

# National Child Protection Working Group Formative Assessment

Towards Strengthening the Child Protection System in Uganda.



Author: **Richard Wamimbi Wotti** *Ph.D (Cad), Royal Roads University Canada/ Centres for Child Protection and Learning (CPL), KAMPALA, UGANDA, Email: richardwamimbi@gmail.com*

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# National Child Protection Working Group Formative Assessment

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## LIST OF ACRONYMS

APHRC	African Population and Health Research Centre
CP	Child protection
CPL	Centres for Child Protection and Learning
CPWG	Child Protection Working Group
CRBP	Children Rights and Business Principles
CRC	Convention of the Rights of the Child
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
DCPWG	District Child Protection Working Group
DOVCCs	District OVC Committees
DOVCCs	District OVC Committees
EAC	East African Community
GoU	Government of Uganda
IASC	Inter Agency Subcommittee
MGLSD	Ministry of Gender Labour and Social Development
MIS	Management Information System
NCPWG	National Child Protection Working Group
NIECD	National Integrated Early Childhood Development
OVC	Orphans and Vulnerable Children
PPP	Public Private partnership
PR	Participatory Research
PSFU	Private Sector Foundation Uganda
RTRR	Reporting Tracking Referral and Response
SDIP	Social Development Sector Strategic Investment Plan
SOVCCs	Sub county OVC Committees
ToR	Terms of Reference
TPO	Tropical Psychosocial Organisation
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations children's fund
USAID	United States of America Agency for International Development

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The broad mandate of the Child Protection Working Group (CPWG) is to coordinate the efforts of child protection actors, identify and respond to key national child protection issues and provide a platform for linking, sharing information and learning within and among actors. The CPWG commissioned an assessment whose purpose was to assess the effectiveness of the CPWG, structural setup and work methods from 2012 to date in contributing to child protection systems strengthening in Uganda. The study adapted a qualitative Participatory Research (PR) methodology of social inquiry that produces unique, in-depth, multi-faceted investigation of phenomena and allow for knowledge integration and personal understanding of individuals and society. The study was conducted among purposively selected individuals and agencies that are directly engaged with the Child protection working group based on an inclusion criteria. A total of 46 respondents derived from members of the child protection group, development partners and line ministries participated in the study. The overall assessment process and procedure was based on the five organizational development assessment elements that included effectiveness, efficiency, relevancy, ownership and sustainability. The findings and recommendations are structured around the key elements of a child protection system that the CPWG has been focusing on.

### Results

#### *Effectiveness*

Overall the child protection working group has significantly contributed to several laws, policies and regulatory frame works development processes through initiating, planning, drafting, review and enactment. The key child protection policies, laws and regulatory frameworks that the CPWG has contributed to include: Alternative Care framework, National street children strategy, National Integrated Early Childhood Development (NIECD) policy and action plan, National Strategy on Violence against Children in schools, Probation Act review, Amended children's act 2016, East Africa Community (EAC) child policy, National framework on Adolescent girls programming, Draft child justice strategy, National strategy to end early marriage and teenage pregnancy and Draft strategic plan for Uganda Child Helpline among others. Participation of the CPWG in the policy and regulations development process has enhanced greater ownership, inclusion of different views, perspectives and opinions of multiple stakeholders in the policy development and review process.

On the basis that the CPWG is an effective platform that ensures that laws, policies and regulatory frameworks are formulated and implemented to harness a protective environment for children to thrive in the country. A number of child related opportunities

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and initiatives do exist for engagement at country and global by the CPWG.

There is clear evidence that the CPWG has contributed to the strengthening of the child protection capacity of both the formal and non formal actors and structures in the child protection system. There are several capacity building initiatives that were undertaken to contribute to the strengthening of the capacity of the actors . Some of these capacity building initiatives included linking the CPWG agencies to accredited Child protection training opportunities, initiating the CPWG institutions capacity self-assessment on children laws and policies and resource materials, strengthening the capacity of member agencies in positive parenting through conducting a parenting seminar on promising practices and lessons learnt.

The CPWG has provided a platform where different line ministries focusing on child protection related work e.g. ministries of education, health, justice and internal affairs and non formal convene for dialogue and engagement of child protection concerns in the country. It will be necessary to increase the engagement and participation of line ministries in the CPWG work to strengthen the child protection system in the country which is currently limited. The CPWG is playing a pivotal role of ensuring that child protection is mainstreamed and integrated in the key line ministries and that the different elements of a system are functioning by providing child protection focused legislation, guidelines, capacities, policies ,accountability, child participation, regulations, resources, standards, quality service provision, child focused research and evidence and child focused planning.

### *Efficiency*

By far the CPWG secretariat is significantly efficient in undertaking its coordination role and in ensuring the achievement of the CPWG objectives and mandate. Working through standing committees provided a rich platform where members come to the committees with different backgrounds, expertise , experience, circumstances, diversity and skills set which allows for quality dialogue and overall contribution to the child protection systems strengthening. Working through subcommittees further increased the secretariat's efficiency in the attainment of its targets. Members have regularly participated in the standing committees in the attainment of the set targets of the committees and consequently in contributing to the achievement of the CPWG objectives and fulfilling its mandate. The standing committees had greatly participated in initiating, reviewing, planning, representing and enactment of policy, regulatory frameworks, capacity building and other child protection practices and processes.

The CPWG has played an important role in linking together several child focused steering committees in the MGLSD so as to bring about cohesion to achieve the desired child well being outcomes in the ministry. There is clear evidence that these committees have closely worked together with the CPWG to ensure that child protection is integrated in the work of these committees. It will be important to understand and define how these committees leverage on each other's efforts within the ministry and how the CPWG works with them to ensure quality child protection programming and policy engagement.

In order to strengthen the local and the national linkages, the CPWG is still working on a framework that articulates how the community level structures link with the National CPWG systems strengthening processes. The CPWG should leverage and build on the already existing child focused structures at the community level to ensure that child protection is adequately coordinated and integrated in all these structures and mechanisms.

### *Relevancy*

National Child Protection Working Group is a relevant platform for collaboration, networking, policy influence and dialogue among the child protection formal and non formal actors in the country. The CPWG attracts actors with diversity of experiences, expertise, opinion, backgrounds and circumstances that can be enhanced to improve child protection practice and policy influence. The CPWG has provided a crucial platform for promoting research and learning to inform child protection programming and policy influence. There are several research and learning events and actions that the CPWG has contributed to and have provided useful evidence in informing child protection programming and policy influence by agencies. Some of the key research and learning events and processes that the CPWG has facilitated and engaged in include: child protection systems mapping study, disseminated national study reports on children and validated research findings on child trafficking and further started establishing collaboration and linkages with regional research institutions in order to foster collaborative research and learning.

### *Sustainability*

Overall outcome sustainability is being achieved by the CPWG because the policies, laws and regulatory frameworks developed or initiated by the CPWG are government led and implemented as key documents to guide child protection programmes and service delivery in the country. The CPWG is in the process of formalizing its mandate through the review and approval of the terms of reference and inclusion in the ministry institutional framework and documents such as the Social Development Sector Strategic

Investment Plan (SDIP 2) 2011/12 – 2015/16 . This will greatly improve both process and outcome sustainability, ownership and coordination efforts of the CPWG.

### *Ownership*

The CPWG ownership has contributed to a higher level of effectiveness in achieving its outcomes and child well being in a sustainable manner. There is coherent ownership of the CPWG among CSOs and MGLSD and limited ownership of the group among other line ministries focusing on child related work. Some of the key elements that enhance ownership which the CPWG needs to be mindful of include: collective decision making, continued buy-in by the senior management team, enhancing sense of control by all the stakeholders and overall commitment of members to the group

### **Recommendations**

**Develop a comprehensive framework that guides the CPWG operations .** An overarching and comprehensive framework that guides the CPWG operations be developed based on a joint participatory and collaborative methodology by the relevant stakeholders. This should be approved by the senior leadership of MGLSD and communicated to all formal and non formal actors and structures for inclusiveness, ownership and sustainability. Further still the CPWG leadership steering committee terms of reference be developed to provide guidance for the operations of the group.

**Prioritise efforts to build a country wide human capital leadership in shaping child protection.** Human capacity development is a key driver for quality child protection programming and policy influence. The CPWG should prioritise its efforts at systematically building human capital leadership in shaping child protection skills sets to add value and quality to different actors and structures at both the national and sub national levels to ensure the well being of children in the country.

**Develop a comprehensive capacity building strategy based on a social ecological framework** that focuses on the individual, family, organisation and environment. The CPWG should further support the creation of an in- county core team of champions and leaders with CP skills and competencies and exposure to develop and mentor others.

**Ensure inclusiveness of both formal and non formal actors and manage diversity.** Membership to the CPWG should be by representation based on an agreed criteria without necessarily admitting all agencies as an open membership. Membership by representation allows for quality, inclusiveness , span of control and effectiveness.

**Redefine the scope of the CPWG:** The CPWG ought to review its existing scope based on the current child protection trends, environment and opportunities that are apparent in the country. Further still the CPWG might consider rebranding itself to be called a National Child protection steering committee. This will be in alignment with other coordination mechanisms e.g National OVC steering committee, children with disability steering committee, National ECD steering committee, child labour steering committee.

**Ensure effective linkages.** The CPWG should define how it is going to develop effective linkage that are inter-ministerial, inter-sectoral, multi-dimensional , multi- level and interdisciplinary to ensure proper coordination and collaboration among the key structures and mechanisms in a child protection system.

The CPWG should **prioritize policy implementation** among others by the duty bearers, families and care givers, and the local citizens in the community as the most crucial frontline actors particularly at the community level to protect children from violence, abuse and neglect.

**Make it a high priority to ensure that the CPWG is supported or anchored on the ministry institutional framework or documents** such as the Social Development Sector Strategic Investment Plan (SDIP 2) 2011/12 – 2015/16 and other ministry frameworks . This will not only support build the CPWG legitimacy and mandate but will also ensure ownership, recognition by other ministries and actors, enhance sustainability and assured funding mechanisms for the operations of the CPWG to undertake its child protection coordination role.

**Develop a systematic monitoring and evaluation framework.** The CPWG should endeavor to develop a systematic monitoring and evaluation framework that includes indicators to measure progress and programme impact.

**Support broad and longer-term funding arrangement for the CPWG through the government frameworks like the Social Development Sector Strategic Investment Plan (SDIP )** and other government frameworks.

**Establish linkages and streamline coordination and working modalities with other child related steering committees** within the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development for example the national OVC steering committee, child with disability steering committee, National ECD steering committee, child labour steering committee etc.

**Develop modalities for meaningful child participation.** Enabling meaningful child participation by the CPWG is quite complex. But in order to empower children as key actors , the CPWG should develop modalities on child participation. The initial point of

engagement will be rolling out the child participation strategy

**Develop a communication strategy for effective information sharing communication.**

The CPWG should put in place a communication strategy that defines what to communicate, whom to communicate to, where, when and how to communicate to all its stakeholders.

**Ensure that both the formal and non formal actors adapt a child protection systems thinking.** The current CPWG strategy is not clear on sensitizing stakeholders on a child protection system thinking and its contribution to child well being. The CPWG should ensure that members and other stakeholders understand and integrate a child protection systems approach in their work

**Focus on child protection capacities, policy influence and research (CPR).** In order to continue being a relevant platform for child protection coordination, collaboration and policy dialogue, the CPWG should focus on three strategic areas in order to address the complex child protection issues in a comprehensive, sustainable manner and strengthen child protection systems in the country. These include in their order of priority: capacities for both formal and non formal actors and structures, to provide and perform the child protection services, including (1) capacity building (including human and financial resources, and adequate infrastructure), (2) policy influence (including legislation, regulations and standards) and (3) research (including learning and evidence building). Therefore it means that the coordination mechanism of the other elements of a child protection system that include accountability, child participation and resilience, resourcing, continuum of care and services will cut across and be reflected in the above three strategic focus areas as building blocks.



## I.0 OVERVIEW AND INTRODUCTION

### **The creation process of the National Child Protection Working group**

The National Child Protection Working Group (NCPWG) was established in September 2009 following the phasing out of the inter agency subcommittee (IASC) Child Protection Sub-Cluster as a coordination forum for agencies and government ministries/ departments working in the child protection sub-sector/with a mandate for child protection. Although the group was initially formed within the framework of the Child Protection Recovery Strategy for Northern Uganda (2009 - 2011), it soon became evident that the critical child protection concerns that the working Group was addressing were not only relevant to northern Uganda but cut across the entire country. In 2009 when UNICEF handed over coordination responsibility to the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MGLSD), the CP sub-cluster at national level became the NCPWG and the terms of reference for the working group included coordinating the implementation of the Child Protection Recovery Strategy. Since 2012, the Ministry of gender, Labour and Social Development with support from child protection oriented development partners and agencies initiated the process of strengthening and streamlining the role and mandate of the National Child Protection Working Group as one of the critical steps in building a vibrant and effective child protection sector that is able to adequately cope with the present and emerging child protection challenges in the country so as to fulfill the Ministry's mandate of ensuring respect for all the rights of children in Uganda. In the same year, a set of terms of reference that defined the mandate of the NCPWG were developed to guide the operation of the working group. The long standing members of the CP sub-cluster and later the NCPWG included the MGLSD, Amnesty Commission, UNICEF, UNHCR, OCHA, OHCHR, ICRC, USAID, TPO Uganda, CPA, World Vision, Save the Children, AVSI, Medair, YSA, Plan Uganda, WCH, GOAL, IMC, ARC, ANPPCAN and FHI.

To date the National CPWG in pursuit of its mandate to coordinate the efforts of child protection actors, identify and respond to key national child protection issues has set up a coordination office within the department of Youth and Children at MGLSD, doubled NCPWG membership; member meetings regularized; emerging child protection concerns discussed and action taken notably - deinstitutionalization of children; as well as scaled internal resource pooling, linkages and learning on child protection systems. Additionally, the CPWG has gained momentum which needs to be sustained with well-defined and comprehensive work methods that can accommodate the unique abilities of each participating institution.

Over the past 4 years, CPWG has been working to achieve the following objectives in contribution to child protection systems strengthening:

- a) Support efforts towards the enactment, review and effective implementation of appropriate child protection laws, policies and procedures.
- b) Promote progressive increase in the standard and quality of human resources and the amount of financial resources committed to child protection by government and other stakeholders
- c) Promote well-coordinated research as well as the establishment and maintenance of an appropriate child protection information and data management system
- d) Establish and maintain effective linkages between child protection actors across all levels and sectors
- e) Promote adherence to child protection quality standards and accountability mechanisms by all child protection actors

To support the government efforts on strengthening the child protection system in the country, the 1st phase of funding by the Oak foundation from 2012 up to 2013 to enable the national CPWG implement the following objectives:

- a) Strengthen and support the National Child Protection Working Group as an effective coordination and oversight mechanism for child protection responses at national and local level.
- b) Support the analysis, dissemination and effective utilisation of child protection data captured by the national OVC MIS and other child protection data sources.

The second phase of funding to the CPWG by Oak Foundation was a continuation of child protection systems strengthening for the period 2014 to 2017 to achieve the following objectives:

The National Child Protection Working Group is facilitating policy and practice discussion platforms, where research findings are shared and action plans developed on key child protection issues and concerns.

Comprehensive and up-to-date information and data on key child protection indicators available and utilized for planning, policy development and programming.

### **The Theory of the National Child Protection Working Group**

While a systems approach to child protection is increasingly recognized as necessary, it is not yet established in most African countries (ACPF, 2014). In Uganda, child protection systems approach is a relatively new concept and as such a growing area although substantial efforts are being made by different actors to ensure a coordinated response to protection of children. The Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development is the nodal institution for child protection in the country. In as much as the child protection mandate rests with the Department of Youth and Children Affairs, it is also spread across

other departments, notably that of Gender and Women Affairs, Culture and Family Affairs and of Labour and Industrial Relations. Beyond the Ministry, the mandate for child protection is shared with the Ministry of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs, Ministry of Education and Sports and Ministry of Health. At the district level, the mandate for child protection is with the Community Based Services Department.

There is scanty data about the functioning of the child protection system in Uganda . In the recent past, available literature indicates that coordination of the different elements, structures and capacities for effective functioning of a child protection system still pose a major challenge. A number of factors that hinder the proper coordination of the Child protection system in Uganda include: multiplicity of structures and coordination centres, lack of a leadership/hierarchy in coordination, inadequate multi-sectoral involvement, limited coverage and functionality of district coordination structures, overlap between OVC and child protection programming. The linkages between the national and sub-national child protection structures are closely associated with those at national level though the strength of linkages are rather weak due in part to the structural set-up within the decentralized service (Status of the Child Protection System in Uganda; 2013).

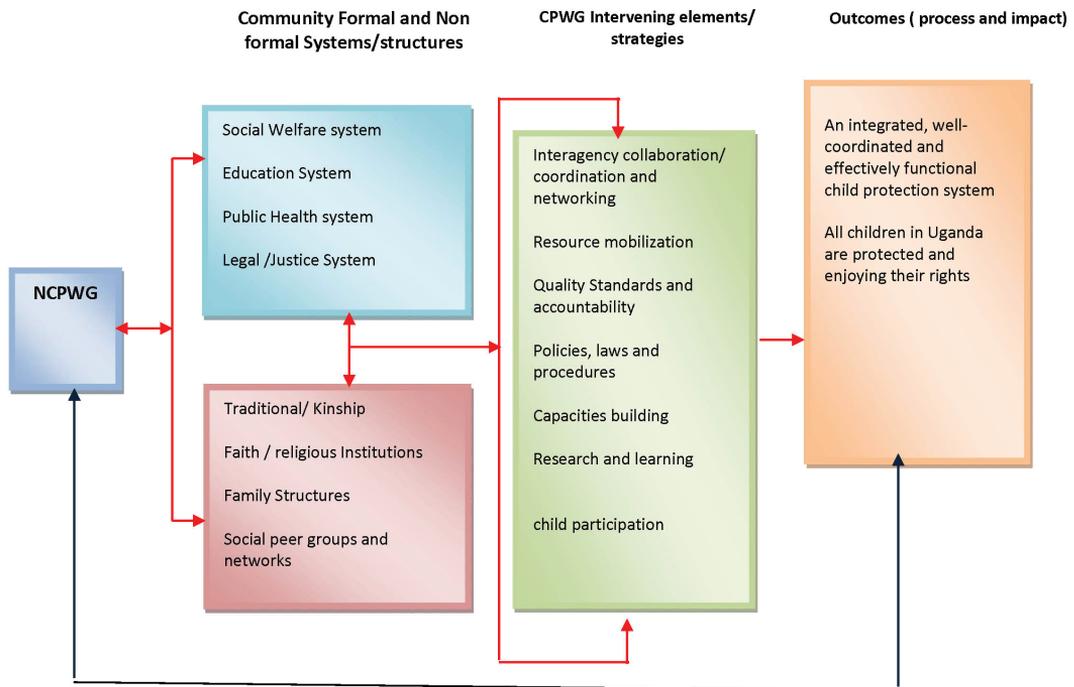
In Uganda community-based or locally generated mechanisms for child protection form an important component of national child protection. Most of the protection and response services are provided within the realm of the community-based and informal child protection system. For example, when violations occur, it is largely the family and community support systems that provide the first line of response (Walakira and Nyanzi, 2013). An effective coordination mechanism should therefore endeavor to strengthen the linkages between the community and national formal and non formal child protection mechanisms and systems.

Whereas there are individual mechanisms within the various child protection institutions for ensuring performance, there is no equivalent of an Ombudsperson or unified mechanism for ensuring that the various child protection institutions are held accountable for their child protection mandates. Thus failures in performance, breaches of standards, as well as other violations cannot be effectively redressed. There are also deficiencies in terms of performance management processes for delivering child protection services (Status of the Child Protection System in Uganda; 2013).

The interactions between different child protection systems mutually reinforce each other to bring about the desired outcomes and change. The interaction between parts of the system requires coordination and other actions that are organized or formed in relation to the goal of the systems (UNICEF, 2008). The formal and non formal system

can achieve its outcomes through the effective functioning of a set of key elements and structures that include collaboration/ coordination, capacities, service delivery for children, laws and policies, social accountability, social norms, child life skills and resilience. According to the CPWG conceptual thinking, the effective functioning of these elements and strategies will therefore promote the achievement of an integrated, well-coordinated and effective functional child protection system with the ultimate outcome that children in Uganda are protected and enjoying their rights. The framework in figure 1 below illustrates the NCPWG child protection systems conceptual thinking.

**Fig 1 : Uganda child protection systems conceptual thinking/ framework**



### 1.1 Purpose of the study:

The National CPWG commissioned a study whose purpose was to assess the effectiveness of the CPWG structural setup and work methods from 2012 to date in contributing to child protection systems strengthening in Uganda.

#### The objectives of the study were to:

- Review the effectiveness and sustainability of the CPWG structure, identity, work focus and methods/ approaches.
- Assess the institutional capacity of the CPWG particularly the secretariat in relation to its mandate.
- Make recommendations for improvement on institutional capacity and mandate .

## 2.0 ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

### 2.1 Assessment design

To achieve the assessment purpose, this formative assessment adapted a qualitative Participatory Research (PR) methodology of social inquiry that produces unique, in-depth, multi-faceted investigation of phenomena and allow for knowledge integration and personal understanding of individuals and society.

### 2.2 Study population

The study was conducted among purposively selected individuals and agencies that are directly engaged with the Child Protection working group. The selection was based on an inclusion criteria for example participation (active, medium or low) in the CPWG activities, By active, medium or low we mean the following:

**Active Participation :** atleast 2 of the following

- Regular Attendance of physical meetings
- Knowledgeable representative on child protection and emerging issues
- Participates in activities of at least one CPWG committee
- Contributes resources towards CPWG budget support

**Medium Participation :** atleast 2 of the following factors

- Irregular in broad CPWG meetings
- Participates in activities of at least one CPWG committee
- Representative to CPWG not up to date with emerging child protection issues
- Contributes resources to CPWG but missing in action at CPWG meetings

**Low participation :** Hardly attends CPWG meetings and no visible contribution to CPWG agenda

The other selection criteria for participation in the study will include: duration of membership (new or old), category of agency (international or indigenous, formal or non formal), type of participation (funding of activities or technical support) and location (urban or rural). The following table shows the categories of the study participant.

**Table 1: Study population by category**

S/N	Category of respondent	Number
	Child protection working group members	30
	Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MGLSD) component lead officers within Dept of Children and Youth; as well as representatives from other MGLSD departments	8
	UNICEF focal persons to the CPWG	2
	Permanent Secretary (MGLSD) represented by the Director children and youth	1
	USAID	2
	Other government line ministries related to child protection work ( Min of Education, sports and technology, min of justice, ministry of health	2
	District probation officer ( Kampala )	1
	Total number of respondents	46

### 2.3 Data collection methods

The study adopted a diversity of qualitative data collection methods and was conducted in three phases:

**Phase one:** This involved a desk review of literature both academic and non academic on child protection systems strengthening which was conducted to inform this assessment process. Over 20 of documents both programme related and academic were reviewed. See list of references.

**Phase two:** Field data collection was conducted during this stage using a diversity of qualitative participatory tools that included:

- a) In-depth interviews with the CPWG members
- b) 3 focus group discussions were conducted to obtain diversity of perspectives with the standing committees, MGLSD component lead officers within the department of children and youth; as well as representatives from other MGLSD departments that are child focused.
- c) Key informant interviews with representatives from USAID and UNICEF were conducted
- d) Held one stake holders consultative workshop with the objective of validating the initial findings and collecting additional data.

**Phase three:** A one day stakeholders consultative meeting comprising of the CPWG members was conducted with the main purpose of validating the preliminary findings and obtaining additional data for triangulation.

### 2.3.1 Assessment guiding questions

The primary assessment question was: How did the National Child Protection Working Group contribute to the strengthening of the child protection system in Uganda between the period 2012 to 2016? *What's working and not working with the NCPWG in fulfilling its child protection coordination mandate ?* Table 2 below shows the assessment research questions that guided the study.

**Table 2: Assessment research framework**

Dimension	Guiding research Questions
<b>Relevance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– How are the objectives and activities of the CPWG aligned with national priorities and Country Strategy on children?</li> <li>– To what extent has CPWG activities since inception contributed to practitioners' awareness and mobilization towards a systemic approach to child protection work?</li> <li>– How is the CPWG responding to the existing needs of its member agencies?</li> <li>– What types of child protection related areas or interventions should the CPWG focus on?</li> </ul>
<b>Effectiveness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– What has been the level of achievement of the specific objectives of the group?</li> <li>– How have the results obtained led to the achievement of these objectives?</li> <li>– To what extent did CPWG activities attain their stated objective(s)?</li> <li>– What are the major accomplishments of the CPWG to date?</li> <li>– Has the CPWG established adequate monitoring and reporting mechanisms for measuring its success?</li> <li>– How has the CPWG responded to recent developments in the child protection sub sector?</li> <li>– How has the CPWG contributed to strengthening coordination mechanisms among Child protection stakeholders across sectors and levels?</li> <li>– Are there unintended positive or negative effects of the CPWG as a whole, e.g, has NCPWG established itself as a reference regarding Child protection issues?</li> <li>– Are there established baselines, expected results and indicators which are being used to monitor CPWG?</li> <li>– What role has the CPWG played in linking the community child Protection mechanism with the national level child protection structures and systems</li> </ul>

<b>Sustainability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Will the achievements of the coordination mechanism be maintained overtime?</li> <li>– Are there foundations for identity and sustainability of CPWG work following withdrawal of external support?</li> </ul>
<b>Efficiency</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– How well is the CPWG organized in coordinating child protection systems work with optimum efficiency.</li> </ul>
<b>Lessons learnt</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– What lessons are we learning to inform future CPWG coordination role in child protection systems strengthening in regard to programming, practice and policy influence in Uganda?</li> </ul>
<b>Recommendations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– What are possible adjustments for CPWG that would maximize its effectiveness and relevance in the future?</li> <li>– What are the possible adjustments for CPWG M&amp;E?</li> <li>– What is the strategy that should be adopted for future CPWG Work, including the Goal, Objectives and Results, that will best reflect its mandate and build upon current achievements?</li> </ul>

## 2.4 Data analysis

Data was transcribed to identify the emerging themes. We utilized the NVivo- Computer-Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software (CAQDAS) to analyze the data besides manual analysis to help manage, organize and develop coherence across the research data. Data cleaning and verification was conducted to allow for accuracy and reliability. Central themes emerged based on each of the research questions. Data was put to each of the questions in a systematic manner and essential descriptive statements made to create meaning. Data was thematically coded based on the differences and similarities within and across the different categories of respondents. After the descriptive statements were made on each of the research questions and the emerging themes to create meaning, initial findings were taken back to the respondents for verification and validation in the stakeholder's workshop and the report of the study was drafted.

## 2.5 Procedures for enhancing assessment study Validity and quality assurance

The lead consultant was accountable for the organization and co-ordination of the study ensuring the delivery of emerging findings, conclusions and recommendations, as well as a comprehensive final report which meets the assessment standards. TPO was accountable for management responsibilities related to contract management, cost control, cash flow and invoice management and further level of internal quality assurance. The CPWG subcommittee leaders constituted a research advisory technical

team which supported the lead consultant throughout the entire assessment process. These included the chairpersons of the CPWG standing committees.

The assessment team used several techniques to maximize the validity of the study including:

- a) Expert peer review: This included sharing the initial findings with some colleagues who are experts in child protection systems strengthening. Some of the insights were used to refine the data while ensuring that objectivity is maintained.
- b) Negotiated validity: During data collection and analysis, consensus was reached on the facts and meanings of units and for each of the final interpretive products and themes by members of the assessment team.
- c) Validity by the participants in the study: This lens suggests the importance of checking how accurately participants' realities have been represented in the final account (Creswell & Miller 2000). While in the field, each day participants were actively involved in assessing whether the interpretations accurately represent them.

## 2.6 Limitations of the study

There were no significant limitations that the study encountered. There were however a few respondents who were reluctant to participate in the study for undisclosed reasons. Secondly scheduling appointments with the participants was a little hard given that the category of respondents participating in the study were very busy due to the nature of work in their agencies.





## 3.0 ASSESSMENT RESULTS

In this section, the results presented relate to the key assessment question: How has the National Child Protection Working Group contributed to the strengthening of the child protection system in Uganda between the period July 2012 to June 2016? What's working and not working with the CPWG in fulfilling its child protection coordination mandate? The findings are structured around the key elements of a child protection system that the CPWG has been focusing on and are based on the five organizational development assessment elements that included effectiveness, efficiency, relevancy, ownership and sustainability

### 3.1 Laws, policies, standards and regulations

A Child protection system is only functional if the laws, policies and regulatory frameworks are formulated and implemented to ensure that there is a protective environment for children to thrive in the country. Child protection laws, policies and regulatory framework often reflect a fundamental belief in and commitment to the principle contained in Article 19 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). This states that all children, wherever they may live and whatever may be their circumstances, have the right to be protected, nurtured and to be free from all forms of violence, abuse, neglect, maltreatment and exploitation. A child protection system should ensure that there is a protective environment and space where laws and policies are not only formulated but are regulated and implemented to guide the provision of services by both the formal and non formal actors and structures.

Overall the child protection working group has significantly contributed to several laws, policies and frame works since 2012. There is clear evidence that the CPWG has actively contributed to policy and regulatory development processes through initiating, planning, drafting, review and enactment. The key child protection policies, laws and regulatory frameworks that the CPWG has contributed to include:

- a) National street children strategy : The CPWG initiated discussions on effectiveness of existing legislation & policy frameworks and recommended to the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development the need to review the strategy to address emerging issues.
- b) Alternative Care framework to address the circumstances surrounding growing number of children leaving Uganda on legal guardianship orders for completion of inter-country adoption in receiving countries. The CPWG technically supported MGLSD in the drafting and costing of the National Action Plan on Alternative Care process started off with a 'think tank team' on government led deinstitutionalization of children which generated policy recommendations to MGLSD.

- c) National Integrated Early Childhood Development (NIECD) policy and action plan. The NIECD is a comprehensive approach to policies and programmes designed for children, their parents and caregivers purposely to help the child grow and thrive physically, mentally, spiritually, morally and socially. It is intended to direct the nation's efforts of responsible parenthood, leadership and delivery of quality services to children.
- d) Probation Act review. The Probation Act spells out the statutory function of the probation and social welfare officer. During its review, the CPWG as a child interest group provided input on the current functions of the probation and social welfare function including the critical question asked whether the functions of probation and social welfare should be separated.
- e) National Strategy on Violence against Children in schools. The purpose of the National Strategy on VAC in schools was to have a national framework that guides the identification, reporting, tracking and response to violence that happens to children in and around schools. The CPWG made input in the draft strategy suggesting key issues for consideration for inclusion in the strategy document
- f) Amended children's act 2016: The CPWG Coordinator was co-opted into the coordination of MGSLD policy processes on children notably development of regulations for the Children Act Cap 59; and Children Act (as amended) 2016
- g) National child protection strategy: The CPWG identified priorities of focus for the National child protection strategy through a consultative process with consultants leading drafting of the strategy.
- h) East Africa Community (EAC) child policy: The CPWG Coordinator was identified as a child rights expert in the EAC and participated in drafting the EAC child policy.
- i) National framework on Adolescent girls programming. This is a national framework under draft expected to guide all stakeholders with interventions targeting girl children on where to invest and how (approaches). This is a work in progress however the CPWG coordinator and select CPWG agencies participated in consultations held by government on what should constitute the framework.
- j) Draft child justice strategy: This is a work in progress (the child justice strategy as a national framework to guide stakeholders on how to address issues of children that come in contact with the law). CPWG coordinator is one of the multi-sectoral team constituted by Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development to fast track strategy development in close liaison with the contracted consultant. CPWG Coordinator participation is to ensure that child protection issues are taken care of in the child justice strategy.
- k) National strategy to end early marriage and teenage pregnancy: This is a national framework that provides guidance to stakeholders on how to address factors that predispose girl children to early marriage.

- 1) Draft strategic plan for Uganda Child Helpline. The review was initiated at the CPWG standing committee level in August 2016.

### **BOX 1: CPWG contribution to validating new child related policy frameworks**

The department of Youth and Children Affairs at Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development has often utilized the national Child Protection Working Group (CPWG) platform to review and or validate new projects by development partners on care and protection of children. The Strong Beginnings project ; and the deinstitutionalization of orphans and vulnerable children projects both of which were aligned to the national alternative care framework solicited CPWG input in scope of work at commencement. Similarly, at the set-up of the Uganda Child Helpline as a government service in 2015, the national CPWG was consulted as a specific stakeholder group. Consequently, a number of CPWG member organizations made financial and in-kind contributions towards the operationalization of the national call centre and its attendant District Action centres.

In addition, the CPWG has been largely involved in the development and/ or review of child related policy frameworks and guidelines generated by the department of Youth and Children Affairs. The CPWG on request by the department of Youth and Children has set up technical teams that have so far supported the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development in the development and review of the following frameworks and/ or guidelines:

- Integrated Early Childhood Development Policy
- National Child protection strategy
- Child Protection Case Management Handbook, and its attendant training manual
- National OVC service providers Inventory
- National OVC referral form (Review)
- Probation Act (Review)

The participation of CPWG institutions in such policy development and/ or review processes has enhanced their knowledge in translating child related policy into practice.

### **Areas of growth for effective policy engagement**

While great achievements were registered around policy and regulatory framework development process by the CPWG, a few barriers might have undermined the effective engagement in the process. These included:

- lack of coherence in terms of planning and execution by the entire CPWG toward the child protection policy development and implementation process.
- absence of an overarching CPWG policy implementation, monitoring, accountability, follow up and evaluation plan to ensure that all these policies and frameworks are meaningfully being implemented and are enhancing a protective environment to ensure the well being of children in the country.

- lack of follow-up plans and will by some CPWG member agencies to follow up policy implementation processes in their areas of operation. A significant number of CPWG agencies did not have strategies of how to monitor policy implementation processes and hold government accountable in the delivery of quality child protection services
- failure to draw on lessons and learning as to why previous policies and laws are not being fully implemented
- lack of a coherent and coordinated dissemination plan by the group to ensure that all these policies and laws are simplified and are trickling down to the communities.

“After the laws are passed, there is no budget and action plan to disseminate them in the community. They are shelved instead and since there is no budget and action plan, they cannot be disseminated to create awareness about the existence of such laws. Finally, there is no mechanism planned for review of some or most of these laws to assess their applicability and effectiveness”. (M A).

A number of agencies reported utilization of these policy frameworks, regulations and evidence to inform their planning, practice or implementation of their work to ensure child protection systems strengthening. Some of the reasons for limited utilization of these frameworks are :

- limited buy in by the senior leadership to adaption of the policy and regulatory frameworks
- slow organizational culture to adapt change
- limited knowledge on policy implementation and monitoring
- inadequate recourses for policy implementation

There was however, a strong willingness by the agencies to utilize these policy frameworks in future in consultation with their leadership to guide and inform their child protection work. The policy frameworks which had been or are being utilized by the agencies to guide their work included the alternative care framework and the amended children’s act 2016.

### **Opportunities for policy engagement and influence:**

On the basis that the CPWG is a relevant platform that ensures that laws, policies and regulatory frameworks are formulated and implemented to harness a protective environment for children to thrive in the country, a number of child related opportunities and initiatives do exist for engagement at country and global levels.

Public- private partnership approach to resourcing for child wellbeing: There is a strong good will by the public and private sector to invest in children. The CPWG should continue to be perceived as a relevant actor in pursuing and contributing to this partnership in which it actually participated during its creation process.

Vision 2040: Vision 2040 aims to catapult Uganda from a peasant to a modern and prosperous economy. The CPWG should clearly position itself to drive child protection within this strategic framework as one of the fundamental pillars

National children policy: Based on the Amended children's act 2016, the development process of the children policy is being initiated by MGLSD in partnership with other stakeholders. The CPWG should ensure that child protection is strongly reflected in the National Children's Policy and integrated in all other sectors.

Early childhood development policy: The early childhood development policy and action plan has prioritized child protection as a core program area. The CPWG should work to position itself on how to support this policy and action plan with a critical input that ensures that child protection is adequately resourced, implemented and monitored.

Violence against children discourse. Currently there is a global and national focus on ending violence against children at all levels. The CPWG should work closely to engage in the violence against children agenda in regard to policy research programming monitoring and evaluation efforts.

National Child Focus Policy Research. Uganda has developed the National Child Focus Research agenda (2016-2020). It is an opportunity for the CPWG to engage as an important partner and contributor to this research agenda.

Adolescent Reproductive Health Policy and Programming. There is a global and national concern on the adolescent reproductive health discourse which has a lot of child protection related issues and concerns. The CPWG should be intentional in engaging with this process and agenda.

Child protection systems approach is still relevant and is being adopted by many national governments, development partners and child protection practitioners across the globe.

### **3.2 Child protection capacities**

The ability of a child protection system to function and achieve its goals largely depends on the capacity of both the formal and non formal actors and structure than perhaps any other factor. Capacities include providing and performing the child protection

services, including human skills and competencies, financial resources and adequate infrastructure. A systems approach will require a significant investment in child protection technical capacity at both the national office and sub national levels based on the social ecological framework. Child protection capacity building involves providing support that will strengthen child protection actors, structures, institutions to effectively and efficiently design, implement and evaluate child protection initiatives to achieve child well being.

Overall the CPWG has contributed to the strengthening of the capacity of both formal and non formal actors and structures in the child protection system. There are several capacity building initiatives that were undertaken to contribute to the strengthening of the capacity of the actors.

■ Linking CPWG agencies to accredited Child protection training opportunities. The CPWG secretariat shared information on existing child protection opportunities particularly being offered by TPO and Makerere department of social work and social administration. There was however no systematic follow up plan at the secretariat to track how many people were trained and consequently the application of this training in informing programming and policy influence in their organizations.

■ Initiated CPWG institutions capacity self-assessment on children laws and policies and resource materials. The findings of this assessment were to guide the CPWG strategy on enhancing member agencies capacity in child protection.

■ Having policy updates by Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MGS LD) as a permanent agenda item at all CPWG bi-monthly meetings.

■ Securing copies of all new national policy implementation frameworks and strategies, as well status reports on children for distribution to CPWG members. To date the following National policy documents among others have been distributed – 2013 Approved Children Homes Rules; 2014 GoU report on mapping of the national child protection systems; 2014 Child Poverty and Deprivation Report; GoU Reporting, Tracking, Referral and Response (RTRR) Guidelines on Violence Against Children in schools (2014); 2015 Situation Analysis of Children Report; 2015 National strategy to end child marriage and teenage pregnancy, 2015 OVC service providers inventory; Study on Legal Guardianship and Adoption Practices in Uganda (2015 Report); 2016 -2020 National Child Focused policy Research Agenda; The National Development Plan II and programme based budgeting for Early Childhood Development.

■ In recognition of the diversity in resource materials used by member agencies in training child protection frontline workers, the CPWG secretariat secured up to 30 free

training slots for staff of CPWG member institutions from TPO Uganda and Makerere University Social Work department, both of which are authorized by government to train practitioners on the accredited national child protection curriculum.

■Contributed to the draft curricula on alternative care being developed by Makerere University social work and social administration department. The draft Child protection Case management Handbook has key recommendations to strengthen content on community level case management in reference to existing pilot projects.

■Strengthening capacity in positive parenting . The role of the family and parenting is critical as the first line of care and protection of children in a child protection system. The CPWG through the capacity building standing committee identified parenting as a critical gap for capacity building for different agencies. Consequently a one day parenting capacity building workshop was held in which selected agencies shared their initiatives as a learning process for others to apply in their agencies. It is however crucial that a follow-up plan indicating how the participants have applied the lessons obtained during the one day meetings and other training programmes are informing child protection practice in their organizations.

### **BOX 2: Case Study: Assessment of CPWG members institutional capacity on child protection policy and practice**

Building upon child protection work profiles for individual member agencies compiled by CPWG secretariat in 2012, the CPWG standing committee on capacity building spearheaded an in-house capacity assessment exercise on child protection policies and practice among member agencies using a simple tool developed by the committee. This was to provide a capacity building basis in child protection for the national CPWG.

The assessment findings revealed that CPWG member agencies were providing one or more of the following child protection services :Awareness raising and training, counseling and psycho social support, case management and referrals, family empowerment on livelihoods, community support structures capacity building, rescue and rehabilitation, facilitating fostering and adoption for children lacking parental care, emergency shelter and feeding, child protection legal services , action research on child protection. However, most of the member institutions had limited knowledge on the legal framework on children as they only referenced the Children's Act Cap 59 , the National OVC Policy and action Plan (National Strategic programme Plan of Interventions II). In addition, the capacity assessment revealed that CPWG institutions use a diverse range of local and international child care and protection resource materials in training staff. Similarly, there exists a broad range of customized organizational level training resource materials and information packs on child protection used in training front line child protection staff.

On the basis of the capacity assessment findings, CPWG secretariat has since then proactively facilitated capacity building processes for member institutions in child protection policy and practice by:

In 2013, the CPWG collaboratively with Child Fund Uganda and the Afri-child centre organized

a learning symposium on strengthening child protection systems in Uganda. With a key note address given by an international expert, and practice models towards strengthening child protection systems, there was conceptual clarity on what strengthening systems for child protection means. Further learning around child protection systems took place in March 2016 and August 2016 where in collaboration with Professor Mike Wesells of Columbia University, the CPWG organized learning workshops on community driven approaches to child protection and child protection systems strengthening. The learning agenda on community driven approaches versus expert driven approaches to child protection and child protection systems strengthening will be on-going through 2018. Learning has also been developed along parenting for child protection initiated by the CPWG standing committee on capacity building. A one - day national seminar on positive parenting for child protection was held on 26<sup>th</sup> April 2016, where the national policy framework and guidelines on parenting were shared; and different institutions with parenting interventions (within and without CPWG) participated through presentation and exhibition of their work. One key recommendation from the parenting seminar was to take forward the idea of a national forum coordinated by the CPWG for further discussions and learning on parenting for child wellbeing. The CPWG secretariat in prioritization of further learning on parenting for child protection has accepted a recent (August 2016) request by a professor from Glasgow University for a partnership with CPWG on a potential operational research project - Exploring optimal means to scale up evidence-based early years parenting programmes in Uganda. Such learning exchanges will expose CPWG members to new knowledge on *'the family as the first line of response for children in need of care and protection'* as recommended by government.

The following were identified as the key gaps and areas to develop competent child protection leadership at the national and sub national level:

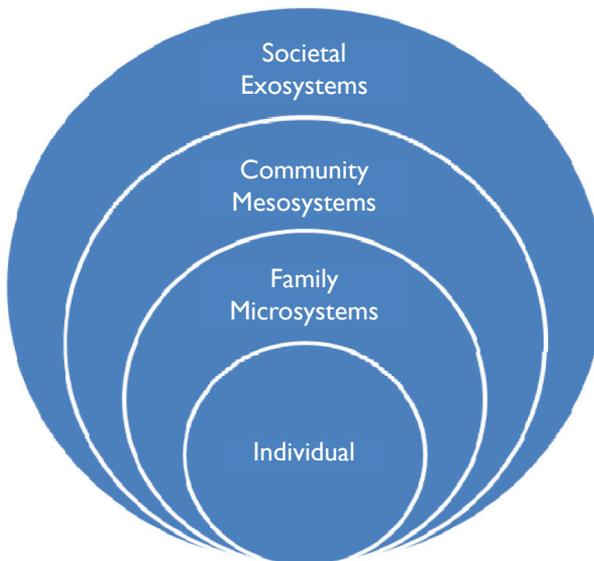
- Overall understanding of child protection concepts
- Child protection in emergencies
- Child protection information management systems
- Child participation
- Mainstreaming and integrating child protection in other development sectors e.g. agriculture, health, economic development, WASH etc
- Reporting , referral and follow-up of child protection cases
- Child protection and safeguards policy development

- Child protection case management
- Child protection indicators
- Positive parenting
- Life skills and resilience for child protection
- Community driven child protection programming

### Topology of Capacity building

It is crucially important for the CPWG to take capacity building for both the formal and non formal structures and systems based on the social ecological framework or on the that focuses on the individual, family, organisation and environment. Capacity building should happen at all these levels.

**Fig 2: Social ecology model /framework for capacity building**



To strengthen the capacity building function, there was consensus that the CPWG should put in place a comprehensive capacity building strategy. The capacity building strategy should be comprehensive enough and should clearly define the key elements such as capacity assessment, techniques and methodological approach, course content, target groups for capacity building, management, innovations, resources etc. A child protection capacity building assessment at both the national and community level will be necessary to provide clear understanding of the gaps, resources and opportunities that exist and a road map for further capacity building initiatives.

The CPWG framework should consider answering the following questions:

- a) What is our capacity building goal?
- b) Capacity to do what?
- c) What are the elements for capacity building?
- d) How do we develop the capacity?
- e) How do we sustain the capacity?

There was clear agreement that child protection human capital capacity building should be emphasized at the community level particularly strengthening the skills and competencies of the social welfare workforce while targeting both the formal and non formal structures.

*“ Let us start to empower individuals and organizations at the community level with the required child protection skills and we shall see tangible change. We should never assume that people at the community do not want to protect their children but because they sometimes do not know how to do it. The CPWG should as such organize itself to emerge as a child protection leader in enhancing child protection capacity building” ( UH)*

### **3.3 Cooperation, coordination and collaboration mechanism**

For a child protection system to be effective, all elements of the system must work in a holistic and coordinated manner to ensure protection of children in the country. A child protection system is not only multi-level and multi-dimensional but is also multi-sectoral. This is why collaboration and coordination between both the formal and non formal actors and structures is a critical element in a child protection system. Structures, mandates, methods and functions are crucial factors in ensuring the proper functioning of a system.

#### **Mandate and structure of CPWG**

The broad mandate of the Child Protection Working Group as stipulated in the 2012 terms of reference is to coordinate the efforts of child protection actors, identify and respond to key national child protection issues and provide a platform for linking, sharing information and learning within and among actors. The CPWG work is guided by terms of reference jointly drafted by the founder members which among others spells out the CPWG Vision, mission and objectives; membership composition; meetings frequency; reporting and linkages.

According to the CPWG terms of reference, the NCPWG should maintain close linkages with the relevant sub-national child protection structures including the DOVCCs, District Community- Based Services Departments and specifically the office of probation

and Welfare. Further still the NCPWG should liaise with other national level sector-wide structures that have a child protection mandate. The CPWG conducts its business through standing committees drawn from member organizations with specific expertise. The standing committees include: Laws, policies and procedures standing committee. Capacity building standing committee, Research and learning standing committee. Standards and accountability committee.

The CPWG is in the process of formalizing its mandate through the review and approval of the terms of reference and inclusion in the ministry institutional framework and documents such as the Social Development Sector Strategic Investment Plan (SDIP 2) 2011/12 - 2015/16 . This will greatly improve the CPWG sustainability, ownership and coordination efforts.

### **CPWG secretariat**

The CPWG Coordination office was established within the department of Youth and Children, Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development. The coordination office is headed by Principal Probation and Social Welfare Officer under the overall oversight of Assistant Commissioner Children Affairs. The day to day affairs of coordination office are managed by an officer (National Coordinator) seconded to MGLSD by a CPWG member organization - TPO Uganda. TPO Uganda is as well a fiscal agent for the operations of the CPWG.

By far the CPWG secretariat is significantly effective in undertaking its coordination role and in ensuring the achievement of the CPWG objectives and mandate. The reasons attributed to effective coordination as mentioned by respondents are:

- the secretariat is headed by a coordinator who is experienced and exhibits the required skills set , competencies and knowledge in coordination and policy influence.

*“the secretariat is very effective and efficient in communication. This enabled the actors to be updated on child protection issues within the country at all times. And also through effective communication, members have always been mobilized to participate in meetings” (O.P)*

*“ there is proof that a secretariat that is competent can do its work efficiently, articulate issues adequately and follow up on issue in a timely manner” ( JK)*

- funding support for the secretariat activities by an external donor and self financing by member agencies.

- enduring and passionate oversight role of the Assistant Commissioner Children Affairs and the Principal Probation and Social Welfare Officer.

There is however a potential risk of burn out given the large scope of work she is managing. It was suggested by majority of the responds that an additional staff

is recruited so as to allow the current coordinator to focus on strategic leadership of the CPWG instead of being tied to the day to day operational activities. There is an impending need to review and redefine the role of the coordinator in alignment with the new CPWG framework while focusing on the following:

- Providing strategic leadership
- Defining the relationship with MGLSD
- Defining the relationship with the seconding agency
- Matrix reporting relationships
- Adapting a systems thinking
- Percentage allocation of time to tasks
- Multiple appraisal process

### **Working through standing committees**

As mentioned earlier, the CPWG conducts its business through standing committees drawn from member organizations with specific expertise. The standing committees include: Laws, policies and procedures standing committee, capacity building standing committee, research and learning standing committee, standards and accountability committees.

The majority of the respondents reported that the standing committees provided a rich platform where members come to the committees with different backgrounds, expertise, experience, circumstances, diversity and skills set which allows for quality dialogue and overall contribution to the child protection systems strengthening. Working through subcommittees further increases the secretariats effectiveness and efficiency in the attainment of its targets. Members have regularly participated in the standing committees in the attainment of the set targets of the committees and consequently in contributing to the achievement of the CPWG objectives and fulfilling its mandate.

The standing committees had participated in initiating, reviewing, planning, representing and enactment of policy, regulatory frameworks, capacity building and other child protection practices and processes. In order to ensure active participation by members in the respective standing committees, a number of factors that undermined the performance of the standing committees will need to be addressed. These include:

- lack of an overarching child protection strategy to guide and benchmark the contribution of committees
- busy schedules at the parent agencies
- type of staff representation to the committees
- understanding of a child protection systems approach
- composition of the standing committees which is mostly by CSOs
- participation of line ministries to the standing committees.

## **Membership, Inclusion , power and diversity**

The membership of the CPWG has increased from the 20 agencies in 2012 to the current 50 agencies comprising of both formal and non formal actors. There was general consensus that mechanisms should be put in place to ensure that members are adequately screened , clearly understand their roles and contribution to the working Group. The membership of CPWG as defined in the terms of reference is comprised of the following categories of agencies:

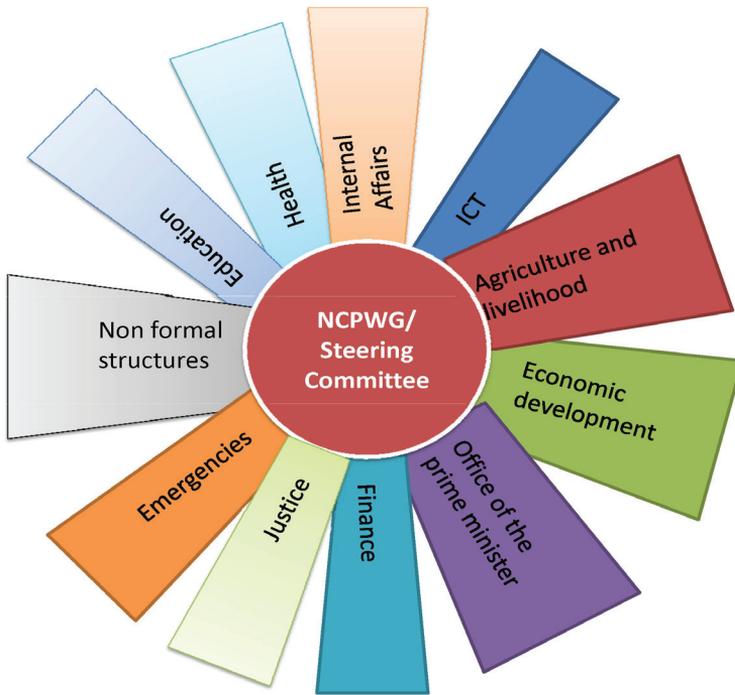
- Government ministries and institutions with a child protection mandate
- UN Agencies with a component on children
- Bi-lateral and funding agencies to the child protection sub-sector.
- National level Civil society organizations with a child focus.

The CPWG should therefore be aware and intentional in managing issues of power, diversity and inclusiveness because of the different expectations, views, opinions and perspectives of the stakeholders given the diversity of its membership. The CPWG should work towards managing and bridging the expectations that may exist among different member agencies and other stakeholders namely:

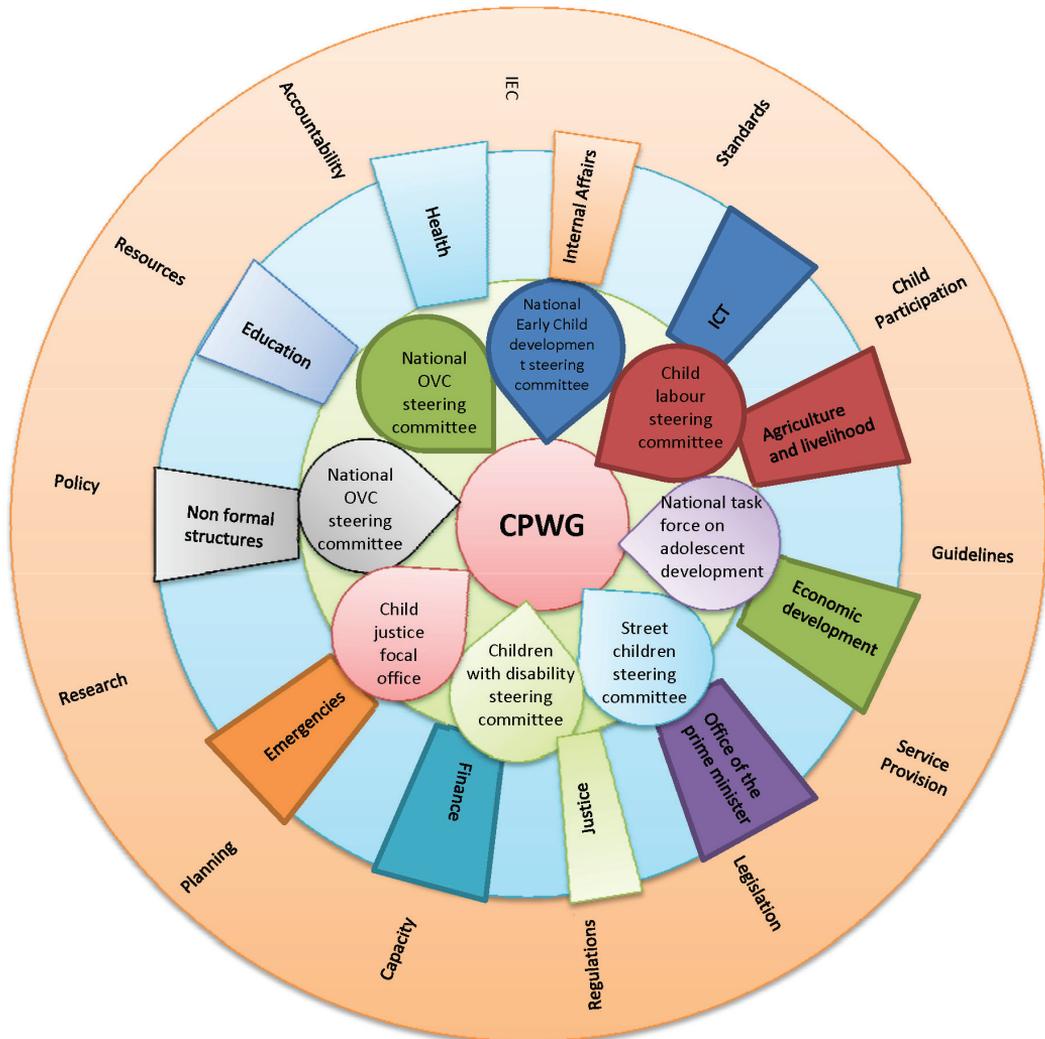
- bridging and managing the expectations of members who fund CPWG activities and those who do not fund
- bridging and managing the expectations of bigger agencies and the smaller agencies
- bridging and managing the expectations of the formal and non formal actors
- bridging and managing the expectations of the national agencies and community agencies.
- bridging and managing the expectations of development partners and implementing agencies.

### **Intersectoral linkages.**

The CPWG has provided a platform where different line ministries focusing on child protection related work e.g. ministries of education, health, justice and internal affairs and non formal actors convene for dialogue and engagement of child protection concerns in the country. It will be necessary to increase the engagement and participation of line ministries in the CPWG work to strengthen the child protection system in the country which is currently limited. The CPWG should play the pivotal role of ensuring that child protection is mainstreamed or integrated in the key line ministries and that the different elements of a system are functioning as illustrated in the figure below.

**Fig 3: Interministerial linkage**

The CPWG working within the MGLSD has provided a platform to ensure that the elements of a child protection systems are functioning in the other line ministries and sectors for improved quality service delivery. The CPWG works closely with the other child focused coordination mechanisms in MGLSD to ensure that child protection elements and interventions are functional in other sectors and ministries: legislation, guidelines, capacities, policies, accountability, child participation, regulations, resources, standards, quality service provision, child focused research and evidence and child focused planning.

**Fig 4: CPWG Multi-sectoral coordination and linkages wheel**

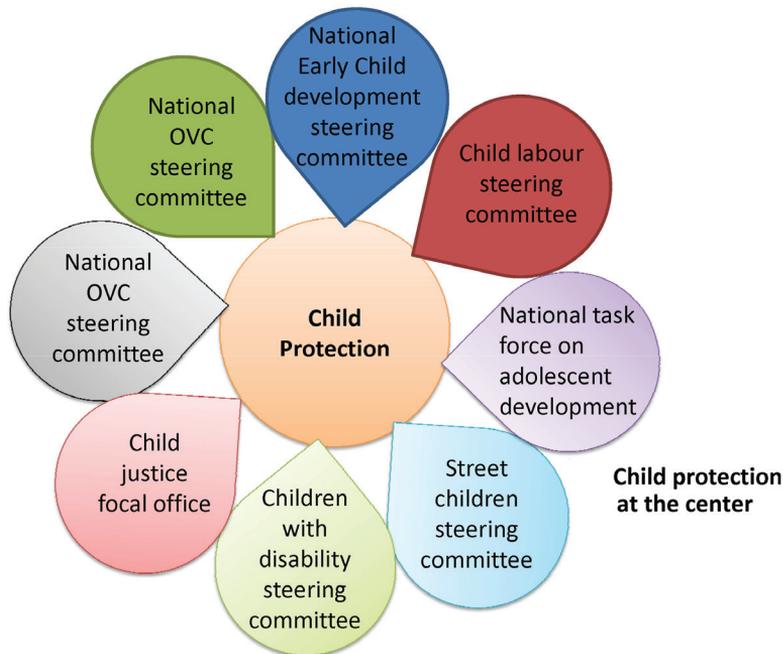
### **CPWG internal linkage with other child focused steering committees in MGLSD**

The Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development has over 8 child focused coordination steering committees or focal offices. These among other include Child protection working group, National OVC steering committee, National Early Child development steering committee, Child labour steering committee, Street children steering committee, Children with disability steering committee, Child justice focal office, National task force on adolescent development.

The CPWG has significantly played a pivotal role in linking together several child focused steering committees in the MGLSD so as to bring about cohesion to achieve the desired child well being outcomes in the ministry. There is clear evidence that these committees have closely worked together with the CPWG to ensure that child protection

is integrated in the work of these committees. It will be important to understand and define how these committees leverage on each other's efforts within the ministry and how the CPWG works with them to ensure quality child protection programming and policy engagement. The figure below illustrates the focal role of the CPWG in the internal child focused coordination mechanism in MGLSD.

**Fig 5: MGLSD internal child focused coordination mechanism**



### **Strengthening local and the national linkages**

Sub national and community level actors, mechanisms and structures play a significant frontline role in protecting children from violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation. The CPWG is still working on a framework that articulates how the community level structures link with the National CPWG systems strengthening processes. The CPWG should leverage and build on the already existing child focused structures at the community level to ensure that child protection is adequately coordinated and integrated in all these structures and mechanisms. Some of the existing coordination structures based on the child protection systems mapping report include: District OVC Coordination Committees (DOVCC), District Child Protection Working Groups (DCPWG), District Chain-linked Coordination Committees (DCCs) and Sub County OVC Committees (SOVCCS).

### **Ownership of the CPWG**

The CPWG ownership contributes to a higher level of effectiveness in achieving its outcomes and child well being in a sustainable manner. There was coherent ownership of the CPWG among CSOs and MGLSD. Evidence from the assessment shows that

there was limited coherent ownership of the group among other line ministries focusing on child related work.

The primary responsibility for decisions and operations of the group ought to be in the hands of a collective especially at the senior leadership level to enhance legitimacy, trust, innovation, open opportunities and good will of the group.

Some of the key elements that enhance ownership that the CPWG needs to be mindful of include:

- a) collective decision making
- b) continued buy-in by the senior management team
- c) enhancing sense of control
- d) commitment to the group

### **Innovative funding mechanism of the CPWG**

The CPWG as a coordination mechanism has been receiving funding from the Oak Foundation from 2012 to date. In order to mobilize additional resources to support the implementation of the other interventions, the CPWG has adopted a self-financing mechanism whereby members of the group provide one off funding for a particular activity. The CPWG is however putting in place a long term, broader and sustainable funding mechanisms by ensuring that the CPWG operations are supported by a ministry institutional framework or arrangement that provides a basis for funds to be committed for its operations by government and a larger number of funding agencies.

### **Relevancy of the child protection working group**

All the respondents agree that the National Child Protection Working Group is a relevant platform for collaboration, networking, policy influence and dialogue. The CPWG attracts actors with diversity of experiences, expertise, opinion, backgrounds and circumstances that can be enhanced to improve child protection practice and policy influence.

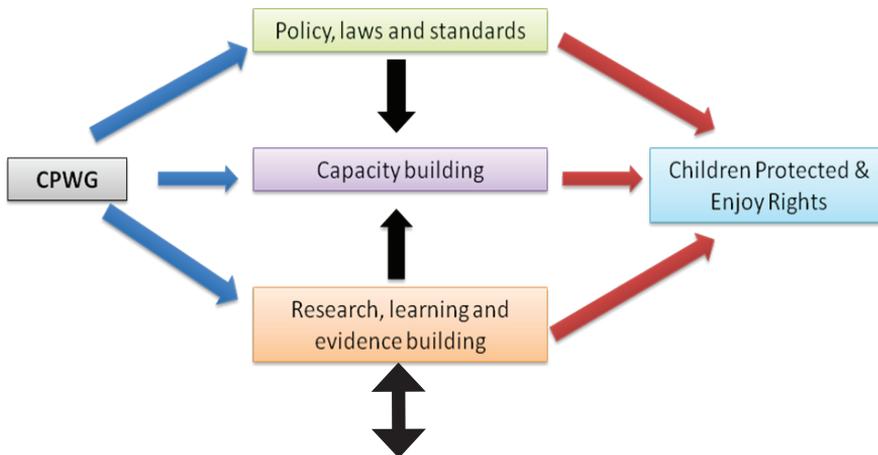
“Before the CPWG was formed, there was no platform with a government mandate where we could convene as formal and non formal actors to engage on issues related to child protection. Now we have a platform where we can meet on important child protection concerns that affect the well being of children in the country” (RT)

The CPWG is as well providing a policy and practice discussion platform, where research findings are shared and action plans developed on key child protection issues and concerns. The CPWG has so far attracted regional and global recognition as a model for child protection coordination mechanism for both the formal and non formal actors and structures in strengthening a child protection system and strengthen the protective environment for all children in the country.

In order to continue being a relevant platform for child protection coordination, collaboration and policy dialogue, the majority of respondents suggested that the CPWG focuses on three strategic areas in order to address child protection issues in a comprehensive and sustainable manner. These include in their order of priority:

1. **Capacities** for both formal and non formal actors and structures to provide and perform the child protection services. Building of capacities should be the overarching focus of the CPWG. The CPWG should aim at a developing a cadre of leaders and champions with child protection competencies and skills to provide quality services particularly at the community level.
2. **Policy**, legislation , regulations and standards. The CPWG shall ensure that policies and legislations so far developed are fully implemented especially at the community level in order to improve child protection service delivery.
3. **Research** , learning and evidence building. The major area of focus should be validating research conducted by different institutions particularly members organizations, application of research and evidence to inform child protection practice and policy influence, providing a forum for sharing research, reflection and collaborative learning.

**Fig 6: CPWG proposed strategic focus areas for the next 5 years**



**Other elements of a Child Protection System as building blocks**

Accountability	Child Participation & Resilience
Resourcing	Continuum of Care & Services
Structures and Functions	Collaboration and Coordination

Therefore it means that the coordination mechanism of the other elements of a child protection system that include accountability, child participation and resilience , resourcing, continuum of care and services, structures, functions and collaborations will cut across and be reflected in the above three strategic focus areas as building blocks. The CPWG should not be seen to be doing everything about child protection but should rather focus on providing coordination leadership, child protection innovations, adding value and doing things differently in addressing the complex child protection issues and concerns in strengthening a child protection system in the country.

### **Systematic monitoring and evaluation framework**

CPWG is working on a systematic monitoring and evaluation framework that includes indicator tracking and tools to measure progress. Baseline data will allow for validation and effective measurement of progress and programme impact.

### **Communication strategy**

Communication in a child protection system is vital to ensure that all actors and structures in a system understand and respond to each other. The CPWG is working on putting in a systematic communication strategy that guides the group on the CP systems approach, legal, policy and regulatory frameworks.

### **3.4 Research Learning and Information Sharing**

Child Protection research focuses on practical tools, applied learning, techniques and evidence building that can benefit practitioners in a child protection system to inform child protection programming and policy so that children can receive quality services. The CPWG has provided a crucial platform for promoting research and learning to inform child protection programming and policy influence. There are several research and learning events and actions that the CPWG has contributed to and have provided useful evidence in informing child protection programming and policy influence by agencies.

- In collaboration with AfriChild centre and Child Fund, the CPWG organized a learning symposium on strengthening child protection systems in Uganda
- Coordinated the national child protection systems mapping study commissioned by MGSLD.
- Contributed to the National OVC Data analysis for child protection trends CPWG Coordinator worked with OVC NIU M&E officer to analyze existing child protection data in OVC MIS for trends, identify gaps in data quality. The findings were presented to CPWG and recommendations for improvement of OVC MIS made.
- Coordinated the process of upgrading national OVC referral form and child service providers' inventory. CPWG Coordinated process and raised logistics for this process

from its member agencies Save the Children and Plan Uganda through its committee on Resourcing, Quality standards and Accountability.

- Disseminated national study reports on children (reports include National Child protection systems mapping report; National Child Poverty and deprivation report).
- Validated research findings on child trafficking. The study was conducted by Makerere University on Child trafficking in select districts disseminated to the CPWG (specifically to the Counter Human trafficking Committee under Ministry of Internal Affairs).
- Established collaboration with a regional research institution – the Africa Population and Health Research Centre based in Nairobi. The collaboration aims at increasing more research evidence on child rights which APHRC will lead on; and ensuring dissemination of the research evidence for uptake by policy makers and practitioners (CPWG to disseminate).
- Validated new national level child protection projects and policy frameworks/ guidelines.

The CPWG should prioritize policy implementation among others by the duty bearers, families and care givers, and the local citizens in the community as the most crucial frontline actors particularly at the community level to protect children from violence, abuse and neglect.

### **BOX 3: Case study : Learning on strengthening child protection systems**

In 2013, the CPWG collaboratively the AfriChild centre organized a learning symposium on strengthening child protection systems in Uganda. The theme of the symposium was adapting a systems approach to child protection in Uganda: What is the way forward? , the symposium aimed at identifying gaps in the Uganda Child Protection System and these could be effectively addressed in the best interest of children. The objectives included:

- Adapting a common understanding of what constitutes “a systems approach to child protection”
- Sharing the status and trends of existing child protection systems in Uganda.
- Jointly reflect on what is required to achieve a systems approach to child protection.
- Mapping out the way forward in supporting the strengthening of child-friendly protection systems in Uganda.

With a key note address given by an international expert, and practice models towards strengthening child protection systems presented, there was conceptual clarity on what strengthening systems for an effective child protection means. The following were some of the key recommendations made during the learning symposium

- It is necessary that stakeholders in NGO's and government to define child protection goals or outcomes clearly for maximum child protection effectiveness.
- Develop a comprehensive national CP strategy and policy to guide child protection practice and policy in the country.
- Support the Amendment of Children's Act to address the current child protection realities and

complex situations.

- Support documentation of child protection models and promising practices in the country
- Invest more in child protection capacities for both the formal and non formal actors and structures particularly at the community level.

Government was required to provide the necessary leadership in taking forward the above recommendations. Government showed interest and pledged to take care of the recommendations through drafting of a national strategy on child protection based on findings of the 2013 report on national child protection systems mapping. This is still work in progress.

Further learning around child protection systems strengthening took place in March 2016 and August 2016 where in collaboration with Professor Mike Wesells of Columbia University, the CPWG has organized learning workshops on community driven approaches to child protection and child protection systems strengthening. The learning agenda on community driven approaches versus expert driven approaches to child protection and child protection systems strengthening will be on-going through 2018. Learning has also been developed along parenting for child protection initiated by the CPWG standing committee on capacity building. A one - day national seminar on positive parenting for child protection was held on 26th April 2016, where the national policy framework and guidelines on parenting were shared; and different institutions with parenting interventions (within and without CPWG) participated through presentation and exhibition of their work. One key recommendation from the parenting seminar was to take forward the idea of a national forum coordinated by the CPWG for further discussions and learning on parenting for child wellbeing. The CPWG secretariat in prioritization of further learning on parenting for child protection has accepted a recent (August 2016) request by a professor from Glasgow University for a partnership with CPWG on a potential operational research project - "Exploring optimal means to scale up evidence-based early years parenting programmes in Uganda." Such collaborative learning exchanges will expose CPWG members to new knowledge on 'the family as the first line of response for children in need of care and protection' as recommended by government.

### **BOX 4 Case study: CPWG coordination role in the national child protection systems mapping study**

In 2013 Government of Uganda commissioned a mapping of a child protection systems study whose purpose was to conduct a systematic assessment of what exists and what needs to be improved in order to inform the process of building consensus on the most important changes that are needed. The Report on mapping national child protection systems among other things revealed major gaps in the continuum of care and services for children. The report highlighted among others limited scope of child care and protection services; the lack of a service package for different types of responses to cases of violence against children; absence of a unified mechanism for case documentation and follow up; institutional care remains the most predominant formal option available to children deprived of parental care; legal procedures for inter-country adoption are not being followed, and instead guardianship orders are being used; and access to justice for children that come in contact with the law remains a major gap. The national CPWG secretariat served as MGSLD coordination office for the 2012/2013 national child protection systems mapping exercise. Since then the CPWG in reflection of the mapping report findings has prioritized activities with potential to strengthen national child protection actors' capacities towards more comprehensive continuum of care and services for children in need of care and protection

### **3.5 Accountability, resourcing and quality standards**

Accountability in a child protection system ensures that the system responds effectively to key child protection concerns and functions according to the CRC, relevant policies, laws and regulatory frameworks in the best interest of the child. The purpose of the child Protection standards is to promote consistently high quality, responsive service delivery to children and families receiving child protection services from formal and non formal service providers across the country. High quality and responsive child protection services are focused on producing positive outcomes to ensure well-being, while simultaneously demonstrating accountability for decisions made and services provided in keeping with the expected level of performance set by the government Ministry frameworks.

The CPWG initiated a unique and innovative process of developing a business case for private sector investment for the well being of children. The initiative utilized a private partnership approach in mobilizing the private sector to prioritize children in their investments to contribute to the fulfillment and protection of their rights. A joint PPP technical interim steering committee has since developed a 2016/ 2017 joint work-plan on taking forward the agenda aimed at achieving the following:

- a) a Child Rights Policy aimed at establishing a mutual accountability framework/ legislation between both the public and private sectors to protect and promote Child Rights

- b) an Innovative Funding Mechanism aimed at increasing and focusing investments in priority children's areas as specified in Uganda's 2016 – 2020 National Development Plan II (NDPII), notably ECD and Adolescent Girls
- c) Child Rights Business Model that will change the behavior of Corporate Organizations towards child friendly business practices that foster the increased care and protection of children in Uganda.

### **BOX 5 : CASE STUDY: RESOURCING FOR CHILD RIGHTS PROTECTION THROUGH A PUBLIC- PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP (PPP) APPROACH.**

In 2015, the CPWG through its standing committee on Resourcing, Quality standards and Accountability prioritized advocacy with the private sector for increased investment in child wellbeing. The prioritization of this advocacy agenda with the private sector was informed by the 2015 Situation of Children Report which showed an appalling situation. In recognition that government of Uganda budget towards children was very little compared to numbers of children in need of care and protection and aware that resources raised for the wellbeing of children by development partners including UN agencies and International NGOs are not sustainable, the CPWG identified the private sector as a critical stakeholder to be targeted for increased investment in children but with investment done in a more coordinated manner. The advocacy aimed at securing commitment of the private sector to protecting child rights in any way possible e.g. child friendly workplace policies, more financial resources under Corporate Social Responsibility budgets committed to child wellbeing activities. The advocacy process was multi-pronged and involved:

Use of existing data on the situation of children to generate a business case on why the private sector should consider increasing investment in children and the investment done in a more coordinated way. A marketing specialist familiar with private sector engagements was contracted to lead the process of development of the business case. CPWG consultations to generate the required information in drafting the business case paper commenced on 15th June 2015, with USAID Uganda and Prof. Neil Booth of Columbia University sharing their perspectives and experiences on evidence that is critical in building a case for investing in children. The outcome of the first consultation process also served as national CPWG contribution a range of activities organised in Uganda to commemorate the 2015 Day of the African Child commemorated on June 16 annually. Seeking strategic partnerships to strengthen both the technical paper (business case), mobilization strategy for the private sector companies and resourcing for the advocacy event. Three institutions were targeted i.e. UNICEF and USAID Uganda for their rich data on the state of children in Uganda, their financial resource base and their high standing in Uganda's children sub-sector as major funders whose 'voice' could be listened to by many including the private sector. The Private Sector Foundation Uganda was targeted for mobilizing leading private

sector companies in Uganda. The response from all the 3 institutions was very positive and joined MGLSD / CPWG in planning advocacy with the private sector.

Under the leadership of MGLSD, a pre-dialogue jointly organised consultative meeting with 10 government ministries and departments with a mandate on children was held on 15th September 2015. The government Sectors and departments that participated were Education; Health; Water & Environment; Information, Communication and Technology; Agriculture; Uganda Registration Services Bureau; Uganda AIDS Commission; and Uganda Communications Commission. Each of the participant sectors/ departments were given opportunity to share their perspectives on what they consider sector level child investment priorities for consideration under a public – private partnership approach. The ideas generated fed into a children’s investment framework collaboratively agreed on between MGLSD/CPWG –UNICEF – PSFU organised around 10 areas (Maternal Health; Child Health; HIV/AIDS; Water, Sanitation and Hygiene; Early Childhood Development; Primary Education; Adolescent Girls ( education, teenage marriage, and Teenage pregnancy); Violence Against Children & Exploitation; Disability; and Family Care.

Under the collaborative effort of MGLSD/ CPWG, PSFU and UNICEF, a one day 1st ever National Public – Private Partnership (PPP) dialogue on increased and coordinated investment in children was held in Kampala on 17th September 2015. The dialogue was attended by 238 persons drawn from the private sector, government departments and agencies, diplomatic missions, UN Agencies, International NGOs, Civil Society Organizations, and the media. As a preamble to the CPWG business case for private sector increased investment in children, UNICEF presented the findings of the 2015 situation analysis of children in Uganda. A panel of experts constituting a Child rights expert, Government (Ministry of Finance, Planning and economic Development; and Ministry of Gender, labour and Social Development) and a Business Consultant unpacked the subject matter of the economic sense of investing in children. The dialogue raised a lot of interest among a cross section of private sector business entities on increased investment in children with up to 30 businesses signing up on at least one child investment area of interest to support. USAID Uganda Deputy Director of Mission added his voice to the need for increased investment in Uganda’s children and called upon all present to join the national Forum on the state of the Ugandan child organised by USAID in collaboration with government of Uganda that was planned for October 27-28, 2015.

Post the private sector engagement dialogue, the collaboration between MGLSD/CPWG; PSFU and UNICEF on taking forward the Public- private partnership for investing in children was strengthened further by constituting a technical team from the 3 institutions to take forward the PPP agenda. The National CPWG Coordinator is one of the members of the technical team constituted to steer the PPP agenda in the interim in preparation for official appointment of the PPP for Child Rights steering committee by the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development at a future date. The technical team (Interim steering committee) has since developed

a 2016/ 2017 joint work-plan on taking forward the PPP investing in children agenda aimed at achieving the following. A PPP for Child Rights Policy aimed at establishing a mutual accountability framework/legislation between both the public and private sectors to protect and promote Child Rights. An Innovative Funding Mechanism aimed at increasing and focusing investments in priority children's areas as specified in Uganda's 2016 – 2020 National Development Plan II (NDPII), notably ECD and Adolescent Girls Child Rights Business Model that will change the behaviour of Corporate Organizations towards child friendly business practices that foster the increased care and protection of children in Uganda.

To achieve the above, a social Policy Analysis exercise has commenced with support of consultant. The expected outcome is a social policy analysis technical paper that among other things should: Propose key features and components of a PPP for Child Rights Policy that establishes a mutual accountability framework/legislation between both the Public and Private Sectors to protect and promote Child Rights, highlighting the justification and need for a Public-Private Partnership for Children in Uganda, specific objectives of such policy and documenting potential impacts of such a policy on children. Propose minimum standards that need to be instituted to guide the Private Sector to be child friendly and build the capacity of select companies to fully operationalize the Children's Rights and Business Principles (CRBPs) and to serve as models for how all companies in Uganda could and should become child-friendly under the future PPP for Child Rights Policy. Propose standards for Private Sector companies' investment in children in line with the priorities of the National Development Plan II, including adolescent girls and early childhood development (ECD). Present an implementation, monitoring and evaluation framework for the proposed Public-Private Partnership Policy for Children.

Since the CPWG initiated idea of a PPP approach to resourcing for child wellbeing in 2015, there is growing interest by a cross section of stakeholders to engage the private sector on children matters. The USAID Uganda 2015 National Forum on the state of the Ugandan child had a private sector component; and workshops by other civil society organizations on engaging the private sector. Therefore, the foundation laid by the PPP 2015 national dialogue on private sector investment in children therefore cannot be under-estimated as it provided building blocks upon which future engagements with the private sector can be built. Additionally, the on-going collaborative preparatory work between MGLSD/ CPWG, UNICEF and PSFU on development of a PPP Child rights policy with an in-built innovative financing mechanism and clear standards for private sector companies' investment in children, are without doubt exhibiting CPWG contribution to strengthening of the child protection system in Uganda.

### **3.6 Child Participation**

Children's perspectives are crucial in guiding the group towards addressing issues that are of great concern to the children. There was low level of child participation initiatives

undertaken by the CPWG. It was however encouraging to note that some members of the CPWG participated in the development process of the child participation strategy . Enabling meaningful child participation by the CPWG is quite complex. But in order to empower children as key actors , the CPWG should develop modalities on child participation. The initial point of engagement will be rolling out the child participation strategy.

### **3.7 Sustainability of CPWG work.**

The crucial element of this assessment was to understand the sustainability of the CPWG work. Sustainability is often at two levels: process sustainability and outcome sustainability. Process sustainability focuses on continuation of CPWG beyond the external funding period and outcome sustainability refers to the continuation of the positive child protection outcomes beyond the external funding period. Overall outcome sustainability is being achieved because the policies, laws and regulatory frameworks developed or initiated by the CPWG are government led and implemented as key documents to guide child protection programmes and service delivery in the country. In order to achieve process sustainability, the CPWG operations should be formalized into the government institutional framework.



## 4.0 RECOMMENDATIONS AND LESSONS LEARNT

The Child Protection Working Group has made greater progress in contributing to the strengthening of the child protection system in Uganda. The recommendations and lessons learnt are based on the assessment findings and the stakeholders validation workshop with the aim of informing and improving the future operation and focus of the CPWG as a coordination mechanism for child protection in the country.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

**Develop a comprehensive framework that guides the CPWG operations .** An overarching and comprehensive framework that guides the CPWG operations be developed based on a joint participatory and collaborative methodology by the relevant stakeholders. This should be approved by the senior leadership of MGLSD and communicated to all formal and non formal actors and structures for inclusiveness , ownership and sustainability. Further still the CPWG leadership steering committee terms of reference be developed to provide guidance for the operations of the group.

**Make it a high priority to ensure that the CPWG is supported or anchored on the ministry institutional framework or documents** such as the Social Development Sector Strategic Investment Plan (SDIP 2) 2011/12 - 2015/16 and other ministry frameworks. This will not only support build the CPWG legitimacy and mandate but will also ensure ownership, recognition by other ministries and actors, enhance sustainability and assured funding mechanisms for the operations of the CPWG to undertake its child protection coordination role.

**Prioritise efforts to build a country wide human capital leadership in shaping child protection.** Human capacity development is a key driver for quality child protection programming and policy influence. The CPWG should prioritize its efforts at systematically building human capital leadership in shaping child protection skills sets to add value and quality to different actors and structures at both the national and sub national levels to ensure the well being of children in the country.

**Focus on child protection capacities, policy influence and research (CPR).** In order to continue being a relevant platform for child protection coordination, collaboration and policy dialogue, the CPWG should focus on three strategic areas in order to address the complex child protection issues in a comprehensive, sustainable manner and strengthen child protection systems in the country. These include in their order of priority: capacities for both formal and non formal actors and structures, to provide

and perform the child protection services, including (1) capacity building (including human and financial resources, and adequate infrastructure), (2) policy influence (including legislation, regulations and standards) and (3) research (including learning and evidence building). Therefore it means that the coordination mechanism of the other elements of a child protection system that include accountability, child participation and resilience, resourcing, continuum of care and services will cut across and be reflected in the above three strategic focus areas as building blocks.

**Conduct a multi-level Child protection capacity assessment.** A child protection capacity building assessment will need to be undertaken at both the national and community level to provide clear understanding of the gaps, resources and opportunities that exist and a road map for further capacity building initiatives.

**Develop a comprehensive capacity building strategy based on a social ecological framework** that focuses on the individual, family, organisation and environment. The CPWG should further support the creation of an in-county core team of champions and leaders with CP skills and competencies and exposure to develop and mentor others.

**Ensure inclusiveness of both formal and non formal actors and manage diversity.** Membership to the CPWG should be by representation based on an agreed criteria without necessarily admitting all agencies as an open membership. Membership by representation allows for quality, inclusiveness, span of control and effectiveness.

**Redefine the scope of the CPWG:** The CPWG ought to review its existing scope based on the current child protection trends, environment and opportunities that are apparent in the country. Further still the CPWG might consider rebranding itself to be called a National Child protection steering committee. This will be in alignment with other coordination mechanisms e.g National OVC steering committee, children with disability steering committee, National ECD steering committee, child labour steering committee.

**Ensure effective linkages.** The CPWG should define how it is going to develop effective linkages that are inter-ministerial, inter-sectoral, multi-dimensional, multi-level and interdisciplinary to ensure proper coordination and collaboration among the key structures and mechanisms in a child protection system.

**Support broad and longer-term funding arrangement for the CPWG through the government frameworks like the Social Development Sector Strategic Investment Plan (SDIP) and other government frameworks.**

**Establish linkages and streamline coordination and working modalities with other child related steering committees within the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development** for example the national OVC steering committee, child with disability steering committee, National ECD steering committee, child labour steering committee etc.

**Accelerate the development of the national child protection strategy** that provides direction and benchmarking for the CPWG work.

The CPWG should be aware and intentional in **managing issues of power, diversity and inclusiveness** because of the different expectations, views, opinions and perspectives of the stakeholders.

**Develop modalities for meaningful child participation.** Enabling meaningful child participation by the CPWG is quite complex. But in order to empower children as key actors, the CPWG should develop modalities on child participation. The initial point of engagement will be rolling out the child participation strategy

**Establish areas of potential conflict and tensions between the CPWG for member agencies.** Define clearly the interventions and operations of the CPWG and those of its member organizations to establish areas of potential duplication, conflict, cohesion and complementarity and establish mechanism to address them. The CPWG should not appear like an implementing agency but rather keep itself within its coordination mandate.

**Ensure that both the formal and non formal actors adapt a child protection systems thinking.** The current CPWG strategy is not clear on sensitizing stakeholders on a child protection system thinking and its contribution to child well being. The CPWG should ensure that members and other stakeholders understand and integrate a child protection systems approach in their work.

**Develop a communication strategy for effective information sharing communication.** The CPWG should put in place a communication strategy that defines what to communicate, whom to communicate to, where, when and how to communicate to all its stakeholders.

**Mainstream the several child focused steering committees in the MGLSD.** The Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development has over 8 child focused coordination steering committees or focal offices. It is difficult to know how all committees coordinate, and relate with each other and how they link with the Child Protection Working Group

and other ministries, non formal structures at the national, sub national and community level. Further still it is not clear on how the committees leverage on each other's efforts within the ministry and the Child Protection Working Group works with them to ensure quality child protection programming and policy engagement. The Child Protection Working Group should play a pivotal role in linking these committees together so as to bring about cohesion in order to achieve the desired child well being in the country.

**Review the job description of the National Child Protection Coordinator.** The job description of the Coordinator should be jointly reviewed and restructured by the key stakeholders based on the new CPWG framework with the main purpose of proving strategic leadership to the CPWG that reflects a desired level of achievement of its vision and strategic objectives. Furthermore, the appointment of the coordinator should be jointly done between the ministry, seconding agency and the steering committee of the CPWG. The role of the coordinator should be reflected in the Social Sector Development Investment Plan as a specialist of the Child Protection Working Group to ensure sustainability

**Develop a systematic monitoring and evaluation framework.** The CPWG should endeavor to develop a systematic monitoring and evaluation framework that includes indicators to measure progress and programme impact.

**Representation to the CPWG by the senior management teams.** Representation to the CPWG should be effected by the members of the senior management team so as to improve quality of dialogue and engagement on complex Child Protection concerns.

## LESSONS LEARNT

- 1) Working through standing committees enhanced effectiveness and high quality of dialogue and debates because individuals come with different backgrounds, having diversity of expertise, experience, circumstances, competences and skills set.
- 2) The Child Protection Working Group with the functional secretariat with a coordinator who has competent and adequate skills set enhances proper coordination role and the achievement of its goals and objectives.
- 3) Participation of the Child Protection Working Group in formulation and review of policies, laws and regulatory framework ensures ownership, multiple voices, inclusiveness and representation.

- 4) The absence of the National Child strategy greatly undermines the work of the Child Protection Working Group. There is no framework for bench marking the coordination function of the Child Protection Working Group.
- 5) The Child Protection Working Group standing committees provide a rich platform for initiating policy and regulatory processes which are later taken on by other broad stake holders outside of the Child Protection Working Group e.g. the case of the private public partnership investment in children.
- 6) It is very important to define the scope, membership and mandate at the very beginning as this might later undermine the quality of representation, engagement, power, diversity and inclusiveness.
- 7) Interministerial linkages are difficult to attain without formalizing the mandate of the Child Protection Working Group by the host ministry.
- 8) It is difficult to measure the performance and validity of the Child Protection Working Group without the monitoring and evaluation, framework, baseline, data and indicators.
- 9) External funding support and self financing mechanisms by member agencies cartelized the coordination activities and set up of the secretariat but such funding is not sustainable without a supportive government framework.
- 10) Absence of a child protection capacity building strategy undermined the capacity building efforts of the CPWG to both the formal and non formal actors to adequately provide quality programs and services to ensure the well being of children.
- 11) Representation to the Child Protection Working Groups by middle level staff who cannot make important decisions might affect the quality of discussions and engagement on high level decisions that require senior management approval and sign off.
- 12) Initiating the formation of the National Child Protection Working Group by a few individuals with passion without inclusion in the institutional government framework can undermined the Child Protection Working mandate, ownership, inclusiveness and sustainability .

## Appendix I: Formative Assessment Tools

Formative Assessment for the National Child Protection Working Group Support to Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development in Coordinating National Stakeholders Towards Strengthening the Child Protection System in Uganda.

**Tool I:** Draft in-depth interview schedule for CPWG members, secretariat, Assistant Commissioner Children Affairs, Principle Probation and Welfare Officer

### Consent

My names are.....

Today we are having a discussion about the work of the National Child Protection Working group (NCPWG). The NCWG is conducting an assessment of its work from 2012 to date in contributing to child protection systems strengthening in Uganda. The information you provide will be used to inform the CPWG future operations and focus as a coordination mechanism for child protection systems strengthening in Uganda.

Please note:

- Your participation is voluntary. You do not have to take part if you do not want to.
- You do not have to answer a particular question if you don't want to.
- We shall be taking notes and recording to ensure that your opinion is accurately taken on. Please answer freely, there are no right or wrong answers.
- The report will not mention your name.
- The findings from this study will be written into a report and used to improve the CPWG work

Would you like to participate in the study \_\_\_\_\_ YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO

Note to interviewer : *The questions outlined below may be adjusted and modified to obtain right kind of information according to the context , type of participant and interest . They may not all be used.*

Interview Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Name of Interviewer: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of agency : \_\_\_\_\_

Name of participant \_\_\_\_\_ Role: \_\_\_\_\_

### A. Structure, methods of work (determines the CPWG's structure, functions and methods of work)

- 1) The CPWG works through a secretariat with one full time staff and 4 standing committee and reports to the social protection subcommittee. How do you feel about this structure and method of doing work in enabling the CPWG realize its objectives? ( give reasons for your response) . How can this method of work be improved?
- 2) What has been the strengthen of working through the standing committees?
- 3) What are the weaknesses of working through standing committees?
- 4) What do you consider to be the achievements of these committees in strengthening the Child Protection system?
- 5) What challenges have the standing committee generally encountered in implementing their mandate?
- 6) In your opinion, what do you feel about the overall performance of the CPWG secretariat as a coordinating unit for the child protection systems strengthening in the country ?
- 7) What have you liked about the performance of the CPWG secretariat since 2012
- 8) What do you perceive as the main challenges that might hinder the effective operation of the secretariat in undertaking its coordination role?

- 9) What do you suggest to be done so as to overcome these challenges in 9 above?
- 10) What method of operation would you suggest for the CPWG to adopt in order to undertake its CP coordination role?
- 11) In what ways has the CPWG contributed to the social development sector strategic investment plan (SDIP 2) 2011/12 – 2015/16? ( Only for MoLGSD)
- 12) What have been the general enabling factors for achieving these results?
- 13) What opportunities exist in the country to enable CPWG implement its strategy?
- 14) What challenges hindered the effective performance of CPWG in achieving its outcomes?
- 15) Looking back, what do you suggest to be done differently by the CPWG secretariat, standing committees so as to effectively deliver the child protection mandate and work?
- 16) What do you envisage as the strategic priorities and focus of the CPWG to achieve its mandate for the next 5 years?

**B. Laws, policies, standards and regulations ( determine the systems structure, mandates and functions)**

- 17) What policies, law, planning, practice or regulatory framework has the CPWG contributed to since 2012 ?
- 18) Are there any legal reforms, policies, planning or practice change that have been informed by contribution or evidence from the CPWG? ( mention the law or policy engagements and partners e.g. JLOS)
- 19) What Child protection policy, laws and regulatory frameworks should the CPWG focus on in ensuring the well being of children
- 20) What do you envisage as the key role of the CPWG in policy, law planning or practice to contribute to child protection in the country
- 21) What barriers that hinder the effective implementation of child protection laws and /or regulations should the CPWG focus on?
- 22) What do you suggest to be done differently by the CPWG so as to improve its policy, laws and regulatory engagements and contribution?

**C. Capacities ( provide and perform the child protection services, including capacity building, human and financial resources, and adequate infrastructure)**

- 23) Have you received any capacity building support from the CPWG? ( mention what capacity building support received)
- 24) Have the capacity building outputs offered by the CPWG contributed to improved child protection practice in your organization?
- 25) How have the capacity building outputs provided by the CPWG contributed to improved child protection practice in your organization?
- 26) What combination of capacity building activities (individual, organizational, system) should be provided by the CPWG to improve CP programming performance in your organization?
- 27) How has the standing committee contributed to the standardization and harmonization of training manuals
- 28) Which types of formal and non formal actor should the CPWG target in its capacity building efforts? ( please list them)
- 29) What do you suggest to be done differently by the CPWG so as to improve its capacity building focus?
- 30) What methods ( mode) would you suggest for the CPWG to adopt in providing capacity building support to different actors?

**D. Cooperation, coordination and collaboration mechanism ( ensure that all elements of the system work in a holistic and coordinated manner to ensure protection of children in the country)**

- 31) What role has the CPWG played in ensuring coordination and collaboration among child actors in the Child Protection system at the national and local levels? ( mention the actions undertaken by the CPWG)
- 32) What went well in ensuring coordination , collaboration and networking among the Child Protection actors in the country by the CPWG in 35 above?
- 33) What did not go well in ensuring coordination , collaboration and networking among the Child Protection actors in the country by the CPWG?
- 34) What gaps exist in linking the formal and non formal actors in preventing and responding to violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation of children in the country
- 35) What gaps exist in linking the local with the national level formal and non formal Child Protection actors in the country
- 36) What gaps exist in linking the CPWG with other child related line ministries ( Education and Sports, Health, Internal affairs, Justice and agriculture) in the country in strengthening the child protection system in the county?
- 37) What opportunities exist in the country that the CPWG can harness in its coordination mechanism?
- 38) What do you suggest to be done differently by the CPWG so as to improve the overall child protection corporation, coordination and collaboration mechanisms in the country?

**E.Accountability, resourcing and quality standards (ensure the systems responds effectively to key child protection concerns and functions according to the CRC, relevant laws and in the best interest of the child)**

- 39) What actions has the CPWG undertaken to improve child protection accountability mechanisms among Key actors?
- 40) What actions has the CPWG undertaken to ensure child protection incidents are reported and responded to by the key actors?
- 41) How has your engagement in the child protection related accountability mechanisms influenced your agency child protection accountability mechanisms e.g. reporting, planning, strategy, monitoring and evaluation?
- 42) The current resourcing of the CPWG interventions is through external donor support and self resourcing by its member organizations on specific activities. What are the strength and weakness of this funding mechanism?
- 43) What have been the overall challenges in resourcing the CPWG in undertaking its Child protection coordination role?
- 44) What do you suggest to be the most effective resourcing mechanism to sustain the CPWG work?
- 45) What do you suggest to be done differently by the CPWG so as to improve child protection accountability mechanisms among Key actors in the country?

**F. Information Sharing , Research and Learning**

- 46) Have you received or shared any information, research or learning evidence from the CPWG ?
- 47) What type of information, research and learning evidence have you received from or shared with the CPWG?
- 48) Has this information, research or learning evidence contributed improving your agency or providing evidence in strengthening child protection systems work? ( Explain in what ways)
- 49) How has information sharing , research and learning been organized by CPWG?

- 50) What challenges have hindered the effective delivery of information, research and learning evidence from the CPWG secretariat and members of the CPWG?
- 51) What do you think should be done differently by the CPWG so as to improve information, research, learning and evidence sharing and utilization by the CPWG?
- 52) Does the CPWG have a communication strategy in place to enable its members understand the child protection systems strengthening? ( Give reasons for your response)
- 53) In what ways would the communication strategy help guide the group on the CP systems approach coordination mechanisms in the country?

**G. Child Participation ( children’s agency to contribute to their own protection)**

- 54) What child participation initiatives has the CPWG contributed to improve CP systems at the national and local levels in the county? ( explain which initiatives)
- 55) In what ways have the child participation initiatives provided by the CPWG contributed to improved child well being outcomes, practices, planning or actions in the country and your agency ?
- 56) What combination of child participation activities should the CPWG focus on to improve child well being in the country?
- 57) What challenges have hindered effective child participation by the CPWG?
- 58) What do you suggest should be done differently so as to improve child participation initiatives by the CPWG?

**H . Lessons and Recommendations**

- 59) In your opinion, what overall lesson can you share with us that can inform the future organization and operation of the CPWG?
- 60) What are your key recommendations that can be implemented to improve the future organization and operation of the CPWG?

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**Tool 2: Draft Key Informant Interview schedule/ FGD guide with MoLGSD Departments and other Ministries**

**Consent**

My names are.....

Today we are having a discussion about the work of the National Child Protection Working group ( NCPWG). The NCWG is conducting an assessment of its work from 2012 to date in contributing to child protection systems strengthening in Uganda. The information you provide will be used to inform the CPWG future operations and focus as a coordination mechanism for child protection systems strengthening in Uganda.

Please note:

- Your participation is voluntary. You do not have to take part if you do not want to.
- You do not have to answer a particular question if you don’t want to.
- We shall be taking notes and recording to ensure that your opinion is accurately taken on . Please answer freely, there are no right or wrong answers.
- The report will not mention your name.
- The findings from this study will be written into a report and used to improve the CPWG work

Would you like to participate in the study \_\_\_\_\_ YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO

Note to interviewer : *The questions outlined below may be adjusted and modified to obtain right kind of information according to the context , type of participant and interest . They may not all be used.*

Interview Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Name of Interviewer: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of agency : \_\_\_\_\_

Name of participant \_\_\_\_\_ Role: \_\_\_\_\_

1. The Child Protection Working group was established in 2012 to coordinate the efforts of child protection actors, identify and respond to key national child protection issues and provide a platform for linking, sharing information and learning within and among actors. Has your department heard any contact or engagement with the Child Protection Working group? ( Explain)
2. In what areas has your department worked collaboratively with the CPWG? ( What went well and what did not go well in this collaboration)
3. How has your collaboration and linkages with the CPWG contributed to the realization of your departmental or programmed objective in strengthening child protection efforts?
4. What gaps exist in linking the CPWG with other child related departments and line ministries in the country in strengthening the child protection system in the county?
5. In what ways has the CPWG contributed to the social development sector strategic investment plan (SDIP 2) 2011/12 – 2015/16? ( Ask only MoGLSD)
6. In your opinion what gaps exist in linking the formal and non formal actors in preventing and responding to violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation of children in the country
7. What gaps exist in linking the local with the national level formal and non formal Child Protection actors and structures in the country?
8. What opportunities exist in the country that the CPWG can harness ( take advantage of ) in its child protection coordination mechanism?
9. What do you suggest to be done differently by the CPWG so as to improve the overall child protection corporation, coordination and collaboration mechanisms in the country?
10. What do you suggest to be done differently by the CPWG to improve the inter ministerial and sectoral linkages to strengthen Child protection coordination in the country?
11. The CPWG works through a small secretariat with one full time staff and 4 standing committee, and reports to the social protection subcommittee. How do you feel about this method of work for the CPWG in realizing its objectives? ( give reasons for your response) . How can this be improved?
12. What policy, capacity, information research and resourcing areas should your department work with the CPWG? ( what other areas do you suggest?)
13. What do you see as the strategic priorities and focus of the CPWG to achieve its mandate for the next 5 years?

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**Tool 3: Draft Key Informant Interview with Development Partners**

**Consent**

My names are.....

Today we are having a discussion about the work of the National Child Protection Working group (NCPWG). The NCWG is conducting an assessment of its work from 2012 to date in contributing to child protection systems strengthening in Uganda. The information you provide will be used to inform the CPWG future operations and focus as a coordination mechanism for child protection systems strengthening in Uganda. Please note:

- Your participation is voluntary. You do not have to take part if you do not want to.
- You do not have to answer a particular question if you don't want to.
- We shall be taking notes and recording to ensure that your opinion is accurately taken on. Please answer freely, there are no right or wrong answers.
- The report will not mention your name.
- The findings from this study will be written into a report and used to improve the CPWG work

Would you like to participate in the study \_\_\_\_\_ YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO

Note to interviewer : *The questions outlined below may be adjusted and modified to obtain right kind of information according to the context , type of participant and interest . They may not all be used.*

Interview Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Name of Interviewer: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of agency : \_\_\_\_\_

Name of participant \_\_\_\_\_ Role: \_\_\_\_\_

1. The Child Protection Working group was established in 2012 to coordinate the efforts of child protection actors, identify and respond to key national child protection issues and provide a platform for linking, sharing information and learning within and among actors. Have you heard any contact or engagement with the Child Protection Working group? ( Explain)
2. In your opinion do you think the CPWG is relevant in coordinating Child protection efforts in Uganda? ( give reasons for your opinion)
3. The CPWG has been focusing on 4 strategic areas that include:

Child protection laws, Policies and Procedures

Resource Mobilization for child protection

Networking and building inter-sectoral linkages among child protection actors

Child protection Quality Standards and accountability mechanisms

Capacity Building, Research and Learning for and among child protection actors.

What do you envision as the strategic priorities and focus of the CPWG in achieving its mandate for the next 5 years?

4. The CPWG works through a secretariat with one full time staff and 4 standing committee and reports to the social protection subcommittee. How do you feel about this structure and method of doing work in enabling the CPWG realize its objectives? ( give reasons for your response) . How can this method of work be improved?
5. In what ways should the CPWG strengthen its collaboration with line ministries ( Education and Sports, Health, Justice, Internal affairs, Agricultures ) focusing on Child Protection related work?
6. What could be the contribution of the development partners in working with the CPWG to effectively undertake its Child Protection coordination role?
7. What do you see as the key areas of collaboration between your agency and the CPWG in contributing to child protection response in the country?
8. In your opinion, how can the linkage between the CPWG and the local child protection structures

and actors be strengthened to ensure effective coordinated efforts to child protection in Uganda?

9. From your experience and lessons elsewhere, what make an effective and efficient working group?

Formative Assessment for the National Child Protection Working Group Support to Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development in Coordinating National Stakeholders Towards Strengthening the Child Protection System in Uganda.

**Tool 4: Draft Key informant interview with Permanent Secretary MoLGSD**

My names are..... ( Introduce yourself following an executive protocol)

The NCWG is conducting an assessment of its work from 2012 to date in contributing to child protection systems strengthening in Uganda. We shall be happy to hear your thoughts and wisdom about the operation of the CPWG. The information you provide will be used to inform the CPWG future operations and focus as a coordination mechanism for child protection systems strengthening in Uganda. Thanks for providing to us your very valuable time and for your willingness to share with us your views.

- 1) The Child Protection Working group was established in 2012 to coordinate the efforts of child protection actors, identify and respond to key national child protection issues and provide a platform for linking, sharing information and learning within and among actors. In your opinion, do you think the CPWG is relevant in coordinating Child protection efforts in Uganda? ( give reasons for your opinion)
- 2) What do you see as the strategic role of the CPWG in contributing to the child protection coordination mechanism in this ministry and country?
- 3) The CPWG works through a secretariat with one full time staff, 4 standing committee and reports to the social protection subcommittee. In your opinion, how appropriate is this structure and method of work in enabling the CPWG realize its objectives? ( give reasons for your response) . How can this method of work be improved?
- 4) The current resourcing of the CPWG interventions is through external donor support and self resourcing by its member organizations on specific activities. What is your opinion about this resourcing mechanism and in what ways can the resourcing mechanism be made more sustainable to enable the CPWG undertake its mandate.
- 5) What do you envision as the main strategic focus of the CPWG for the next 5 years?
- 6) In your opinion, which key line ministries should the CPWG engage with to strengthen the CP coordination mechanism? (suggest in what ways)

## Appendix 2: National Child Protection working group members

No.	Name of Institution/ Year Joined CPWG
1	Action for Community Development/ 2012
2	Save the Children- Kampala/ 2012
3	Children at Risk Action Network/ VIVA Africa/ 2012
4	National Association of Social Workers of Uganda/ 2013
5	PANOS Eastern Africa/ 2013
6	ANPPCAN Uganda/ 2012
7	TPO Uganda/ 2012
8	Centre for Justice Studies and Innovations/ 2013
9	Uganda Muslim Supreme Council/ 2013
10	AVSI Foundation/ SCORE Project/ 2012
11	Childs i Foundation/ 2012
12	UWESO/ 2013
13	Warchild Canada/ 2014
14	Sunshine Urban Foundation/ 2015
15	Refugee Law project/ 2014
16	Youth Social work Association/ 2014
17	Plan Uganda/ 2012
18	HIAS Refugee Trust ( Uganda)/ 2014
19	World Vision Uganda/ 2013
20	Uganda Police – CFPU/ 2014
21	Education Local Expertise Centre/ 2013
22	Uganda private Health Services/ 2014
23	Catholic Relief Services/ 2015
24	Platform for Labour Action/ 2013
25	Child Fund Uganda/ 2013
26	REPSSI/ 2013
27	WEI/ Bantwana / 2015
28	National Council for Children/ 2013
29	Alternative Care Initiatives Uganda/ 2013
30	Uganda Reproductive Health Bureau/ 2013
31	UNICEF/ 2012
32	United Nations High Commission for Refugees ( UNHCR)/ 2013
33	Terre des Hommes / 2013
34	Uganda Youth Development Link/ 2013
35	Retrak / 2013
36	Larkamissionen/ 2016
37	Lutheran World Federation/ 2016
38	4 Children/ 2016
39	Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development ( MGSLD- CPWG Focal persons)/ 2012
	MGSLD – Uganda child helpline/ 2014
	MGSLD – Expanding social protection programme/ 2014
	MGLSD – Culture and Family/ 2016
	MGLSD – Elderly and Disability/ 2016
	MGSLD – Alternative Care/ 2013
	MGLSD – OVC unit/ 2013
	MGLSD – Child Justice / 2013
MGSLD – Youth Affairs/ 2012	
40	Office of the prime Minister ( Refugee Department)/ 2014
41	The Africhild Centre/ 2013
42	Uganda Child Rights NGO Network ( UCRNN)/ 2013
43	Samaritans Purse/ 2016
44	Parenting Uganda/ 2013

No.	Name of Institution/Year Joined CPWG
45	Child Advocacy Africa/ 2013
46	FXB Uganda/ 2013
47	Justice, Law and Order Sector ( Secretariat)/ 2013
48	Dept of Social Work and Social Administration – Makerere University/ 2013
49	Nsamizi Institute of Social Development/ 2015
50	Cheshire Services Uganda/ 2016

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