

Improving Methodologies, Increasing Knowledge

Care and Protection of Children in Crisis- Affected Countries (CPC)

The CPC initiative, funded by the Oak Foundation, USAID's Displaced Children and Orphan's Fund (DCOF), and the US Institute of Peace (USIP), aims to create an evidence base for policy formulation and programmatic intervention and to pilot new assessment methodologies to address child protection concerns. It will strengthen and systematize child care and protection in crisis-affected settings through the collaborative action of humanitarian organizations, local institutions, and academic partners.

New methodologies promise greater knowledge of the extent of the exploitation, neglect, and abuse of children

Today's armed conflicts and natural disasters displace communities and result in child exposure to violence, insecurity, and splintering of group solidarity. Humanitarian responses to crises have moved beyond meeting the physical and material needs of communities to also addressing care and protection concerns. However, limited evidence exists to



Lindsay Stark

Sri Lanka, 2008

support the efficacy of care and protection initiatives. The Program on Forced Migration and Health (PFMH) at Columbia University's Mailman School of Public Health has been actively engaged in an initiative supported by USAID, the Oak Foundation and the US Institute of Peace to develop better consensus on interventions to improve the care and protection of children affected by crisis.

Commitment to the professionalization of child protection practice and policy was the driving force behind the creation of the CPC Initiative. Since the Initiative's establishment three years ago, the CPC team has piloted new assessment, design and evaluation methodologies, contributed to an evidence base on effective programming, and worked with partners to mainstream these findings into practice and policy agendas. Building on the success of the CPC Initiative, PFMH has embarked upon the creation of an Agency Learning Network on the Care and Protection of Children in Crisis-Affected Countries (CPC Learning Network).

CPC in the Field



Lucy Anderson

Sri Lanka, 2008

Neighborhood Methodology in Ethiopia and Sri Lanka

During the summer of 2008, the CPC team conducted population-based surveys in both Ethiopia and Sri Lanka that strove to quantify the magnitude of violence against women and children within conflict-affected areas. In Ethiopia, the team, including MPH candidate Angela Percesepe, partnered with the International Rescue Committee (IRC) to conduct this research within the refugee camps and surrounding host communities of Kebribeyah and Awbere, both located near the Somali-Ethiopian border. Simultaneously, MPH candidates Lucy Anderson and Braeden Rogers utilized the same methodology while working with Save the Children in Sri Lanka and Save the Children UK in Sri Lanka's Eastern District of Trincomalee.

Researchers at both sites employed the Neighborhood Method, which is designed to capture incidence rates of gender-based violence (GBV) in places where formal reporting mechanisms are suspected to be significantly underestimating the magnitude of violence. With this methodology, a relatively small sample of women is interviewed about their experiences, the experiences of their neighbors, the experiences of all the females or children living in their neighbors' households, and the experience of all females or children who live in their household. This method garners multiple estimates of incidence of GBV, rather than relying on a single source of data. These studies were the third and fourth iteration of the Neighborhood Method and built upon lessons learned from the initial pilot in Northern Uganda, implemented in partnership with the Christian Children's Fund in late 2006 and early 2007, as well as a pilot study in Liberia implemented in partnership with IRC in 2007.

The results of these studies will provide critical information on the magnitude and nature of violence experienced by women and children and will help guide the targeting and types of programs administered by IRC and Save the Children staff in Ethiopia and Sri Lanka. This study will also provide valuable information as the CPC Initiative continues to investigate how to accurately, reliably, and ethically capture incidence rates of GBV in places where reporting mechanisms are suspected to be significantly underestimating the magnitude of such violence.

In both sites, the research revealed that the vast majority of perpetrators of violence were well-known to the victims. Husbands and other family members were the perpetrators of most physical violence among women and children, husbands were the main perpetrators of rape, and in Sri Lanka specifically, teachers were nearly the sole perpetrators of physical punishment of children outside of the family. Reliability analysis shows similar rates between data given by the interviewee about herself and her neighbors.

In both sites, the survey team also undertook validity checks to test the assumptions underpinning the neighborhood method. Analysis of this data is currently underway.

Longitudinal Narrative Methodology in Northern Uganda

The CPC Team continued to partner with Christian Children's Fund (CCF) on a multi-phase, longitudinal qualitative study in Northern Uganda. The research aimed to learn about girls' understanding and experience of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) and its aftermath in internally displaced persons (IDP) camps and return areas in Lira District. MSW/MIA candidate Lauren Pessa worked with the CPC team to analyze data collected during the second phase of the study and to roll out the third and final stage of data collection. During the summer, the research team conducted the fourth set of intensive one-on-one interviews with 28 adolescent girls; half of the girls were known to have survived sexual violence at the start of the study, and the other half were not identified as such, though some had themselves become GBV survivors during the course of the research. As nearly all girls had left the IDP camps since the start of the research study in 2007, the study team first engaged in significant efforts to trace the girls to their current locations. The methodology used in this research ensured that each girl was interviewed by the same interviewer four times, helping to build rapport, foster open communication, and in some cases develop a profound relationship between researcher and interviewee.



Lauren Pessa

Lira District, Uganda, 2008

This study offered an important opportunity to learn directly from girls' life stories about the different forms of GBV that exist in their communities (e.g. rape, forced marriage, domestic violence); changes in prevalence and/or types of GBV during conflict and post-conflict periods; existing community and familial supports and coping strategies; and their changing perspectives, needs and goals over time. Given the timing of this study, it also provided the unique opportunity to learn about girls' resettlement experiences over the course of one year.

Evaluation of Psychosocial Structured Activities (PSSA) in Northern Uganda

As part of an ongoing partnership with Save the Children in Uganda, the CPC Team assisted with the second phase of an evaluation looking at the impact of a school-based Psychosocial Structured Activities (PSSA) program in Northern Uganda. In July 2008, a research team, including MPH candidate Faith McCollister, visited eight primary schools in Gulu and Amuru districts that had conducted PSSA classes and eight comparison schools that had not implemented the PSSA program. During the collection of baseline data in August 2007, children, their parents and teachers at each school separately defined and ranked indicators of child well-being during focus group discussions. Interviewers encouraged each child to rank himself or herself for each indicator on a continuum from one to ten, using a line on the ground. Parents and teachers ranked the children using the same method on the indicators each group had derived. This process was repeated with the same participants during the follow-up phase. Analysis of the rankings, along with grades and attendance data, will help to determine the effectiveness of the PSSA intervention.

While much attention has been paid to formerly abducted children in Northern Uganda, this evaluation aimed to assess the impact of PSSA programming on all children affected by the war and their families' displacement. The use of locally-derived indicators has provided useful insight into ideas about child well-being in a Northern Ugandan context, and it is hoped that this research will inform the use of PSSA programs in other locations and cultural contexts.

Research to Practice: CPC Lessons Learned

Throughout the summer the staff at Columbia's Mailman School of Public Health maintained regular contact with students and faculty engaged in CPC fieldwork through a weekly e-mail 'update'. Reviewing entries, there were a number of recurrent themes about the challenges—and importance—of putting rigorous research into practice settings. These included:

- Recognizing the significant demands of interviewing on sensitive topics, and thus the importance of working with qualified interviewers, training them well and regularly reviewing performance across the team so that interviewers can learn from one another.
- Developing clear, community-derived definitions of key concerns in a structured manner provides a solid base for evaluating local needs and, in due course, determining impact.
- Acknowledging that when our work has extended over a period of months it shows how fragile humanitarian support to communities can be: staff moved to other positions, projects are terminated, communities themselves may be 'on the move'. Evidence of the on-going needs of populations and the effectiveness of interventions in addressing them is crucial if greater stability in programming is to be argued for.

CPC Spring Workshops: Report Back

Household Livelihoods in Crisis Situations: What Do We Know and What Do We Need to Know About Economic Interventions for Child Protection and Well-Being

In February 2008, the CPC initiative and the STRIVE Program managed by the Academy for Educational Development (AED) brought together experts from around the world in a workshop hosted in Kampala, Uganda. The purpose of this workshop was to identify key program learning needs in the area of livelihoods intervention and economic strengthening activities as they pertain to child protection and well-being in crisis settings. Participants sought to map out the different roles children play in household economies; identify how these roles are affected by crises; and agree on what the global community needs to learn and do to ensure livelihood and economic strengthening activities are better able to support children's security and well-being.

The workshop explored several key areas, starting with a focus on trying to understand children's roles in household livelihood strategies, exploring different forms of crises, moving into several types of economic strengthening interventions and associated monitoring, evaluation and impact assessments, while continually identifying key principles of practice and learning needs in each of these areas.

The Livelihoods Workshop catalyzed the formation of a Global Technical Group on Livelihoods and Economic Strengthening within the new CPC Learning Network. This group will be convened by Dale Buscher of the Women's Commission on Refugee Women and Children and Jane Warbutron of the IRC.

Engaging with Communities for Child Well-Being

In June 2008, the CPC Initiative, together with the Inter-agency Learning Initiative (ILI) and USAID's Displaced Children and Orphan's Fund (DCOF) facilitated a workshop in



Livelihood Workshop - Kampala, Uganda, 2008



Community Engagement Workshop - New York City, USA, 2008

New York City to address the lack of global inter-agency principles or guidelines on how to engage effectively with communities around issues of child protection and well-being. Participants from 14 agencies, representing nine different countries, examined ways for external agencies to engage communities to improve children's well-being, identified key issues through a collaborative learning process to help improve external agency practice, and planned a way forward to build upon workshop lessons. The workshop was facilitated by a South-North team that worked to create a participatory process and to surface issues and approaches from different parts of the world.

Workshop activities included plenary and small group discussion of key issues such as how to build the staff competencies, attitudes and values that are needed and how to strengthen the evidence base regarding effective practice; discussion of an ILI typology that outlines four ways of engaging with communities that afford varying levels of community ownership and power; presentation and discussion of exemplars from different categories of the typology; group discussion of diverse tools and methods for learning about community engagement; and small group planning efforts to help think through how to move forward in regard to three areas— (1) strengthening the evidence base regarding effective practice, (2) attitudes, values and competencies, and (3) developing a conceptual framework, including strengthening the typology and encouraging the development of theories of change.

The main outcome of the workshop was the creation of three working groups, each of which is co-chaired by one Southern and one Northern partner and will focus on one of the three areas outlined above. Each group will develop and implement a specific plan for moving forward and working with different agencies to implement its plan. Also, the workshop created a process for continuing the work of the ILI, guided by a Steering Committee composed of the co-chairs of each working group and also one or two members at large from the ILI group.

The CPC Learning Network

What is the CPC Learning Network?

Columbia University, the International Rescue Committee, Save the Children, the Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children, UNICEF, Christian Children's Fund, and several local organizations have established an Agency Learning Network on the Care and Protection of Children in Crisis-Affected Countries (the CPC Learning Network). The Learning Network is a direct product of the success of the CPC Research Initiative, which has strengthened consensus on child care and protection interventions over the last three years by piloting new assessment methodologies, consulting with experts on how to build a stronger evidence-base, and performing a structured Delphi review of perceived best practices. The goal of the CPC Learning Network is to further strengthen and to systematize child care and protection through the collaborative action of humanitarian organizations, local institutions, and academic partners.

The CPC Learning Network is already developing an active cadre of member organizations who will, in the future, be capable of collaboratively employing assessment methodologies and able to identify, quantify, and understand the causes and consequences of key child care and protection concerns. Further, key members of the Learning Network will build consensus among their peers on definitions, child protection framework, assessment methods, and standards in protection programming as an evidence base emerges. Local, national, and global members are already developing relevant learning agendas for their particular country or technical contexts, which will inform future global-level learning.

Program Learning Groups

What is a Program Learning Group?

A Program Learning Group (PLG) is a country-specific, inter-agency network which provides child protection practitioners with a "reflective space" where they can develop knowledge at the ground level, and further, foster the synthesis of on-the-ground learning into national and global level practices and policy. Each PLG consists of five to fifteen member organizations including national organizations, field offices of INGOs, and local universities and research institutions.

Updates from Program Learning Groups (PLGs)

Northern Uganda:

The Secretariat is pleased to announce that Save the Children in Uganda has hired Kasingye Africano to coordinate

the PLG in Uganda. Further, the PLG will be officially launched on the 24th of September at the Institute for Development Studies in Gulu, Uganda. The CPC Learning Network is grateful to those who participated in the development of the group and is eager to begin in earnest our collaboration with Northern Uganda child protection practitioners.

Indonesia:

The Network Coordinator, Paul Kellner, recently traveled to the Indonesian capital of Jakarta to learn from national and international stakeholders how a PLG could best complement ongoing child protection and interagency collaboration in Indonesia. He also engaged in multiple strategic planning sessions with PULIH Indonesia, one the PLG's national-level members, whose staff is also represented in the Psychosocial Well-Being Global Technical Group and the Board of Advisors. There is significant enthusiasm about the PLG's development in Indonesia, and substantial progress is expected in the near future.

Palestine:

The CPC Learning Network is working to engage an already existing interagency of child protection practitioners in Palestine. This group has already built consensus amongst a diverse group of agencies to effectively determine indicators of child well-being. Based on those indicators, they performed a joint evaluation. This group will undoubtedly serve as an exemplar for other PLGs in the future.

Global Technical Groups

What is a Global Technical Group?

Global Technical Groups (GTGs) bring together leading practitioners and academics to leverage existing knowledge to identify proven and promising child protection practices. Further, these groups will collaborate with PLGs to implement evidence-supported programs. Please check back to this section for much more information on each GTG in the near future.

Updates from Global Technical Groups

The work of the GTGs is just beginning to take shape, so there will be substantial updates in the near future:

Children's Psychosocial Well-Being

The GTG on Psychosocial Well-Being, which is convened by Mike Wessells of CCF, has made significant progress since convening their first meeting in early June. Most notably, they have drafted a robust work that takes stock of the field's

current evidence base; described how the group will complement other efforts; and outlined key objectives, actions steps, and desired outputs. This GTG will promote inter-agency, North-South learning regarding which program interventions and supports contribute most effectively to children's holistic, psychosocial well-being in crisis situations.

Youth and Violence

Brian Barber, the Director of the Center for the Study of Youth and Violence at the University of Tennessee, will also be convening a GTG. The goal of the Center is to bridge research and applied efforts on behalf of youth in zones of political conflict. To date, the center has engaged in a number of activities that are relevant to the CPC Learning Network, including: establishing a conference/monograph series whereby professionals from a specific conflict region convene to engage in extensive dialogue with one another and formally report on the efforts of their professional domain on behalf of youth; publishing reviews of the current state of the evidence base; pursuing research to enhance the evidence base that applied professionals can use in their efforts; and building community capacity to serve the needs of refugees from conflict zones being resettled in the US. Learn more about the Center at <http://youthviolence.tennessee.edu>

Economic Strengthening and Livelihoods

This GTG is closely linked to the already existing CYES network through conveners Dale Buscher of the Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children and Jane Warburton of

the IRC. The overarching goal of this technical group is to improve the quality and effectiveness of economic programming targeting conflict-affected populations in order to enhance the protection and well-being of affected children.

Early Childhood Care and Development in Emergencies

This group, convened by Lisa Long of Save the Children US and Nurper Ulkeur of UNICEF, is the newest addition to the CPC Learning Network. They are already a well developed network of experts and practitioners, who will be able to link to a number of other relevant networks.

Two other Global Technical Groups are also undergoing active development: one focusing on novel research methodologies, and the other to be centered upon Frameworks, Assessments, and Indicators. The Methods Global Technical Group has acquired Les Roberts from the Program on Forced Migration and Health at Columbia University as its new strand focus person. This past summer, Save the Children Sri Lanka, housed and funded an investigation attempting to document the incidence of child abuse. Evidence suggests that asking people about their neighbors produced far lower reporting about sexual abuse than did interviewing 16-18 year old girls about their own experiences. While not surprising, the two methods produced similar results about the incidence of violence and rape. This suggests that events of sexual abuse is less well known or less talked about than is violence or rape in Sri Lanka.

Spotlight on CPC Learning Network Staff: Africano Kasingya

The CPC Learning Network is pleased to welcome Mr. Africano Kasingye as the new PLG Coordinator for Uganda. Africano holds a Masters of Arts in Development Studies from Uganda Martyrs' University as well as a Bachelors degree in Social Sciences from Makerere University. He has six years experience working with a number of civil society organizations in Uganda, including Save the Children - Denmark, Save the Children in Uganda and the Community Development Resource Network (CDRN), a local Ugandan NGO dedicated to promoting the use of participatory methodologies in development.

Africano's career has centered on working with and striving to empower poor and marginalized populations throughout Uganda. As a result of these experiences he has developed skills and competences in such diverse areas as organizational development and NGO/CBO capacity building, strategic planning, research and program development. In the coming months, he will utilize these skills and his many years in the Ugandan NGO/CBO community to spearhead the development of the Ugandan Program Learning Group.



Child Protection Action Summit

12-14 November 2008
Stockholm, Sweden

This November the CPC Learning Network will host a child Protection summit in Stockholm, Sweden together with Sweden's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Sida, Save the Children Sweden, and UNICEF. The goal of the three day summit is to establish an interagency learning agenda for the next three years. Related objectives include:

- Engage in a policy dialogue on lessons learned from our work with child protection in crisis-affected settings and next steps
- Review major new developments frameworks, strategies, methods and tools, and program evaluation evidence – to establish the baselines for current good practice.
- Agree to child care and protection priorities and initiatives for the next three years
- Form partnerships to take this current state of knowledge forward through new operational-learning initiatives
- Finalize and sign a declaration of commitment to professionalizing the field of practice, including specific practice milestones that the participants commit to achieving.

The first half day of the Summit will include a policy dialogue with political representatives from Liberia, Rwanda, and Indonesia. The 'beyond business as usual' focus of the dialogue will highlight work-related peace and reconciliation, rehabilitation, and reintegration of children in these countries. The afternoon will focus on discussion

and consensus-building around current protection frameworks, strategies and indicators as well as articulation of key revision recommendations. During the second day, Summit discussions will aim to identify the most effective methodologies and tools to establish incidence and prevalence rates of human rights-violations (i.e. gender-based violence, children associated with fighting forces, etc.), as well as to effectively identify local definitions of child protection and well-being. The final day of the Summit proceedings will include a series of partner-led workshops on various key child protection areas, including gender-based violence, children associated with fighting forces, separated children and livelihoods. The Summit will conclude with the review and signing of the Summit Declaration on Interagency Best Practice for Child protection Programming in Crisis-Affected Countries, which will feed into a 3-year program learning agenda.

Learn more about the CPC Learning Network at www.cpclearningnetwork.org

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Gulu District, Uganda, 2008