

Group 1: Social Protection and strengthening Social Services for supporting families to care for their children

1. Definition of social protection and social services

a) Why should the system exist?

To:

- create a socially protective environment where children's rights are protected;
- support families to care for their children and children have access fundamental basic services

b) Who is the system for?

- Vulnerable children - How do you identify vulnerable children?
- Currently institutions are responding to other institutions – should be supporting primary carers (families and communities)

What is it (currently should be)?

A system consisting of:

- Framework – laws, policies and procedures
- Implementation – provision of services
- Management – monitoring and evaluation

Approach of system

- Currently system is **responsive** to crisis (neglect, displacement, separation) and pre-existing problems; it should be also focused on **prevention** on harm (address risk factors)
- System should be rights based - a system of services and resources for supporting children, their families and communities fulfill, respect and protect children's rights

Who is responsible?

Government

- Social Welfare departments/ministries
- Trained social welfare officers
- Currently not coordinated
 - o Linkages with other areas
 - o Networks between partners
 - o Networks between national and local governments
- Government sets standards for NGO's and communities providing services

2. What are the problems?

a) Approach of current system

- Not rights based – should focus on individual right holders
- Not preventative
- Delivery is centralized – not provision at community level
- Not multisectoral – not connective

b) Gaps in existing framework for system

- No adequate laws, policies, regulation

c) Inadequate implementation of existing system

- No guidelines
- No human and financial resources
- No professional structures

3. Response/strategies

Govt has responsibility to:

- Ensure the provision of the service either directly or through families community, NGOs, FBOs, local leaders and private agencies;
- Provide overall framework including laws, policies, guidelines, monitoring (indicators and data) and accountability mechanisms;
- Provide adequate resources (financial and human); and
- Evaluate the impact of interventions to learn, adapt and replicate good practices to scale

4. Recommendation at national/regional level

Goal:

- National and international (WB, ADB) budgets provide resources to social sector/services

Strategy:

- Economic development for developing countries
- Cost of inaction - demonstrate interrelation between provision of social services and the delivery of other key services, including education, health;
- Cost efficiency of prevention of separation of children/families through social service and provision of institutional care
- Sharing experiences and good models between governments

Goal:

- Refocusing systems/interventions towards prevention of separation of families and children and supporting families to care for children

Strategy:

- Understanding (complete and clear data) on why children are separated from parents and existing mechanisms of protection
- Recognize the need to support/strengthen existing protection mechanisms at local level
- Development of overall policy framework aiming to support families to prevent separation and to support reintegration of children in institutions to their families
- Refocusing resources from institutions to families on the basis of the abovementioned policy
- Implementation - provision of social safety nets

Goal:

- Ensure cross-sectoral approach

Strategies:

- Social Welfare Ministries/Departments should coordinate the delivery of services for vulnerable families and children through collaboration with other ministries (Health, Education, Justice)

Goal:

- System implemented at all levels

Strategy:

- Build capacity of local partners (NGO's, CBO's, religious organizations and leaders, community elders, volunteers) to deliver social intervention/services;
- Build the capacity of para-professionals and improve professional networks;

- Social work should be understood as an absolute fundamental service; refocusing of Social Welfare budgets from institutions to skilled workers

5. Support needed from regional/global level