

Child Protection Monitoring and Evaluation Reference Group Newsletter – Issue 9 – December 2013

Child Protection MERG Background

Established in July 2010, the Child Protection Monitoring and Evaluation Reference Group (CP MERG) aims at strengthening the quality of monitoring and evaluation, research and data collection in child protection, through the development of standards, tools and recommendations that are relevant for the sector. It also helps to facilitate coordination and communication across organizations on monitoring and evaluation of child protection.

For further information, please visit www.cpmerg.org.

Latest Updates in Child Protection M&E

Evaluations and Assessments

2015 Declared as International Year of Evaluation

Governments, international partners and civil society need to know how policies and programmes shape the lives of people today and in future generations. Given this, [EvalPartners](#) is facilitating a global dialogue among regional and national evaluation actors, evaluation offices of International Organizations, including UN agencies and the World Bank's Independent Evaluation Group, OECD/DAC and developing countries, private foundations and other key stakeholders. The aim of the dialogue is to advocate and promote evaluation and evidence-based policy making at international, regional, national and local levels through 2015 declared as the International Year of Evaluation at

the Third International Conference on National Evaluation Capacities organized in São Paulo, Brazil, 29 September-2 October 2013. Join this global movement by visiting [EvalYear website](#).

Preventing Violence: Evaluating Outcomes of Parenting Programmes

The result of a collaboration between the University of Cape Town, WHO, UNICEF, and the WHO-led Violence Prevention Alliance, this [report](#) seeks to increase understanding of the need for, and the process of, conducting outcome evaluations of parenting programmes in low- and middle-income countries. The guidance is aimed at policy-makers, programme planners and developers, senior practitioners in government ministries, representatives of nongovernmental and community-based organizations, and donors working in the area of violence prevention.

The publication focuses on parenting programmes to prevent child maltreatment and other forms of violence later in life such as youth and intimate partner violence. It comprises three main sections:

- Section 1 defines outcome evaluations, explains why they are important and counters some of the frequently proposed justifications for not doing them.
- Section 2 reviews the evidence for the effectiveness of parenting programmes to prevent violence, discusses adapting parenting programmes to other cultures, and identifies some of the main features of effective programmes.
- Section 3 describes the activities that need to be completed

before an evaluation can be carried out and the six steps of the evaluation process.

Supplementing this publication is a web-appendix that includes links to useful evaluation websites, evaluation guides, key scientific papers on evaluation, and a list of evaluators working in the area of parenting programmes to prevent violence.



Assessment of Child Protection Needs in Syria

In September 2013, the Child Protection Working Group (CPWG) released the main findings of an interagency assessment of child protection needs in Syria covering the period February to May 2013. A remote data collection methodology was used as well as a desk review, which took into account the findings of other processes monitoring child protection issues in the country. Data covered the governorates of Aleppo, Al-Hassakeh, Damascus, Dar'a, Homs, Idleb, and Rural Damascus. The report provides findings on key thematic areas: psychosocial wellbeing, physical violence, children associated with armed forces and armed groups, child marriage, sexual violence, child labour, separation from caregivers and access to basic services and information. This assessment report is one of the most robust and comprehensive accounts of the child protection

situation available to humanitarian and policy makers to date.

Download the [full report](#) and its [summary](#).



Data Collection

World Vision UK: Learning from Baselines and Mid-Term Evaluations for Child Protection Projects across 12 Countries

World Vision UK (WVUK) is implementing an extensive child protection programme across 12 countries to establish a baseline on child protection and monitor the child protection situation across a number of communities using a set of common indicators. Funded by a three year DFID funded Programme Partnership Agreement (see CP MERG Newsletter 1), the programme is likely to be extended for two further years. The baseline survey was developed to measure the goal indicator - *Increase in number of girls and boys who report living free from violence, abuse and exploitation over the past year* and has been administered with 2,760 children aged from 8 - 17. The survey was piloted in Cambodia and Albania and then revised. It covered personal circumstances; life skills; education and work; physical violence and, for those aged 12-17, sexual violence. Baselines were administered to a total sample of 240 children per country, of which 210 were randomly

selected and a further 30 children were specifically chosen as representative of 'most vulnerable children'. Sensitive questions, such as those on ethnicity and sexual abuse, were optional, if asking them would endanger children in any way.

The sexual abuse questions were invariably hardest to administer, with certain countries (e.g. Albania and Afghanistan) declining to use them for fear of community backlash or putting children at risk of further abuse. Others such as Cambodia and India carefully contextualised the questions and in Somaliland the focus switched to FGM violations. In some countries (e.g. Cambodia) enumerators identified indications of underreporting of sexual abuse, while others such as DRC and South Sudan experienced no difficulty in administering these questions, or eliciting responses from children. The child labour section, using questions based on UNICEF's MICS 4 household survey categories also proved challenging and time consuming for local enumerators to administer, particularly as children's interpretation of work and time recollection varied considerably. By contrast a sub-set of triangulation questions based on perceived experiences of children's work proved more effective. The physical violence questions proved most straightforward to administer. The sub totals for the violence and work and sections have been used to calculate the composite goal indicator of 'proportion of children living free from violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation' for each country. WVUK considered taking an average to be the most valid indicator since it is sensitive to changes in any one of the constituent indicators. A cumulative

approach (i.e. children had to be free of *all* types of violence, exploitation and abuse) presented the risk that progress on four of the elements could be masked by one particular element remaining unchanged.

In 2013, a mid-term evaluation was carried out at outcome level in a sample of two projects in Albania and Cambodia, which actually indicated an average *decrease* of between 2% and 3.6% in the 'proportion of children living free from violence etc.' These results highlight two particular challenges in the programme evaluation. Firstly the feasibility of surveying children on all five of the constituent elements of the indicator, as noted above. Secondly, and perhaps most significantly, the validity of the indicator as a measure of progress at an early stage of a complex and long-term change process. Reviewing comparable areas of social change, the early phase of intervention often focuses on sensitisation, which leads to increased awareness and self-reporting of a phenomenon that may not actually be increasing. Other evidence, such as triangulating results for output level indicators, suggests this to be the case. It can therefore be argued that, after an initial year of programming, targeted children tend to have greater awareness and openness with regard to protection issues and consequently more readily report in surveys that they have been the subject of abuse, violence or exploitation.

WVUK will be conducting a final evaluation survey for participating projects completing early in 2014. Some additional indicators will be used to overcome the challenges identified above and an update is planned for a future

edition of the CP MERG Newsletter.

For more information, please contact Andrew Ware, World Vision UK, Senior Child Rights Programme Adviser (andrew.ware@worldvision.org.uk) and Tracy Shields, Child Rights Programme Adviser – PPA (tracy.shields@worldvision.org.uk).

Launch of a New Phase in the International Survey of Children's Well-Being Project

The new wave of data collection of the [Children's Worlds](#) International Survey of Children's Well-Being (ISCWeB) was launched at Goethe University in Frankfurt, Germany on 4-5 July 2013. *Children's Worlds* is a world-wide research survey on children's subjective well-being carried out by the Jacobs Foundation in co-operation with a group of renowned international child well-being experts. The survey uses a self-administered questionnaire for children aged 8-12, which has been piloted in the past three years in 17 countries. This new phase of data collection was held with a representative sample of 15 countries and regions around the world: Algeria, Colombia, England, Estonia, Ethiopia, Germany, Israel, Korea, Nepal, Norway, Portugal, Romania, South Africa, Spain, and Turkey. The study aims to collect solid and representative data on children's lives and daily activities, their time use and their own perceptions and evaluations of their well-being. By collecting data in as many countries as possible, it hopes to raise awareness of children's well-being and their life situations and to influence government policies and services.

For more information on the project, please visit <http://childrensworlds.org>. Contact: Tamar Dinisman (tdinisman@gmail.com).

Research

Ethical Research Involving Children Project

Research is vital to understanding how we can improve children's lives and create a better future for all. Research methods involving children are expanding rapidly, changing the way we think about children and what they have to tell us about issues relevant to their lives. But how can we ensure these research approaches are ethically sound, children are respected and their views and perspectives gathered and reported with integrity? Faced with dilemmas and challenges, researchers often struggle to find adequate guidance and strategies.

While a range of guidance materials on research involving children is available, it was considered timely and important to bring together the best thinking internationally about key ethical issues and how these might be addressed in different research contexts. The Ethical Research Involving Children Project, a joint initiative by the UNICEF Office of Research, the Childwatch International Research Network, the Centre for Children and Young People at Southern Cross University and the Children's Issues Centre at the University of Otago, intends to provide both guidance and a forum for discussion offering advice and possible solutions. Nearly 400 members of the international research and NGO communities have contributed to this project. A range of resources have been developed

to provide clear guidance on ethical issues and concerns that can be applied in multiple research contexts. The resources include:

- An [International Charter for Ethical Research Involving Children](#): An aspirational statement of seven key commitments aimed at elevating the status, rights and well-being of all children involved in research.
- A [Compendium on Ethical Issues and Challenges](#), including a collection of over 20 case studies as well as structured questions to guide ethical research involving children.
- A website www.childethics.com specifically designed to provide a rich repository of evidence-based information, resources and links to journal articles to guide and improve research involving children and to provide a platform for further critical reflection and dialogue.

Watch an [animated video](#) that presents the project and an [interview with Associate Professor, Director, Nicola Taylor from The Children's Issues Centre at the University of Otago](#) (New Zealand).



New Research Centre to Focus on Trafficking, Child Safety and Cyberbullying

The Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (RCSI) has opened a new Cyber-Psychology Research Centre to focus on key areas of child safety online,

cyberbullying and human trafficking. It will also investigate the impact of technology on leadership, while liaising with the European Commission, the White House, MIT, Harvard, Columbia University, Interpol, the Gardaí, Scotland Yard, Los Angeles Police Department and the Australian Federal Police. According to the college, the centre will work with a range of international collaborators and serve as Ireland's centre of excellence on cyber-psychology research.

For further information on the RCSI Cyber-Psychology Research Centre, please visit www.cypsy.com/.

Joint Initiatives

Latin American Initiative to End the Institutionalization of Children under 3

Since 2012, RELAF (Latin-American Network for the Right to Live in a Family and a Community) and UNICEF have been working on a *Regional Initiative to End the Placement of Children under 3 in Residential Care Institutions*. It is currently estimated that more than 240,000 children live in institutions in that region. Many of those children are below the age of 3, which makes them more vulnerable to the damaging consequences of growing up in an institution. The aims of this Initiative are threefold: i/ training and awareness raising for governments and civil society; ii/ measuring the number of children under 3 living in institutions and the conditions they live in; and iii/ tracking the de-institutionalization processes already taking place in the region.

In September 2013, RELAF and UNICEF published a [guide](#) to accompany residential care institu-

tions in planning for de-institutionalization and a [paper](#) on the situation of boys, girls and adolescents in residential care institutions. Another recent output of the Initiative is the Communication Campaign "[Speak Up for Me](#)" that aims at raising the visibility of the issue in the region. Launched during the Ibero-American Presidential Summit held in Panama in October 2013, this Campaign rallied support from the Presidents of Costa Rica, Honduras and Paraguay.

For more information, please visit www.relaf.org, and [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) pages.



Publications

Launch of Child Helpline International's 10 Year Global Data Publication, 'Voices of Children and Young People'

"[The Voices of Children and Young People](#)", a report released at the United Nations on 20 November 2013, marks the 10th anniversary of Child Helpline International (CHI), a network of 173 child helpline members operating in 141 countries. It provides 10 years of data and analysis drawn from a series of regional studies. The publication shows that every child has the right to be heard and that child helplines respond to the needs of children and are at the forefront of child protection. Child helplines around the world are in

a unique position to listen to children and young people directly. The data collected by child helplines about the contacts made with them is a vital source of information that can be used to make informed policy decision by governments, and can help civil society organizations align their programmes in the best interest of the child or young person, so that collectively they are able to strengthen child protection systems both nationally and locally.

Watch an animated video that presents the report at <http://youtu.be/f55tWxFdap8>.

Reflections on "Disability" and Development: Do We Have the Right Focus?

CanChild Centre for Childhood Disability Research at McMaster University, Ontario, Canada, publishes thought pieces that reflect on different topics related to childhood disability research. In this *Reflections on "Disability" and Development: Do We Have the Right Focus?*, Dr. Peter Rosenbaum proposes an approach to developmental disability in which professionals focus their attention on child development as the primary guiding principle by which to offer advice, intervention, and counseling to parents. The approach emphasizes the promotion of capabilities and strengths, and encourages families to provide an environment that supports a positive view of their child's emerging capacities. It is hoped these perspectives encourage further discussion and research into a strengths-based and developmental focus on 'developmental disability'.

Read the [article](#) and visit [Can-Child Centre for Childhood Disability Research at McMaster University Website](#).

The Impact of Fostering on Foster Carers' Children - An International Literature Review

The Rees Centre at the University of Oxford published a new international report on the impact of fostering on foster carers' children (authors: Luke Nikki, Sebba Judy, Höjer Ingrid). This research review was undertaken in order to identify the ways in which carers' children might be more effectively prepared and supported when their families are fostering other children. The main review questions were i/How well are foster carers' children prepared for life in a family that fosters? ii/What is the impact of the presence of looked after children and young people on foster carers' children? Electronic databases and websites were used to identify 17 studies from Belgium, Canada, Spain, Sweden, the UK, and the US. The studies used a range of methodologies from in-depth interviews and focus groups to larger scale surveys using questionnaires.

Read the [report](#). Contact: rees.centre@education.ox.ac.uk.

A Better Way to Protect ALL Children: The Theory and Practice of Child Protection Systems, Conference Report

In November 2012, more than 130 policymakers, academics, practitioners and other experts committed to child protection systems and coming from 50 countries met in New Delhi, India over four days for a major conference entitled "A Better Way to Protect ALL Children: The Theory and Practice of Child Protection Systems." Among the sessions included one on measuring systems performance. The conference was co-hosted by four organizations - UNICEF, UNHCR, Save the Children and

World Vision. The [report from the conference](#) encapsulates the substantive content of the presentations and related discussions; provides an analysis and documents the journey; and suggest an agenda, or at least direction, for future work on child protection systems.

Events

UNICEF Webinar Series on Child Protection Systems

On 27 November 2013, UNICEF launched a Webinar Series on Child Protection Systems that aims to share recent learning and practices related to child protection systems, including a webinar on measurement and evidence building on 14 January 2014. The series will last through March 2014 and will benefit from the participation of government ministers, academics, UNICEF staff and staff from other child-focused institutions. Supporting documents for each presentation and the recorded sessions can be accessed [here](#).

"Children and Youth Affected by Armed Conflict: Where to Go from Here?" International Conference in Kampala, Uganda - Recommendations for Policy-Makers

In September 2013, a three-day international conference on [Children and Youth Affected by Armed Conflict](#) took place in Kampala, Uganda. The participants reflected on a decade of rehabilitation and reintegration processes for children and youth affected by armed conflict. During the conference, a set of [recommendations](#) for policy makers, practitioners and researchers were formulated. Among the recommendations included a call to all practitioners in this field to conduct systematic evaluations

of their work in order to establish a strong body of approved evidence, contemporary methodologies and verified best practices on successful reintegration outcomes for children and their communities.



Regional Psychosocial Forum "Mainstreaming Psychosocial Support in Child Protection: Linking Evidence and Practice" (29-31 October 2013, Kenya)

The Regional Psychosocial Support Initiative (REPSSI), in partnership with the African Network for the Prevention and Protection against Child Abuse and Neglect (ANPPCAN), organized in Nairobi the second Regional Psychosocial Forum (29-31 October 2013). Following the success of the initial forum, which took place in 2001 in Johannesburg, South Africa, this event gathered leading stakeholders including from government, civil society, academia, international, regional and community partners as well as children themselves. The forum served as a platform to explore why psychosocial care and support is essential for a nationally owned and sustainable child protection system, and how linkages should be made between child protection and psychosocial support actors.

For more information, including presentations and abstracts from sessions, please visit <http://pss-forum-2013.repssi.org/>.

For more events on child protection and M&E, please visit the [CP MERG website](#).

Capacity Building

Continuous Professional Development Courses on Research with Children and Young People at the Centre for Research on Families and Relationships (CRFR), The University of Edinburgh

The Centre for Research on Families and Relationships, The University of Edinburgh is offering in 2014 three continuous professional development courses on research and consultation with children and young people:

- [Involving Children and Young People in Research and Consultation](#) (27-28 February 2014)
- [Using Creative Methods in Research with Children and Young People](#) (27-28 March 2014)
- [Using Digital Media in Research with Children and Young People](#) (24-25 April 2014)

Courses can be taken as standalone courses or as a series of 2 or 3 classes. Accreditation options are available for all courses.

For more information please visit the www.crfr.ac.uk/. Contact: Laura Marshall, Training & Events Administrator (l.marshall@ed.ac.uk).

UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre: Research Watch on Violence against Children

Important progress has been made in deepening the understanding of violence against children. More has been learnt as well when it comes to solutions to the problem and what can be done to address it. And yet, violence against children still lacks traction on the public policy

agenda and responses are not always effective. Why and what can be done? In the UNICEF studios are Ms Michele Moloney-Kitts, Managing Director, Together for Girls; Ms Amie Kandeh, a leading voice on violence in Sierra Leone; Mr Oswaldo Montoya, Global Coordinator of the MenEngage Alliance; Ms Nduku Kilonzo, Executive Director of Liverpool VCT; and Ms Diane Swales, UNICEF's Child Protection Advisor for East Asia and the Pacific Region to share their perspectives on this question, including the need for scaling up evidence-based practices. Watch the [video](#).

CP MERG Webinar Series

In this latest webinar “My M&E, An Introduction to the Monitoring and Evaluation Website - My M&E” (9 December 2013), Celeste Serrano, Programme Assistant in the UNICEF Evaluation Office (cserrano@unicef.org), provided an overview of “[My M&E](#)”, a website that fosters knowledge sharing and networking among monitoring and evaluation practitioners worldwide. The presentation provided information on resources and tools available and discussed ways in which “My M&E” can better support child protection practitioners.

To watch the recording of the webinar and download the presentation, please visit the [CP MERG website](#). Stay tuned as more webinars are scheduled for 2014 in the framework of the CP MERG Webinar Series.

CP MERG Technical Notes

As part of the CP MERG's overall mission to strengthen the quality of monitoring and evaluation, research and data collection in child protection, the CP MERG

Secretariat has produced a series of Technical Notes, which are simple, user-friendly guides, checklists and overviews of key resources and shared learning. So far, three are available on the [CP MERG website](#): *Programmes & Data Repositories*, *Data Collection Tools*, and *Developing Child Protection Indicators*. Should you have any comments or questions regarding the Technical Notes please contact the CP MERG Secretariat (secretariat@cpmerg.org).

For more capacity building opportunities on child protection and M&E, please visit the [CP MERG website](#).



Vacancies

Consultancy assignment: Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) Regional Data Processing Consultants

UNICEF Geneva, Switzerland.

Closing date: 15 January 2014.

For more information visit: http://www.unicef.org/about/employ/index_71669.html

Consultancy assignment: Statistics Specialist

Child Protection Data and Analytics Section, UNICEF Division of Policy and Practice, New York.

Closing Date: 13 January 2014.

For more information visit: http://www.unicef.org/about/employ/index_71667.html

**Consultancy assignment:
Evaluation of the project - "Towards a Pan-African Framework of Action on the Prohibition and Elimination of Violence against Children in Africa"**

Closing date: 21 January 2014.

For more information

visit: <http://refweb.int/job/627051/evaluation-project-towards-pan-african-framework-action-prohibition-and-elimination>

Job assignment: PLAN Kenya Monitoring and Evaluation Coordination

Closing date 15 January 2014.

For more information

visit: <http://plan-international-kenya.org/jobs/>

For more M&E vacancies on child protection, please visit the [CP MERG website](http://www.cpmerg.org). You can contact the [CP MERG Secretariat](mailto:secretariat@cpmerg.org) if you would like to advertise on our site jobs and consultancies that have an M&E component.

**The CP MERG Secretariat
would like to hear from
you!**

In an effort to strengthen its knowledge management function, the CP MERG has revamped its website offering additional M&E resources. To help us further improve the website, newsletter and overall knowledge management, we invite you to take a short anonymous survey: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/NDQRXMY>.

We very much value your feedback that will help us better meet the needs of the child protection M&E community.

For more information:

Visit the CP MERG website: www.cpmerg.org

Email the CP MERG Secretariat:

secretariat@cpmerg.org

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