Maestral FY22 Engagement and Outcomes

Changing The Way We Care℠ (CTWWC) is an initiative designed to promote safe, nurturing family care for children, including reforming national systems of care for children, strengthening families, family reunification and preventing child-family separation, development of alternative family-based care, and influencing others to build momentum towards a tipping point of change for children. Rooted in three demonstration countries – Guatemala, Kenya and Moldova – and expanding throughout Haiti, India and regionally, CTWWC works to strengthen families and reform national systems of care for children through family reunification and reintegration and alternative family-based care. CTWWC has three main strategic objectives: (1) Governments promote family care; (2) Children stay in or return to families; (3) Key stakeholder groups make meaningful commitments toward family care.

Along with Catholic Relief Services, Maestral International is a consortium member of the CTWWC initiative. Other key partners of CTWWC include Better Care Network (BCN), Faith to Action and many implementing partners, who are joined through a Global Development Alliance by three donors (MacArthur Foundation, USAID, and GHR Foundation).

With a focus on 2022-23 themes of transition of care services, development of family-based alternative care, participation of people with lived experience and disability inclusion, this report details several of the significant outcomes and program activities achieved by the work of the CTWWC Maestral team over the last year.

Photo courtesy of CTWWC.
Global and regional influence, learning and engagement

- CTWWC Maestral team members contributed significantly to global influence via the Transforming Children’s Care Global Collaborative Platform (GCP) including participating or leading the Taskforce on Family Reunification and Reintegration, the Taskforce on Strengthening Families, the Taskforce on Transitioning Residential Care, the Taskforce on Measurement, the Evidence for Impact Working Group, the Transitioning Residential Care Working Group and the Global Policy and Advocacy Working Group. CTWWC technical team members are co-chairs of the Disability and Care Reform Community of Practice, now with a membership over 50, and the Public Expenditure Community of Practice. In addition, the CTWWC senior technical advisor is co-chairing global Ukraine Care in Emergencies Working Group and the Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) regional advisor started hosting a Spanish-language transition of care services working group. Over FY22 these groups have grown in membership and a number of collaborative, inter-agency working documents reflecting learning from CTWWC will result. CTWWC Maestral team members have co-hosted four of the Platform’s webinars or events this year.

- Active engagement and facilitation of participation of faith actors, community organizations, donors and other NGOs in the U.S., in demonstration countries and beyond has resulted in increasing momentum for transition to family care. The CTWWC technical team has published a series of five case stories that share learning around the phases of transition and three stories of emotional and faith components of change, and a transition guide for organizations supporting or engaging in transition to family care with concrete examples from Mexico and Guatemala. CTWWC Maestral team members continued accompaniment of transitioning organizations and their partners from Mexico to India, as well as in the demonstration countries and with US or UK-based leadership or donors of residential care organizations. CTWWC worked with BCN on a qualitative study focused on enabling environments for transition of residential care.
services, which will be released early in FY23 and which fed into a global learning event attended by more than 100 people from across the world.

- Dialogue with the World Bank at global and demonstration country levels continued this year, including in person meetings in Nairobi, brought consideration of care reform as part of wider social protection discussions with World Bank and government partners continues into this next year.

- The Vatican Taskforce for COVID-19 included children’s care and protection in their talking points and communication to stakeholders following several meetings, sessions and presentations by CTWWC Maestral team members. CTWWC was also referred to in their release of a statement on COVID and children. CTWWC assisted the Task Force in their convening on Eastern and Southern Africa and the Impact of COVID-19 through presentations and participation. Lastly, CTWWC supported the organization and implementation of the Indaba of Catholic Religious from East Africa held in Nairobi, Kenya. This relationship is expected to strengthen further over the next year. CTWWC Maestral team members organized and delivered six webinars on safeguarding to a group of 30 students of the Pontifical Gregorian University.

- In support of the documentation of practitioner, sector, technical learning from country demonstrations and with an aim to influence care practitioners, governments and non-governmental organizations, the CTWWC technical and monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning (MEAL) team members have worked on a number of learning for influence pieces to be finalized in the coming months. They include learning on key aspects such as case management for reintegration, gatekeeping, family strengthening, parenting, transition, investment cases, family-based alternative care and more. Those already completed include a series of practitioner profiles published to BCN and featuring CTWWC care reform work across multiple countries; an eight part study on the situation of care reform in Moldova; and a series of reports on the Kenya and Guatemala household survey.
Cross-cutting participation of people with lived experience (PWLE)

- The CTWWC technical and MEAL teams really championed the PWLE work over the course of the year, including taking over coordination and oversight of child, youth and adult participation, across the initiative. The core guidance document, *Putting Child and Youth Participation at the Heart of Care Reform*, was launched this year – a collaboration between the CTWWC technical team and Lumos.

- The senior technical advisor co-supported the *Doncel LAC Regional Study on Care Leaver Associations and Activities* together with BCN. The study was published during an event designed and hosted by care leavers and youth advocates. The first of its kind in terms of regional mapping, the methodologies and tools will be available for replication in other regions of the world.

- As part of the East and Southern Africa Regional Learning Platform, the technical director organized and delivered a webinar, *Experience Matters: Bringing lived experience into national care reform*, which featured a panel of care leavers, youth and caregivers from Kenya, Rwanda and Uganda. The senior technical advisor supported an exchange between Latin American Network of Care Leavers and Guatemalan actors. This exchange helped to build the capacity of actors to launch the Guatemalan network of care leavers. A parent with lived experience of the care system from Kenya was supported to join the GCP Taskforce on Parent Advocacy.

- The CTWWC technical director worked directly in a number of participation activities including co-designing and delivering a strategic planning workshop for the Kenya Society of Care Leavers (KESCA) and presenting and facilitating discussion at a meeting of the USAID Care Leaders Council.

- National participation leads were identified in Kenya, Guatemala and Moldova this year, with help from the technical team, they were provided with technical assistance and mentoring to undertake their activity planning and implementation.

- This was a year for improving feedback mechanisms for people with lived experience to provide feedback on its engagement and recommendations for CTWWC. A joint effort between the CTWWC technical and MEAL teams resulted in use of these mechanisms across the initiative and a deeper reflection on the participation work at the end of FY22. Part of the reflection process included professional engagement of a person with lived experience to conduct reflection exercises and develop a learning product.
Cross-cutting learning for adaptive management and influence

- The CTWWC technical and MEAL teams led the initiative in a stock-taking of learning generation and use at the beginning of FY22. This led to the development of a learning agenda in Guatemala and better coordinated and thoughtful learning activities in Kenya, Moldova, and beyond.

- The CTWWC technical and MEAL teams expended considerable effort supporting demonstration country teams to share their learning. This included supporting Kenya and Guatemala teams to prepare abstracts and presentations for regional and global conferences, events and speaking opportunities (ESA-RLP webinars, LAC regional exchanges, country-to-country visits, Catholic Relief Services (CRS) global presentations, and other conferences). Three webinars on the Separated Childhood themed edition of the Global Studies of Childhood journal were organized, which also featured an article written by Sully Santos, Kelley Bunkers, and Vanesa Guillermo from CTWWC Guatemala.

- Team members supported, organized and/or delivered a significant number of the CTWWC Monthly Learning Webinars. Topics included: disability in focus, year three review highlights, community workforce, scaling and transition of care services. In addition, the team organized and led the book club sessions on Day of General Discussion Children’s Survey and Innovations in Care.

- CTWWC’s work was featured in 3 of 4 of Maestral’s external-facing newsletters, including articles on: Participation of children and young people in the design of the household survey; the importance of integrating; and sharing the journey of transitioning from residential care to family and community-based care with Sisters of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd in Mexico. Team members also shared program learning to CRS country programs.

- CTWWC technical team members from Maestral designed and delivered several CTWWC learning-sharing virtual workshops for the global Keeping Children Safe, Faith and Child Safeguarding global virtual conference and are preparing to support a similar regional conference in LAC.

- This year saw a huge effort by the team to finalize a number of learning products. In the first three-quarters, 42 learning products were completed and an incredible 23,926 downloads and views of those products on BCN had been tracked.
Technical support and assistance

- Technical support and assistance was provided across the initiative from country demonstrations to global influence. Much of the year focused on key programmatic areas including family strengthening, transition of care services, faith engagement, disability inclusion, people with lived experience participation, and child protection and safeguarding. With a small team of senior technical advisors and other discreet scopes of technical assistance (31 scopes of work), the following were delivered:
  - Direct technical support to Guatemala, Haiti, India, Kenya and Moldova on a variety of thematic areas;
  - Accompaniment of the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd in Mexico in the transition process;
  - Priority activities of regional influence within the LAC region;
  - Safeguarding training, development of safeguarding tools, review of safeguarding policies and development and roll out of guidance for ethical storytelling;
  - Family strengthening framework, guidance, tools and ongoing technical support;
  - Disability inclusion training and job aids;
  - Series of COVID-19 case studies;
  - Development of materials for influence including UNGA briefs, webinars and blogs for the East and Southern Africa Regional Learning Platform, co-led by UNICEF, country care profiles and a Moldova/Eastern Europe public finance conference concept;
  - Development of the monitoring and evaluation framework for Kenya’s National Care Reform Strategy; and
  - Development of county level investment case tools and guidance in Kenya.

- One of the major technical accomplishments in the last year was the development of a framework for scaling care reform and related guidance and training. This resulted in Guatemala and Kenya scaling care reform strategies and will inform strategic priorities for CTWWC going forward. Maestral consultants led two scaling workshops in Kenya and Guatemala resulting in those country scaling strategies.

- CTWWC’s technical leaders stepped up to respond to the war in Ukraine, responding quickly with the guidance, Critical Considerations for Movement of Children During a Humanitarian Crisis (downloaded more than 1300 times in March/April alone) and providing three of the first virtual trainings early in the crisis: Safe Responses During Emergency Situations, Psychosocial First Aid for Frontline Workers and Psychosocial First Aid for Foster Families. Review of social media parenting messages for parents caring for children in the Ukraine crisis was completed. Oxford University has reported these messages reached 9.3 million people.

- Several important technical packages were finalized and published during over the last year. These include:
  - National Care System Assessments: Guidance to conducting a participatory self-assessment to inform national strategic planning;
  - A Toolkit for Disability Inclusion in Care Reform and accompanying training modules; and
  - The CTWWC Safeguarding Toolbox with updated training materials. The team organized refresher trainings for CTWWC team members and was contracted by USAID Kenya to support a review of PEPFAR partner safeguarding policies and provide training to over 35 Kenyan organizations.
Monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEAL)

- The senior advisor for MEAL led the global MEAL team and a strong agenda around intentional reflection, output and outcome data collection, using evidence for adaptive management, learning and evidence building. There continued to be a focus on building capacity for MEAL within the CTWWC global team and our partners, as well as a sharing of key methodologies and tools with the wider care reform sector.

- A major output of the MEAL team early in FY22 was publication and dissemination of the findings from the CTWWC year three review including the household survey. Results from the review were utilized to inform planning and adaptation of activities throughout the year. The team expects to finish a video aimed at sharing findings back to case workers, families and children early in FY23 and to help launch the next round of the survey.

- Routine monitoring, including a methodology called “Outcome Harvesting,” continued to drive CTWWC throughout the last year to ensure that information informed our work and is there to influence change in the sector. A mid-year analysis and review of outcome harvesting data showed the value of this approach as a monitoring tool, which led to use of the data and to refresher trainings for the Kenya and India teams. New this year was the development and piloting of a “Champion-ness framework” to identify, accompany, and monitor care reform champions to ensure sustainability of influence work. Monitoring approaches for the transition of residential care were further revised in the last year through adaptation for use in Mexico and the review of findings from Kenya, Guatemala and Moldova. It is clear that flexibility is needed for monitoring a process that is very iterative and varied depending on the facility and context.

- Working with Johns Hopkins University, CTWWC developed research into use of the UNICEF/Washington Group Child Functioning Module to understand prevalence of disability in child care institutions in Kenya and to explore the use of this tool in a non-family setting. The findings from this disability measurement research will be compiled and shared early in the coming months.

- In addition, the MEAL advisors organized a number of learning sessions for the wider CTWWC team, including virtual sessions on learning and developing learning agendas, a number of MEAL workshops, outcome harvesting training, and a learning webinar on the year three review findings and recommendations. Via participation in the Evidence Working Group of the GCP, CTWWC’s MEAL work was shared.
Maestral FY22 CTWWC Team

Philip Goldman, Maestral President & CTWWC Steering Committee

Beth Bradford, CTWWC Technical Director

Joanna Wakia, CTWWC Senior Technical Advisor MEAL

Sully Santos de Uclés, CTWWC LAC Regional Advisor and Technical Advisor for Guatemala

Kelley Bunkers, CTWWC Senior Technical Advisor

Anna Jolly, Maestral Senior Associate

Doreen Alaro, Maestral Senior Associate

Emmanuel Wireko Antwi-Boasiako Maestral Senior Associate

Francesca Stuer, Maestral Senior Associate

Innocent Yekeye, Maestral Senior Associate

Janet du Preez, Maestral Human Resources and Development Advisor

Jushi Gitau, Maestral Associate

Khadijah Madihi, Maestral Associate

Lenora Borg, Maestral Senior Associate

Mari Hickmann, Maestral Senior Associate

Peta-Gaye Bookall, Maestral Senior Associate

Siân Long, Maestral Senior Associate

Shar Kurtishi, Maestral Senior Associate

Nicole Williams, Maestral Operations Officer

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