



Case studies on UNICEF programming in

Child Protection



CASE STUDIES ON UNICEF PROGRAMMING IN CHILD PROTECTION

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FOREWORD

Through its child protection work, UNICEF supports countries in addressing the factors that expose children to violence, exploitation and abuse, both during emergencies and in the context of long-term development. These case studies illustrate how UNICEF support is helping countries to strengthen child protection systems and promote social change to align social norms and practices with child protection. The case studies provide evidence of positive results from diverse initiatives in nine countries. They cover:

- Improving access to legal aid, counselling and basic services for children in conflict with the law in Afghanistan;
- Raising rates of birth registration in Brazil by partnering with hospitals and using technology;
- Empowering adolescents in the Democratic Republic of the Congo through discussion groups, resulting in community engagement in combatting sexual violence;
- Reducing corporal punishment in Jordan's schools and encouraging teachers to adopt non-violent disciplinary methods;
- Offering prevention, referral and protection services for children at risk of or suffering from violence, exploitation, abuse or neglect in Kenya;
- Supporting community collaboration to curtail female genital mutilation/cutting in Senegal;
- Developing child-friendly police units to handle child victims and perpetrators of criminal activity in the Sudan;
- Strengthening child protection systems in Indonesia and Malawi.

We hope you find the progress documented in these case studies not just informative but inspirational.

Susan Bissell
Chief, Child Protection Section
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Inter-agency referral mechanism for children in conflict with the law



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Year: 2012

Country: **Afghanistan**

Region: South Asia

A UNICEF study in 2008 showed weak implementation of the Juvenile Code of Afghanistan in terms of treatment of children in conflict with the law. The Code clearly states that detention should be used only as a measure of last resort and for the shortest possible time, but children were being detained for long periods of time for relatively minor offences.

To address this situation, UNICEF facilitated an agreement between key ministries to establish a mechanism for inter-agency referrals in collaboration with the Child Protection Action Network, a network of governmental and non-governmental groups. The mechanism aims to encourage the use of alternatives to detention, avoid illegal detention and expedite the judicial process. UNICEF initially supported implementation of the mechanism in eight pilot provinces. In 2012, it was scaled up to all 34 provinces of Afghanistan.

THE SITUATION

The Juvenile Code of Afghanistan, adopted in 2005, states that children in conflict with the law should be detained only as a measure of last resort and for the shortest possible time period. It also pledges to provide legal defence for children within the age of criminal responsibility, from ages 13 through 17.¹

However, a 2008 UNICEF study found weak implementation of the Juvenile Code.² Hundreds of children were being detained for minor offences, often for long periods of time, in juvenile rehabilitation centres. In 2008, approximately 71 per cent of detained children had been sentenced to more than one year for offences such as 'moral crimes' (for example running away from home, extramarital sex) and property-related offences. At least 48 per cent of detained children experienced physical abuse or torture in the juvenile justice system. They also had limited access to schooling, leisure, health care and sanitation facilities, all of which are required by the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Another study found that 455 children were in detention in Afghanistan as of January 2008.³

The reasons for inadequate implementation of the Code included insufficient knowledge among judicial professionals of international norms such as the Convention on the Rights of the Child and national laws such as the Juvenile Code. The study also highlighted poor coordination between the police, prosecutors, judges and social workers when dealing with children in conflict with the law; little use by judges and prosecutors of alternatives to detention stipulated in the Juvenile Code; and lack of adherence to child rights in the justice system.

To follow up on children in conflict with the law, Afghanistan has a Child Protection Action Network (CPAN) operating in the provinces. This network is made up of governmental and non-governmental groups who track cases involving children and refer them to support services such as psychosocial and legal aid services as well as health care and education. They also advocate for child rights and monitor and report on child protection issues. CPAN activities are directed by the Ministry of Interior, Attorney General's Office and Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Martyred and the Disabled (MoLSAMD). Since 2007, UNICEF has supported the establishment of CPANs in 28 of the country's 34 provinces and capacity building of their staff.

1 Afghanistan Juvenile Code, 2005.

2 Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission and UNICEF, 'Justice for Children: The situation of children in conflict with the law in Afghanistan', 2008.

3 K.M. Motley, 'An Assessment of Juvenile Justice in Afghanistan', Terre des Hommes, 2010.

THE RESPONSE

In 2008, an agreement mandating inter-agency referrals and collaboration was reached by the Ministry of Interior, Attorney General's Office and MoLSAMD, along with UNICEF and a group of non-governmental organizations. This accord was formalized through a Letter of Agreement. It calls for the parties to share information, work together to ensure that children have access to services and seek alternatives to detention. These could include social services such as counselling; treatment in institutions such as vocational training centres; issuance of warnings to the child and his/her family; postponement of trial; conditional suspension of punishment; home confinement; and surrender of the child to his/her parents or legal guardians. CPAN facilitates referrals and tracks provision of follow-up services to ensure that the response is appropriate and timely.

A key component of the mechanism is the Social Inquiry Report (SIR), a screening tool developed by UNICEF in consultation with partners. During the initial investigation after a child comes into contact with the law, his or her background details are recorded on the SIR. These include the facts of the offence, the child's family information and a summary of findings, along with a summary of the social worker's assessment of the case and recommendations based on his/her investigation. Having these details recorded on the SIR facilitates exchange of information among social workers, police and prosecutors

and any other sectors or services that get involved in the case. The SIR also provides prosecutors and judges with the information they need to make decisions in the child's best interest. It might lead them, for example, to choose an alternative to detention or order a lighter and shorter sentence. In addition, police stations receive a regularly updated list of social workers to whom they can refer children needing services. UNICEF organized orientation workshops to train focal points from all provinces about how to make referrals. The focal points included police officers, prosecutors, judges, social workers, heads of juvenile rehabilitation centres and representatives of the Ministry of Education.

In March 2010, the Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Education and Supreme Court signed the Letter of Agreement, becoming part of the referral mechanism. In March 2012, the parties agreed to seek the participation of three additional agencies: the Ministry of Public Health, Ministry of Women's Affairs and National Directorate of Security. UNICEF is supporting these efforts as well as development of action plans for each ministry to implement the mechanism.

PROGRESS AND RESULTS

The parties to the Letter of Agreement established a technical working group to oversee implementation of the referral mechanism. UNICEF provides technical support for the group, which is chaired by the Deputy Minister of MoLSAMD. In 2010, the group developed and endorsed nine indicators



to monitor implementation of the mechanism (Box 1). As reporting of data becomes routine, statistics will be kept on the indicators.

Box 1: Agreed indicators to monitor implementation of the inter-agency referral mechanism

In the past three months:

- Number of children arrested
- Per cent of cases in which social workers were contacted within 24 hours after the arrest
- Per cent of cases in which SIRs were provided to prosecutors
- Per cent of children diverted from prosecution
- Number of children in pretrial detention
- Number of children who had access to a defence lawyer at the police station
- Per cent of cases in which juvenile court judges used SIRs
- Per cent of children diverted by the police
- Per cent of children diverted by the juvenile court.

In almost all provinces, cooperation has improved among social workers, the police, prosecutors and legal aid providers. This has led to more children accessing legal aid, counselling services and referral to basic services. The number of child protection cases handled by CPAN in the 28 provinces has gone up almost 60 per cent in three years, from 1,459 cases in 2008 to 2,486 cases in 2011. In addition, trained social workers aided 4,624 children in institutions (3,841 boys and 783 girls), including those in juvenile rehabilitation centres and unaccompanied children, between 2008 and 2012.⁴ Some of these cases benefited from diversion, alternative punishment or mediation. Children in conflict with the law were also referred to legal aid services.

The inter-agency referral mechanism is currently operational in all 34 provinces. In each province, social workers have been trained on juvenile justice issues and the SIR. CPAN members and government staff uniformly express appreciation for the SIR as a tool to help children in conflict with the law access appropriate treatment. These closer relations have also increased recognition of the social work profession by the justice authorities.

The inter-agency referral mechanism is the first attempt at coordinating the work of the police, judges and prosecutors in Afghanistan, and the first component in a comprehensive child protection system. This initiative has also challenged the assumption that there are no alternatives to detention. In addition, it has shown the benefits of coordination – cases involving children in conflict with the law move more smoothly through the system when they do not have to be dealt with separately by diverse government institutions hampered by conflicting mandates and a lack of coordination structures.

NEXT STEPS

UNICEF is advocating for the Ministries of Public Health and Women's Affairs and the National Directorate of Security to become part of the inter-agency referral mechanism. UNICEF will continue to work with government partners to strengthen the mechanism and to support professional training of social workers. This is being done through development of national standards and a curriculum in partnership with the Silberman School of Social Work at Hunter College (New York), the National Skills Development Programme of MoLSAMD and Kabul University. UNICEF will also continue to support capacity building and coordination of CPAN in its assessment and referral of child protection cases.

In addition, UNICEF has been working with the Ministry of Interior and the Attorney General's Office to develop diversion guidelines, channeling children in conflict with the law away from judicial proceedings towards a different way of resolving the issue that enables many – possibly most – to be dealt with by non-judicial bodies, thereby avoiding the negative effects of formal judicial proceedings and a criminal record. They will be included in new child-focused legislation and piloted in 2013.

In collaboration with the European Commission, UNICEF is supporting a pilot project in five provinces on alternatives to detention for children in conflict with the law. Working with community members and juvenile justice professionals, UNICEF's partners (Children in Crisis, War Child UK) and the European Commission's partner (Terre des Hommes) are assessing community mechanisms to facilitate implementation of alternatives to detention. These would complement social services offered by non-governmental organizations, MoLSAMD and the Ministry of Women's Affairs.

⁴ UNICEF Afghanistan, 'Evaluation of Social Work Coaching Agency Projects in Afghanistan (2007-2011)', July 2011.

National commitment to increase birth registration



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Year: 2012

Country: **Brazil**

Region: Latin America and the Caribbean

In Brazil, birth registration rates in poor states from the northern (Amazon) and northeastern regions have historically been low. However, rates have increased substantially since adoption of a comprehensive national plan of action in 2001 and a revised strategy in 2007, complemented by public funding, political commitment and monetary incentives for maternity wards to register newborns.

Since 2001, UNICEF, in collaboration with its partners, has encouraged establishment of civil registration services in public hospitals. Integrating civil registration into the health sector has been tested and improved, and the northeastern state of Pernambuco has piloted an online birth registration system. Birth registration indicators were also included in regional implementation of the National Pact for Children in states from the northeastern region, encouraging greater commitment and budget allocations. Between 2006 and 2008, birth registration rates of children up to 1 year old increased by 13 per cent in the northeastern states. Registration of births in the northern states also increased on average from 53 per cent in 2000 to 82 per cent in 2010.

THE SITUATION¹

Socioeconomic indicators in the northern and northeastern states of Brazil are considerably below the national average.² In support of government efforts to reduce national inequities, UNICEF's country programme for 2012-2016 is concentrating on these two regions, along with major urban areas including Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo. It focuses particularly on vulnerable children such as those from indigenous groups, the Riberinhos (Amazon river peoples) and the Quilombola (descendants of African slaves living in impoverished rural communities).

Birth registration rates have improved steadily in Brazil over the last 15 years, partially due to UNICEF advocacy and technical assistance to the government at all levels. However, in most of Latin America national averages often mask subnational pockets of poverty and exclusion, and Brazil is no exception. In 2010, the country's national registration rate, defined as children aged 15 months with a birth certificate, was 93 per cent. However, in states in the northern region the rate was around 82 per cent, while in the northeastern region it was 91 per cent. The 2010 national census included questions on birth registration, enabling authorities to provide registration services to communities with low rates, and it confirmed this inequity. The census revealed that among the 600,000 children under 10 years old who do not possess a birth certificate, 400,000 live in northern and northeastern states. In addition, the census showed that 32 per cent of indigenous children under age 10 remain unregistered.

Reasons for low birth registration rates include geographic isolation, lack of awareness of the benefits of registration and discrimination against minorities. Registration of children with indigenous names is commonly denied, although this practice is against the law. National legislation does not require registration of indigenous children, but not having a birth certificate may limit their ability to claim other rights. In addition, birth certificates are sometimes not required within areas reserved for indigenous populations, which reduces the incentive to register.

¹ All statistics quoted throughout the case study are from the National Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE).

² The Northern (Amazon) region includes the states of Acre, Rondônia, Amazonas, Roraima, Amapá, Para and Tocantins. The Northeastern states are Maranhão, Ceará, Piauí, Bahia, Sergipe, Alagoas, Pernambuco, Paraíba, and Rio Grande do Norte.

THE RESPONSE

To improve outreach for birth registration, UNICEF has supported the Government of Brazil for more than a decade in the following initiatives:

- **Legislation:** In 1997, the Government amended laws to eliminate fees for birth registration and birth certificates. In 2012 a resolution was approved allowing registration under indigenous names and inclusion of ethnicity on the birth certificate when requested.
- **Awareness-raising:** Since 1999, the Ministry of Health and the Human Rights Secretariat of the Ministry of Justice, working with the Association of Notaries and Registrars of Brazil, have carried out information campaigns on children's rights to birth registration under various slogans, such as 'I have a name and a last name, I am part of the Brazilian family'. These campaigns have involved celebrities such as footballer Ronaldo and musician Ivete Sangalo.
- **Monetary incentives:** A law passed in December 2000 requires states to create mechanisms for compensating civil registrars at state and local levels to ensure birth registration and issuance of birth certificates without charge.³ In 2002, the Ministry of Health issued a resolution specifying allocation of R\$5 (around US\$2.40) for each child registered by a notary public in maternity wards of hospitals run by the National Health Service.⁴ To receive this incentive, the hospital must prove that the child received his/her birth certificate prior to discharge from the facility.
- **National Programme for the Promotion of Birth Registration:** Monetary incentives were not enough to encourage maternity wards to take on birth registration. As a result, in 2001 the Government established the National Programme for the Promotion of Birth Registration, in collaboration with civil society organizations, corporations and the media. As part of this campaign, UNICEF has supported the deployment of civil registration services in public hospitals. However, a 2008 UNICEF-led assessment found that most of the units put in place as a result of this programme in three northeastern states (Ceará, Piauí and Rio Grande do Norte) had ceased to function. This was attributed to the high cost of maintaining the registration units in maternity wards, lack of awareness about legislation pledging free registration, hospitals' lack of mandate and incentives to register children, and difficult geographic access.
- **Linkage with the Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative:** Directives issued in 2004 and 2008 regulating the Baby-Friendly Hos-

pital Initiative require that at least 70 per cent of newborns leave the hospital with a birth certificate in order for the hospital to be certified baby-friendly. Birth registration is also a core element of National Baby Week, which is celebrated annually at state and municipal level to promote mothers' and children's rights.

- **Approved Municipality Seal:** A National Pact for Children and Adolescents in the northeastern states was signed in 2004 and renewed in 2007, involving authorities from federal, state and municipal levels. It tracks progress on birth registration, and high-performing municipalities are awarded the Approved Municipality Seal.
- **National Commitment for the Eradication of Under-Registration of Births and Expansion of Access to Basic Documentation:** In 2007, a comprehensive national policy was established, providing for long-term budget allocations and joint collaboration at all levels between civil registration authorities and the health sector.

The key initiative has been the National Commitment for the Eradication of Under-Registration of Births and Expansion of Access to Basic Documentation. This strategy establishes a holistic approach to registration, building on experience gained over the previous decade. UNICEF supported revision of the approach, which integrates birth registration into the health sector, provides capacity building for civil registrars and health care staff, and explores new and less costly mechanisms for linking maternity wards and civil registrars. Electronic linkage was piloted in 2008 in a number of hospitals in the state of Pernambuco. As soon as parents receive the declaration of birth (a document issued in the maternity ward) they can register the child through an online registration unit in the hospital without going to the registration office. As of November 2012, 436 units have been set up in UNICEF priority areas: 13 in Amazon region, 190 in Semi-Arid region and 233 in the cities of Itaquaquecetuba, Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo. An additional 250 units are to be installed annually nationwide in hospitals delivering over 300 babies each year through 2014.

The main targets of the national strategy are indigenous, Quilombola, Riberinho and Gypsy groups, rural communities and children living in residential care institutions. Awareness-raising is concentrated on indigenous groups in the northern, central western and northeastern states. Fathers have been a particular focus of awareness-raising, through the 'Be Your Child's Hero' campaign, because many children are registered only with their mother's name. The justice sector facilitates voluntary recognition of paternity, along with investigation if required, including through DNA tests.

³ Law No. 10.169, December 2000.

⁴ Ministry of Health of Brazil, Decree No. 938/GM of 20 May 2002.



A central element of this strategy is to reinforce the integration of the health sector (hospitals and maternity wards) and civil registration authorities at municipal and state levels. Partners include civil society groups and the Association of Notaries and Registrars of Brazil. In 2011, the Human Rights Secretariat, Ministry of Justice and National Council of Justice agreed on a standardized model for birth certificates. New security features prevent document fraud.

The Government has allocated funds to implement the National Commitment for the Eradication of Under-Registration of Births and Expansion of Access to Basic Documentation. Funds are provided within the framework of the Social Agenda for Birth Registration and Basic Documentation, led by the Human Rights Secretariat, and UNICEF provides technical and financial support. Federal government partners responsible for ministerial action and social mobilization are the Special Secretariat for Human Rights and the Ministries of Social Development and Fight against Hunger, Justice and Health. Other partners are state and municipal governments, the Courts of Justice, Internal Affairs Division of the Ministry of Justice and the Association of Notaries and Registrars of Brazil.

PROGRESS AND RESULTS

Children's access to birth registration in areas with low registration rates has improved considerably, particularly in the northeastern states. Between 2006 and 2008, registration rates of children under 1 year old increased by 13 per cent in the northeastern states, more than four times greater than the national increase of 3 per cent. Registration rates had reached 91 per cent by 2010 in the northeastern states. Registration of births in the northern states grew on average from 53 per cent in 2000 to 82 per cent in 2010. Free online registration in maternity wards, being expanded nationwide, has removed geographic and financial barriers to registration.

Similar improvements have taken place nationally, with the registration rate up from 79 per cent in 2002 to 93 per cent in 2010. Just between 2009 and 2010, the increase was 20 per cent. Out of 615 public maternity wards, 286 have registration units as of December 2012. Higher registration rates represent an improvement in child protection – children with birth certificates can claim access to other rights and services.

Despite these improvements, northern and northeastern states still have the lowest birth registration rates in Brazil. Among children under 1 year old, the lowest rates are found in the northern states of Amazonas (79 per cent), Roraima (80 per cent), Para (81 per cent) and Acre (83 per cent), and in the northeastern state of Maranhão (83 per cent). Efforts should

therefore be continued to reach out to particularly vulnerable and excluded population groups in those regions.

Challenges also remain for children born outside of maternity facilities. UNICEF is reaching out to the most excluded and vulnerable groups through advocacy, technical assistance, capacity building of stakeholders and communication campaigns. Brazil's experience has also benefited other countries. In 2008, Brazil's Human Rights Secretariat was invited to Guinea-Bissau to provide technical assistance on birth registration, and in 2010 representatives from the Government of Guinea-Bissau traveled to Brazil to strengthen their understanding of the national birth registration policy. The Human Rights Secretariat also traveled to Haiti in 2010 to explore possibilities for supporting modernization of its birth registration process.

NEXT STEPS

In 2013, a bottleneck analysis on birth registration and a situation analysis of the Amazon region will identify obstacles to birth registration and help refine the region's policies and interventions. UNICEF is supporting expansion of the online registration system piloted in Pernambuco state to all 217 hospitals in the state and its introduction in other states.

The National Commitment for Eradication of Under-Registration of Births and Expansion of Access to Basic Documentation has the following objectives for the period 2011-2014:

- Improve the national rate of registration to 95 per cent by 2013
- Register all children under 5 years old by 2014
- Broaden access to birth registration among excluded population groups in partnership with the Government and the National Indigenous People's Foundation
- Establish online registration units in hospitals with more than 300 deliveries each year, at a rate of 250 units per year through 2014
- Establish and implement a National Information System on Civil Registry (birth registration data are currently held by the National Institute for Geography and Statistics). This specialized system will strengthen birth registration monitoring and the identification of trends and gaps that will inform policies and programmes.

For further information, see:

UNICEF Brazil, Health Department of the State of Piauí and Foundation of Ceará for Reproductive Health, 'The Situation of Birth Registration in Maternity Wards in the State of Piauí: Access and characteristics of services', July 2008.

Child-friendly spaces – Empowering girls in emergencies



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Year: 2012

Country: **Democratic Republic of the Congo**

Region: West and Central Africa

Child-friendly spaces provide a safe place for children to play and access psychosocial services in emergencies. They are an important UNICEF-supported tool of protection in camps for displaced people in North Kivu, Democratic Republic of the Congo. But a 2008 programme review revealed insufficient participation of children in planning activities in these spaces. In particular, it found that activities did not adequately address the concerns or interests of girls, especially adolescent girls.

In response, UNICEF revised its approach to concentrate on building the capacities of staff, promoting girls' participation and incorporating more gender-targeted activities. These included facilitated discussion groups for adolescent girls and boys in child-friendly spaces in camps as well as in return areas. The groups offer a platform for young people to express themselves, be heard and learn from their peers. Both girls and boys have reported feeling more confident and empowered as a result of their participation.

THE SITUATION

According to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, girls and boys displaced by conflict constituted more than 50 per cent of the 2.2 million internally displaced people in the Democratic Republic of the Congo as of June 2012. Displacement brings risks for both girls and boys. It puts girls at risk of sexual violence and exploitation as well as early marriage, and it limits their access to services such as reproductive health care. It puts both boys and girls at risk of recruitment by armed forces and groups and prevents them from attending school.

As part of its activities to protect children displaced by conflict, UNICEF introduced child-friendly spaces as a standard component of its emergencies programming in the eastern part of the country in 2007. As of October 2012, a total of 48 child-friendly spaces are operating in camps for displaced people, serving 30,000 girls and boys aged 3 to 17. These spaces provide displaced boys and girls with a safe place to play, participate in structured activities and access psychosocial support to deal with violence and abuse. The staff, who come from the community, receive materials and technical assistance from non-governmental organizations (NGOs), supported by UNICEF.

A review completed in 2008 revealed several issues that were preventing the child-friendly spaces programme from fully addressing the needs and priorities of girls and boys.¹ Girls in particular were not sufficiently involved in planning the activities; they did not feel at ease talking about personal issues in discussion groups when boys were present; and there were not enough activities appropriate to both age and gender. Failing to address the needs and interests of adolescent girls, and thus failing to create a protective environment, could increase the risk of sexual violence and exploitation of girls in the camps.

THE RESPONSE

To address these issues, UNICEF supported capacity-building for staff of the child-friendly spaces and the redesign of activities to improve their quality and gender sensitivity. The staff received on-the-job support through regular monitoring and supervision visits.

¹ In 2008, UNICEF conducted monitoring visits to evaluate programme performance. The observations and recommendations were discussed internally and shared with implementing partners directly. There was no published document.

They also were trained on psychosocial support, referral mechanisms, recreational activities, gender-based violence and prevention of HIV and AIDS.

As a further response to the review, as a pilot initiative, one child-friendly space in Kibati camp set up a girls' discussion group facilitated by trained NGO staff. This took place in 2008 after two girls were attacked by soldiers while collecting wood in Kibumba. One of the girls was killed, which deeply affected communities in the area. The girl who survived moved with her family to the camp in Kibati. She began participating in the child-friendly activities and found support among her peers and from the staff. The discussion group gave the girls an opportunity to mourn together and became a source of both solace and protection, as they discussed the risks they face and strategies for addressing them. The supportive environment empowered them to become agents of change in their communities, by identifying and helping to put in place protection mechanisms such as community patrols, emergency contacts and referral mechanisms. UNICEF provided support to the NGO staff to manage the girls' physical and psychosocial needs and offer follow-up and referral services, including medical care from a local health facility.

Based on these initial positive results, discussion groups with adolescent boys were introduced in Bulengo camp in Mugungu in 2009. Soon this was expanded to 11 groups, including 5 in the camps around Goma. Similar to the girls' groups, the boys' discussion groups offer a safe environment for sharing with peers and an opportunity to discuss issues facing adolescents. All are guided by trained facilitators in order to challenge harmful beliefs and practices.

In both boys' and girls' groups, the young people choose the topics. The conversations centre on issues such as sexual and reproductive health, relations with the opposite sex, protection concerns, gender-based violence, parents and peers, personal hygiene, life skills and gender roles, including those that sustain gender inequalities. The staff build trusting relationships with the adolescent girls and boys and use an interactive process of guided dialogue and reflection. In discussing problems and solutions in this safe environment, these groups work to challenge prevailing attitudes.

PROGRESS AND RESULTS

In 2009, UNICEF began scaling up the pilot project. As of October 2012, each of the 48 child-friendly spaces in the country has separate discussion groups for girls and boys, each serving an average of 10 children. During on-site visits, child protection workers have recorded the groups' progress. Their findings suggest the groups have been very beneficial. According to these workers' reports, the girls felt valued, and they appreciated the recognition of their right to participate. The trusting relationships established with their facilitators and peers put them at ease in discussing intimate matters. They also felt empowered by having identified practical protection mechanisms and helped establish them.

The girls were self-confident in expressing their needs and establishing limits in relationships with boys. They identified members of the adolescent boys' groups who had been sensitized about their concerns and accompanied them when they moved around, providing a degree of protection. In some areas, members of the boys' groups have created community vigilance groups against sexual violence, and they report on protection concerns to local leaders or police.

The child protection workers also noted that discussion group participants were informed about services and how to access them. They discussed the benefits and risks of reporting incidents to local leaders or police. With adequate information, boys and girls felt better equipped to make informed decisions about whether or not to access services. As the groups raised awareness about community services (health, psychosocial and legal), implementing partners reported that many children and parents began to seek services directly, without waiting for referrals.

Both boys and girls also reported feeling better equipped to challenge harmful practices and traditional gender roles. Girls said they were more outspoken about sexual exploitation by teachers in school. Boys mentioned a change in their attitude about sexual relations, reflecting an understanding that sex should be consensual, never forced. They also expressed more willingness to perform household chores.

Throughout 2009, capacity-building and monitoring efforts strengthened facilitators' ability to promote adolescent participation and conflict resolution in the discussion groups. The child-friendly spaces staff often serve as a bridge be-



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tween the adolescent discussion groups and the community, advocating for children's protection and sharing the concerns and solutions raised by the adolescents. In some cases, information from the discussion groups improved the community's understanding of situations that are risky for girls, leading them to set up patrols to reduce the risk of sexual violence on roads and in fields.

This pilot project has now been expanded into a standard response in UNICEF's transition programme in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. To support families and build a more supportive and protective community, it was decided with local leaders to establish child-friendly spaces in certain villages of return. The discussion groups have also been set up in these communities, where they help the returnees, particularly unaccompanied displaced children, deal with the many challenges facing them. In addition to providing an opportunity for young people to express their concerns and protection needs, the groups help communities identify solutions to issues that arise during the delicate period of transition. The success of the adolescent discussion groups has demonstrated the importance of gender-sensitive programming for effective, high-quality interventions, reinvigorating commitment to gender analysis and participatory approaches.

NEXT STEPS

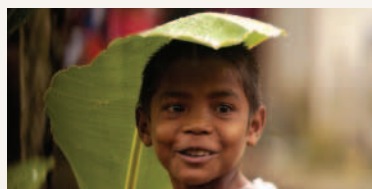
Since April 2012, eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo has experienced a deadly upsurge in violence following the creation of a new armed group, M23, and more intense fighting between existing armed groups, M23 and the national army. In this context, UNICEF plans to continue scaling up the child-friendly spaces in return areas to support safe spaces for boys and girls and contribute to a durable and peaceful return home.

For more information, see:

Global Education Cluster of the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies and the Global Protection Cluster of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, Guidelines for Child-Friendly Spaces, 2011.

UNICEF Democratic Republic of the Congo, Humanitarian Action Update, August 2012.

Strengthening child protection systems



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Year: 2012

Country: **Indonesia**

Region: East Asia and the Pacific

Indonesia is classified by the World Bank as a middle-income country.¹ However, national indicators mask inequalities, and the country faces a number of child protection challenges, including child labour, sexual exploitation, lack of birth registration and high rates of institutionalization.

While Indonesia has the resources to provide systematic and longer term support to vulnerable children, it has lacked a comprehensive approach to child protection. Government agencies have tended to respond to child protection issues at individual levels rather than systematically assessing potential violations of child rights and establishing a national protection system to prevent them.

In this regard, UNICEF Indonesia has been working with the Government to establish a more comprehensive systems-strengthening approach. Child protection is now defined as a separate pillar in Indonesia's medium-term development plan, staff have been trained in holistic child protection strategies, and provinces are redefining their strategic approach and plans.

1 World Bank, 'Country and lending groups' (http://data.worldbank.org/about/country-classifications/country-and-lending-groups#Low_income), information accessed on 21 January 2013.

THE SITUATION

Of Indonesia's estimated 240 million inhabitants, almost one third are under the age of 18, and the population grows by approximately 3 million each year.² Indonesia has experienced steady economic growth in recent years. But national indicators mask major inequalities at subnational levels and among the most vulnerable people, especially women and children.

At least 30 per cent of the females engaged in or forced into sex work are below the age of 18;³ more than 120,000 children aged 10 to 14 are or have been married;⁴ around 9 per cent of children under age 17 are working; and an estimated 3 million adolescent children are working in potentially hazardous occupations.⁵ Around 5,000 to 6,000 children (84 per cent of incarcerated children) are in adult detention centres, correction facilities or prisons.⁶ Indonesia has one of the highest rates of child institutionalization in the world, with an estimated 6,000 to 8,000 institutions caring for more than 500,000 children.⁷ Almost half of the children under age 5 do not have birth certificates and are not registered, with large disparities within and between provinces and between wealth quintiles.⁸

As a middle-income country with decentralized governance, Indonesia has sufficient government resources to provide support both nationally and subnationally to child protection. However, allocations from national budgets are not always directed most effectively in the child protection sector, and fiscal decision-making at provincial level is often strongly guided by central government authorities. The central government also has substantial influence in the legal and policy environment, and subnational entities are required to mirror and adopt national policies.

2 UNICEF, *The State of the World's Children 2012: Children in an urban world*, 2012, p. 109, and United States Central Intelligence Agency, *The World Factbook*, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/rankorder/2119rank.html?countryName=Indonesia&countryCode=id®ionCode=eas&rank=4#id>, accessed on 22 January 2013.

3 Irwanto, Muhammad Farid and Jeffry Anwar, 'Children in Need of Special Protection in Indonesia: Situation analysis', 1999.

4 Population Census 2010 (<http://sp2010.bps.go.id/index.php/site/tabel?tid=271&wid=0>), information accessed on 24 January 2013.

5 UNICEF Indonesia, 'UNICEF Annual Report', 2011.

6 Purnianti, et al., 'Situation Analysis of Children in Contact with the Law in Indonesia', 2007, and UNICEF Indonesia, 'UNICEF Annual Report', 2011.

7 Florence Martin and Tata Sudrajat, 'Someone that Matters: The quality of care in child care institutions in Indonesia', 2007; and UNICEF Indonesia, 'UNICEF Annual Report', 2011.

8 UNICEF, *The State of the World's Children 2012: Children in an urban world*, 2012, p. 121.

Historically, child protection funds have been allocated and actions have been taken in reaction to events. Policies tend to reflect individual issues rather than being based on a comprehensive approach to prevention of violations against children. Institutionalization of children is an example. When a child protection issue emerges, such as the risk of violence in a child's home, the default response has been to place the child in institutional care. As a result, little attention has been given to assessing the factors contributing to the child's vulnerability or to helping families and children deal with the challenges they face.

UNICEF's primary function is to advocate for and provide guidance to the Government on how to define policies, laws and standards that respond to the diverse child protection issues of the country's 33 provinces in accordance with international standards and in a more cost-effective way. UNICEF works in partnership with national and subnational government counterparts to address the factors that lead to violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation and to strengthen child protection services.

THE RESPONSE

Indonesia is beginning to formulate a systematic approach to child protection. The objective is to develop comprehensive laws, policies and regulations; improve the delivery and quality of services; and strengthen professional capacities in child protection and related sectors. Systemic change requires a holistic child protection framework focusing on both preventing and responding to child protection violations and deficits. Such a framework requires a long-term strategy, and this is the focus of UNICEF's child protection work in Indonesia. Along with advocating for a more comprehensive approach, UNICEF provides global evidence and technical guidance to aid its development, particularly in terms of the legal, policy and operational framework. UNICEF is supporting the government's efforts to strengthen the child protection foundation upon which the structures and procedures can be built. Strengthening systems involves structural changes to the process for determining policies, laws and standards; allocation of budgets; strengthening of human resource capacity; and delivery of services.

Lessons can be drawn from other sectors. Years of advocacy preceded the country's shift to a systems approach in providing health care. The shift began at the policy level, and once political will was secured, more integrated delivery of services began in provision of primary health care. The same approach is being used to develop a systematic response to child protection.

As of 2010, the scale and nature of child protection concerns in Indonesia had not been comprehensively mapped and the bottlenecks impeding a more coordinated national child protection system were largely uncharted. UNICEF supported training for national mid-level staff from line ministries to introduce the concept of a holistic child protection system. Initially conducted in Jakarta, the training was rolled out in 2011 to provincial and district government partners in the six provinces where UNICEF has a field presence: Aceh, Central and East Java, South and West Sulawesi and Nusa Tenggara Timur. In addition to government officials from sectoral departments, participants included Members of Parliament and civil society representatives. The inclusion of Members of Parliament from the relevant provinces proved crucial as they were able to defend and advocate for budget allocations and for changes in the local government environment to ensure passage of progressive regulations.

PROGRESS AND RESULTS

Signs of progress are emerging. The 2011 training influenced child protection planning by the National Development Planning Agency. Most significantly, child protection is now defined as a separate pillar in Indonesia's Medium Term Development Plan, the Rencana Program Jangka Menengah Nasional (RPJMN), for 2010-2014. This is a monumental breakthrough. It provides the clearest indication of the momentum being created and of the level of political commitment from key decision-makers. Since the initial training, the Government has committed a significant amount of funds to extend the training to the remaining provinces, which should take place by the end of 2013.

Immediately following the provincial training, participants began to meet to increase coordination and to identify actions needed to improve child protection. Provincial governments are beginning to address factors that contribute to children's vulnerability and to plan a more comprehensive response. For example, at the time of the training, one district in Central Java was weeks away from presenting a regulation to the local parliament that continued to address children in terms of categories of protection violations. After the training, the district authorities revised the regulation to address vulnerability more holistically and to call for a more coordinated approach to child protection. Other provinces that participated in the training have also adopted this regulation. The Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection, which is responsible for national policy and coordination on child protection, has turned it into a template for national regulations. Data collection is another area of progress. Strengthen-

ing of the Child Protection Information Management System is one objective of the RPJMN, but it has been recognized that the system's current structure does not capture comprehensive data on the nature and scale of violence against children. Therefore, the Government committed significant funds in 2012 to support the country's first national study of violence against children, scheduled for 2013. It will provide essential data to inform the direction of future policies and the type of services needed.

Capitalizing on the training, UNICEF also supported the design and implementation of a government-led mapping and assessment exercise in 2011 to track child protection elements at provincial level. This galvanized local governments to identify their weaknesses and limitations. Analysis of bottlenecks determined that the primary constraint was not a lack of awareness about the need for a more coordinated child protection system, but rather the lack of knowledge about how to translate awareness into practical action. Each province that received training is now redefining its strategic direction and revising child protection plans.

The mapping and assessment exercise was vital for a comprehensive analysis of child and family welfare services. One issue that emerged was the need to link national policies and regulations with local service provision. UNICEF and the Government have begun to explore how to support this integration, which is particularly relevant regarding the extensive use of institutional care for children. Through evidence-based advocacy by UNICEF and other partners, the Government is aware of the hazards of institutional care and recognizes the economic and social benefits of family care and community-based approaches. But professional capacity and training are limited in institutions, and placement is rarely informed by evidence as to the best interests of the child. With different departments responsible for different aspects of social welfare programming, the result is fragmented delivery of services. With UNICEF support, efforts are now under way to move towards a community-based system of care emphasizing family support.

Additionally, UNICEF and its partners are supporting efforts to strengthen the two cash transfer programmes, the Child Social Welfare Programme and Family of Hope, both administered by the Ministry of Social Affairs. The Child Social Welfare programme provides financial support targeting children needing special protection, with the objective of keeping children at home instead of send-

ing them to institutions. The Family of Hope programme provides support to poor families for health care and to encourage children to attend school. UNICEF support aims to improve the skills of the front-line workers who administer these initiatives so they can help families and communities identify solutions to their challenges. Along with influencing social norms and behaviours, these shifts in approach will help to refocus the social welfare function and ultimately reduce the number of children entering institutional care.

Evidence is also emerging of a similar shift in how Indonesia deals with children in conflict with the law. UNICEF has advocated strongly for an increase in the age of criminal responsibility, and in July 2012 it was raised from 8 years of age to 12 years.⁹ UNICEF also supported the drafting of a juvenile justice bill aligned with international standards.

In 2012, UNICEF worked with the national police to draft standard operating procedures for handling children in contact with the law and developed pre-service and in-service training modules on child protection for police officers. Additionally, the National Bar Association is developing guidelines for lawyers who handle cases involving children. Collectively, these actions will move Indonesia towards comprehensive rights-based treatment of children who come into contact with the law.

The natural disasters that beset Indonesia in the recent past also make children more vulnerable to exploitation, neglect, violence and abuse. When the 2004 tsunami struck, Indonesia had no dedicated response mechanism to protect children in such circumstances, and the tsunami proved enormously challenging for staff providing services for them. As that crisis demonstrated, lack of birth registration puts children at risk when they are separated from their families. Emergencies also increase the threat of sexual exploitation, especially for girls. The need to develop generic systems to better protect children at such times was a lesson learned from this event.

Since 2004, UNICEF has worked with the Government to establish systems to protect children in emergencies. In 2011, the Ministry of Social Affairs developed and trained a Quick Reaction Team for Child Protection in Emergencies, the first of its kind in the country. The team is on call for deployment when emergencies strike, with responsibility for assessing and monitoring child protection issues. It

⁹ Law No. 11/2012 on Juvenile Criminal Justice System.

has been deployed several times. For example, during an isolated pocket of religious violence in 2012, the Ministry deployed 15 social workers to support families and children who had been displaced by the violence.

NEXT STEPS

During 2013, the Government will undertake the first national study of violence against children and expects to complete child protection training for line ministry staff in the remaining provinces. UNICEF will continue to provide guidance for the development of a national child protection system. This will include technical advice to national and

subnational government departments covering legal and policy issues, strategic planning documents, state budget allocation and reform of the social work sector.

For further information, see:

UNICEF Indonesia, Issue Briefs, October 2012.

Yusuf, Al Huda et al., 'Profil Anak (Profile of Indonesian children) 2011'.

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Ma'an campaign – Together towards safe schools¹



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Year: 2012

Country: **Jordan**

Region: Middle East and North Africa

Corporal punishment is common in Jordanian schools, as confirmed in a 2007 survey. To reduce this violence, in 2009 UNICEF initiated the Ma'An (Together) Towards a Safe School campaign, in close collaboration with key ministries, the office of Her Majesty Queen Rania Al Abdullah, non-governmental organizations, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) and the Military Education Directorate.

This nationwide campaign promotes new disciplinary methods in schools, advocates to end societal tolerance of violence in schools and supports media coverage to spread the message nationwide. The initiative has been successful in reducing violence in schools and bringing the issue to the forefront of the national dialogue.

THE SITUATION

The Convention on the Rights of the Child requires States to protect children from all forms of violence. Countries are required to take all appropriate measures to ensure that when schools need to discipline children, they do so in a manner consistent with the Convention. The United Nations Secretary-General's Study on Violence against Children (2006) calls on States to ensure that principals and teachers use non-violent teaching and learning strategies and adopt classroom management and disciplinary measures that avoid fear, threats, humiliation or physical force. It also calls for programmes to prevent and reduce violence in schools.²

The Jordan Ministry of Education banned corporal punishment in 1981. But despite the ban, children experience high levels of emotional and physical abuse at school, and also at home, as revealed in a UNICEF-supported national survey in 2007. It found that more than two thirds of children were subjected to verbal abuse by teachers and school administrators (71 per cent) as well as by their parents/legal guardians (70 per cent). More than a third of children (38 per cent) reported being subjected to verbal abuse by adults in the community. Around 57 per cent of children reported physical abuse by teachers and school administrators, 34 per cent by parents/legal guardians and 13 per cent by adults in the community. The study also revealed wide acceptance of corporal punishment among families, who saw it as an effective tool for changing children's behaviour.

THE RESPONSE

These survey findings prompted UNICEF and the Ministry of Education to embark on a national three-year campaign to reduce violence against children in all schools in Jordan, including those run by UNRWA. The initiative, called the Ma'An (Together) Towards a Safe School campaign, aims to completely shift the thinking about discipline and the school environment. It works to make teachers aware of their rights and responsibilities and hold them accountable for their actions. Through a series of consultations with teachers, students and families, the campaign devised a new way of discipline and then tested it in schools. Now, when a behavioural problem occurs in the classroom, teachers are to follow a four-step process: (1) pause, (2) ask the student about the problem, (3) engage the class

¹ The UNICEF Jordan country office provided all data quoted in this case study

² United Nations General Assembly, *United Nations Secretary-General's Study on Violence against Children*, 2006, pp. 28-29.

in discussion about the issue(s), and (4) take action to address the problem.

The Ma'An campaign was launched in November 2009 under the patronage of Her Majesty Queen Rania Al Abdullah and is now operating in virtually all public schools. It works to influence not just teachers, but also families and opinion leaders about the importance of avoiding violent disciplinary behaviours.

Every month, students are requested to fill out an electronic questionnaire to monitor the rate of change in violence throughout the school year. The survey samples 30 per cent of students from three grades, picked randomly from grades 4 through 10.

The campaign's activities include:

- **Administrative mobilization and advocacy:** Through meetings and personal letters, the Ministry of Education promotes the campaign and non-violent discipline to all principals, teachers and school and municipal administrative staff.
- **Interpersonal communication:** Each school has an advocacy group comprised of the principal, the counsellor, two teachers who use positive disciplinary measures, two parents from the Parent-Teacher Association and four students from the Student Council. The members of this group promote the new disciplinary methods among teachers and principals through monthly discussions based on the results of the school surveys. The school counsellors have been trained on the Ma'An campaign principles and approaches, and they train the other members of the advocacy group.
- **Media campaign:** Three times a year, a three-week media campaign is organized on radio, television, newspaper, social media and the Ma'An website.
- **Community mobilization:** Community and religious leaders from municipalities, districts and governorates, trained by the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs on advocacy skills and the principles of the Ma'An campaign, conduct town meetings with opinion and tribal leaders. The goal is to promote a culture of zero tolerance of violence against children and support schools in their efforts to reduce violence.

The Ma'An campaign is implemented through a series of committees. The Steering Committee, which oversees implementation, is headed by the Minister of Education with representation from key ministries and other relevant organizations along with school principals. The Technical Committee serves as a think tank and designs the campaign's activities, and the Monitoring and Evaluation Committee administers the monthly violence surveys and ensures that activities are based on evidence and data. The members of these two committees come from technical departments in the Ministry of Education and relevant outside organizations. The Media Committee, with members from the Ministry of Education, media outlets and the education field, spearheads efforts to engage with the media, including social media. UNICEF participates in all the committees.

The campaign, the first of its kind in Jordan, is an innovative component of a larger reform process, Educational Reform for Knowledge Economy, which is being led by the Ministry of Education and funded by the World Bank. It is introducing a shift in the country's educational approach. One aspect is professional development through improved teacher training and career development. More broadly, it is initiating a social contract among principals, teachers, students and families to promote democracy, participatory classroom approaches and safe schools.

Partners include the Ministries of Education, Social Development, Health, Interior and Awqaf and Islamic Affairs; Family Protection Department of the Public Security Department; National Council for Family Affairs; the Office of Queen Rania; Jordan River Foundation; Private Schools Education Association; Queen Rania Teacher Academy; UNRWA; Jordan Television; the Military Education Directorate; and a separate group of educators. The Ma'An campaign is supported by the National Alliance for Combating Violence against Children, a group of opinion leaders and influential people, led by Her Majesty Queen Rania.

PROGRESS AND RESULTS

- **Administrative mobilization and advocacy:** A National Ma'An Day has been held every November in all schools in Jordan, at which students learn about the campaign through entertaining activities. At the beginning of each school year all teachers and students receive letters from the Ministry of Education highlighting the importance of safe schools and the responsibilities of all to uphold a secure school envi-

ronment. Children are encouraged to take the letter home and discuss it with their families. In response, some families have signed a pledge not to use violence. The mandate of the district Education Councils is also being revised to include prevention of school violence among its responsibilities.

- **Interpersonal communication:** Advocacy groups have been established in all schools. The Technical Committee developed a Ma'An training manual for school counsellors and principals, which is used to train advocacy group members. In all schools, students, teachers and administrative staff have developed Codes of Conduct to govern their behaviour. Students in each class have developed age-appropriate classroom rules that specify unacceptable behaviours and the penalties for engaging in them.
- **Media campaign:** In addition to the three annual media campaigns, the Media Committee supported the production of the Ma'An documentary to inform audiences about violence against children and the Ma'An campaign. The Ma'An website serves as a platform for dissemination of its message and for discussion forums for teachers, students and parents.
- **Community mobilization:** Substantial progress has been made in mobilizing communities to support school efforts to reduce violence against children since the campaign was launched in 2009. The National Alliance, led by Her Majesty Queen Rania, brings together influential opinion leaders. They have been instrumental in persuading the media to address violence and solicit funding for the campaign. A National Day of Commitment, held in October 2011, encouraged families and communities to pledge to non-violent approaches to child-rearing and discipline at home, at school and in the community. It was celebrated in 13 cities across the country with participation by over 23,000 families. In addition, religious leaders have been trained by the Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs and are using their Friday sermons to preach for positive disciplinary and child-rearing practices and abandonment of violence against children. The campaign has also engaged governors and district directors on the campaign's objectives and sought their support to promote school efforts to reduce violence.
- **Legislation:** Advocacy by the National Alliance and

others translated into an amendment of the Civil Servants Disciplinary Guidelines in December 2009 to toughen penalties on teachers who use corporal punishment. Focus group research initiated by the Technical Committee solicited opinions from parents, educators and students about appropriate and effective disciplinary measures for each age group, as a first step in revising the Students' Disciplinary Guidelines.

- **Survey:** A national survey was implemented in all public and UNRWA-run schools (grades four through nine) in 2009 to establish a baseline regarding the levels and types of physical and verbal violence that students were experiencing. In December 2010, after the first year of campaign implementation, a follow-up survey was conducted. Results showed an impressive average decline of 28 per cent in physical violence, close to the anticipated 30 per cent reduction after one year of the campaign. The decrease in verbal violence, at 15 per cent, was also significant. The follow-up survey found that boys were subjected to more physical and verbal violence at school than were girls. Sixty two per cent of boys endured physical violence compared to 22 per cent of girls. Just over half of boys (51 per cent) faced verbal violence compared to 40 per cent of girls.

Similarly, the improvement after one year of the Ma'An campaign was greater among girls than among boys. For boys, physical violence declined by 15 per cent, compared to an astonishing 58 per cent among girls. Verbal violence among boys fell by 9 per cent, compared to 18 per cent among girls. The survey also found that verbal violence increased with age. Physical violence was the highest in sixth grade, affecting 44 per cent of students before the campaign, but it registered an impressive decline, falling 35 per cent. Physical violence decreased in all grades. These successes reveal that even when behaviours are ingrained in the beliefs and culture of a society, change is possible with comprehensive efforts involving all the groups that have a stake in the issue.

The campaign encourages a national dialogue on the most appropriate approach to positive discipline. It calls for developing classroom rules in a participatory manner. In addition, the campaign builds on the strong components of community participation introduced by the Ministry's Educational Reform for Knowledge Economy and through Parent-Teacher Associations and Student Councils.



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NEXT STEPS

The Government views the Ma'An campaign as a springboard to addressing violence at home and in the community. Students represent 25 per cent of the population, and teachers are also family members and community leaders. As a critical mass of society, together they are a potent force for reversing societal acceptance of violence as a means of discipline. Therefore, the Government has extended support to the campaign for another five years (2013-2017).

A 2011 assessment found that teachers felt they were incapable of managing their classrooms without resorting to violence. This revealed a clear need to equip all teachers with classroom management skills. In addition, some of the strategies used by the Ma'An campaign were seen as less suitable for older children. Based on these results, a plan of action will be implemented in four pilot districts to strengthen skills-building, leadership training and community mobilization. It is also working to engage older children through sports. If successful, the plan will be rolled out to all schools in the country.

The assessment also showed that teachers resented and, in some instances, resisted the campaign's sole

focus on violence by teachers. They felt that all societal violence should be addressed. As a result, the mandate of the subdistrict Educational Councils is being amended to promote and facilitate dialogue between schools and communities. The Media Committee is being restructured to include prominent experts on communication for behaviour change, who will help redesign the media messages. In addition, criteria for selecting schools that have succeeded in reducing violence are being developed to introduce a system of incentives.

UNICEF is supporting institutionalization of the monthly surveys and a year-end survey in 2012 as a tool for national monitoring of violence, as well as an evaluation, planned for 2014. It will examine successful strategies for reducing violence among various socioeconomic, geographic and age groups.

The Ma'An campaign could serve as a model for other countries, since similar cultural norms that support violence against children are found throughout the region. Changing norms and practices in Jordan could encourage other countries to exert national efforts to change disciplinary methods.

The Malindi child protection centre



UNICEF Kenya/2013/Mutua

Year: 2012

Country: Kenya

Region: Eastern and Southern Africa

In 2001, with passage of the Kenyan Children Act, Kenya began the process of establishing a comprehensive child protection system. In 2009, the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Development coordinated and participated in the pilot test of a tool kit for mapping and assessing national child protection systems. One of the gaps identified was the lack of adequate prevention, referral and protection services for children at risk of or suffering from violence, exploitation, abuse or neglect.

As one of the responses, Kenya decided to set up child protection centres. A concept was developed in 2010, based on lessons from a Nairobi drop-in centre operated by an NGO since 2000. Three centres are now serving children, one of them in Malindi, on Kenya's Indian Ocean coast. It is showing how a comprehensive approach to child protection can protect its most vulnerable children from abuses of their rights while also educating a community about how to protect those rights.

THE SITUATION

Since 2001, with passage of the Kenyan Children Act, the Government has been working to establish a national child protection system to address violations of children's rights. The Act consolidated all legislation affecting children and gave effect to international instruments ratified by Kenya, including the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child. The Children Act sets forth the legal obligations of all duty-bearers to respect, protect and fulfil the rights of children, including the right to be protected against violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation. Overseen by the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Development, the child protection system operates primarily through child protection officers operating in counties.

A 2010 study on violence against children in Kenya found that sexual and physical violence are widespread, perpetrated mostly by those closest to the children. Child neglect forms the largest proportion of the caseload of the Department of Children's Services, which more than doubled between 2005 and 2010, to almost 50,000 cases.¹ Every month Kenya's Child Helpline receives more than 40,000 calls from children and adults reporting child rights violations.²

Malindi and Magarini districts are among the poorest in Kenya. Nearly two thirds of their combined 450,000 people live below the poverty line. As of 2008, primary school enrolment rates were also among the lowest in the country, at 60 per cent for girls and 65 per cent for boys, compared to nationwide net enrolment rates of 83 per cent for girls and 84 per cent for boys. Poverty leads many parents to marry off their daughters at a young age. Lack of education and early marriage perpetuate a vicious cycle of poverty and illiteracy.

Malindi has an economy reliant on tourism. Sex tourism is widespread, putting both boys and girls at great risk of sexual exploitation and trafficking. Magarini's economy depends largely on salt mines. Girls as young as age 9 babysit their younger siblings while their parents work in the salt mines, and starting at about age 14 children begin to work in the mines themselves. Girls face the added risk of sexual exploitation by mine security guards.

¹ Situation Analysis of Children and Women in Kenya, UNICEF, in progress, March 2013.

² United States Department of State, Trafficking in Persons Report 2012 – Kenya Chapter, June 2012, available at www.state.gov/j/tip/rls/tiprpt/2012/index.htm.



UNICEF Kenya/2013/Mutua

Many girls in these two districts have children before they turn 16 years old. Physical and psychological abuse is common, including corporal punishment by parents and teachers. Typically these violations of child rights are not reported to the authorities. This is because the reporting process is not well understood, and in rural areas cases have traditionally been settled informally with the help of village elders and chiefs.

THE RESPONSE

An important component of Kenya's child protection system is child protection centres (CPCs), which are being established with UNICEF's help. They have two mandates: to respond to violence, exploitation, abuse and neglect; and to raise awareness about child rights in order to establish a protective environment throughout the community. So far three centres have opened, including one in Malindi. These 'one-stop shops' offer counselling and referral for various services, including medical care and legal support.

In Malindi, the CPC staff consists of a manager, appointed by the Director of the Department of Children's Services, four social workers, a child counsellor and a legal officer. The district children's officer and a police officer from the Police Gender and Children's Desk are located at the CPC, supporting integration of services. These individuals work as a team to respond to rights violations experienced by children. Though not a part of the CPC, the children's magistrate is also a committed advocate for children and works in collaboration with the CPC.

The CPC has fundamentally changed how cases of violence, exploitation, abuse and neglect are handled in Malindi and Magarini. The CPC oversees the case from beginning to end

– from rescue of the child to collection of information on the case to coordination of the child's rehabilitation and reintegration. Anyone with knowledge of a child rights violation can report a case to the CPC. A free and confidential telephone helpline, #116, is available throughout Kenya, encouraging people to report.

When a child rights violation is reported, CPC social workers assess the situation and gather information about the child and his or her family. They record the child's biographical data and a description of the case, and they can provide family mediation services if needed. If the child needs counselling, the social worker makes a referral to the counsellor based at the CPC. Some cases require referrals to other in-house services, such as police and legal aid, and to external providers, such as health services and alternative care. Social workers follow up on all the cases, monitoring them throughout the referral process as the child goes from one service provider to the next.

As the Malindi children's magistrate noted, "Not everyone in Malindi and Magarini districts understands that sexual abuse is an offence." This highlights one of the difficulties in protecting children – people do not always recognize violations of children's rights for what they are. Practices such as child marriage and corporal punishment in particular have long been widely accepted in many cultures, and it is difficult for people to see that they violate a child's rights.

The CPC's awareness-raising objective is to educate children, parents and communities so that a protective network is formed among all the people children encounter in their daily lives – including families, teachers, health care workers, religious leaders, neighbours and shopkeepers. The



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goal is for everyone to understand that children have rights, be able to recognize violations of them and know where to report those violations.

To fulfil its awareness-raising mission, the CPC makes outreach visits to communities, meets with civil society groups such as women's organizations and talks with children at schools. It also holds 'open days', inviting the community to visit the CPC and learn about its services.

PROGRESS AND RESULTS

In its first 20 months of operation, the Malindi CPC handled 5,650 child protection cases. In 2011, it reintegrated 20 children with their families, some to places as far away as Western Kenya and Tanzania.

In administering these cases, the CPC is building a child protection network in the Malindi-Magarini area. It has links with 13 registered child care institutions, which can pro-

vide temporary alternative care for children who need to leave their homes. Pregnant girls are usually referred to the Watamu Rescue Centre, which offers them a home for up to a year and reproductive health care information and services. The centre also provides vocational training in tailoring, and each young woman receives a sewing machine upon departure to help her earn a living.

Another partner is Watoto Kenya, which runs a home for children with HIV in Malindi district. Many of these children have been living on the street, and the Watoto home offers them a temporary place to live and schooling, including life skills lessons. The staff work with the children's families to smooth the way for the children to return home.

UNICEF supports the Child Rights Advisory, Documentation and Legal Centre (CRADLE) to provide legal aid through a legal officer who is stationed at the centre and ensures that appropriate cases undergo a judicial process. CRADLE also

trains lawyers to represent children in court on a pro-bono basis and is working to develop a network of lawyers to handle children's cases.

Malindi has a very committed children's magistrate, who personally assigns pro-bono lawyers to ensure that children have legal representation and encourages other lawyers to take on children's cases.

In terms of progress in raising awareness, the Malindi district education officer pointed out, "Parents used to take children to the police; now they can turn to the CPC." And a doctor at the Malindi hospital noted that reports of sexual abuse have increased tenfold since the CPC opened.

The CPC counsellor regularly runs discussion groups for parents on various subjects to educate them on appropriate child care practices. The topics are diverse: in addition to addressing various forms of exploitation and abuse, they cover reproductive health, hygiene and birth registration, as well as the importance of caring for children within families.

In collaboration with local chiefs, the 'mobile CPC' also visits rural communities to raise their awareness about these issues. During these outreach activities the CPC promotes its services, encouraging communities to report child rights violations. As of September 2012, four 'open days' had been organized at the CPC site, attracting a total of 600 visitors to learn about children's rights and the CPC's services.

Remaining needs include more awareness-raising, particularly in sensitive areas such as sexual abuse of boys; more sensitizing of village chiefs, to encourage them to work with the CPC; more training of staff, particularly in sign language so they can work with children who have hearing impairments; and more resources, such as to buy a vehicle for the CPC.

Additional support is needed to ensure optimal functioning by the CPC, including development of alternative care. Formal foster care, adoption and guardianship have not yet taken hold in Malindi, which leaves the CPC with few options when a child cannot stay with a relative. As a result, the child is usually placed in an institution. Foreigners sometimes open informal children's homes, and there have been allegations of girls moving in with foreigners to be supported in exchange for sex. The Government of Kenya is currently adapting the UN Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children, which emphasize family-based care.

The justice system also needs to be strengthened. According to the CPC legal counsellor, only 5 of the 20 pro-bono lawyers in Malindi are active. The Ministry of Justice has developed a draft legal aid policy and bill, and Cabinet approval is expected in 2013. With support from UNICEF in 2012, the Ministry carried out a situation analysis of children in the justice system to inform necessary improvements. The Malindi children's magistrate also stressed the need to find ways to encourage witnesses to come to court to testify, such as by providing financial and security support.

NEXT STEPS

Recognizing the positive results of the Malindi CPC, in 2012 UNICEF renewed its support to the Government through the NGO Comitato Internazionale Sviluppo Dei Popoli (CISP) for the period ending in December 2013. The funds will be used to hire additional staff and provide skills training; strengthen its activities, including 'open days' and outreach; improve the CPC's facilities, by providing a library and a playground for children; and expand the number and training of child protection stakeholders, including people from the community, parents, children and officials from the police department, courts, hospitals, schools and NGOs. This reflects understanding that one of the keys to an effective, comprehensive child protection system is coordination among all the officials and individuals who work and come into contact with children.

Through development of its child protection system and establishment of child protection centres, the Government of Kenya has demonstrated its commitment to addressing violence, exploitation, abuse and neglect targeted at children. This is a lasting commitment. The Government has pledged to establish four new CPCs every fiscal year, with the aim of eventually covering all of the country's 47 counties. In 2013, CPCs will open in Kakamega, Nairobi, Nakuru and Siaya. Among the existing centres, the Malindi CPC is recognized for its strong coordination among all partners and a commitment to raising awareness of communities and children. If this commitment continues and the staff manage to address remaining challenges, the Malindi CPC will grow stronger. It could also offer a model to be replicated throughout the country, strengthening the protection of all of Kenya's children, and to other countries in East and Southern Africa and beyond.

Building a child protection system



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Year: 2012

Country: **Malawi**

Region: Eastern and Southern Africa

Current thinking suggests that countries achieve more robust and sustainable child protection results for the most vulnerable children when the national response is part of a system rather than driven by individual child protection issues. While Malawi has many child protection components in place, it does not yet have a comprehensive national child protection system. In addition, while recognized as a need, child protection in the past has not been seen as a major national priority.

UNICEF used revision of the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (2011-2016) as an opportunity to raise the profile of child protection and influence the structure of the strategy to incorporate the issue. This laid the foundation for a new approach to child protection in the country, which then cascaded through to the design of the new United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and the new UNICEF country programme document, both covering 2012 to 2016. As a result, a strengthened child protection system is now cemented as a national priority in these key strategies and programmes.

THE SITUATION

A child protection system is a coordinated, harmonized and systematic approach to protecting children from violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect. It is guided by legislation and policy, complies with international treaties such as the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and has the human resources, financing and infrastructure required to fulfil its mandate. Based on human rights, it is accountable and accessible to children and their families and provides a continuum of protection services from prevention to mitigation of impacts.

The challenge for Malawi has been not just the lack of such a system but also the lack of demand for it by families and communities. As a result, programming for children vulnerable to abuse has focused on specific population groups — such as orphans, children in conflict with the law and girls at risk of early marriage — rather than on efforts to change the circumstances and causes of children's vulnerability. However, the country has in place many components of a comprehensive child protection system, including a structure, coordination mechanisms, policies, laws, action plans and the capacity to provide services. Malawi now needs to bring the components together into a coherent whole.

Although child protection concerns have been seen as important in the past, they have been considered secondary to broader development concerns. Child protection was absent from the previous Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (2006-2011) and UNDAF (2008-2011). As a result, the country's national development efforts were blind to the one in six children who were vulnerable to violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect and at risk from HIV and AIDS.¹

THE RESPONSE

Malawi needs a national child protection system that is flexible enough to respond to emerging issues, such as migration, urbanization, political transition and deteriorating economies. In a country with a heavy burden of HIV, it also needs to mitigate its effects on children. The starting point for a child protection system is support for community child-rearing and care to aid children who are subjected to harm or neglected by their communities. Building such a system requires the engagement of everyone in government and civil society, not just a few groups concerned about specific aspects of child well-being.

¹ United Nations Technical Review Team on programming for children affected by HIV and AIDS in Malawi, 'Vulnerability and Child Protection in the Face of HIV in Malawi', UNICEF and the Australian Agency for International Development, 2011, p. 61.



The effort to develop a comprehensive child protection system began towards the end of 2010 as UNICEF recognized the need to move beyond analysis of policy frameworks into concrete action on the ground. With the agreement of the Government, a review of literature on system-building was initiated with the National Technical Working Group on Child Protection, guided by the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Welfare. This review drew from the model of a child protection system described in a 2010 paper, 'Adapting a systems approach to child protection: key concepts and considerations'.² This led the partners to devise a working definition of child protection reflecting the situation in Malawi. Particularly striking in the definition is its reference to mitigation of the impact of HIV and AIDS on children.

Second, UNICEF and its partners contributed to developing the new Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (2011-2016) by participating in substantive meetings and preparing briefing notes to inform other participants about important issues. Strengthening of the national child protection system was identified as one of the medium-term outcomes in the section of the strategy dealing with child development, youth development and empowerment.

Third, in 2011, partners from more than 50 national and subnational agencies, both government and civil society, participated in a mapping exercise that identified the various child protection activities, partners, capacities and interventions. It provided the evidence partners needed to advocate for establishment of a comprehensive national child protection system.

Fourth, advocacy among United Nations and national partners helped to create a consensus that building the system was a national priority. Estimating the costs of implementation of the Child Care, Protection and Justice Act provided another opportunity for stakeholders to come to agreement about what needs to be done to establish an effective child protection system.

PROGRESS AND RESULTS

- A system-based approach enabled the Government and its partners to identify how to bring the components of child protection into a coherent programme. The various entities with mandates related to child protection (line ministries covering welfare, justice, health, education, police, courts and disability, along with key international and national civil society actors) now coordinate their actions through national technical working groups and reference groups on various components of the system, reducing duplication of effort.

- Establishment of a national child protection system is stated as a priority in the new Malawi Growth and Development Strategy (2011-2016) and the new UNDAF (2012-2016).
- The Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Welfare has established a Division of Child Protection to coordinate system-building and support partners in harmonizing their efforts.
- Case management is being tested with diverse groups including children at risk of violence, children living in households receiving social cash transfers and children affected by HIV and AIDS.
- The participatory mapping exercise improved understanding of system-building among child protection partners, who now have the skills to assess the components of the child protection system.

The main lesson learned is that child protection system-building can be used to reframe policy discussions about child protection concerns. The effort in Malawi lifted child protection from a marginal issue to one of national significance, influencing the priorities of numerous government agencies. This lesson is timely for UNICEF country offices that are supporting national efforts to transition from responding to specific issues to building a comprehensive approach and response mechanism. System-building can also help generate more commitment to child protection among UN agencies.

NEXT STEPS

The findings of the child protection mapping will be published in 2013. Three steps follow in establishing the child protection system in Malawi: Step 1 is assisting the ministries and other partners to reconfigure the national coordination mechanism to focus on results for children rather than on processes and inputs; Step 2 involves creating a master plan for the child protection sector covering human resources, infrastructure and financing; Step 3 is commissioning a five-year operational evaluation of the design and implementation of the system. This is to start in 2013 and will gather evidence about what does and does not work, and what is promising to influence the ongoing development of the system.

Establishment of the national child protection system will also provide a mechanism to build the skills of the social welfare workforce and improve the quality and reach of services, improving children's access to them.

² UNICEF, UNHCR, Save the Children and Chapin Hall, 'Adapting a Systems Approach to Child Protection: Key concepts and considerations', 2010.

Accelerating abandonment of female genital mutilation/cutting



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Year: 2012

Country: **Senegal**

Region: West and Central Africa

In Senegal, efforts to end female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C) had long been stymied by the widespread view that it was essential to a girl's marriageability and in the transition from girlhood to adolescence and adulthood. Beginning in the 1970s, numerous approaches to end this harmful practice were tried. But despite political commitment, backed up with strong advocacy from women's associations and non-governmental organizations, little progress was achieved.

An important shift took place towards the end of the 1990s with the introduction of an approach based on social norms and human rights. It was embedded in the framework of the government-led National Action Plan for the Acceleration of the Abandonment of FGM/C, coupled with a law prohibiting the practice. The new mix of strategies has proved successful. An increasing number of communities have become empowered to pursue realization of a range of human rights, which in turn has accelerated the process of collective public abandonment of FGM/C. This empowerment has extended to abandonment of other harmful practices, such as child marriage.

THE SITUATION

According to a 2010 survey, 26 per cent of Senegalese women aged 15 to 49 have undergone FGM/C. Among certain ethnic groups the rate is as high as 82 per cent, and in some regions of the country up to 92 per cent of women have been cut.¹

Momentum to stop FGM/C began to increase in the late 1990s. Senegalese President Abdou Diouf condemned the practice in 1997; a law prohibiting FGM/C was adopted in 1999; and the first National Action Plan was put in place in 2000. The action plan called for research, education, awareness-raising and advocacy. It aimed to (i) expand primary decision-makers' knowledge about the practice of FGM/C and about women's and girls' rights; (ii) include FGM/C in formal and non-formal education curricula; (iii) support enforcement of the 1999 law throughout the country; and (iv) set up a mechanism to coordinate the many partners in the effort. A second National Action Plan was launched in 2010, endorsing a human-rights based approach as a strategy to end FGM/C by 2015. It concentrated on promoting positive change rather than fighting against a tradition.

THE RESPONSE

Since 1997, in collaboration with the Government of Senegal, UNICEF and the non-governmental organization Tostan have supported implementation of the Community Empowerment Programme (CEP), a non-formal education programme based on the promotion of human rights. The CEP process teaches communities about democracy, human rights, accountability, problem-solving, health and hygiene, and conflict management. The programme stimulates collective discussion and decision-making about various issues affecting communities, including through meetings organized between villages and between generations, and through radio programmes aired in local dialects. As part of this process, communities learn about the harmful effects of FGM/C. The CEP process, along with national legal and policy efforts supported by the UNFPA-UNICEF Joint Programme on FGM/C, has led to a movement calling for abandonment of the practice in thousands of communities in all the regions where it is practised.

Communities reap benefits from their participation in the community empowerment process in other ways, such as learning about the need for health-promoting behaviours, hygiene, clean water and sanitation. They also adopt such positive practices as birth registration, prenatal and post-natal care, use of insecticide-

¹ Agence Nationale de la Statistique et de la Démographie (ANSD), MEASURE DHS ICF International, 'Enquête Démographique et de Santé à Indicateurs Multiples Sénégal (EDS-MICS) 2010-2011', 2012.



treated mosquito nets, child vaccination and use of latrines. In addition, individuals in communities report that village relationships are more harmonious when people apply the conflict management skills learned in the programme.

Typically, the CEP process ends after 30 months with a gathering of all participating villages, at which they proclaim their commitment to abandon both FGM/C and child marriage. A community that participates but is not yet ready to abandon these practices may choose to delay participating in a public declaration until a later date. The time taken to learn about human rights and achieve community commitment strengthens people's resolve, ensuring that once made, the decision to abandon FGM/C will be upheld. Communities in Senegal are bound by the weight of their words, and making an announcement in a public setting reflects endorsement of the new social norm; no one will face ostracism for deciding not to engage in a practice after the community has collectively agreed to stop it.

Implementation of the Nation Action Plan involves a diverse array of partners. The Division of the Family in the Ministry of Family Affairs coordinates implementation, supported by a national technical committee with representatives from several ministries, including Health, Education, Youth and Justice. USAID and UN agencies regularly participate in meetings of the technical committee, providing inputs to decisions and strategies pursued by the Division of the Family in implementing the plan. The Government has established 11 committees at regional and county levels to follow up on implementation.

PROGRESS AND RESULTS

A 2008 evaluation examined villages that had participated in the CEP in the late 1990s and had made public pledges to abandon FGM/C. It found that, nearly 10 years later, the prevalence of FGM/C had fallen by more than half in the participating villages – 30 per cent of girls

had been cut compared to 69 per cent in comparison villages. Though the practice had not fully disappeared, its frequency – and social acceptance of it – had declined sharply in the villages that had declared abandonment. This evaluation established the link between public declarations and reduction in prevalence.²

Another study, commissioned by UNICEF in 2010 in villages that had made public declarations two years earlier, found that only 24 per cent of women who had been cut intended their daughters to undergo FGM/C. In villages that had not gone through the CEP process, 44 per cent of mothers still intended to cut their daughters.³

Expansion of the CEP has created a snowball effect. Only two villages participated in the first public declaration of abandonment of FGM/C and child marriage in 1997. But interaction among communities has led more and more villages to publicly declare together. For example, 114 villages participated in the two ceremonies organized in 2005; 839 villages in the five public declarations held in 2009; and 1,444 villages in the six declarations held in 2010. By 2011, 5,315 communities had participated in 56 public declarations. The momentum is growing, and abandonment of FGM/C is approaching national scale. The trend of community declarations in favour of abandoning the practice have also spread to communities in Djibouti, the Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Mauritania and Somalia. This is thanks in part to programming pursued by the governments of these countries as part

2 UNICEF, 'Long-term Evaluation of the Tostan Programme in Senegal: Kolda, Thiès and Fatick Regions', 2008: www.childinfo.org/files/fgmc_tostan_eng.pdf.

3 Ministère de la Santé, Ministère de la Famille, de la Sécurité alimentaire, de l'Entreprenariat féminin, de la Microfinance et de la petite Enfance et Centre de Recherche pour le Développement Humain, 'Impact du changement de normes sociales sur les comportements en milieu rural au Sénégal – Evaluation du Programme de Renforcement des Capacités des Communautés (PRCC-Tostan)', 2010 (available from UNICEF Senegal).

of the UNFPA-UNICEF Joint Programme on FGM/C, which incorporated lessons learned from Senegal into its programme design.

Implementation of the National Action Plan is proceeding and actions are under way to integrate FGM/C in secondary school curricula. A study on enforcement of the 1999 law has been released, suggesting actions needed for better implementation, such as translating the law into national languages and organizing local workshops to explain the legislation. More mobilization campaigns are needed in the regions, involving local officials, parliamentarians and media.

In addition, local action plans are being developed under the coordination of the administrative authorities and in cooperation with child protection institutions and NGOs. This reflects endorsement and ownership of the National Action Plan at all levels. The result is that a government-led initiative operating within the framework of locally monitored action plans has been crucial in creating the foundation for social change in Senegal. The approach avoids fragmentation of efforts, creates consensus and improves coordination of actions, including among UN agencies. Based on local feedback, CEP activities have been made more inclusive so that everyone in a community, including men, benefits from the programme. Its implementation has also been expanded to more villages, providing further evidence that acceptance of social change is strengthened when nearby communities receive similar information and support one another.

NEXT STEPS

An important next step is to link CEP results to data on FGM/C prevalence in national household surveys. UNICEF is analysing surveys undertaken in 2005 and 2010-2011 to assess trends nationally and by region and ethnic group. The analysis will also review prevalence rates among the youngest age groups, including girls up to 9 years old, on whom data were collected for the first time in 2010-2011. In addition, Senegal will be the subject of a case study as part of the global joint evaluation being conducted by the UNFPA-UNICEF Joint Programme on FGM/C in 2013.

Assessing the financial feasibility of activities is also crucial. Changing deeply rooted social norms is a complex and long-term process, requiring continuous resources for community mobilization and training. UNICEF will also ensure that implementation of the National Action Plan on FGM/C continues to fit within the broader national child protection strategy, so that all forms of violence against girls and women are tackled simultaneously.

UNICEF will continue to support government efforts to achieve the goal of abandonment of FGM/C by 2015. It will advocate with high-level officials, assist in coordination among partners and encourage social mobilization activities, in Senegal and neighbouring countries and among the diaspora. Having played an important role in drafting the National Action Plan 2010-2015, UNICEF will also collaborate on its evaluation and update. More emphasis will be given to evidence-based programming, based on studies in pockets of resistance and further analysis of survey data. Partner mapping will also be pursued to better document the scope of activities and improve coordination. UNICEF will particularly concentrate on supporting the process in the poorest regions of the country, where children are especially vulnerable and lack access to basic services.

The well-documented experience of FGM/C abandonment in Senegal, while reflecting the country's specific context, is providing other countries with lessons for their FGM/C abandonment efforts, concentrating on public pledges to end the practice. The approach was favourably noted in the 2011 *Secretary-General's Report on Ending Female Genital Mutilation* and was included in a technical note on the programmatic elements necessary for FGM/C abandonment in one generation.

For more information, see:

UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre, 'Coordinated Strategy to Abandon FGM/C in One Generation', 2008:
www.childinfo.org/files/fgmc_Coordinated_Strategy_to_Abandon_FGMC_in_One_Generation_eng.pdf.

United Nations ECOSOC, *Secretary-General's Report on Ending Female Genital Mutilation*, E/CN.6/2012/8, 2011:
www.un.org/Docs/journal/asp/ws.asp?m=E/CN.6/2012/8.

Selected resources on FGM/C compiled by the UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre:
www.unicef-irc.org/knowledge-pages/Female-Genital-Mutilation-Cutting--The-dynamics-of-social-change/678

UNFPA-UNICEF Joint Programme on FGM/C: www.unfpa.org/gender/practices3.html

Family and child protection units in police stations



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Year: 2012

Country: **The Sudan**

Region: Middle East and North Africa

Since 2006, UNICEF has worked closely with the Sudanese police to strengthen child-friendly procedures for children in contact with the law through establishment of family and child protection units (FCPUs) in police stations. Since the first FCPU opened in the city of Khartoum in 2007, it has provided a 'one stop shop' of specialist services for child victims of violence, abuse and exploitation and children in conflict with the law. Following the success of the Khartoum pilot, another 18 FCPUs have been established across the Sudan, along with one in Abyei, a contested area claimed by South Sudan but administered by the Sudan.

The units have significantly increased access to police services for victims of violence and for children in conflict with the law. Between 2007 and 2011 the number of cases handled by the units in Khartoum state increased fivefold. Outreach to communities has increased both reporting of crimes and convictions for crimes against children. It has also raised awareness about sexual and gender-based violence. Collaboration has improved among the police, judiciary and social workers, and a database collects information on all cases reported to the FCPUs. Their establishment also influences the policy and legislative environment and hence sets the stage for operation of a comprehensive child protection system.

THE SITUATION

Children make up half of the Sudan's population of 30 million people. According to the 2009 National Baseline Household Survey, 47 per cent of households in the Sudan live below the poverty line, and socioeconomic inequality is widespread. The country has suffered deeply from armed conflict and displacement, and social protection for the poorest people is almost nonexistent. As a result, children are more vulnerable to crime, both as victims and as perpetrators.

Sudanese law restricts the employment of children under the age of 14.¹ But many children work on the streets, and a 2004 study found that 82 per cent of those aged 7 to 18 were doing so to support their families.² A 2007 UNICEF-supported study in Khartoum state by the National Council for Child Welfare revealed that children living on the streets were vulnerable to discrimination, exploitation, maltreatment and abuse by employers, older children and law enforcement personnel.³ Children who were arrested complained of corporal punishment and verbal humiliation, and they also suffered from poor health and nutritional status and lack of access to health services, school, psychosocial support and recreation. Similar findings were seen in North Darfur, where children also reported being beaten and whipped and subjected to forced labour and sexual exploitation.⁴ In 2010, the Ministry of Social Welfare, Women and Children's Affairs registered 8,831 children living and working on the streets in nine states. Khartoum and South Darfur accounted for more than 80 per cent of them.⁵

In a 2005 field study carried out in Khartoum city by Save the Children Sweden, a majority of children said they had experienced corporal punishment either in school or at home.⁶ Violence against children, particularly sexual violence, remains largely unreported due to fear of social stigma. Among girls working as domestic servants in Khartoum city who were interviewed for a 1998 Save the Children report, 70 per cent said they had suffered some form of sexual abuse,

1 Ministry of Justice and the National Council for Child Welfare, Child Act, 2010.

2 National Council for Child Welfare and Save the Children Sweden, 'Child Labour in Khartoum', 2004.

3 National Council for Child Welfare, 'Street Children: Causes and implications of the phenomenon', 2007.

4 Ministry of Social Affairs, North Darfur State, 'El Fasher Street Children Child-centred Participatory Study', 2009.

5 National Council for Child Welfare, 'Street Children: Causes and implications of the phenomenon', 2007.

6 Save the Children, 'Corporal Punishment in Schools', 2005.

and 22 per cent of children complained of physical abuse.⁷ UNICEF studies of knowledge, attitudes and practices in Khartoum and the three Darfur states identified negative attitudes among social workers towards children living and working in the streets. In Khartoum state, 52 per cent of respondents recommended placing such children in reformatories or handing them over to the police.⁸

Prior to establishment of the FCPUs, the police force had little capacity to investigate cases of sexual and physical abuse against children. With no system for evidence-gathering, families of victims often had to provide evidence themselves to back up their complaints. The police force offered no legal, medical or psychosocial support or care services. Because the system for dealing with abuse and exploitation was so unsupportive of children, many crimes were simply not reported.

THE RESPONSE

In early 2006, UNICEF and the National Council for Child Welfare began discussions with the Sudan police to explore ways to protect children in contact with the law. A Committee of Police Generals was formed to undertake a feasibility study for a child protection unit within the police department. The approach was based on similar units in Jordan, and following a study visit to see how it operated in Jordan, the Director-General of the Sudan's police issued a decree ordering the establishment of child protection units. From this starting point, the concept of the FCPU began to take shape.

In April 2006, UNICEF supported a strategy workshop involving key partners. In addition to the police, the participants were the Ministries of Health, Justice and Social Welfare, Women and Children's Affairs; Office of the Chief Justice; and non-governmental organizations. They discussed the steps in establishing the units, starting with a pilot in Khartoum state; the roles and responsibilities of the various stakeholders; and the units' links to other sectors and service providers. The workshop produced a Memorandum of Understanding, detailing the responsibilities of the police and UNICEF in setting up a model FCPU in Khartoum.

UNICEF provided the supplies and equipment and supported training for the police officers on child-friendly procedures, some of it by the Jordanian police. Numerous training ses-

sions were organized for FCPU staff on child rights, counselling, video investigation techniques and child-friendly investigation. UNICEF supported a former police officer with extensive experience in child protection to work in the unit, providing on-the-job training and organizational and managerial advice. UNICEF and Save the Children Sweden also supported several study tours to other countries for key personnel from the police, prosecutor's office and judiciary.

Following this extensive capacity-building exercise, lasting almost a year, Sudan's first FCPU opened in January 2007 on the grounds of the Central Police Headquarters in downtown Khartoum. Operating 24 hours a day, it aims to provide a child-friendly and family-friendly environment, which lessens the trauma for children who have experienced violence. The FCPU provides medical care, counselling and access to dedicated investigators and prosecutors, all in one office. Children's cases are handled in a separate space where children can play and feel safe. The staff wear civilian clothes, and those who interview children have undertaken special training so they can collect information without causing further harm. Children's testimonies are recorded on video, to limit the need for repeated hearings and court appearances. Children accused of crimes receive legal aid. Social workers also work with communities, providing support and counselling to families who come into contact with the FCPUs.

PROGRESS AND RESULTS

Based on this successful pilot in Khartoum state, in September 2007 the Director-General issued another decree, calling for replication of the FCPU approach throughout the country. All 15 states have since established units. In addition, two supplemental units were established in Khartoum state and one in West Darfur to improve access for families and children in cities.

Since 2007, UNICEF has provided technical and financial support to 15 of the 19 FCPUs in the Sudan. Further training has been provided on gender-based violence and psychosocial support by other agencies and organizations, including the Safety and Access to Justice Programme of the UK Department for International Development, Save the Children and the United Nations Development Programme. UNICEF and other agencies have also supported FCPU outreach activities, such as family visits, community meetings and awareness-raising activities.

Parents and children say that privacy and confidentiality have been properly maintained during judicial proceed-

⁷ Dr. Gaysar Musa, Save the Children, 'Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children in Central Urban Sudan', 1988.

⁸ UNICEF, 'An Analysis of the Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices of Social Workers in Khartoum State, West Darfur, South Darfur and North Darfur', 2008.



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ings, raising their confidence in the process. Parents also reported that bringing the perpetrator to justice helped in their child's physical and mental recovery. They were also pleased with the psychosocial support and involvement of families in the rehabilitation process.

A free telephone helpline (#9696) was established in 2009 at the FCPU in Khartoum state, offering advice and immediate assistance 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. UNICEF supported the development of a toolkit to raise public awareness of the helpline. It receives reports about abuses against children and links child victims to the child-friendly police services, as well as with counselling services on family affairs and legal advice. The helpline also serves to promote confidence in the police. In 2011, it received around 48,500 calls from children and parents.

Since their establishment, the FCPUs have played an important role in bringing violence, abuse and neglect against children into focus, engaging key government bodies and increasing the visibility of these issues in the media. Advocacy and awareness-raising efforts have increased reporting of criminal activity. The silence around child abuse, neglect and other protection violations is being broken and a new relationship with police services is emerging in communities. This is best illustrated by the increase in the number of reports of crimes committed against children and by children in Khartoum state between 2007 and 2011 (see tabulation).

Year	Number of children's cases reported to FCPUs in Khartoum state	Cases involving child victims*			Cases involving alleged child perpetrators		
		Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
2007	1,033	466	400	866	–	–	167
2009	1,304	444	360	804	415	85	500
2010	3,026	935	1,015	1,950	932	144	1,076
2011	5,152	1,106	1,628	2,734	2,172	246	2,418

*Most involved children aged 6 to 10, and the greatest number of complaints related to sexual violence

The success of the units depends on collaboration among several government authorities including the police, Ministry of Justice, judiciary, prosecutor's office and health and social welfare authorities, as well as non-governmental partners and UN agencies. This sets the stage for broader cooperation in establishing a comprehensive child protection system. A database has been set up to track the crimes reported to the FCPUs, which will help in planning both responses and prevention activities.

The Sudan achieved a major milestone in 2010 with promulgation of the new Child Act.⁹ It defines a child as

9 Ministry of Justice and the National Council for Child Welfare, Child Act, 2010.

any person under the age of 18, criminalizes child exploitation and abuse, and outlines a comprehensive child justice system, incorporating the mandate of the FCPU. UNICEF supported this legal reform, which brought the 2004 Child Act into conformity with the Convention on the Rights of the Child and its two Optional Protocols, on the involvement of children in armed conflict and on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography.

Since early 2012, UNICEF has been working with the FCPUs and the National Council for Child Welfare to develop a diversion programme to deal more effectively with the increasing numbers of children accused of crimes. UNICEF supported the training of 30 FCPU social workers in facilitation skills on community conferencing, which brings together the child offender, his/her family, the victim(s) and those providing care to the offender and the victim. They discuss the harm caused by the offence, how to repair the harm and how to prevent the child from offending again. By allowing non-judicial bodies to deal with child cases, community conferencing diverts child offenders from the justice system, thereby avoiding its negative effects, including a criminal record. The goal is for community conferencing to become the default method of dealing with children accused of crimes except in serious cases such as those involving murder or rape.

In addition to raising awareness about violence and abuse of children, the FCPUs appear to have increased community trust in the ability of the police to handle these cases, which encourages people to report such crimes and is one reason for the growing conviction rates for offences against children. Since 2007, perpetrators of crimes against children have been convicted in around 50 per cent of cases reported to the FCPUs.

These conviction rates are believed to result from several factors. The presence of medical experts, forensic investigators and skilled police officers in the FCPUs has speeded up evidence gathering on accusations of abuse and violence. This has led to more robust legal cases being presented to the courts. The stronger working relationship between the police and the judiciary has also improved the presentation of cases and increased the acceptance of children's evidence. Other factors are strengthened referral mechanisms supporting the FCPUs, the presence of prosecutors in Khartoum's three juvenile courts, criminal laboratories operated by the Ministry of Interior, the Khartoum and police hospitals' forensic departments, and a network of lawyers who provide free legal aid to the victims of criminal cases.

NEXT STEPS

Though all the state FCPUs are based on the same model, each has its unique environment and challenges. They all function independently and deliver varying levels of services to the community. A UNICEF rapid assessment in 2010 revealed the need for more government resources, both human and financial, to improve the quality of each unit's work and to reach remote areas. For this purpose, it is recommended that these units be administered federally instead of by the states.

UNICEF will continue to support the FCPUs and other judicial, prosecutorial and civil society partners working on justice for children. The first priority is the development of child-friendly standard operating procedures for all FCPU staff, improvements to the information management system and promotion of non-custodial measures for child offenders. The Ministry of Social Welfare should also become more engaged in the judicial system to ensure that child-friendly procedures are in place throughout the justice and social welfare systems, so that all children are treated in a way consistent with their rights and best interests.

The FCPUs can serve as a foundation for a more comprehensive child protection system with mechanisms for collaboration, especially with the social welfare sector, and engagement with key justice actors beyond the police, including communities, prosecutors and judges. This system could be replicated in other countries and contexts.

For more information, see:

Central Bureau of Statistics, Sudan Household Health Survey 2010, Summary report, 2010: www.childinfo.org/files/MICS4_Sudan_2010.pdf.





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