SCS along with UNICEF and five other NGOs established 20 Family Centres (FCs) across the GS, within the premises of the CPN members. The FCs serve as information points for families seeking support for their children, providing services such as psychosocial activities, counseling, school tuition support and health awareness raising sessions for parents. Furthermore, the FCs are formally linked to a network of organizations and governmental service providers throughout the territory to initiate referrals of children in need of professional care. The CPC in Qarara and Khoza became a model to be duplicated in each location where a FC is established with the specific scope of ensuring community endorsement of the FC and participation. The CPC in Al Shoka stopped working due to internal political rivalries. Through the "Protecting the rights of Palestinian children affected by armed conflicts through community-based mechanism in the Gaza Strip and North Lebanon" SCS and PCDCR agreed to establish Child Friendly Centres (CFC) in 7 locations in Gaza most affected by ongoing military operations. The CFCs provide educational and psychosocial support to a small group of children in need of long-term support to overcome the distress caused by the conflict. Each CFC welcomed 30 to 35 boys and girls between 7 to 10 years old and their families over the last two years. A team of two teachers and two counselors were available in each CFC.

The detection of children involved personnel of the CBOs hosting the CFCs, the teachers and counselors of the CFC and teachers and counselors from governmental and UNRWA schools.

The CFCs provided daily educational and psychosocial activities for children (5 days a week), home visits and parenting support (twice a week).

When a child is accepted in the CFC an initial assessment is carried out and a long-term rehabilitation plan is developed. This plan is revised on a monthly basis by the CFC team supervised by PCDCR; the rehabilitation plan addresses not only the child but also the family. Severe cases such as survivors of sexual abuse are discussed with PCDCR's psychologist. The progress achieved is discussed regularly with the child's teachers and parents. Children phase out of the program once the objectives set in the rehabilitation plan are achieved and a "graduation" ceremony is organized for the child.

The CFCs are linked to the Family Centres. Children detected by the FC and in need of the service provided by the CFCs are referred to it, and, children detected by the CFCs and in need of professional care such as mental health, health care and legal protection are also referred to the FC. To facilitate the coordination between the CFCs and the FCs, the two were using the same documentation format and coding system.

To ensure a stronger participation in and acceptance of the CFCs by the community, monthly "Fun Days" were organized in cooperation with other civil society actors, each contributing through specific activities such as theatre or puppet shows and awareness-raising sessions on specific topics such as health and nutrition. Families also contributed to the Fun Days by bringing food and drinks to share with the other participants.

Challenges

1. Low level of coordination between CP actors leading to duplication of services especially in the field of psychosocial support;
2. Limited participation of fathers;
3. Partner CBOs tend to be competitive rather than collaborative challenging coordination and programming actions;
4. Limited understanding of and willingness to apply the best interest of the child principles. Often political, religious or family interest prevailed over the child's best interest, protection and wellbeing. As a consequence, interventions by CP actors from the civil society sphere are considered as intrusion
5. Law enforcement officials are resistant to enforce the law and ensure the protection of child victims of violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect.
6. Lack of a national CP System. The absence of a national framework and structure to guide, coordinate and monitor leads to a kind of "anarchy" between the involved CP actors from the public sphere and from civil society, and with clear negative impact on the wellbeing of the child.
7. Involving representatives of any governmental institution (a police officer and a member from the municipality) can also lead to exclusion of others (division between Hamas and Fatah).

The community based approach to CP in Yemen Background

Due to its strategic location, Yemen has been a centre for transitory population movements throughout history and receives thousands of asylum seekers every year. An increased influx of refugees into the country was prompted by the outbreak of the civil war in Somalia in 1991 and the subsequent collapse of government administrative structures. Today Yemen hosts over 200,000 refugees and of whom almost 190,000 are from Somalia.

Yemen is the only country in the Arab Peninsula that is a signatory of the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol relating to the status of refugees; however, it does not have national refugee legislation or an asylum policy to deal with refugees and other asylum-related issues. Most of the refugees in Yemen live in the urban areas of Sana'a and in the suburbs of Basateen in Aden. A minority of about 11,000 live in Kharaz camp, some 165 kilometres south west of Aden.

The community/school based approach

Funded by UNHCR, in 2010 Save the Children Child Protection team initiated a new project addressing school aged children attending five governmental schools located in a district of Sana'a city with a high concentration of refugee families. The schools are attended by both refugee children and Yemeni children. An initial child protection assessment was carried out in the area, which aimed to better understand the causes of the high rate of school dropouts and low rate of school enrolment especially within the refugee population. The assessment highlighted that lack of registration papers

rom the country of asylum was the first reason of low attendance for the refugee community. Furthermore, early marriage, difficult financial conditions of many families (Yemeni and refugee families), domestic violence and poor quality education provided in the schools, were identified as causes of school dropout from both boys and girls.

The project designed by SC involved children and caregivers to better protect children in the family, school and community setting. As a first step, caregivers in the community were sensitized on child protection risks faced by children and the consequences on the long-term development of the child; the awareness-raising sessions included representatives from the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health and the Local Councils. Following their endorsement, in each targeted school, Mothers and Fathers councils were elected through a democratic process supported by SC; a mapping of health, mental health, psychosocial and extracurricular services was carried out, including number and location of police stations; and, knowledge and skills to detect and respond to child protection issues were built through intense trainings involving all personnel in schools including fathers and mothers councils, traditional community leaders and refugee community representatives, governmental and civil society service providers in the health and social sector and working in the targeted areas, imams, police officers and personnel from the Inclusive Social Centers (ISC) linked to the Ministry of Social Affairs and labor.

A Child Protection Committee was established in each school. The committee is composed by: 1) Members of the Community Committee (an official body established in each district and linked to the municipality whose main role is to improve local governance and communication between the community and elected representatives in the



The sixth war in Sa'ada in northern Yemen forced more than 300,000 persons to flee their homes in 2009 and 2010. Here, children participate in recreational activities at one of the Child Friendly Spaces provided by Save the Children in North Yemen.

municipality), 2) Members of the Refugee Community Representatives (nominated by the refugee community in each district where refugee families are living and representing every different nationality and ethnic group; the representatives have been elected through a process led by UNHCR during 2009), 3) Head masters, teachers and school counselors from each of the five schools targeted as well as 4) Representatives from the Fathers, Mothers and Students councils.

During the first year the Committee received an intensive training on child protection, child development and case management. A Terms of Reference for the committee was developed, describing their role and responsibilities of the members, as follows:

- Participate in monthly meetings to discuss individual cases of children exposed to violence, sexual abuse, neglect within the family, exploitation in the form of harmful child labour including begging, dropout and early marriage;
- Raise awareness in the community and in the school on child protection risks and the available mechanism to report and respond to child protection;
- Act as a focal point for children and parents providing guidance on where to go if they have

concerns about a child's wellbeing;

- Initiate or facilitate solution through family mediation and mentoring;
- Strengthen the cooperation with police, local council, imams, parents and health workers to establish and implement referral of cases of abuse or violence to appropriate authorities and service providers.

In each school, a code of conduct banning any form of physical and humiliating punishment against children was adopted and enforced by training school staff, in addition to setting up a mechanism for reporting and detecting breaches in the code. Furthermore, a protocol for the detection of children exposed to violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect, including guidance to identify the appropriate response, was developed and every member of the CP Committee was trained on this. Students from the five schools also played a key role in the new CP mechanism. In each school, a student council was elected ensuring equal participation of Yemeni and refugee boys and girls. The members of the student councils were then trained on child rights, protection risks, and peer-to-peer support techniques. The student council played a key role in increasing the awareness of all other students in the school about the following topics: the protection mechanism established in the school and the referral mechanism including all the external service providers, the procedures for submitting complaints and seeking the support of the CP Committee. Furthermore, the student councils participated in the CP Committee's monthly meetings, hence representing the voices of all the students.

Challenges

1. Even though all actors involved in the established CP mechanism were supported during the last two years with extensive training and mentoring, they are not yet confident when reporting cases of abuse occurring within the home or school setting. Caregivers and children still believe that people outside the family do not have the right to intervene in family/private issues even for the protection a child.
2. Children are resistant to reporting violence occurring in the school and home environment due to fear of stigma, revenge and non-acceptance by the caregivers and society.
3. In Yemen a national CP System does not exist. Available services are limited and do not have qualified professional capacity. Because of this, the CP Committee faces serious difficulties ensuring the protection of children when dealing with severe cases of child abuse and neglect.
4. Discrimination against the refugee population is a serious concern. Law enforcement officials often abuse their power and treat members of the refugee community with violence rather than protection.

B. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

To the Lebanon team

We have understood from the team in Gaza that one of the main challenges faced during the work in the community was the political affiliation of the different CP actors involved in the mechanism. Could you explain if in Lebanon you had the same experience and, what is the political environment in which the child protection network functions?

The CBO members of the CPN in Lebanon are not politically affiliated and do not allow their personal political beliefs to influence their work. However, in the camp there is nevertheless some pressure from the religious groups to prevent the network from working with boys and girls together and not to address issues such as sexual abuse. The CPN has tried in different ways to address these religious groups, involving them in awareness-raising and other activities and the situation has slightly improved.

To Lebanon and Gaza Teams

Through your community based CP mechanism, do you address all forms of violence against children or specific types?

Lebanon: *In Lebanon the CPN wants to address physical and humiliating punishment in schools, domestic violence, sexual abuse, discrimination against children with disabilities and peer violence. We know that in the camp there is an increasing number of children making use or involved in the trafficking of psychotropic drugs, children involved in armed groups and children involved in exploitative child labor but we still have not found the best strategy to address these forms of violence.*

Gaza: *In Gaza we don't have a specific target group. Through the Family Centers we respond to all forms of violence against children and in the Child Friendly Center we provide support to those children most affected by the conflict and showing signs of grave distress and difficulties in school. We know that our detection mechanism of children at risk or victims of violence is still not functioning to its maximum and many children are not addressed including: children who have lost one or both parents during Operation Cast Lead and are now living in extended families and are at risk of exploitation and neglect, children involved in harmful child labor such as digging the tunnels to Egypt or collecting scrap metal in the buffer zones near the borders with Israel.*

How do you evaluate the community involvement? Do you think it was sufficient?

Lebanon: *Community support and involvement increased through the awareness raising campaigns, although we would have benefitted much more if the community was involved from the beginning, even since the design of the project, like in Yemen for example.*

Gaza: *In Gaza we tried to achieve both community endorsement and participation. The endorsement was achieved through: informing the community (families, professionals and influential) about the activities to be implemented beforehand, community participation in the monthly events, achievements of the CP Committees and sub-committees in Qarara and Khoza'a and also through the child-led communication campaigns. Nevertheless there is always space for improvement, especially when it comes to participation.*



Children participate in recreational activities at one of the Child Friendly Centres in North Lebanon

To the Yemen team

About the CP Committee, can you please explain if they have an office or space to meet in, keep their files, etc?

The Committee does not have an office dedicated only to their work. In Yemen schools are already overcrowded and have to work on double or triple shifts to provide education to all children. Nevertheless, in each school there is a school counselor and they should have a private office in which to keep confidential files, be able to talk with children in a safe and private way etc... the CP Committee uses this office for their work.

Furthermore, could you tell us how individual cases are discussed within the committee and how you preserve the right to privacy of the victim and abuser?

The mechanism in place for reporting violence is very simple. The children are aware that they can meet and talk with the counselor any time of the day and the counselor has the obligation to listen and to take the appropriate action. This works very well in certain schools where the counselor was able to gain the trust of the students. Nevertheless, the counselor is the one who then presents all cases to the committee. When this happens, the identity of victim and abuser are not revealed. They are mentioned only if the committee is asked to take action such as to report the case to the police. Nevertheless in such case only the ones involved in the direct response are aware of the name of the abuser and the offended party.

C. LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- **The actors involved in the community based CP Mechanism must be well known by the community.**

This is necessary in order to ensure that the community will make use of the mechanism and that they will trust the actors involved. Bodies such as the CP Committee must also be nominated through the participation of the community and should always be linked to official and governmental bodies if possible (following the example of Yemen). To ensure the protection of the child, it is extremely important that the whole community, including key decision makers and law enforcement officials, support the CP mechanism and so they must be involved throughout the project as active members of the mechanism.

- **The Community Based Approach needs to involve all resources in the community.**

These include schools, health clinics, police stations, CBOs and NGOs providing CP services, traditional leaders from extended families as well as religious leaders. Such resources are essential to protect the child especially in contexts where there is neither clear legislation nor a national CP system.

- **The Community Based CP mechanism must provide quality services or the community will not approach it and, in the worst case, lose trust in it.**

The negative impact would then inevitably affect the child. Therefore, systematic evaluations of the CP mechanism should be carried out and, should focus on verifying if the case management

process assures long-term positive outcomes for children. Capacity building of service providers including follow-up support and ongoing supervision should also be ensured.

- **The Community Based Approach should follow the ethical principles of neutrality and impartiality.**

All members should commit to such principles before being involved in the mechanism.

- **The sustainability of the community based CP mechanism depends on the availability of external funds and international organizations investing in the field of CP.**

Even when it is built on already existing resources, a CP Mechanism requires new and trained staff for the detection, follow up, documentation, awareness raising, parental support etc... In countries where institutionalized CP trainings do not exist, the community remains dependent on the international community. This is why it is very important to have a certain level of institutionalization of the community-based mechanism.

- **The referral mechanisms must be structured in order to make effective use of available resources.**

A case management protocol facilitates flow of information between the involved service providers.

- **One of the biggest gaps identified is the lack of a protocol for the detection and response to child sexual abuse.**

Community based structures, especially in countries where a national system is not existing, need

stronger support and guidance. Such protocol could be developed in cooperation with law enforcement officials, and other key actors for the protection of the child.

- **It is important to combine CP interventions to other type of family support activities**

such as livelihood or micro-loan projects for income generating activities. Experience has shown that this also increases the participation of parents, and especially fathers.

Following UN SC Resolution 1612, Monitoring and Reporting on children affected by armed conflict addresses itself to six grave violations against children in situations of armed conflict:

1. Killing or maiming of children;
2. Recruitment or use of children as soldiers;
3. Rape and other grave sexual abuse of children.
4. Abduction of children;
5. Attacks against schools or hospitals;
6. Denial of humanitarian access for children;

A. COUNTRY PRESENTATIONS

The Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism (MRM) in Lebanon

Lebanon is not one of the countries addressed directly by the Security Council through Resolution 1612, which provides guidance on the establishment of a Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism on six specific grave violations against children in armed conflict.

Children in NBC/BC are still today exposed to several rights violations and child protection risks directly related to the conflict such as: restrictions to movement in and out of the camp imposed by the Lebanese army, limited access to education and health facilities that were destroyed and not yet rebuilt after the NBC crisis, lack of adequate shelter and hygiene standards, increased poverty and levels of violence in the home and community environment, and last but not least the association of children with armed groups. A workshop was organized with the members of the CPN in NBC/

BC to discuss and agree on the main violations the Network needed to monitor and report on.

Based on the capacity of the CPN to collect evidence and report and also taking into consideration the safety and confidentiality of the informant, the group agreed to focus on the following child rights violations:

1. Violence against children (physical, verbal and sexual abuse)
2. Discrimination against disabled children.
3. Abuse of power by Lebanese Armed Forces
4. Drug use (The network did not collect any cases relates to this violation hence, no monitoring was conducted)

The MRM mechanism implemented by the CPN in Lebanon is as follows:

1. The CPN representative of each NGO/CBO member is responsible for collecting data directly and through the other social workers working in the same organization.
2. The data is collected during field visits to homes and/or schools.
3. As the CPN is quite known in both camps, often the Palestinian community directly refers to them to report cases of child rights violations.
4. The CPN submits the MRM reports on a quarterly basis.

Based on the mechanism adopted by the CPN in Lebanon, the last report developed by the network contained 87 cases of violence against children, 2 cases of discrimination and 5 cases of abuse of power. In addition to being included in reports, the data collected by the CPN is also used in the development of facts sheets, the production of animated movies and the development of awareness-raising material.

Positive outcomes of the established MRM are:

1. Improved response of the CPN to child's rights violations;
2. Strengthened referral system inside and outside the camps;
3. More focused awareness-raising and advocacy campaigns since they were based on the results of the MRM reports.

Challenges

- The mechanism in place still relies only on violations documented and assessed by the organizations, members of the CPN. There are no

other organizations reporting to the network and contributing to the quarterly reports. Of course this limits the monitoring to the geographical areas where the CPN is working.

- Data could not always be considered reliable therefore not all the cases initially identified are included in the quarterly reports.
- The fear of exposing the CPN or the child victim of violence to further safety and protection risks has prevented the reporting of a number of violations documented by the CPN.
- The quarterly reports are at present shared with a list of key actors in the country, nevertheless, advocacy activities did not address the Lebanese government or other duty-bearers such as the Popular Committee and Security Committee, political groups and UNRWA.
- The lack of an appropriate mechanism to ensure the protection and safety of the CPN is not in place therefore the CPN refrains from monitoring several child rights violations directly linked to the ongoing conflict situation in the camps, and, from implementing more direct advocacy activities.

The MRM in Gaza Strip

During 2007, in the OPT, a Working Group-WG with representatives of civil society organizations, international organizations, Palestinian Ministries and UN agencies established a monitoring and reporting mechanism in accordance with UN SC Res. 1612. To the 6 grave violations listed in the resolution, three more child rights violations occurring in oPt were added: detention, torture and forced displacement.

Save the Children is an active member of the working group. One major challenge in the established

MRM regards the denouncing of violations committed by Palestinian armed groups and forces and the unwillingness of the individuals directly affected to report them. Save the Children and PCDCR believed that strengthening the role of the community in the MRM should support in the overcoming of this obstacle. Therefore, the members of the CPN in Gaza Strip started participating in the MRM through field data collection and documentation of evidence of violations perpetrated by armed groups and forces in Gaza Strip. One staff member from each CBO of the CPN was appointed as field monitoring staff and was involved in a training program focusing on how to use specific forms to document violations against children. When in the field, the field monitor would either approach the victim directly or attain it from secondary resources, such as witnesses, media and other Human Rights Organizations. All completed forms would then be sent to SCS who is in charge of verifying the information and consolidating the data in a standard form to be then sent to UNICEF. Depending on all the reports it receives, UNICEF compiles a Global Horizontal Note every two months. The CPN identified the following positive outcomes from the established MRM:

1. Members of the Child Protection Network are more aware of the international legal framework protecting children affected by armed conflict and the available international instruments to advocate towards duty-bearers;
2. The members of the CPN were provided with the capacity to ensure that each child identified as victim of grave violations according to the 1612 Resolution would receive the appropriate care and referral to professional service providers;
3. Child victims of 1612 violations have increased access to services;
4. Advocacy activities and community awareness initiatives were based on the findings of the MRM

Challenges

- Most of the field monitors are working on a voluntary basis. This has led to a series of problems:
 - High turnover and loss of staff with the needed capacities;
 - Limited commitment to timely documentation;
 - Field monitors do not want to take the risk linked to reporting violations committed by Palestinian armed groups and forces;
 - Not all field monitors are appropriately trained – due to the high turnover and lack of MRM trainers in Gaza
 - Some data transmitted by a few members of the CPN were manipulated or inaccurate.
- Only violations perpetrated by Israeli forces are monitored and reported.
- There are a high number of national and international organizations (NGOs and HR organizations) participating in the working group and documenting in the field yet the lack of coordination between these actor leads to overlapping of activities.
- National actors believe that the international community is not sufficiently involved in ensuring an appropriate response to the identified violations, in terms of support to the victim of the violation as well as in terms of advocacy actions towards the armed groups and forces responsible for committing violations against children.
- Frustration of CPN members due to lack of feedback from the UN following the submitting of the reports.
- No Arabic version of the Children Affected by Armed Conflict-CAAC bulletins.
- Competition with Human Rights-HR organizations who are better equipped.

The MRM in Iraq

In Iraq, since 2008, UNICEF has established an official Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism as described in the Security Council Resolution 1612. From each governorate of Iraq, child rights activists and trainers were selected. The trainers were involved first in Training of Trainers workshops carried out by UNICEF. Following that, they became in charge of building the capacity of a number of selected child rights activists on how to monitor and document the six grave violations listed within Resolution 1612 using primary and secondary data sources.

Once the information from the field were collected and documented in the forms provided during the training, each Activist is supposed to send a soft copy of the form to a mail address provided by UNICEF. All forms would be then verified by UNICEF through other sources available within the UN and compiled in reports that are brought to the attention of the UN Security Council every two months.

Challenges

1. Many MRM activists are from urban areas. Although all governorates are represented, not all districts are.
2. MRM activists are volunteers and are not always able or available to report on cases.
3. It is challenging for MRM activists to maintain the balance between their own safety and collecting evidence from the victim or witnesses. At times, they are exposed to danger.
4. To date MRM in Iraq focuses solely on monitoring and reporting. There is no mechanism to provide the detected children with a CP response.
5. MRM activists are not aware of the services available in the country to support children victims of rights violations therefore cannot support the child and family in cases where such services are needed
6. Definitions of violations under 1612 are not always clear in Iraq. In the context of an ongoing and very complex conflict there is a need for inter-agency dialogue and clarification of what constitutes a grave violation of child rights under UN SCR 1612 in Iraq.
7. Most participants originally selected for MRM training are professionals – doctors, lawyers, engineers – or managers in local NGOs. While they are interested in the subject matter, several trainees expressed concern that they are not sufficiently grounded in the community to raise reports on grave violations of child rights

B. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

To the Lebanon team

The MRM established in Lebanon is not focusing on the child rights violations mentioned in Resolution 1612. Why?

The idea is to identify violations related to the conflict in NBC/BC, and then to have an independent line to reach the UN Special Representative of the Security Council for Children in Armed Conflict. When analyzing the specific situation of NBC/BC we focused on violations faced by children and are directly linked to the conflict but we had to acknowledge that the grave violations mentioned in the Resolution 1612 cannot apply to our context as there is no ongoing armed conflict. Nevertheless, NBC/BC are living under military control, the Lebanese army is checking who is coming in and out; the children going to school (mostly located outside NBC) are stopped at the checkpoint and their school bags searched; as a result they often reach school late, in addition homes and schools are containers since everything has been destroyed.

Is there a limited time to submit the report after the violation takes place? Is there a time ceiling following which you cannot submit the report? The format and forms are used in the collection of data? Who prepares them?

The report is submitted every 3 months, so we give ourselves enough time to verify the information. The form was initially prepared by the members of the CPN, supported by Save the Children. This was tested for six months then the CPN introduced further adjustments. Today we use two different forms, the first is ad hoc for each type of violation monitored and the second is a unified form used by the Network to report. In the first form we write confidential information while in the second we don't. When the compiled form is ready, the CPN submits it to Save the Children.

To the Gaza team

If the child or its family refuses to report the incident or if you have a suspicion that they are not reporting the whole truth, what do you do?

If the field monitor has doubts about the information collected he/she needs to highlight this so that special attention is given during the verification process. It is not difficult to receive the information needed from the child; it often happens that parents refuse to provide us with the details of the event. Our role is to convince them that it is not dangerous, that we will not use the information against the child or his/her family and that the information will be kept confidential and the identity of the child will be protected. We can only really convince the parents if we really believe in the mechanism.

How do you coordinate with the HR organizations in Gaza?

We focus on the CPN's role of collecting the data from the field to be provided to Save the Children and to the HR organizations. We believe that our role is to detect as many children as possible to ensure that they can be involved in a response mechanism. This is our role mainly; to provide children with the support and rehabilitation they need.

To the Iraq team

What is the mechanism in place to verify the information?

We have a form to collect the testimony directly from the victims but we do not rely on this. The verification comes from other sources, such as UN agencies. UNICEF verifies the information. It happened that information in some reports were not accurate and had to be rejected. Since last year we are also trying to monitor other child rights violations occurring and directly related to the conflict but UNICEF does not report them yet to the Security Council.

What is the role of the Iraqi government? What are they doing for the child victims of CR violations? What are their plans to help them?

The Government of Iraq is aware of the mechanism in place but does not play a role. Since Iraq has no child protection system in place there is no response to the children detected as victims of grave violations. This is the biggest gap in the whole system. The Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour is now working with other ministries to develop a CP policy and we hope that they will include the protection of children affected by the conflict in it.

Could you explain more about the criteria for selecting child rights activists and trainers?

UNICEF selects them. Most of them are specialist doctors, lawyers, directors of national organizations or CBOs and other professionals.

What is the level of commitment of the activists? Do they receive any compensation for the work done? Are they skilled enough to document violations?

The activists are selected based on their willingness to participate in the program and only receive compensation to cover the travel costs when monitoring. Since 2008 we had a high turnover of activists. We believe that the causes are mainly two: first, there is no strategy in place to ensure that the activists do not lose their enthusiasm and commitment and, second, the activists are all volunteers and do not receive any fee for the work done. The activists work alone and have no contact with UNICEF or other actors involved in the monitoring and reporting; when they send the collected data they do not receive any reply or confirmation from UNICEF; furthermore, the Global Horizontal Notes developed by UNICEF every two months are not shared with the activists or distributed in Iraq for advocacy purposes. Because of all of this, the activists believe that there is no real scope or concrete action taken following all the reporting they do. Sometimes they feel exploited.

Every time one activist leaves the program he/she must be replaced or we will not be able to collect data from the geographical areas he/she was covering. New activists must be trained before starting their work. We believe that the selection process is not correct, heads of local NGOs should be selected and they will then ensure that their staff carry out the work. Furthermore, UNICEF or other national and international NGOs should be playing a stronger role, using the collected information to develop advocacy activities in Iraq and also setting up a referral mechanism for the identified children.

Safety and security of the monitors is a problem that both Gaza and Lebanon mentioned. Often the monitors don't feel comfortable documenting specific types of violations; this has been an obstacle and has created some kind of hiccups in the process. How did you deal with this in Iraq?

In Iraq there are some "hot" governorates like Ramadi, Mawsil and Kirkuk, and others that are safer. The positive thing is that usually the activists are from the same geographical location where the incident they are documenting has occurred; this is an advantage, as the activist knows how to move and how to collect the information through trustworthy secondary sources. There still has not been an incident in which one of the activists was exposed to security threats.

C. LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Community sensitization and awareness-raising focusing on the importance of reporting child rights violations related to armed conflict should be implemented before setting up any MRM.**

This would facilitate the work of the field monitors/activists and reduce their security threats when collecting data. Furthermore this could lead to community mobilization against perpetrators of child rights violations.

- **Creating a Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism relevant to the CR violations occurring in the local context and not limited to the grave violations depicted by Resolution 1612 should be strongly considered.**

Of course this new mechanism should also identify key bodies within the Security Council or at regional level to be addressed and involved in advocacy actions. It should also address national duty-bearers, governmental bodies and the armed groups.

- **The reports regularly developed should be used for in-country activities other than to inform the Security Council.**

These should be translated in local language and disseminated to inform the community of the violations occurring against children. The reports should also become more qualitative and not merely a quantitative description of events.

- **The MRM should be linked to programmatic responses.**

This should include a protection response for the child and the family victim of the violation, protection of the field monitors/activists and advocacy actions addressing the community and the bodies responsible for the violations.

- **The international and donor community should increase their investments in national child protection systems.**

The support or response to the victims needs to be improved as the services that are able to respond to victims, in a professional, safe and confidential way are very few and have very limited capacity.

- **It is important that all actors from the civil society have a role to play in the MRM, nevertheless they should also be provided with effective measures to ensure their protection and safety.**

Participation should be coordinated in order to avoid overlapping and maximize resources. In countries where Human Right Organizations are present, they should be the ones in charge of documenting, monitoring and reporting. The community can play a key role in ensuring that children and families receive the needed care and protection. Civil servants such as teachers, doctors, nurses, police officers and others should participate in strengthening the detection of children victims of rights violations, while children, schools, youth centers, NGOs, CBOs and religious leaders should be directly involved in communication and advocacy campaigns.

- **It is important to carefully select persons and NGOs who are part of the MRM since they should be committed to protecting**

children's rights and reporting violations as part of their civic and humanitarian responsibility.

- **A systematic approach to reduce the turnover of field monitors/activists and loss of capacities should be developed.**

This could include small incentives such “appreciation certificates” for the field monitors/activists, “thank you” notes upon receipt of the incidents forms, closer supervision, more effective safety and protection.

- **Focal points in each country where a MRM is established should be appointed**

and be in charge of training new monitors/activists and immediately provide them with clear orientation.

- **It is important to ensure full geographic coverage of the MRM**

and not be limited to urban areas or locations where field monitors/activists are available.

Advocacy is a set of activities created to mobilize the community to make a positive change in people's lives. Based on verified data, advocacy sets out to convince the community that a change must be made. On the fourth day of the workshop in May 2011, participants presented their implemented advocacy activities that have led to some positive outcomes. Participants from different countries and organizations organized galleries illustrated with pictures and documents to highlight implemented advocacy activities and to present successes and lessons learned. These documents can be found on the following web link:

<http://mena.savethechildren.se/MENA/What-we-do/Protection/Regional-Projects/Protecting-the-rights-of-Palestinian-children-affected-by-armed-conflicts-through-community-based-mechanism/>

A. COUNTRY PRESENTATIONS

Advocacy activities in Lebanon

As part of the child-led awareness campaign and seeking to gain support on the national level, Palestinian children in the camps chose the radio as a tool to communicate their realities and aspirations to the Lebanese audience and to invite them to ask questions about Child Rights. An "Animate-it" training was also organized by Save the Children for 13 children living in NBC and BC. This resulted in the production of one cartoon film focusing on violence against children, which was disseminated in UNRWA schools, local organizations and the community at large as well as on YouTube and Save the Children Website (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wj_MQcWd0IE&feature=channel_video_title and <http://mena.savethechildren.se/mena>). "Animate-it" is a communication and advocacy tool by which children utilize art to express their views, advocate for their rights, and suggest potential solutions and influence public institutions and policymakers' policies and actions.

With the support of the CPN members, 13 children were also elected to be part of a Children's Committee (CC) in Nahr El Bared and Beddawi

Camps. The establishment of this committee aimed at promoting child participation and boosting their role as agents of change in their communities. It also strengthened their capacities to raise awareness among peers and caregivers as well as among decision makers on the importance of protecting all children, especially children affected by armed conflict. Two workshops were organized with the CC in order to train them on advocacy so that they could develop messages addressed to relevant stakeholders. These messages were displayed on UNIPOLES on 2 strategic points on the highway leading to the camps. The messages were: "Children should not be beaten by teachers and school directors - as a result many among us are dropping out of school", "Streets in both NBC and BC are narrow and need lamps so that we are not in danger of being attacked and abused", "We need more parks and playgrounds so that we don't spend our free time on the streets". The unipole can be viewed here: <http://mena.savethechildren.se/PageFiles/3667/UnipoleFinal.pdf>

Throughout the project's implementation, the CPN organized different activities including open days

awareness-raising sessions, discussions and meetings. Participants involved parents, children, teachers and members of committees (popular, religious and political) that play a role in decision-making that affect people's lives in general and children in particular in both camps. Prior to these activities, CPN members noticed a lack of knowledge among participants regarding Child Rights and Child Protection especially in the situation of armed conflict. It is important to note that the outcome of these activities showed an increase in awareness on both topics and willingness to work on eliminating violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation against children and involving children in matters that have an impact on their well-being. As a result, the community and local authorities were held more accountable. On the other hand, the participation of children and the establishment of a children's committee empowered them to advocate for their rights and have an active role in their community.

In March 2010, staff members of the CPN in North Lebanon took part in a training on Child Rights-based Advocacy enabling them to produce action plans to be used as tools of change in the community, local authorities and relevant stakeholders. The advocacy plan of CPN members in Lebanon addressed children's right to an environment free from violence whereby NGOs along with children advocated for the elimination of all forms of violence in both Nahr El Bared and Beddawi camps including at home and in UNRWA schools. It also approached duty-bearers to involve them in responding to the daily violations of child rights and in ensuring protection to children by placing them among their priorities. Part of the training emphasized child participation in advocacy by highlighting child-centred and child-led advocacy. In both approaches, children acted as advocates and are supported by adults (NGOs,

CPN members, parents, teachers, duty-bearers) and their peers to carry out activities aiming at bringing change to their lives and well-being.

While working towards the achievement of the CPN objectives in Lebanon, the implemented advocacy plan focused on:

- Enhancing children's knowledge on the violence they witnessed during NBC conflict and how it is mandatory to have their needs and rights respected and taken into consideration in their community.
- Empowering children to create their own advocacy messages and address them to the relevant stakeholders in both camps.
- Meeting with stakeholders and discussing concerns and needs. The discussion tackled the issue of violence and its effects on children, and the neglect of children's needs.

13 children living in NBC and BC took part in an "Animate-it" training organised by Save the Children



The CPN members emphasized that stakeholders have an important role to play and a big responsibility when it comes to reaching out to children and stopping violence against them through involving children, the CPN and other organizations in decision making aiming at bringing change into children's lives.

Advocacy activities in Gaza

The following activities were implemented in Gaza by the project:

Formation of Children Committee



Members of the children's committee formed in NBC and BC draft their advocacy messages addressed to relevant stakeholders

A children's committee was established in the Gaza Strip and linked to the CPN. The members of the CPN participated in the establishment of the committee by identifying and nominating children from their community. Children were selected based on two main criteria:

1. Boys and girls 13 to 17 years old, who have expressed interest in becoming a member of the Children Committee linked to the CPN;
2. Children already involved in community activities as volunteers or as members of youth organizations, child led organizations/associations/groups or other community based associations,

A final selection was made by a committee composed of representative members of the CPN, SCS and PCDCR. The committee, during the selection, evaluated applications by each child and took into consideration gender equity and geographical representation.

Forty-four children were selected as members of the Children's Committee, 21 girls and 23 boys. They were distributed in the following manner:

- Rafah – 5 children; 3 boys and 2 girls
- Khan Younis – 9 children; 6 boys and 3 girls
- Gaza – 4 children; 3 boys and 1 girl
- Middle areas – 8 children; 4 boys and 4 girls
- North – 18 children; 9 boys and 9 girls

In order to complement efforts carried out by other children's committees implementing similar activities, in the second year of the project, another 16 children (6 boys and 10 girls) from The Culture and Free Thought Association (a local organization based in Gaza Strip) joined the committee.

To facilitate the child led communication and advocacy actions, SCS, PCDCR and two members of the CPN in the south of Gaza participated in a training focusing on methodologies of child participation in communication and advocacy campaigns. The training was carried out by an external consultant within the framework of a different project implemented in partnership with SCS and PCDCR. During the training, the team involved in the project drafted guidelines for the child led communication component of the project and shared this with the children members of the committee.

Child-led awareness raising workshops



Children took part in 5 workshops to plan, design and implement the child led initiatives in Gaza

The Children's Committee participated in 5 workshops to plan, design and implement the child led initiatives. Children were divided into 10 groups each comprised of 6 children according to geographical location. The workshops combined practical exercises and techniques such as role-play, sharing of experiences, and discussion in small groups. The child-led awareness raising workshops were meant to give children the chance to get to know about their rights and to identify violated rights and exchange their experiences; in addition, the workshops enabled children to identify the issues related to their violated rights and develop the awareness-raising and advocacy tools to claim these rights.

The Purpose of the workshops was to:

1. To enable participating children to come together to explore and gain knowledge of children rights identifying issues they see it is highly significant to raise the community's awareness about and advocate for.
2. To enable participating children to develop messages and key communication materials for the identified issues.

3. To ensure effective child participation techniques, which allow the children to take control of their lives and in which they feel their voices are heard.
4. To identify and decide on the main topics of the campaign.

Training on Animation Movies Production

20 children (10 boys and 10 girls) aged 13-17 years old, representative of the Child Friendly Centres in Gaza Strip, participated in an Animated Movie-Making training course in November 2010. The creation of 'Animation Movies' is a powerful tool which enhances children's creative expression. The main purpose of creating animation movies is to allow children to discuss their concerns, report on their situation and educate other children and adults about issues important to their lives. As a result of the training, which lasted for one month, the children produced four Cartoon Movies. Each one conveys a key message in order to claim their rights to play, education, safe environment and free movement. The training started on October 16th, 2010 and finished by December 2nd, 2011.

Children were fully responsible for making all parts of the animation movies. They wrote stories, drew, colored the characters, selected the music and gave their voices to the characters they created. The role of the facilitator/trainer was to teach them how to use the technique and to provide the technical support to the children without imposing his/her personal opinion or influencing the children.

At the end of the training children produced 4 movies about their right to play, right to free movement, right to education and right to live in peace. The movies can be watched on SCS MENA's youtube channel:

<http://www.youtube.com/savethechildrenmena>

Celebration of Palestinian Child Day

On 5 April 2011, around 200 children, 70 of which were participating in the CFCs activities celebrated Palestinian Child Day organized by Save the Children Sweden and Al Dameer Association for Human Rights as part of a child-led awareness raising and advocacy campaign. The day was moderated by children under the supervision of the organizers. Children had the chance to participate in 6 activity corners where they played, sang, danced, etc. Visibility materials were produced for this day such as banners, posters, T. shirts and caps, and there was a high-level coverage by the media.

Radio episodes & spots

Following the identification of an increase in 'Child Labour' due to armed conflict as the most alarming issue in the Gaza Strip, children identified Radio Programs as one of the communication and advocacy tools.

Children used radio as a tool to raise awareness on the increase in child labour due to armed conflict in Gaza as part of their advocacy campaign



In this project, radio was extensively utilized as an awareness as well as mobilization tool to enable the child-led campaign's key messages to reach the largest numbers of listeners from caregivers, duty-bearers and other indirect target groups. For this, Gaza FM Radio Station was selected to broadcast 6 episodes and 300 spots (all designed by the children) during the month of June 2011.

Production of Posters

Media publications were used to convey messages in relation to the identified issue (child labour) to the audiences. Children fully participated in the design and dissemination of the posters.

Sketches

5 sketches were produced highlighting the causes and negative effects of child labour and emphasizing on the significant role of duty-bearers and caregivers in protecting children from economic exploitation. The sketches further aim to:

- To reflect on the severity of child labor in Gaza and the impact it has on children and their families/communities.
- To highlight the alarming issue of child labor in the access restricted areas.
- To demonstrate why children end up working i.e. poverty within the family, Israeli blockade and occupation.
- Demonstrate the dangers children are exposed to while collecting rubble and scrap metals in the access restricted areas.
- To provide evidence to encourage decision makers and duty bearers to take all measures necessary to address this issue.
- To promote and advocate for protecting children from child labor.

March



200 children march through the streets of Gaza calling for an end to Child Labour as part of their own advocacy campaign

In June 2011, a march was organized in central Gaza city to call for an end to child labour. 200 children from the CPN and other stakeholders such as Al Dameer Association for Human Rights, The Culture and Free Thought Association participated in the march. The main purpose of the march was to allow children to address their concerns, report on their situation and educate other children and adults about issues important to their lives. It further aimed to advocate for the right of children to be protected from economic exploitation and to provide children with a space to raise the community's awareness of their rights. Children held banners and posters during the march, and headed towards the office of the Ministry of Labour in Gaza city. Children gathered in front of the Ministry building calling for an end to child labour. By the end of the march, representatives of the Children's committee met the Minister of Labour demanding that his Ministry put an end to child labour through re-activating inspection. Children also called upon taking stern sanctions against employers who violate children's rights according to the Palestinian Labour Law. During the meeting, children gathered information and pieces

of evidence such as factsheets and reports about the worst forms of child labour and presented it to the Minister of Labour.

Disseminate communication /information tools

The communication materials developed by children were distributed through the CBOs/NGOs of the CPN in schools, community centres, local organisations, public institutions and in the streets under supervision of SCS communication and advocacy officer and PCDCR staff who developed a distribution plan.

The materials can also be downloaded on the project's website:

<http://mena.savethechildren.se/MENA/What-we-do/Protection/Regional-Projects/Protecting-the-rights-of-Palestinian-children-affected-by-armed-conflicts-through-community-based-mechanism/>

Advocacy activities in Yemen

The Yemen team presented an animated film created with the drawings of an internally displaced six-year-old girl, who lost all the members of her family during the sixth war in Sa'ada. Dalal Joma'an is one of the children targeted through Save the Children's Child Protection Project in Sa'ada. Her story is one of the many stories of children who have benefitted from activities and adult support in the Child Friendly Spaces. The film was created as an advocacy and visibility tool as part of Save the Children's child protection work in Sa'ada, with the purpose to raise awareness on the work that Save the Children is doing in Sa'ada and to inform of the situation of children in the area. It has been used in trainings of staff, volunteers and partners as an example of our work. It was uploaded onto Save the Children Yemen's youtube site

in February 2011 and has been viewed over 100 times:

<http://www.youtube.com/user/SavethechildrenY#p/u/2/XRgEoElRvWU>.

A slide show was also shared at the workshop, which summarized the emergency in Sa'ada and Save the Children's response. The slide show was developed for fundraising purposes and to inform interested stakeholders of the work that we do in the north of Yemen and was uploaded onto Save the Children MENA's youtube site:

<http://www.youtube.com/user/SavethechildrenY#p/u/4/ILex6hQOnW0>

The Yemen team also presented brochures and the situation reports (initially produced daily, and then bi-weekly, and then weekly) related to the current civil unrest in Yemen. These materials are distributed to donors, internally to all Save the Children members

and are uploaded onto a web page on the Regional Save the Children Sweden Middle East and North Africa website for all to access:

<http://mena.savethechildren.se/MENA/News-and-events/Press-Releases/Yemen-crisis/>

Dalal Joma'an, one of the children targeted through Save the Children's Child Protection Project in Sa'ada, told her story through pictures she drew at one of the Child Friendly Spaces.



B. LESSONS LEARNED

- Children's participation in the development and implemented of advocacy action plans is very important
- There should be a better use of the results collected by the MRM and other data to develop advocacy messages
- The ability to convince and work with government officials through meetings can be very important
- It is very important to provide staff and stakeholders including children with the necessary the necessary capacity to implement advocacy and communication campaigns
- Media participation should be encouraged
- It is important to target all the groups including children
- Children's participation should not be manipulated and their involvement should not be abused

This section includes a definition of Save the Children's principal concepts and terms relating to the project and the workshop. They consist of: Child Rights Governance (CRG), National and Community-Based Child Protection Mechanisms and Systems and Child Protection In Emergency (CPIE). In addition, Save the Children Sweden's Middle East and North Africa-MENA's regional Child Protection program priorities are depicted while fifty International Laws and Standards relevant to Children in Armed Conflict are also listed with a special focus on United Nations Security Council Resolution 1612. It is important to note that the second day of the workshop was lead by the International Bureau for Children's Rights (IBCR) and included capacity building sessions on: the 82 International norms, resolutions and standards related to the protection and promotion of children's rights in the context of an armed conflict, and the monitoring and reporting mechanisms on violations of children's rights by and for civil society organizations. These sessions greatly enriched the working groups' discussions and will be of great use in the final assessment of the project itself.

Child Rights Governance (CRG)

Throughout its history Save the Children has been at the forefront of the child rights movement. Our founder, Eglantyne Jebb, believed that this was a fundamental role that Save the Children should play: "I believe we should claim certain rights for children and labour for their universal recognition, so that everybody - not merely the small number of people who are in a position to contribute to relief funds, but everybody who in any way comes into contact with children, that is to say the vast majority of mankind - may be in a position to help forward the movement."

One of the key milestones in this work was Save the Children's influential role in the drafting of the 1989 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Save the Children is now committed to the fulfillment of children's rights as set out in that convention that has been ratified by 193 States. Since its adoption Save the Children has played a central role in monitoring and supporting its implementation at country, regional, and international levels – including challenging governments to fulfill their obligations.

In doing so Save the Children has led the call for governments to be much more transparent, responsive and accountable for the fulfillment of those rights and for civil society, including children, to be active in promoting and defending those rights. This is the core focus of Child Rights Governance, built on a belief that 'child rights governance is good governance and good governance is essential for the fulfillment of children's rights'. The consequences of bad governance are of course disastrous for children and contribute to conflict, the misuse of scarce resources, and failure to advance the survival and well being of the poorest and most marginalized.

The inclusion of Child Rights Governance (CRG) in Save the Children's International Strategy reflects Save the Children's long-standing and deep-seated commitment to the advancement of children's rights. It links the fulfillment of those rights to the growing pressure for good governance from citizen's groups, donors, the corporate sector and multilateral agencies. It gives Save the Children an ambitious and leadership role in speaking out for millions of disadvantaged and marginalized children deprived of their rights.

NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY-BASED CHILD PROTECTION MECHANISMS AND SYSTEMS:

The issue of child protection is complex and is linked to several other issues. Preventing harm to children and responding to child protection concerns requires comprehensive and sustainable action. Recently there has been a shift towards a systems-building approach to child protection. Such an approach emphasizes prevention, coordination between sectors and integrated responses that benefit all children. The development and strengthening of national child protection systems has become a fundamental part of a rights-based approach to child protection in the work of Save the Children and other agencies.

Save the Children defines child protection as measures and structures to prevent and respond to abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence affecting children. The goal of child protection is to promote, protect and fulfill children's rights to protection from abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence as expressed in the 1989 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and other human rights, humanitarian and refugee treaties and conventions, as well as in national laws.

Save the Children believes that the building and strengthening of rights-based national child protection systems will lead to holistic, inclusive, sustainable and well-coordinated ways of protecting all children. An effective national child protection system recognizes the state's ultimate responsibilities and human rights obligations to children. It consists of:

- Laws and policies that protect children from abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence and respond in the best interests of the child when violations occur

- A central government coordination mechanism for child protection, bringing together central government departments, different provinces, central and local levels of government and civil society
- Effective regulation and monitoring at all levels of child protection standards, for instance, in childcare institutions and schools
- A committed workforce with relevant competencies and mandates.

A functioning child protection system is informed by children's views and experiences and strengthens families in the care and protection of their children. It connects child and family support mechanisms in the community with child-friendly services at all levels, regulated by quality standards and delivered by the government or accredited social agencies.

A national child protection system includes both formal and informal mechanisms. It is governed by laws that are compliant with international standards and by national policies and regulations that cover all levels in a country. (In addition, emergency situations require that humanitarian and refugee treaties and conventions be followed)

In many countries, there is a de facto or de jure traditional/custom-based authority. In a functioning child protection system this traditional authority is accountable in some way to the government, so that customary laws are linked to national laws and regulations.

In addition to the formal mechanisms (for instance, a family centre run by a local non-governmental

organization under the supervision of the Department of Welfare), or in the absence of them, communities and families often rely on informal mechanisms to protect children. These can include extended family and kinship care, religious and cultural groups, friends and neighborhood support networks. Such informal mechanisms are crucial to children's wellbeing and safety, as they are often the first line of response and better placed to recognize problems and respond to them quickly. It is critical to ensure that these types of informal responses are connected and supported by formal child protection mechanisms.

Community-based child protection and child welfare groups or committees made up of volunteers are part of the national child protection system if their mandate is formalized by government regulations. Committee members are often well respected and trusted women and men in their community, and they engage in all matters that can strengthen the protective environment around each child, often working with children's groups in the community. However, they seldom have qualified skills as professional child protection/social workers and do not replace the need for formal child protection services at community level. It is, on the other hand, necessary for professional services to establish links with volunteer groups, who are often the first line of response.

In a functioning national child protection system, the state does not have to be the service provider, although it retains ultimate responsibility for the quality of services. In fact, it will often not be in a position to provide effective services at all levels. However, the state is responsible for ensuring that those who do provide children's and family services (e.g., civil society organizations or the private sector) are accountable and have the resources, knowledge and mandate to take responsibility for children's wellbeing.

The development and strengthening of national and community-based child protection systems has become a core underlying, rights-based approach to child protection in both Save the Children and other agencies, including UNICEF and UNHCR. It is a pre-condition for achieving a sustainable and lasting positive impact in the lives of children and a foundation for work in the project entitled "Protecting the rights of Palestinian children affected by armed conflicts through community-based mechanism in the Gaza Strip and North Lebanon".

CHILD PROTECTION IN EMERGENCY-CPIE:

Armed conflicts and increasingly frequent natural disasters continue to scar children's lives. Each year, natural and man-made disasters affect an estimated 231 million people worldwide, causing countless injuries and deaths and costing billions of dollars. The majority of the affected people are usually children. There are currently 250-300 million children affected by humanitarian crises and disasters globally; increasingly, they come from or stay in urban areas. Of the estimated 24.5 million conflict-related Internally Displaced People (IDP) in the world, about 50% are children. It is estimated that between 250,000 and 300,000 children are associated with government armed forces or armed opposition groups in at least 13 countries. Whether internally displaced or a refugee, whether as a result of war, civil unrest or natural disaster, whether in an urban, rural or semi-rural setting, a child's vulnerability to abuse during a crisis is very high. Families suffer multiple and severe disruptions: losing their homes and livelihoods, and often also losing their autonomy and dignity when trying to obtain humanitarian relief and protection.

With an uncertain future, repeated emotional stress and only minimal access to education, children in emergency and conflict situation are at risk of sexual abuse and exploitation, physical harm, separation from their families, psychosocial distress, gender-based violence, economic exploitation, recruitment into armed groups, and other forms of harm. Save the Children's approach to Child Protection in Emergency is based on every child's non-negotiable right to be protected and to be cared for – ideally by their family, or in a family setting. A rights-based national child protection system recognizes the state's responsibilities and human rights obligations to children and provides government with a coordinated and sustainable way to protect children.

To ensure the highest level of response and protection during an emergency, Save the Children has defined five programming priorities. They have been identified - from the vast range of violations of children's rights to protection - in order to guide sustainable child protection activities in the field, to use resources efficiently, and to target advocacy efforts to achieve systemic change. They are listed briefly below, while subsequent chapters go into some depth on each issue. It is important to note that these are categories constructed to facilitate work; in reality, the issues are often crosscutting and children's experiences overlap. Thus, practitioners need to focus on each child in his or her entirety.

- 1. Family separation:** Children are at risk of being separated from their primary caregivers during emergencies, either as a direct result of the emergency or as a result of its consequences. The identification of separated children, as well as tracing of their families and subsequent reunification, are therefore priorities in every phase of any emergency. Interventions that prevent secondary separation are also required.
- 2. Recruitment into armed forces or armed groups:** In situations of armed conflict, boys and girls are regularly recruited into armed forces or armed groups. While this involvement may be forced or “voluntary”, they take on a range of roles - including fighting, acting as spies or messengers, cooks and porters, and for sexual purposes. Recruitment exposes children to a number of extreme risks, such as death, physical injury, psychological damage, and sexual abuse. Return to civilian life can pose many challenges for both children and communities.
- 3. Exploitation and gender-based violence:** Sexual violence and exploitation are chronic risks to girls and boys in situations of emergency. In times of social crisis, when their support and protective structures are limited or nonfunctional, children – particularly those who are displaced – are most vulnerable to abuses such as rape, incest, molestation, trafficking and early marriage.
- 4. Physical harm:** In every emergency, boys and girls risk being physically harmed. As the nature of armed conflict and natural disasters evolves, civilians are increasingly becoming targets and victims of violence and are at risk of being maimed or killed. The tremendous stress under which caregivers live can lead to disproportionate punishments. Programmes that enhance children's physical safety - such as landmine awareness - and that advocate for greater protection of girls and boys are essential in all emergencies.
- 5. Psychosocial distress:** During emergencies, children are exposed to a variety of extreme circumstances, some of which are beyond their capacity to cope. It is now accepted that in addition to meeting basic needs, such as food and shelter, it is essential to consider the emotional

and developmental support of children. They recover from distressing experiences more quickly when supported by their family and community in a child-friendly environment.

Save the Children Sweden-SCS' Child Protection program in the Middle East and North Africa - MENA Region

As a part of our Child Protection programmes, we have opened Child Friendly Spaces in places where large numbers of IDPs live. Here children participate in non-formal educational activities that alleviate stress. Children that participate in our activities are less likely to become victims of violence and abuse, and less likely to be recruited into any of the parties involved in fighting.



The overall goal of SCS' regional Child Protection programme in the MENA region and for the period of 2009 - 2012 is to ensure the protection of all children from abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence in all settings and conditions, including emergencies. More specifically, it seeks to ensure that National Child Protection Systems (NCPS) are in place and functional and accessible to all children in Yemen, Lebanon, oPt and initiated in one to two more other countries of the region. The different components of such a system are developed in close coordination with relevant actors, ensuring the participation of children and including measures that will target children who are most vulnerable and at risk. Yemen, Lebanon and oPt are characterized by on-going conflicts affecting specific regions within each country and, because of this, SCS agreed to apply a dual mandate to all its CP interventions making sure that mechanism and structures put in place would be responsive during both emergency and non-emergency times.

CP intervention models such as the Child Protection community based approach for emergency response first developed in Gaza was then replicated and adapted to local context in Lebanon, Yemen, Jordan and Iraq. Throughout the years SCS further elaborated the model to work also during non-emergency and provide a quality and effective preventive and response mechanism to children at risk or survivors of domestic violence, neglect, gender based violence and violence related to armed conflict. In OPT specifically, a community based mechanism for the reintegration of children in conflict with the law is also implemented. The Community Based child protection mechanism "replicates" the same structure which should be in place for a national child protection mechanism, but at a community level; complying to national legislation as well as local traditional customs builds on community human and material resources

coordinating detection of children at risk or survivors of violence, response through service provision and family interventions and reporting for advocacy purposes at community and national level.

In 2008 SCS and UNHCR started developing a model for strengthening or developing Child Protection Systems during the emergency preparedness phase, immediate emergency response and chronic long-term emergencies. In the MENA Region, the model was field tested in Yemen and brought clear and measureable improvement to the lives of refugee children. The model is implemented today and has been further developed through a project of SCS and UNHCR in Jordan and Lebanon. The project aims at strengthening the CP response to refugee children in the two countries of operation (influencing other UNHCR country operations in the region such as Syria) by strengthening national child protection systems accessible to all children. This project has opened important doors and opportunities in the field of national case management mechanisms and documentation for data analysis systems, alternative care for children in institutions (orphanages and rehabilitation centres for children in conflict with the law) and policy change.

During 2012 SCS will step up its program in two main areas, first civil society actors will be supported to become stronger advocates towards national governments by involving them in capacity building on governmental budget analysis and, second, build skills of partners and other actors involved in the child protection system on alternative education to PHP in the school, home and institution sectors.

International Law and Standards Relevant to Children in Armed Conflict:

Over the last ten years, there have been numerous additions to the body of international humanitarian and human rights law aimed at protecting the rights of children living in situations of armed conflict. Yet, practitioners, actors and governments are often unaware of the breadth of these new instruments and their methods of application and implementation.

Usually, their focus is on raising awareness of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the tool most widely utilized and understood by actors in the field. In the specific context of armed conflict, there is the potential for greater advocacy, awareness raising, monitoring and reporting on a wide range of commitments and norms. Due to the lack of knowledge about the legal framework for protection of children in armed conflict, as well as the tools for its implementation at the national level, many actors in the field fail to integrate new laws, resolutions and policies into their daily activities to ensure child protection. The impact of actors' work in the field can be maximized through capacity building and information sharing on these new developments. The list include:

1. 1926 The Slavery Convention
2. 1949 Geneva Convention IV Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War
3. 1950 Statute of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
4. 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees
5. 1969 Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of the Refugee Problem in Africa
6. 1973 International Labour Organization Convention 138 Concerning Minimum Age for Admission to Employment
7. 1977 Geneva Protocol I Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and Relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts
8. 1977 Geneva Protocol II Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and Relating to the Protection of Victims of Non-International Armed Conflicts
9. 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
10. 1989 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
11. 1990 African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child
12. 1993 Statute of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia
13. 1994 Statute of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda
14. 1995 Beijing Platform for Action
15. 1996 Amended Protocol II on Prohibitions or restrictions on the Use of Mines, Booby-Traps and Other Devices to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May be Deemed to be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects 1980

16. 1997 Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and the Transfer of Anti-Personnel Landmines and on their Destruction (Ottawa Treaty)
17. 1997 Mandate of the Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict
18. 1997 Cape Town Principles and Best Practices on the Recruitment of Children into the Armed Forces and on Demobilization and Social Reintegration of Child Soldiers in Africa
19. 1998 Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement
20. 1998 Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court
21. 1999 International Labour Organization Convention 182 Concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour
22. 1999 Recommendation 190 Concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour
23. 1999 Lomé Peace Accord (Sierra Leone)
24. 1999 United Nations Security Council Resolution 1261
25. 2000 Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreement (Burundi)
26. 2000 Truth and Reconciliation Commission Sierra Leone provided for in the Lomé Peace Accord 1999 Article XXVI
27. 2000 Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict
28. 2000 Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography
29. 2000 United Nations Security Council Resolution 1306
30. 2000 United Nations Security Council Resolution 1314
31. 2000 United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325
32. 2000 Resolution 1709 of the Organization of American States on Children and Armed Conflict
33. 2001 Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition, supplementing the United Nations Convention on Transnational Organized Crime
34. 2001 United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects .
35. 2001 United Nations Security Council Resolution 1379
36. 2002 Statute of the Special Court for Sierra Leone
37. 2002 Inter-Agency Standing Committee Task Force on Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse in Humanitarian Crises
38. 2003 United Nations Security Council Resolution 1460
39. 2003 Protocol V Explosive Remnants of War to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects

- 40. 2003 European Union Guidelines on Children and Armed Conflict
- 41. 2004 United Nations Security Council Resolution 1539
- 42. Organic Law N°16/2004 of 19/6/2004 Establishing the Organisation, Competence and Functioning of Gacaca Courts
- 43. 2005 United Nations Security Council Resolution 1612
- 44. 2006 United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- 45. 2006 United Nations Security Council Resolution 1674
- 46. 2008 Convention on Cluster Munitions
- 47. 2008 United Nations Security Council Resolution 1820
- 48. 2009 United Nations Security Council Resolution 1882
- 49. 2009 United Nations Security Council Resolution 1888
- 50. 2009 United Nations Security Council Resolution 1889

2005 United Nations Security Council Resolution 1612

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming its resolutions 1261 (1999) of 25 August 1999, 1314 (2000) of 11 August 2000, 1379 (2001) of 20 November 2001, 1460 (2003) of 30 January 2003, and 1539 (2004) of 22 April 2004, which contribute to a comprehensive framework for addressing the protection of children affected by armed conflict,

While noting the advances made for the protection of children affected by armed conflict, particularly in the areas of advocacy and the development of norms and standards, remaining deeply concerned over the lack of overall progress on the ground, where parties to conflict continue to violate with impunity the relevant provisions of applicable international law relating to the rights and protection of children in armed conflict,

Stressing the primary role of national governments in providing effective protection and relief to all children affected by armed conflicts,

Recalling the responsibilities of States to end impunity and to prosecute those responsible for genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes and other egregious crimes perpetrated against children,

Convinced that the protection of children in armed conflict should be regarded as an important aspect of any comprehensive strategy to resolve conflict,

Reiterating its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security and,

in this connection, its commitment to address the widespread impact of armed conflict on children,

Stressing its determination to ensure respect for its resolutions and other international norms and standards for the protection of children affected by armed conflict,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General of 9 February 2005 (S/2005/72) and stressing that the present resolution does not seek to make any legal determination as to whether situations which are referred to in the Secretary-General's report are or are not armed conflicts within the context of the Geneva Conventions and the Additional Protocols thereto, nor does it prejudice the legal status of the non-State parties involved in these situations,

Gravely concerned by the documented links between the use of child soldiers in violation of applicable international law and the illicit trafficking of small arms and light weapons and stressing the need for all States to take measures to prevent and to put an end to such trafficking,

1. Strongly condemns the recruitment and use of child soldiers by parties to armed conflict in violation of international obligations applicable to them and all other violations and abuses committed against children in situations of armed conflict;
2. Takes note of the action plan presented by the Secretary-General relating to the establishment of a monitoring and reporting mechanism on children and armed conflict as called for in paragraph 2 of its resolution 1539 (2004) and, in this regard:
 - a. underlines that the mechanism is to collect and provide timely, objective, accurate and

reliable information on the recruitment and use of child soldiers in violation of applicable international law and on other violations and abuses committed against children affected by armed conflict, and the mechanism will report to the working group to be created in accordance with paragraph 8 of this resolution; ANNEX 4 399

- b. underlines further that this mechanism must operate with the participation of and in cooperation with national government and relevant United Nations and civil society actors, including at the country-level;
 - c. stresses that all actions undertaken by United Nations entities within the framework of the monitoring and reporting mechanism must be designed to support and supplement, as appropriate, the protection and rehabilitation roles of national governments;
 - d. also stresses that any dialogue established under the framework of the monitoring and reporting mechanism by United Nations entities with non-state armed groups in order to ensure protection for and access to children must be conducted in the context of peace processes where they exist and the cooperation framework between the United Nations and the concerned government
3. Requests the Secretary-General to implement without delay, the above-mentioned monitoring and reporting mechanism, beginning with its application, within existing resources, in close consultation with countries concerned, to parties in situations of armed conflict listed in the annexes to Secretary-General's report (S/2005/72) that are on the agenda of the Security Council, and then, in close consultation with countries concerned, to apply it to parties in other situations of armed conflict listed in the annexes to Secretary-General's report

(S/2005/72), bearing in mind the discussion of the Security Council and the views expressed by Member States, in particular during the annual debate on Children and Armed Conflict, and also taking into account the findings and recommendations of an independent review on the implementation of mechanism to be reported to the Security Council by 31 July 2006. The independent review will include:

- a. an assessment of the overall effectiveness of the mechanism, as well as the timeliness, accuracy, objectivity and reliability of the information compiled through the mechanism;
 - b. information on how effectively the mechanism is linked to the work of the Security Council and other organs of the United Nations;
 - c. information on the relevance and clarity of the division of responsibilities;
 - d. information on the budgetary and other resource implications for United Nations actors and voluntary funded organizations contributing to the mechanism;
 - e. recommendations for the full implementation of the mechanism;
4. Stresses that the implementation of the monitoring and reporting mechanism by the Secretary-General will be undertaken only in the context of and for the specific purpose of ensuring the protection of children affected by armed conflict and shall not thereby prejudice or imply a decision by the Security Council as to whether or not to include a situation on its agenda;
 5. Welcomes the efforts undertaken by United Nations peacekeeping operations to implement the Secretary-General's zero-tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse and to ensure full compliance of their personnel with the United Nations code of conduct, requests the Secretary-General to continue to take all

necessary action in this regard and to keep the Security Council informed, and urges troop-contributing countries to take appropriate preventive action including predeployment awareness training, and to take disciplinary action and other action to ensure full accountability in cases of misconduct involving their personnel



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