

An approach to building consensus, collaboration, and scale: the Transforming Children's Care Collaborative



Overview of the Transforming Children's Care Collaborative (TCCC)

The Transforming Children's Care Collaborative (TCCC) was formed out of successful joint advocacy efforts for the 2019 UNGA Resolution and Key Recommendations. Seeing the influence and impact that global-level collaboration could yield and following clear interest expressed by a broad group of actors to strengthen sectoral cooperation and collaboration, Better Care Network and partners, including CTWWC, launched this online platform in late 2020.

The TCCC set out to:

1. Initiate a collaborative, non-competitive place to discuss frameworks and guidance on care reform;
2. Build consensus on care reform goals, key terms and definitions, and develop useful tools;
3. Provide a forum for coordination and sharing among diverse care reform actors

About this case study

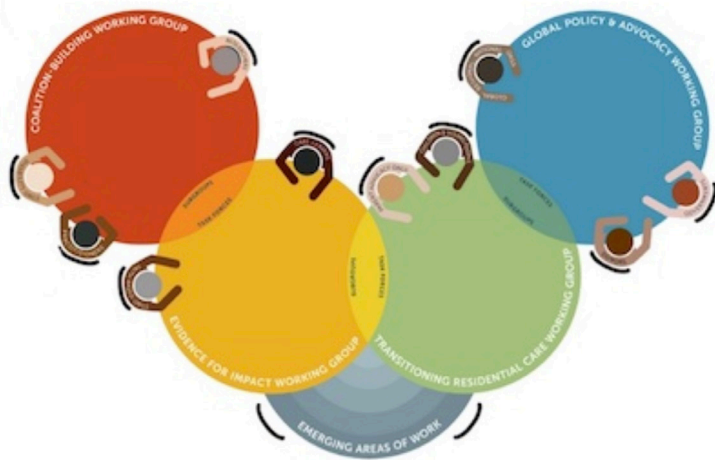
This case study was developed by an external evaluation team as part of the Changing the Way We Care (CTWWC) initiative's five-year evaluation. In addition to looking at CTWWC's work overall, the evaluation created cases around five select approaches which the initiative used and/or supported to influence change in order to understand the approaches' effectiveness in supporting care reform and wider care sector collaboration. The information presented in this case comes from the evaluation team's analysis of key documents, monitoring data, three key informant interviews, initial input from CTWWC staff, and a final validation workshop with input from Better Care Network.

This case is not meant to serve as an evaluation of the Transforming Children's Care Collaborative (TCCC), though a deeper and more holistic review of the TCCC platform would likely be useful in the future. The findings from this analysis and data collection are presented here as one input to inform CTWWC and others' understanding of the role of the platform, how it contributes to care reform, and to help build the case for and encourage greater investment in care reform as a global movement.

The additional case studies as part of CTWWC's five-year evaluation, and many more resources on care reform from CTWWC, are available on [CTWWC's website](#) and [Better Care Network](#).

The platform is a no-fee membership model, granting members access to a diverse global community of stakeholders engaged in child protection and care reform inclusive of civil society organizations, donors, faith-based organizations, disability-rights and other advocates, government actors, and others. The platform can be easily used in over 100 languages, though uploaded documents and resources remain in the language of origin.

The TCCC is a space that facilitates direct communication among members about their work; provides access to resources; and hosts webinars, online training, and other learning events. Members have the opportunity to join one or more of four thematic working groups: (1) evidence for impact, (2) transitioning residential care, (3) coalition-building, and (4) global policy and advocacy. The TCCC is the first platform of its kind in both size and scope and to center collective work in the technical areas of care reform. It is a place where care reform practitioners and organizations can share practices, tools, and experience with a wider audience and bring new practices into their work.



Why a global platform?

Two overarching themes emerge from data around the role the TCCC plays in global care reform, together making a strong case for supporting its unique role and purpose in the global care reform movement.

The TCCC increases collaboration, connecting those in care reform around the world and offering an antidote to an often disjointed and competitive sector. Collaboration moves actors from siloed priorities and efforts toward joint work in service of common standards and goals. The platform also offers an opportunity for organizations and actors with shared goals to advocate together for greater impact in shaping a global agenda (e.g. at the UN).

The TCCC also provides an opportunity to scale care reform efforts and learning such that it is promoted broadly across countries and in different spheres. Global data and evidence helps to document lessons learned from various approaches and applied tools, as well as identify gaps in knowledge. The TCCC aims to maximize inclusion of geographically diverse actors who contribute different experiences and perspectives and cross-sector participation, making space for a variety of actors

What does it take to establish and sustain the TCCC?

The following is an outline of some key resources that have been instrumental in establishing the TCCC, as well as those that stakeholders identified as being necessary to continue to build and sustain this approach. This is a non-exhaustive list, and the resources needed for the onset and early period of the TCCC may continue to shift over time, requiring different elements to sustain that approach. Still, there is use in making explicit what goes into such an approach in order to facilitate proper resourcing.

Relationships



- Interpersonal relationships were foundational in starting the platform and building initial membership; for example, in eliciting responses to a survey to understand the needs of the care reform sector at a global level.
- Strong relationships continue to drive participation in the TCCC. Overall effectiveness of the platform is predicated on buy-in and clearly making the case for direct benefit to individual members.



Time

- Management and coordination of the TCCC has thus far been held by three individuals whose contributions do not yet equate to a part-time position. According to key informants, a full-time position solely focused on managing and coordinating the TCCC would more aptly contribute to sustaining functionality of and participation in the TCCC.
- Time costs also exist for current and potential members with many experiencing competing priorities in daily work. Clear incentives are needed for time contributed to learning and participation within the platform, or action and input from community-level actors can stall due to competition for people's time.
- Building consensus on a global level are objectives that have long and not always one-directional timelines for change. Collaborative members' sustained engagement and effort over time is needed to continue to realize progress toward long-term goals.



Expertise

- The TCCC working groups and other events have shown that experienced, collaborative facilitators are necessary to lead. People are needed who are able to tap into the thoughts and ideas of and draw out learnings from a group of diverse actors, while building consensus and moving agenda items and action forward. This is a rare skill set, requiring technical expertise, credibility, and a wide network of relationships.
- The current website platform and virtual events require technical expertise inclusive of regular site maintenance and upkeep, particularly allowing for multi-language access and ease of use among members. Translation and interpretation services have also helped facilitate global membership and full participation in TCCC events.

A closer look: the TCCC Transitioning Residential Care Working Group and Spanish-speaking subgroup

In order to go deeper into the effectiveness of the TCCC, interviews and secondary data analysis were conducted specifically around the TCCC Transitioning Residential Care Working Group and its more recently established Spanish-speaking subgroup. The following presents a brief overview of these groups and how they have helped further the TCCC's strategy toward greater collaboration and scale.



Overview: Transitioning Residential Care Working Group

The idea behind one of the four working groups of the TCCC, the Transitioning Residential Care Working Group (hereafter the Transition Working Group), was an initial motivator for proceeding with full platform development. Knowing the rich experience and variety of actors involved in transitioning residential care, the formation of this working group was designated as a space for discussion and to create a common starting point for developing a transition framework.

The Transition Working Group's purpose is to promote and scale up good practice in transitioning residential care and improve collaboration, coordination and the capture and dissemination of knowledge towards that goal. It is framed by the following objectives, stated on the TCCC:

- **Collating and disseminating learning:** Encouraging and actively participating in the capture of knowledge and lessons learned.

- **Facilitating peer learning and support:** Enabling peer-to-peer exchange between practitioners involved in transitioning residential care services.
- **Consensus building:** Developing a common position around key aspects of transition in order to enhance interagency collaboration.
- **Resource development:** Drawing on and responding to evidence and learning, providing interagency input on the development of open-source frameworks and resources to guide strategic approaches to transition.

These objectives are rooted in a defined strategy that emphasizes ongoing maintenance of an overview of the state of evidence, gaps and opportunities related to practices within transitioning residential care. The Transition Working Group maintains a composition of platform members from organizations and practitioners with direct experience and involvement in transitioning individual residential care services, seeking to amplify perspectives of practitioners.

Overview: Transition Working Group Spanish-speaking subgroup

The default operating language of the Transition Working Group is English, at times inhibiting collaboration with members from other primary language groups and taking significant time in simultaneous translation in gatherings. This reality, coupled with an emerging need to accommodate growing interest in transition and increased representation from stakeholders in Latin American and the Caribbean (LAC) countries, led to the creation of the Spanish speaking subgroup in March, 2022.

Facilitated by a CTWWC staff member, the subgroup has grown to over 120 participants guided by the same goals as the wider Transition Working Group, with a specific focus on the LAC region. The formation of the subgroup has led to an overall increase in participation of LAC members. The TCCC Disability Community of Practice was also invited to participate in the Spanish-speaking subgroup in order to incorporate a focus on disability inclusion. Overall, the Spanish-speaking subgroup allows for:

- Greater focus on sensitization of practitioners in the region about the importance of transitioning residential care;
- A capacity building mechanism for technical assistance within the region;
- Improved links to and coordination of technical support.

Contributions of Transition Working Group toward Collaboration and Scale

The progress made toward the Transition Working Group's four objectives directly support the TCCC's effectiveness in building collaboration and scaling care reform, with building consensus, and peer-learning.

- **Developed resources** and **disseminated learning** on care reform to increase its scale, including documenting transitions and lessons learned. The Spanish-speaking subgroup has developed case studies about transition within different LAC countries, translated tools and case studies created in the wider Transition Working Group from English into Spanish, and has put together process and costing tools for transition.
- Increased **peer-learning** as members share tips with one another regularly, particularly during the process of co-creating guidance and new tools for transition. This is an area key informants deemed as more nascent, with progress being in the works with a Training of Trainers event held in August, 2023. The Spanish-speaking subgroup has specifically led to more active participation and input from LAC members.
- **Built consensus** among members, which was in large part needed first to frame the other objectives. Questions addressed within the group include when transition starts and stops, and what level of change is required to consider transition vs. reintegration. According to Transition Working Group leadership, it is difficult to gain support (political, funding, etc.) for transition without these definitions.

“It’s the first time we are having a space where we speak the same language and the vision is the same.”

-Key informant involved in the TCCC Transition Working Group

One informant noted that what is left are intersecting debates that cross into other working groups, including what defines residential care:

“What’s left here are intersecting debates with the broader policy and advocacy groups about what defines residential care. Some of those kinds of things- we’ve had to kind of skirt them. When these things come up we bring them to the other group as well. We don’t want to decide these things in isolation. It intersects with our work but it is not fully ours to debate out.”

-Key informant involved in the TCCC Transition Working Group

Overall, the Transition Working Group and Spanish-speaking subgroup have made important strides toward increasing work on transitioning institutional to family-based care. This work has strongly demonstrated increased collaboration across actors within the care reform sector. Greater consensus, learning and resources provide useful tools and evidence to scale this work. Key questions around scaling, in particular, remain for the Transition Working Group, including:

- How to scale the human-resources needed for transition?
- How to prioritize facilities to transition and which areas should be the government’s responsibility and which areas should be handled by community groups?
- How to make sure transitions support larger plans for care system improvement, linking individual facility service transition to national level reforms? How to go from an ad-hoc, donor-driven approach to one which is driven by national care reform agendas?

Considerations to strengthen and sustain this approach

The TCCC has a strong start and firm foundation on which to build for the future. The data on this approach highlighted a few factors to consider as the TCCC continues its work.

1. Cultivating ownership and movement at the global level.

An asset of the platform is that it is not specifically branded as the work of any one organization, fostering a greater level of interest and participation across many organizations. Alongside this dynamic, however, the lack of a singular body driving the effort can also limit resources, creating a collective assumption that it is someone else's responsibility to lead and fund the work. Until there is solid clarity of the operational procedure of collective ownership, sustaining momentum and cultivating individual ownership will be a challenge.

Further, there is a balance needed in leveraging the many positive aspects of a diverse group of stakeholders with the reality that it can be difficult to move action at a global level because of the immense contextual differences. Likewise, it can be challenging to convey the utility of a global working group if many of the group's activities are only actionable at a regional or local level.

Consider:

- Discerning and communicating the unique value proposition of the platform for specific collective action and advocacy efforts that increase collaboration and scale for transforming children's care.

- Continuing working groups since smaller and more task-oriented groups can more easily get to specificity in forward moving action and creating a sense of ownership. Take opportunities within the working groups to amplify the case for both regional and global level work and how the contribution of each strengthens the whole.
- Cultivate ownership in affirming all members as experts, approaching them as partners rather than beneficiaries. Outreach strategies can offer ways to emphasize these actions and to clearly lay out the positive benefits of being part of the platform, thus instilling ownership.
- While hiring consultants to assist with certain aspects of the work (policy development, for example), can save time, doing so can also lead to lower use. If members have not invested their own time, thinking, and resources to the development they may not as easily be able to feel the immediate relevance. Finding the balance between time available and cultivation of ownership is worthy of further exploration.

2. Incentivizing participation to sustain and diversify active engagement

Sustained engagement in working groups of the TCCC competes with demands on time and capacity of both members and potential members. People often have a desire to share and to participate in collective learning, but may not be able to carve out the time needed to do so. Practitioners within the care sector face daily competing priorities, particularly for smaller organizations (or individuals within these organizations) with smaller budgets. Asking for contribution to a working group may not be perceived as beneficial enough to divert staff resources to participate, especially if they are already carrying out innovative solutions within their context.

An additional aspect impacting participation is the meeting format. In the beginning years of the COVID-19 pandemic, virtual platforms were the sole vehicle for facilitating platform connection—a lifeline for continued learning and collaboration. Now with the ability to more safely gather, virtual meeting fatigue is apparent, as is the desire to work in-person. There is often richer brainstorming and consensus building to be had with in-person work. For instance, one interview informant shared about traveling to a religious congregation that they had been working with for 1.5 years; she reflected that the group was able to make more progress in one week of in-person time than the full 1.5 years on Zoom.

Consider:

- Incorporating a hybrid model in which some of the collaborative work is done in-person. While travel incurs a high cost, it is often more generative and efficient than virtual meetings, potentially saving costs in the long run.
- Continuing efforts to streamline information that is shared with working group members. Be clear about what is being shared and why, tie it back into the objectives of the working group and how it might be used by working group members.
- Leveraging the good governance already in place within the TCCC for the purposes of exploring and eventually creating a framework for membership incentive. By and large, the majority of platform members engage passively, with a singular motivation to not miss something that may be

relevant to them. There has to be very clear relevance and incentive for their involvement.

Diversifying funding streams to sustain TCCC working groups

The working groups serve as a public good, generating work that is often affirmed in the public sphere, even by potential donors. However, this acknowledgement of the platform's public good often does not translate into direct funding of the work. Additionally, relying solely on a paid membership model is not likely to sustain the entirety of the platform.¹ A concerted effort is needed to diversify funding streams in order to sustain the presence of the platform and its working groups. Within this challenge remains the question of who holds these costs and an acknowledgement that relying on one or a few large actors for leadership and funding puts the platform's collective ownership at risk.

Consider:

- Being explicit about the costs and expertise needed to maintain the platform and its working groups, emphasizing the efficacy of this approach and including human resources that may thus far be hidden, under-resourced and/or unpaid.
- Learning from other global communities of practice on different funding models and sustainability practices.²

¹ Budget information was not analyzed as part of the evaluation, however the sentiment that membership fees were insufficient to fully sustain the platform came up in two separate interviews, one internal to the TCCC and one interview with the director of another organization with a similar global membership platform.

² This evaluation connected CTWWC with ExpandNet and Alliance for Peacebuilding as organizations offering comparable structures in other sectors, and would also recommend connecting with Community Health Impact Coalition for sharing strategies and cross-learning.

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Need to know more?

Contact Changing the Way We Care at info@ctwwc.org
Or visit [changingthewaywecare.org](https://www.changingthewaywecare.org)

Data Sources

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