



Child protection assessment

Description:	This child protection assessment consists of several tools for data gathering and analyses. It will give local NGO's and governments insights in child protection issues, causes and systems in a targeted community and its wider context. This enables them to design programmes to address child protection issues with appropriate measures.
Goals of the session:	<p>To identify and prioritise child protection issues in a community.</p> <p>To identify particular groups of children in a community that are more vulnerable than others to abuse, exploitation or neglect.</p> <p>To identify causes of child protection issues in a community.</p> <p>To gain insight in existing formal and informal support mechanisms for children and youth, their linkages, their strengths and their gaps/weaknesses.</p> <p>To identify possible solutions for child protection issues.</p>
Audience:	Project officers / researchers of local NGO's and governments.
Target group:	Children, youth and adults in a community. Professional and non-professional key informants working in/with a community.
Preparation time:	3 or more hours
Duration:	3 or more hours
Training method:	Desk research (filtering relevant data from existing documents), focus groups with children, youth and adults in a community, key informant interviews with professional and non-professional key informants, analysis.
Materials:	A printed version of this tool. Also see the description of each tool.
Copyright:	<p>Help a Child (2015). Toolbox to facilitate child centered participatory development. Empowering communities & children for a better tomorrow. A guide for practitioners in child centered community programs. Zwolle: Help a Child. Adapted by Help a Child (2016).</p> <p>The Columbia Group for Children in Adversity (2011). An ethnographic study of community-based child protection mechanisms and their linkage with the national child protection system of Sierra Leone. Annex 3. Key tools, ethnographic phase. Adapted by Help a Child (2016).</p> <p>World Vision International (2011). ADAPT for child protection. Analysis, design and planning tool. California: World Vision International. Adapted by Help a Child (2016).</p>

How to use this document

- ➔ The tools described in this child protection assessment can be used either separately or as a whole.
- ➔ If you would like to use a tool separately, you may skip most of the 'General child protection assessment instructions' (p. 3-8), but please do read the 'Preparations' (p. 4) and 'Positive openers and closures' paragraphs (p. 6).
- ➔ Click on an underlined title in the Index (p. 2) to go to a preferred paragraph or tool directly. You do not have to scroll the entire document to find the information you need.



Index

How to use this document	p. 1
Index	2
General child protection assessment instructions	3
Introduction	3
Definition	3
Key questions	3
Preparations	4
Positive openers and closures	6
Assessment steps	8
Child protection assessment tools	9
1A. Desk research	9
2A. Risk and support mapping - children & youth	12
2B. Risk and support mapping - adults	15
2C. Risk and support systems - key informants	19
3A. Analysis	24



General child protection assessment instructions

Introduction

Help a Child has developed a child protection assessment to help local governments and organisations to:

- Identify and prioritise child protection issues in a community and their root causes.
- Identify particular groups of children and youth in these communities who are more vulnerable to abuse, neglect or exploitation.
- Gain insight in the current local child protection system and the way it functions.

The assessment consists of several ready-to-use tools that have been collected and adapted by Help a Child. These tools are described in detail in different toolsheets and can be used either separately or as a whole. Users are free to adapt or replace tools and they do not have to keep the described order.

Definition

Child protection issues may relate to **violence**, or threat of violence (including physical violence, sexual and gender-based violence, trafficking) that occurs at home, community, schools and places where children work, **exploitation** such as child labour or commercial sexual exploitation, **neglect of children** including deliberate deprivation of food, shelter, clothing, attention, and **harmful traditional practices** such as early marriage.¹

Key questions²

Answers to the key questions below will provide a clear overview of the current state of affairs in a community regarding child protection. Different parts of Help a Child's child protection assessment will help to answer them.

1. *Demography (only in case of new communities)*
 - What is the number of children and youth in the targeted community in total and per age group? (Boys, girls, children with disabilities.)
 - What is the number of families in the targeted community? (Two parent, single parent and child-headed households.)
2. *Child protection issues*
 - What are the child protection issues within the community?
 - Are there any harmful traditional practices in this community?
 - What is the prevalence of these issues and practices?
 - Are any particular groups of children more vulnerable than others to abuse, exploitation or neglect, such as girls or children with disabilities?

¹ World Vision International (2011). ADAPT for child protection. Analysis, design and planning tool. California: World Vision International.

² Source: 'Checklist for national office level assessment' (p. 31-34) and 'Research questions for the community level child protection assessment' (p. 41-45) in: World Vision International (2011). ADAPT for child protection. Analysis, design and planning tool. California: World Vision International. Adapted by Help a Child (2016).



3. *Child protection causes*

- What are the root causes of the main child protection issues within the community?

4. *Child protection system*

- What do the formal national, provincial³ and local child protection systems look like? (Laws, standards, actors, mandates and regulations, policies, procedures/processes for identification/reporting/investigation, methods, implementation, monitoring.)
 - Prevention of abuse, neglect and exploitation, aimed at children/youth, families and other caregivers⁴.
 - Response to abuse, neglect and exploitation, aimed at children/youth, families and perpetrators.
- How do these formal child protection systems function in practice? (Focus on local system and relevant parts of the national and provincial/district system.)
 - Actor's capacities to provide and perform child protection services (including human and financial resources, training and adequate facilities).
 - Actually reaching children/youth, families, other (professional) caregivers and/or perpetrators.
 - Satisfaction of children/youth, families and other community members with services.
- Does an informal local child protection system exist and if yes, what does it look like (actors⁵, processes for identification/reporting/investigation)?
 - Prevention of abuse, neglect and exploitation.
 - Response to abuse, neglect and exploitation.
- What are the linkages, ways of cooperation and gaps between actors of the (formal and informal) child protection system?

Preparations

Start to collect useful information to begin working with a community. Contact relevant informants/officials, make appointments and arrange logistics. Inform relevant stakeholders and solicit their participation from the outset. Collect relevant documents.⁶

Assign experienced personnel to roll out the process with the targeted community. Involve an experienced specialist in the field of child protection in the process. Make sure all personnel

³ The level between national and local. May be called differently in some countries, for example 'regional' or 'district'.

⁴ For example caregivers in the community, schools, health centres, out of school activities, religious institutions and residential care institutions.

⁵ For example community leaders, caregivers in religious institutions, so-called wise women in the community to whom children turn to.

⁶ Source: '2. Preparatory phase and tools' in: Help a Child (2015). *Toolbox to facilitate child centered participatory development. Empowering communities & children for a better tomorrow. A guide for practitioners in child centered community programs.* Zwolle: Help a Child. Adapted by Help a Child (2016).



are trained in a participatory approach including using the tool(s) and applying ethical principles throughout the process.⁷

Respect and protect the best interests of children throughout the process. This requires certain preparations, methods and after care⁸:

- *Ensure voluntary participation:* All participation of children, youth, adults and (professional) key informants must be voluntary.
- *Ensure informed participation:* Every participant must give verbal or signed ‘informed consent’. (Both the caregiver’s and the child’s consent in case of child participants.) Informed consent means an explicit agreement to participate after being informed in ways that participants can understand, about the:
 - purpose and expected benefits or outcomes of the activity
 - potential risks and consequences of being involved in the process
 - time commitment and other expectations of participants
 - possibility of refusing to participate (including not answering a specific question) or to withdraw at any time
 - ways in which data are being collected, including note-taking and recording
 - topics of information that are being collected and discussed
 - use of the information, and if any information will be held in confidentiality. Something should be included about what might be done if the child discloses information about personal experience of abuse. For example: “If we are discussing sensitive topics, what you share in the group, will remain in the group, but if an adult thinks that you might not be safe, we might have to tell some other adults who can help me try to make you safer.”
 Also agree upon any compensation (no money!) to participants in advance.
- *Respect privacy and ensure confidentiality:* Make sure the place where you meet the children, youth, adults and (professional) key informants is safe, with nobody who can overhear what is being said in the group. Explain that you will use the information gathered during the assessment to design a program, but that you will not mention specific names of people or who said what. The information gathered through the assessment is dealt with in a confidential and anonymous way.
- *Ensure safety of and emotional support for participants:*
 - *Protect participants from harm including distress:* Make sure activities with children and youth start and end positively (see ‘Positive openers and closures’). Pause the activity as soon as a participant shows any form of distress and only continue if he feels comfortable continuing or has quit participating. Offer external support if needed.
 - *Know how to deal with child protection cases:* Have a plan in place for how to respond to children that share about current or past personal experiences of abuse, violence, and exploitation. Make a distinction between severe or even life-threatening situations that require immediate action and situations that do

⁷ See 5.

⁸ Source: ‘Ethics’ (p.12-14) in: World Vision International (2011). ADAPT for child protection. Analysis, design and planning tool. California: World Vision International. Adapted by Help a Child (2016).



require action but are not emergencies. Ensure that all facilitators know how to act and will act appropriately in severe cases. Only in these cases may facilitators pass on confidential information gained during the interviews on a basis of 'need to know'.

- *Ensure safety of and emotional support for facilitators:* Protect facilitators of potential threats from perpetrators of child abuse. Have emotional support available for stress that facilitators may feel, especially as a result of discussing difficult issues for children that the team may not be able to resolve.

Positive openers and closures⁹

Do short activities to start and end the sessions with children and youth positively. A positive opener allows the facilitators and the participants to get to know each other, to break the ice and to build rapport. A positive closure encourages positive thoughts. They will help children and youth to leave a session, which has included potentially distressing child protection topics, with a balanced emotional state. Below you find examples of activities that could be used to open and close sessions. Feel free to adapt them or to replace them by other activities.

Positive openers:

- *Names and adjectives:* Participants sit in a circle. Ask each to think of an adjective to describe how they are feeling or how they are. The adjective must start with the same letter as their name, for instance, "I'm Harry and I'm happy". Or, "I'm Maria and I'm moody". As they say this, they can also mime an action that describes the adjective. All others will repeat the child's name and imitate her action after she introduces himself/herself. For example, "He is Harry and he is happy". The facilitator may want to start off by first introducing himself/herself this way.
- *The Sun shines on:* Participants sit in a tight circle with one person in the middle (facilitator may start off). The person in the middle introduces first saying her/his name and one sentence that describes her/him. Then shouts out "so the sun shines on..." and names a color, articles of clothing that some in the group possess, a favorite activity or a talent or skill. For example, "I am Aimy, I love the color blue and the sun shines on all those wearing a blue shirt" or "the sun shines on all those who love to draw" or "the sun shines on all those who know how to sing". All the participants who have that attribute must change places with one another. The person in the middle tries to take one of their places as they move, so that there is another person left in the middle without a place. The new person in the middle shouts out "the sun shines on..." and names a different color or type of clothing, skill or talent.
- *'Hello' in many languages, in 72 seconds:* Participants standing up, spread out around the room. Facilitator teaches "Hello" in a few languages. For instance, "Hello" (English), "Konnichi wa" (Japanese), "Hola" (Spanish), "Assalamou Alykoum" (Arabian), "Haai" (Afrikaan), "Bonjour" (French), et cetera. Participants repeat the

⁹ Source: 'Protection tool' and 'Tool: Introductions and creative openers' in: World Vision International (2011). ADAPT for child protection. Analysis, design and planning tool. California: World Vision International. Adapted by Help a Child (2016).



words so they get to pronounce and remember them. This may also be written on flipcharts so they can read and memorize. Then at the count of three (3), facilitator signals participants to go around the room and meet other participants they don't know well and greet them with 'Hello' in many languages and adding their own language/dialect, and asking their names and brief description of who they are in 72 seconds. After 72 seconds, count to three again and ask them to switch and find other people in the room they haven't met and repeat the exercise. Repeat this a couple more times.

Positive closures:

- *Singing a nice song.*
- *Doing a small game.*
- *Colouring a picture:* Give each child a picture of something with positive cultural associations, to colour or decorate, with five to six sentences to complete that indicate positive aspects of their lives. Often the picture is a flower, with a sentence on each petal. Typical sentences are: I am best at...; The person who loves me most is...; I feel safe...; My happiest memory is...; My biggest fan is...; What I like best about my village...
Sentences can differ and the picture can take any form, such as a hand, an umbrella, et cetera. Of course they can draw the picture themselves.
Children take their own pictures away with them when they have finished, but they may give permission to the researchers to copy or photograph the picture.
- *Shaking of bad experiences and feelings:* Ask children to stand up and say: Now we will shake off bad experiences and feelings, so they are blown away by the wind away from us and into the farthest and deepest oceans. Then motion a shaking of your body, and invite the children to shake their own hands and fingers, then feet/legs, then their head, then their whole body altogether. Do this for a few seconds. Then, slowing down, thank them for doing a good job, then as they stop, ask them to breathe in and out for a few seconds until they become still and comfortable.



Assessment steps

Help a Child's child protection assessment consists of 3 steps, from the preparation stage to the analysis stage:

Step 1: Data gathering – Filtering relevant data from existing documents

Tool:

1A. Child protection assessment: Desk research

Step 2: Data gathering - Focus groups and individual interviews with children, youth, adults and key informants

Tools:

2A. Child protection assessment: Risk and support mapping - children & youth

2B. Child protection assessment: Risk and support mapping - adults

2C. Child protection assessment: Risk and support systems - key informants

Step 3: Analysis

Tool:

3A. Child protection assessment: Analysis



1A. Child protection assessment tool:

Desk research

Description:	This desk research tool helps local NGO's and governments to collect and analyse relevant existing data about child protection issues, causes and systems in a targeted community and its wider context. Desk research results may provide also a framework for field research.
Goals of the session:	To identify child protection issues at the national and local level and their possible causes. To understand the national, provincial and formal and informal local child protection systems, as well as their strengths and gaps/weaknesses. To understand linkages between formal and non-formal mechanisms and services for child protection.
Audience:	Project officers / researchers of local NGO's and governments.
Target group:	-
Preparation time:	1-2 hours
Duration:	3 or more hours
Training method:	Collecting and analysing relevant documents, information on web pages, video's, et cetera. Reporting the results.
Materials:	Computer with internet connection, (printer), office supplies like pens and paper.
Copyright:	Help a Child (2015). Toolbox to facilitate child centered participatory development. Empowering communities & children for a better tomorrow. A guide for practitioners in child centered community programs. Zwolle: Help a Child. Adapted by Help a Child (2016). World Vision International (2011). ADAPT for child protection. Analysis, design and planning tool. California: World Vision International. Adapted by Help a Child (2016).

Important: This tool can be used separately or in the context of a complete child protection assessment, either your own or the one developed by Help a Child. If you would like to use this tool separately, you may skip most of the 'General child protection assessment instructions' (p. 3-8) in this document, but please do read the 'Preparations' paragraph (p. 4).

Introduction

Desk research means collecting and analysing relevant existing data, in this case on child protection issues, causes and systems. This to get a general impression of the current issues and state of affairs in a targeted community and its wider context. Relevant information can be found in documents, on web pages, in video's and in other sources of for example national and local governments and organisations.

Desk research can be done as comprehensively as needed, depending on the use of the assessment. Feel free to do a short version of this desk research tool if wished.



When using this tool in the context of a complete child protection assessment: execute a desk research before conducting field research. This provides you with a framework on the matter beforehand and gives you the ability to check and complete the information gathered.

Instruction

1. Formulate questions that you would like to answer with information from relevant existing sources. You could use the key questions on page 3-4 or formulate your own.
2. Collect useful documents, information on web pages, video's and so on containing:
 - national and local demographic data
 - information on local child protection issues and their root causes
 - information on national, provincial and local child protection systems
 - other relevant data regarding the local context

Below you find an overview of possible sources. It is not necessary to gather all documents, but these are the kind of documents you could collect.

Data on	Possible source	Level		
		National	Provincial/ district	Local
Demography	National statistics office reports	x		x
	Government reports			x
	Previous studies done in target area			x
Child protection issues including prevalence and vulnerable groups	National statistics office	x		x
	Government reports on children and child protection, eg. Child act, child protection policies.	x	x	x
	Government and shadow reports to Committee on the Rights of the Child and CRC's concluding recommendations	x		
	Previous studies done in target area			x
	Other relevant sources			x
Child protection root causes	National statistics reports	x		x
	Government reports on children and child protection, eg. Child act, child protection policies.	x	x	x
	Government and shadow reports to CRC and CRC's concluding recommendations	x		
	Previous studies done in target area			x
	Other relevant sources			x



Child protection system	Government reports on children and child protection, eg. Child act, child protection policies.	x	x	x
	Government and shadow reports to CRC and CRC's concluding recommendations	x		
	Previous studies done in target area, for example by UNICEF, Save the Children or World Vision			x
	Other relevant sources			x

3. Analyse the information gathered by answering the questions formulated.

4. Report the findings in a brief report, for example using this format:

Summary

(Summary of situation and key findings)

Methodology

(Short description including key questions)

Context

(Description of answers to demography key questions)

Child protection issues

- Issues
- Vulnerable groups

(Summarised description of answers to key questions)

Child protection causes

(Summarised description of answers to key questions)

Child protection system

- National structure and practice
- Provincial structure and practice
- Local structure and practice (formal and informal)
- Coordination and cooperation
- Strengths and gaps/weaknesses

(Summarised description of answers to key questions)

Conclusions

- Key findings
- Information gaps



2A. Child protection assessment tool: Risks and support mapping – children & youth

Description:	A tool to gain insight in and document critical child protection issues, causes and priorities in a community, as well as existing support and ways to make communities safer for children and youth.
Goals of the session:	To identify and prioritise child protection issues in the community. To identify particular groups of children that are more vulnerable than others to abuse, exploitation or neglect. To identify causes of child protection issues in the community. To gain insight in existing support for children and youth. To identify possible solutions for child protection issues.
Audience:	Project officers / researchers of local NGO's and governments.
Target group:	Children and youth (6 - 9; 10 - 13; 14 - 16; 16 - 18). Boys and girls in separate groups (especially the last group).
Preparation time:	30 minutes
Duration:	1-2 hours
Training method:	Focus groups with children and youth in a community.
Materials:	Notepad, pens, audio-tape recorder with a full battery and a spare battery, flipchart and markers in different colours (including green and red) or local materials like small sticks and stones, leaves etc, copies of this tool.
Copyright:	© Help a Child – CreativeCommons BY-SA

Important: This tool can be used separately or in the context of a complete child protection assessment, either your own or the one developed by Help a Child. If you would like to use this tool separately, you may skip most of the 'General child protection assessment instructions' (p. 3-8) in this document, but please do read the paragraphs on 'Preparations' (p. 4) and 'Positive openers and closures' (p. 6).

Introduction

Children and youth might be facing risks in different areas of their own community. There might be dangerous roads, a dangerous well, a drinking joint where drunk men linger around, or an unpredictable neighbour or even father in their own homes.

There might also be places where children feel safe, or where they can go to in case of issues. Maybe a nice playground where they can meet friends, or at the church where there is this nice woman it is easy to talk with, or at home with their mum...

For every child this might be different of course. But to get a general feeling of how things are in a community, it is good to do this mapping exercise, with different groups of children.



Preparations

1. Select different groups of children of different ages, max 8 to 10 per group. Boys and girls can be together but when dealing with teenagers it is better to have separate girls and boys groups, since protection issues can be different for both sexes.
2. Make sure the place where you meet the children is safe, with nobody who can overhear what is being said in the group.
3. Adapt the questions to make them age appropriate.
4. Record the focus group session and/or take notes. When taking notes, write down the answer to each question/subject in keywords.

Instructions

1. Ask the children to draw a map of their community. They can draw on sand, using all kinds of sticks and little stones they find around. Or if flipchart paper is available, they can use markers. Let them not use red and green for now.
2. Ask them to explain the map of their community: where is the school? Their homes? The church? The roads? The well? The clinic? Etc.
3. Then ask them: If you think of your community, where would children feel not safe? Where would children feel scared or sad?
They can use the red marker now. When using sand, they can select one type of material (grasses, or dark sand or just simply putting a cross in the sand at the places where they do not feel safe).
4. Ask the children to explain the scary places in the community: which places make them not feel safe? And what is the reason for not feeling safe? (For instance: The roads are dangerous. Why? Because cars drive fast and do not break when they see children playing).
5. Now let us look at the places children like, places where you like to be, where you do feel safe. Indicate these places with a green marker or with clear material, like sand or a circle drawn in the sand.
6. Ask them to explain these places: Where do you feel safe and what makes it safe for children?

Ranking

1. The children have made a nice map of their community and identified the places they do not feel safe and the places they do feel safe. They have also identified the reasons for feeling unsafe and feeling safe at those places. List them again for the children.
2. There might be cases of feeling unsafe which occur often and others that are not so likely to happen. The children have to make a ranking: What is the top 5 of most common reasons for feeling unsafe?

What would you do?

1. Ask the children: What would you do when you do not feel safe?
2. Is there somebody you would go to? If yes, to whom?
3. Ask the children to come up with ideas what adults should do to make all places in the community safe for children.
4. And what can the children themselves do?



Closure

Thank all the children and close with a nice song or small game.

For each focus group session you now have answers to the questions/subjects written in key words. If wished, you can play the recordings to add any missing answers or to check whether your notes are correct.



2B. Child protection assessment tool: Risks and support mapping – adults

Description:	A tool to gain insight in and document critical child protection issues, causes and priorities in a community, as well as existing support and ways to make communities safer for children and youth.
Goals of the session:	To identify and prioritise child protection issues in the community. To identify particular groups of children that are more vulnerable than others to abuse, exploitation or neglect. To identify causes of child protection issues in the community. To gain insight in existing support for children and youth. To identify possible solutions for child protection issues.
Audience:	Project officers / researchers of local NGO's and governments. For this tool: 1 facilitator and 1 note taker.
Target group:	7-10 adult community members per group with attention to diversity (for example different economic status including the poorest of the poor, different social status, those living in difficult circumstances). Men and women in separate groups of 7-10 people.
Preparation time:	1-2 hours
Duration:	1-2 hours
Training method:	Focus groups with adult men and adult women in a community.
Materials:	Notepad, pens, audio-tape recorder with a full battery and a spare battery, flipchart, marker, copies of this tool.
Copyright:	Help a Child (2015). Toolbox to facilitate child centered participatory development. Empowering communities & children for a better tomorrow. A guide for practitioners in child centered community programs. Zwolle: Help a Child. Adapted by Help a Child (2016). The Columbia Group for Children in Adversity (2011). An ethnographic study of community-based child protection mechanisms and their linkage with the national child protection system of Sierra Leone. Annex 3. Key tools, ethnographic phase. Adapted by Help a Child (2016). World Vision International (2011). ADAPT for child protection. Analysis, design and planning tool. California: World Vision International. Adapted by Help a Child (2016).

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Introduction

This Risk and support mapping tool consists of three parts:

- A. Identifying and ranking child protection issues (30 minutes)
- B. Identifying causes and effects of child protection issues (45 minutes)
- C. Gaining insight in the formal and informal child protection systems (45 minutes)

The different parts of this tool can be used separately, although it is necessary to identify child protection issues together with the target group before executing part B or C. Also the risk and support mapping with adults can be done as comprehensively as needed. Feel free to shorten the tool, by skipping questions for example, if wished.

Instruction

1. Say welcome to the participants and thank them for coming.
2. Explain the purpose and the general planning of the meeting.
3. Record the session from now on and/or start to take notes. When taking notes, write down the answer to each question in keywords.
4. Continue with part A, B and/or C. Have short breaks between the different parts if required.

A. Identifying and ranking child protection issues¹⁰ (30 minutes)

5. Tell the participants: Now let us look at our children, at the things that we do and that we don't do that make them feel unsafe or insecure, and that affects their development. Those are the things we want to discuss. Who wants to start to tell what makes children feel unsafe or insecure at home, at school and in the community? (This may apply to children in general or specific groups of children.)
6. Continue until at least 5 risks have been identified. Let the process continue up to 10 items if the group is very energetic. Then ask the participants: Have the main issues been identified now or is a very big/urgent issue missing?
7. Explain that we need to close this discussion now and decide which are the biggest or most important risks to children in their village/area. Then put three signs on the floor. On the first write '*most significant issue in community*', on the second '*important but not most important*' and on the third '*less important*'.
8. Ask participants to vote on each identified issue by lining behind the appropriate sign when you call out the issue identified. Call out the issues one by one and each time ask participants to line behind the sign that best describes how they feel on the issue. Note the numbers behind each sign on a flipchart and ask participants why they think the particular issue is or is not most important.
9. At the end, the votes recorded on a flipchart will be reviewed noting the three most important child protection issues which will be further explored by participants.

¹⁰ Sources: *The Columbia Group for Children in Adversity (2011). An ethnographic study of community-based child protection mechanisms and their linkage with the national child protection system of Sierra Leone. Annex 3. Key tools, ethnographic phase.* / *World Vision International (2011). ADAPT for child protection. Analysis, design and planning tool. California: World Vision International. Adapted by Help a Child (2016).*



B. Identifying causes and effects of child protection issues¹¹ (45 minutes)

10. Explain that the group now will detect the root causes and effects of the identified child protection issues raised by the group. Explain that we will look at each problem as a tree. Draw a tree on sand, a blackboard or flipchart paper with a trunk, roots and branches. Explain that:
 - The trunk represents the core problem (a child protection issue that the group identified).
 - The roots represent the problems and issues that cause the child protection issue to happen, just like roots give rise to trunks.
 - The branches represent the effects of the problem.
11. Explain: If we want to remove the trunk, we cannot just cut the tree, we need to dig out the roots. Some 'roots' are closer to the trunk and easier to see than the deeper, hidden 'roots'. It's the same with the causes of problems. When we identify the initial causes of a child protection issue, we need to keep digging to see what has caused those causes. Later on in the project this will help us to tackle the deeper causes, which makes our actions more sustainable and effective.
12. Write the main child protection issue on the trunk. Ask the group why does this issue happen and write the things that are mentioned each on one of the roots.
13. Keep asking "Why?" until the group can go no further with their explanation of the causes behind the problem. This will help you to detect the immediate causes as well as the underlying causes and root causes.

Example: Many orphans do not go to school. **Why?**

 - Their guardians do not have money to pay for notebooks and uniforms. **Why?**
 - They are caring for many children and the money is not enough for all. **Why?**
 - The District Department of Education said that financial assistance would be given for orphans but this has not happened. **Why?**
 - Nobody has pushed the District education committee to give this money to the children. **Why?**
14. Optional, if time allows: After discussing causes thoroughly ask what the impact is of the discussed issue and write those on the branches. Restrict the analysis to major effects only.
15. Repeat step 1-3 of this exercise for two more main child protection issues that have been ranked by the group.

¹¹ Sources: Help a Child (2015). *Toolbox to facilitate child centered participatory development. Empowering communities & children for a better tomorrow. A guide for practitioners in child centered community programs.* Zwolle: Help a Child. / The Columbia Group for Children in Adversity (2011). *An ethnographic study of community-based child protection mechanisms and their linkage with the national child protection system of Sierra Leone. Annex 3. Key tools, ethnographic phase.* / World Vision International (2011). *ADAPT for child protection. Analysis, design and planning tool.* California: World Vision International. All adapted by Help a Child (2016).



C. Gaining insight in the formal and informal child protection systems¹² (45 minutes)

16. Tell the participants: Now I'd like to ask you what would happen if a child were affected by one of the three main risks/sources of harm you identified. Let's take your first ranked item, which was [NAME the top ranked item]. Suppose this had happened to an 8-year-old girl in your village. (Or if the risk is specifically related to a boy, the example would be a boy.) What would then happen step by step?

To help the group to go through the process step by step you may use the following questions:

- Who would the child go to for help?
 - What would this person do?
 - What would the family do?
 - Who else would be involved?
 - Who would take the lead?
 - What would likely happen to the child?
 - What would likely happen to the family?
 - What would likely happen to the perpetrator?
 - How would the support be experienced by the child and the family?
 - How could the help/services that the child received have been made better?
17. On the same problem/issue, repeat for one other person or place the child could go to for help in order to trace out a second pathway. Ask the participants: What other options did the child/family have? And repeat the questions of step 16.
18. If wished: Repeat step 16, focusing on the second-ranked item.
19. If wished: Repeat step 16, focusing on the third-ranked item. Don't worry if you run out of time since other risks and responses can be explored in during the interviews with key informants.
20. Conclude by thanking the participants for their time and participation.

For each focus group session you now have answers to the questions written in key words. If wished, you can play the recordings to add any missing answers or to check whether your notes are correct.

¹² Source: *The Columbia Group for Children in Adversity (2011). An ethnographic study of community-based child protection mechanisms and their linkage with the national child protection system of Sierra Leone. Annex 3. Key tools, ethnographic phase. Adapted by Help a Child (2016).*



2C. Child protection assessment tool: Risks and support systems – key informants

Description:	A tool to gain insight in and document critical child protection issues, causes and priorities in a community, as well as existing local formal and informal (preventive and responsive) support systems and ways to make communities safer for children and youth.
Goals of the session:	<p>To identify and prioritise child protection issues in the community.</p> <p>To identify particular groups of children that are more vulnerable than others to abuse, exploitation or neglect.</p> <p>To identify causes of child protection issues in the community.</p> <p>To gain insight in existing local formal and informal preventive and responsive support systems for children and youth.</p> <p>To identify possible solutions for child protection issues including improvements of support systems.</p>
Audience:	Project officers / researchers of local NGO's and governments. For this tool: 1 facilitator and 1 note taker.
Target group:	Local professional and non-professional key informants: The individuals from key government structures and institutions that have a legal responsibility for child protection are the primary key informants, for example local government representatives, police officers, health clinic workers and social workers. Also other professional and non-professional key informants that play an important role in in the community should be interviewed, like community leaders, teachers and leaders of faith-based organisations, especially any that work with children. A list of potential key informants should be formed based on the results from desk research and focus groups with children, youth and adults.
Preparation time:	1-2 hours
Duration:	1-2 hours
Training method:	Individual interviews with professional and non-professional key informants.
Materials:	Notepad and pens (or a laptop), audio-tape recorder with a full battery and a spare battery, copies of this tool.
Copyright:	<p>© Help a Child – CreativeCommons BY-SA</p> <p>The Columbia Group for Children in Adversity (2011). An ethnographic study of community-based child protection mechanisms and their linkage with the national child protection system of Sierra Leone. Annex 3. Key tools, ethnographic phase. Adapted by Help a Child (2016).</p> <p>World Vision International (2011). ADAPT for child protection. Analysis, design and planning tool. California: World Vision International. Adapted by Help a Child (2016).</p>

Important: This tool can be used separately or in the context of a complete child protection assessment, either your own or the one developed by Help a Child. If you would like to use



this tool separately, you may skip most of the ‘General child protection assessment instructions’ (p. 3-8) in this document, but please do read the paragraphs on ‘Preparations’ (p. 4) and ‘Positive openers and closures’ (p. 6).

Introduction

The key informant interviews can be done as comprehensively as needed with as many people as needed, depending on the information required. Feel free to shorten the tool, by skipping questions for example, if wished.

When you have not spoken to children, youth and/or adults in the targeted community before conducting key informant interviews, you should slightly modify the interview questions about child protection issues and causes.

You are advised to keep the order of the questions of the interview list as much as possible. In any case on each topic it is important to ask for facts first, before asking about opinions. This to separate facts from opinions as much as possible.

Instruction

1. Thank the participant for participating in this interview. Introduce yourself and others on the team, including your organisation and position. And ask the participant to shortly introduce himself or herself.
2. For each interview, write down the interview date, name of the interviewer, name of the interviewee, role of the interviewee, district and town/village.
3. Explain the topic and purpose of the interview. You may use the following definition of child protection issues:
*Child protection issues may relate to **violence**, or threat of violence (including physical violence, sexual and gender-based violence, trafficking) that occurs at home, community, schools and places where children work, **exploitation** such as child labour or commercial sexual exploitation, **neglect of children** including deliberate deprivation of food, shelter, clothing, attention, and **harmful traditional practices** such as early marriage.¹³)*
4. Ensure informed participation (see the Preparations paragraph on p. 4).
5. Ask the participant to answer freely, there are no right or wrong answers. And ask if the participant has any questions or remarks before starting.
6. Record the interview from now on and/or start to take notes. When taking notes during the interview, write down the answer to each interview question in keywords.
7. Start the actual interview. Use the list of interview questions below. Note: some questions have been placed in boxes. These questions should be asked to specific participants only (see each box for a description). Questions not in a box should be asked to all participants. Please keep the order of the questions as much as possible.
8. When finished with the list of interview questions, ask if the participant has any questions or remarks left. Then thank the participant for participating in the interview.

¹³ World Vision International (2011). ADAPT for child protection. Analysis, design and planning tool. California: World Vision International.



9. For each interview you now have answers to the interview questions written in key words. If wished, you can play the recordings to add any missing answers or to check whether your notes are correct.

List of interview questions

1. Role and tasks of interviewee

All interviewees except Child Welfare Committee members:

- What types of services does your organisation provide?
- What are your main roles and responsibilities?

Child Welfare Committee member(s) only:

- Who are the members of the Child Welfare Committee and how were they selected?
- Did you receive any specific training on child protection? If yes, what kind of training and how long?
- What are the main roles and responsibilities of the Child Welfare Committee?
- How well does the Child Welfare Committee work at present? (Strengths and challenges.)
- What should be done to strengthen the Child Welfare Committee?

2. Child protection issues

During the sessions we had with children, youth and adults in the community, they told us about the following child protection issues and harmful practices within the community: [name all the issues and practices brought up during the focus group sessions].

- Do you recognise these issues? If not, could you explain why please?
- Are there other issues that haven't been mentioned yet?
- What particular groups of children are more vulnerable than others to child protection issues and harmful traditional practices?
- Which of the child protection issues and harmful traditional practices are most significant according to your opinion?

3. Child protection causes

During the sessions we had with children, youth and adults in the community, they told us about the following causes of child protection issues within the community: [name all the causes brought up during the focus group sessions].

- Do you recognise these causes? If not, could you explain why please?
- Are there other causes that haven't been mentioned yet?



4. Child protection system - prevention

- What do you or does your organisation do to prevent harm to children and youth in the community?¹⁴
- Who else is involved in the prevention of harm to children and youth in the community? And what are their roles and responsibilities?¹⁵
- What are the linkages / ways of cooperation between everyone involved in the prevention of harm to children and youth?
- According to your opinion, what should be improved in the prevention of harm to children and youth in the community, how and by whom?

5. Child protection system - responding

All interviewees except police officers and health workers:

- What are your responsibilities in responding to harm to children and youth in the community?¹⁶
- Who else is involved in responding to harm to children and youth in the community? And what are their responsibilities and the services they offer?¹⁷
- Could you describe step by step what happens in case of a child protection issue?¹⁸ Please include your own role as well as the role of others.
- What are the linkages / ways of cooperation between everyone involved in the response to harm to children and youth?
- According to your opinion, what should be improved in the response to harm to children and youth in the community, how and by whom?

Police officer(s) only:

- About how many child protection cases per year does your police office deal with?
- Who at the police office handles child protection cases?
- What is the procedure for a child protection case normally?
- What happens with the perpetrators?

¹⁴ Ask about prevention measures aimed at children/youth, families and other caregivers.

¹⁵ Ask about the following actors: Traditional mechanisms in the community (community leaders, Child Welfare Committee, others in the community), government, police, health services, NGO's and others.

¹⁶ Ask about response measures/actions aimed at children/youth, families and perpetrators.

¹⁷ Ask about the following actors: Traditional mechanisms in the community (community leaders, Child Welfare Committee, others in the community), government, police, health services, NGO's and others.

¹⁸ Ask about the following steps: Identification, reporting, referring, investigation and providing care including psychological support.

For example:

- How is an issue identified and by whom?
- Where does a child or young person go to for help?
- What do community members do when they feel concerned about the safety of a child or young person?
- What do professionals (eg. social worker, nurse at the health clinic) do when they feel concerned about the safety of a child or young person?
- What happens next?
- Who takes the lead?
- Etc.



- Who else is involved in responding to harm to children and youth in the community? And what are their responsibilities and the services they offer?¹⁹
- What are the linkages / ways of cooperation between everyone involved in the response to harm to children and youth?
- What challenges do you as police face in dealing with child protection cases?
- What problems are there for people in accessing the police and judicial system?
- According to your opinion, what should be improved in the response to harm to children and youth in the community, how and by whom?

Health clinic workers only:

- What kind of child protection cases do you see in your clinic?
- About how many child protection cases per year do you see in your clinic?
- What do you do if you have a suspicion of child abuse?
- What is the procedure for a child protection case normally? (What do you do? Is there any referral system?)
- Who else is involved in responding to harm to children and youth in the community? And what are their responsibilities and the services they offer?²⁰
- Is there anybody dealing with the psychological effects of harm done to a child/young person?
- What are the linkages / ways of cooperation between everyone involved in the response to harm to children and youth?
- What challenges do you face in dealing with child protection cases?
- According to your opinion, what should be improved in the response to harm to children and youth in the community, how and by whom?

6. Other

- Would you like to mention anything else that we haven't discussed yet, but would be good for us to know about?

¹⁹ Ask about the following actors: Traditional mechanisms in the community (community leaders, Child Welfare Committee, others in the community), government, police, health services, NGO's and others.

²⁰ Ask about the following actors: Traditional mechanisms in the community (community leaders, Child Welfare Committee, others in the community), government, police, health services, NGO's and others.



3A. Child protection assessment tool: Analysis

Description:	This tool helps local NGO's and governments to analyse and report data gathered during desk research, focus groups and individual interviews.
Goals of the session:	To analyse and report about child protection issues and their causes in a community. To analyse the formal and informal support mechanisms for children and youth, their linkages, their strengths and their gaps/weaknesses. To identify possible solutions for child protection issues in a community.
Audience:	Project officers / researchers of local NGO's and governments.
Target group:	-
Preparation time:	15 minutes
Duration:	3 or more hours
Training method:	Analysis of written and recorded data gathered during desk research, focus groups and individual interviews.
Materials:	Desk research report and recordings and notes of the focus groups with children, youth and adults and of the individual interviews with key informants.
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Introduction

During the different parts of this child protection assessment (desk research, focus groups with children/youth and adults and interviews with key informants) you have collected a lot of data on child protection issues, causes and systems. Now it is time for the next step: analysing the information gathered and reporting it briefly.

Instruction

Analyse the information gathered by answering the key questions (see p. 3-4) in a brief report, for example using this format:

Summary
(Summary of situation and key findings)

Methodology
(Short description of desk research, focus groups and interviews including key questions)

Context
(Description of answers to demography key questions)

Child protection issues



- Issues
 - Vulnerable groups
- (Summarised description of answers to key questions)

Child protection causes
 (Summarised description of answers to key questions)

- Child protection system
- National structure and practice
 - Provincial structure and practice
 - Local structure and practice
 - Formal
 - Prevention
 - Response
 - Informal
 - Prevention
 - Response
 - Coordination and cooperation
 - Strengths and gaps/weaknesses
 - Suggestions for improvement
- (Summarised description of answers to key questions)

- Conclusions
- Key findings
 - Information gaps

Note: It is not necessary to sum up all findings per category of participants. Just sum up all findings per subject at once and mention any remarkable differences between answers of participants.