

The background of the entire page is a photograph of two young children. They are looking upwards and holding colorful beads on strings, appearing to be in the middle of a craft or play activity. The child in the foreground is a girl with dark hair, and the child behind her is partially visible.

COMMUNITY- BASED CHILD PROTECTION MECHANISMS

Global Synthesis Report of Plan International's
Support to CBCPMS

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Global Synthesis Report of Plan International's Support to CBCPM PROTECTION FOR ALL

Strengthening Community Based Mechanisms and State Systems on Child Protection
A POLT Global Initiative by Plan International

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

It is our pleasure to bring to you the Global Synthesis Report of Plan International's Support to Community Based Child Protection Mechanisms. This is a mapping of Plan International's work on CBCPMs in 50 countries that include 24 in region of Africa, 11 in Asia and 15 in Americas. It captures the work being undertaken by more than 15,000 child protective mechanisms that are in one or the other way supported by Plan and its partners.

We take this opportunity to express our gratitude to everyone who contributed to this mapping which now forms the basis of our work and leads us towards developing a global guidance for further strengthening these mechanisms.

Many thanks to Alex Jacobs, the sponsor for this global initiative, for his overall supervision and valuable support. Due acknowledgements to Stefanie Conrad and Elsebeth Elo for their much appreciated work on this document.

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Many thanks to Plan International's Global Child Protection Reference Group that is leading the implementation of our global child protection strategy by prioritising Child Protection System Strengthening that includes strengthening Community based Mechanisms on Child Protection.

Exceptional thanks to Plan International Honduras for all the administrative and communications support as well as to Global Child Protection Services, consultancy firm that worked with us to make this report a live document.

We are deeply grateful and recognize the invaluable work and contribution offered each day, by communities and children, state governments and other like-minded organisations, civil society partners and others who dedicate their time and efforts to combat violence against children all over the world.

It is our pleasure to thank Ms. Marta Santos Pais, the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary General on Violence Children, for supporting this work as well as her valuable guidance.

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ACRONYMS

ARO	Asia Regional Office (Plan International)
CBCPM	Community-based child protection mechanism
CBO	Community-based organisation
CCCD	Child-centred community development (Plan International)
CO	Country Office
CP	Child protection
CPC	Child protection committee
CPiD	Child Protection in Development
CPiE	Child Protection in Emergencies
CPWG	Child Protection Working Group
CRC	UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FGM	Female genital mutilation
GCPS	Global Child Protection Services
HTP	Harmful traditional practice
MVC	Most Vulnerable Child
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
PU	Programme Unit (Plan)
RESA	East and Southern Africa Regional Office (Plan International)
ROA	Latin America and Caribbean Regional Office (Plan International)
WARO	West and Central Africa Regional Office (Plan International)



INTRODUCTION

Children and their protection

Plan and other international development agencies have made great efforts to combat child abuse and prioritise child protection in their work. Their strategies include direct programmes aimed at protecting children, advocacy with governments to set up effective State frameworks and providing capacity building for local partners.

Children and their protection from violence has become an increasingly high profile issue; children face abuse within families, communities and schools, including physical, emotional and sexual abuse, neglect, trafficking, child marriage, female genital mutilation (FGM), slavery and child labour. Certain abuses are rooted in the prevailing culture, religion and ethos of particular communities; some are linked to gender inequality; and others, such as slavery and sexual abuse, have arguably increased with accelerated urbanisation and migration, and the consequent weakening of traditional community and family ties.

Background and aims

Plan International works in 51 developing countries across Africa, Asia and the Americas to promote child rights and lift millions of children out of poverty. In 2014, Plan worked with 86,676 communities. Plan International's vision is of a world in which all children realise their full potential in societies that respect people's rights and dignity. Plan International's child rights strategy and programming is grounded in its child-centred community development (CCCD) approach in which children, families and communities are active and leading participants in their own development.

Child protection is one of Plan International's eight thematic impact areas and support for community-based child protection mechanisms



(CBCPMs) is one of the global priorities defined in Plan International's Global Child Protection in Development Strategy 2015–2020. Plan also implements global campaigns (such as Learn Without Fear and Because I Am a Girl) that aim to facilitate a positive, protective environment for children. In addition, Plan International's organisational Child Protection Policy has integrated child safeguarding into all programmes and has provided a good foundation on which to build child protection programming. In line with its CCCD approach, Plan International has been working with communities in order to strengthen their mechanisms of protection of children from any form of violence and maltreatment, in all the four regions.

Between 2012 and 2014, Plan International mapped and analysed its work supporting CBCPMs in each of its four regions: West and Central Africa (WARO), East and Southern Africa (RESA), Asia (ARO) and Latin America and the Caribbean (ROA). This current synthesis is a summary of those four studies, which were carried out by different consultants with broadly similar methodologies. Some information has also been included from Plan International ARO's 2014 evaluation of the effectiveness of CBCPMs entitled *Protection in Action*. The synthesis is part of a global project entitled 'Protection for all children: strengthening community-based mechanisms and systems on child protection', which aims to improve the effectiveness of Plan International's

support to CBCPMs and contribute to sector-wide understanding of good practice. It will feed into the next stage of the project, which involves the development of global practice guidelines and a learning module.

Plan International's global CBCPM Project Reference Group agreed the aims of this synthesis as:

- Provide a summary of the four regional studies
- Clarify what is community-based child protection, including Plan International's definition, and including external trends and practices, endogenous practices, the context of the child protection systems approach, and what other agencies are doing
- Examine the CBCPM work of Plan International across its regions, including reviewing, comparing and contrasting models and approaches, structures and processes, and looking specifically at roles and responsibilities, child participation; response to child protection issues, links with key stakeholders and national CP systems, support and sustainability, models and approaches in the emergency setting
- Highlight key achievements and challenges, identifying good practices/lessons learned, and providing a basis for development of global practice guidelines
- Identify overall issues arising, both about Plan International's support for CBCPMs but also CBCPMs themselves as suitable frameworks for child protection
- Make recommendations to Plan International and others who are supporting CBCPMs
- Formulate key advocacy messages for Plan International to use with primary policy makers

Scope and limitations of the study

This synthesis report relies primarily on reports from the four regional studies, which were broadly similar in terms of approach, scope and methodologies.

The original regional studies were mainly limited to mapping and analysis of support for CBCPMs, rather than full-scale evaluations of Plan International's involvement with CBCPMs. Changes and improvements in approach continue to be made – for example the Asia Regional Office has subsequently completed a full evaluation of its work with CBCPMs (Protection in Action) which was published at the end of 2014. Reference has been made to this document for updated information and examples. The timeframe for the studies also varied, for example the Asia study took 18 months, and involved five country visits, while the study carried out in East and Southern Africa was conducted over three months, with three country visits.

Each study used an online survey questionnaire posing different questions, though broadly the same data was collected. Not all surveys that were sent out were completed. Although all the studies provided information in graphs and tabular form, it proved difficult to consolidate these at global level due to differences in data presentation.

Not all Plan International staff were clear about or agreed on the definition of CBCPMs adopted formally by Plan and used in this study. This meant, for example, that there may have been an element of variation in including or excluding certain structures as 'CBCPMs'. In addition, due to cultural and geographical differences certain kinds of structures may be unique to certain contexts.

The terms of reference of the regional studies meant that they largely excluded examination of other agencies' work with CBCPMs, although the West and Central African and Americas studies had slightly broader remits in this regard. Gender analysis and appraisal of other cross-cutting themes have been addressed in this report where evidence is available from the regional studies.

PREFACE

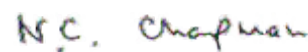
In recent past there has been more and more realisation that protective environment is crucial for children to realise their full potential leading to increased attention towards combating violence against children. This includes saying no to abuse, exploitation, neglect or any other form of violence as well as call for justice for children. Plan has identified children's right to protection as one of its key impact areas. We take a comprehensive child protection systems strengthening approach that allows us to ensure protective environment for children at all levels as well as help us to deal with interconnectedness of child with other segments such as education and health, in both development and fragile settings.

Children themselves, their families and communities are an integral part of such a system and Plan International with its child centred community development approach works closely with them through a strong civil society action as well as directly with the state actors. Plan International as a global federation supports more than sixteen thousand community based structures, practices and mechanisms that work towards prevention and response to any form of violence against children. Deeply rooted in the context of a given community, these mechanisms are much more effective as they are able to transform the behavioural pattern of societies towards children. These form an important building block for the state system as such being very

close to families and children, and take a holistic view of the family where care is provided at times by non-biological caregivers. Plan International is progressively working towards recognition of these mechanisms by the state as critical link between state and the child.

This mapping report is synthesis of our global work on strengthening community based child protection mechanisms from 50 countries in Americas, Asia, East and West Africa. The report provides complete description of these mechanisms, composition, membership, roles and functions, achievements and challenges. It also provides key recommendation for the management and practitioners. It is a step by step journey for us and we intend to improve everyday with our professional approach and sound leadership on the subject. It is timely that we release this report when the world leaders have also put combating violence against children on the sustainable development goal agenda.

Very soon we are also going to produce the Global Guidance for community based child protection mechanisms with clear criteria for quality enhancement of our own work as well as make this guidance available for sector wide usage. As part of the child protection community of practice, it is my pleasure to invite all of you to be part of this global action as a citizen and as partner.



Nigel Chapman
Chief Executive Officer
Plan International

¹ Wessells, M. G. (2015). Bottom-up approaches to strengthening child protection systems: Placing children, families, and communities at the center. *Child Abuse & Neglect: The International Journal*, 43, 8-21. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.chiabu.2015.04.006>

FOREWORD

As the international community moves forward in the shaping of the global post-2015 development agenda, decisive voices and influence are needed to ensure that the best interests of the child and the protection of children from violence remain at the centre of this agenda. I am therefore very pleased to see that Plan International has given high priority to its work on child protection and has been taking stock of its support to child protection in the community, with a view to improving its effectiveness and contributing to sector-wide understanding of good practice.

The 2006 UN Study on Violence against Children helped to raise awareness and increased attention to this issue, as well as a growing consensus that effective mechanisms for child protection at the family and community levels are critical to the realisation of children's rights and important components of national child protection systems.

This summary of the mapping studies undertaken in the four regions where Plan works acknowledges some of the many efforts which have been underway in the past few years towards ensuring that every girl and boy enjoys a childhood free from all forms of violence. The large number of community mechanisms and structures supported indicates a strong commitment to community-based child protection.

The report highlights many common challenges across and within regions. Violence often remains hidden. Although countries in all regions have ratified international instruments on children's rights to protection from violence and abuse (principally the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child), national provisions are often inadequate and implementation lags behind. And the impact of these measures at the community level remains weak and uneven. Hence the importance of strengthening community based mechanisms

and linking them into national systems, while ensuring that these initiatives are sustained especially when external support ceases.

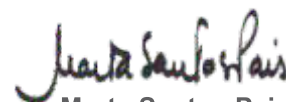
I am particularly interested in the views and contributions of those most directly affected by this issue: children and young people themselves. As part of the contribution to the post-2015 debate, I have been inspired by their views through consultations with more than eight hundred thousand children. Their message was clear and unambiguous: "violence is a major obstacle to child development and it urgently needs to be brought to an end!" Children highlighted three major issues. Firstly, they expressed deep concern at the high levels of violence affecting their lives — in schools, the community, the workplace and the home. Girls underscored the particularly high risk of sexual violence, and boys the special risk of severe forms of physical abuse, crime-related violence and homicide. Children called for their effective protection from violence in all contexts and at all times. They ranked protection from violence as their second highest priority, immediately after education. Secondly, children acknowledged that some manifestations of violence have heightened incidence in different regions of the world, where some groups of children are at special risk of violence. The third message strongly conveyed by children was that violence constitutes not only a crucial priority that the post-2015 development agenda should specifically address, but also a cross-cutting concern that other development goals need to take into consideration. It was evident that children are eager to have a voice and have much to contribute.

Therefore I am pleased to see that child participation is one of the main issues highlighted in this study of community-based child protection mechanisms. I have noted the finding that genuine child participation in community based mechanisms was found to be generally limited. We need to encourage

children's participation and involvement in decision-making. This is an important challenge for the future work of Plan International and other agencies with a view to supporting community based child protection mechanisms and strengthening Child Protection Systems.

As Special Representative of the Secretary General on Violence against Children, I

congratulate Plan for sharing the findings contained in this report and for contributing to the body of knowledge which can help enhance the effectiveness of community based child protection mechanisms. I offer you every encouragement as you take forward this vital work. This also sends out a clear message that civil society in general, local and international non-government organisations play a vital role in strengthening the child protection systems.



Marta Santos Pais

Special Representative of the UN
Secretary-General on Violence against Children

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This global synthesis examines, compares and contrasts the outcomes of the four regional mapping and analysis studies recently undertaken by Plan International of its support to community-based child protection mechanisms (CBCPMs). Plan International supports CBCPMs as a key part of its child protection role in its regions: Asia (Plan ARO), Latin America and the Caribbean (Plan ROA), Eastern and Southern Africa (Plan RESA), and Western and Central Africa (Plan WARO).

The synthesis looks at all elements of support to CBCPMs: the practice in each region, how CBCPMs operate, how they are structured, what role they play, the links they have, and how effective they are in protecting children from abuse and exploitation.

The four regions are diverse in terms of political context, culture, religion, history and tradition, as well as in the types of abuse faced by children. In some regions, and countries within regions, child labour is extremely prevalent; in other areas, issues of early marriage and female genital mutilation are prominent issues. There is also a contrast between rural and urban settings, and in emergency situations caused by conflict or natural disasters. The majority of Plan International-supported CBCPMs are in rural areas,

Despite these variations, the way Plan International supports CBCPMs, and the successes and challenges identified, are remarkably consistent across regions. If built on existing, traditional community structures, as per emerging good practice, CBCPMs are effective in raising awareness of child abuse, whether violence, sexual abuse, trafficking, child labour or other harmful practices, even if it is less clear whether this awareness leads to social change.

Many CBCPMs were also seen to take action

to prevent abuse, or to intervene where it is taking place. The participation of traditional or community leaders is a key factor in effectiveness; and the more successful CBCPMs are embedded in and 'owned' by their communities. There are examples of real gains for children; for example, reductions in early marriage. In many cases, children are empowered to speak out against abuse.

There are common challenges across and within regions. There are questions over the sustainability of CBCPMs if external support ceases, and over States' ability or willingness to link with CBCPMs. Some forms of violence, such as sexual abuse, have become more hidden. CBCPMs have not always been good at including disabled children and other excluded groups, and they often perpetuate existing societal gender inequality. Genuine child participation was found to be generally limited with children rarely involved in decision-making, though often active in children's groups and awareness-raising activities. Data was lacking on the overall effectiveness of CBCPMs, including the cost-effectiveness of supporting them.

CBCPMs in many cases provide a real, community-based and owned way to protect children; and given the scale of child abuse and the competition for State action and resources, they may be the most practical way. Learning points were identified from Plan International's experience across the regions, particularly in relation to supporting CBCPMs that build on existing structures or traditional mechanisms, and avoiding dependency. There is a need to improve links between CBCPMs, to promote learning and sharing of good practice. Crucially, along with other international agencies, Plan needs to better evaluate its advocacy to States and lobby them to take on the linking and support to CBCPMs, including backing up national legislation with regional and local resources.

A number of recommendations are made for Plan's future support to CBCPMs:

- Base Plan International's work on the best global, interagency evidence
- Focus on making community-based child protection programmes truly community-driven and sustainable
- Develop strategies to promote gender sensitivity and inclusion, both in terms of target groups and community involvement
- Improve the effectiveness of advocacy with government authorities by drawing on Plan International's experience from the field
- Put resources into capacity building for Plan International staff





PART 1

WHAT IS COMMUNITY-BASED CHILD PROTECTION?

1.1 Child protection: the formal and legal basis

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) of 1989 outlines the fundamental rights of children. Though some abuses of children, as defined in Article 19 of the CRC, are more prevalent, and new forms created, through modern living and, especially, the widespread availability and use of new technology and social media, certain forms of abuse are rooted in socio-cultural practices, including FGM and early marriage. Many governments, both through their own recognition of the issue, as well as externally-driven processes such as ratification of the CRC, have attempted to enact laws and put in place structures and processes to protect children from abuse and outlaw abusive practices and behaviours.

1.2 Evolution of child protection: why community-based approaches

In the 1990s and early 2000s much of the work of international agencies on child protection focused on individual issues, such as child labour, child trafficking, street-involved children, and child sexual exploitation. There is evidence to suggest that this fragmented approach to child protection divided efforts to create a safe environment for children from all forms of abuse. Following various calls for a more systematic approach to dealing with child protection, including the recommendations of the 2006 UN Study on Violence Against Children¹, international organisations have focused their support to

governments mainly on the development of holistic national child protection systems.

However, Plan International works mainly in rural-based societies and communities where customs, beliefs and traditional practices are important, and can take precedence over the use of government services and formal legal systems. Mediation, for instance, involving traditional leaders and local village chiefs, may be the preferred way of resolving issues of inter-family conflict. This can be true even for serious issues of child abuse, where community cohesion is seen as paramount, over and above what may be in the best interests of the child. The study in West Africa found a significant disconnect between the formal systems and the beliefs and practices of communities about ways to protect children, with the result that children and families continue to rely largely on endogenous practices to manage their child protection concerns. There is also the natural resistance of communities to rules and guidelines imposed from the outside.

Another severe limiting factor in implementing a primarily government-led approach to child protection is a lack of resources. Formal child protection services are frequently poorly funded and inaccessible.

All of the above factors have led to a greater emphasis by international agencies on community-based means of providing a safe environment for children, and specifically on community-based child protection mechanisms (CBCPMs) as an effective, appropriate and realistic way of protecting children.

¹ United Nations Secretary General (2006). Violence Against Children. UN Secretary General.

1.3 External support to CBCPMs by other agencies

The other main international agencies working in the field of community-based child protection are UNICEF, Save the Children, Terre des Hommes, World Vision, War Child and Child Fund. The four mapping studies also note organisations that are active at regional and national level, for example Dos Generaciones in Latin America, and ENDA and the African Movement of Working Children and Youth in Africa.

A number of international organisations that had initially established their own community committees to address child protection violations have moved towards supporting CBCPMs through inter-agency collaboration. This includes research on identifying priority child protection issues and how communities respond to them, and working to build on and transform traditional mechanisms or practices. Working through inter-agency collaboration has proved valuable in reducing duplication of effort between agencies and avoiding the tendency of agencies to set up their own mechanisms in parallel to committees established by others.

A review of existing global evidence in 2009² identified the following factors that influence the effectiveness of community based child protection groups, and against which Plan International might measure its future performance:

- Community ownership
- Building on existing resources
- Support from leaders
- Child participation
- Management of issues of power, diversity and inclusivity
- Resources
- Linkage

1.4 Definition of CBCPMs

Plan International has formally adopted the following definition of CBCPMs, based on definitions used by other international organisations in their recent work on CBCPMs, including the Child Protection Working Group:

COMMUNITY-BASED CHILD PROTECTION MECHANISM

A CBCPM is ‘a network or group of individuals at community level who work in a coordinated manner towards protection of children from all forms of violence, in all settings. Such mechanisms can be indigenous or externally initiated and supported. They may be more formal or informal in their structure and functioning. CBCPMs are linked and contribute to the child protection systems’

Appendix 2 gives a fuller explanation of this definition.

² Wessells, M. (2009). What are we learning about protecting children in the community? An inter-agency review of evidence on community-based child protection mechanisms. Executive Summary. Save the Children



PART 2

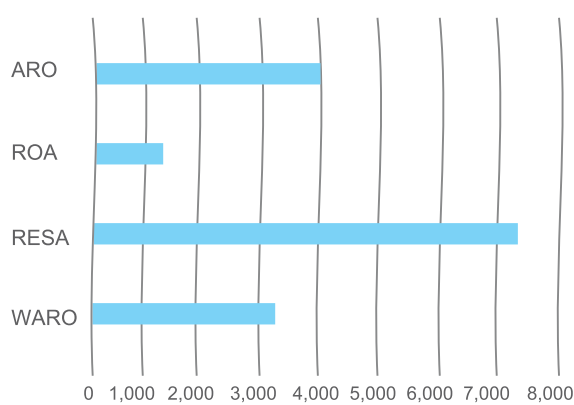
PLAN INTERNATIONALS SUPPORT FOR CBCPMS ACROSS ITS REGIONS

Despite the wide range of cultures and traditions within and across the regions, the experiences of Plan International country offices (COs) in working with and supporting CBCPMS show a remarkable level of similarity. For a summary of the findings region by region, please refer to appendices 3-6.

2.1 Number of CBCPM structures and location

All regions mapped the number of CBCPMS being supported by Plan International. Even though many of these were child protection committees of one form or another, the groups or structures included in those numbers differed between regions. For example, Plan International Asia respondents did not consider 4000 children's groups where Plan International is involved in child protection programming activities to be CBCPMS, whereas these were included in some countries in other regions. In West and East Africa the figures are known to include some government coordination structures and other groups not focused primarily on child protection, such as elders groups. In the Americas the mechanisms included varied according to country, for example school committees, community defence committees, municipal commissions and organisations promoting family life. The figures therefore do not present a consistent interpretation of what constitutes a CBCPM across Plan International.

Number of CBCPMS:



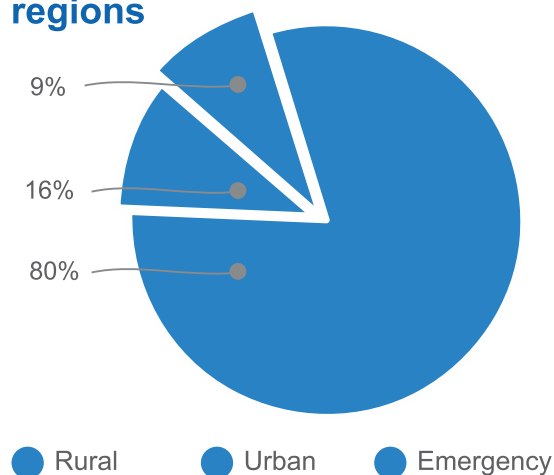
Please note that figures may not be directly comparable as countries and regions had some different interpretations of what constitutes a CBCPM.

Plan International supports an estimated 3,267 CBCPM structures in 12 countries in West and Central Africa and 7,500 in 12 East and Southern African countries. In the Americas, Plan International supports 1,182 mechanisms across 11 countries, ranging from 14 in Colombia to 317 in Guatemala. In Asia, Plan International has made significant progress to replicate and scale up CBCPMS in the last two years since the original study was carried out.

The number of mechanisms supported by Plan International in Asia rose from 2,247 in 2012 (13 countries, with over 50% in India) to 4056 by 2014 (ranging from 9 in China to 1027 in the Philippines and 1027 in India). Overall these figures indicate a strong commitment to community-based protection and the different approaches are analysed in the following sections. The majority of CBCPMS across Plan

International are in rural areas – up to 89% of those in the Asia region, with the remainder divided between 8% urban and 3% described as peri-urban. There are also CBCPMs in some emergency settings, mainly in Africa.

Profile of CBCPMs across regions



2.2 Categorising CBCPMs

All regions adopted a standard framework for categorising CBCPMs in the mappings. The categorisation used for the Africa and Asia studies was a classification adapted for the Plan International Asia mapping from a study commissioned by the Interagency Learning Initiative in 2008. Please note that Plan International normally works with local partners and therefore reference to Plan International in the list below refers to 'Plan International and partners'.

Category 1:	Direct implementation by Plan
Category 2:	PCommunity Involvement in Plan's initiative
Category 3:	Community-owned and managed activities mobilised by Plan
Category 4:	Community-owned and managed activities, initiated from within the community
Category 5:	Builds upon local government structures; community involvement mobilised by Plan

Most CBCPMs across Plan International's regions were initiated by Plan and fit within categories 1, 3 or 5:

- Category 3 was the most common approach in West Africa, followed by Category 5. There are examples of groups which were initially established to fight child trafficking or child labour whose focus has shifted to overall child protection.
- CBCPMs in East and Southern Africa were mostly Plan International initiated and either directly implemented or mobilised (category 1 or 3). A number of CBCPMs for example in Tanzania had emerged from Most Vulnerable Children Committees set up to address the needs of HIV-related orphans.
- Plan International Asia's CBCPMs are generally category 1, having emerged from community-based protection work and part of its CCCD approach. However some are built on different kinds of local government structures (category 5), where Plan International's role ranges from advocating for recognition (India), forming and strengthening structures (Laos, Cambodia) to a formal Memorandum of Understanding with a District Child Welfare Board (Nepal).
- Different categories were used in the Americas, identifying three types of mechanism from the community perspective. The most common mechanisms are firstly, where the CBCPM is formally constituted and recognised by the community, and, secondly, where the CBCPM is additionally recognised by the official protection system.

All studies highlighted the importance of understanding local perceptions, beliefs and practices related to childhood and child protection and determining how to strengthen good practices as a foundation for CBCPMs. Various initiatives were reported to be in progress to improve CBCPM support. The Asia report noted that in Vietnam, an ethnographic study is planned to identify social norms and how far they align with international child rights principles, to inform their development of CBCPMs; in Sierra Leone, Plan International is part of the inter-agency initiative that is building on the ethnographic studies conducted by the Columbia Group to inform support for CBCPMs and the approach to determining priority issues.

There were very few examples of CBCPMs being supported which were initiated from within the community itself. The pattern seems to be primarily that structures and groups are mobilised by Plan International (or its partners), emerging from Plan International's knowledge of a given community and its existing approaches to child protection. They grow into being community owned and managed over time, with the support of Plan International or its partners. Category 5 CBCPMs seem to emerge either in response to a government structure to facilitate community interaction, or as a result of advocacy by Plan International and others to stimulate a government initiative to formalise child protection.

2.3 Membership of CBCPMs

The size and composition of CBCPM networks and committees vary but most have between 6 and 15 members. In Asia the CBCPMs comprised between 6 and 50 members, with the majority involving 7-20, so similar to the usual size in the Americas of 5- 20. In East and Southern Africa the most prevalent size is 6-10 and the full range between 6 and 25 members per mechanism. In West Africa a wider range was reported with two PUs having more than 20%, and three having more than 42% of their CBCPMs with more than 25 members. The larger groups were often government coordination mechanisms. In none of the regional surveys was this data specifically disaggregated by gender or other criteria, but further information is provided below about types of members.

Religious leaders are prevalent as members in the Americas and in West Africa. Teachers and health workers play an important role across all regions.

Common challenges present themselves in all regions. The Plan International regions aim for community ownership and the inclusion of those who are traditionally excluded from decision-making. However, the regional studies show there is often a tension between these two aims, as giving voice to marginalised groups can be seen as a challenge to existing power structures whose collaboration is often

STRENGTHENING CBCPM AUTHORITY AND RECOGNITION THROUGH MEMBERSHIP

- In Asia government representatives are present in all CBCPMs apart from in Pakistan
- In West and East Africa community leaders and village chiefs are seen as key members, as they are often the traditional mechanism for protecting children. Local government officials are present in CBCPMs in four out of the 12 countries in West Africa and 70% of countries in East and Southern Africa
- CBCPMs in the Americas include State officers in six countries, with El Salvador including Office of the State Prosecutor officials
- In Sierra Leone the committee mechanism covers a number of communities with clearly defined membership, roles and responsibilities; at community level a focal point and chief are responsible for supporting the community on child protection and reporting to the committee.

essential to ensure community ownership. Poverty reduces the time available to participate and illiteracy proves to be a barrier.

One common issue is how to ensure genuine women's participation where this is not accepted in the wider community. For example, CBCPMs in West Africa sometimes have only one or two women members. Indeed, in practice in Togo, some groups comprise only men - there are women members, but they do not attend meetings. Where women do participate, the challenge has been to ensure that their participation is genuine and influential. The Asia study noted how involving local government representatives and elders influenced gender balance as these institutions remained male dominated; by contrast, at least 50% of community volunteers and children tended to be female and so most CBCPMs are fairly well gender-balanced.

CBCPM MEMBERSHIP ISSUES

- Balancing existing power and inclusion
- Genuine participation of women
- Voices for marginalised groups
- Volunteerism versus payment
- Selection processes
- Effective child participation

More attention is needed to ensure that other excluded and marginalised groups with less of a voice and less available time are included. In East Africa the responses indicated that over half of the supported CBCPMs have promoted community ownership by ensuring collective decision-making, building consensus and involving traditional and religious leaders and women. The focus on involving marginalised groups was weaker, although in Tanzania some CBCPMs involved vulnerable groups, such as albinos, and were successful in ensuring greater access to education for this group. Children with disabilities were being included more successfully by some groups (e.g. Zambia and Uganda). In Asia, it was only in India, Nepal, the Philippines and Sri Lanka where CBCPMs actively involve marginalised families as members.

The West Africa study noted that marginalised groups were more likely to be involved when they were the target group, for example people with disabilities. However, where CBCPMs or related structures have been set up to tackle abuses against a particular group of children, this sometimes weakens the overall approach of the CBCPM.

Another factor in relation to membership is the notion of volunteerism in the CBCPMs. The Asia study looked at payments to CBCPM members. In China all members receive a stipend or wage, as do some in the Philippines and Vietnam. The level of payment in East and Southern Africa was mainly during workshops and review meetings and the vast majority of West and Central African CBCPM members were volunteers, although this may involve some remuneration in kind. Where

members were volunteers, their willingness or interest in working on child protection appeared to be greater when the work was linked to other benefits for the community e.g. support for schools (Benin), or livelihood opportunities (Sierra Leone). East and Southern Africa also noted that in emergency settings the lack of other activities increased the spirit of volunteerism for child protection initiatives.

Membership selection and removal presents certain challenges. The East Africa study shows a mixed picture on community involvement in selection, where in Mozambique it was determined by the chief alone. In West Africa it was found that selection of members by the community and intergenerational dialogues helped ensure community ownership.

In the Americas there were no processes for removing members and incorporating new ones. The Asia study noted that limited rotation of membership could also contribute to excluding others. The other membership challenge for all regions was children's participation, which is explored below.

2.4 Child Participation

Plan International gives a high priority to child participation, as part of its CCCD approach. The regional studies all contain examples of the involvement of children and adolescents, particularly through membership of children's clubs and participation in awareness raising campaigns. There is a more mixed picture relating to their direct involvement in CBCPMs. The studies showed, however, that children's perception of the dangers they face can be very different to that of the adults working on their behalf.

In Asia, child participation is mainly organised through community or school-based clubs (which are not themselves CBCPMs). In seven countries, children and young people also play active roles in CBCP work, identifying child protection concerns, taking action to prevent or respond to these concerns and raising issues

with government officials up to State level. For example, in Thailand, children are provided with mobile phones to monitor and report child protection problems. Perhaps the most outstanding example is in Cambodia, where children are described as in the 'forefront of combating child abuse' by reporting cases for action and even following up cases of child labour and school dropout more attentively than their adult counterparts. In the Philippines where 150 barangay children's associations enable child participation in protection issues, traditional attitudes still often prevent recognition and appreciation by adults of children's capacity to contribute to community development.

The West Africa study reports that only about half of the PUs support CBCPMs with children as members. It cites a number of CBCPMs where children are not involved, for example the Niger Vigilance Committees which have no child members and weak links with children. This study includes a note of caution: children's involvement should be in age-appropriate activities and it may not always be in the best interests of the child to be members of groups mainly composed of adults. However children's clubs supported through the regional Violence Against Children (VAC) programme were particularly active in awareness initiatives and media activities, for example in Benin.

The Americas study identifies a major CBCPM achievement as increasing the participation of children and adolescents. They are recognised as key players in creating the mechanisms, by identifying needs, participating in the structures and contributing to the evaluation process. All mechanisms include children and adolescents in raising awareness to encourage their peers to 'speak without fear'. In Paraguay, Peru and Costa Rica they are involved in political advocacy. The study notes a lack of progress towards children gaining decision-making autonomy.

In East and Southern Africa it was noted that younger children were usually excluded and that the prevalent practice of using school-based groups as a vehicle for child

CHILDRENS CLUBS IN SHEBEDINO, ETHIOPIA

Clubs for either girls or boys, linked to the schools, are a vital part of the child protection mechanism in the community. A focal issue, articulated both by boys and girls, is to 'save our girls', from FGM and early marriage. The children meet with parents groups, acting as real change agents, and the young people are knowledgeable on the dangers of HIV, FGM, and the realities of child labour, physical abuse and early marriage.

participation in CBCPMs risked consolidating the exclusion of those who probably face greater risks, such as working children or those not at school. Positive examples included one school group in Ethiopia which was taking a strong stand against FGM and an 11 year-old boy stating: 'They will not cut our girls'.

The studies present limited data about child participation disaggregated according to gender or age. The questionnaire results from West Africa suggest that boys are more likely to be members of child protection committees than girls. However in Asia the Protection for Action report notes that in many communities in different parts of the region, girls are playing a more active role than boys. In the Americas study the need for differentiated methodologies and resources for the involvement of girls and boys was highlighted. In East and West Africa adolescents (aged 13-17) are more likely to be members of CBCPMs than children under 12. This would be an interesting area for further data gathering and analysis.

Overall genuine child participation was not always as common-place as might be expected with Plan's CCCD approach. Children may be involved in awareness raising and peer education, but in many CBCPMs across the regions children's voices were absent or their role was limited.



2.5 Priority Target groups of children and issues

All regions aimed to identify priority target groups of vulnerable children for both care and protection. Plan International's CCCD approach is seen as an entry point for CBCPM work, starting with a situation analysis in conjunction with local communities and structures. This leads to the identification of issues, consensus building and agreements on action. Adolescent girls in rural areas were found to be the main focus for CPCBMs across all regions, supported in part by Plan International's Because I am a Girl campaign and the prevalence of early marriage and teenage pregnancy in a number of countries, as well as FGM in Africa.

TARGET GROUPS OF CHILDREN

- Adolescent girls
- Children affected by HIV/AIDS
- Children with disabilities
- Children in conflict with the law
- Children without parental care

More than 50% of CBCPMs in East and Southern Africa were focused on care and protection issues, particularly children with HIV and orphans (indicating the original remit of some groups), and children in conflict with the law, which has had increasing focus in the

region and, in Mozambique, support to families with children with disabilities.

West and Central Africa and the Americas region had specific projects focused on trafficked children (e.g., the PROTECT project in Togo and Benin; Bolivia) due to the prevalence of migration and trafficking in West Africa and the increased risk in Bolivia of indigenous children being trafficked.

TYPES OF ISSUES ADDRESSED

All regions:

- Teenage pregnancy
- Sexual abuse and exploitation, including prostitution, sex tourism
- Early marriage
- Physical and psychological abuse by teachers and parents/caregivers
- Child neglect
- Exploitative child labour
- Child trafficking

Africa regions:

- FGM
- Child recruitment into armed forces
- Forced begging

There remains a mixed picture in terms of consistently identifying issues of care and protection for excluded groups, such as children with disabilities, and developing specific strategies to address their needs. There also remains the question of whether CBCPMs should be encouraged to 'address' all child protection violations in a community or focus on their priority issues, at least initially. In some cases, mechanisms at community level had been originally established to deal with one particular issue, before being encouraged to address others.

In Africa it was noted that even if CBCPMs were responsible for targeting all groups of children and a range of child protection issues, CBCPMs tended to focus on what was important to them and what they understood or could identify easily. For example in Sierra Leone, the overwhelming interest of the

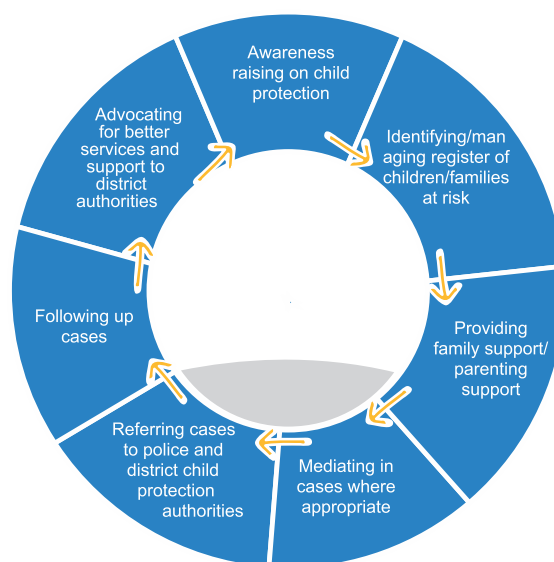
communities was teenage pregnancy. In Mozambique the CBCPMs that included primary school teachers as members focused on corporal punishment. In the Americas, however, it was found less effective to work on specific issues, such as safe migration or child labour, the preference being to strengthen village child protection committees that build on government structures and practice.

2.6 Roles and responsibilities of CBCPMs

Across all regions most CBCPMs meet regularly; a number of committees have terms of reference or action plans and an identified Chair. A proportion of CBCPMs also have their own child protection policies and codes of conduct to prevent harm to children from their decisions and actions, but this remains an area that needs improving. Written records of their activities vary according to the level of formality of the mechanism, making systematic monitoring difficult.

In countries where the government has already recognised the role of CBCPMs, there are either mandates or guidelines on their roles and responsibilities. The formal approach in the Americas, building on local government structures, provides for clarity of roles and organisation, as is the case in a few countries in Africa, for example Sierra Leone and Mozambique.

A cycle of action or responsibility can be used as a framework to determine the roles and responsibilities of CBCPMs and determine how these relate to State and formal services. This process was reviewed at Plan International regional meetings in 2014 to discuss the mapping study findings in West Africa, East Africa and the Americas. It was recognised that CBCPMs were working primarily on the awareness raising element of the cycle, as per the findings of the mapping exercises.



Some aspects of this cycle require skilful case management. In the absence of a systematic case management approach by accessible government or NGO social workers, some CBCPM members are increasingly involved in informal case management approaches to assess, plan and take action to try to improve the situation of the child and/or their family.

2.6.1 Awareness-raising

Almost all CBCPMs, despite the diversity of contexts, are involved in prevention work which mainly involves awareness-raising with community members about child rights and protection issues. In West Africa for example, two thirds of countries reported that all the Plan International-supported CBCPMs were involved in sensitising parents and caregivers and in the remainder, most or some were doing this. In the Americas, CBCPMs in all countries are conducting awareness-raising. This might also include training on gender sensitivity and child participation with a view to empowering children, especially girls.

2.6.2 Identifying/managing register of children/families at risk

There were some examples of CBCPMs identifying and managing registers of children and families at risk. In Asia, CBCPMs undertake community based risk mapping and

lists of vulnerable children and families are sometimes created through door to door visits to households by CBCPM members. Vulnerable families are assisted to access services and support. In East Africa there were examples noted in Mozambique of a few CBCPMs creating and managing lists of at risk children and families, which included regular visits to each household in the community.

More systematic efforts are needed to encourage CBCPMs to identify vulnerable children and families, and to ensure that services and support are available for children and families at risk. The Asia, West Africa and East Africa studies all identified limitations in availability of services and support for care and protection issues where these are related to poverty and require improved social protection or livelihood interventions.

2.6.3 Providing family and parenting support

There were examples across all regions of CBCPMs providing family or parenting support to varying degrees and for different issues. In El Salvador five vulnerable groups were identified for CBCPM support, including children with disability and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Transgender (LGBT) adolescents. In Guatemala, partnership with a disability organisation has resulted in inclusion of children with disability into CBCPMs. In Mozambique, a few CBCPMs have identified children with disabilities and the support that they and their families need, but this often required extra resources which were difficult to access. A number of these CBCPMs in Mozambique were also participating in a form of 'community fostering', financed by UNICEF and supported by Plan International, which provided foster care for children who have lost parental care. The CBCPMs paid regular visits to the 'foster families' to ensure that the fostering was working and to assess family needs.

The Asia mapping and Protection In Action evaluation described parenting education initiatives to promote positive discipline, school attendance and healthy child development, particularly in Sri Lanka, Vietnam, Cambodia and Indonesia.

Parenting groups and closed groups to reduce domestic violence, Cambodia.

When cases of domestic violence are reported and confirmed, the Family Protection Network (CBCPMs supported by Plan in Cambodia) ask parents to participate in parenting groups or in closed groups. The closed groups have a clear goal of preventing further domestic violence and helping families to live together without disputes. The closed groups are very successful in stopping domestic abuse and alcohol abuse.

A gender-related issue arises with respect to the need to include men and fathers in issues involving parenting and the importance of seeing boys as potential victims of violence. The Americas study refers to promoting gender equality through exploring 'models of masculinity' in the context of their gender and diversity approach.

Promoting and facilitating birth registration cuts across all four regions. The West Africa study pointed to debate within Plan International, about whether birth registration can be considered as a child protection initiative, rather than a factor that supports child protection interventions. However, birth registration was seen as a key CBCPM achievement across Asia, except for Pakistan, and a number of countries in West Africa identified their work on birth registration as the primary intervention for child protection. In some cases, such as in Niger, there are separate committees, rather than full CBCPMs, reflecting the fact that most of Plan's work on this issue has been through the Count Every Child campaign.

2.6.4 Mediating in cases

As with providing family and parenting support, there were a number of successful examples of CBCPMs mediating in cases. Corporal punishment is key area of success across regions, partly due to Plan's global campaign

Learn Without Fear against corporal punishment in schools, where CBCPMs mediate in cases, as well as referring cases when necessary. CBCPMs described being active in mediating with families on the use of corporal punishment in the home. In East Africa community-level resolution led some teachers to stop beating children in schools. In Honduras mediation was used where parents had forced their children to abandon school because of child labour.

There were a few examples of CBCPMs mediating in cases of early marriage and FGM, particularly in West Africa, which had resulted in the reversal of family decisions on FGM or early marriage in time to prevent them from taking place, and in other cases, securing girls' return to school once married. In Ghana young people provided an example of where the work of the CBCPM had increased the focus on addressing the rights of adolescent girls who become pregnant rather than prioritising harmony between the parents.

EXAMPLES OF CASES DEALT WITH BY CBCPMS IN WEST AFRICA

Cases dealt with by mediation

- Teacher smashed a child's head and the parents attacked the teacher (Niger)
- Cases of early marriage (Niger, Sierra Leone)
- Case of forced marriage (Benin)
- Child involved in heavy work and not going to school (Benin, Niger, Ghana)

Cases referred to authorities

In Asia, there were successes in responding to cases of hazardous work for children. In one village in India, the CBCPM intervened where

six boys aged 14-15 were working in a brick kiln, informing the family about legal provisions on harmful child labour and government livelihood programmes, with the result that the children regularly attended school.

These examples were described as few, but potentially promising, but with a cautionary note on ensuring that the roles and responsibilities of CBCPMs on family support and mediation are appropriate.

2.6.5 Referring cases to authorities

There are very different levels of progress in referring child protection violations to formal government services.

In all regions there has been a significant increase in the number of child protection violations being referred to the formal authorities by CBCPMs. In most countries there are clear referral pathways, either developed by government or supported by Plan, and an increasing number of services to support referrals. Examples include One Stop Crisis Centres in Thailand and the Philippines and multi-disciplinary teams interacting with Most-Vulnerable Children Committees at village level in Tanzania.

"We are encouraging children and communities members to report child protection concerns and we are explaining about the mechanisms that are in place such as the District Child Policy Unit, Child Welfare Committee, Juvenile Justice Board, and Childline 1098. We are also trying to strengthen the capacity of various actors within this system. However, if the response is not adequate we may be putting the child at more risk.... For example, if there is a child protection concern within the family the CWC may send the child to a "State Home" – this may create more challenges in terms of the child's protection".

Plan International India staff member

Even in some countries which do not yet have a government mandate, CBCPMs may have formal responsibility for referring cases; for example in Ghana, the CBCPMs are required to mediate in cases and refer these when applicable, although the National Child Protection Policy is still being developed.

In Asia, referral mechanisms are strongest in the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and in some Nepali communities. In the Americas, all CBCPMs have an established role of acting as a channel for referring and reporting cases they receive. In Honduras, cases of child sexual abuse reported to the justice system have increased as a result of more effective civil society reporting and enhanced awareness. In the Dominican Republic the CBCPM cooperates with schools and health centres to detect cases and these have been reported in line with their protocol. Countries in Africa such as Mozambique and Sierra Leone have referral pathways described in government mandates.

All CBCPMs tend to find it difficult to identify and refer cases of child sexual abuse, but there are some notable examples of success. In the Philippines, CBCPM work has monitored 106 cases of violence against women and children whose gender was not specified, of which 17 child sex abuse and six child physical abuse cases have been referred to the appropriate authorities. Sexual abuse was cited as the most frequently addressed issue in West Africa, perhaps because it is clearly illegal (here as elsewhere) and there is usually a reporting mechanism in place; however it was noted that referring cases did not always lead to action and rarely helped the survivor. For example, sometimes the survivor was left in the community or home where the abuse had taken place, due to lack of options for alternative care.

However, although CBCPMs generally understand the need to refer cases to the formal authorities, there remains a reluctance to undertake this role for a number of reasons. CBCPMs prefer to resolve cases within the community partly because of absent government responses, but also to avoid

tensions within the community. The possibility of the family of the victim receiving money as recompense also drives cases to be dealt with informally in all regions. In some countries in Africa, the prospect of the chief collecting money in fines dissuades some from reporting the case formally. In these cases, few records are kept and the resolution is not often in the best interests of the child.

2.6.6 Following up cases

CBCPMs generally described a role in following up cases but this often consisted of monitoring the outcome of formal authority decisions on cases referred. The Asia Protection in Action report described a situation that is common across regions, that many countries lack sufficient child friendly protection services to support the recovery and reintegration of survivors of child protection violations. This necessitates increased efforts by Plan to support capacity building of CBCPM members to support family and community based reintegration.

2.6.7 Advocacy with the formal system

The reports describe Plan's prominent role in advocating with the formal system as well as building the capacity of the government at different levels to strengthen referral mechanisms and links between the formal and informal system. The experiences from the work of the CBCPMs are sometimes used by Plan for those advocacy and capacity building efforts. What comes through less strongly in the studies is the advocacy efforts that CBCPMs make directly with formal authorities. The Americas' report describes examples of the participation of network members in public policy decision-making, such as municipal councils (e.g. Honduras), or within a wider comprehensive protection system (e.g. Costa Rica). These initiatives, however, were not yet consistent in countries or across the region.

Key points from the studies in relation to the role and responsibilities of CBCPMs:

- If outside mechanisms and ideas are introduced without real community dialogue and mutual understanding, there is a tendency towards respecting cultural norms that may result in decisions favouring the interests of the perpetrator over the child.
 - CBCPM members consistently expressed the fear that abuses remain hidden with families and the community, especially where cultural beliefs (e.g., hitting children, FGM) are deeply rooted. This is one of the biggest barriers to change for CBCPMs.
 - Case management requires a range of different skills. Care should be taken in charging CBCPMs with roles and responsibilities that professional services should be taking on, and particularly when CBCPMs have not been trained to perform those roles.
 - Even where CBCPMs do have appropriate roles and responsibilities, their ability to perform these properly are constrained when the formal authorities are unable or unwilling to perform their own roles appropriately and support the CBCPMs in theirs.
- The absence of resources limits possibilities for CBCPMs. This extends to social protection initiatives; livelihood opportunities and alternative care for children without, or needing to be removed from, parental care.

2.7 Links with key stakeholders and national child protection systems

The level of involvement with official stakeholders varies greatly in line with differing levels of government presence. There is evidence that an inter-agency approach has an improved chance of ensuring that the government assumes responsibility.

In the Americas, while not all CBCPMs are linked to the national protection system, the majority coordinate with officials at municipal level in activities such as case referrals, risk mapping or prevention work. Good examples of integrated approaches include Peru, Paraguay and Costa Rica, where CBCPMs have collaborated with the national protection system to mutual benefit.

Linking CBCPMs to national systems in Peru

In 28 rural communities, Plan International has supported the concept of 'community defence promoters' (CBCPMs) within an agreed government framework (COMUDENA) which includes a protocol for action, detection, referral and reporting. The groups are recognised by the municipalities in 28 communities. These groups carry out awareness-raising actions among families, identifying cases of violence and referring them to the appropriate bodies, and are linked to the Municipal Community Defence Committee for Children and Adolescents (DEMUNA).

In West Africa, where the child protection committees are part of government policy, such as in Sierra Leone and Benin, links with formal systems are in place, often through the village chief, and, in the case of Sierra Leone, set out in a referral protocol.

In Niger, the government wishes to have community child protection committees linked to

the national system through the mandated regional child protection committees, but this is entirely reliant on NGOs supporting the committees. Ghana provides a positive example where CBCPMs play a pivotal role between formal structures (Commission on Human Rights, Domestic Violence and Victim Support Unit, Department of Social Work) and a range of community groups (chiefs, children's clubs and the village saving and loans association).

Across East and Southern Africa many CBCPMs have strong links to the police and to local government education institutions, as well as to local, formal child protection structures and services, such as social workers and health units. It was noted that these links are vital for referrals.

In 2012, when the Plan International Asia study was conducted, most CBCPMs had strong links with local government structures but the linkages into national child protection systems were still under development. This has changed considerably since then and it can now be said that the majority of Plan International supported CBCPMs come within the government child protection system and contribute towards it. This is due to effective advocacy by Plan rather than necessarily to the actions of the CBCPMs themselves. In Thailand government readiness to assume full responsibility was reported (in 2012), allowing Plan to withdraw from its work with CBCPMs.

Many impediments were cited in relation to linkages with the national child protection system. These included a lack of time, resources and/or interest by the formal authorities to effectively engage with CBCPMs; the geographic distance between the local authorities and the CBCPMs, which is often too great for regular and effective linkages to be maintained; and a reluctance by state authorities to cede power and recognition to CBCPMs.

Linkages between CBCPMs and between the CBCPM and other community groups, including in emergency settings, present a

mixed picture across regions but are generally weak, inhibiting exchange of good practice and the sharing of both challenges and how to overcome them.

2.8 Plan International's role in CBCPMs

Plan International's role in supporting CBCPMs ranges from capacity building to advocacy, but rests primarily with building the capacity of CBCPMs to function as a structure or committee and raise awareness on child rights and child protection.

In all regions Plan International has conducted a significant amount of capacity building for CBCPM members, police and other institutions, children and adolescents, and NGO partners involved in child protection. The common elements of capacity building support include training on the role of child protection committees, child protection and child rights, national laws and policies on child protection, how to elect representational volunteers, case management and referral. Capacity building on the technical aspects of child protection, such as case management, was not consistent across regions. In Asia, the training included some social skills on how to provide initial support to a victim.

There is little explicit capacity building on issues such as alternative parenting techniques, or on promoting cross-cutting issues such as gender equality.

In Asia, East and Southern Africa and the Americas, Plan has also supported CBCPMs to play an advocacy role to strengthen national child protection systems and district-level child protection structures.

In all regions Plan International and its partners provided material and financial support for CBCPMs. In West Africa, when asked where they go if there is a problem to resolve or support is needed, most groups consulted during the field visits said 'Plan International'. Many CBCPMs see Plan as having responsibilities which should be those of the State.

2.9 Sustainability

This issue is an important challenge in all four regions, particularly in relation to determining the right combination of factors which make a CBCPM sustainable. One clear factor for sustainability is the recognition of CBCPMs by governments and strong linkages between government and the CBCPM. Another factor is building on traditional mechanisms which have been operating for many years and have a better prospect of continuing post external support. Questions remain over whether volunteerism fosters sustainability.

In Sierra Leone, the inter-agency approach to supporting CBCPMs, their recognition by government and the drive to build on traditional mechanisms have increased the potential for sustainability.

Specific factors for sustainability - Moyamba (Sierra Leone)

- Structures, roles and responsibilities mandated by government
- Collaborative working through an inter-agency initiative
- Pilot approach with opportunities for learning and fine-tuning the approach
- Communities which are articulate on issues and can contribute effectively to solutions, even if there is some resistance to the child rights approach

The Asia study highlights how linkages with government and between CBCP programmes and Plan's other programmes, and with other agencies, contribute to sustainability. In contrast the low level of government involvement in West Africa is a threat to sustainability. Indeed, even where CBCPMs are part of a national child protection system, governments remain dependent on Plan and other agencies for technical and financial support and there is evidence that some child protection committees set up by Plan International have folded when a particular project or funding stream has ended. For example, Vigilance Committees in Niger fell into abeyance after the end of an USDOL (US

Dept. of Labour)-financed project on child labour (2005-8); however they were being relaunched in 2014 through funding to combat early marriage

The Americas' study highlighted the importance of having Plan International staff in daily contact with the CBCPM, both in terms of visible support and to stress the importance of the CBCPM's work, but noted the risk of over-reliance and lack of ownership. The dependency goes beyond being a financial one and includes an ongoing need for supervision, support, motivation and monitoring. Another threat to sustainability is the lack of strategies to prevent burn-out for those involved.

In both African regions, whilst studies noted elements which would favour sustainability – members of CBCPMs are volunteers, traditional leaders are involved and Plan does not usually provide direct financial support to members and works with others to build capacity, the fact that Plan International and local NGO partners largely fund the mechanisms is an inbuilt weakness.

Evidence from the studies suggests that it is unlikely that committees that have been established by Plan will continue actively post Plan support, without a combination of sustainable factors being in place. This is why it is equally important to work with the formal State systems and convince them to adopt the CBCPM approach, moving beyond the idea of project-based support and funding from Plan to linking CBCPMs to systems and processes that could improve their sustainability. There was no clear data on what happens to existing CBCPMs that become enmeshed in emergency situations, in terms of their sustainability and ongoing effectiveness in changed circumstances.

2.10 Models and approaches in emergency settings

The types of emergency varied from region to region with long-term displacement or refugee crises a major issue in the two Africa regions, climate issues taking precedence in the



Americas, and Asia confronting the full range of humanitarian situations. The Child Protection Working Group (CPWG) recognises the importance of CBCPMs in the prevention and response to child protection issues in the emergencies setting and has developed standards for support to CBCPMs as part of its Minimum Standards for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action. These standards highlight the importance of identifying existing methods of support to children at risk and mapping formal and informal service providers before making decisions about the form of external support that could be provided for preparedness and response. They also emphasise the importance of linking CBCPMs to the formal child protection system.

Plan's support for CBCPMs in emergencies is generally recent. In East Africa there are a substantial number of CBCPMs in emergency settings in South Sudan, Sudan, Ethiopia and Rwanda. Although the notion of 'community-based' may be different in a refugee camp or other emergency setting, Plan International has successfully supported CBCPM child protection approaches and has found that camp inhabitants often have more time available to devote to such activities. The experience in Niger in West Africa, where one of the field visits included consultations in a refugee camp, was rather different, as the population tended to be transient.

CASE STUDY FROM NIGER

Plan set up a child protection committee at the Tabareybarey refugee camp near the border with Mali. The main focus of this CBCPM was awareness-raising. After project funding ran out, responsibility for child protection was passed to ASA (Afrique Secours et Assistance). Due to the transient population, a number of members left and ASA set up a new committee of 10 men and 10 women, comprising two men and women from each of the five camp districts. During a visit to the camp as part of the mapping study, the committee was found to have a limited understanding of child protection risks, but it keeps a watching brief on protection issues and passes information about any problems to ASA. It encourages children to go to school and to use the 'Child Friendly Space'.

The responses from West Africa suggested that Plan is supporting 179 CBCPMs in emergency settings across eight countries. On closer examination some of these are not strictly CBCPMs as they do not deal specifically with child protection and are more focussed on disaster risk reduction (DRR) generally. Plan's regional Child Protection in Emergencies Specialist is implementing a new strategy based on the CPWG standards.

The aim is to learn from community responses and build on these to improve preparedness. A mapping of risks and resources is leading to the establishment of 'community mechanisms for the prevention and management of cases of abuse' in Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger. CBCPMs are seen as a key plank of future CPIE work in West Africa.

In the Dominican Republic there is an example where a CBCPM modified its actions to provide safe places for displaced families, with priority given to protection of children and adolescents. In Guatemala, the CBCPM has improved disaster preparedness in schools as part of its responsibility for child

protection in the context of managing and coordinating humanitarian response to disasters.

In Asia, DRR and emergency programmes are being established in several countries and recognise the need for stronger inter-sector collaboration. At the time the comparative analysis was undertaken in 2012 no CBCPMs were functional in communities that were affected by natural disasters or armed conflicts, even though in the past child protection committees had been established as part of the emergency responses in Pakistan, Sri Lanka and East Timor. However in 2013 Plan India supported CBCPM engagement in the flood response in Uttarakhand and Plan Philippines established CBCPMs in areas

affected by cyclone Haiyan. Some CBCPMs have started to include disaster risk reduction and emergency preparedness into their training and regular programmes, for example in Pakistan and Bangladesh, but this is at an early stage.

The Asia Protection for All evaluation report notes the risks associated with running parallel structures, an issue which is relevant to all regions. If CBCPMs are not involved in DRR and other existing community-based DRR structures are not aware of child protection, this leads to inefficient use of community structures.



PART 3

ACHIEVEMENTS AND CHALLENGES

This section largely draws on subjective data (online surveys of Plan staff, FGDs with CBCPM members and with children, key informant interviews, etc.) to identify both achievements and challenges. It reflects the views of those most directly involved – Plan staff, CBCPMs, local government officials, and, most importantly, children themselves: do they feel safer in their schools, homes and communities?

3.1 Achievements and Impact

There is a striking commonality in CBCPM successes. In CBCPMs visited in all four regions, and amongst key stakeholders such as chiefs, community leaders, elders, teachers and police, awareness-raising on child protection was seen as a major success. In places this greater awareness was observed during field visits (for example, CBCPM members talking knowledgeably about child protection, understanding of the different forms of abuse, and open discussion of harmful practices). However it was not always clear that this awareness led directly to behaviour change.

All regions report some decrease in violence towards children, even though the types of violence may vary from region to region. All regions also highlighted increased formal reporting of child abuse, and stronger links between CBCPMs and national or State actors where these are present and effective. Families and communities are taking more responsibility themselves for child protection, spreading the influence of the formal CBCPMs more widely to parents and others.

The level and nature of child participation

varies from region to region, and within communities; but children are a visible presence in CBCPM work across all regions, even where their views do not have a significant influence on CBCPM decision-making and processes; this is a success that has potential to be built on for the future. In Latin America, children play a strong advocacy role. In Africa, children were observed to be speaking out openly against certain abuses (for example FGM in East and Southern Africa). In parts of Asia, children received special training in media and theatre to help them understand, explain and report abuse.

Given the wide uptake by countries in all regions of the CRC, and the adoption of national laws on child protection by many, it is reasonable to conclude that lobbying and advocacy have had some positive impact, though there remain significant issues on resourcing legislation and of making formal links between State systems and CBCPMs. The studies did not highlight Plan's advocacy actions, or attempt to appraise these.

It is noticeable that Plan International staff, when asked about successes of CBCPMs in addressing and preventing child abuses, talked with many caveats (e.g., lack of data, most achievements based on perceptions, changes at early stages, etc.). There is clearly an ambition to build on achievements so far, and to make child protection stronger and more effective, indicating passion and energy; though the caveats also form part of the challenges.

EXAMPLES OF SIGNIFICANT ACHIEVEMENTS IDENTIFIED BY PLAN STAFF

Community child protection legislation:

- In Sierra Leone CBCPMs achieved new child protection bylaws with regard to teenage pregnancy
- In Vietnam, village codes on parental care were adopted with shortcomings reported to the CBCPM
- In the Philippines, community campaigns generated new village resolutions and municipal ordinances against child trafficking with the result that 148 victims were rescued during 2011.

New approaches to gender: In Colombia the CBCPM emphasis on 'family life' has facilitated the promotion of new approaches to masculinity across genders and across generations

Improved case management: In Mozambique, a centralised register of cases has been created by the provincial child protection network which should complement CBCPM activity.

Behaviour change:

- A doctor in Tanzania explained that the training he had received from Plan International in preparation for his interaction with CBCPMs had helped him to play a stronger role in identifying cases of rape and to convince his colleagues of the importance of this work as a contribution to protecting local children.
- In Ethiopia, community leaders spoke passionately about how their traditional beliefs and customs have been altered, going beyond behaviour change to something deeper – a change in thinking and belief; Elders are now making it clear that neither the Koran nor the Bible advocate FGM.

Empowerment of children:

- In Ecuador the Community Defence Committee has organised a group of adolescents who use theatre to share their concerns with the community. They said 'the theatre group helps us to develop ourselves to speak in public, acquire techniques for losing fear and defend ourselves against problems'
- In India, by linking children's groups to the CBCPMs, children have been empowered to participate in community discussions and have been effective in advocating for an end to beatings by teachers and parents

Creative technological solutions developed: Various helplines; in Kenya, a special mobile phone application called VuruguMapper to report child abuse, distributed through CBCPMs; in Benin, the USHAHIDI system for reporting cases of abuse by text message

3.2 Challenges

Across all regions, there is striking uniformity in the challenges faced in supporting CBCPMs to prevent and respond to child abuse.

Sustainability and the availability of resources are key challenges. Many CBCPMs remain dependent on Plan for funding and support.

In some places members of CBCPMs are discussing raising local funds, and volunteerism is still considered a key part of the functioning of CBCPMs; but making stronger links with governments, including getting them to include such structures in their budgets, is a major advocacy task for Plan. Some forms of child abuse and violence

remain hidden in the community, with children left vulnerable and unsafe. Certain forms of abuse, such as sexual abuse, have potential for shame within and between families. The meaningful participation of children in their own protection is highlighted as a challenge in all Plan regions. Many children are members of boys and girls clubs, but few are involved as decision-makers, in monitoring and evaluation, or as advocates; though Latin America has more successful examples than the other regions. Community attitudes still mean that the voice of children is often not valued and there is sometimes a cultural resistance to children playing a more active influencing role on child protection or other issues.

The studies all highlighted deficiencies in national child protection systems. In most countries where Plan International works, governments devote very small proportions of their budget to child protection, contributing to the low coverage and low quality of child protection services. Plan often finds itself trying to 'plug the gaps' where CBCPMs have highlighted problems but there is a lack of resources for response and a lack of options for alternative care for children in difficulty.

Effective case management is necessary to ensure appropriate responses to cases of abuse, access to services and follow-up monitoring. The full range of case management actions should be the responsibility of skilled professionals (usually social workers) but under-resourced professional services for children in most countries mean that these activities are not taking place, or CBCPMs are attempting to conduct them, without the necessary skills – or authority. This is an area where further guidance is needed for CBCPMs.



The lack of clear, comparable data on the performance of CBCPMs in protecting children, including cost-effectiveness, makes difficult the assessment of Plan International supporting CBCPMs against other strategies difficult (e.g. against greater advocacy). There also needs to be more focus on CBCPM effectiveness in emergency settings, to be clearer whether this approach should be integral to Plan's emergency response.

The legitimacy of CBCPMs is also questioned by some communities, and therefore the authority they wield, especially where CBCPM committees have been externally established. Some perceived resistance to CBCPMs is based primarily on the sensitivity of the issues dealt with, which may in turn be linked to issues of gender and to cultural beliefs, reinforcing the idea that CBCPM support may need to include more of these elements as part of increasing the longer-term effectiveness of CBCPMs in achieving real behavioural and cultural change in the status and treatment of children.

EXAMPLES OF CHALLENGES IDENTIFIED BY PLAN STAFF

Capacity issues and sustainability:

- Malawi was one country highlighting the turnover of CBCPM volunteers
- The Americas noted a lack of training of communities to identify and work with vulnerable groups
- Guinea noted a lack of specialised organisations competent to follow up cases raised by CBCPMS and a lack of government interest in child protection.

Legal issues:

- A generalised issue about lack of access to judicial processes, and they are rarely child-friendly.
- Thailand raised the inability of the police and judiciary to protect CBCPM members from threats.
- West Africa and the Americas highlighted the tendency to prefer out of court settlements.

Different approaches to child rights:

- Across Africa, attitudes to physical punishment of children are slow to change
- Ethiopia noted the need to explain Plan's right-based approach in ways appropriate to local language and concepts.
- Deep-rooted allegiance to some harmful practices is contrary to international child rights standards.

Unintended consequences:

- In Costa Rica it was found that focusing on boys' responsibility for violence obscured the fact that they are also victims and vulnerable (as a result they developed new advocacy messages)
- In Niger, a community response to inappropriate behaviour led to beatings of adolescents.
- In Asia, insufficient attention to confidentiality was found to affect the privacy, dignity and security of all parties involved in handling a child protection case
- Compulsory pregnancy testing has been introduced in Tanzanian schools as an approach to tackle teenage pregnancy whereas this would be considered a violation of child rights elsewhere



CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This section outlines some key conclusions, learning points, and recommendations. In addition, as per the terms of reference for this report, some key advocacy messages are proposed.

Conclusions and lessons learned

Plan International's work has been based in the community over many years. This long-term community approach means that it is trusted and recognised for its work and local partnerships. As a result Plan International is in a good position to work in the community on some of the sensitive issues that arise in relation to child protection. All four Plan regional offices are supporting CBCPMs as a key strategy for delivering child protection in the various countries where they work. The total number of CBCPMs being supported may be more than 15,000, often through partner organisations, though there are big country variations. In all regions differences emerged in how CBCPMs were being defined; it would appear that Plan's definition (see Chapter 2) is not being used consistently across or within the four regions.

Many successes are claimed for Plan-supported CBCPMs across the regions, from awareness-raising (a particular strength of CBCPMs and their stated primary purpose) through to real gains in child protection and reductions in key areas of abuse such as FGM, early marriage and physical punishment. Field research as part of these four studies found examples of changes in behaviour towards children, as ideas on what constitutes child abuse has begun to be spread by CBCPMs and their members. This

shows that given time and the right circumstances, CBCPMs can have a profound impact on communities and child protection.

In emergency situations, CBCPMs have been used as part of providing child protection in difficult circumstances, though evidence is mixed on how effective they have been.

Objective statistics and baseline data against which to measure change for vulnerable children are generally hard to find. The recent Plan Asia evaluation has added to the body of knowledge and offers findings based on a more systematic approach to evaluation and learning, measuring CBCPM work against sixteen Key Quality Elements (KQEs). It is a future challenge for Plan globally to develop improved monitoring and evaluation systems and indicators.

Child participation, a core part of Plan's strategy and values, remains a challenge, certainly for the youngest children. There were impressive examples of children and young people speaking out articulately about the issues, including young boys showing great awareness of abuses that most immediately affect girls, including FGM and early marriage. However, their involvement was not always seen as vital.

Children with disabilities do not feature strongly in Plan's work on CBCPMs, despite this group being a priority target for Plan. In the same way, children of other excluded and marginalised groups, from albinos to those out of school, are often not actively considered. On the other hand, teenage girls, often seen as a vulnerable target group, fare better, as CBCPMs tend to prioritise issues that especially impact on them, such as forced

marriage, sexual abuse and teenage pregnancy. If communities were also able to see benefits of prioritising children from marginalised groups, this could be the basis for improvements in their protection. This is an area that needs further thought and dialogue with communities.

Sustainability remains a key issue for all CBCPMs, particularly those that are committee structures initiated by Plan International. The key criteria for sustainability in different contexts need to be established.

The biggest test of CBCPMs is: do they contribute to protecting children from the range of abuses they face? Many specific examples were given of positive improvements in child protection, but it is also clear that much abuse remains hidden. The child protection challenge in the four regions is huge. Working closely with communities, through an inter-agency approach, with mutual learning and sharing of experiences at all levels would seem to be the way forward.

Key learning points

1. CBCPMs can be an effective way of mobilising the community to be the frontline in child protection; however the impact of CBCPMs on reducing levels of child abuse is difficult to measure in objective, formal ways without baselines and other statistical measures
2. CBCPMs work most effectively if built on existing structures or traditional mechanisms, initiated from the community rather than externally. Supporting community empowerment is a means to sustainability.
3. CBCPMs are especially effective in raising awareness about child abuse, but without in-depth engagement and dialogue with communities about their needs and perceptions, this may not lead to social change
4. The majority of Plan-supported CBCPMs are in rural areas, where the community is easier to define. The distinctive features of urban life, where there may be less social cohesion, pose particular challenges and may mean a different way of engaging with communities; an interagency approach is likely to be essential.
5. If children have active, appropriate and meaningful participation in their own protection and in CBCPMs, then they can be effective advocates and agents of change
6. CBCPMs have been more effective when Plan's support has been accompanied by other interventions of particular interest to the community – for example, poverty alleviation interventions or support for children attending school. A more holistic approach offers the opportunity to prevent certain violations such as child labour, if increased family income opportunities are available
7. Involvement of community and traditional leaders is a vital component in successful CBCPM functioning
8. Issues of exclusion, including gender, physical disability and social status, remain major barriers to effective operation of CBCPMs, limiting their child protection scope and effectiveness
9. Direct links between CBCPMs and State structures help to avoid dependence on Plan International and to foster sustainability. To be effective, CBCPMs need to be able to rely on formal State legal responses which are resourced and accompanied by measures to protect the victims and witnesses
10. Short-term projects based on special funding do not facilitate lasting change; child protection needs to be fully part of Plan's community work in the same way as other priorities like education, with technical support and resources
Inter-agency approaches have the advantage of pooling resources, expertise and experience



Recommendations

These are recommendations for Plan International's overall work with CBCPMs at the global level; more detailed and specific recommendations are available in the four regional reports.

1. Base Plan International's work on the best global, interagency evidence:

- Work within inter-agency initiatives wherever possible to foster a coordinated and sustainable approach to supporting child protection in the community.
- Build on this global synthesis to intensify exchanges between Plan International regions, on what works and why, including in emergency situations
- Play an active role in the Interagency Learning Initiative on Community-Based Child Protection Mechanisms and Child Protection Systems

2. Focus on making community-based child protection programmes truly community-driven and sustainable:

- Carry out pilot studies in selected countries in each region on the contribution of traditional mechanisms to child protection, including investigating and understanding the cultural values, beliefs and practices that enhance well-being within communities
- Take prevention beyond awareness raising by exploring techniques for using dialogue, mutual learning and reflection

that can lead to community-driven action and social change.

- Exchange experience on the use of community and intergenerational dialogue on traditional practices and child protection issues; ensure the active involvement of children and young people
Review the experience of using mobile phone technology and social media (e.g., Thailand, Kenya and Benin) to see if there is scope for replicating or extending its use in community-based child protection
- Prioritise support to CBCPMs that are based on existing community structures and initiatives, or in the context of the formal mandate of the State.

3. Develop strategies to promote gender sensitivity and inclusion, both in terms of target groups and community involvement:

- Align work with community-based child protection mechanisms with Plan's policies on gender and inclusion
- Put marginalised and vulnerable children at the heart of community-based child protection responses
- Promote greater and more meaningful participation and inclusion of women in CBCPMs, especially in leadership roles
- Use existing tools for conducting analyses of patterns of exclusion, including gender, to assess what the issues of excluded groups are and the reasons for exclusion (e.g., Plan's own gender transformation tools).

4. Improve the effectiveness of advocacy with government authorities by drawing on Plan's experience from the field

- Systematically gather information from field projects working with community-based child protection mechanisms to support advocacy at national, regional and international level
- Collect case studies and models of good practice which can be presented to inform discussions with governments about how best to provide effective child protection and enhance links between formal and informal systems.

5. Put resources into capacity building for Plan staff:

- Take time to explore the Plan International definition of CBCPMs and what this means
- Discuss what CBCPMs are and how they differ from and link with other groups engaged with child protection and child rights within the community
Offer professional development for Plan child protection advisers to enable them to develop the specialist skills needed to provide leadership and technical support to those delivering child protection programmes in the community (with a clear separation from the role of supporting the internal child protection policy)
- Provide training and opportunities for exchange of information and experiences for field staff and managers on community-based child protection

Advocacy messages

Plan's support for CBCPMs cannot succeed by itself; the State is responsible for child protection, and Plan has a key role in advocating with governments to assume their responsibilities and respect the role of CBCPMs. Plan International should gather examples and case studies from its work to support the following key advocacy messages:

- Governments need to prioritise and strengthen child protection in all its elements
- Governments need to formally recognise the role of CBCPMs and provide guidance on how these mechanisms link to the formal authorities
- Governments must monitor how the referral and response pathways are working between communities and the formal system, so that they can make improvements to services, including strengthening the protection, rehabilitation and care of children who are victims of abuse
- Greater opportunities are needed for district and local child protection services and authorities to use information and evidence from the community to input into national level decision-making on government policy and legislation
- Greater transparency is required in the allocation of resources for child protection, including how decisions are made in allocating funding at district level and how this extends to supporting child protection at community level
- Governments need to make better linkages between poverty reduction strategies and programmes and child protection initiatives to make a step change in the protective environment for children in communities.



APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: References

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APPENDIX 2:

Plan International's definition of CBCPMs

Plan has formally adopted the following definition of CBCPMs, based on its understanding and dialogue with other agencies and actors working on child protection, and studies of child protection:

A CBCPM is 'a network or group of individuals at community level who work in a coordinated manner towards protection of children from all forms of violence, in all settings. Such mechanisms can be indigenous or externally initiated and supported. They may be more formal or informal in their structure and functioning. CBCPMs are linked and contribute to the child protection systems'. z".

- Networks and groups that may be regarded as CBCPMs include locally initiated structures that work towards the protection of children, such as traditional structures and religious groups, as well as community networks, committees and groups established through external support from NGOs or government organisations
- CBCPMs function at the community or grassroots level, in a village, urban neighbourhood or other community (e.g., a camp for internally-displaced people, IDP)
- To be classed as a CBCPM, networks and groups need to have a specific role and responsibility for working in the community towards the protection of children. CBCPMs address violence against children, which includes all forms of physical, sexual, verbal and emotional abuse, neglect and exploitation.
- Formal child protection CBCPMs are those that are implemented under national or local government legislation. Informal CBCPMs are those that are not mandated by national or local government legislation.
- Through child protection systems, countries aim to develop a comprehensive and sustainable approach preventing and responding to violence against children. CBCPMs are an important component of child protection systems and should be

linked to systems at district and national levels.

APPENDIX 3:

Summary of regional mapping study for Plan International RESA (East and Southern Africa)

The regional study

Mapping and Analysis of Plan International RESA support for Community Based Child Protection Mechanisms, August 2014
Countries in Plan's region: North (Egypt, Ethiopia, Sudan, South Sudan), East (Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Rwanda), South (Malawi, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Zambia)
Countries visited during the study: Ethiopia, Tanzania, Mozambique (separate reports are available for each of these countries).

The situation for child protection in Plan's East and Southern Africa region

The scale of violence and abuse against children in the region is difficult to measure, with much of it being hidden and taboo. In eastern and southern Africa, various surveys indicate that large numbers of children face violence. The highest rates of traditional practices such as FGM and early marriage are found in the Horn of Africa, particularly in Eritrea, Ethiopia, Sudan and Somalia, where more than 70% of girls and women have undergone FGM. In Egypt, violence against children, in its different forms, is widespread; in South Sudan, the emergency status of the country, with widespread armed conflict, means even the basis for child protection such as attending school is threatened. Other forms of abuse and neglect common in the region are child labour, child trafficking, and the abandonment of children or general neglect of orphans, with many vulnerable children living alone on the streets. Discrimination against marginalised and excluded children and communities also leads to abuses; for instance, abuses against albino children and others with disabilities in Tanzania.

Formal child protection systems in the region

Many of the countries within the East and Southern Africa region have ratified the core international instruments on children's rights to protection from violence and abuse (e.g., UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, UNCRC; African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child). However, governments across the region are at different stages in strengthening national child protection laws based on international and pan-African norms and the implementation at national level of a child protection framework that is compatible with the international framework is variable. Reasons for this vary from political will and prioritisation through to lack of resources and challenges of geographical scale and communication. The absence of real, coherent, multi-sectoral policy and programming for child protection is also problematic; the right people and institutions are failing to join up approaches.

Plan supported CBCPMs in the region

Plan, in line with its child-centred approach, has prioritised child protection as part of its current strategic plan, and has sought to build and strengthen child protection by utilising CBCPMs, working with partners to support existing traditional community structures and linking these to State structures and processes. There is debate over the exact meaning of CBCPMs, including formal versus informal CBCPMs; it is difficult to estimate exactly how many CBCPMs are supported. In many cases CBCPMs have been built on existing structures and processes, involving elders, community leaders, teachers, parent and others. There has been major success in raising awareness of the most serious child protection issues, from sexual abuse, physical harm and child trafficking to traditional practices such as early marriage and female genital mutilation (FGM). Where national governments have introduced legislation, CBCPMs have proved even more effective, especially where decentralisation has led to government agencies and the police being involved with, or linked to, CBCPMs. Some CBCPMs have moved beyond awareness-raising to a range of actions, including referrals, mediation and the

pursuance of prosecutions for child abusers.

Plan has made a significant contribution to child protection in emergency settings through the building of camp-based CBCPMs. In many cases, from necessity, Plan's role has been more direct than with non-emergency CBCPMs, actively setting up structures where communities are less stable and more itinerant.

There remain a number of challenges to the effective functioning of CBCPMs. Many CBCPMs are still dominated by existing and traditional groups, with (for example) women being less well represented in terms of influence and quality of participation. Whilst some children have been empowered by CBCPMs, in other cases children are not involved or represented fully, including priority groups such as children with disabilities.

Some CBCPMs have been created by Plan International, contrary to the evolving principles of good practice. This, and issues such as financial and other support needs, present challenges to sustainability and scalability. Financial and training and capacity building support from Plan International and partners is finite, and many CBCPMs would find it hard to function on their own, even though they exhibit a strong sense of volunteerism. A key element of tackling this problem is the involvement and commitment of government, including the allocation of resources; this area is key for Plan's advocacy. More sharing of lessons, experience and approaches between CBCPMs is required, with Plan facilitating, so that communities can be supported to strengthen their own child protection practices and mechanisms.

The study also found many anecdotal, impressionistic and qualitative examples of success, with children's lives being clearly improved by CBCPMs; but there was a lack of quantitative measures and baseline data. The provision of better, quantitative evidence is needed.

Overall, Plan's experience and practice of

supporting CBCPMs in East and Southern Africa has been reasonably positive, and is providing real protection for children and also empowering communities. Recommendations include: following Good Practice Guidelines in building on existing community mechanisms of child protection; assisting in linking CBCPMs to government structures; ensuring meaningful and appropriate participation of children in their own protection; making sure membership of CBCPMs reflects the community (including women's participation), and providing the right training to Plan staff to support CBCPMs.

APPENDIX 4:

Summary of mapping and analysis study for Plan International ARO (Asia)

The regional study

Lessons for Protection: A comparative analysis of community-based child protection mechanisms supported by Plan International Asia, 2012

The summary below is taken from the original mapping study, but since then a regional evaluation of the effectiveness of CBCPMs has also been undertaken:

Protection In Action: Regional Evaluation Of The Effectiveness Of Community Based Child Protection Mechanisms Supported By Plan International Asia, 2014. This study also includes 10 country reports (Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam).

Countries in Plan's region: Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, East Timor, India, Indonesia, Laos, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam.

Countries visited during the studies: Cambodia, East Timor, Nepal, Pakistan and Vietnam (2012) and Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Nepal and Vietnam (2014)

The situation for children in Plan International's Asia region

Asia is one of the most diverse regions globally in terms of cultural, religious, ethnic, socio-economic and political contexts. Violence against children is found across the region in all settings – in families, schools, and communities, on the streets, in residential institutions, in the workplace and in prisons. Much violence is still hidden. In East Asia, children continue to experience sexual abuse and exploitation, child labour, trafficking, corporal punishment, and violence in their home, school and community. For some specific violations (e.g., trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation), rapid economic change in some countries has worsened the issue, as societal norms and structures have lessened. Children in South Asia are especially exposed to physical violence and corporal punishment, child marriage, domestic violence, sexual violence and abuse, and child trafficking. Violence is perpetuated by adults as well as by children's peers. Half of the world's child brides live in South Asia, though significant differences in the child marriage rate exist (e.g., 4% in Maldives to 66% in Bangladesh). 44 million children are engaged in child labour, 25% of the total worldwide, with 29 million in India. Children are trafficked for the purpose of sexual and economic exploitation both within South Asian countries and outside, with many victims of trafficking found in Europe and in the Middle East. Conflicts and disasters affecting countries in South Asia create new protection risks for children and worsen existing ones.

Formal child protection systems in the region

Countries have generated substantial resources and institutions to address specific issues of protection and have reacted very positively to external processes and influences (e.g., adoption of UNCRC), but resources are often poorly deployed and lack critical linkages at the municipal and national levels to CBCPMs and other community level components. Protection of children from violence is moving higher up on the political agenda (e.g., the establishment, in

2010, of the South Asia Initiative to End Violence against Children, SAIEVAC). Many efforts are on-going in the region to strengthen national child protection systems. Bhutan, for instance, has recently started to build a national child protection system: Pakistan has embarked on a national child protection system mapping and assessment; in India, the roll-out of the Integrated Child Protection Scheme is being implemented at State level. In India, Nepal and Pakistan close-working relationships have been established between government and community groups to better prevent and respond to violence against children.

Plan supported CBCPMs in the region

Plan has focused on establishing and sustaining a variety of local mechanisms. Across the region, the most common structure for CBCPs supported by Plan International is the community level child protection committee (CPC). CBCPM's efforts are increasing awareness and reporting on child protection, decreasing violence against children in schools and homes, and increasing recognition and respect for children and their participation. CBCPMs are also contributing to increased birth registration.

Children and young people are playing important roles in awareness raising, identification and reporting of child protection concerns, mapping of risks, and other activities; but increased efforts are needed to engage the most marginalised children. While many CBCPMs are increasingly effective in changing parents', caregivers' and teachers' behaviour to reduce physical punishment and abuse of children, CBCPMs often find it difficult to prevent and respond to child sexual abuse. Traditional forms of justice often focus on financial compensation, rather than criminal justice and/or support to the child. Child protection concerns such as neglect or children's engagement in work, which are rooted in poverty, are hard for CBCPMs to solve.

CBCPMs across the region are coordinating and collaborating closely with both local

government and civil society actors within their communities. Where national child protection systems exist and extend to district levels, CBCPMs are connected to these systems. Within Plan International country offices, there are strong links between CBCP programmes and Plan's education programmes (e.g. 'Because I am a Girl'), which reinforce the CBCP programmes. There are increasing efforts by Plan International to integrate disaster risk reduction and emergency preparedness into CBCPM activities.

Plan's child-centred community development (CCCD) approach and associated tools have improved understanding of child protection across the region, but there is a need to invest more time and resources in capacity building, as well as mentoring support to CBCPMs. Networking between CBCPMs should also be strengthened. Specific indicators and processes to gather baseline and results data on child protection outcomes are underdeveloped, and systematic monitoring of child protection caseloads is in its early stages across the region.

Time constraints result in CBCP volunteer members struggling to dedicate sufficient time to child protection activities. Sociocultural traditions towards children and low levels of child protection awareness within the community contribute to the ongoing existence of different forms of violence against children and the relatively low levels of reporting. CBCPMs lack sufficient guidance or referral opportunities to ensure a sensitive and timely response to child sexual abuse cases, and Plan Asia has limited human resources and capacity building in child protection. Fragile and/or non-functioning child protection systems, particularly at the district levels, significantly affect the functioning of CBCPMs.

Recommendations include: increased support to strengthen CBCPMs; more advocacy with governments; inter-agency efforts to strengthen the child protection system; increased research and analysis to build upon traditional practices; more attention to gender analysis in all stages of child protection system

development including the engagement of men and fathers; systematic application of internationally agreed basic requirements on children's participation; strengthening of child-friendly child protection services that support children's recovery and reintegration if they have faced abuse; learning from practice of 'multidisciplinary teams' like the child protection units in the Philippines or the 'One Stop Crisis Centres' in Thailand; better child protection data collection; capacity building for Plan staff, partners and CBCP system stakeholders; learning from existing CBCPM work in urban settings, and increasing planning, training and support to CBCPMs to integrate emergency preparedness.

APPENDIX 5: Summary of mapping and analysis study for Plan International WARO (West and Central Africa)

The regional study

Comparative Analysis of Community Based Child Protection Mechanisms and Good Practices Model Development for Plan in West and Central Africa, June 2014

Countries in Plan International's region: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Ghana, Guinea Bissau, Guinea, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo (a two-page appendix for each of these countries is attached to the main study).

Countries visited during the study: Benin, Ghana, Niger and Sierra Leone (a separate report is available for each of these countries).

The situation for children in Plan's West and Central Africa region

Many children experience physical punishment in the region. UNICEF statistics show that this varies from 43% of children 2-14 years in Sierra Leone to 71% in Guinea Bissau. Levels of sexual violence are high, particularly against girls, for example in Ghana and Liberia. There are also high levels of violence in and around schools, including bullying, corporal punishment and sexual abuse, leading to

school dropout and contributing to low enrolment rates, especially among girls. West Africa has some of the highest national rates of child marriage worldwide (e.g., 74.5% in Niger, 63.1% in Guinea and 55% in Mali). There are high rates of FGM in Burkina Faso, Guinea, Mali and Sierra Leone. Around 35% of children are estimated to be engaged in child labour, though there are wide variations between countries and child labour rates are higher in rural than in urban areas. Trafficking of children is a serious problem, with the majority of children being trafficked for domestic servitude, forced labour in plantations or in mines. Commercial sexual exploitation of children is also a growing problem.

Formal child protection systems in the region

West and Central Africa countries have ratified international instruments on children's rights to protection from violence and abuse such as the CRC and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, but national provisions are often inadequate. West African countries are at different stages of defining these and the role of CBCPMs within them. For example, in Cameroon, elements of a national CP system are in place, and the Ministry of Social Affairs has established Centres Sociaux at commune level; in Guinea Bissau, the State is very centralised and has only national and regional structures relating to children, with Plan solely supporting community child protection mechanisms; Liberia has two parallel governance structures for child protection at national and community level, modern and traditional, with local chiefs recognised by the national government as part of judiciary; in Ghana, the National Child Protection Policy currently being developed will include establishment of community based child protection groups by local government; while in Sierra Leone, Child Welfare Committees (CWCs) have been mandated in law, and the Child Rights Act of 2007 lays out the roles and responsibilities of CWCs which function at the level of the Chiefdom.

Plan International supported CBCPMs in the region

CBCPMs supported by Plan International are involved particularly in awareness raising and monitoring activities, and less in other aspects of prevention or in responding to cases of abuse. However some more experienced CBCPMs have developed the confidence to take action to prevent, resolve or refer problems as appropriate. It was noted that referring cases to the formal authorities does not always lead to action. This may be due to lack of resources, as well as cultural factors favouring settling problems between families or within the community. One important aspect of case reporting that needs to be acknowledged is the significant risk of retribution by the perpetrator or the perpetrator's family.

Child participation is a vital element of Plan International's CCCD approach, but the involvement of children in CBCPMs supported by Plan is a mixed picture. The most frequent way in which children are involved is through collaboration between child protection committees and separate children's groups based in the community or school. About half the Plan offices reported that they were supporting CBCPMs that had children as members. In some cases children were playing active roles; in others the committees were dominated by adults.

The strongest links of the CBCPMs supported by Plan are with Plan International itself. Less than half the Plan offices stated that all the CBCPMs they supported were linked to the formal local/district child protection authorities. Where the child protection committees are part of government policy, such as in Sierra Leone and Benin, the links are in place, often through the village chief, and, in the case of Sierra Leone, set out in a referral protocol.

Plan International's role is focused more on supporting CBCPMs to conduct awareness raising than on assisting them with other methods of prevention, or with mediation or responding to child protection violations. Plan International's method of establishing CBCPMs has a number of elements which are positive

for sustainability: traditional leaders are involved in decision-making and are often members of the committees; also Plan works with local civil society partners who are able to provide capacity building and support.

However in many cases committees have been established without an in-depth study and any dialogue with the community involved in order to understand their values and perceptions, as well as traditional ways of protecting children. Resources have not always been allocated for regular, ongoing capacity building to ensure that the community itself takes ownership of the protection of its own children.

The CBCPMs created by Plan International are very dependent on Plan for support and for their ongoing functioning; this is not helped by the work being based on short term projects rather than longer term support and capacity building. Many of the child protection committees set up by Plan International have ceased to be active after the end of the particular project which provided the resources for support. One of the biggest challenges to sustainability is the often limited role and lack of responsibility taken by local authorities. Even in countries where there are plans to set up CBCPMs as part of the national child protection system, governments are very dependent on Plan and other agencies for technical support and resources to make this possible.

Plan International has put a particular strategic focus on child protection in emergencies (CPiE). Mapping projects are underway in Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger, in conjunction with UNICEF, assessing risks and resources, with a view to the establishment of community mechanisms for the prevention and management of cases of abuse. Plan International's role involves overseeing mapping exercises and setting up committees, organising women's discussion groups, facilitating referrals and creating child friendly spaces.

The CBCPMs supported by Plan

International have had some successes, even if on a small scale. An increase in awareness of child protection is reported by Plan offices in all countries. Progress is being made in children, families and communities taking responsibility for child protection. There are higher levels of reporting of cases of abuse. In eight countries PU staff felt that there had been reductions in levels of violence against children, though the evidence provided during this study was mainly anecdotal.

In relation to challenges faced, the most important issue that emerged from questionnaire responses was lack of resources for child protection. Governments devote very small proportions of their budget to it, contributing to the low coverage and low quality of child protection services. Plan also devotes fewer resources to child protection programming than other priority areas.

Recommendations included: All countries to clearly articulate and apply their strategy for child protection programming work including strengthening the national child protection systems and supporting community based child protection; Develop community based child protection programmes based on the good practice model, adapted to the external country context and Plan's country experience and expertise; CBCPM programmes to go beyond awareness raising; Ensure the inclusion of marginalised groups; Strengthen the participation of children; Facilitate the strengthening of links between CBCPMs and State services ; Identify priorities and finances for quality work on CBCPMs; Enhance monitoring and evaluation; Capacity building for Plan staff

APPENDIX 6:

Summary of mapping and analysis study for Plan International ROA (Latin America and the Caribbean)

The regional study

Protective Community: Regional study on community protection mechanisms against

violence: Characteristics and Challenges, 2014 Countries in Plan International's region: Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominica/Saint Vincent, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Peru, and the Dominican Republic.

Country visits during the study: Honduras, Ecuador, Dominican Republic (a report for these countries can be found in the appendices to the main study).

The situation for children in Plan International's Latin America and Caribbean region

Violence against children in the region is the paramount problem, including sexual violence; some of the culturally important forms of abuse in other regions do not emerge as significant issues. Instead, there is structural violence, both in families and in school, exacerbated by armed violence and drug trafficking. 'Public spaces', which should be part of the safe environment for children, are seen by children, and by others, to be unsafe, filled by organised crime and other forms of danger. Violence in the region is a multi-causal phenomenon, contributed to by individual, family, social, economic and cultural factors that can have an impact on abuse, neglect, exploitation and other forms of violence against children. Despite advances in the region on many human development indicators, macro-level issues of poverty and inequality still persist in Latin America. As with other regions, there is enormous variation between countries (e.g., high levels of child labour and child abuse in Peru; in Honduras, children suffer high levels of violence in their homes, communities, and cities).

Formal child protection systems in the region

The response in the region to the recommendations of the UN Study on Violence against Children has been remarkable. Many countries have ratified the CRC and have included it in their constitutions. The legal frameworks are often extensive, and the region's commitment to ratifying international laws and consistently updating national legislation to improve child protections shows

willingness to improve the situation of children. Specific institutions and resources have been created to address violence against children and adolescents. National protection systems have been developed and improved in different countries, emerging as benchmarks in the decentralisation of this system. However, implementing laws is less successful. Laws are often adopted wholesale without taking into consideration adapting each set of laws and regulations to the unique and nuanced set of circumstances in their country.

Plan International supported CBCPMs in the region

Community mechanisms in the region have developed in a context of development and are principally in rural and suburban areas. They are focused mainly on domestic violence, especially sexual child abuse, violence in school, gender equality, sexual exploitation and improvements to the national protection system. They are involved in awareness-raising and social mobilisation within communities, training in families and in schools, training children and adolescents on their rights and various issues related to self-protection, training network members and families to generate strategies for detection, reporting and referral, political advocacy and working with judicial officials on accessible and friendly justice systems.

Most identified community protection mechanisms are promoted by NGOs, and in many the initiative has been shared between the State and the community. All the identified mechanisms can call upon the active participation of community members and local institutions. International or national organisations fulfil the role of facilitator, fostering capacities, providing technical advice and granting financial support. These organisations are not direct implementers of the mechanisms. The majority of the identified mechanisms take on the structure of a network, committee or Community Defence Committee that is recognised by the community, with five to 20 people, generally community leaders, teachers, local protection system agents and, to a lesser extent, young

people and adolescents and representatives of vulnerable groups.

The development of community protection mechanisms and their cooperation with the national protection system has led to a number of outstanding achievements, including improvements in the care of victims and the implementation and improvement of referral systems at local and national level.

Child and youth participation is one of the strengths of the community mechanisms in the region, and all mechanisms include children and adolescents, though mostly diagnosing problems, raising awareness and specific training (e.g., identifying cases of violence and speaking without fear, the ability to ask for help, recognition of one's own body or the visibility of psychological violence, gender equality, etc.). Only in some cases, such as Paraguay, Peru and Costa Rica, is child and youth participation in political advocacy and monitoring of protection systems encouraged at different levels of incidence; generating autonomous decision-making capacity among children remains scarce.

Work on gender equality focuses on the prevention of various forms of gender violence, specifically intervening with girls as potential victims, but not with boys. In some cases, such as Bolivia and El Salvador, work is undertaken from the perspective of the new masculinity, while in another case, as in Guatemala, work is undertaken on gender diversity. There is no evidence of shared responsibility between parents in upbringing, the respective role of parents or the development of diverse gender identities or sexual orientation.

The principal challenges facing CBCPMs include difficulties in coordinating the comprehensive protection system at local, national and regional levels, limited systematisation of community protection mechanisms, the absence of baselines, monitoring systems, evaluation and follow-up and recording of cases attended, including vulnerable or traditionally excluded groups, the difficulty of visualising boys as victims and

generating resources for prevention, detection and treatment that meet their needs, the presence and proximity of organisations such as Plan generating over-reliance, shortage of strategies and self-care spaces for individuals, development of humanitarian action within community protection mechanisms in vulnerable areas so that ad hoc mechanisms are not created for each intervention in the context of humanitarian action but, rather, from existing structures within the community, thus avoiding the creation of different networks based on the projects or interventions. In this respect, the need to improve local and community implementation of minimum protection standards in the context of humanitarian action needs to be highlighted.

APPENDIX 7:

Key Quality Elements for Community-Based Child Protection Mechanisms identified by Plan International Asia

The indicators set out below are those used in Plan International ARO's evaluation of the effectiveness of CBCPMs undertaken in 2014, with the report entitled Protection in Action: Regional Evaluation of the Effectiveness of community-based child protection mechanisms supported by Plan International in Asia.

They build on indicators from the Save the Children (August 2013) Child Protection Initiative QoS Global Outcome Indicator Handbook, adapted and updated to ensure a closer fit with Plan International's Key Quality Elements for child protection that were identified in Plan's 2012 comparative analysis of CBCPMs in Asia.

KQE 1: Strong collaboration and partnership work with the Government authorities at national, sub-national and local levels in planning, implementing and monitoring CBCPMs as part of broader efforts to strengthen the national child protection system.

KQE 2: Effective advocacy with the Government at different levels to influence laws, policies, standards, and budgets which contribute to a stronger child protection system from national to local levels.

KQE 3: Improved monitoring and evaluation systems to measure the impact of child protection interventions are in place, including the establishment of a government data base on child protection.

KQE 4: CBCPM members, Plan International staff, and civil society and government partners access capacity building to develop the necessary competencies to support implementation of the KQEs for CBCPMs.

KQE 5: CBCPMs are piloted and scaled up in urban and rural contexts.

KQE 6: Emergency preparedness and DRR are integrated into CBCPM activities, such that adults and children in communities have increased knowledge, skills and practices on emergency preparedness and the care and protection of children in emergencies

KQE 7: Community ownership for the community based child protection structure and inclusive membership.

KQE 8: Positive traditional practices towards the care and protection of children are built upon; and harmful practices are transformed.

KQE 9: Active participation of stakeholders in the community based child protection structure with a clear mandate to protect children

KQE 10: Inclusive and meaningful children's participation in community based child protection efforts, and in broader child protection practice and policy developments affecting them.

KQE 11: Female and male community members are aware of children's rights, child protection and positive discipline and have changed their behaviour to care and protect children in families and communities.

KQE 12: CBCPMs members are actively involved in prevention and early interventions to increase children's protection from abuse, neglect, violence and exploitation

KQE 13: Community based reporting mechanisms on child protection are clear. Community members (parents, caregivers and children) know who to report to if they have any concern.

KQE 14: CBCPMs are able to coordinate with and make referrals to government statutory child protection bodies to ensure an effective child protection response and necessary referrals for psychosocial, legal, medical, social protection and other relevant services.

KQE 15: Child protection social workers are accessible to CBCPMS and have the capacity to undertake child protection case management to resolve cases in the best interests of the child.

KQE 16: Child friendly protection services are available to support children's psychosocial recovery from different forms of violence against children.

APPENDIX 8:

Good Practices for the establishment and strengthening of CBCPMs developed for Plan International WARO

These characteristics of good practice were developed during the mapping and analysis study undertaken for Plan in West and Central Africa in 2014. They were also used for the Plan RESA study later in 2014. In both cases they were discussed at network meetings of Plan regional child protection staff.

1. Support to the establishment and strengthening of CBCPMs is based on a thorough understanding of the national and local child protection situation, including:

- The national CP system and its mandates at the local level
- The existing local government and NGO service providers and support mechanisms
How different sectors of the community view children, childhood and child protection
- Child protection issues in the community from the perspectives of different sectors of the community
- Possible risks to girls and boys during emergency situations
Pathways that families and communities use to address different child protection issues

2. CBCPM processes and structures promote inclusive community ownership and support by leaders

- Different community structures and mechanisms that already exist to address child protection issues
- CBCPMs are built on existing indigenous structures, existing externally supported community structures and/or government mandated community CBCPMs where possible and appropriate
- CBCPMs are inclusive of all sectors of the community including leaders, faith groups, youth, children and marginalised groups
- In the emergency situation, where possible, the processes and capacities of existing CBCPMs are strengthened to prevent and respond to child protection violations
- Democratic governance of CBCPM structures is developed

3. Safe, appropriate child protection functions are established by CBCPMs that promote the best interests of the child

- Clear, realistic roles and responsibilities are developed by CBCPMs in relation to:
 - awareness raising;
 - community mobilisation;
 - monitoring child protection risks;
 - implementation of local solutions to CP problems that are in the best interests of the child;
 - referral of difficult cases;
 - support to affected children
 - addressing child protection issues in emergency situations
- Choice of issues that CBCPMs address is based on their understanding of the CP issues of girls, boys, marginalised groups and children of different ages in the community
- The capacity is built of local partners to address CP problems that are referred by CBCPMs, through case management approaches that are in the best interests of the child
- Mechanisms to prevent abuse or harm to children through the activities of the CBCPMs are established

4. Meaningful children's and youth participation is promoted

- children's and youth groups work actively in collaboration with CBCPMs on CP issues

- children are represented in CBCPMs in a meaningful manner
- children's groups reflect gender equality and inclusivity of marginalised groups

5. Active linkages are promoted with:

- other sectoral community groups (health, education, livelihood, DRR etc)
- children's groups working on CP
- school based CP groups
- local formal CP structures
- networked with other CBCPMs

6. Sustainable resourcing and support is promoted

- material and financial support is sourced locally as much as possible
- the capacity of local government and civil society partners is built to train, monitor and mentor CBCPMs
- learning from community based work is used to influence government CP policies and strengthen the CP system as a whole

7. Promotion of learning and good practice

- CBCPMs improve their practice through reflection, monitoring and evaluation, supported by local partners, and through networking with other CBCPMs and CP actors.
- Plan International's support to CBCPMs is based on clear research, monitoring and evaluation plans, including the identification of core indicators, qualitative and quantitative base-line studies, regular monitoring and reflection on programme quality and qualitative and quantitative evaluations.



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