

Meeting report of the Uganda learning and consultation Workshop

**Theme: Reflection on efforts aiming at Strengthening
Child Care reform in Uganda**



**11th and 12th November 2014
Grand Imperial Hotel - Kampala**

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List of Acronyms

ACI	Alternative Care Initiative
BCN	Better Care Network
CCI	Child Care Institutions
NCPWG	National Child Protection Working Group
CSO	Civil Society Organisations
DCOF	Displaced Children and Orphans Fund
FC	Foster Care
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MGLSD	Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development
MoIA	Ministry of Internal Affairs
MSH	Management Sciences for Health
OVC	Orphans and Vulnerable Children
PSWO	Probation and Social Welfare Officers
TDH	Terre des Hommes
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
USAID	United States Aid Agency for International Development
UWESO	Uganda Women’s Effort to Save Orphans

Executive Summary

In 2013 the Better Care Network (BCN) - a multi-agency global network facilitating active information exchange, collaboration and advocacy on the issue of children without adequate family care - commenced a regional interagency initiative in eastern and southern Africa to build and share knowledge and to advocate for care reform and technically sound policy and practices around strengthening families and providing appropriate alternative care in the region.

The BCN regional interagency initiative is working closely with Kenya, Rwanda and Uganda in order to identify opportunities for closer collaboration around child care reform and family strengthening in each of these countries.

As part of this process a consultative workshop was convened in Uganda on the 11th and 12th of November 2014 by BCN, the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MGLSD) and the National Child Protection Working Group (CPWG) – an interagency platform of national child protection stakeholders.

The national consultative workshop sought to jointly identify knowledge, awareness and technical gaps which may be hindering children's care reform and identifying national priorities for action. The main focus areas of the consultation were:

- strengthening capacity for family strengthening and alternative care;
- evidence building and sharing around family strengthening and alternative care;
- strengthening advocacy for family strengthening and alternative care.

The workshop in Uganda also set out to address the three main BCN focus areas in the region and was combined with a morning session of presentation and discussion around the theme *“Linking child poverty analysis to child protection programming in Uganda: Research briefing paper based on Situation Analysis of Child Poverty and deprivation in Uganda”*, convened by the Child Protection Working Group. During this morning session the links between and implications of child poverty and child protection were considered.

The action priorities identified during this two-day meeting resulted in a stronger understanding of who is doing what in child care reform, the identification of key progress and challenges in child care reform as well as priority areas for action. The rich information, insights and collaborative discussions facilitated by the workshop can help pave the way for a stronger, multi-agency, multi-sectoral, coordinated action plan to support child care reform in Uganda.

Below is a summary of the priorities for action identified by the workshop participants and those marked with an asterisk * were considered top priorities by the participants:

1. Strengthening capacity for family strengthening and alternative care

Implementation capacity and coordination

- Develop a detailed implementation strategy for the Alternative Care Framework and develop and support a clear structure for its implementation. This should be a formal implementation body which is strengthened to include checks and balances at various levels. This would include undertaking an assessment of current structures needs to be undertaken and roles and responsibilities defined;
- Strengthen the CPWG, chaired by the MGLSD, as the coordination body;
- Strengthen the judicial services at all levels in relation to children;
- Work with local structures, for instance at the district level, to increase coordination between local actors in planning and implementing programmes. This will prevent the duplication of services and enhance collaborative efforts;
- Strengthen the coordination team to build evidence around alternative care of children.

Budgeting

- Work to ensure that additional funds are allocated for child protection by the Ministry of Finance, including ensuring children have access to appropriate care and justice;
- Develop a resource implication paper (human resources and financial resources) for the implementation of the alternative care framework;
- Undertake an investment in children analysis which shows the returns on spending on children's protection and care versus not spending in these areas;
- Increase coordination and collaboration around the allocation of resources which are relevant to children needs to be increased with a view to increasing the efficient nature of child related funding – for example, funding more programmes which are based on evidence and learning and avoiding funding similar initiatives.

Human Resources

- Strengthen human resources including staffing, capacities and facilitation;
- Support more holistic training for child protection which targets child protection units for example in health, education and police.

Families, communities and individuals

- Provide training to parents in creative parenting including forms of positive parenting and a whole range of life skills training (which can also target young people);
- Support additional community level family support groups to enable families to support each other and enhance the community aspect of raising children;
- Provide more support for inter-generational parenting;
- Provide training for economic and social empowerment of the household, with an emphasis on household livelihood capacity building. This could also be considered as an entry point with the potential to reduce domestic violence;

- Train additional para-professionals to ensure ongoing community sensitisation around issues related to the care of children;
- Advocating for having a deputy chair in charge of child wellbeing and protection at Local Council 1 (the lowest government administrative unit at village level);
- Provide training and skilling to community structures in child protection and care in particular and link them to government structures at sub-county (i.e. Assistant and Community Development Officers) on a continuous basis;
- Create and strengthen Community Child Protection Committees and link them to the implementation of alternative care framework;
- Package information for community dissemination and to support meaningful community dialogue;
- Build a referral structure within the community so that family members know who to go to for specific services.

Especially vulnerable children

- Support the development of byelaws that integrate vulnerable children into communities, with a special focus on children in CCIs;
- Support the increased participation of all children, including especially vulnerable children, in community decision making. This includes educating parents and relatives on diverse children's issues and children's participation and supporting programmes which can help build children's confidence to participate and link with other children and the community, for instance through sports programmes;
- Provide or support more positive role models for children with disabilities and to mainstream psychosocial support into policy and programming around child protection and children's care;

2. Evidence building and sharing around family strengthening and alternative care

Reporting

- Harmonise and simplify community level data collection and reporting tools on children's protection and wellbeing and disseminate these tools at all levels;
- Generally, all data and reporting tools also need to be harmonised;
- Document issues from a community perspective;
- Share information more effectively with all frontline human resources at community and district levels.

Data collection

- Set up a detailed database on children which uses or links to various forms of data being collected around children (e.g. education management, police, birth registrations);
- Undertake periodic baselines on children's protection and wellbeing;
- Undertake systematic documentation of children in CCIs into a centralized database;

- Harmonise information on OVC within the national OVC Management Information System with data being collected on children’s alternative care.

Research

- Increase financial resources for research around child protection and alternative care; including data collection; monitoring and tracing systems and the re-election of Local Councils;
- Invest in local research around alternative care and the continuum of care and encourage increased sharing of findings among key stakeholders;
- Undertake research, including “action research” on programmes around alternative care to identify those which could be replicated;

Coordination

- Invest in and strengthen coordination of alternative care evidence collection and implementation, for instance create a central repository of alternative care information, resources and actors;
- Develop a central data collection point on child protection learning and data, and which can help increase improved programming and avoid duplications;
- Systematically and professionally share generated evidence with decision makers across all levels.

3. Strengthening advocacy for family strengthening and alternative care

Advocacy targeting government

- Generate and support top level political commitment beyond the MGLSD to deinstitutionalise the child care system in Uganda. Whilst there is already a coordinating Alternative Care unit within MGLSD it is not clear to what extent it is able to reach out to and coordinate with other sector Ministries;
- Strengthen joint leadership for joint planning, M&E and law enforcement;
- Identify a “flag bearer” – namely a high profile person to champion progress in addressing child care issues within government;
- Focus more strongly on advocacy engagement with policy makers.

Advocacy targeting communities and districts

- Undertaking actions which create awareness around vulnerable children in communities, especially those at risk of separation, targeting gate keepers, local authorities, opinion leaders and influencers such as teachers, police and health workers.
- Develop additional strategies and support to engage communities further around community dialogue and actions addressing issues of child care and protection on a continuous basis.
- Supporting a “rebuilding” of a family values system which can ensure that children are taught family and community values at an early stage;
- Creating child-friendly communities where children are encouraged to participate and their voices are heard.
- Facilitating the development of community byelaws around child welfare and linking these to national laws and guidelines
- Undertake advocacy for the recognition of the important role of probation and social welfare officers (PSWO) at the district level and increase their

number. Currently there are only 40 functional PSWOs in 112 districts. PSWO should also negotiate budgets and explain their roles clearly;

Advocacy targeting stakeholders and evidence based advocacy

- Disseminate and raise awareness of existing laws and frameworks on Alternative Care and other relevant areas.
- Utilise existing child protection networks to better coordinate and create a united voice for advocacy;
- Create more awareness platforms around children's alternative care;
- Identify key advocacy issues related to family strengthening and alternative care and build a case for advocacy initiatives using evidence to back up the messages.

Advocacy targeting foreigners

- Institute a "children are not for tourism" campaign which can address the phenomenon of "orphanage tourism" where foreigners visit or volunteer in Ugandan orphanages.

Background and introduction

In sub-Saharan Africa, a number of countries have undertaken significant action to reform national policies and systems concerning the care for children. With this growing momentum for child care reform, there is a significant opportunity to support country-level initiatives by increasing knowledge, political will and capacity; sharing promising policies and practices; facilitating targeted technical support; and encouraging national and regional collaborations and peer support mechanisms.

In 2013 and building on this momentum, the Better Care Network (BCN) initiated a regional inter-agency initiative in eastern and southern Africa with the primary objective of improving the knowledge and capacities of regional and national stakeholders to develop and implement care reform policies and practices that strengthen families and improve alternative care services. The initiative builds and shares knowledge and advocates for technically sound policy and practices for quality family and alternative care in the region.

Following an analysis that BCN conducted, the following countries have been selected to be the first three priority countries of BCN Regional Initiative: Kenya, Rwanda and Uganda. The initiative will provide focused support, in an initial phase, to those priority countries for action that include Uganda.

A two-day, national consultation workshop was convened by BCN, the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MGLSD) and the National Child Protection Working Group (CPWG) - an interagency platform of national child protection stakeholders in Uganda - in November 2014. The purpose was to jointly identify knowledge, awareness and technical gaps that may be hindering the child care reform and identify priority actions for Uganda under the Alternative Care Framework.

The national priority actions were identified within the following areas: evidence building and sharing, capacity strengthening and advocacy related to family strengthening and alternative care.

The workshop was also combined with a morning of presentation and discussion around the report *“Linking child poverty analysis to child protection programming in Uganda: Research briefing paper based on a situation analysis of child poverty and deprivation in Uganda”*, convened by the Child Protection Working Group. During this morning session the links between and implications of child poverty and child protection were considered.

There were 63 participants at the two-day workshop representing 42 institutions and agencies, including government, UNICEF, donor agencies, academia and international and national civil society organisations (CSO), who came together to identify priorities for action in order to support Uganda’s national child care reform process.

The purpose of this report is to summarise the key points, themes, priorities and any actions identified around family strengthening and alternative care for children from the two days of presentations and discussions.

Workshop approach and methodology

The consultation workshop used three main approaches:

1. Sharing information from different stakeholders on what has been undertaken and learned so far around family strengthening and alternative care for children;
2. Group discussions which identified key issues and priorities for action going forward;
3. A review of the key issues and recommendations emanating from panel and group discussions and indications of where organisations are already or are potentially interested in engaging.

Information sharing was facilitated through the organisation of four thematic panels of presenters (the national context - overview of child care reform in Uganda, Capacity development; building and sharing evidence; strengthening evidence-based advocacy) who first presented on their respective initiatives or mandates and then participated in a moderated question and answer session.

Group discussions focusing on each of the four main themes followed the panel sessions. Two different methods were used.

1. *“Group discussions”*: Group facilitators were identified who then “convened” a group discussion for about 45 minutes around a particular sub-theme or key question. Key points were recorded and three priority actions were identified and presented to the meeting. These actions were also recorded.
2. *“Café conversations”*: “Café owners” were identified and allocated a “café” space and a key question. The rest of the participants circulated around the various cafés engaging in group conversations. The café owners recorded key points and each of the participants also recorded at least one key issue or point which stood out for them. These points were presented to the meeting and recorded.

At the end of the two days the main issues, points and recommendations were exhibited on the walls of the meeting room and participants were asked to review these issues and indicate where their agency had an interest in engaging. The purpose of this exercise was not to elicit organisational commitments as such, but rather to indicate or map which stakeholders might be able and willing to collaborate around a particular issue.

DAY ONE

I. Session one: Child poverty, child protection and child care

The morning session was dedicated to looking at the links between child poverty and child protection. A preamble was given by Ms Marica Garde of UNICEF which highlighted the need to understand the difference between child poverty and adult poverty. This was followed by a presentation of the report *Linking child poverty analysis to child protection programming in Uganda: Research briefing paper based on Situation Analysis of Child Poverty and deprivation in Uganda, 2014*.

The CPWG also added that discussions and main recommendations around linking child poverty and child protection programming will inform a publically shared issues paper on child care and protection to be developed by the National Child Protection Working Group in consultation with stakeholders. According to the CPWG child care and protection is a sub-sector that is currently allocated relatively little within the national budget, therefore the extensive sharing of information is critical in building the necessary momentum among the public to advocate for increased government investment in child care and protection.

a) Comments and observations by the consultant

Whilst it is generally understood that poverty, child protection and child care are linked in a number of ways, this recent analysis of child poverty tells us that more reliable evidence which can help us understand the precise dynamics at play and the causal pathways leading to children entering or requiring alternative care is still needed. More robust evidence of this nature will lead to a strengthening of child friendly poverty reduction and social development strategies. For instance, by investing in building the evidence around the causal links and pathways between poverty, child protection and child care, more precise entry points and opportunities for intervention, especially at the prevention stage can be identified.

II. Presentation of Better Care Network's Regional Initiative

The BCN regional initiative was presented by Valens Nkurikiyinka, Regional Technical and Knowledge Management Specialist for Eastern and Southern Africa. The presentation outlined the main objectives and guiding principles of BCN globally which are:

- Facilitating active information exchange and collaboration on the issue of children without adequate family care;
- Advocating for technically sound policy and programmatic action on global, regional, and national levels;
- Guided by the Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children and UNCRC.

The presenter also listed BCN members (UNICEF, United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Save the Children, Firelight Foundation, Family for Every Child, RELAF) as well as giving a short summary of the Guidelines for Alternative Care of Children endorsed by the UN General Assembly in 2009 as well as the 2013 inter-agency Handbook "Moving Forward: Implementing

the Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children”. The presenter also summarised a brief history of the promotion of family strengthening and alternative care in Africa.

Of interest the presentation highlighted some of the technical tools and working papers that BCN has developed or is in the process of developing including:

- Better Care Network Toolkit;
- Manual for the Measurement of Indicators for Children in Formal Care;
- Inter-agency Monitoring Tool for the Implementation of the Alternative Care Guidelines;
- Risk of Harm to Young Children in Institutional Care (2009);
- Families, Not Orphanages (2010);
- Children with Disabilities and Alternative Care (2012);
- Child Care Country Profiles in sub-Saharan Africa (2014);
- Gatekeeping (forthcoming);
- Social Workforce and Child Care Reform (forthcoming).

The presentation also clarified the regional objectives of BCN which are:

- Improving the knowledge and capacities of stakeholders to develop and implement care reform policies and practices that strengthen families and improve alternative care services;
- Sharing the learning generated to inform evidence-based practices and policies at national, regional and global levels;
- Strengthening broader child protection systems through the entry point of child care;
- Strengthening emergency preparedness and response regarding the care of separated children, taking into account the movement of populations within the region.

These regional objectives also informed the Uganda country workshop.

The presentation went on to outline the main approaches which are being used at the country and regional levels to achieve these objectives. At the country level in Uganda BCN seeks to support consultation and collaboration with country stakeholders in order to:

- Identify jointly knowledge, awareness and technical gaps that may be hindering the care reform;
- Identify priority actions with regards to evidence building and sharing, capacity strengthening and advocacy related to family strengthening and alternative care;
- Identify strategic opportunities for strengthened collaboration in the area of family strengthening and alternative care of children at country level;
- Engage and increase awareness on family care with country stakeholders.

A number of central approaches used to achieve the country objectives were highlighted including using:

- An interagency approach which includes building on and sharing the significant work already underway in the region, jointly identifying responses

- to existing gaps and working with policymakers, practitioners, academics, community and faith based actors;
- Contributing to and strengthening existing national and regional collaboration mechanisms;
- Regional learning and peer support mechanisms with a view to stimulating more cross-fertilisation throughout the region and agencies to inspire and provide guidance to neighbouring countries on child care reform and;
- Strengthening links between national, regional and global efforts related to child care reform.

III. Session two: The national context – an overview of child care reform in Uganda

Moderated by: Mark Riley, alternative care consultant, and Helen Namulwana of Save the Children Uganda

Panel presentations by:

James Kaboggoza, Assistant Commissioner for Children’s Affairs, Min of Gender, Labour and Social Development: Care reform in Uganda – status and progress so far and the role of the Min. of Gender, Labour and Social Development

Lillian Mwandha, Nakawa Court - Issues in reforming child care: The role of the justice sector

Tracy Kyagulani, Country Director, Child’s i Foundation - Strong Beginnings project

Mark Riley, Alternative care consultant – Overview of the Uganda Alternative Care Initiative and ChildFund deinstitutionalisation project

This panel session set out to respond the following questions:

- *What progress has been made so far?*
- *What are the strengths, opportunities and challenges?*
- *How could other actors and sectors within government and from outside government support progress?*

A. Summary of presentations and discussions on progress in children’s care reform in Uganda

Summaries of presentations:

The **Alternative Care Initiative** noted the following areas of progress:

2010-2011:

- MGLSD started an alternative care task force to discuss how to deal with mushrooming child care institutions leading to the growth of children living in institutions;
- An Alternative Care Framework and regulations were developed for child care institutions;

- Efforts were made to sensitise institutions to the problem of institutional care.

2012-2013:

- A baseline survey of child care institutions (CCI) was undertaken which highlighted that 85% of the children in “orphanages” still had a parent but had been put in the institutions because the family was too poor to provide for the child and the institution offered free services;
- A media campaign with a website and Facebook group was set up in order to allow for abroad discussion of alternative children’s care issues in Uganda;
- District probation officers were trained along with Civil Society Organisations, who in turn trained their partners in issues such as supporting family-based care and keeping children together as well as how to deinstitutionalise children;
- The National Child Protection Working Group platform was strengthened and reached out to a broad range of stakeholders.

2014 onwards

- Terre des Hommes (TDH) are supporting the *Strong Beginnings* project which includes setting up of an Alternative Care Unit within the MGLSD;
- An Anti-Human trafficking programme was started in 2014 with support from TDH;
- The USAID Displaced Children and Orphans fund (DCOF) has been targeting deinstitutionalisation through the strengthening families and community structures;
- Research has been undertaken on foster care by the Alternative Care Initiative (ACI);
- Save the Children has taken a regional approach to alternative care for children which has included hosting conferences around this issue;
- A Child Helpline referral system has integrated children’s alternative care issues and CCIs into its policy and programming.

The **Assistant Commissioner for Children’s Affairs (MGLSD)** added to this list of progress made with the following:

- Regulations have been put in place to regulate CCIs and an inspection unit (the Alternative Care Unit) has been established;
- Child protection systems have been mapped which have identified areas where the national child protection policy needs to be strengthened and a national curriculum has been developed;
- Child protection has been integrated into the national social protection policy under the component “social care for children”;
- Community-based “para-social workers” have been trained: the Government, through the SUNRISE USAID programme, has trained and equipped 4000 para-social workers from within civil society and community members to deliver appropriate child protection services at community level. This supplements and supports the formal structures;
- Additional research has been undertaken around child poverty and the upcoming Violence against Children national study;
- The Africhild research centre has recently launched at Makerere University and will focus on building the evidence around children’s wellbeing.

The ***Strong Beginnings*** project, a recent collaborative initiative between TDH Netherlands, a number of Ugandan CSOs and the MGLSD is one example of efforts now being made to promote family-based care for children living without appropriate care in Uganda.

In addition, the newly implemented ***DCOF pilot project*** (Retrak Uganda, Child Fund, TPO Uganda, Child's i Foundation, USAID and MGLSD) is focusing on supporting the roll out of national alternative care guidelines. This includes working to build and strengthen the capacity of central and local government, strengthening resettlement and alternative care with child care institutions - including government remand homes, strengthening families and, monitoring and supporting communities and families.

b) Current gaps and challenges for care reform in Uganda

The **Alternative Care Initiative** have identified the following gaps and challenges:

- Stronger capacity is required around understanding and responding to children's alternative care and the different options at the local government staff level;
- Children with disabilities require a much higher quality of family care;
- Suitable transitional centres for children moving out of institutions are required;
- A case management system needs to be put in place;
- Donors and other funders' participation in the child care reform process and how they currently influence policy and programming is an issue which requires additional open discussion;
- Increased coordination around children's alternative care needs to take place across ministries, especially between the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Internal Affairs and MGLSD as well as between different departments within each ministry;
- Additional resources and personnel need to be assigned to the de-institutionalisation process and the closure of CCIs;
- National foster care programme standards need to be established and implemented.

The **Assistant Commissioner for Children's Affairs (MGLSD)** mentioned many of these gaps and challenges also adding to this list with the following points:

- There are gaps in the juvenile justice system which create loopholes and encourage or permit international adoptions;
- There is a minimal government investment in child protection more generally;
- There is a need to build the capacity of the social welfare force and increase the number of government officials working in this department;
- There is a lack of child protection and safeguarding polices amongst organisations supporting CCIs.

The **Deputy Registrar of the Nakawa Court, Ms Lilian Mwandha** added the perspective of the Judiciary to these challenges. These included:

- Where no parents exist relatives or institutions must take over responsibility for children but this often makes children “victims of circumstances”;
- The law operates on the principle of the best interests of the child and therefore can be interpreted in many ways;
- The law does not provide for someone to represent the children accused of major offences in court, whilst adults accused of major offences have state advocates to represent them;
- The Judiciary has planned to start visiting the places (*locus*) where children in the justice system come from. However, this will be challenging if the case involves children who have been abandoned or who are too young to talk or locate their home.

B. Priorities identified through group work

Participants worked in four focus groups and generated responses to the questions below. All groups were asked to identify three main priorities for action. The overall question to address was: *How can we as child care and protection actors support the successful implementation of the child care reform framework in Uganda?*

The **Coordination Focus Group** specifically discussed what the priorities should be for coordination and how to forward together. As a result three main priorities were identified:

- Develop a detailed implementation strategy for the Alternative Care Framework;
- Strengthen the CPWG, chaired by the MGLSD, as the coordination body and;
- Generate and support top level political commitment beyond the MGLSD to deinstitutionalise the child care system in Uganda. Whilst there is already a coordinating Alternative Care unit within MGLSD it is not clear to what extent it is able to reach out to and coordinate with other sector Ministries.

Additional priorities for coordination were also identified as:

- Developing and supporting a clear structure for implementation. This should be a formal implementation body which is strengthened to include checks and balances at various levels;
- An assessment of current structures needs to be undertaken and roles and responsibilities defined;
- Judicial services need to be strengthened.

The **Resources Focus Group** discussed what resource implications existed for some of the perceived priorities. The main implications for resources were:

- Working to ensure that additional funds are allocated for child protection by the Ministry of Finance, including ensuring children have access to appropriate care and justice;
- Supporting more holistic training for child protection which targets child protection units for example, in health, education and police and;
- Strengthening human resources including staffing, capacities and facilitation.

Additional priorities for resources were also identified as:

- An investment in children analysis could be undertaken which shows the returns on spending on children's protection and care versus not spending in these areas;
- A central data collection point on child protection learning and data, and which can help increase improved programming and avoid duplications;
- Coordination and collaboration around the allocation of resources which are relevant to children needs to be increased with a view to increasing the efficient nature of child related funding – for example, linked to the previous point, funding more programmes which are based on evidence and learning and avoiding funding similar initiatives.

The **Especially Vulnerable Children (for instance, street children, children with disability, out of school children, refugees) Focus Group** discussed how these groups of children could be better integrated into communities and community responses. The group identified its three top priorities for action as:

- Supporting the development of byelaws that integrate vulnerable children into communities, with a special focus on children in CCIs;
- Supporting the increased participation of all children, including especially vulnerable children, in community decision making. This includes educating parents and relatives on diverse children's issues and children's participation and supporting programmes which can help build children's confidence to participate and link with other children and the community, for instance through sports programmes;
- Undertaking actions which create awareness around vulnerable children in communities, especially those at risk of separation, targeting gate keepers, local authorities, opinion leaders and influencers such as teachers, police and health workers.

It was also seen as important by this group to provide or support more positive role models for children with disabilities and to mainstream psychosocial support into policy and programming around child protection and children's care.

The **Strengthening Families and Communities Focus Group** discussed how we can ensure a stronger focus and more support for communities and families to care for their children. It identified the following top three priorities for action:

- Providing training to parents in creative parenting including forms of positive parenting and a whole range of life-skills training (which can also target young people);
- Providing training for economic and social empowerment of the household, with an emphasis on household livelihood capacity building. This could also be considered as an entry point with the potential to reduce domestic violence;
- Develop additional strategies and support to engage communities further around community dialogue and actions addressing issues of child care and protection on a continuous basis.

The additional priorities identified by **Strengthening Families and Communities Focus Group** also included:

- Training additional para-professionals to ensure ongoing community sensitisation around issues related to the care of children;
- Supporting additional community level family support groups to enable families to support each other and enhance the community aspect of raising children;
- Providing more support for inter-generational parenting;
- Facilitating the development of community byelaws around child welfare and linking these to national laws and guidelines;
- Building a referral structure within the community so that family members know who to go to for specific services;
- Working with local structures, for instance at the district level, to increase coordination between local actors in planning and implementing programmes. This will prevent the duplication of services and enhance collaborative efforts;
- Supporting a “rebuilding” of a family values system which can ensure that children are taught family and community values at an early stage;
- Creating child-friendly communities where children are encouraged to participate and their voices are heard.

C. General observations from presentations and discussions and comments by the consultant

Collectively the speakers presented a picture of the progress and challenges in reforming child care in Uganda so far. This can be characterised by a concrete commitment to reforming child care in partnership with a number of key government ministries and other actors. The Alternative Care Framework and the amended Children’s Act, both of which are soon to enter into force, are the main frameworks or instruments by which government intends to guide and reform child care going forward. However there are number of challenges which create barriers to an optimal child care reform process and are discussed below.

Coordination

The now strengthened CPWG, with the MGLSD acting as the current Chair, is a key coordination structure which has allowed broader and closer collaboration with a number of diverse stakeholders as well as with other government ministries. There appears to be a concerted commitment to address child “wellbeing” including care reform using a multi-sectoral, systems approach with MGLSD further encouraging stakeholders and ministries alike to coordinate using the CPWG structure.

However, at times it is not clear how different projects are coordinating around similar objectives. For instance the role of donors in this programming coordination process has been highlighted. In another instance, the need for MGLSD and the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MoIA) to coordinate more closely, for example, when institutions apply to the MoIA for non-profit organisation status, which might include those organisations planning to open CCIs.

Additionally, the Alternative Care Framework only provides guidelines but has not

yet been fully operationalised. There was a clear call for a coordinated effort to develop an implementation strategy and plan in order to operationalise this process. It was also suggested that to achieve the desired level of coordinated multi-sectoral planning the CPWG needs to be further strengthened. This should also consider a stronger linking with faith-based organisations and structures, which are often closely tied to alternative care for children responses.

Strengthening families and communities

The vital role of families and communities in keeping children safe and supporting the successful child care reform was highlighted. It was suggested that priority be given to providing families with more life skills, positive parenting and livelihood skills training in order to address what is being seen as a “breakdown” in family values. Key to this was the facilitation of ongoing community dialogue and engagement around child care and protection and wellbeing issues.

Including especially vulnerable children

The sub-groups which constitute especially vulnerable children such as children with disabilities or refugees are generally considered to be marginalised from community and other level of structures which are used to protect and care for children. Byelaws were mentioned as a potential mechanism to ensure better inclusion for these children. Additionally the need for increased initiatives which can at once sensitise communities, families, service providers and gatekeepers on the issues facing marginalised children and include children in this process was highlighted.

The judicial system

Linked to the need for different ministries and sectors to coordinate more closely, gaps in the judicial system for children also need to be addressed. This includes loopholes which allow for international adoptions, and children who get “lost” in the judicial system, although the amended Children’s Act and the Alternative Care Framework will address some of the current concerns.

A suggestion that byelaws be created to empower local communities to address child care and protection issues at the local level was highlighted as an initiative which could potentially be explored further.

Resources, capacity and political commitment

Efforts appear to be hampered by a perceived lack of investment in child protection programming at the government level, with calls for additional budgets for child care and protection and access to justice for children. Further budget analysis using a child-friendly lens could confirm or identify additional strategic points where increased allocations for child protection and alternative care are required.

The need for stronger capacity at both the government and CSO levels to regulate and ensure the safety of children currently residing outside of or within CCIs was highlighted, as well as improved capacity to support the de-institutionalisation of children.

There was a call to strengthen the government and CSO workforce capacity around child care and protection using a multi-sectoral approach in order to advance the child care reform process.

Stronger advocacy for increased political commitment

There appears to be a need to advocate further to government in a coordinated manner to allow care reform and other related policies to win additional high level political commitment. The need for this political commitment to extend beyond the MGLSD was highlighted, but advocacy could also include supporting the MGLSD's current priority of the adoption and incorporation of child care reform into national social protection policies, programmes and structures.

DAY TWO

IV. Session three: Capacity development

Moderated by: Patrick Onyango, Country Director, TPO Uganda

Introduction by: Patrick Onyango, Country Director, TPO Uganda

Panel presentations by:

Fred Ngabirano, Technical Advisor, Advocacy and Resource mobilisation, SUNRISE OVC Project - Existing capacity and needs of government (Central and Local Governments) on delivery of alternative care services for children outside the family setting.

Dr. Walakira, Senior Lecturer, Children and Youth, Head Department of Social Work and Social Administration, Makerere University - Alternative Care Curriculum and Diploma at Makerere University

Edton Babu, Deputy Country Programme Director, Bantwana - Strengthening informal child protection systems at the community and family levels: keeping children in communities, examples of promising practice

The panel session set out to answer the following questions:

- *What are examples of good capacity building?*
- *What are the areas where capacity needs to be stronger and which can be considered priority areas?*
- *Where do you see challenges and opportunities to build a stronger child care system capacity?*

A. Summary of presentations and discussions on capacity development for child care reform in Uganda

The moderator reminded participants that capacity development efforts for child care reform are not new and that there are already a number of curricula integrated into university courses in Uganda.

The **SUNRISE OVC project** supports Uganda's local governments and communities under the oversight of MGLSD to protect and support Orphans and Vulnerable

Children. The programme is implemented by International HIV/AIDS Alliance in partnership with Management Sciences for Health (MSH) and the Uganda Women's Effort to Save Orphans (UWESO).

The presenter outlined the existing capacity and needs of government (central and local Governments) on delivery of alternative care services for children outside the family setting. The presenter highlighted the fact that residential care is the main response to assisting children without primary caregivers and that poverty is a significant factor underlying the admission of children to institutions. The presenter also promoted a strategy of comprehensive, community-level services for families in order to prevent institutionalisation and the prioritisation of family support services. The need to improve the quality of care provided to children without primary caregivers was highlighted as well as the vital role of standards, services, competent staff and resources in order to guarantee the protection of children in residential and community-based facilities.

Capacity needs were listed as:

- *Case management systems* – there are limited skills in case planning and management and case plans or reviews of the placements of children in institutional care do not exist;
- *Compliance to standards* – there is limited enforcement of compliance measures to ensure that standards for alternative care are in place to guarantee the quality of care and the rights of children whose needs cannot be met within their own families; Implementation of national laws - this is still weak and some practices are inconsistent with national law;
- *Staff capacity development* - there is need to develop and strengthen curricula for in-service and pre-service training in child protection and care in particular;
- *Comprehensive systems for monitoring, tracking and supporting children in informal care settings* is still weak;
- *Public awareness and education* - comprehensive information, educational and communication program is needed at all levels directed towards sustained advocacy on children's rights and the essential roles of families and communities in protecting the rights of children;
- *Coordination* - there is need to strengthen coordination structures, enhance coordination between local and central government agencies and expand partnerships focused on improving child protection.

The presentations also included a detailed look at the **Alternative Care Training Curriculum and Diploma being under development at Makerere University**, presented by the Senior Lecturer in Children and Youth at the University. Initiated as a learning and internship programme supported by Childs I Foundation, the Diploma-level training qualification will be eventually developed with support from the MGLSD and TDH in response to the urgent need to build the capacity of the social workforce in children's care.

This practical training course - *Diploma in Alternative Care* - responds directly to findings from a study undertaken on the alternative care of children. The findings highlighted the following:

- CCI mostly have poor social work practices as well as poor Early Childhood Care and Development and child protection practices;
- Keeping children in institutions has negative effect on many children by delaying their development;
- Quality care is compromised in many CCIs due to limited financial resources; a lack of close supervision and a minimal awareness about child development issues;
- Less than 10 % of the 984 children in the **private** CCIs had individualised care plans (the study covered 29 child care institutions: 27 institutions were privately owned, while two CCIs were under the Ministry of Gender Labour and Social Development. A total of 1282 children were living in the CCIs surveyed. There were more boys (725) than girls (557) in the institutions);
- Many institutions have no interest in resettlement or using other alternative care options such as kinship care or foster care and lack the guidelines on how to undertake this effectively and safely.

The curriculum development approach is to work collaboratively and consultatively with relevant stakeholders and includes a baseline survey, engagement with MGLSD, partner involvement and sharing the draft curriculum for feedback.

Finally, **Bantwana** shared an example of promising practice to strengthen informal child protection systems at the community and family levels.

The presenter illustrated the central importance of community level support, action and change using the following quotation: *“In Africa, if it does not happen in the community, then it has not happened”* - Prof Mary Gitui.

The presenter highlighted the important role of informal child protection systems - also called community based child protection mechanisms - in Uganda, namely systems based on cultural and traditional values, especially the extended family and other “voluntary” actors such as relatives, cultural leaders, CBOs, religious leaders, and community resource persons – including retired elites, village neighbours, community support agents and peer support.

The Bantwana case management model consists of:

- Leveraging community care and support inherent in the African tradition of “Ubuntu”;
- Placing the case care worker/ para-social workers at the centre of an integrated referral system;
- Using community level structures;
- Linking communities to district systems through case conferences;
- Placing trained Field Assistants to work with government community development officers at sub-county level.

The following gaps and challenges for capacity were highlighted:

- Poor coordination between formal and informal systems;
- Weak documentation of referrals;
- Lack of clarity of roles and responsibilities for informal child protection systems;

- Weak linkage between informal child protection systems with district formal system.

During the panel discussion there was a strong focus on issues of community capacity. Insufficient capacity at the community levels to implement existing laws was mentioned in the discussion which followed, and the need to be realistic about the feasibility of any new proposals for care reform being implemented if additional capacity building measures were not also put in place. In addition, panellists discussed the challenges of encouraging CCIs in the community to channel their energies to support children into other kinds of activities which can prevent children from entering an institution, and in some cases, being adopted internationally. There was also the question posed of the capacity of community level actors (for instance para-social workers) to handle case work effectively as well as the question of the sustainability of many community models.

B. Priorities identified through group work

Participants worked in two focus groups and generated responses to key questions. All groups were also asked to identify three main priorities for action and in some cases identified additional priorities.

The **National and District Capacity Focus Group** addressed the question of identifying the priority needs for capacity development at district and national level. The three priorities were presented as:

- Develop a resource implication paper (human resources and financial resources) for the implementation of the alternative care framework;
- Undertake advocacy for the recognition of the important role of probation and social welfare officers (PSWO) at the district level and increase their number. Currently there are only 40 functional PSWOs in 112 districts. PSWO should also negotiate budgets and explain their roles clearly;
- Disseminate and raise awareness of existing laws and frameworks on Alternative Care and other relevant areas.

The **Community Capacity Focus Group** sought to identify the priority capacity development needs at the community level. These were subsequently identified as:

- Put a deputy chair in charge of child wellbeing and protection at Local Council 1 (the lowest government administrative unit at village level);
- Provide training and skilling to community structures in child protection and care in particular and link them to government structures at sub-county (i.e. Assistant and Community Development Officers) on a continuous basis;
- Create and strengthen Community Child Protection Committees and link them to the implementation of alternative care framework;
- Package information for community dissemination and to support meaningful community dialogue;
- Promote community livelihood initiatives.

Note: This group agreed on a community definition as a Village Executive Council.

C. Capacity development : General observations from presentations and discussions and comments by the consultant

It is clear that there are many capacity challenges for Uganda in moving forward with care reform. These capacity issues are visible at a number of levels and the CPWG further noted at district level in particular, where the number of probation officers is inadequate and where officials and the local authorities have insufficient skills and resources to address the many child protection and alternative care issues. This is combined with a lack of CCI staff knowledge and skills in child care, development and protection.

In addition, communities were portrayed as important implementing elements of effective child care reform by this meeting yet they also have many capacity needs, plus the additional dynamic of often using informal mechanisms which do not link strongly, or are not aligned with formal systems. The true nature of the relationship between formal district service providers and authorities and other formal and informal community level structures is not clear from this session, and could be further investigated to inform future community level strategies.

The sustainability of community-based child protection mechanisms and volunteers is also in question and would suggest that further research, learning, modelling and testing should take place in order to establish which practices are most likely to be effective and sustainable and that can be used to implement the alternative care framework.

Whilst the comprehensive training for the Alternative Care Diploma is most welcome and needed, the curriculum needs to further ensure that it is closely linked to government efforts, commitments and frameworks in order to optimise the Diploma's applications within Uganda's care reform agenda.

V. Session four: Building and sharing the evidence

Moderated by: Dr. Walakira Eddy, Makerere University
Introduction by: Dr. Walakira Eddy, Makerere University

Panel presentations by:

Dorah Musiimire, Alternative Care Unit Officer, Min. of Gender, Labour and Social Development - Assessments and monitoring of CCI's and the state of evidence in Uganda

Dinah Mwesigye, RETRAK - Good practices in foster care capacity development - children living or working on the street

James Ssekiwanuka, Director, CALM Africa - Innovative practices in foster care capacity development – community-based foster care

This panel session set out to answer the following questions:

- *What is the state of the evidence on child care in Uganda, where are the gaps?*
- *How do we gather strong evidence and data to guide policy, advocacy and programming related to family strengthening and alternative care?*
- *What examples do we have of good practice in evidence building?*

A. Summary of presentations and discussions on building and sharing the evidence for child care reform in Uganda

The **moderator** highlighted that a number of studies relevant to child care reform have already been undertaken. The moderator emphasised that government have a key role to play in generating evidence which can inform decision makers on care reform and that a major challenge for universities and other research institutions is a mechanism which can allow for the effective sharing of research work with practitioners.

The **Alternative Care Unit office at the MGLSD** highlighted the challenges for regulating CCIs and concerns for children's wellbeing. The presenter indicated that there is a lack of qualified social workers linked to CCIs as well as a general lack of staff motivation at many of these homes. In addition, the most vulnerable children including children with disabilities or who have been abandoned are often not accepted at many CCIs, with the majority of children who live in CCIs still having live parents or other extended family members. She also raised the concern that some CCIs are being used to "traffic" children by using legal domestic guardianship legislation to later have children adopted internationally.

RETRAK Uganda presented an example of good practice in foster care for children connected with the street, who represent a very marginalised group of children. Moving forward, RETRAK would like to develop more and stronger partnerships with other CSOs with a view to establishing good practice around support for this group

of children, and for coordinating around advocacy, fundraising and referrals. It would also like to expand beyond its current foster care programme and raise more awareness around children connected to the street.

Within the presentation some lessons learnt were highlighted. These included:

Foster care (FC):

- FC is a participatory service, which involves the child, birth family, foster family, social workers and probation officers;
- FC is a social work activity, but it is slightly different from conventional social work;
- FC has to be planned, it has to be achieved by a deliberate set of actions;
- commitment is highly demanded of the parties involved (both the foster care family and agency);
- FC is less costly compared to institutional care, but its service delivery cannot be implemented cheaply.

RETRAK also outlined the main challenges which were:

- Minimal (almost non-existent) public information on the foster care programme, which means that the foster care programme is generally not understood;
- The very high stigma in society directed towards street children;
- The very high expectations from people who desire to foster children and the high level of support required by families;
- Children connected to the street often have difficult behaviour and are often traumatised requiring a high level of support and rehabilitation;
- Barriers to accessing government services;
- Very limited budgetary provisions – this affects everything concerning the RETRAK programme;
- This is a labour intensive programme, and relatively expensive to run, yielding low numbers in terms of output;
- Many of the children want to go back to their own families is given the choice between real family or a foster family, which is a positive challenge, but also results in low numbers of fostering.

CALM Africa, a Ugandan CBO, shared with participants an example of an innovative practice in community-based foster care. The presentation highlighted how it supported formal schools in communities where children were being fostered, as well as community awareness raising and support around child wellbeing and food security. Children are often fostered by extended family, and trained community workers provide follow up and support to the foster families and children. The organisation also links and coordinates directly with district government regarding its activities, including sitting on local government OVC coordination committees. CALM highlighted the need for more community dialogue as a key approach to encouraging community members to learn about child legislation, child care and protection.

During the **panel discussion** which followed concerns were raised regarding the number of illegal CCIs which avoid prosecution. It was acknowledged that the law is weak in prosecuting these institutions although there are now additional sanctions

and reforms in the proposed amendment Bill to the Children's Act. A major challenge is that to close an illegal or sub-standard CCI requires many resources and while there are many CCIs which are already slated for closure it is not in practice very easy to achieve. There was a call for additional collaboration to support this process.

The need for additional data on children who are in foster care was also highlighted, and how this information will allow government in collaboration with other stakeholders to decide on the next steps in regulating and improving foster care.

B. Priorities for action identified through group work

The questions addressed by the meeting around capacity were:

- *What other examples of current evidence do we know of?*
- *Where are the data, evidence and learning gaps?*
- *How can we minimise these gaps?*
- *What would be the priority areas?*
- *What are the resource implications for the above mentioned areas?*

This group work was undertaken using the café conversation approach. Below is a summary of the main themes and priorities which emerged from the conversations.

Issues around reporting

- Harmonise and simplify community level data collection and reporting tools on children's protection and wellbeing and disseminate these tools at all levels;
- Generally, all data and reporting tools also need to be harmonised;
- Document issues from a community perspective;
- Share information more effectively with all frontline human resources at community and district levels.

Issues around data collection

- Set up a detailed database on children which uses or links to various forms of data being collected around children (e.g. education management, police, birth registrations);
- Set up a detailed database on children without parental care (in institutions) and children in alternative care placements;
- Undertake periodic baselines on children's protection and wellbeing;
- Undertake systematic documentation of children in CCIs into a centralized database.

Issues around research

- Increase financial resources for research around child protection and alternative care; including data collection; monitoring and tracing systems and the re-election of Local Councils;
- Invest in local research around alternative care and the continuum of care and encourage increased sharing of findings among key stakeholders;
- Undertake research, including 'action research' on programmes around alternative care to identify those which could be replicated.

Issues around coordination

- Invest in and strengthen coordination of alternative care evidence collection and implementation;
- Create a central repository of alternative care information, resources and actors;
- Strengthen the coordination team to build evidence around alternative care of children;
- Systematically and professionally share generated evidence with decision makers across all levels;
- Harmonise information on OVC within the national OVC Management Information System with data being collected on children's alternative care.

C. Building and sharing the evidence : General observations from presentations and discussions and comments by the consultant

This session suggested that more evidence is required to identify promising and good practices for child care, as well as the strong call for the creation of central data bases which can inform policy and programming around forms of alternative care for children.

And whilst there are a number of key studies which have been undertaken in Uganda, there is an additional challenge of translating this learning into practice by linking research and practitioners more closely.

The general emphasis at the meeting on the crucial role of community level initiatives to support child care reform suggests that evidence building should also focus strongly on what is known about working with communities around children's alternative care and also address gaps in knowledge and learning. This includes actively seeking to learn more about the issues and challenges facing especially vulnerable children, their families and communities.

The role of national and other research institutions in building the evidence is clear and it was highlighted that government also has a key role to play in linking and collaborating with research institutions around evidence building, research coordination and translating knowledge into practice. Of note, a coordination mechanism at the national level for research and learning was also mentioned as a current gap.

This approach should equally apply to CSOs or faith-based structures supporting children's care, which are often the main collectors of data, evidence and learning around child care, protection and wellbeing. Collaborative partnerships could be enhanced and increased between CSO, government and academia with a focus on supporting robust, more standardised and easily comparable reporting and learning approaches that can provide more accurate information on good practice. Additionally how learning can be shared back more effectively to practitioners needs to be considered.

Of note, approaches which make it simpler for practitioners to collect information are also needed. This would not only increase the quality and quantity of information collected but it may also foster a stronger “bottom-up” approach to learning and a clearer indication of what communities consider to be important.

VI. Session five: Strengthening evidence-based advocacy

Moderated by: Helen Namulwana, Save the Children

Introduction by: Helen Namulwana, Save the Children

Panel presentations by:

Faith Kembabazi, Coordinator, Children at Risk Action Network (CRANE) - SAFe Campaign

Ms Aidah Agwang, Communications Officer, Ugandans Adopt: National Foster Care Campaign

Robert Oneka, Terre des Hommes, The Anti-Child Trafficking Campaign

Questions to be answered by the panel:

- *What are current advocacy initiatives in the country?*
- *What are the successes, challenges and lesson learned?*
- *Are there any priorities for action?*
- *Where are the current or future opportunities?*

A. Summary of presentations and discussions on evidence based advocacy for child care reform in Uganda

The **SAFe Campaign** is a public information, web-based campaign supported by an alliance of individuals, government and organisations working in Uganda, seeking to ensure that children are in safe, happy and healthy families.

The campaign is in response to the ‘orphan care’ movement in the USA and other countries which often ignore the positive work which is being done in African countries to keep children with their families. The campaign is concerned that the orphan care movement misrepresents African children. The SAFe Campaign is aimed at increasing awareness around child care issues especially the rise in orphanages in Uganda and promoting other ways to support Uganda’s children in accordance with the Ugandan government’s policy on Alternative Care.

The **Ugandans Adopt Campaign** encourages Ugandans to adopt Ugandan children who have no other form of care available to them except living in an institution. The campaign notes that despite its growing success there are still challenges in the form of funding, partnerships, myths that adoption is not a Ugandan concept, limited coverage of issues surrounding domestic adoption by the media. Ugandans Adopt has learned that:

- There is an appetite in Uganda for information on adoption and adoption itself;
- There is a need for follow-up and help for Ugandan individuals and families who have adopted;
- Myths are preventing Ugandans from adopting formally;
- Religious institutions are crucial to the spread of the “adoption gospel”.

Going forward Ugandans Adopt are planning to:

- Partner with religious institutions i.e. churches to increase outreach /presentations;
- Widen the scope of the Ugandans Adopt campaign to include more CCIs and eventually roll out nationwide;
- Incorporate a post-placement support service into the Ugandans Adopt website;
- Train and educate the media on alternative care for children, especially domestic adoption;
- Recruit Community Foster Carers - The Ugandans Adopt Campaign will play a pivotal role in recruiting community foster carers in addition to prospective adoptive parents;
- Hold an annual National Adoption Week every November.

The **Anti-Child Trafficking Campaign** was presented by Robert Oneka, Terre des Hommes with input from the anti-trafficking coordinator of the coordination office for Anti-Human Trafficking, MoIA – Moses Binoga, who also attended the meeting.

This campaign is a CSO (Terre des Hommes)-government partnership which works with a number of different government ministries.

Article 5 for the Prevention of Trafficking in Persons Act 2009, and apparently not yet well known to actors in Uganda, provides for issues of child care and protection and summarises offences in relation to child trafficking. Poverty is considered as one of the key driving factors in the trafficking of children in Uganda. Uganda has been identified not only as a centre for recruitment and transit, but also a destination for trafficked children. However there are no statistics to clarify the scale of the problem and enforcement of the Act is so far proving very challenging.

It was highlighted that the response to trafficking must be diverse as it must respond to different contexts and forms of trafficking. In Uganda domestic and international trafficking of children has been identified. For instance, there are instances of cross border trafficking of children, especially girls who are sent to marry older men in neighbouring countries. There are also CCIs which solicit money for orphans but do not invest the funds received in the children. Some CCIs are set up as primarily money making organisations which use legal loopholes in Uganda to facilitate international adoptions.

Successes so far include:

- Achieved a greater level of awareness starting with the duty bearers including policy and handlers of trafficking;
- Currently finalising the development of child trafficking training curriculum with Makerere University;
- In negotiation to include trafficking in persons and child trafficking in mainstream policy training;
- Establishing a referral pathway for victims of trafficking;
- Working with Makerere University to establish and host a website specifically on trafficking in children for awareness and resource disseminations;
- A baseline survey has been undertaken, although it was limited to the project catchment areas, which provided key insights on trafficking in children. E.g. “Two thirds (64%) of the children living in the CCIs have at least one living parent”.

The challenges identified by the campaign include:

- High and increasing numbers of children being trafficked within Uganda and across local borders e.g. children on streets of urban centers;
- The lack of a regional plan of action for coordinating cross-border trafficking;
- The lack of proper frameworks for the needed response and partnership;
- The low level of awareness on TIP and Trafficking in Children (TIC) among key duty bearers, including law enforcement/legal systems personnel causing negligible prosecution rates;
- Limited capacity of the relevant enforcement agencies;
- Limited knowledge on the roles and responsibilities of the concerned parties
- Incomplete and poor enforcement of the anti-trafficking legislation;
- The absence of victim-friendly services and laws or a flexible victim-centered approach throughout criminal justice and victim protection services or procedures (rehabilitation);
- The scarcity of quality information on the scope and impact of TIC within Uganda and the East African region;
- The limited understanding - and worrying social acceptance - of the issue amongst many Ugandans.

Priorities for action have been identified as:

- Widening awareness of child trafficking beyond the project catchment areas;
- Supporting the Ministry of International Affairs to conduct nationwide surveys and research on the situation of child trafficking;
- The need to strengthen responses in a more holistic manner beyond tracing and reintegration;
- The need to harmonise responses and data collection and usage through coordination and networking;
- The need to develop and implement regulations and dissemination of the 2009 Trafficking in Person’s Act;
- The need for increased resource allocation (human resources and finance) both for CSOs and government;

- The need to collect more evidence on child trafficking and to inform strategy development.
- The need to increase the capacity of the Police, Directorate of Public Prosecutions, judicial organs and MGLSD for investigation, prosecution and case management;
- Wider coverage on response and prevention of trafficking in children through the different child protection actors;
- The ratification and domestication of the Palermo protocol;
- International/regional engagement for cooperation in prevention and response.

During the panel discussion issues surrounding the approaches required to encourage more Ugandan people to adopt were discussed as well as ensuring that we use language carefully, avoiding branding children as “orphans”. There were also concerns expressed regarding the bottlenecks which prevent children from being resettled back into families and how to deal with CCIs which are operating without regulation. It was noted that by targeting families and reducing household poverty and vulnerability the incidence of trafficking can also be reduced.

B. Priorities for action identified through group work

This group work was undertaken using the café conversation approach. Below is a summary of the main themes and priorities which emerged from the conversations. Groups were asked to identify challenges, opportunities and suggestions to increase evidence-based advocacy.

The challenges for advocacy in relation to child care were identified as:

- There is a lack of coordinated advocacy around alternative care;
- There is inadequate funding by government for child care reforms;
- There is a lack of locally raised resources to support advocacy.

The opportunities in relation to advocacy around child care were identified as:

- The availability of some partnerships, good coordination and collaboration on alternative care such as that between Strong Beginnings and DCOF, where the implementation of both has taken on a partnership approach;
- Laws and policies on alternative care are already in place;
- Political support is evident within government as Alternative Care is currently high on the agenda.

The suggestions made by the meeting for improving advocacy included:

- Institute a “children are not for tourism” campaign which can address the phenomenon of “orphanage tourism” where foreigners visit or volunteer in Ugandan orphanages;
- Utilise existing child protection networks to better coordinate and create a united voice for advocacy;
- Create more awareness platforms around children’s alternative care;
- Focus more strongly on advocacy engagement with policy makers;
- Strengthen joint leadership for joint planning, M&E and law enforcement;

- Identify a “flag bearer” – namely a high profile person to champion progress in addressing child care issues within government;
- Identify key advocacy issues related to family strengthening and alternative care and build a case for advocacy initiatives using evidence to back up the messages;
- Identify key advocacy issues and build a case for advocacy initiatives using evidence to back up the messages.

C. General observations from presentations and discussions and comments by the consultant

It was noted at the meeting that the scene is set in Uganda to move forward on child care reform. With the forthcoming amended Children’s Act and the Alternative Framework, and numerous existing campaigns and programmes, there is already national commitment to address the current child care situation.

However it would appear that there are some notable challenges, including the need to identify further high level political champions for child care reform. Of the three BCN priority areas for support for child care reform, the area of evidence-based advocacy initiatives, which go beyond public awareness raising, appeared to be the least strong.

Current advocacy efforts are mostly focused on public information and behaviour change campaigns and also include efforts to control child trafficking. Campaigns are addressing aspects of children’s care such as reducing the demand for international adoptions from western nations, encouraging Ugandans to adopt children domestically¹.

What has been made clear through the meeting is that there are a number of areas for additional advocacy, for instance where policy makers and government are targeted, which could not only support the outcomes of campaigns such as those above but also move the child care reform process forward more generally.

Key focus areas for advocacy were mentioned during the various sessions. These include:

The identification of political commitment to child care reform at the highest level:

The need to create stronger political commitment and will around child care reform in Uganda and which also extends beyond the current mandated Ministry (MGLSD), including the Ministry of Finance and Donors. During the advocacy session the need for a “flag bearer” or champion was also noted. In other words, increased advocacy efforts directed at government and other high level decision makers is required.

¹ Campaigns identified by participants were: Safe Campaign on domestic adoption; Children are not Tourist Attractions; Because I am a Girl; Destination Unknown; Replace Campaign; A violence free childhood is everyone’s right; Keeping Children Safe; Stop Girl Brides; Ugandans Adopt; Speak Out; Sauti (Uganda Child Helpline); Child labour free zone; End child sexual abuse; A violence free home is a violence free nation.

Coordination of advocacy efforts: There was the impression that advocacy efforts are currently not well coordinated between the different actors and there were numerous calls during the meeting that increased efforts needed to be made to establish or identify coordination mechanisms. There was a clear request from the MGLSD that the CPWG could provide this function. There were also suggestions from CSO during the meeting to use the CPWG as the key coordination mechanism. The suitability of the CPWG to coordinate advocacy targeting government, donors and policy makers could be further considered and investigated, as should any additional capacity needs of the CPWG to support advocacy coordination.

Coordination of common messaging: It is also worth considering that advocacy is generally more successful if a set of (limited) common messages are agreed upon. If advocates communicate the same messages to their targets, they collectively reinforce the same message over a period of time. If messaging is not coordinated, advocacy efforts can be diluted because the numerous mixed messages become too confusing or overwhelming for government or agencies to respond to. This aspect of advocacy was not explicitly noted during the meeting. In light of the numerous existing campaigns which were listed by meeting participants, the same points above should also be considered in going forward with any existing or new public information campaigns.

The need for additional evidence to inform advocacy: The meeting highlighted the many gaps which exist in the strength and coordination of the evidence base around child protection and child care in Uganda. Without strong evidence it is difficult to develop strong and consistent messages and to argue with confidence for a particular strategy for change. In addition, the issues raised during the session on building the evidence highlighted the need to coordinate research more closely, link practitioners to research, and the need to centralise information and learning. This is also relevant to advocacy planning. Evidence building could be collaboratively planned with advocacy objectives in mind and better communicated to agencies which undertake advocacy.

The need to measure the success of current campaigns: It was not entirely evident from the meeting how existing public awareness campaigns are being measured and how a campaign is considered a success or how lessons can be learned. Before starting on new public campaigns such as “children are not a tourist attraction” it is worth investigating what models of good practice for campaigns exist in Uganda and elsewhere. Finally, with limited funds for advocacy and child protection in general the case for funding an additional campaign could be clarified.

Additional opportunities for advocacy: The recent child poverty and deprivation survey and the forthcoming national violence against children study are both opportunities to move the child care agenda to even higher political levels and collect more evidence for clear messaging. In particular, the current focus on social protection and the desire by the MGLSD to make social protection more child sensitive should be considered as an opportunity for advocacy on strong government policy and programming. Additionally, the forthcoming national elections should also be considered as a possible opportunity for advocacy.

Including especially vulnerable children's issues: Especially vulnerable children such as those with disabilities, refugee children or children connected with the street need to be more comprehensively included in programmes, policies and responses, at the various different levels ranging from community responses to national legislation on children. It is therefore emphasised that these children should not be forgotten when considering advocacy priorities.

VII. Closing remarks

Closing remarks were provided by:

Helen Namulwana, Save the Children

Valens Nkurikiyinka, Regional Technical & Knowledge Management Specialist for Eastern and Southern Africa, BCN

James Kaboggoza, Assistant Commissioner for Children's Affairs, Min of Gender, Labour and Social Development

Summary of closing remarks

Save the Children called for strong leadership and increased investment in stakeholders which are supporting the care reform process in Uganda, including district probation offices.

The central role of partnerships in this process was also highlighted, including strengthening links at the community level by leveraging structures and actors such as churches and the para-social workers.

Linked to this was the call for increased coordination in all areas, including advocacy, learning and other information sharing. Stakeholders were also urged to take a more proactive role in coordination. The vital role of coordination was also highlighted within the context of closing CCIs. It was noted that by contributing in terms of coordination and logistical support to the MGLSD's plans, this activity can be achieved with greater ease.

Finally Save the Children urged that we make stronger efforts to address the root causes of children's need for alternative care, especially poverty, in our efforts to improve children's protection and care.

Better Care Network acknowledged the very active participation of stakeholders in the meeting and expressed the hope that this level of sharing and participation can continue between stakeholders and also with the participation of BCN. BCN also acknowledged the support of the MGLSD, CPWG, Mark Riley (ACI), Caroline Aloyo (UNICEF) and Helen Namulwana (Save the Children) in helping plan and host this meeting. It was also hoped that the consultation had increased people's understanding of the current care reform context and provided some ideas and impetus on how they can move forward. BCN noted that the meeting will be captured in a report which highlights the priorities identified by meeting

participants. This report will be shared through the CPWG with a focus on identifying next step processes.

BCN committed to coordinating directly with the CPWG and MGLSD in order to follow up with organisations and stakeholders around priority areas for action.

The Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development acknowledged the closing remarks by Save the Children as comprehensive and reiterated that continued discussion and coordination was now needed as a follow on to this meeting. It also reaffirmed its commitment to the process including at the level of the Director for Social Protection, who met with the BCN team prior to the workshop.

The MGLSD also underlined the importance of having a joint action plan in place implemented by a range of stakeholders. It was further emphasised that the MGLSD requires support from stakeholders in order to successfully reform child care in Uganda, including on the level of policy and legislation. Further engagement, discussion and debate with MGLSD around child care reform issues were invited from stakeholders. Additionally, the question was raised as to the level of awareness of child care issues amongst actors from different sectors.

The MGLSD also highlighted the need to address the root causes of the need for alternative care, noting that the very broad scope and mandate of the MGLSD can benefit from an increased understanding and more strategic response to root causes such as poverty. The need to factor in more diverse children's themes into the CPWG meetings was also mentioned.

The need to strengthen families and communities was highlighted as key element in reforming child care. The Assistant Commissioner also went on to point out that CCIs were now assessed by the revived Inspection Unit under the project supported by the MGLSD's Alternative Care unit.

The role of the CPWG, its increased strength and example of good practice was also highlighted, noting that other departments within the Ministry are now seeking to replicate similar working groups based along the lines and good practice of the CPWG. The Assistant Commissioner went on to mention that collaborative efforts via the CPWG have already resulted in a number of key working documents and he highlighted the role of the National Council for Children in linking additional stakeholders to the CPWG.

VIII. Conclusions

Over the course of the two-day meeting participants listened to an extensive range of presentations on aspects of capacity, evidence and advocacy around alternative care for children as well as issues of child poverty and protection. These presentations and the group work which followed elicited lively discussion and debate on the priorities for child care reform and how they should be addressed.

Table 1 indicates the most popular priority areas and which entities are potentially interested working further in these areas. The table can help guide stakeholders in deciding which priority areas of work will potentially have the most support from a diverse range of actors, and which bodies could be approached for follow up on these issues.

One of the intended outcomes of the meeting was to lay the foundation of a plan of action to move child care reform forward in Uganda. Whilst strong themes and priorities for action did emerge from the consultation, there were relatively few concrete actions agreed upon with strong commitments from particular institutions or agencies.

Based on workshop feedback forms it is also suggested that any further national level workshops on children's alternative care focus on developing practical actions and that enough time is allocated for this priority.

Capacity strengthening

The need to coordinate and collaborate around a strategic, costed implementation plan of the Alternative Care Framework stood out as a key priority for the meeting. By agreeing an implementation plan a clear indication of human resources, capacity, coordination and budgetary needs can be established and further advocated for. The Child Protection Working Group is the most obvious group which could be tasked with convening this work.

Given the key role which community and district levels do, can and must play in reforming child care in Uganda it is also important that these actors are included in any strategic implementation planning. The emphasis on child care reform requiring multi-sectoral collaboration also necessitates that different ministries, such as education and welfare, and actors from different sectors take part in this consultation. There was a notable lack of representation of local faith-based organisations and structures at the meeting. These groups need to be included in future consultation, planning, learning and advocacy events around children's care. Equally efforts should be made to ensure that actors are from various sub-national levels.

Generally, concerted efforts should be made to coordinate more efficiently using the Child Protection Working Group as the primary mechanism. Additional capacity considerations and technical support required by the CPWG should be discussed, ideally in light of an agreed Alternative Care Framework implementation plan.

Building the evidence base to reform children's care

It is clear that more evidence is required generally to fill gaps in knowledge and understanding around many issues related to alternative care for children in Uganda. In particular it might be of benefit to research further into the causal pathways of risk between poverty and alternative care for children as well as increase learning and evidence around community-based child protection mechanisms. Additional learning is also required around groups of especially vulnerable children, including in emergencies contexts, which was not extensively discussed during the meeting.

Consideration could also be given to additional research and the development of robust evaluation methodologies around community-based child protection mechanisms and links to formal systems. This could include developing models with the potential for replication around children's alternative care in the community. It might also include looking at new bottom-up models of strengthening links between the community and formal systems.

The development and/or inclusion of child protection and child care indicators into child wellbeing studies in Uganda should also be highlighted.

The call for a centralised database of standardised data was clear, as well as a central information access source for learning to allow stakeholders to more effectively inform policy and planning.

In addition, research and learning in country could be better coordinated and more strategic. It could address gaps as well as link more closely with key policy, programming and advocacy priorities. This requires closer collaboration with research institutions and other stakeholders.

Importantly, children's voices as well as those of the community need to be more strongly heard in research.

Finally, research needs to be more closely linked to practitioners, so that learning can be turned into practice. This could include closer researcher-practitioner collaborations and the analysis and "repackaging" of research findings into practical implications for practitioners.

Strengthening evidence-based advocacy for child care reform

Further efforts are required to engage the highest level political commitment to the process of child care reform and additional advocacy needs to take place which target government and donors and bring about policy and programming changes.

Advocacy efforts could also target key actors and implementers within the alternative care for children sector in order to help improve programmes. This differs from a public campaign where behaviour change is the primary goal.

Advocacy also needs to be coordinated between stakeholders and a set of common messages developed in order to avoid overwhelming the targets of with multiple requests and mixed messages. Additionally, advocacy needs to be strengthened with more evidence whilst existing evidence needs to be used to develop advocacy

messages. Where there are gaps, advocacy groups could coordinate more closely with research institutions and other bodies undertaking studies so that advocacy and research planning are linked.

Actors could coordinate more closely around agreed opportunities for advocacy entry points, for examples the national elections or any new national studies, such as the Violence Against Children study;

It would also be worth considering the feasibility of the CPWG as potential advocacy coordination mechanism if there are no conflicts of interest inherent in this arrangement. In any case, because the CPWG have direct access to government, it should feature prominently in any advocacy coordination and planning groups.

Table 1: Most popular Priority areas and indications of interest by agencies	
Priority areas	Interested institutions, organisations, agencies and individuals
1. Strengthening capacity for family strengthening and alternative care	
<i>Implementation capacity and coordination</i>	
*Develop a detailed implementation strategy for the Alternative Care Framework and developing and supporting a clear structure for implementation. This should be a formal implementation body which is strengthened to include checks and balances at various levels. This would include undertaking an assessment of current structures needs to be undertaken and roles and responsibilities defined;	UCRNN; Alternative Care Initiatives; Bantwana; Terre des Hommes; FXB Uganda; Holt; CALM Africa; Kampala school for physically handicapped children; Retrak Uganda; CRANE / VIVA; Children charity; UWESO
*Strengthen the CPWG, chaired by the MGLSD, as the coordination body;	
Strengthen the judicial services at all levels in relation to children;	This area needs more support
Work with local structures, for instance at the district level, to increase coordination between local actors in planning and implementing programmes. This will prevent the duplication of services and enhance collaborative efforts;	Terres des Hommes; CALM Africa; Uganda Child Helpline; URCNN; Uganda Youth Development Link; Bantwana; Ministry of Health; UWESO; Children Charity Uganda; Ugandans Adopt; VIVA/ CRANE; ANPPCAN Uganda
Strengthen the coordination team to build evidence around alternative care of children.	UCRNN; Alternative Care Initiatives; Bantwana; Terre des Hommes; FXB Uganda; Holt; CALM Africa; Kampala school for physically handicapped children; Retrak Uganda; CRANE / VIVA; Children charity; UWESO.
<i>Budgeting</i>	
Work to ensure that additional funds are allocated for child protection by the Ministry of Finance, including ensuring children have access to appropriate care and justice;	This whole area of work requires more support
*Develop a resource implication paper (Human Resources and financial resources) for the implementation of the alternative care framework;	
Undertake an investment in children analysis which shows the returns on spending on children's protection and care versus not spending in these areas;	
Increase coordination and collaboration around the allocation of resources which are relevant to children needs to be increased with a view to increasing the efficient nature of child related funding – for example, funding more programmes which are based on evidence and learning and avoiding funding similar initiatives.	
<i>Human Resources</i>	
*Strengthen human resources including staffing, capacities and facilitation;	Terres des Hommes; CALM Africa; Uganda Child Helpline; URCNN;

Table 1: Most popular Priority areas and indications of interest by agencies	
Priority areas	Interested institutions, organisations, agencies and individuals
*Support more holistic training for child protection which targets child protection units for example in health, education and police.	Uganda Youth Development Link; Bantwana; Ministry of Health; UWESO; Children Charity Uganda; Ugandans Adopt; VIVA/ CRANE; ANPPCAN Uganda
<i>Families, communities and individuals</i>	
*Provide training to parents in creative parenting including forms of positive parenting and a whole range of life-skills training (which can also target young people);	Terres des Hommes; CALM Africa; Uganda Child Helpline; URCNN; Uganda Youth Development Link; Bantwana; Ministry of Health; UWESO; Children Charity Uganda; Ugandans Adopt; VIVA/ CRANE; ANPPCAN Uganda
Support additional community level family support groups to enable families to support each other and enhance the community aspect of raising children;	
Provide more support for inter-generational parenting;	
*Providing training for economic and social empowerment of the household, with an emphasis on household livelihood capacity building. This could also be considered as an entry point with the potential to reduce domestic violence;	
Train additional para-professionals to ensure ongoing community sensitisation around issues related to the care of children;	
Put a deputy chair in charge of child wellbeing and protection at Local Council 1 (the lowest government administrative unit at village level);	
Provide training and skilling to community structures in child protection and care in particular and link them to government structures at sub-county (i.e. Assistant and Community Development Officers) on a continuous basis;	
Create and strengthen Community Child Protection Committees and link them to the implementation of alternative care framework;	
Package information for community dissemination and to support meaningful community dialogue;	
Build a referral structure within the community so that family members know who to go to for specific services.	
<i>Especially vulnerable children</i>	
*Support the development of byelaws that integrate vulnerable children into communities, with a special focus on children in CCIs;	This whole area requires more support
*Support the increased participation of all children, including especially vulnerable children, in community decision making. This includes educating parents and relatives on diverse children's issues and children's participation and supporting programmes which can help build children's confidence to participate and link with other children and the community, for instance through sports programmes	
It was also seen as important to provide or support more positive role models for children with	

Table 1: Most popular Priority areas and indications of interest by agencies	
Priority areas	Interested institutions, organisations, agencies and individuals
disabilities and to mainstream psychosocial support into policy and programming around child protection and children's care.	
Support the development of byelaws that integrate vulnerable children into communities, with a special focus on children in CCI's;	
2. Evidence building and sharing around family strengthening and alternative care	
Reporting	
*Harmonise and simplify community level data collection and reporting tools on children's protection and wellbeing and disseminate these tools at all levels;	FXB Uganda; Retrak UGANDA; Bantwana; Terre des Hommes; CALM Africa
*Generally, all data and reporting tools also need to be harmonised;	FXB Uganda; Retrak UGANDA; Bantwana
*Document issues from a community perspective;	Terre des Hommes; CALM Africa
*Share information more effectively with all frontline human resources at community and district levels.	This areas needs more support
Data collection	
*Set up a detailed database on children which uses or links to various forms of data being collected around children (e.g. education management, police, birth registrations);	Terre des Hommes; CALM Africa; Bantwana; Childs i Foundation
*Undertake periodic baselines on children's protection and wellbeing;	Bantwana; Childs i Foundation
*Undertake systematic documentation of children in CCI's into a centralized database;	Terre des Hommes; CALM Africa
*Harmonise information on OVC within the national OVC Management Information System with data being collected on children's alternative care.	Bantwana; Childs i Foundation
Research	
*Increase financial resources for research around child protection and alternative care; including data collection; monitoring and tracing systems and the re-election of Local Councils;	ANPPCAN Uganda; UWESO; UCRNN; Alternative Care Initiatives; Children Charity Uganda; Holt Children's services; Uganda Youth Development Lin; Retrak Uganda
*Invest in local research around alternative care and the continuum of care and encourage increased sharing of findings among key stakeholders;	
*Undertake research, including 'action research' on programmes around alternative care to identify those which could be replicated;	
Coordination	
*Invest in and strengthen coordination of alternative care evidence collection and implementation, for instance create a central repository of alternative care information, resources and actors;	CALM Africa; Bantwana; UCRNN; Retrak Uganda; Uganda Child Helpline; CRANE / VIVA
*Develop a central data collection point on child protection learning and data, and which can help increase improved programming and avoid duplications;	

Table 1: Most popular Priority areas and indications of interest by agencies	
Priority areas	Interested institutions, organisations, agencies and individuals
*Systematically and professionally share generated evidence with decision makers across all levels.	
3. Strengthening advocacy for family strengthening and alternative care	
Advocacy targeting government	
*Generate and support top level political commitment beyond the MGLSD to deinstitutionalise the child care system in Uganda. Whilst there is already a coordinating Alternative Care unit within MGLSD it is not clear to what extent it is able to reach out to and coordinate with other sector Ministries;	UCRNN; Alternative Care Initiatives; Bantwana; Terre des Hommes; FXB Uganda; Holt; CALM Africa; Kampala school for physically handicapped children; Retrak Uganda; CRANE / VIVA; Children charity; UWESO.
*Strengthen joint leadership for joint planning, M and E and law enforcement;	UWESO; UCRNN
*Identify a “flag bearer” – namely a high profile person to champion progress in addressing child care issues within government;	
*Focus more strongly on advocacy engagement with policy makers.	
Advocacy targeting communities and districts	
*Undertaking actions which create awareness around vulnerable children in communities, especially those at risk of separation, targeting gate keepers, local authorities, opinion leaders and influencers such as teachers, police and health workers.	UCRNN; CRANE /VIVA; Terres des Homes; Children charity; Uganda Youth Development Link; Child Advocacy Africa; Retrak Uganda
*Develop additional strategies and support to engage communities further around community dialogue and actions addressing issues of child care and protection on a continuous basis.	
Supporting a “rebuilding” of a family values system which can ensure that children are taught family and community values at an early stage;	
Creating child-friendly communities where children are encouraged to participate and their voices are heard.	
Facilitating the development of community byelaws around child welfare and linking these to national laws and guidelines	
*Undertake advocacy for the recognition of the important role of probation and social welfare officers (PSWO) at the district level and increase their number. Currently there are only 40 functional PSWOs in 112 districts. PSWO should also negotiate budgets and explain their roles clearly;	
Advocacy targeting stakeholders and evidence based advocacy	
*Disseminate and raise awareness of existing laws and frameworks on Alternative Care and other relevant areas.	UCRNN; CRANE /VIVA; Terres des Homes; Children charity;
*Utilise existing child protection networks to better coordinate and create a united voice for	

Table 1: Most popular Priority areas and indications of interest by agencies	
Priority areas	Interested institutions, organisations, agencies and individuals
advocacy;	Uganda Youth Development Link; Child Advocacy Africa; Retrak Uganda
*Create more awareness platforms around children’s alternative care;	
*Identify key advocacy issues related to family strengthening and alternative care and build a case for advocacy initiatives using evidence to back up the messages.	
<i>Advocacy targeting foreigners</i>	
*Institute a “children are not for tourists” campaign which can address the phenomenon of “orphanage tourism” where foreigners visit or volunteer in Ugandan orphanages.	Police – Child & Family unit; Retrak Uganda; Uganda Youth Development Link; Child Advocacy Africa; CALM Africa; ANPPCAN; Holt; UWESO; FXB Uganda; Ugandans Adopt

Key documents and references

- Better Care Network (2014) Mapping of child care actors and collaboration mechanisms in Eastern and Southern Africa: A report of findings and recommendations
- Better Care Network (2014) Meeting Report of the Regional Learning and Consultation Meeting: Strengthening Child Care Systems
- Child Protection in Crisis Learning Network (2012) Mapping community-based child protection mechanisms – Uganda
- Child Protection Working Group, Uganda (2014) List of institutions in the National Child Protection Working Group (CPWG)
- Deogratias Yiga and the Government of Uganda (2014): Linking child poverty analysis to child protection programming in Uganda: Research briefing paper based on Situation Analysis of Child Poverty and deprivation in Uganda
- TPO Uganda and REPSSI (2010) Mainstreaming Psychosocial Care and Support - Facilitating community support structures: lessons learned from Uganda about community-based psychosocial and mental health interventions
- UNICEF and the Government of Uganda (2014): Situation Analysis of Child Poverty and Deprivation in Uganda
- Wessells, M (2009) Executive Summary: What are we learning about protecting children in the community?

Annexure 1: List of participating agencies and individuals:

Agency, Institution or Initiative	Participant name	Work Title
Action for Community Development	Benon Mugulusi	Partnership Manager
Alternative Care Initiatives	Mark Riley	Consultant
ANPPCAN Uganda Chapter	Faidha Jamilar	SPO – Legal Services
CALM Africa	Joseph Luganda	Programme Manager
	Israel Sekanjako	Senior Officer
	Muhebwa Hillan	Communication Officer
Child Advocacy Africa	Vivien Kiwanuka	Social Worker
Children At Risk Action Network [CRANE]	Faith Kembabazi	Network Manager
Children Charity	Sewagudde Patrick	Manager
Childs i Foundation	Lucy Buck	CEO
	Tracy Kyagulanyi	ED
	Barbara Aber	L&D Manager
HIAS Refugee Trust [Uganda]	Nathalie Achlen	B/D Specialist
Holt Uganda	Andezu Dorah	Social Services Coordinator
Hope and Homes for Children [Rwanda]	Kamanyire Deus	Head of Advocacy and Programme Development
International HIV AIDS Alliance – SUNRISE OVC Project	Ngabirano Fred	Technical Advisor
Kampala School for Physically Handicapped	Okiring Sam	Deputy Head of School
Kyampisi Child Care Ministries	Priscilla Nabukeera	Child Protection
	Anna Nayngoma	Assistant Child Protection
	Peter Sewakiryanga	E.D
Legal Aid Service Organizations Network [LASPNET]	Mukooyo Jolly	RAO
Makerere University – Department of Social Work	Firminus Mugumya	Lecturer
	Dr. Eddy Walakira	Senior Lecturer
Management Sciences for Health [MSH] STAR – E project	Esther Sempira	Deputy Director
	Dr. Agnes Kobusingye	STO
Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development	James Kaboggoza	Assistant Commissioner for Children Affairs
	Lydia Wasula	Ag. Head, OVC Unit
	Matsiko Frank	Principal Probation Officer
	Ajiambo Emily	Senior Gerontologist
	Agnes M. Wasike	CPWG Coordinator
	Charity Rutaremwa	Assistant Comissioner- Family Affairs
	Dorah Musiimire	Probation & Social Welfare Officer
	Jimmy Obbo	Uganda Child Helpline

Ministry of Health	Ninsiima Boaz	Lab Technician
	Albert Lule	Senior Nutritionist
Ministry of Internal Affairs	Binoga Moses	Coordinator- PTIP
National Association of Social Workers of Uganda	Irene Nafungo	National Coordinator
Office of the Prime Minister [Refugee Department]	Darlson Kusasira	CSO
PANOS Eastern Africa	Lynn Najjemba	Programme Officer
	Carolyn Nantambi	
REPSSI	Michael Byamukama	Country Representative
Retrak Uganda	Dinah Mwesigye	Foster Care Advisor
	Cyrus Kayumba	Social worker – Foster Care
Save the Children	Helen Namulwana	Child Protection Advisor
Terre des Hommes Netherlands	Richard Oneka	Partner Support
	Mor Ben- Atar	Business Development Officer
The Judiciary [Nakawa Court]	Lilian Mwachha	Deputy Registrar
TPO Uganda	Patrick Onyango	Country Director
Uganda Muslim Supreme Council	Nangeeba Hassan	NCWA
Uganda Police – Child and Family Protection Unit	Gad Mfitundida	Assistant Inspector of Police - CFPU/UCHL
Uganda Society for Disabled Children	Dolorence Were	Executive Director
Uganda Women’s Efforts to Save Orphans [UWESO]	Eddie Wambewo	CPM
Uganda Youth Development Link	Immaculate Nanziri	Social worker
UNICEF Uganda	Caroline Aloyo	Child Protection Specialist
	Silvia Pasti	Chief Child Protection
	Marica Garde	Head of Research
United Nations High Commission for Refugees [UNHCR]	Samuel Vandi	Child protection Officer
Uganda Child Rights NGO Network [UCRNN]	Patrick Owaga	Partnership Manager
USAID – Private Health Services Program	Dennis Nuwagaba	Technical Coordinator- OVC
VIVA Africa	Mim Friday	Network Consultant
Wakiso District Local Government	Nakazibwe Mary	Probation & Social Welfare Officer
World Education / BANTWANA	Susan Kajura	Director
	Edton Babu	Deputy County Director
World Vision Uganda	Judith Nakamanya	Advocacy Coordinator
Youth Social Work Association	Peniel Rwendeire	Project Coordinator

Annexure 2: Summary of evaluation forms

Overall the meeting was rated well by individual evaluations and feedback.

Many people reported they would have liked more time to discuss and collaborate, and less presentations, with suggestions that the workshop could have been three days, but it was also acknowledged by everyone that the opportunity to focus on alternative care was most appreciated.

Many people would have liked more time for networking, practical planning and agreeing more concrete actions. Some noted that they would have liked to clarify in the meeting what was expected from stakeholders going forward.

The majority of people rated the venue as good or excellent and convenient.

Everyone rated the facilitator's style as good to excellent, noting challenges with time management but having enjoyed the participatory style, especially the café conversations, and the facilitator's level of knowledge of the subject areas, which some noted added value to discussions.

People also suggested:

- More case studies,
- More child care institutions to be present,
- More practical recommendations,
- Include schools, community development organisations and CBOs and field officers
- Implement similar processes at the grassroots, consider having meetings "in situ"
- Decision makers need to be part of the meeting, and new actors, that we risk "preaching to the converted"
- More Ministries

Annexure 3: Linking Child Poverty and Child Protection in Uganda

The meeting in Uganda was combined with the presentation of the report “*Linking child poverty analysis to child protection programming in Uganda: Research briefing paper based on a situation analysis of child poverty and deprivation in Uganda, 2014*” and a discussion. The main points in relation to the preamble and presentation are below and include some brief comments from the consultant.

Presentations

Convened by: National Child Protection Working Group

Preamble by: Ms. Marica Garde, Social Policy Specialist, UNICEF Uganda

Presentation of the report by: Deogratias Yiga, Consultant, Development Links Consult

Main points emanating from the preamble:

The *Situation Analysis of Child Poverty and deprivation in Uganda 2014* - Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development and UNICEF Uganda - highlights the very high percentage of Ugandan children (55%) under 4 years old who are experiencing multi-dimensional poverty and are deprived in at least two crucial areas of their rights. At least 24% of these children are considered to live in extreme poverty.

The preamble given by Ms Marica Garde of UNICEF highlighted the need to understand the difference between child poverty and adult poverty, pointing out that children experience poverty differently than adults. It was argued that using primarily income indicators to measure child poverty does not give an adequate picture of the deprivations experienced by children. It was noted that children who grow up in poverty and deprivation will often live with the impact for the rest of their lives. For example children who are stunted due to malnutrition are shown have decreased educational and livelihood outcomes compared to children who are not stunted.

The preamble also highlighted that whilst it is generally understood that child poverty and child protection are linked, the 2014 study did not report on child protection indicators. For this reason we do not yet have a clear understanding as to exactly how poverty, child care and protection are linked. It was recommended in the preamble that indicators on child protection and child care should be included in future child poverty surveys so that we can integrate child protection and care into resulting broader social development policy and programming responses. For example child protection and care should be included in child-friendly budgeting and in social protection policy and programming.

Main points emanating from the presentation of the report *Linking child poverty analysis to child protection programming in Uganda: Research briefing paper based on Situation Analysis of Child Poverty and deprivation in Uganda, 2014*:

The focus of this analysis looks at child protection within the broader framework of child wellbeing, which encompasses a range of sectors including social development and access to basic services such as education, health and housing. The analysis identified social protection as mechanism which should be employed to address child poverty and wellbeing, using a “child sensitive” approach that would incorporate child protection measures.

The analysis also notes the need to undertake more research which can identify the specific links between household poverty and child protection, especially the link between household poverty and violence against children.

These points were reiterated by the discussion which followed, with a number of key points of consensus being reached:

- Social protection is a key response to child poverty. However, we need to ensure that vulnerable and deprived children are able to access social protection services as part of their rights as children;
- There are gaps in Ugandan law which need to be addressed regarding who holds the responsibility for ensuring children’s socio-economic rights. In the Constitution responsibility is stated as both the State’s and the parents’ but there is no law which explicitly makes the State responsible for ensuring children’s socio-economic rights, despite being a signatory to the UN CRC;
- There should be a stronger focus on actions plans and roles;
- More action oriented research and interventions are required. There is a need to identify improved approaches to child protection which includes building the capacities of communities to respond more rapidly at the community level to children who are at risk or in danger.

Child poverty, child protection and child care: observations and comments by the BCN consultant

The CPWG tells us that the discussions and main recommendations around linking child poverty and child protection programming will inform a publically shared issues paper on child care and protection to be developed by the National Child Protection Working Group in consultation with stakeholders. According to the CPWG, child care and protection is a sub-sector that is currently allocated relatively little within the national budget, therefore the extensive sharing of information is critical in building the necessary momentum among the public to advocate for increased government investment in child care and protection.

Whilst it is generally understood that poverty, child protection and child care are linked in a number of ways, this recent analysis of child poverty tells us that more reliable evidence which can help us understand the precise dynamics at play and the causal pathways leading to children entering or requiring alternative care is still

needed. More robust evidence of this nature will lead to a strengthening of child friendly poverty reduction and social development strategies. For instance, by investing in building the evidence around the causal links and pathways between poverty, child protection and child care, more precise entry points and opportunities for intervention, especially at the prevention stage can be identified.