Improving Children's Lives through Research

Child Research and Practice Forum

Ministry of Women Children and Youth

Summaries from Presentations at the Monthly Seminar Series
of the *Child Research and Practice Forum* in 2018

Foreword by H.E. Filsan Abdullahi,
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Edited by Alula Pankhurst
Addis Ababa

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Young Lives

Foreword

H.E. Filsan Abdullahi

Minister, Ministry of Women, Children and Youth

The Child Research and Practice Forum has been hosted by our Ministry for the past ten years since 2010 and is currently celebrating its tenth year. This is an important achievement. The CRPF is a useful network for discussion and dialogue concerning children and youth in Ethiopia to promote improvements in policy and practice.

The CRPF provides an important regular opportunity for research findings on children's issues to be presented at our Ministry to stimulate discussion between our experts, those of other ministries, development partner and non-government organisations about issues facing young people in our country. The discussion can contribute to designing better policies and programmes to improve the lives of children and youth.

Our Ministry has presented our policies and plans at the CRPF on several occasions including presentations in this collection on an international workshop organised by our Ministry on the topic of violence affecting children and youth and another by a staff member on factors affecting adolescent girls' assertive behaviour. There have also been presentations of research promoted by our development partners. In this collection research sponsored by UNICEF on multi-dimensional poverty and on the longer term impacts of El Niño on children's wellbeing is featured.

This collection of summaries from 2018 follows on from the earlier summaries available on the Young Lives website (www.younglives-ethiopia.org) and will be followed soon by those for 2019.

The topics covered in this booklet include research and practice on vulnerable children, including street children, refugee children and disabled children, issues to do with nutrition, health, early childhood care and education, children's socialisation, and parent-children relations, and adolescence and girls' risks. There are examples of best practice from projects including on reducing vulnerability among women and girls and community-based child protection.

The presentations include a summary of the key findings from an international workshop organised by the Ministry of Women, Children and Youth on violence affecting children and youth, and an assessment of the work of the Federal Supreme Court's Child Justice Project Office. Other presentations have been made by international longitudinal research projects, notably by Young Lives, that was involved in initiating the CRPF and has provided organizational support for the Forum over the past ten years, GAGE, which provided support to the CRPF last year.

There have also been presentations by researchers at Ethiopian institutions and universities notably Addis Ababa University, Jimma University, and the Central Statistical Agency. Other presentations are by international interagency groups, such as the African Partnership to End Violence Against Children and local and international NGOs, notably Child Fund International, International Rescue Committee, Meseret Humanitarian Organisation and RETRAK.

Our Ministry would like to thank UNICEF and FCDO that have funded the running costs of the CRPF and the production of this collection and two other annual summaries, and Young Lives that has commissioned the production of the summaries and produced this edited collection.

We look forward to the 2019 collection and further presentations and newsletters from the CRPF.

Preface

Vincenzo Vinci, UNICEF

Chief of Social Policy and Evidence for Social Inclusion a.i.

Over the past years the CRPF confirmed its role as key forum where research findings on children and youth in Ethiopia are presented and discussed offering an important perspectives to a wider audience on how policies, programmes and practices can be better designed and implemented to ensure they are in the best interest of children.

The Forum brings together government experts, development partners, international and national organisations to debate evidence brought to the table by researchers and discuss the implications for policy and programming.
UNICEF has played a key role in promoting the Child Research and Practice Forum since it was established ten years ago in 2010, including supporting the monthly presentations at the Ministry of Women, Children and Youth, annual conferences and the production of newsletters and annual summaries.

This collection consists of 16 presentations on a wide range of topics relevant to children and youth in Ethiopia organised into the following five headings: 1) early childhood, nutrition, and socialisation, 2) multidimensional and longitudinal issues, 3) adolescences and intergenerational and family issues, 4) vulnerability and marginalised children, and 5) violence and child protection. There is also a valuable review of the Child Research and Practice Forum by academics from Addis Ababa University making useful suggestions to improve the Forum. Linkages have been also strengthened with the Policy Studies Institute.

Some evidence presented in this booklet includes UNICEF research, notably on multidimensional poverty and on the long-term Impact on children's well-being caused by el Niño. This piece of evidence was awarded by UNICEF globally as one of the best conducted across all country offices in the organisation.

UNICEF is pleased to support the work of the CRPF along with DFID and Young Lives including the production of this collection of summaries from the 2018 presentations. The annual summaries from the 2017 presentations have been brought together in a booklet produced earlier this year and a third booklet of summaries from presentations in 2019 is currently under production.

We look forward to further collaboration with the Ministry of Women, Children and Youth on CRPF activities.

Early childhood care and education challenges and opportunities of O-class education

Young Lives[1]

Introduction

Exposure to good-quality early childhood education is one of the most effective ways to improve children's preparation for formal schooling, and investment in early learning has been linked to long-term economic benefits and enhanced human capital. Yet until recently, access to preschool has been very limited in Ethiopia, and almost non-existent in rural areas.

As part of its research into early childhood care and education (ECCE), Young Lives carried out a study to better understand the perceptions of parents, communities and service providers on the provision of early learning in O-Class.

Methodology

The study took place in four communities in four regions: Amhara, Oromia, SNNPR, and Tigray in May 2017. All the sites involved are communities that have taken part in Young Lives longitudinal research since 2002.

Focus group discussions were conducted with *woreda* experts and *kebele* committees, parents and Younger Cohort boys and girls now in Grade 7 and 8,

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[1] Presented by Kiros Birhanu in January 2018.

to compare current conditions to those when they were in O-Class. There were also key informant interviews with school directors and O-Class teachers and facilitators. The researchers also used structured observations to examine indoor and outdoor facilities including classrooms, toilets, water sources, teaching aids and textbooks.

Findings

Understanding ECCE needs

Understanding of community members: Various stakeholders in the communities share broadly similar understandings about children's needs prior to going to school. These include:

- o *health:* including vaccination, nutritional support, traditional healing and access to safe water;
- o *protection:* for example, from fire, animals, roads and being beaten by other children;
- o *socialisation:* such as providing moral guidance and developing communication skills; and
- o *education:* including how to read and write some letters and numbers.

Understanding of service providers: The study found that service providers' understanding is generally similar to those of community members. They also mentioned the need for modern, rather than traditional services and the importance of high quality provision. For example, health professionals want improved vaccinations and health treatments and facilities as per Ministry of Health standards.

Parental understanding of the contribution of O-class: Many of the parents interviewed contrasted the current situation with that of their older children who had not benefitted from preschool, and who had poorer language skills and were less well prepared for Grade one. The study found that parents believe that O-Class helps children to:

- o read and write letters in both local languages and English;
- o familiarise themselves with the school environment, teacher-student relationships, school regulations, discipline and hygiene; and
- o play and communicate with other children and gain the confidence to ask questions and express themselves.

System level challenges

Lack of interest: Participants from Oromia and Tigray said that the School Director from their respective primary schools do not follow up on the education of younger children in O-Class. Thy also said that the management of O-Class is poor compared with the primary school and there is no replacement when the O-Class teacher is absent.

Teachers' qualification and remuneration: Teachers and school directors from across the three sites suggested that the majority of the O-class teachers have not obtained proper training. The terms of employment and low salary were also mentioned as challenges among many O-class teachers interviewed. Unequal pay and unequal terms of employment appear to be negatively affecting the motivation of teachers in the study sites and this may be impacting the quality of the teaching delivered.

School level challenges

Safety concerns: In some cases parents felt that the schools were too far for

young children to travel to or difficult to access due to steep terrain or dangerous roads. Within the schools there were concerns about the safety and security of small children where the O-Classes were not separate from the primary school and didn't have a guard to protect the children.

Lack of age appropriate facilities and infrastructure: Many of the parents interviewed were concerned about the facilities available. Among other things, they cited classrooms that were small and overcrowded, a lack of desks and chairs designed for small children, a shortage of books and the absence of sleeping areas and suitable toilets.

Absence of school feeding: In the Oromia site, school feeding had been provided the previous year, but this had stopped, leading to increases in children dropping out. In the Tigray site school feeding was only meant for primary grades: O-Class children were also fed but some did not like the porridge provided.

Community level challenges

Unfamiliarity with ECCE: Lack of awareness was cited across all the study cites as the main reason across why communities do not send their children to O-class. Some of those interviewed suggested holding awareness sessions and campaigns to promote the benefits of early education. Community members from Amhara recommended conducting an education conference at which the service providers and parents could come together to explore the major challenges and discuss how to overcome them.

Recommendations

The rapid scaling up of preschool, especially through the O-Class programme, has resulted in a huge increase in access to preschool, with particular benefits for children living in rural and remote areas, in the emerging regions, and those from poorer backgrounds. However, ensuring that the aim of O-Class to improve school readiness is met and the potential equity benefits fulfilled will require:

- a system that allows communities to contribute in kind, cash and labour towards resources that can lead to the improvement of O-class service;
- strong monitoring and evaluation system for the O-class programme across the regions;
- the expansion of training and materials on special needs education so that O-class is accessible for all children;
- cross-government collaboration to ensure a more holistic approach to ECCE in which children's health, protection and social welfare are also included;
- improved access to age-appropriate facilities and equipment; and
- improved security to protect children from bullying and attacks from children attending the formal primary schools.

The issue of whether a single year of preschool education is sufficient and whether the cost of additional years can be covered also requires further consideration. The insights of this qualitative study deserve additional discussion and should be reviewed in the context of further diagnostic work on early childhood development.

Child health, nutrition and cognitive scores: empirical evidence from Young Lives Ethiopia

Young Lives[2]

Introduction

Good nutrition is an essential foundation for children's development. Under-nutrition is a cause of stunting (low height-for-age) and is a key factor leading to preventable child mortality, as well as being linked with greater susceptibility to illness. It is also associated with long-term effects on children's later outcomes including learning and psycho-social development.

Despite progress, child malnutrition in Ethiopia remains high and its impacts far reaching. Malnutrition is understood to contribute to the deaths of 270,000 under fives each year. Nearly two out of every five children are stunted and 67 per cent of the adult population have suffered from stunting as children. 16 per cent of all repetitions in primary school are associated with stunting while child mortality associated with under-nutrition has reduced Ethiopia's workforce by 8 per cent.

There is little empirical evidence on the effect of childhood malnutrition on children's cognitive achievements in low-income countries like Ethiopia. Young Lives has used the longitudinal data on growth and nutrition it has collected to investigate whether stunting at the ages of 1 and 5 does indeed, limit children's cognitive skills at age 8 or 12.

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[2] Presented by Dr Mesele Araya in July 2018.

Methodology

The children studied were selected from 20 sentinel sites of Ethiopia's five major regions –Tigray, Amhara, Oromia, SNNP and Addis Ababa. In each region three to five sentinel sites were selected, with a balanced representation of poor and less-poor households, and urban and rural areas. Finally, from each sentinel site 100 children who were born between April 2001 and June 2002 (the Younger Cohort) and 50 children born between April 1994 and June 1995 (the Older Cohort) were selected using simple random sampling.

As the aim of this study was to examine the impact of early childhood stunting on cognitive performance of children aged 5 and 8, the researchers, however, made use of data only from the Younger cohort who were first appraised in 2002 when they were around age one.

The children were then re-interviewed in 2006 and 2009. At the beginning, there was no refusal from parents of the children to be part of the long-term study, but once started some children were untraceable and some others refused to give responses up to round three. Additionally, 72 children died up to the third round. Excluding these deaths, the total attrition rate over eight years was 2.15 per cent, reducing the sample of the children to 1884 by the third round.

Also:

- Children's cognitive achievements were measured by using the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT) (Dunn & Dunn, 1997), Cognitive Developmental Assessment Quantitative (CDA-Q) and mathematics tests.
- The Ethics Committee of University of Oxford approved the validity and reliability of the tools used in each survey.
- The Ethiopian Development Research Institute (EDRI) managed the data collection process.

- All cognitive achievement tests were also adapted to the Ethiopian context and translated into local languages during the test administration.

- In order to re-establish experimental conditions in a non-experimental setting, the researchers used the Propensity Score Matching (PSM) model to estimate the effect of childhood stunting on cognitive performance of children aged 5 and 8 years.

Findings

- One-third of sample children were stunted by the age of 5, which declined to 27 per cent at the age of 15.

- A marked difference in cognitive scores between stunted and non-stunted children were observed.

- The propensity score matching results from the Kernel analysis shows that stunted children scored 16.1 per cent less in PPVT test and 48.8 per cent less in Mathematics test at the age of eight,

- This may imply that chronic infant malnutrition is associated with long-term consequences for children's development including lower cognitive achievement and poorer school achievement.

- Despite improvement in the nutritional status of the Young Lives children between 2009 and 2016, rates of chronic malnutrition remain very high. The level of thinness is especially a cause for concern as about 35 per cent of the Younger Cohort children are still experiencing wasting, compared to a global average of 7.7 per cent in 2016 (UNICEF /WHO/World Bank, 2017).

Conclusion

Since providing a balanced diet and health services are the key for children's nutritional achievements, efforts – and perhaps increased resources – should be devoted to improving prenatal and postnatal care, parental education and other related environmental factors.

As poverty is known to play an important role in the nutritional status of children, policy measures that are directed towards improving households' livelihoods may have a further impact on improving child health and consequently on their overall growth.

Ethiopia's Government recognises that eliminating stunting is a necessary step for growth and transformation and the Seqota Declaration illustrates their aspiration to end child undernutrition by 2030. However, the declaration may not bring the desired result *per se* and real commitment through inter-sectoral engagement (social protection, education, and other sectors) is needed to "end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture" (Goal 2 of SDGs).

Socialisation practice in Ethiopia: An inventory of folklore genres pertaining to parenting and socialisation among the Ethiopian communities

Dejene Gemechu, Jimma University[3]

Introduction

Passed down through the oral tradition, folklore is as old as the hills. As a tool of socialisation, it teaches listeners to be more keenly observant, to be more considerate of others and to the world around them. It helps model behaviors and reinforces expectations about how to live a meaningful life and the roles they are expected to play as members of society.

To understand the impact of folklore on parenting, child rearing and socialisation, the ESSSWA made an inventory of folklore genres among seven communities in Tigrawy, Amhara, Oromo, Sidama, Nyangatom, Gamo, Konso. The specific research objectives were to:

- collect context-specific oral narratives and children games as possible;
- assess the political, social, and economic implications of oral narratives and games;
- pinpoint their positive and negative implications in socialisation process;
- make an inventory of folklores, proverbs and story-telling traditions that is associated with child socialisation;

- review existing books, short monologs, dialogues and other relevant literature for reference concerning the roles of folks, proverbs on child rearing practice;
- contribute to the development of the final ESSSWA branded parenting skill training manual; and
- identify major barriers and opportunities in inculcating discipline, social norms and values in the socialisation process of children in the study communities

Methodology

The researchers commonly used qualitative approach to generate data from the field, with the exception of the data from Gojjam in Amhara National Regional State. In all cases the researchers collected qualitative data by using key informant interviews, focus group discussion and observation while children performed riddles, puzzles and plays. Different published and unpublished documents and other reports directly related to the topic were also analysed.

Findings

The inventory revealed both positive and negative impacts of folklore on the areas of childcare, child-parent interactions, gender, morality, logical thinking, politics, tolerance, the economy and language.

Childcare: some folklore speaks to both the principles guiding childcare and its practices. Proverbs such as 'a tree is straightened while it is young' indicates the role of the parents in socialisation processes while on the other hand sayings such as 'an immoral father cannot advise his children well' suggest that the development of a child is predestined and as a result, beyond the capacity of parents to influence.

Child-parent interactions: some sayings suggest that parents should avoid their children ('when you eat with a child, you end up quarrelling') whereas others advise closer contact ('don't be hated by a growing child').

Gender: folklore provides what is commonly termed as anticipatory socialisation, in which children rehearse their future position as a man or a woman, as a husband or a wife. The story of Akko Manoye appears to be a tool in disempowering women or denying women political power. There are ample proverbs that state the virtues of women ('a good woman is a crown for her husband' 'behind every successful man is a strong woman').

Morality: socialisation helps to control human behaviour with the aim of maintaining social order and reinforcing social norms and values. Folklore communicates moral issues to children in order to teach them of behaviours which receive collective approval or disapproval from the society in which they live.

Folklore and natural and social environment: children are socialised to understand and appreciate social and natural environments. There is no single folklore genre which exclusively serves this purpose. Instead one finds an element of environmental and social knowledge and views in riddle, folktales, myths, legends and plays.

Mathematical and logical thinking: folklore that presents mathematical concepts enhances the logical and critical thinking skills of the children. For example, the story of the Puzzle of the Six Cannibals requires children to think critically to avoid any risky association of the river crossing groups.

Politics: is also part of the socialisation endeavors which societies communicate through folklore. For example, the story of the King of the Monkeys shows how a leader who is unfriendly to its subjects will fail miserably.

Tolerance, prudence and alertness: a number of stories teach children to be cautious and prudent as well as tolerant in their day-to day activities. Children are also instructed to take care of choosing friends ('a calf which spent the day with a donkey learned to fart like a donkey').

The economy: folklore that speaks to the values attached to working hard – such as 'lazy boy waits for the death of his father to inherit his father's property' – were common in all the areas studied.

Language: since they are oral in nature, folklore genres develop the listening, speaking and understanding skills of participating children. For example, 'Tongue Twisters' are designed specifically to support children's speech development.

Conclusion

The socialisation of children through folklore appears to be in decline with both children and parents complaining of their dwindling knowledge of stories that were once told. The collection and analysis of different genres is needed to save folklore while curriculum designers and schools need to pay better attention to local knowledge as a means of supports effective teaching and learning.

Multi-dimensional child deprivation in Ethiopia: First national estimates

Central Statistics Agency, Ethiopia and UNICEF[4]

Introduction

Ethiopia has experienced an impressive rate of economic growth during the last decade. Despite the improvements made and high economic growth, the development process has not equally benefited the most vulnerable groups. Some 13 million children are estimated to live in poor households in Ethiopia, 2 million of whom in extreme poverty. Children account for more than half of the population of the country.

For Ethiopia to escape out of the vicious circle of poverty and pave the way for achieving its vision to reach the level of middle income nation by 2025, it has to deepen its understanding of the multiple dimensions of child poverty.

By analysing the Ethiopian Demographic and Health Survey datasets from 2011 and 2016, this study aims to help sectors to better understand multidimensional deprivation experienced by children and help trigger policy makers to approach child poverty in an integrated and comprehensive manner through child sensitive policies and programming.

Methodology

The report adapted the global Multi-Dimensional Overlapping Deprivation Analysis (MODA) methodology and used information available from national data sets such as the Ethiopian Demographic and Health Surveys (EDHS) of 2011 and 2016. MODA has been widely used by 32 countries in Africa to analyse child well-being.

The methodology defines multi-dimensional child poverty as non-fulfilment of basic rights contained in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and concludes that a child is poor if he or she is deprived in three to six age-specific dimensions.

For the EDHS 2016, a total of 16,650 households were interviewed, in which 15,683 interviews were completed with women age 15-49 years and 12,688 with men age 15-59 years. Overall, the dataset contains information on 37,892 children under 18. The data for EDHS 2011 were collected between December 2010 and June 2011. A total of 16,703 households were interviewed, in which 16,515 interviews were completed with women age 15-49 years, and 14,110 with men age 15-59 years. Overall, this dataset contains information on 36,229 children under 18.

The report's findings have been validated through an extensive consultative process involving the Ministry of Women, Children and Youth, National Planning Commission, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs together with the Economic Policy Research Institute, among others.

Findings

The study found that 88 per cent of children in Ethiopia under the age of 18 (36 million) lack access to basic services in at least three basic dimensions of the nine studied, with lack of access to housing and sanitation being the most acute. The study also revealed:

- that there are large geographical inequalities: 94 per cent children in rural areas are multi-dimensionally deprived compared to 42 per cent of children in urban areas;

- high disparities across areas and regions of residence in terms of average number deprivations in basic rights or services. For example, multi-dimensionally deprived children residing in rural areas experienced 4.5 deprivations in accessing basic rights and needs on average compared to 3.2 among their peers in urban areas;

- across Ethiopia's regions, rates of child poverty range from 18 per cent in Addis Ababa to 91 per cent in Afar, Amhara, and SNNPR. Poverty rates are equally high in Oromia and Somali (90 per cent each) and Benishangul-Gumuz (89 per cent);

- the percentage of children deprived in three to six dimensions decreased from 90 per cent to 88 per cent between 2011 and 2016 and the average number of deprivations that each child is experiencing decreased from 4.7 to 4.5 dimensions during the same period;

- given their large population sizes, Oromia, Amhara, and SNNPR regions are the largest contributors to multi-dimensional child deprivation in Ethiopia. These three regions jointly account for 34 of the 36 million deprived children in Ethiopia, with Oromia having the highest number at 16.7 million, SNNPR at 8.8 million, and Amhara at 8.5 million. Regions with the lowest number of poor children are Harar at 90,000, Dire Dawa at 156,000, and Gambella at 170,000; and

- most children in Ethiopia face multiple and overlapping deprivations. Ninety-five per cent of children in Ethiopia are deprived of two to six basic needs and services, while only one per cent have access to all services;

- MCD in Ethiopia is associated with children's area of residence, education attainment of family members, father's economic activity and occupation, access to services, and child protection.

Recommendations

- Mainstream single and multidimensional child deprivation indicators in national development plans and/or strategies.
- Child-sensitive budgeting at the national and regional level to enhance equality and equity.
- Promote multi-sectoral approach in programme and policy design for effective poverty reduction.
- Enhance evidence-based policymaking in the area of child poverty and deprivation reduction through continuous support of data collection activities and improvements to the existing tools.

Generation El Niño: long-term impact on children's well-being

Oxford Policy Management and UNICEF[5]

Introduction

In general, Ethiopia experiences significant variability in rainfall, and research suggests that the country is experiencing further warming trends driven by climate change (USGS and USAID, 2012). The 2015 El Niño episode sparked drought across large parts of eastern, southern and central Ethiopia. Failed rainy seasons caused acute and widespread crop failure, asset depletion and food insecurity. Children were amongst the most vulnerable and their well-being was severely affected.

With no sign of abating, persistent drought episodes will place millions of children at risk in terms of their long-term well-being and future development. Children's needs and aspirations must be integrated within a clear strategic framework of resilience-building that provides a shared reference point for humanitarian and development efforts.

This research aims to contribute to this effort by:

- generating evidence and building understanding on the long-term impacts of the 2015 El Niño on households and children's well-being; and
- utilising this evidence to inform programming for UNICEF and wider policy decisions for UNICEF's partners in the Government of Ethiopia, so that their interventions are more effective in reducing or preventing long-term negative impacts on children.

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[5] Presented by Dr Terry Roopnaraine, Oxford Policy Management in February 2018.

Methodology

The qualitative driven research informing this study was undertaken between August and October 2017 across Afar, Amhara, Oromia, SNNPR and Tigray. A total of 649 respondents (adults and children, male and female) at regional level and 21 key informants at federal level informed the research through focus group discussions, key informant interviews and household case studies. *Woredas* and *kebeles* were purposively sampled to include pastoralist, agricultural and agro-pastoralist sites that were amongst the worst affected by the El Niño drought in 2015.

Findings

<u>Short term impacts and effects</u>

Children's well-being was clearly compromised as a short-term result of the drought.

- Crop failure resulted in an immediate reduction in the amount of self-cultivated foods and income earned from selling cash crops in agricultural and agro-pastoralist *kebeles*, and lack of animal feed in pastoralist and agro-pastoralist *kebeles*.
- The frequency, size and dietary diversity of meals was affected – with chronic hunger impacting on children's attendance and performance at school.
- Livestock herds were sharply reduced through death and destocking.
- There were major impacts on water availability for domestic use, as water sources (natural and piped) dried up.
- Children suffered from thirst in the extreme heat and their skin became irritated and cracked while waiting in the sun at water points.

<u>Coping mechanisms, effect on children</u>

Intensifications or transformations of existing coping strategies were influenced by livelihood orientation as well as being mediated by external factors and interventions. Broadly, the drought increased children's participation in work, with implications for educational attainment and human capital accumulation in the long-term.

- Economic migration increased (agricultural and agro- pastoralist kebeles), and took on a greater importance.
- The age range of migrants expanded to include young boys aged 7-13.
- Economic migration exposed children (especially younger children) to exploitation and poor treatment.
- For some, remittances became 'even more important' during drought (although there were some cases where nothing was sent).
- Transhumant journeys became longer (distance and duration), with younger children expressing concerns for safety.
- Transhumance and economic migration had negative impacts on school attendance and drop-outs, especially among older boys.
- Younger children involved in income generating activities.
- Water collection increased in duration and distance by girls who were also exposed to potential abuse along the route.
- Financial coping mechanisms included loan access, but high interest problematic.
- Money was used for immediate consumption rather than for productive investments.
- Solidarity and social capital were important factors in enabling households to cope – especially in pastoralist societies.

Interventions and influence on well-being

Overall, and in all research communities, aid played a critical role in mitigating the impacts of the drought on vulnerable households generally, and on children in particular. In various cases, the arrival of aid in 2016 was significant in easing the severity of household situations – with community members in Gurwure and Guba Lafto emphasising that things had been worse in 2015 because of the lack of aid.

Longer term impacts on well being

A lack of resilience has serious implications for children's long-term well-being. When a household is unable to maintain its livelihoods base, the negative coping strategies undertaken (for example, migration, labour, withdrawal from school) influence long-term threats to familial unity, children's safety, as well as social and human capital.

- In agricultural and agro-pastoral *kebeles*, children were increasingly 'urban' in terms of their aspirations, attitudes and activities. This, along with trends of migration and industrialisation, contributed to feelings of social isolation and a perception that traditional networks were dissolving.
- Children articulated their dreams alongside sadness, fear and worry about the future – exacerbated by what drought implied for the decisions households faced.
- Children (7-18) expressed a general sense of disempowerment and lack of agency in determining their future life courses.
- Immediate impacts and coping strategies had negative impacts on school attendance and dropouts, especially among older boys (13- 18) who often did not rejoin.
- Drought, in some cases, resulted in the postponement of marriages to avert economic outlay and due to the migration of older boys. Yet, following the drought, early marriage was resumed, posing a threat to

girls' life choices and educational opportunities, with older girls (13-18) not returning to school.

Policy and programming recommendations

It is critical to take a long-term perspective on how to reduce vulnerability and 'drought proof' human and socio-economic development. A child-focused perspective should take into account children's particular needs, contexts, developmental trajectories and aspirations.

- Strengthen institutional and strategic foundations for child-sensitive disaster risk management (DRM) and support the National Disaster Risk Management Committee to act as effective focal point.

- Develop a comprehensive strategy for building children's resilience to droughts across sectors that is grounded in children's perspectives and aligned with other development policy frameworks.

- Ensure resilience interventions are reflected and integrated across sectors (nutrition, health, WASH, education, child protection).

- Design strategies and interventions that build skills, contacts and support for youth employment.

- Support mechanisms that build social capital to support recovery and children and youth in migration.

<u>Future research</u>

The presentation concluded with suggestions for further research to explore:
- childrens' situations in drought:
  - The consequences for well-being, strategic implications for development partners;
  - Child migration/child migrants in urban contexts;
  - Intra-familiar relations strategic implications for development partners;

- disaster response/management:
  - Synergies/contradictions in strategies/programmes for DRM, poverty reduction, food security and economic development; and
  - Comparative analysis of vulnerability at *woreda* level.

Intergenerational divides: exploring the patterning of adolescent-parent relationships, opportunities and risks in Ethiopia

Gender and Adolescence Global Evidence[6]

Introduction

While the impact of parenting on adolescent psychosocial well-being is well documented, almost all the research is from the global North, ignoring both cultural differences and pragmatic realities like extreme poverty. How can parents who were raised in more authoritarian cultures move towards respecting their children's agency? How can parents who have no education see that while their children are learning, they still require guidance?

Gender and Adolescence: Global Evidence (GAGE) is a longitudinal research programme exploring the gendered experiences of 20,000 young people in six focal countries, two each in Africa (Ethiopia, Rwanda), Asia (Bangladesh, Nepal) and the Middle East (Jordan, Lebanon). By finding out 'what works' with regards to adolescent psychosocial well-being and voice and agency in Ethiopia, the programme aims to help transform the lives of adolescent girls and enable them to move out of poverty and exclusion, and fast-track social change. GAGE conducted research to help better understand the shifting inter-generational relationships and the ways in which adolescents and parents are navigating these. In this presentation, their findings are demonstrated by using the voices of those interviewed.

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[6] Presented by Dr Guday Emirie, Workneh Abebe, Dr Nicola Jones, Abreham Iyasu in April 2018.

Methodology

The programme takes a mixed methods impact evaluation approach to develop its baseline using data collected in selected sites in Afar, Amhara and Oromia regional states and Dire Dawa city.

- *Quantitative survey:*
  o adolescent girls and boys and their caregivers
  o two age cohorts: 10-12 years and 15-17 years in rural and urban locales, in programme intervention and non-intervention sites
  o sub-sample of adolescents with disabilities
- *Qualitative research*
  o nodal adolescents, their siblings, caregivers, community leaders
  o nested sample of adolescents with disabilities
  o key informant interviews and historical   process tracing with officials, service providers and donors
- *Annual qualitative research*
  o nodal adolescents, their caregivers and peer networks to better pinpoint shifts in adolescent capabilities over time
  o social network analysis to understand evolving influence of peer groups
- Qualitative research tools used:
  o community mapping and timeline, including changing norms and perceptions of adolescents
  o key informant interviews with district and community level officials, service providers, adolescent empowerment programme graduates
    - in-depth interviews with adolescents and parents on their experiences and perspectives relating to the second decade of life
    - FGDs with adolescents using participatory community mapping, vignettes to explore social norms and body mapping

- inter-generational trios to explore generational shifts regarding adolescent experiences and age and gender-related social norms

Selected findings

Education: A positive change

"The attitude of the people towards education was poor in the past…now our families understand their mistake." (Father, Afar)

"I am educating all my children in private school by paying monthly fee even if my income is low, I want them to get better quality education." (Father, Batu)

Trading work for school

"During our childhood age everything was done by the children. There is no workload on the children at present." (Father, Afar)

"He learns the whole day and comes home at 4:30pm and then his tutor comes and stays until 8pm. So the only free time he has is for sleeping and making his exercise books ready." (Mother, Dire Dawa)

Respecting children's choices

"I want my daughter to have a job that she is interested in, if she refused I don't want to enforce her." (Father, Afar)

"Now it is up to girls' decision to make the right choice." (Mother, Dire Dawa)

Regretting children's choices

"Today adolescent boys and girls are abandoning their culture; they are not fearing and respecting their elders, parents, and their cultures." (Father, Afar)

"Children these days are not wise and do not protect themselves from unwanted pregnancy though they are educated and the service is available." (Mother, Dire Dawa)

Blaming 'children's rights'

"The government brought democracy for the children. So, just like women, children have rights and protection by the government." (Father, Afar)

"Children see all things from the angle of their rights. Today if you say no to their questions, they ask you for a reason why you declined their requests…they relate everything to their right." (Mother, Dire Dawa)

<u>Technology as a positive force</u>

"They communicate each other and also with others in another locality, share information, talking about politics, and they know many things which we didn't know in our time." (Father, Afar)

"I have hearing disability and people don't know the sign language, it helps me to easily communicate through text messages." (18 years old boy with hearing disability, Dire Dawa).

<u>Technology as a negative force</u>

"Now adolescents have a mobile phone and have different music and plays on it. They never hear their parents and also elders." (Father, Afar)

"They are occupied with it for 24 hours as if they are someone who is administrating the country." (Mother, Dire Dawa)

<u>Peer pressure</u>

"Even if you tell your children not to use these things (Facebook), their friends can influence and show them." (Mother, Dire Dawa)

"It is common to follow trends, but some of them spend their time in inappropriate places like bars, shisha houses and the like without the permission of their parents. I want to stay away from these kinds of people." (Younger boy, Dire Dawa)

<u>Risks of urban life</u>

"I sometimes think wealthy living standard is not good for the children. They skip school and try to become rich by trying things they can't do." (Father, Amhara)

"Many teenagers who come from other places are being exposed to rape and unwanted pregnancy." (Mother, Dire Dawa)

<u>Age-old parenting advice</u>

"I advise them to respect other people, in particular those who are older to them.

I advise them to extend greetings whenever they meet their elders while on streets." (Father, Oromia)

<u>Careful supervision</u>

"I control their day to day school activity, when they come home from school I ask them how school was and every detail they have." (Father, Amhara)

"My father together with my mother counsels me a lot about my education. They advise me a lot about my education." (Younger boy, Dire Dawa)

<u>Minding friendships</u>

"I mainly support them on choosing good friends, I don't want them to hang out with ill-mannered and silly students." (Father, Amhara)

"I don't allow my children to be in their friends' house and their friends to come to our house." (Mother, Dire Dawa)

<u>Monitoring technology…sometimes</u>

"My father has banned everyone in the house from watching KANA." (Younger boy, Dire Dawa)

"My mother has uploaded every app on the iPad she gave me – including Facebook – but not games. Then my uncle uploaded me the Quran." (Younger girl, Dire Dawa)

<u>Talking through decisions</u>

"So I always take time with my children as well as answer any of their questions. We have open discussion in the family and make her tell me about the things she has come across at school. As a result, she tells me everything." (Mother, Dire Dawa)

"I tell them not to be too friendly (with boys). They need to concentrate on their studies." (Father, Amhara

<u>Mixed support for parenting</u>

"We hear a lot about parenting practices on TV and radio." (Mother, Dire Dawa)

"Everything is hidden in the community because our culture has an impact on

that. There is no way people are made to learn from the experience of the other."
(Mother, Dire Dawa)

Conclusions and policy implications

Robust national and international frameworks are supporting children's rights, but parents are not well trained about how to guide their school children who are exposed to different technologies and medias. So, there is a need for parenting manuals and skill training for parents on how parents can guide their children on the use of new technologies and exercising their rights without losing their social and cultural obligations.

The fast rate of urbanisation and urban life style means that a large number of adolescent girls are facing significant risks such as street life, commercial sex work, addiction, HIV/AIDS, sexual violence and economic poverty. This needs a strong inter-sectoral collaborative efforts and the full participation of community based structures to understand the root causes and to tackle problems. Involving adolescents themselves in programme design and evaluation can also be part of the solution.

The expansion of schools and investments in children's education is a major driver of change in discriminatory gender based social norms and in improving respect for adolescents' choice and rights. However, many older adults are uncomfortable with the discourse surrounding children & children's choices and rights, opting instead for strong social sanctions on 'disobedient' adolescents. Strong awareness raising activities are needed to reduce such intergenerational divides and gaps.

Inadequate support and guidance from parents and other family members, peers, teachers and other community members is a critical concern in terms of adolescent exposure to risks. For adolescents who lack appropriate parenting or adult guidance and role models, the newly emerging social worker cadre in Ethiopia under the mandate of Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MOLSA) could play a key role.

Family related factors affecting adolescent girls' assertive behaviour

Million Fikru, Ministry of Women Children and Youth[7]

Introduction

Adolescence is a unique and challenging time for young people as they walk the fine line between child and adulthood; asserting their independent choices and voices yet still needing the protections afforded to them by virtue of them lawfully being children. For adolescent girls struggling for gender equality, this journey is particularly tricky.

Although several studies have been conducted on adolescent girls in Ethiopia, most of them have focused on their sexual, reproductive and mental health or on economic empowerment rather than their need for assertiveness. This study attempts to address this gap by exploring how family-related factors hinder adolescent girls' assertive behaviour and the impact this has on their self confidence and their ability to communicate their agency.

Research objectives

- To understand the available literature adolescent girls' assertive behavior.

- To identify the family-related factors affecting adolescent girls' assertive behavior.

- To suggest possible recommendations to help minimise the problems that affect adolescent girls' assertive behavior.

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[7] Presented by Million Fikru based on his Masters research in June 2018.

<u>Literature review</u>

Before commencing the study, the researchers reviewed national and global empirical studies covering concepts of adolescence, the development stages of adolescents, adolescents and rights and Erickson's work on the different stages of psychosocial development. They found that:

- parents find themselves in conflict between how much freedom to grant, and how much control to assert over the young person who is simultaneously a child and an adult;

- fostering mutual respect and an appreciation of the positions of both parties is the key;

- according to Erickson's theory, parents should give their children the chance develop independent thinking and examine their own identity;

- likewise, adolescents should be assertive in articulating their rights but without violating the rights of their family and the community as a whole: and

- that this kind of assertiveness will help adolescent girls' fight discriminations against their rights in their adulthood.

<u>Methodology</u>

Interviews were carried out with 284 adolescent girls from Yeka sub city *woreda* and Karallo primary school in Addis Ababa as well as with four key informants from the study area's administration office.

The research took two different types of methodological approach:

- *the descriptive approach:* to describe the status of adolescent girls' understanding towards assertive behavior and assess the key factors that affect assertive behavior itself; and

- *explanatory research design:* to show the effects of parent–adolescent relationships, communication, parental support and demographic variables on the assertive behaviors of adolescent girls.

Findings

Status of adolescent girls' understanding towards assertive behavior

- The majority of the students interviewed did not know what was meant by the term assertive behavior and reported a low assertive behavior score (below the mean 0.72).

- In spite of coverage in the mass media (e.g. newspapers, radio, television, magazines and others) the research found that adolescent girls first heard about assertive behavior from their families.

- The study found that the majority of the respondents had not undertaken any kind of assertiveness skill training.

Family-related factors affecting adolescent girls' assertive behavior

- Parental support and communication were positively and significantly linked with assertive behavior of the adolescent girls.

- The research found that adolescent girls aged 14-16 were more than those adolescent girls who were 10-13 years old.

- However there was no significant difference between the mean assertive behavior of girls between age groups 10- 13 and 17-19 as well as between age groups 14-16 and 17-19.

Recommendations

- Parents should improve their support of, and communication with, their adolescent daughters in order to nurture their assertive behavior.

- Assertiveness skill training should be provided for adolescent girls.

- Government agencies and other stakeholders need to design and implement empowerment strategies for girls that incorporate assertiveness behavior.

Learning from an adolescent girls' project in refugee camps in Ethiopia

International Rescue Committee[8]

Introduction

Adolescence is a distinctly challenging and critical time for girls, during which they face immense social barriers that limit them from leading safer, healthier and more self-sufficient lives. Adolescent girls living in crisis-affected communities, including refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs), are at increased risk of gender-based violence (GBV), including sexual violence and exploitation, intimate partner violence and early and forced marriage.

Funded by the UK Department for International Development (DFID), the Creating Opportunities through Mentoring, Parental Involvement and Safe Spaces (COMPASS) programme sought to create safe spaces for adolescent girls. Managed by the IRC in partnership with Columbia University, the programme helped to deliver a life skills curriculum for girls through young adult female mentors, working with parents to develop a supportive environment and training and supporting service. The programme was implemented between 2013-2017 with refugees living in camps in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), north-west Pakistan and on the Sudan-Ethiopia border.

Although there is a growing body of information on the prevalence of GBV against girls, there is still little research available specific to adolescent girls in humanitarian settings. As a result, there is also a lack of rigorous evidence on effective strategies for protecting adolescent girls in humanitarian settings from

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[8] Presented by Asham Assazenew, International Rescue Committee Community Wellbeing Initiative in April 2018.

GBV and helping them recover. To help address this gap, the programme conducted an impact evaluation to assess whether the adolescent girls' life skills sessions conducted as part of COMPASS had an impact on the girls' exposure to GBV and their social and health outcomes.

This presentation focused on the outcomes of the evaluation in Ethiopia where the programme operated in three refugee camps in Benshangul-Gumuz region.

Methodology

Following programme enrolment and the completion of baseline survey data, adolescent girls were placed into COMPASS groups and then randomly assigned to one of two clusters:

- intervention group – adolescent girls receive life skills sessions and parents/caregivers take part in group discussions; and
- waitlist group – no intervention (COMPASS was then delivered after completion of the endline).

Two qualitative methods were introduced with a sub-sample of adolescent girls, their parents and caregivers at the beginning and end of the programme. The first activity was a participatory social mapping exercise in which girls worked together to map their community and then identify and discuss areas on the map where they felt safe and unsafe. The second activity was a focus group discussion with parents and caregivers that included a participatory component to brainstorm ways in which the safety of their female children could be increased.

Adolescent girls and their parents/caregivers in the waitlist group would begin the programme after completion of the evaluation. An endline survey was conducted following completion of the programme's first year.

Key findings

<u>Findings from the baseline assessment</u>

High levels of violence are experienced by adolescent girls: 50 per cent had experienced at least one type of violence (last 12 months) while 45 per cent had experienced any form of sexual violence (last 12 months). 30 per cent had experienced physical violence (ever) and 36 per cent had suffered emotional abuse.

Perpetrators were most likely to be people known to girls: 39 per cent of the perpetrators were cited as parents or care givers, 32 per cent were intimate partners and 16 per cent were friends or neighbours. Marrying the perpetrator was commonly seen as a response to sexual violence.

Gender norms and attitudes: 58 per cent of the girls interviewed agreed that men should have the final word about decision in his home. 58 per cent agreed that females should tolerate violence to keep the family together.

<u>Findings from the end line assessment</u>

Adolescent girls' agreement to statements on social networks: At endline, 60 per cent of the girls interviewed had an adult who gives them advice; 60 per cent had a female figure in community to go to with problems on a regular basis; and 75 per cent had female friends their age outside the family. This compared with waitline figures of 54 per cent, 44 per cent and 64 per cent respectively.

Adolescent girls' comfort talking to parents/caregivers, by topic: At endline, 80 per cent of the girls interviewed said they were confortable talking about education, 77 per cent on earning a living and 71 per cent puberty. This compared with waitline figures of 69 per cent, 66 per cent and 63 per cent at waitline respectively. At endline, parents showed more warmth and affection in their parenting styles.

Adolescent girls who knew where to go if they had been hurt: At endline, 43

per cent of the girls interviewed said they knew of a place to go for help if they experienced sexual violence and 55 per cent knew were to go for help help if they experience physical violence. This compared with waitline figures of 31 per cent and 39 per cent respectively. Adolescent girls at endline also had better knowledge of professional GBV services.

Attitudes on gender and violence remain challenging: 30 per cent of girls felt their family would blame them if they were forced to have sex. 22 per cent of girls believed their community would force them to marry the perpetrator if she was forced to have sex.

Lessons learned

Alongside the provision of life skills, there is a need for more comprehensive programming that acknowledges and addresses the root causes of GBV. While the study makes a valuable contribution to the evidence, further programming and study is needed to build learning and make the interventions designed to reduce GBV against girls more effective.

Initiatives to reduce vulnerability among children and women

Meseret Humanitarian Organisation[9]

Introduction

The Meseret Humanitarian Organization (MHO) is an Ethiopian-based charity seeking to empower the lives of orphans, other vulnerable children and young women – many of who are unmarried mothers or suffered physical, psychological and sexual abuse at a young age. MHO is built on values that include humanity, dignity, building self-esteem, trust and love. Their work includes providing care and support for children at risk, supporting women's economic empowerment, promoting water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) and providing life skills for young people. To date, the organisation has reached 1079 children and 620 women in need.

During the presentation, representatives from MHO spoke about their work and highlighted some of the organisation's achievements.

Organisation activities

Areas of work include, but are not limited to:

- *a psychological support programme:* MHO provides counselling services for children run by professional volunteers and MHO staff. Children also receive training on issues such as self-awareness, communication skills and conflict resolution strategies. The organisation also offers parent classes facilitated by post graduate class student from Addis Ababa University School of Developmental Psychology;

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[9] Presented by Meseret Azage in June 2018.

- *access to healthcare:* MHO has provided medical support for young women and children through a medical referral system established with Ethiopian NGO, Redeem The Generation;

- *education and life skills support:* The organisation has provided 1079 children in Addis Ababa and up to 60,000 children in Oromia, Amhara, SNNPR and Tigray with school educational materials and uniforms. Children also enjoy visits to places such as Ethiopian Airlines, the National Museum and the National Library to learn more about the country's history, culture and science. The organisation also runs motivational events in which positive role models share their life experiences with children and encourage them to get an education and work hard;

- *a Saturday lunch programme:* MHO runs a weekend club for children during which they receive a meal, play and develop friendships. Those that attend can also receive counseling and life skills training;

- *women's economic empowerment:* MHO has held ten village-level meetings with 250 women to discuss economic empowerment, environmental protection and sanitation issues. Financial literacy, coaching and mentoring have been provided for 440 young women – some of who have since established a Savings and Credit Cooperative (SACCO) and secured legal license. To date, these SACCO members have managed to save birr 278,157.23; and

- *WASH:* Along with local partners such as the Athrons Rotaract Club, MHO has conducted a number of campaigns to help raise awareness of personal hygiene and sanitation. The organisation has also helped to provide 5000 community members with access to clean water.

Major achievements

MHO's work to date has empowered children and young women by:

- helping to secure sustainable incomes and improve the livelihoods of young women and their children;

- supporting young women to build their self-confidence and esteem;

- enabling children to focus on their education and achieve better academic results;

- contributing to better physical and mental health outcomes for both young women and children;

- supporting young people to serve their communities and enhance their personal development through volunteering; and

- strengthening networks and partnership with donors, partners and government at regional and local levels.

Challenges

In spite of the organisation's many successes, a number of barriers remain including funding constraints and high staff turnover – particularly at the sub-city and *woreda* levels.   In some instances a lack of data and information from some *woredas* has led to problems with accurately targeting planning interventions.

MHO will continue in their efforts to mobilise resources, enhance partnerships and build the capacity of staff, volunteers, and communities so that all beneficiaries can continue to benefit from their services.

Experience and practice of working with street children and youth in Ethiopia

GOAL Ethiopia[10]

Introduction

Children who live on the streets are amongst the most vulnerable and marginalised groups in Ethiopia. Deprived of basic needs such as shelter and adequate food, they are also in danger of ill health and the worst forms of exploitation. While international agencies, government and non-government organisations and local community groups have all made significant attempts to address the issue, a steady stream of children continues to flow onto the streets of every year.

GOAL is an international humanitarian agency founded in Dublin in 1977. It currently operates in 14 countries, including Ethiopia where it operates in Oromia, SNNPR, Gambella, Afar, Somali, and Addis Ababa.

In this presentation, GOAL focused on the ChildSPACE (Supporting Positive Action for Child Empowerment) programme that supports street children to take positive actions in their lives, creates educational services and facilitates the process of community reintegration through rehabilitation.

The children that GOAL seeks to reach are living on the streets for a number of reasons including family disintegration, domestic abuse or failed promises of economic opportunity. More than 70 per cent of the children living on the streets of Addis come from outside the capital. Children as young as seven years live independently on the streets and in almost all cases, children have no contact with their families and are completely detached.

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[10] Presented by Binyam Berhane, GOAL Ethiopia ChildSPACE programme in March 2018.

In spite of every hardship thrown at them, GOAL has found street children to be resilient and hard workers and have the highest moral integrity. They hold strong, positive values, are caring and committed to equality and social justice.

The ChildSPACE approach

ChildSPACE takes a three-pronged approach to its work with street children.

- *Strength-based:*
  - SLCY develop a strong resilience while on streets as well as acquire crucial capacities and skills as much as they face risks and struggle to meet their needs.
  - Understanding that street living children and youth (SLCY) have needs as well as capacities.
  - Understanding the inner potential and skills SLCY develop on the street.
  - Programming guided by unleashing the inherent potentials and talents in children.
  - Seeing strength as an entry point.

- *Street-based:*
  - Developing a thorough understanding of the streets: design interventions based on this understanding.
  - The street offers both risks and opportunities: designing interventions to minimise risks and maximise benefits.
  - Working with children 'of the street' and working with all sub-categories within this broad category.

- *Community-based:*
  - Understanding the street population as a community of its own with its own features. Devising ways and means on how to mainstream these features with the wider community.

o Placing and analysing the situation of street children in the context of the street population as well as the wider surrounding community.

o Working in collaboration with various actors within the community to create protective and enabling environments for street children.

ChildSPACE strategies

ChildSPACE's strategies include:

● DIRC-based interventions that provide basic rehabilitation services such as access to minor health care, hygiene and sanitation Services, counseling and life skills;

● Supporting the reintegration of SLCY into their communities through family reunifications, vocational skills training and job placement and help with small businesses; and

● out of DIRC-street based interventions that include street-based services that enable the early detection of children and teens who are entering the street and provide group-based support.

Major accomplishments (2012-2017)

● 16,355 children were reached and 2630 have been reintergrated within their communities.

● 11,541 received life skills training while 10,574 have accessed guidance and counselling.

● The programme has extended the range, scope and quality of opportunities available to street children and youth in Addis Ababa and enabled children to explore safer options and make more informed choices on alternatives to the street environment.

- ChildSPACE has sought to strengthen the coordination and cooperation between different state and non-state actors, and facilitate linkages improving information flow and case management.
- It has also enhanced community level efforts to increase child dignity.

<u>Moving forward</u>

Despite the efforts of GOAL Ethiopia and other organisations working to support children living on the streets a number of challenges remain. The flow of street children to urban areas continues to be erratic while unfavourable attitudes towards street children persist.   Substance misuse is growing among children on the streets and options for community reintergration for young children remains limited. Budget fluctuations and low interest among donors to financially support street children projects exacerbate the pressure on resources.

Against this backdrop, the ChildSPACE programme will continue to focus on providing essential, tailored support to children, in their own environment and work to improve existing informal protection systems and offer access to more formal protection systems.

Adolescents with disabilities

Gender and Adolescence Global Evidence[11]

What are the experiences of adolescents with disabilities and how do they perceive that their wellbeing and resilience could be enhanced? And how are those experiences shaped by the individual's gender, impairment type and context?

Gender and Adolescence: Global Evidence (GAGE) is a longitudinal research programme exploring the gendered experiences of 20,000 young people in six focal countries, two each in Africa (Ethiopia, Rwanda), Asia (Bangladesh, Nepal) and the Middle East (Jordan, Lebanon). By finding out 'what works' with regards to adolescent psychosocial well-being and voice and agency in Ethiopia, the programme aims to help transform the lives of adolescent girls and enable them to move out of poverty and exclusion, and fast-track social change. GAGE conducted research to help better understand what factors shape the development pathways of adolescents with disabilities (aged 10–19) in Ethiopia.

State of the evidence: the Ethiopian perspective on disability

The prevalence of adolescents with disabilities in Ethiopia is difficult to determine, as there is a distinct lack of gender disaggregated and adolescent-specific data:

- WHO (2011) estimates 15 million people are living with disabilities;
- the National Plan of Action for Equality of Opportunity and Full Participation of People with Disabilities (PWD) estimates that 2.5 million children in Ethiopia live with disabilities;

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[11] Presented by Workneh Yadete, Dr Nicola Jones and Nados Chuta, in April 2018.

- the Government of Ethiopia estimates PWDs make up 1.09 per cent of the population, but their definition of disability excludes temporary impairments, and some types of sensory impairments; and

- cultural norms in Ethiopia that stigmatise disability mean people with disabilities are often hidden at home and this contributes to inaccurate statistics.

Methodology

The programme takes a mixed methods impact evaluation approach to longitudinal research design. The largest GAGE research cohort is in Ethiopia and currently comprises 6800 adolescents of which 373 live with a disability.

Quantitative data and methods

- Quantitative data was collected from 4300 adolescents living rurally in Amhara and Oromia and Dire Dawa city, 2000 living in Debre Tabor, Adami Tulu and Batu and Dire Dawa City Administration and 500 living in the pastoralist areas of Afar.

- Adolescents with disabilities were included in the quantitative survey in three distinct ways:
  - first, when the researchers undertook our community listing exercise, they included a question on whether the adolescent had any type of disability;
  - second, they used key community stakeholders to identify additional hard-to-reach adolescents with disabilities who did not show up in the traditional listing exercise; and
  - third, they used our quantitative data (which used the Washington Group instrument) to further categorise adolescents who were not formally identified during listing as having one or more disabilities.

- Qualitative data was taken from a sample of 1000 adolescents, family members and key informants (including 300 girls and boys).

- The qualitative research was conducted with adolescent girls and boys (with varying types of impairments – including physical, hearing and visual impairments), as well as their parents, and key informants (including service providers at national and sub-national levels).

- Researchers used hands-on and participatory tools:

  o a 'favourite things' exercise, a tool focused on support networks, and a tool on resilience and worries for individual adolescent girls and boys with disabilities;

  o body mapping and community mapping, including adolescents with different types of disabilities, in small group discussions to better understand community treatment and access to services;

  o small group discussions with special needs educators to understand in-depth education provisioning for young people with a disability; and

  o vignettes with adolescents and adults to explore understandings of disability, attitudes, and issues of inclusion and exclusion.

Selected findings

Education and learning

- Adolescents with disabilities are 14 per cent less likely to be enrolled and those in school complete half a year less schooling (GAGE Survey data). Girls with disabilities face greater educational disadvantages compared with their male peers.

- School attendance of adolescents with disabilities is greatly affected by impairment type and severity of the disability condition.

- Discriminatory attitudes and practices prevail including violence by teachers and fellow students.

- Special needs education (SNE) teachers complain that they are isolated from the rest of the school, receive little support from district officials, and are often discriminated against due to their contact with children with disabilities.

- SNE schools and transportation services are under funded.

- GAGE's research found mixed evidence in regard to the educational and occupational aspirations of and for adolescents with disabilities. The qualitative work found almost universally high aspirations – from both adolescents themselves and their parents. However, the quantitative work found that adolescents with disabilities had lower educational aspirations (by half a year) than their peers without disabilities.

- The GAGE survey found that the learning outcomes of Ethiopian adolescents with disabilities were overall lower than those of adolescents without disabilities. Rural students with disabilities had significantly lower scores than their urban peers.

- Interestingly, given that boys in Ethiopia are often prioritised for schooling and tend to have significantly higher scores on national exams, the GAGE survey found that boys with disabilities are disadvantaged relative to their female peers on a number of fronts.

Bodily automony, integrity and freedom from violence

- Adolescents with disabilities are three to four times more likely to experience physical, sexual and emotional violence than peers without disabilities. Adolescent girls with disabilities are particularly vulnerable to sexual violence and abuse.

- Adolescents with disabilities are at heightened risk of violence, but caregivers often have insufficient tailored information about protection measures and how to support their adolescent to report violence and secure justice.

- Evidence suggests adolescents with intellectual impairments are at increased risk of violence.

- Among adolescents with disabilities, 12 per cent were less likely to self-report violence at home, rural adolescents 17 per cent and girls 17 per cent. Evidence shows adolescents with disabilities find it difficult to report abuse and seek justice.

Sexual and reproductive health (SRH) and nutrition

- Younger and rural adolescents are more disadvantaged in terms of self-reported health.

- Financial constraints impede parents from taking their adolescents with disabilities to health services

- 69 per cent of carers that knew of health centres used them, but 28 per cent could not afford them. Government health centres are often inaccessible, while crutches and wheelchairs are expensive.

- PWDs require increased need for WASH services but their access is limited due to physical, institutional, environmental and social constraints.

Pyscho-social wellbeing

- Adolescents with disabilities experience social isolation and often feel stigmatised within their own households.

- GAGE survey data found adolescents with disabilities in Ethiopia have substantially different psycho-emotional development test scores than peers without disabilities.

- Girls with disabilities are particularly likely to be isolated and lack psychosocial support, due to restrictive gender norms.

- Adolescents who are deaf appear to have especially limited psycho-emotional support from their families, because few parents can use sign language.
- Caregivers often lack information and guidance as to how best to support adolescents with specific impairment types.
- Stigma around disability leads to isolation and frustration, often stemming from parents' shame.
- Low self-esteem, low self-worth, isolation and exclusion are compounded for adolescent girls with disabilities who are confined to the home and are overburdened with household chores.
- Disability has a significant negative impact on welfare and subjective wellbeing for entire households. Girls with disabilities (37 per cent) less happy than boys (22 per cent).

Voice and agency
- Adolescents with disabilities are often unaware of their rights to equality and non-discrimination, and therefore cannot claim or exercise them.
- Mobile and internet connectivity can facilitate access to information and contact with the outside world for these young people and give them a sense of purpose and psychosocial wellbeing.

Economic empowerment
- Older adolescents with disabilities are often excluded from microfinance schemes and denied their inheritance rights.
- Training and skills development opportunities for adolescents with disabilities are limited and do not match labour market demands.
- Adolescents with disabilities, particularly girls, have lower access to decent employment opportunities.
- Skills training opportunities for adolescents with disabilities are limited and social protection is very limited.

Conclusions and recommendations

- Support adolescent capabilities and transition through an integrated package of disability-tailored support.
- Undertake a comprehensive mapping of national and donor programming and services for adolescents with different impairment types to identify gaps and solutions for the hardest-to-reach groups, including those in rural contexts.
- Engage and support caregivers of adolescents with disabilities. Ensure that caregivers have access to tailored information and guidance to support their adolescents with disabilities as well as access to support networks, including for psycho-emotional support.
- Invest in age-, gender- and impairment-disaggregated data, robust evaluations of interventions to better understand what works, and in participatory research to better understand the perspectives of adolescents with disabilities
- Improve governance and accountability among policymakers and donors.

<u>Specific to capability domains</u>

- *Education and learning:* develop costed national action plans with measurable milestones to provide quality inclusive education for all adolescents with disabilities.
- *Health, sexual, and reproductive health and nutrition:* ensure that adolescents with disabilities have access to primary and disability-specific health care, information and services.
- *Bodily integrity and freedom from violence:* provide adolescents with disabilities, their families and communities with information about risks of violence, protection measures and how to report abuse whilst strengthening justice sector responses.

- *Psychosocial wellbeing:* provide age-appropriate guidance for parents, teachers, healthcare workers and social workers on how to support adolescents with disabilities psycho-emotionally and provide opportunities for peer interactions.

- *Voice and agency:* raise awareness of the importance of and opportunities for supporting adolescents with disabilities to be listened to and to participate in decision-making.

- *Economic empowerment:* ensure social assistance programmes cover the additional costs that adolescents with disability incur, as well as invest in skills and assets building programmes necessary for their economic empowerment.

Children and youth facing violence in Africa

Ministry of Women, Children and Youth[12]

Introduction

Developing more effective, evidence-based policies and programmes to prevent and respond to violence affecting children is becoming a key global priority, as signified by targets on ending all forms of violence against children by 2030 as part of the Sustainable Development Goals.

On the African continent increasing attention is being directed towards developing regional and national action plans for preventing violence affecting children. Research studies have generated insights into the multiple ways in which violence affects the lives of children, and the ways in which diverse contexts may protect from or exacerbate risks. However, there has been a disconnect between research and policy, with insufficient sharing of the implications of research evidence for policy and practice, and few studies focused on policy processes linked to violence against children and young people.

On 18-19 September 2018, the Federal Ministry of Women and Children Affairs co-hosted a pan-African workshop on 'Children and Youth Facing Violence in Africa' with the Ethiopian Centre for Child Research, University College London (UCL), and Young Lives. Two other co-hosts, the GAGE programme and Oak Foundation funded the event.

The workshop aimed to share findings of policy-relevant research from different African countries on violence affecting children and youth in the continent. Various papers were presented by researchers and programme implementers working on 12 different African countries: Benin, Cote d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Rwanda, Tanzania, Togo, South Africa, Uganda and Zambia,

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[12] Presented by Dr Alula Pankhurst and Dr Kirrily Pells, Young Lives and Dr Nicola Jones, Gage in October 2018.

as well as high-level government officials and an African Union Goodwill Ambassador.

Workshop overview

Session 1. Children's experiences of violence: connecting the local and national: Researchers from GAGE, Young Lives and the Children's Institute at the University of Cape Town presented research on the barriers to adolescent justice and understanding children's experiences of violence in Ethiopia and the underlying determinants and strategies for the prevention of violence towards children and young people in South Africa.

Session 2. Intersecting violence and gender: Researchers from GAGE, Plan UK and the University of Cape Coast, Ghana presented research on the connections and intersections between violence and structural vulnerabilities in Rwanda, girls' experiences of violent discipline in Togo and Benin, sexual violence and corporal punishment in Uganda and marital roles and expectations for gender-based violence (GBV) in Ghana.

Panel A. Risks and protective factors for violence against children and youths (VACY): Panelists from Lensthru Consultants, the Africhild Centre at Makere University, Addis Ababa University and the Ugandan Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development's Child Protection Working Group discussed their work on violence against children in Kenya and Uganda, sexual violence in Ethiopian higher education and a national survey of child violence in Uganda.

Panel B. Methodological challenges of researching violence affecting children and youth: Panelists from UNGEI, Nascent Research and Development Organization, Ministry of Women and Children Affairs, Ethiopia and the Population Council discussed approaches to violence affecting young people in Tanzania, monitoring school-related gender-based violence in Uganda, analysis of data on gender-based violence in Ethiopia and screening for sexual violence (SV) against children in Kenyan primary schools

Session 3. Breaking down siloed approaches to preventing VACY: Researchers from UCL, UNICEF, GAGE, KCL, AAU and the University of Cape Town presented their research on addressing gender-based violence in schools in Ethiopia, Togo, Zambia and Côte d'Ivoire, the role of para-social workers in child protection, an assessment of UNFPA's approaches to GBV in Ethiopia and evidence-based policy and prevention of violence to children.

Panel C. Violence against children in vulnerable circumstances: policies and practice: Panelists from Goethe University, Germany, Retrak Ethiopia and ANPPCAN Nigeria discussed their research on improving 'positive' discipline in Zanzibar, strengthening communities to protect children and developing a national priority agenda for vulnerable chldren in Nigeria

Panel D. Preventing Violence in Schools: Panelists from UNICEF Ethiopia, Addis Ababa University, UCL, Raising Voices and RTI discussed their work on Ethiopia's code of conduct on prevention of school-related GBV and taking promising practices to scale and shifting the school norm in Uganda.

Taking the agenda forward

There is a strong tradition of African leadership within international agenda-setting on preventing VAC. Progress has been made but there is still a long way to go. Knowledge on drivers of VAC, risk and protective factors and evidence on promising practices is increasing but there are gaps. What are the key entry points for strengthening the prevention of VACY? What are the key next steps for stakeholders? How might we collaborate together to take the agenda forward?

There are three key entry points:

Education sector and whole school approaches:

- Schools (and HE institutions) are both sites of violence and positive change – reach large numbers of children and make them a key priority.

- Addressing the structures, norms and practices that promote violence in schools.
- Supporting and valuing teachers – recognise their constraints and include violence prevention in teacher training.
- Improving school governance is central, for example, through implementation of the Ministry of Education's 2014 Code of Conduct on Prevention of School Related Gender Based Violence.
- Developing reporting and support systems for children.
- Strengthening child protection systems and encourage inter-sectoral collaboration – building knowledge, skills and collaboration across sectors and levels (federal, regional, *woredas*, *kebele* and community).

Social protection:
- Enhancing social protection measures to strengthen families (addressing poverty as a driver of violence).
- Building greater linkages with child protection systems through the Social Protection Policy and Strategy to increase focus on children and 'child sensitivity'.
- Training for social workers and health extension workers on effective ways of working with caregivers and children, to ensure that children are listened to and parents are supported.
- Increasing evidence on mutual benefits, for example, work by ODI and UNICEF Innocenti Transfer Project: https://transfer.cpc.unc.edu/

The role of para-social workers:
- Exploring alternative approaches while systems are being scaled-up, for example, para-social workers.
- Making greater linkages between children and services.

- Increasing support to families – trusted sources of support and problem-solving skills.

Next steps for key stakeholders

For international organisations, including the Africa Union:

Develop greater collaboration between government, UN, international and national NGOs, alliances and networks and research institutions

- Build on international momentum, for example, around SDGs to mobilise resourcing and promote data collection.
- Advocate at national level for uptake of research, sharing of what works (and what does not). Also 'scaffolding' of national priorities and systems Key opportunity: African Partnership to End Violence Against Children.

For governments:
- Develop inter-sectoral coordination on VAC via Inter- ministerial Committee on Violence affecting Women and Children and the National Coordinating Committee on Children's Rights – down to local level.
- Create awareness and ensure implementation of existing national policies and plans – needs effective communicating of burden of violence (e.g. health and economic) to address resourcing challenges.
- Increase data collection (for example, extend DHS).

For NGOs:
- Make prevention of VAC a cross-cutting issue.
- Increase uptake of research into practice but also contextualising research findings. Faciliate greater dialogue between research and practice.
- Be willing to tackle 'sensitive' topics and challenge entrenched social norms – advocating for longer-term investment.

For the research community:

- Increase knowledge exchange between 'international' and 'local' researchers, and includes 'capacity unleashing'.

- Build more equitable research partnerships between Global North and Global South.

- Increase accessibility of research, for example, modes of dissemination, language and open access.

- Collaborate across disciplines and approaches to address emerging questions, gaps and evaluation of interventions.

INSPIRE: Seven strategies for ending violence against children

African Partnership to End Violence Against Children[13]

Introduction

Approximately 1 billion children are subjected to violence across the globe each year. The costs of such widespread violence are immense; exposure to violence is associated with effects on brain function, psychological well-being, non-communicable diseases, infectious disease, and social functioning. The global community has committed to ending violence against children, and combat these subsequent effects, through the Convention on the Rights of the Child and Target 16.2 of the Sustainable Development Goals.

In 2016, a cohort of ten global organisations collaborated to produce 'INSPIRE: Seven strategies for ending violence against children', the first-ever global technical package for preventing and responding to violence against children.

INSPIRE is an evidence-based resource for anyone committed to preventing and responding to violence against children and adolescents. The document presents seven strategies that together provide a framework for ending violence against children.

Background to the strategies

Dealing with violence against children involves implementing measures to:

- create safe, sustainable and nurturing family environments, and provide specialised help and support for families at risk of violence:
- modify unsafe environments through physical changes;

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[13] Presented by Doris Roos in October 2018.

- reduce risk factors in public spaces (for example, schools, places where young people gather) to reduce the threat of violence;

- address gender inequities in relationships, the home, school, the workplace and so on;

- change the cultural attitudes and practices that support the use of violence;

- ensure legal frameworks prohibit all forms of violence against children and limit youth access to harmful products, such as alcohol and firearms;

- provide access to quality response services for children affected by violence

- eliminate the cultural, social and economic inequalities that contribute to violence, close the wealth gap and ensure equitable access to goods, services and opportunities;

- coordinate the actions of the multiple sectors that have role to play in preventing and responding to violence against children.

The seven strategies were selected based on a strong convergence in the research-based guidance already published by INSPIRE's participating agencies.

Each strategy is accompanied by:
- a key objective;
- the rationale for the strategy;
- SDG Targets other than 16.2 which it contributes to and is supported by its potential effects on preventing violence against children;
- specific approaches (including programmes, practices and policies), that advance the strategy; and
- evidence supporting these approaches.

They address risk and protective factors for violence against children at all four

interrelated levels of risk (individual, relationship, community, society), and most have been shown to have preventive effects across several different types of violence, as well as benefits in areas such as mental health, education and crime reduction. Additionally, INSPIRE includes two cross-cutting activities that together help connect and strengthen – and assess progress towards – the seven strategies.

Criteria for model interventions

The INSPIRE strategies were chosen to represent interventions that have been implemented and evaluated in low-resource settings.   The INSPIRE package provides an opportunity to increase the number of studies of the effectiveness of the seven strategies in settings where currently there are relatively few such studies.   It is therefore anticipated that INSPIRE will be regularly updated as new evidence emerges.

Overview of the INSPIRE's seven strategies

Implementation and enforcement of laws: the aim of this strategy is to ensure the implementation and enforcement of laws to prevent violent behaviours, reduce excessive alcohol use, and limit youth access to rearms and other weapons. Laws prohibiting violent behaviours like sexual abuse or violent punishment of children signal that society does not consider these behaviours acceptable. Such laws provide a way to hold perpetrators accountable for their actions. Laws and policies can also reduce key risk factors for violence against children.

Norms and values: social and cultural norms can create a climate in which violence is encouraged or normalised. This strategy aims to strengthen norms and values that support non-violent, respectful, nurturing, positive and gender equitable relationships for all children and adolescents. Achieving this often requires modifying deeply ingrained social and cultural norms and behaviours – in particular, the idea that some forms of violence are not only normal, but also sometimes justifiable. It involves approaches like community mobilisation

programmes, bystander interventions, and small group programmes that challenge harmful gender and social norms of boys.

Safe environments: this strategy aims to create and sustain safe streets and other environments where children and youth gather and spend time. It focuses on modifying communities' social and physical environment (rather than the individuals within it) to foster positive – and deter harmful – behaviours. It involves approaches like problem- oriented policing directed towards 'hotspots' for violence, interrupting violent conflicts by stopping retaliatory violence, and changing the built environment.

Parent and caregiver support: this strategy aims to reduce harsh parenting practices and create positive parent-child relationships by helping parents and caregivers understand the importance of positive, non- violent discipline and of close, effective communication. Parent and caregiver support can be provided through parent training programmes delivered through home visiting or in groups.

Income and economic strengthening: this strategy aims to improve families' economic security and stability, thereby reducing intimate partner violence and child maltreatment. It involves approaches like making cash transfers to families in combination with parent training and/or on condition that they ensure their children attend school; or providing microfinance in combination with education for men and women on gender norms, domestic violence and sexuality. Cash transfers Group saving and loans combined with gender equity training Micro finance combined with gender norm training

Response and support services: this strategy aims to improve access to good-quality health, social welfare and criminal justice support services for all children who need them – including for reporting violence – to reduce the long-term impact of violence. Basic health services, such as emergency medical care for violence-related injuries, and clinical care for victims of sexual violence are the main priority.

Good practices on community-based child protection mechanisms (CBCPM) mapping

ChildFund International[14]

Introduction

ChildFund is an international organisation operating in nine countries in Eastern, Western and Southern Africa countries. In Ethiopia, ChildFund works with 13 local partners in four regions including Oromia, SNNPR Amhara and Addis Ababa.

ChildFund works on every stage of children's lives including child protection from abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence. It works with a broader and deeper understanding and establishment of the layers of a protective environment. ChildFund uses a system strengthening participatory approach to implement its programmes.

<u>Community Based Child Protection Mechanisms mapping conceptual framework</u>

Community based child protection mechanisms (CBCPM) mapping is an approach which assesses and strengths child protection by putting children and the youth at the centre and continues with families and community as well as institutional and sys- tem level resources. Participatory mapping of this kind not only allows for more meaningful child and youth participation but promotes collective learning and helps mobilise communities to take action.

The mapping process focused to examine six core themes including child protection issues, community attitude and norms, children skill and participation, formal and informal mechanisms, capacity and accountability. Community action planning was also part of the CBCPM process.

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[14] Presented by Tigist Tarekegne in November 2018.

Methodology

In-depth interview, focus group discussion, observation and other participatory tools were employed to conduct the assessment. The mapping was conducted as a pilot in Addis Ababa Merkato area and in Debre Birhan. The total number of study participants is 434 with 217 from each of the two areas. Validation and action planning workshops were held with government stakeholders, community representatives, religious leaders, elders, law enforcement bodies, children, youth and staff from partner organisations after the mapping had been completed.

Findings

Child protection concerns and prevalence:

- Age (0-5): Neglect, uvula cutting, use of children for begging, female genital mutilation (FGM) and children being left alone were the most prevalent child protection concerns among children in this age category.
- Age (6-14): child labour, school based violence, rape, physical abuse (i.e., corporal punishment), verbal harassment, emotional abuse, child prostitution and early marriage, child trafficking and unsafe male circumcision were mentioned as major child protection concerns of children in this age category.
- Age (15-24): Early marriage, child labour, physical abuse, school based violence and abduction were mentioned as a common risk for the youth in this age category.
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Community Social norms, values and attitudes

- The target communities have a positive attitude but less understanding towards children and children wellbeing.
- Adults have less value for children's opinions and give little time for discussion with children.
- The communities also believe that corporal punishment is a means of disciplining measure.

Children's resilience skill and participation

- The survey confirmed that children's participation is low in social affairs and it is strongly correlated with lower house- hold economy.
- This implies that the children from poor families have limited time for attending school and cannot participate with their peers. Children and the youth were not listened to adult community members.
- Children do not feel safe in school and surrounding environments.

Formal child protection systems

- The formal structures have a good understanding of CP laws and regulations but they are weak in implementing.
- There is no strong integration among service providers to protect children from risk. The mechanism focuses more on prevention rather than other key pillars.
- Reporting and documentation mechanisms are not consistent.
- The existing formal mechanisms are dependent on NGOs support to function.
- There is resource limitation for prevention and response activities.

Informal child protection mechanisms

- There are the informal structures but their mechanism is not strong and well functioning in responding to child protection. They are relatively stronger in response than prevention. They are also characterised by low integration, coordination and weak referral linkage in reporting and managing cases.

Capacities in child protection systems

- Even though the formal structure is organised through mandated women, children and youth office, the capacity is limited: there is more awareness

creation [prevention] than the other pillars. There is also poor documentation and reporting practices in terms of reliable data.

Accountability in the child protection process

● The child protection process does not have a strong case management system. There are limited resources to respond to child protection issues. The Government's monitoring and evaluation system is not strong. The informal child protection mechanism has not been given recognition in the child protection process.

Recommendations
● Raise the awareness of the communities, parents and caregivers, children and youth on the issue of child protection.
● Enhance the livelihood status of the families.
● Strengthen the capacity of stakeholders and law enforcing bodies.
● Develop standard child protection tool for effective monitoring and evaluation.
● Ensure a safe and secured school environment.
● Strengthen the informal structure.
● Have meaningful and effective child and youth participation.
● Contextualise and translate tools for different areas.
● Provide budget allocation for the process as well as the action.
● Document the process and share findings for collective learning.

Assessment on the Social Work Unit of the Federal First Instance Court

Adamnesh Atnafu and Emebet Mulugeta, Addis Ababa University[15]

Introduction

Social workers play many roles in the justice system – including working with child victims and perpetrators, preparing children to testify in court and providing support to their families. There are three potential areas of intervention where social work can have positive direct and indirect impacts on the justice system:

- *working together with but independently from the justice system:* this involves preventive role of social workers if the service is accessible on a self-referral basis to respond appropriately to any individual or family experiencing difficulties;

- *interfacing with the justice system:* In this case, social workers should be involved when the police question or arrest a child who is under the minimum age for prosecution or has not committed a criminal act but is clearly in danger (for example a homeless, unaccompanied migrant); and

- *engagement as an intervention in the justice system:* a wide range of tasks may be allocated to the social worker in the context of the justice system, in cases where children are directly (whether as victims or perpetrators) or indirectly involved.

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[15] Presented by Dr Adamnesh Atnafu and Dr Emebet Mulugeta, Addis Ababa University.

<u>The Social Work Unit in the Federal First Instance Court (FFIC)</u>

The Social Work Unit primarily works with children who are passing through custody processes, children who are victims of abuse and exploitation, children who are in conflict with the law, and children involved in adoption cases, upon demand from the court. The role of the Unit is to provide a child friendly environment and to facilitate competent, timely, and developmentally appropriate legal treatment for children under the age of 18 in connection with a civil, criminal, or administrative proceedings in which the child's rights or interests are at stake.

The social workers in the Unit collect information from the child, the family and the community in order to make recommendations to the court based on the 'best interest of the child'. Weighing the needs of the child and those of the family may generate ethical dilemmas and create pressures on the social worker. But social workers are primarily accountable to the children that they are working with.

<u>Assessment objectives</u>

- To assess the experience of children and families in line with accessibility and quality of services provided for children and their families/guardians in contact with the law.
- To ascertain whether the court environment enables social work provision.
- To assess the impact of the social work interventions on the court process.
- To understand the capacity of social workers in handling cases with respect to the four pillars of child right protection.
- To measure the extent to which the skills and practices of social workers working within the court system have been enhanced.
- To identify gaps/challenges and strengths of the Unit and its functionality within the court system.

- To suggest strategies to help deal with any weaknesses identified during the assessment.

Methodology

Primary data:

- in-depth interviews, focus group discussions and key informant interviews;
- participatory data collection with children, parents and guardians and selected social workers, and other key informants, who were engaged in the assessment;
- data was collected from seven girls and boys who passed through the court process, and their parents or guardians and through individual interviews using semi- structured questionnaire and checklists with children and their parents or guardians.

Secondary data:

- reviews of existing literature, legal and policy documents, court cases, and official reports.

Ethical considerations

The approach emphasised informed and voluntary participation, ensured confidentiality and maintained the anonymity of all the assessment participants.

Findings

Experience of children and families at the court throughout the process

Children as victims of abuse and their families:

- Children who were victims of abuse and their families confirmed that they were not anxious in telling their stories to the social workers. The families believed that their children were comfortable and happy in doing so.
- Social workers have little time to spend talking to the children (about 10-15 minutes) and so building trust is difficult.

- The unit provides post-interview counseling to children to try and minimise further trauma.

Children in conflict with the law and their families/guardians:
- The children interviewed said they were treated with respect and were comfortable with the process with the respective social worker handling their cases.
- Children noted that they had met with a counselor one or two times, within the first days of their arrival at the remand home.
- The interviews revealed that the remand home where juvenile delinquents are to be reformed was not rehabilitating.

Children and families passing through custody disputes:
- Most cases are forwarded to the unit.
- Children felt comfortable to speak freely with the social workers.

Children and families in adoption cases:
- Most, but not all, cases of adoption are sent to the Social Work Unit by the registrar before they open in court.
- Since the Unit does not have a clear mandate to decide on court cases, this is viewed as a risky way of handling cases.

Implementation of social work service provision: Structure and physical set-up
The Unit is located on the upper floors of the court buildings which is considered unsafe for children.
- Although there is a separate room there is no guarantee of privacy in all instances.
- Play equipment in the Unit is neither up to date, clean or sufficient – yet the creative attempt of some social workers should be appreciated.
- Children may cross the paths of prisoners and other disputing parties on

their way to the Unit.

The impact of the social work intervention on the court
- All the children and families held a positive view of the Unit but were unable to identify the exact impact the process had had on them.
- There were some cases, where in spite of the intervention of social workers, judges were harsh on children in conflict with the law and their families.
- The court is considered a better place for children now than it was before.

Knowledge and skills of social workers
- An assessment of the knowledge and skills of social workers revealed that with some limitations, social workers are seen to respect and follow the four principles of the Rights of the Child.
- Social workers who have had years of experience and training demonstrated higher levels of assessment skills than their junior counterparts.

Ability to work with a team and to communicate effectively with judges
- There is teamwork among the social workers in terms of sharing the cases among themselves based on their areas of expertise and contribution.
- The communication between social workers and the judges who understand their role is effective.

Selected challenges
- Office facilities and lack of resources such as CCTV.
- Negative attitudes and assumptions of some new judges.
- Stress management for social workers.
- Supervision services for social workers.

<u>Selected opportunities</u>
- Social workers are commitment to their clients.
- The social work unit itself, the project office and the referral system.

Strategies for future interventions
- *Build on key strengths:* social workers are committed to their clients, there is a high level of team spirit and relationships with clients and judges are considered positive.
- *Address limitations:* Orientate judges on the objectives of the unit and improve office facilities and resources.
- *Provide supervision services for social workers:*
  - *administrative and supportive:*
    - promote and maintain good standards of work, co-ordination of practice, efficient and smooth administrative approaches and maintain harmonious working relationships;
  - *educational and professional support:*
    - invest in the educational development of social workers to help them realise their full potential; and
    - provide social workers with the opportunity to critically analyse their knowledge, values and skills;
  - *stress management for social workers:*
    - prevent burn out by providing supportive sessions which help social workers to reflect on their work; and
    - build a reward mechanism for achievement
  - *an improved referral system:*
    - provide social workers with information on which cases are eligible for referral, what kinds of services are available and which clients can benefit from them; and

- o allocate a focal person to facilitate the referral service and share information with social workers working in the court;
- o establish a forum for organisations who are part of the referral system to meet with social workers to discuss progress and concerns;
- *communication:*
  - o encourage a close working relationship between the Social Work Unit and the Project Office; and
  - o coordinate and work with the Remand Home. The assessment indicated challenges related to the services of the Remand Home and identified that close collaboration with the institution is of paramount importance.

Child Research and Practice Forum Assessment

Abeje Berhanu and Melese Getu, Addis Ababa University[16]

Introduction

The Child Research and Practice Forum (CPRF) was established in 2010, following a consultative workshop organised by Young Lives during which participants suggested that a regular forum should be established to enable researchers to interact with policymakers and practitioners and promote wider use of research evidence.

Since then, the informal network has held regular monthly meetings hosted by the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs focusing on issues such as early learning, nutrition, child labour, child marriage and violence affecting children. During this time, the Forum has enabled researchers to present their findings related to children to a number of stakeholders including Government, local NGOs, UN bodies and other international organisations.

In 2018, the CRPF commissioned a review of the Forum's activities to help reflect on its achievements to date and assess how the findings might inform future work.

Composition of the CRPF

The CRPF is comprised of:

- **individuals** attending in a personal capacity as seminar participants and presenters;

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[16] Presented by Dr Abeje Berhanu and Dr Melese Getu, Addis Ababa University.

- because CRPF does not have a membership list, it is not easy to tell who they are and how many they are. However, individuals usually come from universities, research institutes and child-focused organisations. Their participation tends to be irregular;
- **organisations** that commit resources and personnel to support the Forum including those who have provided input over the long term (for example, UNICEF, MoWCA) and those who support CRPF on a periodical basis (for example, MoLSA, and World Vision);
  - support from UNICEF, OAK Foundation and Young Lives has included:
    - Providing funding (OAK)
    - Strategic and technical guidance (UNICEF)
    - Serving on Steering Committee (NCA)
    - Assisting with publication activities (Young Lives)
    - Identifying and selecting seminar presenters
  - while NGO's have been very supportive, input from government institutions apart from MoWCA has been minimal.

Methodology

Primary data was collected through survey questionnaires and interviews conducted with Forum participants. 21 surveys were completed and 19 interviews were carried out – three with government institutions, five with research institutes and universities, three with international organisations and eight with NGOs. The assessment team also observed some of the monthly seminar presentations. Secondary data was obtained from CRPF publications including research briefs, annual reports, presentation summaries and Steering Committee minutes.

Selected findings

<u>Participant satisfaction</u>

Since the first seminar was held in September 2010, an average of ten monthly seminars have been held every year. Major themes covered include (but are not limited to): child protection, early childhood education, harmful traditional practices and migration.

● 78.6 per cent of survey respondents reported that they found most of CRPF activities very useful.
● 21.4 per cent of survey respondents said they their participation in the Forum helped them to improve their own programme activities.
● 57.1 per cent said that the Forum helped familiarise them with the latest child-related research and policies.
● 19 per cent reported that participation had enabled them to initiate partnerships with like-minded organisations while 28.6 per cent mentioned their appreciation of the focus on child-focused research.
● 9 per cent mentioned that function of the Forum to share knowledge.

<u>Achievements</u>

The assessment found that:
  ● the CPRF has strengthened the linkages between research and practice by creating a space in which researchers can share their research findings;
  ● by strategically engaging MoWCA through its activities, the CRPF has been able to positively influence the formulation of the National Children's Policy –sharing evidence and providing input into the draft;
  ● the Forum has also played a role in establishing the Ethiopian Center for Child Research (ECCR) and helped to facilitate partnerships between different stakeholders as well as discussions among government

institutions; and

- the quality of CRPF publications is regarded as a notable achievement. Most of the papers presented at the seminars are of good quality and are based on original research.

Impact

The assessment team explored the extent to which CRPF's activities have helped to change policymakers' and practitioners' approaches toward children. While it is difficult to attribute any changes specifically to the CPRF, the Forum contributed by:

- *creating a model for knowledge management and dissemination:* a number of organisations have designed their own outreach activities based on the CRPF model. For example, MoWCA now hold quarterly seminars that bring together researchers, practitioners and policy makers to discuss gender while MoLSA want to create a forum to discuss and share information on the implementation of the country's social protection strategy; and

- *encouraging a more child-centric approach:* the Forum has helped to create awareness about children's issues and some participants have shown increased interest in working more closely with the government on issues affecting children. The CRPF has also played an important role in encouraging both government and NGO staff to consider the needs and interests of children in their work. In some cases this has resulted in organisations redesigning their programmes to them more child-focused. For example, the NCA acknowledged that the participation of their staff in the monthly seminars has been instrumental in the organisation taking an increasingly child-centric approach towards its work.

<u>Challenges</u>

- *Lack of legal status:* because the Forum is not registered as a legal entity, limited efforts have been made to mobilise the financial resources required to maintain it.
- *Government coordination:* poor coordination between the MoWCA and other government ministries has made if difficult to mainstream children's issues at the national level.
- *Limited funding sources:* up until now, the CRPF has relied too heavily on financial support from the OAK Foundation and needs to diversify in order to be sustainable.
- *Limited geographic coverage of seminar papers:* some regionally-based organisations have questioned the relevance and feasibility of recommendations drawn from presentations made by research projects covering small sample sizes in small geographic areas.

Recommendations

<u>Continuity of the Forum</u>

- *Explore different hosting options:* assess the value of continuing with MoWCA or assigning ECCR as a new host.
- *Diversify funding:* explore alternative funding sources to allow for financial sustainability.
- *Devise a strategic plan:* secure the future of the Forum by developing long- and short-term goals and performance indicators with which to measure, monitor and evaluate its success.
- *Develop guidelines:* document the Forum's mandates and responsibilities alongside the roles and duties of the Steering Committee. Formalise staff recruitment, contracting and performance evaluation.

<u>Forum activities</u>

- *Broaden the seminar presentations:*
  - strike a balance between academic, practice and policy oriented research;
  - encourage senior management staff from government line ministries and NGOs to present and attend Forum events;
  - focus on hitherto neglected issues such as health, nutrition and disability and link seminar topics to government priorities; and
  - organise more practice-oriented seminar presentations
- *Provide capacity support:*
  - offer advice to MoWCA staff on how to design projects and programmes based on research evidence and provide training on child-focused methodologies and research ethics; and
  - encourage MoWCA to mobilise relevant line ministries to actively participate in the Forum's activities.

- *Improve dissemination:*
  - translate some of the publications of the Forum in Amharic and Afaan Oromoo languages; and
  - encourage presenters to speak in Amharic and Afaan Oromoo so that they can be heard by a wider audience.

<u>Additional Activities</u>

- *Promote university participation in Forum's activities by:*
  - working closely with universities so that their research findings can be disseminated through the monthly seminars;
  - inviting postgraduate students (those who produced good quality Theses), from relevant fields of study to present seminar papers and consider publishing a selection each year; and

- o providing small grants for postgraduate students to select child related topics for their dissertation research.
- *Advocate for policy change by:*
  - o capitalising on UNICEF's technical expertise and using them and MoWCA as a bridge between government organisations, NGOs and civil society organisations;
  - o organising child-focused project site visits; and
  - o working with Parliament Standing Committees dealing with children
- *Improve coordination by:*
  - o taking a more strategic approach to communications that includes planning, packaging, targeting and monitoring Forum outputs;
  - o widening the scope of CRPF to include a mandate to coordinate research activities; and
  - o instituting a system of monitoring, evaluation and learning to judge the relevance and impact of the seminars and assess research uptake.