

Brief Report on Community Based Child Protection Mechanisms supported by Plan in India¹

- **Introduction:**

Plan is as an international child-centred development organization working in 50 developing countries across Africa, Asia and the Americas. Plan's vision is of a world in which all children realize their full potential in societies that respect people's rights and dignity. In recent years² child protection has become a key programming and thematic area for Plan in which it effectively contributes to the realisation of child rights, applying its Child Centred Community Development approach. For Plan International, child protection encompasses the work and activities it undertakes to prevent and respond to all forms of abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence against children. Plan's child protection work incorporates work on child protection in emergencies (CPiE), child protection programming referred to as child protection in development (CPiD) and Plan's policy to safe guard children, "Say Yes! to keeping children safe". Specific child protection programmes and strategies include:

- Strengthening Child Protection Systems, focusing particularly on community based protection mechanisms;
- Building the capacity of parents, communities and professionals to provide protection;
- Developing children's resilience and their capacity to participate in their own protection;
- Integrated advocacy to strengthen legal frameworks and for access to basic and specialist services.

Focussing on community based child protection, Plan's increasing efforts are channelled into establishing and sustaining a variety of local mechanisms, reflecting a specific child rights based situation analysis, aiming at creating protective networks and environments expected to ensure protection of all children and contribute towards strengthening national child protection systems.

This brief report provides an overview of community based child protection mechanisms supported by Plan India, as a contribution to a regional comparative analysis on community based child protection mechanisms supported by Plan in the Asia region³. The overall objective of this comparative analysis is firstly, to increase learning of various structural and functional aspects of the existing community based child protection mechanisms in Plan Asia and secondly, to provide a comprehensive report on their potential for increased impact and sustainability. The specific objectives of the regional study are:

- to provide a broad mapping of the scale and coverage of community-based child protection mechanisms supported by Plan Country Offices across the Asia Region;
- to document various models and approaches in establishing, supporting and promoting such child protection mechanisms, including defining roles and responsibilities of various actors and processes supporting their functionality;
- to document common roles, responsibilities and key activities of these community based child protection mechanisms;
- to analyze identified achievements and gaps of community based child protection mechanisms in different operational contexts, including crisis/emergency, early recovery and longer-term development;

¹ Claire O'Kane, ICPREC (2012)

² particularly since 2006

³ Encompassing an analysis of community based child protection work in 13 out of the 14 countries where Plan works in the region: Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, East Timor, Indonesia, Laos, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam. The study did not include Myanmar where Plan's work is more recent and child protection programme work has not yet started.

- to provide a broad overview of lessons learned on key components and processes contributing towards effective child protection and sustainable community based mechanisms.

- **Methodology:**

The comparative analysis study is carried out by a consultancy group⁴ in 3 key stages involving data collection, analysis and synthesis:

- 1) Data collection through a desk review of available information and mapping existing community based child protection mechanisms across Asia (*January – April 2012*).
- 2) Data collection and participatory analysis through field visits in 5 countries (Cambodia, East Timor, Nepal, Pakistan and Vietnam) using child/user friendly participatory tools, interviews, Focus Group Discussions and observation with all relevant stakeholders (*May – June 2012*)
- 3) Analysis and Synthesis: comparative analysis of existing models and report writing (*May – September 2012*)

Ethical guidelines have been applied throughout the study, particularly in preparing for, undertaking and following up to the field work to ensure safe, ethical and inclusive participation of girls and boys with attention to issues of: informed consent, assessment of risks, and opportunities to report on protection concerns relevant to Plan's child protection policy.

In countries where the field study did not take place, the report builds upon a mapping exercise conducted by the consultants, based on available country documents⁵ and verified and updated by Plan's child protection focal points in each country. These country reports were further informed by primary qualitative data from Plan's child protection programme staff, civil society and/or government partners, as well as adult and child members of community based child protection mechanisms (CBCPMs) using the following two tools: 'H' assessments – undertaken by different stakeholders to share their views on the main strengths and achievements, challenges and weaknesses of their CBCPMs; as well as practical suggestions to improve CBCPMs in their country context. Secondly, Stories of Most Significant Change and Most Significant Challenge (SMSC/C) relating to experiences of community based child protection mechanisms were shared by various stakeholders. In India 168 stakeholders (27 boys, 32 girls, 53 women and 56 men) were involved in the participatory consultations⁶.

- **Brief Introduction to the Country Context:**

India is the second most populous country and the most populous democracy in the world. It is a federation with a parliamentary system governed under the Constitution of India. India's form of government, traditionally described as "quasi-federal" with a strong centre and weak states, has grown increasingly federal since the late 1990s as a result of political, economic, and social changes. India is a federation composed of 29 states and 6 union territories with geographic and cultural diversity. Civil society has deep roots and is extensive in India with diverse and active civil society organisation at every level. The majority of the population are Hindus; however Islam, Christianity, Sikhism, Buddhism, Jainism, Zoroastrian and Bahai faith are also practiced in India.

India is home to 440 million children. Despite economic progress especially in the past decade, 136 million children continue to live in poverty. Plan India's analysis of 11 child rights indicators show that child poverty is higher in the 8 states of Bihar, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh,

⁴ ICPREC – International Child Protection Rights and Evaluation Consultants led by Claire O'Kane and Kunera Moore.

⁵ Country Strategic Plans, child protection proposals, progress reports, training reports on child protection and CBCPM, minutes from children's gatherings/ initiatives etc.

⁶ See Annex 1: Stakeholders involved in CBCPM study in India, April / May 2012

Rajasthan, Orissa, Uttar Pradesh, and Uttarakhand. Additionally, cities like Delhi, Mumbai and Hyderabad and states like Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra and West Bengal have regions of child poverty. Discrimination and disadvantage based on caste, gender and income are the root causes of the survival, protection and developmental risks that Indian children face.

The Government have an Integrated Child Protection Scheme (ICPS) which increases efforts to ensure that children have a security net to depend on, including provision of necessary care and rehabilitation when needed. The Government of India study on child abuse (2007) identified significant child protection concerns including: prevalent physical punishment of children at home and in schools, emotional abuse and discrimination (especially faced by girls at home), significant risks of sexual abuse, high prevalence of child labour and risks of child trafficking, high rates of child marriage, and ongoing concerns of female foeticide. Lack of birth registration also continues to be a challenge.

In this context Plan India are working collaboratively with National, State and local level governance bodies to strengthen and scale up child protection mechanisms at the local and higher levels through partnerships with civil society organisations, communities and children.

- **Brief overview of Plan's strategic child protection work and the scope of CBCPM work:**

Plan has been working in India since 1979. However, child protection programming has only been implemented since 2006, and an explicit focus on supporting community based child protection mechanisms has been underway since late 2009. While much of Plan's work in India is focused on long term development processes, there are also increasing efforts to mainstream DRR and emergency preparedness to mitigate the negative impact of natural disasters and climate change.

Within Plan India's Country Strategic Plan III (2011 – 2015) there are 7 country programmes⁷, including a child protection programme. The goal of the child protection programme is to fulfil the **right to protection from abuse and exploitation** through 3 key objectives:

1. Improve knowledge, attitude and practices (KAP) among children and parents on child abuse, female foeticide, child marriage and gender based violence
2. Promote community based child protection and its effective integration into the state/national child protection system
3. Improve child protection legislation and policies

In addition, Plan India's programme work on *the right to children's participation as active citizens* is also relevant to strategic work on effective CBCPMs.

Under the 2nd objective either through Plan Programme Units or through NGO partners the formation and strengthening of Child Protection Committees in villages are being supported. Plan and their partners also strengthen school management committees and other duty bearers on child protection aspects in schools and communities. This will include sensitization on children's right to be protected against violence, abuse and neglect, harmful impact of violence against children, various forms of abuse, exploitation and neglect against children, discrimination against girl child, declining sex ratio, early marriage, gender based violence, and Governments' schemes, laws and system to protect children from violence. Promotion and support of children's groups, clubs and bal panchayats (children's councils) are also being supported as part of CBCPM efforts.

Work under the 1st objective (to ensure children are protected against all forms of violence in Plan program areas) is also relevant to CBCPM work. Activities under this sub-objective include: *awareness and sensitization on Child Protection* among Plan staff, PU staff, volunteers, local level institutions, community and religious elders, school teachers, parents, caregivers, and children

⁷ Child protection; ECCD / Education; Health; Children's participation as active citizens; Adequate standard of living; Water; DRR & Emergencies.

(through Child Clubs) on core child protection issues (including physical and sexual violence, early marriage, child labour, birth registration and survival of the girl child). It also involves collaboration with technical agencies for preparedness and legal support; and spreading awareness about Plan's child protection policy amongst children. Under this 1st objective the PUs/NGOs also create safety nets by establishing linkages between various micro systems of the community. They will encourage individuals (such as children, youth, teachers, leaders, and police) as well as institutions to be vigilant and ensure right to protection for children and related issues in the area.

The 3rd objective in the Child Protection Programme: To improve child protection legislation and policies is also relevant to strengthen CBCPMs. As activities under this objective include: *Formal collaborations with national and state level institutions and organizations for facilitating implementation of Integrated Child Protection Scheme*: Plan India will formalize agreements with national and state level institutions for facilitating implementation of ICPS scheme. Key activities will include: developing IEC materials on various child protection issues will be developed for awareness generation and sensitization of various stakeholders such as parents, school staff, and community based institutions, and district and state level staff. Collaboration with the National Institute of Public Cooperation and Child Development (NIPCCD) and NIMHANS will be explored in this regard. It also involves capacity building of government official at district, state and national level on the issue of child protection. Along with ICPS, in some states Plan is also focusing on Juvenile Justice System under the Juvenile Justice Act. Interventions include capacity building of the Child Welfare Committees and Juvenile Justice Board members. When these institutional structures are functional it will strengthen the child protection system and referral options for response to child protection and justice issues. Plan is also engaged in civil society coalitions to strengthen the national child protection system and effective policies and services (including Child line).

Plan has Programme Units (PUs) in 8 states in Delhi, Uttarkhand, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Orissa, and Andra Pradesh. Community based child protection mechanisms are primarily being supported in each of these States except Maharashtra where there are some grant projects supporting children in difficult circumstances but no longer term CBCPM work in this area.

In India, Plan works through NGO and Community Based Organisation (CBO) partners, both in long-term development (sponsorship communities) and via grant-funded projects. Most of Plan's partners are well-established community based organizations (CBOs) with strong reputations that have been working in their intervention areas for a long time. In PUs where there is sponsorship projects, CBCPM is more visible as there is a long term plan for them, but in the grant projects, Plan uses CBOs to act as child protection committee during the project period. Plan's partners implementing CBCPM work in India include: AAK, ADITHI, Alamb, AV Baliga Trust, Bal Vikas Dhara, CASP, CYSD, DVV, GNK, IDF, Navjagriti, NavShrishti, Nidan, PANI, SBMA, SRF, Setu Sansthan, Seva Mandir, Urmul Seemant, Urmul Setu Sansthan and Vatsalya⁸.

In addition to the partnership work, Plan is also actively involved in national campaigns (linked to Plan's global campaigns) including the 'Learn Without Fear', 'Because I am a girl' and 'Universal Birth Registration'. Advocacy components of these campaigns are directly implemented by Plan's national programme office staff as part the Child Protection National Programme.

At the time of writing this report community based child protection mechanisms were being supported by Plan in approximately 1300 communities⁹. Approximately 87% of these are in rural

8 Aarthik Anusandran Kendra (AAK), Adithi, Alamb, AV Baliga Trust, Bal Vikas Dhara, Community Aid and Sponsorship Program (CASP), Centre for Youth and Social Development (CYSD), Dalit Vikas Vindu (DVV), Gram Niyojan Kendra (GNK) Integrated Development Fund (IDF), Navjagriti, NavShrishti, Nidan, People's Action for National Integration (PANI), Shri Bhuvaneshri Mahila Ashram (SBMA), Dr. Shambunath Singh Research Foundation (SRF), Setu Sansthan, Seva Mandir, Urmul Seemant, Urmul Setu Sansthan and Vatsalya.

9 See Annex 3 Overview of CBCPM structures in different geographic areas of India June 2012

areas, 13% are in urban areas. All the CBCPMs were supported as part of longer term development programming, to date there has not been any specific focus to establish CBCPMs in emergency contexts.

- **Structural aspects of CBCPMs including child groups:**

In different parts of India Plan's PUs are supporting the formation of community based child protection mechanisms through partnerships with civil society organisations. In many areas community based **Child Protection Committees** are being formed. However, in some areas the committees have slightly different names including: Child Protection Surveillance Committees; Bal Suraksha Dal (Child Protection Volunteer groups); or Self Help Groups. Furthermore, in Uttarkhand existing Gram Panchayats (Village Councils/ Assemblies) have been sensitised and had their capacity built to act as Child Protection Committees.

Formation and/or strengthening of **Children's Groups/ Child Clubs** are also integral to the work on community based child protection supported by Plan and its partners in most areas. In some areas 'Bal Panchayat' (children's councils) are also formed, and children's panchayat members are encouraged to participate in the Gram Panchayat meetings.

School management committees to ensure schools that are safe and free from corporal punishment, verbal abuse, discrimination, bullying and sexual abuse are also being supported in some areas.

In addition in some areas Plan and partners are advocating for and/or contributing to efforts to strengthen District Child Protection Units which are new structures mandated under the Government's Integrated Child Protection Scheme (ICPS).

While accumulated data is not available across the different PUs, most of the community CPCs are newly formed by Plan and its partners, while some build upon existing committees or groups involving active members within the community. Furthermore, as mentioned above in Uttarkhand existing Gram Panchayats are sensitised to act as CPCs.

Most CPCs have 7-10 members in their committee, while some have slightly more members. In general the child protection committees (CPCs) will comprise of representation from duty bearers from panchayats (PRIs)¹⁰, head teachers/ teachers, parents, community members (women, men) youth, children/ Child Club members, health worker or doctor, religious leaders, and the police.

The general process for forming CPCs involve Plan/ partner organisations organising and facilitating:

1. A large village meeting stating the objective and suggested profile of CPC members.
2. Small discussions within the village to orient them about the CPC roles and responsibilities.
3. Community meetings to identify members who can contribute their time for the purpose of child protection and hold influential position within their own community. Child Clubs members are also involved in screening and selecting CPC members.
4. Consent for appointing CPC members is generated in the meeting and documented in the meeting minutes.
5. Monthly/quarterly/need based meeting of the members is organized as per the agreed terms.

Panchayat members are specifically requested to participate in the meetings, to become members of the CPC and to align themselves with the response to child protection concerns in the community. Furthermore, once the CPC is organised and empowered with the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes to undertake community based protection work, then interaction with government structures at higher levels is also facilitated by Plan/ partners.

¹⁰ Local government made up of elected representatives from the local community.

Most CPCs have monthly meetings. Child Groups also usually have their own monthly meetings. The majority of CPCs keep minutes. Some CPCs have developed their own group rules, but the CPCs do not generally have detailed Terms of Reference.

- **Functional aspects of CBCPMs:**

The Child Protection Committees are being established as permanent structures to create safer communities and to increase the prospects of safe childhoods. The objectives of the CPCs are:

- To address risks and effectively prevent and redress child abuse and various forms of harms and exploitation that children are exposed to.
- To create sustainable child protection mechanism at community level
- To link with government child protection structures

The CPCs have a strong focus on monitoring and prevention of child protection concerns affecting girls and boys in communities, families and schools. They also support direct response to child protection concerns, and if required make referrals.

The functions of the Child Protection Committees include:

- Mapping vulnerable children in their villages/areas
- Identifying risk being faced by children in the community, family and school (physical, emotional, sexual risks) by involving children in risk mapping.
- Identifying violations of children's rights
- Mapping redressal mechanisms in their village, block and district level
- Designing and implementing risk reduction strategies
- Developing community and child friendly child protection standards and monitoring practices
- Reporting cases of abuse and exploitation of the child to Child Welfare Committee (CWCs) at the district level, and other available system for redressal.
- Working as interface between district level CWCs, child helpline, District Child Protection Unit (DCPU)
- Link to redressal systems of abuse against children in family, institutions and community in a manner that child and his family's interests and dignity are protected.
- Advocating and ensuring mainstreaming affected children in schools, including access to scholarships and schemes for pursuing higher education.
- Linking response to child labour with livelihood programs of Plan and other food security programs of the government.
- Networking with organizations specializing in legal support and activism for justice.

Plan's country office develop and roll out a capacity development plan (initial and refresher trainings) on ICPS, and other laws governing specific violations of children's right to protection. They support capacity building on the specific child protection issues and handling cases of child abuse (with duty bearers) and formal/ informal structures to report and address issues of child abuse. They also support training on their child protection policy as one mechanism to be promote formal structures at village and PU level. Plan and their partners are also advocating for increased recognition of village CPCs' (VCPCs) as part of the local governance system.

The role of Plan PU and the NGO partners in developing and strengthening CPCs include:

- Awareness generation, developing and disseminating IEC materials on child protection issues; including support for peer education among children group members and among CPC members (for example, in Patna awareness raising on child rights has been organized through *nukkad natak* (street plays), wall writing, wall painting and children's campaign etc)
- Orientation and capacity building on child rights, child protection, relevant child laws and government schemes, and practical ways to prevent and address child protection concerns.

- Supporting linkages and referrals between the community CPC and the child welfare committees and police at district and/or higher government levels to address specific cases.
- Partnering with technical agency¹¹ to ensure legal, psychosocial and/or other forms of technical support.
- Capacity building on handling, reporting, and mediation and linking to referrals¹² in case of violation of children's right to protection.
- Support implementation of the Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostics Techniques (PCPNDT) Act to prevent female foeticide.
- Promoting universal birth registration through the community CPCs.

Plan (PUs) and/or NGO partners also play a role in strengthening District Child Protection Unit (DCPCU) under ICPS and building linkages between the village level child protection committee and DCPCU representatives at block and district level. Such efforts include: orientation and training of district officials on child rights and child protection; supporting the government officials to organise quarterly meetings on child protection at block level and sharing information and updates.

In addition Plan PU and/or the NGO partner build capacities of the School Management Committees and other stakeholders to strengthen their capacity to make the schools safe and free from corporal punishment, verbal abuse, discrimination, bullying and sexual abuse by providing training sessions for teachers and ECCD functionaries on child rights, protection and positive discipline; by encouraging discussion to identify and address child protection concerns in schools; and by National Commission for the Protection of Children's Rights (NCPCR) guidelines for safe schools. Such efforts contribute to the Plan's 'Learn without Fear' campaign.

Process of identifying and responding to child protection cases: The main protection issues that the CPCs are identifying and responding to include: child abuse (including beating by parents and teachers), child labour, child marriage, sexual abuse, child trafficking, and preventing female foeticide. In addition, the CPCs are addressing discrimination based on gender, ethnicity, disability and other factors. The CPCs are also supporting universal birth registration and learn without fear campaigns.

Child protection concerns are sometimes brought to the attention of CPCs members by concerned parents, children, teachers or community members. Other concerns are directly observed by CPC members. Once identified the CPC members try to address the concern raised through discussions and guidance with the concerned child, family member and/or other concerned stakeholders. If required a few of the CPC members may unite together to meet with and influence a positive response from the concerned perpetrator (the parent/ caregiver, employer, teacher or other person who is placing the child at risk and/or causing harm to the child). If the CPC members do not have sufficient power to influence an appropriate response, they may report and use the panchayat (local governance) mechanism to attempt to address the concern. If either of these community based approaches are not effective, and especially when the child protection concerns are grave, the CPC members may involve the police to resolve through the legal system.

Child Protection Committee address harmful child labour, Rudaupur, India¹³: In one village due to the poor economic situation of families and traditional beliefs regarding the acceptance of child work rather than education, six boys aged 14-15 years were working in the brick kiln to break the coal or transporting bricks. The Child Protection Committee with support from the NGO partner intervened to generate awareness of the dangers of harmful work with the children's families, and to inform families about legal provisions concerning child labour. As a result in

¹¹ Technical agencies include Human Rights Law Network, Social Jurist, Tulir etc.

¹² National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR), district child welfare committees, any structure established under the ICPS scheme

¹³ Shared by an NGO partner during CBCPM consultation activities organised as part of the study in May 2012.

December 2012 these children were freed from child labour and were enrolled in schools. With the help of the CPC, these children are now regularly attending the schools. Furthermore, to support the families income the families were informed and referred to relevant government livelihood programs/financial support schemes.

The type of protection issues which can most easily be prevented and/or resolved through the community CPCs are issues which can be resolved through peer pressure, issues such as corporal punishment, discrimination with the school, or eve teasing. These types of issues can be effectively addressed through awareness-raising in the community, mobilising community cohesion and accountability towards children to prevent and address such harmful practices. However, protection concerns which are criminal (under the India Penal Code) including child sexual abuse or child trafficking are more difficult for CPCs to resolve as they need to engage in legal procedures and CPC members are sometimes fearful of the negative repercussions of taking a legal case against a perpetrator. In addition, the state institutions are often reluctant to take up such cases despite their legal obligations. Child sexual abuse cases are also difficult to resolve due to sensitive issues regarding sexuality and mis-use of power – especially if the perpetrator is a family member, relative or neighbour within the community or school. CPCs in some areas, including in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh have emphasised the need for increased guidance to sensitively respond to cases of child sexual abuse, and also to address bullying among children.

Children and CPC support a lost child to return to his family, Lucknow, India¹⁴: In Lucknow a child lost his way while going by a train. The lost boy was noticed by some children who were aware of the CPC in their village. They informed the CPC and CPC members took the child into their custody and first of all comforted him with food and proper rest. The members then inquired from child about his home and contacted a relative. The committee ensured that the child reached home safely.

While CPC members try to resolve child protection issues through community meetings and discussions with concerned stakeholders, there is no formal use of a case management approach. However, in cases which require legal interventions or referrals, the NGO partner supports the CPC to follow up on the cases. Maintaining confidentiality remains a challenging aspect of community based child protection work, as the CPC meetings take place within the village, and apart from in very sensitive child sexual abuse cases, the community members may be actively involved to solve concerns through peer pressure within the community.

*The principle of best Interests of the child is taken as a subjective issue within the community and their own rituals, beliefs etc. came into play while deciding these terms. For example, corporal punishment was thought to be an act of child discipline and is practiced across India. So, if someone beats a child badly, the connotation will be on the excess beating and not on beating at all.
(Plan child protection staff member, India)*

Furthermore, it can sometimes be difficult for the CPC to take action in the best interests of the child for example to support family based care rather than institutional care of a child, especially when alternative structures and support services (e.g. for family support and/or alternative community based care) are not in place. However, there are examples where CPCs and Plan's NGO partners have supported family based care and support, including support to children with disabilities:

¹⁴ Shared in Plan Annual Participatory Programme Review Report from State Program Office Lucknow (CPU Varanasi), July 2010 – May 2011

Plan partners have supported children with disabilities to access services and family counselling to support home based care, Lucknow, India¹⁵: In 2011 Plan's partners in Lucknow PANI, SRF and AAK facilitated health assessment and issuance of Disability certificate for 106 children. With their certificates the children with disabilities were able to receive appliances and support from the government department. Furthermore, 16 children who had learning difficulties were referred to higher medical department for the assessment and certification. Counselling services were also accessed, for counsellors to counsel the families to support home based care of children with disabilities.

- **Children's participation and involvement in CBCPMs:**

Recognising children as right holders and supporting children's participation is a key element of Plan's CCCD approach. Children are empowered with knowledge on child rights and with skills to assert their rights. They are supported to develop their own Child Groups/ Clubs or to be part of bal panchayats (children's councils) that give them more collective strength to raise awareness on child rights and child protection. Across the different geographic area where Plan and their partners are working more than 1500 Children's groups have been supported involving girls and boys (at least 50% girls)¹⁶.

In many project areas Child Club/ group members are included in the CPCs. In other areas the children are not included in the CPCs, but the CPCs and Child Groups/ Clubs work together collaboratively. Child group members have been supported with training on: child rights, child protection, the roles and responsibilities of CPCs, Government laws (e.g. Juvenile Justice Act), and life skills.

Girls and boys play an important role in community based child protection through their Child Groups by:

- identifying child protection concerns;
- raising awareness of child rights and child protection among their peers and family members through creative initiatives including drama, newspapers, magazines, wall painting, drawing and other competitions;
- organizing action to prevent or respond to child protection concerns (such as beating, child marriage etc);
- raising their concerns with government officials at different levels (village, panchayat, block, district) so that practice and policies can be developed and implemented in their best interests.

Children's media initiatives to raise awareness on child rights and child protection¹⁷:

Children's media initiatives are being supported in different PUs enabling children to develop their own newspapers, wall posters, drama, local radio programmes, and paintings to raise awareness on child rights and child protection concerns affecting them. In Uttaranchal UMANG a child media initiative for child right advocacy and awareness was initiated by Plan India in 2005 in 3 PUs as a pilot initiative under the Amazing Kids program. In 2006 children from SBMA/ Plan Gairsain PU took the lead and formed a children media group and named it UMANG (Unique Media Approach for New Generation). Child/Youth received focused training on radio, news, comics, photography, video and internet and developed a 5 Media training module of their own. In Orissa Child Group members have been developing and publishing their own newspaper which has been effective in raising

¹⁵ Shared in Plan Annual Participatory Programme Review Report from State Program Office Lucknow (CPU Varanasi), July 2010 – May 2011

¹⁶ However, increased efforts are still need to reach and engage the most marginalised children, including children with disabilities in these Child Groups.

¹⁷ Shared in Plan Annual Participatory Programme Review Report from Project Unit Gairsain, July 2010 – May 2011

awareness on child rights and child protection. In addition, in Hyderabad children have developed and published 4 bi-monthly “Ashakiranal magazine” with a special focus on Learn without fear, gender discrimination, early child marriages and child labour. Capacity building of 42 Child council members (1 from each council) was undertaken to train them on print media to make them child journalists. The children worked actively with the resource person in preparing the bi-monthly newsletter, through collecting and sharing drawings, poems, articles, songs related to protection issues that had been prepared by children. The newsletters brought out the latent talents of children. It is expected that next year, these members will start working on the formatting and editing of the newsletter and eventually take on the responsibility of doing it by themselves in the coming years.

Through their participation in community based child protection children have been empowered to defend their rights; girls and boys have increased confidence to express their concerns and to play a role in solving their concerns; and children have been able to express their talents.

*“During trainings we were told some stories which were about coping up from the adverse situation. It increased our confidence level. We were also told that we should always motivate others to grow high”
(Adolescent girls club leaders, Delhi)¹⁸*

Child Clubs and Child Protection Group identifies and responds to child sexual abuse, Delhi¹⁹: While going to a community shop to buy some toffee a 4 year old girl was lured by a 40 year old man and taken to a community park. Other children noticed the man touching the little girl inappropriately and doing wrong things. 2 of the children were Child Club members and hence they rushed home to their families and narrated the incident to them. The community members approached the Bal Surksha Dal (Child Protection Group) members who filed a case with the police. The police intervened and the perpetrator was arrested. The perpetrator has been in jail for the last six months and the case is still going on. His bail appeals have been rejected by the court. The family members of the child were pressurized to surrender the case but with the support of BSD members, women and youth club members the family has denied to do so. The girl has been enrolled in a nearby government early child hood care centre (Anganwadi). Her family members and other also take care of her regularly. The incident has developed a sense of faith in the BSD members and has also strengthened the individual capacity of the committee to deal with such incidents. The children clubs has been oriented on safe and unsafe touch. A dialogue has been initiated to discuss child sexual abuse and also to report it in the best interest of all the children. A small documentary film has also been developed on “safe and unsafe touch” reflecting the efforts of children’s group. This film is being used to raise increased awareness among children, parents and others.

However, legal/ policy constraints and traditional attitudes towards children continue to create barriers to recognizing and involving children as change agents. In the Gram Panchayat system children under the age of 18 years are not constitutionally recognized as members. Furthermore, due to existing socio-cultural attitudes towards children and children’s low status in society it can be difficult for girls and boys to negotiate with adults (their parents, relatives, religious elders and/or stakeholders) to prevent and protect children from different forms of abuse, including early marriage as adults have more authority and power:

¹⁸ Shared in Plan Annual Participatory Programme Review Report from Rajdhani Cluster Program Unit, May 2010 – June 2011. NGO partners AV Baliga Trust, NavShrishti, Bal Vikas Dhara and Alamb contributed to this report.

¹⁹ Shared by Child Protection Group members during CBCPM consultation activities organised as part of the study in May 2012.

“One of my friends got married recently. He is of my age. When we talked to the family they did not listen to us and scolded my friend for disclosing the matter with us. Later my friend approached me and requested to stay away from the matter as otherwise his family will become more aggressive. Hence we did not go again to the family” (boy child club member, Delhi)²⁰

Other challenges regarding children’s participation and Child Group formation is the importance of developing inclusive Child Groups that are effective in addressing different forms of discrimination. Currently some Child Groups are not inclusive of children with disabilities. Thus, increased efforts are needed to ensure that the most marginalized children (including children with disabilities, out of school working children, children from minority groups etc) are reached and supported to feel welcome and be active members in the Child Groups.

- **Capacity and support systems:**

Plan’s approach to child protection is guided by the child centred community development approach which supports child focused community mobilisation, mentoring and technical support to empower children as right holders, and to strengthen the capacity of duty bearers to better fulfil their responsibilities to children. In India the CCCD approach is implemented through NGO partnerships. Plan has made partnerships with NGOs and CBOs who are focused on child rights and child protection. In addition Plan has supported exposure learning visits to enhance their capacity on community based child protection; and in most areas the NGO partners and Plan staff come together for a monthly meeting which provides an opportunity for mentoring, joint problem solving and capacity building.

Plan and its partners have organised regular training for CPC members, Child Groups, and for government officials at block, district and state levels (PRI, ICPS, CWC, and Juvenile Justice Board) by Plan PU and/or the NGO implementing partner. Training for these different actors include sessions on: child rights, child protection, Government laws and schemes, violence free school, universal birth registration, Learn without fear and other topics (see Annex 2²¹). In 2011, Plan and its partners trained over 10,000 government officials, police personnel, community workers and other stakeholders on child rights.

While good efforts are underway to strengthen the capacity of community CPCs, more extensive training of CPC members is required to enable them to sensitively and effectively identify and respond to the range of protection and care concerns affecting children in families, communities and schools. One of the challenges is to develop tools and guidance that are accessible to community members who are illiterate. Another challenge faced is time constraints faced by CPC members who have limited time available to join training due to their own livelihood needs.

Plan India CP focal point suggestions to strengthen the capacity of CPCs²²: To strengthen the CPCs there is a need to strengthen CPC member’s knowledge on child rights legislation, policy and schemes related to child protection and development and to strengthen CPC members’ abilities to: identify risks and violation of children’s rights at family, school and community level design risk mitigation strategy; act as a pressure group to stop the violence against children (abuse, neglect and exploitation); work as mediator and coordinator for stopping child abuse and exploitation. Effective CPCs would have the ability to: act and maintain the best interest of the victim child; refer cases to the concern systems and structures; link with government child protection structures and other services related to child protection and development; and to monitor the essential services and demand duty bearers to bring appropriate program for child protection.

²⁰ Shared by Child Protection Group members during CBCPM consultation activities organised as part of the study in May 2012.

²¹ See Annex 2: Overview of training provided to actors involved in CBCPM by Plan India and partners

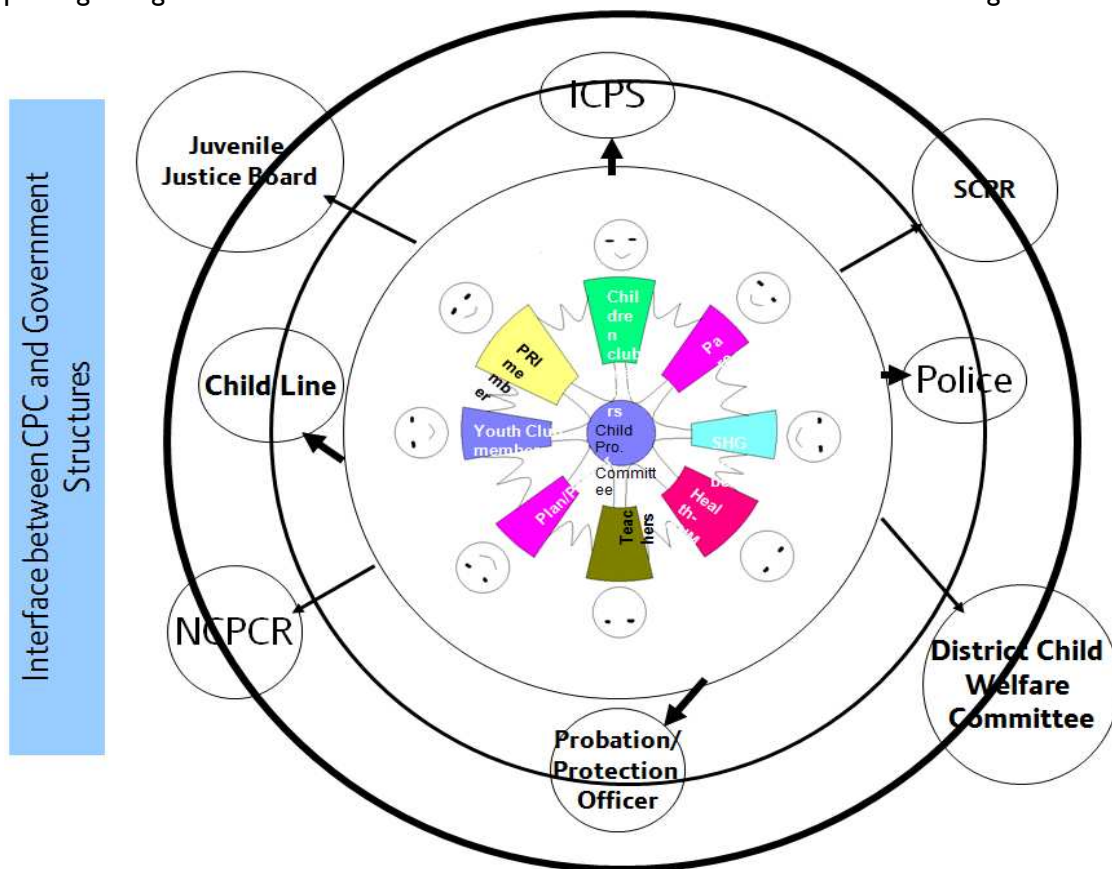
²² Shared in a presentation during a regional workshop of Plan CP focal points, May 2011

- **Linkages with civil society and Government:**

The CPCs collaborate with the Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRI), Women’s Groups, Youth Groups, Dalit groups, other social groups, PCPNDT Committees²³, the School, ChildLine (telephone helpline), and local government officials. In places where Plan’s Programme Units are well established and the village CPCs are empowered to effectively address child protection issues a federation approach among village CPCs is also being supported in a respective geographic project area. A federation approach enables cross-learning, mutual collaboration and joint advocacy by CPCs especially when trying to secure services and support from higher levels, e.g. at the district level.

Plan PUs and NGOs partners are establishing and strengthening child protection committees at the Panchayat level as envisaged in the Governments Integrated Child Protection Scheme (ICPS); and are collaborating with State Governments to establish strong ICPS including revitalization of child welfare mechanisms at state, district and block levels. Plan PU staff and/or NGO partner staff regularly liaise and collaborate with representatives of ICDS, the Child Welfare Committees (CWC), Child labor commission, Juvenile Justice Boards who have formal roles to protect children. They also work closely with the local government officials from Panchayati Raj Institutes (PRI) at block, district, provincial and state levels. Linkages will also be made with the District Child Protection Units that are meant to be established as part of the ICPS.

However, in most places the CWC has been inactive, thus currently the CPCs have not been able to make effective use of the CWCs for referral services. However, Plan and its partners are increasingly engaging with the District level CWC to help activate and strengthen it as a mainstream child protection structure and a referral mechanism at the district level. Plan and partners are also supporting linkages with other relevant structures and services as illustrated in the diagram below:



²³ Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostics Techniques – committee to prevent female foeticide

In terms of linkages within Plan's programme, the Plan India's CSP III is committed to protection of children from abuse and exploitation as a country program as well as a cross cutting aspect in any program activity or collaboration. Plan India, through its policy and programs, aims to create 'child safe' environments, both internally and externally, where children are respected, protected, empowered and active in their own protection. It seeks to work with parents, children, community, government and Plan's staff so that they are skilled, confident, competent and well supported in meeting their protection responsibilities towards children. There are strong links between programmes on rights to child protection and rights to children's participation as active citizens. As part of the right to quality education there are efforts to address violence and abuse in schools to create safe schools. Also, there are some links with the right to resilience during emergencies, but these can be strengthened. Some members of CPC and Child Groups have received training in DRR including disaster search and rescue.

Furthermore, at a national level Plan India is the Founder Member of National Coalition on Child Protection along with UNICEF, Save the Children, AAANGAN, HAQ and IACR that can support national level advocacy on child protection system strengthening and exchange of good practice and lessons learned. Since December 2010 the coalition membership has expanded from 6 to 23 organisations.

- **Monitoring and evaluation system and process:**

Like all its programmes in India, child protection is subject to Plan's Accountability and Learning System (PALS). The current CSP clearly aligns itself with PALS and Plan has undertaken an overall analysis of the situation of children and identified those most subject to rights violations as part of its planning and design processes. Micro-level planning has also assisted in this process, with communities and children involvement. Plan is purposely structured to support and monitor implementation of all programmes and uses a variety of tools to measure a range of programme metrics in order to track progress on CSP and specific programme goals and objectives. Children and adult members of CPCs and Child Groups are involved in the Annual Participatory Programme Review (APPR) which is an influential participatory review and planning process for shaping ongoing programming. Furthermore, the findings and lessons learned by Plan and NGO partners from the APPRs are clearly documented, thus enhancing their usefulness.

While an assessment of child rights violations has been undertaken in many programme areas; more detailed baseline about which child protection concerns currently get identified and responded to, how and by whom is required. Increased use of KAP surveys will also help gather relevant baseline. While accumulative data is not yet available in the past year there have been increased efforts by Plan India and their partners to develop and use indicators to monitor impact in the child protection programme. These indicators include:

- % of incidents of child sexual abuse reported to a child protection agency/NGO/others
- % of children who know where to report incidents of violence
- % of girls married before legal age
- % of new born children registered at birth
- % of children who are engaged in gainful employment (proxy for less child labour and less child trafficking)
- % of schools with active school management committee (NCPCR school safety)

CBCPM output monitoring indicators also include: Number of Child Protection Committees formed at village level; the number of School Management Committees oriented on Child protection; and the number of District Child Protection Unit members trained. Furthermore, *outcome indicators* of CBCPMs include:

- Number of schools that declare themselves violence free²⁴- present with two to three criteria under National Commission for the Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) guidelines
- Number and types of issues reported and addressed by Child Protection Committees at various levels

- **Sustainability and scale up of CBCPMs:**

The Juvenile Justice Act 2000 outlines the role of Child Welfare Committees as the competent authority to deal with children in need of care and protection. The establishment of CPCs at the village level and linking these into formal systems provides more opportunity for communities to advocate for adequate provision of services. The community based CPCs are being promoted by Plan as a crucial mechanism to strengthen linkages for prevention, response and referral at community, block, district and higher levels. A key strategy of Plan has been to support and capacity build with Child Welfare Committees including those at District level and to also assist with establishing, strengthening and linking informal CP committees to the new District Child Protection Units that are being put in place under the ICPS.

Through NGO partners Plan is supporting the roll out of the Integrated Child Protection Scheme (ICPS) which increases Government efforts to ensure that children have a security net to depend on, including provision of necessary care and rehabilitation when needed. In all Plan PUs which are operating in rural areas Plan is supporting the formation of Child Protection Committees at the Block and Gram Panchayat level. These committees' track and report child rights and protection issues to the district level officials and advocate with government agencies/personnel for better implementation on child rights and protection. Plan PUs are also supporting children's involvement in Gram Panchayats to ensure that children's issues are raised and address through the GP system. In Uttarkhand PUs and partners are supporting the formation of Bal Panchayats at Block and District levels.

Forming Child Protection Surveillance Committees in Orissa in support of ICPS roll out²⁵: *In Orissa in efforts to support roll out of the integrated child protection Schemes (ICPS) Plan and its partners initiated advocacy at the block level to authorize the Child protection surveillance committee as a block level legal forum that would escalate the child protection issues to District level forums. The PU in Orissa has made attempts to leverage human resources from mainstream department for organizing, facilitating the programs at block and district levels and also solving the child protection issues in PU operational area. It has been ensured to include the government personnel and people in different professions to be part of the Child rights programming through various sensitizing meetings and workshops at block and district levels.*

Furthermore, in 2012 through the block level child right protection surveillance committees:

- they have organized 30 village levels meeting to sensitize the community on different issues and consequences of child neglect.
- 4 Gram Panchayats out of 8 have passed a resolution to take appropriate action to address the issues pertaining to lack of information of migration of child labourers.
- 10 neglected children have been rehabilitated non-institutionally as per ICPS guidelines.
- 10 girls have been prevented from migration.

ChildLine India has now been given statutory responsibility under the ICPS to provide first up response services within existing structures, and Plan has supported ChildLine to develop its capacity and through funding support. Police and Child Welfare Committees do not necessarily function as they should, the resources for victim response are limited and the judicial system is slow

²⁴ As per NCPCR guidelines

²⁵ Nolan, P. and Mallik, L. (2011) Plan Thematic Evaluation on Child Protection: Country Case Study – India, draft Evaluation Report

and very child unfriendly. Plan aims to increase awareness of child protection issues, encourages reporting and is trying to stimulate the formal system to perform adequately and in ways that demonstrate good practice, but this is very challenging and Plan needs to consider to what extent it can increase its support to and involvement with the formal response system to ensure better services for children that are victims of violence and abuse. As acknowledged in a thematic evaluation case study in India *'the task around child protection is a hugely challenging one, especially in view of the general inefficiency and absence of formal structures and mechanisms, in the slow progress of the ICPS becoming functional, in the discrimination and marginalization of some of the communities and neighbourhoods Plan is supporting. Despite these challenges Plan seemed to have adopted a sensible strategy (building up community protection groups and linking those to formal structures as and when they are set up.) The concern would be on how long Plan or its partners would be able to support this kind of work till the government processes got up and running and its responsibilities during exit (keeping in mind sustainability).'*²⁶

To demonstrate effective community CPCs that can be used by Plan to lobby and influence State and local governments to effectively roll out the ICPS and to scale up support to village CPCs, Plan makes efforts to secure funding for 3 – 5 years to support community based child protection mechanisms. Furthermore, NGO partners are selected on the basis of pre - assessment and detailed reporting processes to ensure good partners who can support quality child protection programme developments.

In supporting the establishment and strengthening of village CPCs the main costs are human resource costs to NGO partners who play a crucial role in mobilising communities, organising training of concerned stakeholders on child rights and child protection, and mentoring to adults and children to develop strong and effective CPCs and Child Groups. In rural areas the CPCs are able to access venues without a fee to organise their regular meetings. However, in urban areas there are some challenges in some areas to find suitable venues for regular meetings. However, no fees are being paid by community CPCs for regular meeting space. Currently the village CPCs are not registered and are not able to access any government funding. Village CPCs are currently depended on Plan for funding to support their child protection action initiatives. The village CPCs are provided with stationary and small budgets which support regular meetings, local travel, awareness raising and training activities. In some places, the concept of village reserves has been floated but has not been successfully integrated to programs. In some communities challenges are faced when handling the cash at the community level due to mistrust among community members.

- **Key achievements, challenges and lessons learned:**

Key achievements through Plan ad partners CBCPM work in India:

- There is increased basic awareness on child rights and child protection in communities, and increased attention to children.
- Many village CPCs have linked to the local governance PRI system which increases its recognition, and helps increase the accountability of the Panchayati Raj Institutions.
- There is increased acceptance of the village CPCs, and increased recognition of its importance and the roles it can play to prevent and respond to child protection issues.
- There is also solidarity among the CPC members and where issues are solved by the community members with the local resources/joint efforts it increases community cohesion.
- Child Groups are linked to the child protection committees. Children are more aware of their rights and have been empowered to participate in community discussions where they can raise child protection concerns affecting them, this was not possible earlier.

²⁶Nolan, P. and Mallik, L. (2011) Plan Thematic Evaluation on Child Protection: Country Case Study – India, draft Evaluation Report

- Children have been effective in advocacy through their media initiatives, and through some of their action initiatives (e.g. to prevent beating of children by teachers and parents).

Increasing dialogue between children and PRI officials on child protection, Bihar²⁷:

Introduction of the concept of Bal Raksha Diwas /Bal Sambad at community level where there is an open dialogue between different stakeholders including local government official (PRI) and children on child protection issues which is increasing awareness and action on child protection concerns in the community.

Achievement by Child Clubs supported by Dalit Vikas Vindu, Bihar²⁸: Children of Child Clubs are aware of their rights. Children of Bhim Rao Ambedkar Child Club, Khalari, opposed the use of stick in their primary school to ensure their protection from violence. They organised a campaign and as a result sticks are no longer used by teachers in their primary school or in the ICDS Centres.

- Early marriage has been taken up very sensitively by the CPCs and most CPCs are effective in preventing child marriages. Key strategies to prevent early marriage include: education, empowerment, alternate engagement through media, associating with some livelihood options, peers group dialogue, community empowerment, and local resolution.
- At the district level progress is being made in raising awareness on sensitive protection issues, including child sexual abuse; and the district authorities have accepted use of a manual on Positive Discipline. In addition Plan has supported the development of a State level Action plan on Child Labour in Rajasthan. Furthermore, in Delhi strong networking has been developed with Bal Adhikar Abhiyan (a group of voluntary organization, NGOs, child right activists, government representatives and civil society organizations).

Key challenges faced while developing CBCPMs in India:

- Some CPCs organise irregular meetings.
- The CPCs are made up of volunteers and need to be recognised by the government authorities (e.g. with CPC identity cards) in order to have the power to intervene in sensitive protection cases.
- As CPCs are volunteers and have to work for their livelihood, it can be difficult to find sufficient time when they are available for training on child protection related issues.
- There remain low levels of awareness and knowledge among community members and parents on child protection.
- In some project areas where the 'Learn without Fear' campaign has been taking place children have reported how punishment in schools has been reduced, but how parents continue to beat as a means to discipline them. Need increased awareness and positive discipline work with parents and community members.
- There is also some resistance among some parents and groups within society to understand the concept of children as change agents. Furthermore, the Bal Panchayat (children's panchayat) is still not constitutionally recognised as part of the gram panchayat system,
- There is insufficient guidance available to support CPCs sensitive response to child sexual abuse, bullying, and child migration.
- Secrecy around child sexual cases, especially around sexual abuse of boys remains. In many locations they are not reported to the CPC due to shame and stigma, and due to legal barriers. It is only recently that there has been a change in the Sexual Offence Act such that the sexual abuse of boys is legally recognised.

²⁷ Shared in Plan Annual Participatory Programme Review Report from ADTHI and Plan Program Unit in Bihar, July 2010 – July 2011

²⁸ Shared in Plan Annual Participatory Programme Review Report from Dalit Vikas Vindu and Plan Program Unit in Bihar, July 2010 – July 2011

- When the CPC (or NGO) tries to intervene to stop child marriage in the project area there are some instances where the family arrange the marriage in another village location.
- Ethical concerns that sometimes Child Group members may place themselves at risk while undertaking the activities to promote and protect child rights. For example while going to work sites to monitor if children are working, the Child Group members themselves may face risks from adults. Also when children intervene to stop child marriage, female foeticide or other forms of abuse adults may retaliate as they are not used to children giving them advice.
- Children are busy – need to ensure that their participation does not negatively impact the time they have for school and study. Also need to consider time needed for other household, work and leisure opportunities.
- While communities are undertaking village mapping identifying vulnerable children and families and children at risks, increased efforts to actively involve the most marginalised children in Child Groups are needed.
- Reporting on child protection and reporting on how child protection cases were followed up is weak; child protection case management is limited and the CPCs lack resources.
- It can be difficult to ensure clarity among the community, block and district level officials regarding their relative roles and responsibilities in child protection; as different people have different understanding.
- There is poor network and linkage with government departments. In some communities there are no formal linkages between the CPCs and the government system (administrative); and there is a lack of support from the local police functionaries.
- In many areas the mandated Child Welfare Committee and Juvenile Justice Boards are not active. In several states, they have been recently formed and due to its quasi-legal nature, members are not aware of their roles and sometimes lack capacity. Furthermore, even where these structures are established at district level, it remains challenging for community based CPCs especially in remote rural villages to access and make referrals to these district level structures, as they are far away, and communication channels between the CPCs and the district level structures remain weak in many areas.

Optimal number of members for community based CPCs, lessons learned from Lucknow²⁹: In the initial year of forming Child Protection Committees, 10-15 members in a community were involved, and the group was oriented on child rights and child protection. However, due to the relatively large number of members, the group found it difficult to organize themselves. In the second year the number of CPC members was reduced, and as a result the CPC has been more effective. The group itself knows its members who are active, and community is also more aware of who the CPC members are.

Key lessons learned on CBCPMs in India:

Over the past 2- 3 years significant efforts have been undertaken by Plan and their NGO and CBO partners to establish community based child protection mechanisms, to integrate the CPCs as part of local governance systems (PRIs), and to strengthen linkages between the village CPCs and formal child protection mechanisms associated with the ICPS and the Juvenile Justice Act. Plan India's strategy is appropriate to its socio-political context, however, as the Government Integrated Child Protection System developments are also in their early stages of development, the district level Child Welfare Committees and Juvenile Justice Boards are not yet functioning in many areas. Thus child protection case management for more serious child protection cases, and the referral mechanisms for child protection response continue to be weak at the district level. Ongoing advocacy and programming efforts are needed to strengthen the child protection system and the

²⁹ Shared in Plan Annual Participatory Programme Review Report from State Program Office Lucknow (CPU Varanasi), July 2010 – May 2011

linkages between the community based CPCs and the formal child protection structures at district and higher levels.

Lessons learned identified in thematic evaluation India country case study (2011)³⁰:

Plan should build understanding of the systems approach to child protection within Plan India and look for ways to support the development of coherent child protection systems at the district and national levels. India is in a good position in terms of existing legislation and policy for child protection, and the systems-strengthening approach adopted by Plan at community, district and to some extent national levels, combined with CCCD approach, principles and strategies means that Plan is already working on a number of key components of a systems approach to child protection. Plan could become even more effective if it is able to develop a sharper, more focused conceptualisation of child protection and combines this with a change model based on a systems approach.

In terms of the community based protection work lessons learned include³¹:

- The importance of identifying and involving community members who are ready to be active in the CPCs. In Lucknow they have found that it is more effective to have less members who are active and can effectively organise themselves, than to have more members which can contribute to inefficiency.
- The importance of sensitisation and awareness raising among parents, community and local government officials to change attitudes towards to children, to recognise children as rights holders and as citizens (compared to the welfare approach), and to change traditional practices regarding the way children are disciplined.
- Recognising the value of children's participation in decision making in community based child protection mechanisms; and increasing efforts to support safe, ethical and inclusive participation. Organisations need to invest time and resources to apply practice standards in children's participation to ensure support for meaningful children's participation.
- CPCs are effective in prevention work and early interventions. CPC members and Child Group members can raise awareness on child rights and child protection issues and can intervene with families, teachers and other stakeholders to prevent child protection concerns (e.g. beating, early marriage, lack of care and attention to children). However, it is more difficult for CPCs to address child protection concerns which have a legal aspect involving criminal acts such as child sexual abuse, and in some situations early child marriage and harmful child work. Legal barriers to reporting sexual abuse of boys was until recently a barrier. Furthermore, shame and stigma associated with child sexual abuse, especially with child sexual abuse within the family continues to contribute to under-reporting of such concerns; and referral options for victims/ survivors of child sexual abuse for the necessary legal, psychosocial, health and other support remain limited in many parts of the country.
- Where child protection concerns are rooted in financial concerns of families (e.g. sending a child to earn a living rather than to school) in addition to awareness raising and sensitisation on child protection, interventions and/or referrals to relevant social protection schemes, livelihood or income generation opportunities for family members may be needed.
- Need for additional IEC materials and campaigns to support mass awareness raising on child protection and prevention of child abuse, early marriage, harmful child work, child sexual abuse etc.
- Ongoing need to ensure increased liaison, communication and advocacy with the panchayat system at local, block and district levels; and with the district Child Welfare Committee to ensure proper roll out and functioning of the ICPS.

³⁰ Nolan, P. and Mallik, L. (2011) Plan Thematic Evaluation on Child Protection: Country Case Study – India, draft Evaluation Report

³¹ See also Annex 3 of key recommendations made by stakeholders involved in CBCPMs in India on how to strengthen the CBCPMs.

Initial recommendations to increase the impact and sustainability of CBCPMs in India³² include:

- Increased advocacy for formal recognition of village CPCs as part of the Integrated Child Protection System; and as part of the local PRI governance system. Inter-agency advocacy at central and state levels is required, as well as advocacy at district and block levels. Advocating for formal recognition of the VCPCs should include advocacy for child protection agencies (e.g. district level CWCs) to issue identity cards to village level CPCs which meet minimum standards. Plan in collaboration with other concerned protection agencies should develop such minimum standards. Increased advocacy is also needed to ensure constitutional recognition for Bal Panchayats and children's representation in the Gram Panchayat system and the child protection system.
- In Plan PUs ongoing advocacy and support for the activation and strengthening of the District level Child Welfare Committees, Juvenile Justice Boards and District Child Protection Units is required ensure that government officials are sensitised on their roles and responsibilities, and that they have the capacity to support sensitive and timely responses in the best interests of the child.
- Scaling up efforts to form federations of village level Child Protection Committees so that the CPCs can support and learn from each other, and can collectively influence and engage with block level PRIs and district level child protection structures (CWCs, JJBs, DCPUs).
- Increased capacity building on child protection case management and other social work skills of child protection actors, including members of the Child Welfare Committees and District Child Protection Units; and members of the village CPCs. If Federations of CPCs are formed, each federation could nominate interested CPC members who have the time and interest to be part of more systematic capacity building initiatives as child protection social work volunteers.
- Advocate for and support the government child protection agencies in developing and implementing a child protection data base which records confidential details of child protection cases being identified and addressed from community level upwards. The establishment of such a data base using disaggregated indicators (gender, disability, ethnicity, caste, geography etc) can inform monitoring and planning of child protection services, policies and plans.
- Strengthen monitoring and evaluation of CBCPM to increase quantitative and qualitative data on the outcomes of CBCPMs that can inform evidence based advocacy for formal recognition of village CPCs and their scale up as part of the ICPS. Undertake more systematic baseline studies of child care and protection concerns in project communities; periodically collect data on relevant child protection indicators; and ensure periodic independent child protection evaluations.
- Strengthen child protection response and referral mechanisms at the block, district and state levels to ensure a systematic response to child protection and other related child rights concerns that are identified at the community level. Increase efforts to engage other civil society actors and organisations that are present at the district level, as well as relevant government agencies and police to ensure that referral options are available for a range of needed interventions (psychosocial, health, legal, income generation / livelihood, social protection etc). Identify and advocate for child friendly service developments where-ever key gaps are identified.
- Support child friendly budgeting and participatory budget monitoring in the PRI to increase budget allocations for child rights, protection and participation.
- In CBCPM communities increase efforts to mainstream Disaster Risk Reduction and to ensure emergency preparedness for family and community based care and protection in emergencies.

³² These recommendations can be informed and updated based on the forthcoming regional comparative analysis report when it is complete.

Annex I: Stakeholders involved in CBCPM study in India, April – May 2012

Who?	Role and location:	Gender:		Age range (if children)	Total number:
		Male	Female		
Child right protection surveillance committee members and village representatives	PU Bhubaneswar, Orissa. President, secretary, ward members, village representatives and 4 child group representatives	28 men	17 women		45
		2 boys	2 girls	11 – 16 years	4
Village Child Protection Committee (including children's Bal Panchayat representatives).	Chamoli, Uttaranchal	4 men	8 women		12
		10 boys	12 girls	12-18 years	22
Child protection committee (including children's Bal Panchayat representatives)	Uttarkashi, Uttaranchal	20 men	12 women		32
		2 boys	2 girls	15-18 years	4
Child Protection Group (Bal Surksha Dal) and Children's Media Group	New Delhi.	2 men	11 women		13
		12 boys	14 girls	7-14 years	26
Self Help Group, Women's Group, Child Group and Youth Group	Ambedkarnagar, Uttar Pradesh	2 men	5 women		7
		1 boy	2 girls	14-18 years	3
Total		83 males (56 men & 27 boys)	85 females (53 women & 32 girls)		168

Annex 2: Overview of training provided to actors involved in CBCPM by Plan India and partners:

Year of training:	Name of training (main subject):	Who was included:	Who facilitated:	Was there a follow up training?
2010 – 2011	Child rights, child protection and child abuse. Government procedure – Juvenile Justice Act and other government schemes	SHG members, Child Clubs and Youth Clubs (in Bihar)	<i>Bihar:</i> ADITHI	
2010 - 2011	Child rights and child protection	Panchayat members, municipal corporation members, teachers	Bihar, Orissa, Uttarkhand	
2010 – 2011	violence free schooling	Teachers	<i>Bihar:</i> IDF, Navjagriti, Nidan and DVV	
2010 -2011	training on UBR and female feticide	ANM/ AWW/ PRI & communities member's	<i>Bihar:</i> IDF, Navjagriti, Nidan and DVV	
2010 - 2011	Child rights, child protection, violence free schooling, eradication of child labour and child trafficking	District level officials	<i>Bihar</i>	
2010 - 2011	Child rights, protection, life skills	Child Groups	Orissa, Delhi	
2010 - 2011	Child rights and protection	Block level officials and teachers	Orissa	
2010 - 2011	Media (radio, comics, magazines)	Children	Uttarkhand	
2010 - 2011	child rights, child protection, eve teasing, quality education, early marriages, corporal punishment through Learn without fear campaigns, and print media	Children's Council members	Hyderabad	

Annex 3: Overview of CBCPM structures in different geographic areas of India June 2012 (excel sheet)

States	Districts	Partners	Rural/Urban	Communities	Child Protection Committee (CPC)	Self Help Group	Child Group/Child Club/ (Bal Panchayat)	Youth Groups	ICDS Monitoring Committee	WSG	Bal Suraksha Dal (gp of community vols)	Children Media Club	Adolescent girls group	Youth boys groups	Block level Bal Panchayat (Child Panchayat)
BIHAR Muzaffarpur	Muzaffarpur, Vaishali and Sitamarhi	ADITHI	Urban slums	56	7	72	56		7						
BIHAR Patna	Vaishali, Saran, Samastipur and Jamui	IDF, Navjagriti, Nidan and DVV	Rural	72	64	202	127	34		58					
ORISSA Bhupeneshwar	Keonjhar and Mayurbhanj blocks - tribal areas	CYSD	Rural Tribal	95	10		95								
AP Hyderabad	Ranga Reddy	CAP Foundation	sub-urban slums	32	0	85	42	30	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
UTTARKHAND	Gairsain (Chamoli)	SBMA	Rural hills	240	210		205								
UTTARKHAND	Uttarkashi - Bhatawari and Dunda	SBMA	Rural hills	170	48		170						166		

	blocks														
UP Lucknow	Maharajganj, Sant Ravidas Nagar, Ambedkar Nagar & Mirzapur	SRF, AAK, PANI, GNK & Vatsalya	Rural	214	125	186	214	125	164				125		5
AP Hydrabad	Shapur Nagar & Balanagar in Quthbullapur & Kukatpally municipalities	CAP	sub-urban slums	42		??	42								
Delhi Rajdhani	West, North West	Alamb, Nav Sristhi, Bal Vikas Dhara, Baliga Trust	Urban	4	NA	16	102	NA	0	87	4	4	103	92	NA
Southern Delhi	Delhi		Urban	7			7								
PU Bajju	1. Bikaner 2. Jodhpur (Rajasthan)	Urmul seemant	Rural	77	25	430	350	-	50	50	-		200	100	-

PU Lunkaransar	Bikaner (Rajasthan)	URMUL Setu Sansthan	Rural	79	20	170	90	10	10	30		1	50	30	1
PU Seva Mandir	Udaipur & Rajsamand (Rajasthan)	Seva Mandir	rural/urban	GVS: 669 (~ 300 groups active on child protection)	10	546 shgs are clubbed into 7 clusters + 3 youths in Delwara and +8 more Shgs	15 (Bal Manch)	21 youth centres (45 youth groups)	not committees, but if issues are raised we work accordingly			1 youth video unit	9+60 (6 clusters)		

Annex 4: Key Recommendations to strengthen CBCPMs in India

Key recommendations made by 168 stakeholders (27 boys, 32 girls, 53 women and 56 men) involved in participatory consultations during the CBCPM study in April/May 2012:

- Increased efforts are needed to recognize village level CPCs as part of the Government Integrated Child Protection scheme; and identity cards for village CPC members should be issued from an existing child protection statutory body.
- More trainings for CPC members are needed on child protection, child protection case management, using the law, and working with statutory child protection bodies.
- In regular Gram Sabha meetings children's rights and child protection should be included as a special agenda.
- Gram Panchayats should be encouraged to develop a budget for children that supports fulfillment of their rights. Yearly planning with reference to child budgeting needs to be given priority at the Gram Panchayat level.
- Regular joint meetings between CPCs, School Management Committees and Child Groups are needed.
- Affirmative action on child protection and children's rights as citizens and human beings is needed by concerned-parent, families, communities, teachers, care givers and duty bearers; and strong networking and liaison is required among child protection stakeholders and agencies at different levels to ensure guidance and response.
- Exposure and exchange visits should be organized for CPCs and Children's Groups to learn from one another and to increase their capacity on child rights and child protection.
- Contextual IEC campaigns & IEC strategy need to be prepared for creating mass awareness.
- A Child rights resource centre should be established in each village and/or at the Gram Panchayat level with all related resource material and information about child rights. #
- 'Children's counseling and issues solving' units should be established at the Gram Panchayat block level.
- A Women & Children's desk should be set up at the local police station to support sensitive response to child rights and women's rights cases. Strategic relationships between this special police desk and the Gram Panchayat and village level child protection mechanisms should be built.
- Block level Child protection Surveillance committee should set up a web site to share information and to increase awareness among other stakeholders about their roles and responsibilities.
- Special Child Welfare fund provision should be allocated by the government at the Gram Panchayat level to be used by the village level CPC for emergencies.
- A child data base should be maintained and updated in a timely manner at the GP level to track and monitor children's situation.
- Co-curricula activities for children should be organized at village and Gram Panchayat level in order to retain children in school and to break patterns of migration; and increased efforts are need to prevent children using alcohol.