# Mapping of Child Protection M&E Tools
**Final Report to UNICEF**

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**Executive Summary**

The availability of effective measurement tools is a clear prerequisite for the strengthening of monitoring and evaluation within the field of child protection. This report provides a structured review of a sample of 124 child protection M&E tools. Tools were selected for review with respect to explicit inclusion criteria regarding relevance to certain focal areas of child protection, structured means of data collection, and documented use in monitoring and evaluation activity. With the timescale and resources available, search methodology combined structured computer search of three major bibliographic databases with elicitation of materials through professional networks. A total of 3,515 documents were screened for inclusion, with full review of 280 documents determining the final listing of 124 tools for inclusion in the reported analysis. Given the use of explicit inclusion criteria (which reliability checks indicated to be consistently applied) the body of evidence compiled provides a rigorous basis for comparative review and analysis. With tools being made available along with this report (or links to access being provided) this compilation also represents a valuable consolidation of material for potential field use. It needs, however, to be understood as a sample of the wider universe of material that could be compiled with a more extensive and prolonged data search strategy.

Material was identified with respect to many areas of child protection, but the areas for which the largest numbers of tools were identified within the current sample were the fields of children without family care, violence against children and psychosocial support. In terms of working to consolidate good practice within child protection M&E, these would seem to represent appropriate areas of strength on which to build. There are clearly many other areas where there is evidence of good practice, but in areas of extensive literature but comparatively sparse published documentation on M&E tools (such as, as evidenced by this sample, harmful traditional practices, children affected by armed conflict, child trafficking, child migration, and child injuries) a more focused, proactive strategy of search within appropriate professional and practice networks will be required to identify material of relevance. In general, the lack of overlap in material identified by the two search strategies suggests the need for much greater exchange between academic and practice communities working in the field of children protection M&E. UNICEF and Save the Children were responsible for significant proportion of the material compiled, but there are clearly a broad range of other organizations active in developing material that would usefully be engaged in efforts to collate and coordinate activities.

Material was identified from all regions, although work focused in Africa, Asia and the Middle East was particularly well represented. Approximately 15% of material was specifically related to – or had been applied in emergency humanitarian settings. Given the increasing strategic significance of a 'systems perspective' for the field of protection, there was a relative lack of material adopting such a framework identified. Some clear examples of good practice in this area are noted, however, with encouragement to build on such development. A wide range of differing methodologies are represented in the reviewed material, including indictor frameworks, monitoring and evaluation manuals, case management documentation, questionnaires, surveys, and participatory guides.

Documentation provided through professional networks indicated a large number of tools to be 'under development' and many others had not been finalized from longstanding 'draft' versions. Documentation generally provided cursory details on such issues as usability, threshold capacities for use, and experiences of (and modifications prompted by) field testing. There was inconsistent rigor in the detailing of strengths and constraints of tools in the documentation that accompanied

them. Few outputs reporting on the use of measures were made available. Taken together, these issues suggest challenges in the area of knowledge management. If established, a MERG should encourage greater attention to the consolidation of existing efforts, emphasizing reflecting upon and refining tools more often than developing new ones.

In a concluding critical analysis a number of observations are made based upon the sample of tools identified. There is, for example, significant opportunity for making better use of case management systems in developing robust monitoring and evaluation strategies for work within the child protection sector. It is recommended that technical guidance be prepared and disseminated regarding the collation and analysis of aggregated data available through child protection case management systems. Such guidance should be incorporated into systems documentation, encouraging routine use of data from such sources to inform service development and evaluation.

There were relatively few examples across the sample of 'mixed methods' approaches integrating multiple methodologies. There are very strong examples provided of quantitative, survey approaches to the assessment of child well-being, for example, and also excellent guides to the implementation of participatory, action-research methodologies with children. Given the value of triangulating data from multiple sources and by multiple methods, encouraging integration of such approaches with program M&E strategies should be encouraged.

There are a number of issues related to the potential shift of attention in the field from measures of specific protection risks to more comprehensive and systems-related assessments. The best examples of rigorous case definitions and clearly specified data sources came in work with a narrower focus on a set of specific child protection concerns. Given the focused nature of much programming, such measures are likely to remain important. However, such precision needs to be brought to bear in comprehensive, integrated measures that are likely to be of increasing interest as the field seeks to develop more holistic approaches to risks and vulnerabilities. If such measures are to be manageable in scope, this will likely require a clear focus on core indicators of children's well-being (rather than attempts to represent all areas of potential vulnerability).

There is clearly a strategic balance to be struck within the field between valuing local innovation and encouraging generalizability. Both are of value. Without expectation that these would be adopted for widespread use, examples of locally developed tools and measures should be widely shared as an encouragement of the feasibility of developing locally 'tailored' M&E tools. However, an important workstrand of a group seeking to promote best practice in monitoring and evaluation will be considering the requirements for tools and measures to be useable in a valid and reliable manner across diverse cultural settings.

Building on earlier consideration of difficulties in the identification of material, circulation of updated versions, and sharing of findings from use of a given tool, the field is clearly constrained in its capacity to keep track of developments. A regularly updated 'repository' of materials developed for use in monitoring and evaluation within the child protection sector would, accordingly, be a major asset. Active knowledge management of this repository – in terms of some degree of quality control and proactive dissemination – would be required.

Finally, strengthening the processes that translate guidance into practice and evidence is a clear priority. Few of the tools reflect the cycle of design-pilot use-refinement-field testing-revision-evaluated use that is fundamental to the development of robust, effective measurement tools. There

are a large number of conceptually strong, well written and effectively illustrated monitoring and evaluation guides, but far fewer examples of concrete tools that have utilized such guidance and been established as effective and validated local practice. In seeking to strengthen the monitoring and evaluation capacity of the child protection sector, investment strategy will need to ensure that resources are distributed in a balanced manner to support not only preparation of guidelines, but also formulation of these into practicable measures, local piloting, refinement and introduction into use, mechanisms for documenting local experience and means for this to be fed back into processes of tool development.

## I.    Introduction

UNICEF suggests that child protection mechanisms involve eight core functions, spanning from the macro- to the micro- level.[1] One of these functions is the ongoing monitoring of child protection needs and the evaluation and assessment of child protection response. Seeking to identify and promote best practices, UNICEF has prioritized steps to improve monitoring and oversight through better data collection, analysis, and use. Based on various evaluations,[2] it has been proposed that child protection monitoring and evaluation (M&E) needs significant strengthening. To address this need, a crucial foundational step is to take stock of current child protection M&E tools.

The overall goal of this project is thus to map tools that are currently being used, or under development for use within, for M&E functions within field settings. Towards this goal, the project has addressed four major tasks. First, a mapping matrix has been developed for review of child protection M&E tools against specified criteria. Second, a sample inventory of tools has been identified from diverse sources. Third, these tools have been reviewed with respect to the developed mapping framework. Fourth, this report presents the findings of the preceding stages of work, focused analysis on trends, gaps and promising practices and makes recommendations for further work on tool development. The final report, matrix, and inventory of tools are scheduled to provide focus for discussion for a July 2010 meeting considering the potential establishment by UNICEF and Save the Children of a Child Protection Monitoring and Evaluation Reference Group (MERG).

With the timescale and resources available, Terms of Reference focused on identifying trends and promising practice within certain focal areas of the child protection field and assembling a core body of information on which initial analysis could be based. This report does not, therefore, offer a comprehensive review of all tools of potential utility in monitoring and evaluation in the field of child protection. It may usefully serve, however, as a precursor to such an analysis, which – on the basis of findings reported here – will necessarily involve proactive, protracted and persistent efforts regarding search, collation and dissemination.


## II.    Overview of Methods

**Selection Criteria**

The identification of child protection M&E tools was approached through a structured computer search and through elicitation of potential tools from a range of professional networks. This collection of tools from two sources in this manner potentially targets a wider variety of contexts and differing stages of tool development. The computer search gathered academic literature from programs and institutions committed to publication as a means of dissemination, whereas professional networks provided access to tools in current and active use and other 'grey literature' of relevance to field operations. Networks were considered to be more likely sources of tools in

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[1] UNICEF, "What is Child Protection", Retrieved on 20/3/10:
http://docs.google.com/gview?a=v&q=cache%3A4PPqDOvLIacJ%3Awww.unicef.org%2Fprotection%2Ffiles%2FWhat_is_Child_Protection.pdf+what+is+child+protection&hl=en&pli=1.

[2] e.g. UNICEF (2008) Segone, M (ed.) Bridging the gap: The role of monitoring and evaluation in evidence-based policy making. New York: UNICEF; Ager, A, Boothby, N, and Bremer, M. (2009) Using the 'protective environment' framework to analyze children's protection needs in Darfur. *Disasters*, 33 (4), 548-573.

development. Tools gathered from computer searches – and by definition accessible as publications - were likely to have been available for use in diverse settings. Based on discussions with UNICEF and Save the Children, there was interest in identifying lesser-known tools, and therefore the network search – although presenting many logistical challenges (in terms of initial contacts, requirements for follow-up, volume of potential material, robust judgment regarding inclusion criteria etc.) - was seen as being a particularly valuable component of the methodology. While there are multiple avenues through which tools could be gathered (including websites, agency databases, survey of academic institutions) this dual methodology was seen to represent the most appropriate approach to identify an appropriately diverse range of tools for review within the 4-week search period allotted for the mapping exercise.

Tool selection criteria for inclusion in the final mapping matrix – which was the basis for all subsequent analysis and recommendations - was determined with the close engagement of UNICEF and Save the Children. The same basic selection criteria was upheld for both tools accessed through the structured computer search and tools accessed from professional networks.

A child protection M&E and research tool was included in the analysis if it met all of the following three inclusion criteria:

- It addressed child protection concerns or aspects of child functioning that are directly pertinent to child protection;
- It involved some form of structure or framework for the consistent collation of data;
- It had been used, or could plausibly be applied, for the purpose of monitoring or evaluation

These selection criteria were set deliberately broad in order to identify a sufficient range of measures such that trends and potential practice lessons could be identified at this scoping stage of a potential MERG. However, with such broad inclusion criteria, analytic depth is inevitably constrained. The focus here, however, was not on detailed analysis of a concise series of robust monitoring and evaluation tools, but rather appraisal of broader patterns and trends reflected in a more extensive and diverse sample of measures. Thus tools included in the final matrix: have been deployed in a broad range of settings (e.g., emergencies, post-conflict settings, transitional and emerging economies etc.); represent usage at various levels (e.g. project, national, system); address a broad range of differing protection needs; illustrate a broad range of approaches to measurement; and feature tools at varying stages of development.

In terms of the first criterion, child protection was defined in a broadly inclusive manner as a core area of programming in relation to the protection of children from violence, abuse and exploitation as specified in relevant UNICEF operational definitions. For the process of review and selection, the terms outlined in Table 1 were used to define areas of child protection concern. UNICEF identified these areas of child protection as varying degrees of priority. Gender based violence (GBV) was not identified as a specified area of child protection, though relevant focal areas of child protection - including violence against children, and harmful traditional practices (e.g., female genital mutilation/cutting, early marriage) – addressed aspects of GBV.

**Table 1: Areas of Child Protection Considered in the Mapping Process**

- Physical/verbal/psychological/sexual violence against children in all contexts (e.g., family, school, community)
- Children without family care
- Children affected by armed conflict
- Justice for children (includes children in conflict with the law as well as child victims and witnesses of crime)
- Child trafficking
- Harmful traditional practices
- Migration and "children on the move"
- Birth registration
- Child injuries
- Psychosocial support
- Children with disabilities[a]
- Child labour[a]
- Landmines, UXO, small arms[a]

[a]As per the inclusion/exclusion criteria agreed with UNICEF and Save the Children (7 April 2010), these three areas of child protection were excluded from the formal search process, although tools in these areas were reviewed if provided by professional networks.

## A. Computer Search

A structured computer search was conducted using the above selection criteria. Individual computer searches were conducted for each of the areas of child protection specified.[3]Keyword search terms were refined through an initial appraisal process (e.g. determining that the search term 'child soldier' yielded a subset of reports selected through the search term 'armed conflict'). An initial appraisal process adopted a Boolean procedure using various combinations of terms, which were found to be the most accurate in capturing the types of tool targeted for this mapping exercise. The following keyword structure was entered in all fields to capture as many studies as possible: ("category of child protection") AND (child OR children) AND (tool OR framework OR indicator OR measure OR questionnaire) AND (evaluation OR monitoring). Annex 2 summarizes the keyword searches used. Search was for material published with the past 15 years.

Based on previous experience conducting structured reviews of studies (see Stark & Ager's Structured Review of Studies of Gender-Based Violence in Crisis-Affected Countries, 2010), the electronic databases PubMed, MEDLINE, and PsycINFO were selected as the most reliable source of published material of relevance. PubMed and MEDLINE contain citations and author abstracts from approximately 5,400 journals, including social science journals.[4]PsycINFO provides abstracts and citations from more than 2,450 journals in the psychological, social, behavioral, and health sciences.[5] Together, these three electronic sources provide insight into published work from both

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[3] The areas of child protection – children with disabilities, child labor, and landmines - were not included in the computer search per agreed guidance.

[4] For a full listing of journals available through PubMed and MEDLINE, see: ftp://ftp.ncbi.nih.gov/pubmed/J_Medline.txt

[5] For a full listing of journals available through PsycINFO, see: http://www.apa.org/pubs/databases/psycinfo/2010-coverage-list.pdf

the medical and social science literature (including all major titles in the area of child protection and child well-being, including Child Abuse and Neglect; International Social Science Journal; International Journal of Child and Family Welfare; Child Welfare Review; Child Development; Intervention; International Journal of Mental Health; Psychosocial Work & Counseling in Areas of Armed Conflict).

Once an article was identified through the initial keyword search, the title and abstract were reviewed to ascertain whether the study plausibly met inclusion criteria and warranted further review for potential inclusion in the final matrix. As with many structured computer searches, the overwhelming majority of studies reported in the search results did not meet the first criteria for inclusion (i.e., addressing child protection concerns or aspects of child functioning that are directly related to child protection). Upon further examination, many more studies did not meet the second criteria for inclusion (i.e., a structured form of data collection). If an article was selected for further review, the full article was reviewed with respect to the specified inclusion criteria noted above, and a decision was made on this basis of whether the tool was included or excluded from the matrix. Figure 1 depicts these steps involved in the computer search, as well as studies identified and selected in each step.

As this procedure requires significant exercise of judgment, the determinations of inclusion/exclusion by two independent reviewers (KS and BA) were compared for over one hundred titles and abstracts generated through PsycINFO. With full agreement on all determinations, the implementation of stated inclusion criteria appears to have been robustly reliable.

**Figure 1: Structured Computer Search**[6]



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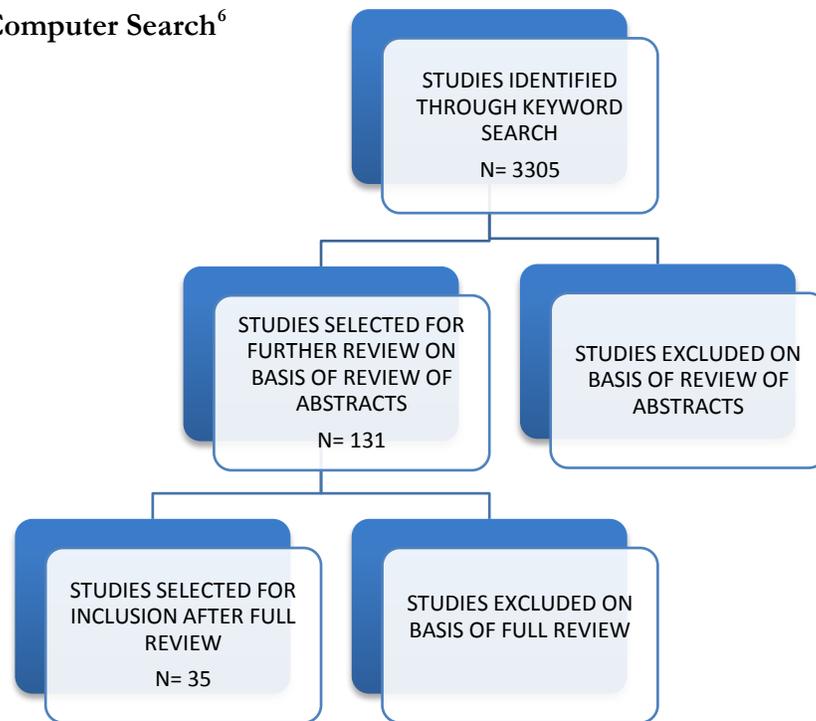
[6] Of 35 tools identified by the computer search as described, nine were duplicates of those also identified with respect to another area of child protection. For example, the Child Behavior Checklist (89-Achenbach, 1991) has appeared in searches for sexual abuse in PubMed, MedLINE, and PsycINFO (see Sim et al., 2005), as well as through other searches. Therefore, only 26 tools sourced from computer searches appear in the review matrix (Annex 1).

**B. Professional Networks**

In order to collect tools from a variety of child protection issues and contexts, child protection M&E and research tools were elicited from several professional networks. Networks that identified recommended tools included: the CPC Learning Network, the Child Protection Working Group (CPWG), and the Better Care Network (BCN). These networks span a range of agencies, sectors, and settings. Furthermore, UNICEF and Save the Children sent requests for recommended tools to their field offices. Emails were also sent via UNICEF to organizations invited to the MERG planning meeting in July. An initial request email was sent out at the end of April 2010, with a Gmail account (CPMapping@gmail.com) established to receive and conduct all correspondence. Respondents were asked to reply within a two week period; however, responses after that deadline were still accepted.

The email request for recommended tools sought to elicit documentation relevant to the stated inclusion criteria by using accessible and encompassing language (wishing to facilitate elicitation of a broader range of material rather than risk an inappropriately narrow interpretation of criteria for work of interest). Respondents were asked to suggest any tool(s) that collect data and information on child protection issues and the performance of child protection programs. The request reinforced that the mapping exercise was interested in a broad range of child protection monitoring and evaluation tools. It was explained that a "tool" included manuals/guides/toolkits, monitoring frameworks, questionnaires, interview protocols, or indicators and data collection/research methodologies. The professional network request for tools cast "a wide net", and the inclusion/exclusion criteria was used to narrow the field down to tools that would be especially useful for this mapping exercise and for a critical analysis.

With forwarding of the email invitation encouraged, it is impossible to gauge the total number of people receiving this message. Additionally, with multiple cross-membership of networks (and multiple mailings in varied sequence), relative response rates from differing channels cannot reliably be determined. However, 84 specific respondents were identified who, overall contributed over 210 recommended tools. Annex 2 lists the individuals who recommended tools for the mapping exercise from the professional networks, providing an example of the diversity of individuals and organizations - representing both the global North and South - who responded to the request to submit materials. All respondents were thanked via email for their participation in the mapping exercise, thus allowing for potential follow-up and clarification. Replicating the computer search methodology, recommended tools were screened on receipt and excluded from full review if clearly not within inclusion criteria. The selection criteria was applied to all recommended tools selected for further review to determine if the tool should be included in the final matrix. Figure 2 outlines the professional network process for tool identification and selection.

Similar to the computer search, a number of tools were initially excluded because they did not meet the first inclusion criteria (i.e., addressing child protection concerns or aspects of child functioning that are directly pertinent to child protection) e.g. surveys or assessments for adults. Other tools were excluded because they were overviews of agency or country programs and thus did not fit the second inclusion criteria (i.e., comprising a structured form of data collection) or the third (i.e. usable in the context of monitoring and evaluation activity). If reviewers were uncertain in their judgment of inclusion or exclusion, documents were referred to a second reviewer for independent analysis. Annex 4 lists tools excluded from the final sample of tools on the basis of full review with respect to inclusion criteria.

**Figure 2: Professional Network Methodology**
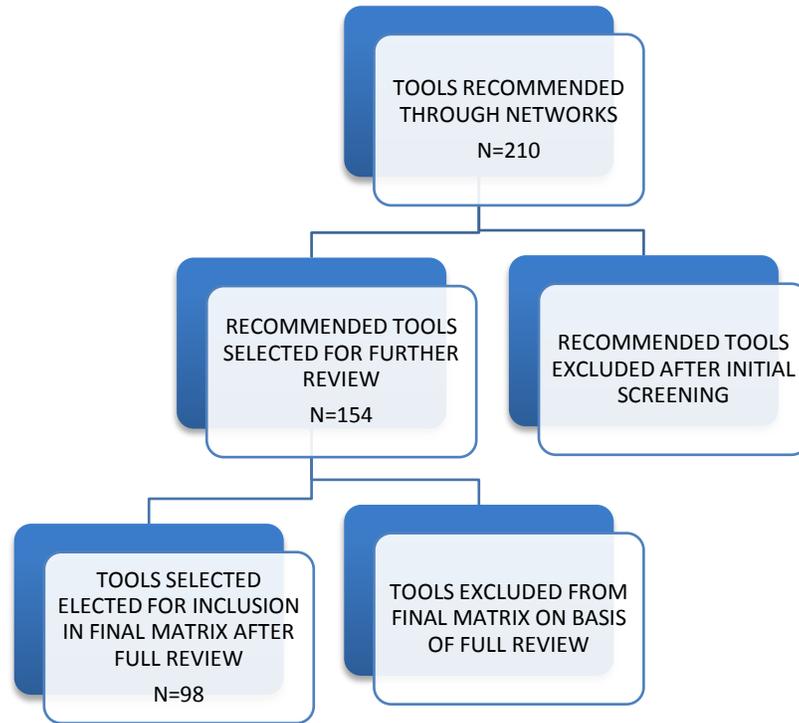


There was significant variation in the detail of documentation provided on recommended tools. In many instances it was necessary to follow-up with respondents to obtain more information on the tool to determine if it met the selection criteria. For instance, we received blank forms from specific field locations used to collect data on various child protection issues, but required further information on the methodology for completion of these forms and the subsequent use of data to determine if it was part of a monitoring and evaluation effort. Details about follow-up with respondents are given below.

## Collation and Analysis of Material

Based on agreed inclusion criteria, 124 tools are included in the final matrix (Annex 1) from 280 tools selected for full review. The review matrix was initially developed to highlight information on various issues specified in the Terms of Reference for the work as pertinent for the mapping exercise. Review themes and their definitions necessarily evolved as the matrix was populated with information from tools meeting selection criteria. For example, cost was an original heading proposed for the framework, but virtually no information was received on this issue. Table 3 summarizes the categories used for the matrix reporting and analysis.

**Table 3: Matrix Review Themes and their Definitions**

- **Area of child protection**: *tools categorized based on one or more of the areas of child protection as outlined in Table 1 (a general child protection category was also included for tools of relevance across a range of protection concerns or with explicit goal of providing comprehensive coverage)*

- **Purpose**: *the stated purpose or function of the tool*

- **Stage of development**: *(e.g. under development, piloted, finalized, revised), including any background information on the tool*

- **Geographical area**: *locations where the tool has been used or is planning to be used*

- **Source**: *the primary source for information on the tool (whether individual, institution or publication)*

- **Target population**: *the target population from whom data are collected*

- **Main users**: *intended users of the tool, specified by user (educational and/or professional role)*

- **Methodology and implementation**: *the methodology involved in use of the tool and means of implementation*

- **Type of Tool**: *the nature of the tool (e.g., survey, questionnaire, indicators, participator guidance)*

- **Outputs produced**: *details any outputs (reports, papers etc.) that were identified as having been produced on the basis of the tool*

- **Strengths/constraints**: *particular strengths and constraints noted within the documentation received or indicated in correspondence with contact person*

- **Critical analysis**: *a summary independent review based on all material available, focusing on such issues as programmatic relevance, rigor, capacity requirements usability etc.*

Follow-up was necessary for many tools meeting the selection criteria and included for analysis. Follow-up for tools gathered from both computer search and professional networks consisted of additional literature searches on the internet (e.g., academic journals, organizational websites, etc.) or through contacting the person who was affiliated with, or who suggested, the tool. In the latter case, the contact person was generally requested to provide more detailed information on missing categories of thematic analysis. Outputs produced and strengths/constraints were particular themes for which more information was commonly requested.

Detailed email correspondence gathered additional in-depth information on tools was conducted in lieu of the initially proposed key informant interviews. While response varied on follow-up requests for further information, with 124 items incorporated in the matrix for analysis, email communication proved an efficient, productive and interactive means to learn more about particular tools. People were responsive and thoughtful in their replies. Utilizing email (as opposed to telephone) was especially useful for communication with people in different regions and time-zones. Nonetheless, despite frequent follow-up, we did not hear back from all of our contacts within the project timeframe and, in consequence, for some listed tools there are review themes in the matrix for which there is incomplete information.

**Constraints and Limitations**

The methodology adopted was shaped by the constraints of time available for the exercise: focal areas of child protection were identified, and search tools– computer literature search of major databases and email canvassing of professional networks – were utilized that would feasibly yield an appropriate body of material within a four week data collection period. The listing of tools that resulted was determined by consistent application of agreed inclusion criteria, and thereby provides a rigorous basis for comparative review and analysis. It needs, however, to be understood as a sample. A fuller mapping of the broader population of work from which this sample is drawn will require a more extensive and prolonged data search strategy.

Nonetheless, the current listing of tools appears to constitute the most intensive collation of M&E material that has been attempted to date. As such, the review and analysis which follows gives important insight into apparent strengths and weaknesses within the field, and provides a basis for formulating future strategy for more active collation and dissemination of material relating to M&E in the child protection sector.

### III.     Thematic Review

Once selected for inclusion in the matrix, there was no distinction made between tools identified on the basis of computer search or recommendation through professional networks. The following thematic review and analysis is based on the combined sample of 124 tools that met the specified selection criteria.

<u>Area of child protection</u>
The search and selection methods adopted identified M&E tools with respect to all areas of child protection identified in Table 1, with the exception of children with injuries and landmines (the latter of which had been excluded from formal search processes). Tools relating to children with disabilities and child labor had also been excluded from such formal search processes, but some items related to these themes had been provided through professional networks and were (in accord with agreed Terms of Reference) included in the review matrix if otherwise meeting selection criteria. Given their exclusion from formal search processes, clearly the number of items listed regarding children with disabilities, child labor and landmines should not be taken as a reliable indicator of the availability of tools in these areas.

In terms of specific areas of child protection the most tools were found in relation to children without family care, violence against children, and psychosocial support, suggesting that these tools are among the most prevalent in the diverse range of settings sampled by the search methodology. A more limited number of tools were identified regarding other child protection areas specifically searched for: justice for children, harmful traditional practices, children affected by armed conflict, child trafficking, child migration, and birth registration. However, many tools corresponded to more than one area of child protection: five tools linked with three specific areas of child protection, and 16 tools linked with two areas. As indicated in Table 4, the largest number of tools were not linked to any specific area of child protection, but were rather categorized as covering broad aspects of child protection (e.g. 1-Advocacy Data Collection Tools, 2-Child Rights Indicators Guidance an Framework, 3-Life Skills Baseline Tool (Cote d'Ivoire) etc.). Seeking comprehensive coverage of a

range of child protection issues, or applicable to diverse child protection concerns, these items were accordingly categorized as 'general child protection'.


**Table 4: Number of Tools associated with Specified Area of Child Protection**

| Area of child protection | Number of Tools[a] |
| --- | --- |
| General child protection | 30 |
| Children without family care | 27 |
| Violence against children | 25 |
| Psychosocial | 21 |
| Justice for children | 11 |
| Child trafficking | 8 |
| Harmful traditional practices | 7 |
| Children affected by armed conflict | 6 |
| Child labor | 5* |
| Child migration | 4 |
| Birth registration | 2 |
| Children with disabilities | 2* |
| Child injuries | 0 |
| Landmines | 0* |

[a]Summed totals exceed total number of tools because of relevance of more than one child protection area.
*Excluded from formal search and thus unreliable indicator of number of available tools


These trends need to be interpreted with caution. Identification of materials through professional networks, in particular, is likely to be biased by (as well as usefully informed by) personal experience and expertise (e.g. through track-record of deployment in specific regions; social contacts across agencies) and the sample of tools listed in the review matrix clearly cannot be taken to be fully representative of the field as a result. Nonetheless, these trends indicate particularly strong development of tools in three specific areas of child protection - children without family care, violence against children, and psychosocial – which represents a potential foundation for consolidation of learning for the child protection field.

**Recommendation: If work of the proposed MERG is to initially focus upon areas where there has been a clear track record of development, appropriate areas of focus include children without family care, violence against children and psychosocial.**

Relatively few tools were identified in such areas as harmful traditional practices, children affected by armed conflict, child trafficking, and child migration. Evidence from computer searches suggests that these areas, while the focus of extensive literature, have not yet produced a significant number of tools within the published literature. Appraisal of methodological developments in these areas is likely to require proactive search strategy within professional and practice networks focused in such work. Encouragement of publication (and thus, potentially, of wider dissemination) is also important to bring insights from M&E work in these fields to greater prominence. Ideally, of course, there

should be an exchange of information between field and academic communities, so that M&E work conducted by both is disseminated in both arenas. Although this may seem an obvious recommendation, the fact that only one tool (87-Community-Based Participatory Evaluation Tool) was identified through both the computer search and the professional network search indicates the rather distinct 'universes' of these means of sharing information.

**Recommendation: To identify emerging best practice in such fields as harmful traditional practices, children affected by armed conflict, child trafficking, child migration, and child injuries – areas of extensive literature but comparatively sparse published documentation on M&E tools – will require a more focused, proactive strategy of search within appropriate professional and practice networks**

**Recommendation: There needs to be greater exchange between academic and practice communities working in the field of children protection M&E. The lack of overlap in material disseminated through professional networks and the published literature is striking, and needs to be addressed if learning is to be effectively captured and shared.**

*General Child Protection*

Although clearly many M&E tools have been developed with respect to specific protection needs, the largest number of tools (30) were in the category of 'general child protection'. These included case management tools (e.g., 30-Baseline Synthesis for Monitoring and Evaluation of Child Protection Issues; 9-Case Registration Form for Violation Child Rights); data tools that have a generic applicability across a range of child protection concerns (e.g. 16-Qualitative Assessment for Program Planning; 22-Compendium of Indicators for Measuring Child Well-being Outcomes), and assessment instruments that make an explicit attempt for coverage across a range of potential protection risks within a population (e.g.15-Child Protection Indicators for Viet Nam Proposed Framework and Indicators Manual for Early Childhood Rights Indicators; 24-Inter-Agency Child Protection Assessment Toolkit; 28-UNICEF Regional Matrix CP Indicators June 2007). Each these forms of development are welcome to the extent that they potentially foster more comprehensive, integrated approaches within the field of child protection.

Relatively few tools were identified that built upon such breadth of analysis to address not just a range of protection needs, but the broader systems (formal or informal) that served to address them. There are signs of moves in this direction (e.g. 12-Toolkit to Map and Assess Child Protection Systems; and, a more focused application with respect to monitoring and information systems, 29-Regional Review of Child Protection Information and Monitoring Systems in West and Central Africa). However, these were somewhat rare examples of more explicit 'systems' perspective being adopted.

**Recommendation: Given the increasing strategic significance of a 'systems perspective' for the field of protection, focused attempts to identify, promote and develop M&E methodologies adopting a more integrated child protection systems focus are warranted.**

'General child protection' tools were deployed in a wide range of geographical settings. Five identified were focused on use in emergency contexts. More than one quarter of the tools

categorized under 'general child protection' were still in development, which is suggestive of the current active engagement of agencies in working on such measures.

Trends are also noted for the three specific areas of child protection for which the volume of tools identified allows meaningful analysis.

*Children without family care*

Approximately one-third of the tools pertaining to children without family care also focused on an additional area of child protection, with psychosocial as the most common additional category. This seems partially related to the extensive published material in the area of orphans and vulnerable children (OVC), with which psychosocial care is often linked. For example, the Children's Manifest Anxiety Scale Revised (RCMAS, 68) is a psychometric tool that has been used to assess the mental health of adolescents orphaned by AIDS (see Cluver, Gardner, & Operario, 2008). The tools categorized as pertaining to both 'children without family care' and 'psychosocial' all utilize questionnaires as the primary mode of data collection (e.g. 67-Child Depression Index, 68-Children's Manifest Anxiety Scale, 69-Bantwana Child profiling Tool, 70-Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire, and 101-Social Support Questionnaire). Indeed, the majority of all tools pertaining to 'children without family care' were some form of questionnaires or survey.

*Violence against children*

For the purposes of this mapping exercise, the child protection category of 'violence against children' addressed physical, verbal, psychological, and sexual violence in various settings (e.g., family, school, community). A number of tools pertaining to gender based violence (GBV), although not a specific area of search, accordingly fell within this category (e.g.,118-Monitoring and Evaluation of Sexual Gender Violence Programs in Tanzania, 121-Gender Based Violence Tools Manual - For Assessment & Program Design, Monitoring & Evaluation in Conflict-Affected settings, 123-Violence Against Women and Girls: A Compendium of Monitoring and Evaluation Indicators, and 124-Strategic Framework for the Prevention of and Response to Gender-based Violence in Eastern, Southern and Central Africa). Regionally, the predominant focus of tools in the 'violence against children' area was Africa; only six tools were considered global in coverage.

*Psychosocial*

The most common type of tool within the 'psychosocial' category was questionnaire; there were no case management forms or indicator lists categorized in this area. A potential explanation for the high number of questionnaires identified in the 'psychosocial' area may be the number of identified psychometric instruments (most typically in questionnaires in form) addressing psychological functioning identified during the computer search process. Approximately half of the psychosocial tools had been used in, or were recommended for use across, diverse geographical settings. One-third related explicitly to emergency contexts.

## Primary Sources

In addition to the computer search, tools were identified through contacts at UNICEF, Save the Children, the CPC Learning Network, the Child Protection Working Group (CPWG), and the Better Care Network (BCN). It is not possible to attribute supply of material to specific networks because of individuals' frequent membership with more than one group. UNICEF was the primary source for 28.2% (N=35) of the tools included in the analysis, including tools received from UNICEF field offices (including Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bolivia, Equatorial Guinea, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Mauritania, Trinidad Tobago, Venezuela). Save the Children was the primary source for 8.1% (N=10) of the tools included in the analysis. Other sources of tools included: Care, Catholic Relief, Concern, ECAPT, IPEC, IOM, IRC, UNHCR, USAID, World Vision as well as a range of regional and national NGOs and CBOs. Additionally, Monitoring Child-Well Being: A South African Rights Based Approach (2007, HSRC) was a primary source for 5 tools, each focusing on a different area of child protection. It is clear that UNICEF and Save the Children Alliance are key players in promoting more robust M&E practice in the field of child protection, but that a large number of national and regional organizations, as well as international NGOs, are also strongly committed to developments in this field. It will be important for any prospective MERG to fully engage with such diverse capacity from the outset.

**Recommendation: Acknowledging the global capacity of UNICEF and Save the Children in the areas of child protection M&E, there is a need to develop a proactive engagement strategy with a broad range of other organizations if the maximum benefits of learning are to be gained.**


## Coverage: Geographical Area and Target Population

Tools represented use in a wide variety of countries including Afghanistan, Albania, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Bolivia, Cambodia, Cote d'Ivoire, Egypt, Eritrea, Equatorial Guinea, Georgia, India, Iran, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Liberia, Madagascar, Mauritania, Occupied Palestine Territories, Tanzania, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Uganda, and United States. Table 5 outlines the number of tools associated with each region. Some tools were associated with M&E activity relevant to country-specific initiatives (e.g. 5-Child Friendly Locality What Barangay Officials Can Do (Philippines), 69-Bantwana Child Profiling Tool) or measurement of a particular child protection issue in a specified geographical area (e.g., 41-Trafficked Children in Albania, 42-Rapid Assessment of Child Trafficking in Yemen, 72-Questionnaire on FGC Prevalence in Egypt). However, many tools (n=47) were clearly designed for potential global coverage (e.g., 1-Advocacy Data Collection Tools, 4-Keeping Children Safe: A Toolkit for Child Protection, 18-ChildFund CP Tools, 20-Child Rights Based Monitoring and Evaluation Tools and Mechanisms, 34-Handbook for Action-Oriented Research on the Worst Forms of Child Labour including Trafficking in Children, 61-OVC Program Effort Index, 82-Manual for the Measurement of Juvenile Justice Indicators, 99-Child Global Assessment Scale, 123-Violence Against Women and Girls: A Compendium of Monitoring and Evaluation Indicators, etc.).

**Table 5: Number of Tools associated with each region**

| Regions | Number of Tools[a] |
|---|---|
| Various | 47 |
| Africa | 39 |
| Asia | 23 |
| Middle East | 21 |
| Europe | 11 |
| Latin America | 8 |
| North America | 7 |
| Oceana | 6 |

[a]Summed totals exceed total number of tools because of relevance of more than one geographical region.

The populations from whom data was collected for tools in the review sample ranged across children, families, communities, organizations (CBOs, NGOs, INGOs, etc.), and governments. Unsurprisingly, the vast majority of tools (N=107) focused on data gathered directly from children, although several tools targeting communities/CBOs and governments/NGOs (e.g. 1-Advocacy Data Collection Tools, 115-Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) Assessing the Implementation of UN CRC Article 19).

## Stage of Development

Nearly 25% of the tools included in the final analysis are explicitly reported as 'in development', typically awaiting further consultation activity in a specific country setting (e.g. 21-Information Management System, Bangladesh), wider piloting and consolidation (e.g. 13- Manual for Early Childhood Rights Indicators) or an extended period of field-testing (e.g. 86-Evaluation of Psychosocial Programming in Emergencies). Interpreted positively, this implies significant on-going activity regarding child protection M&E. However, on fuller review it appears that a number of these tools may not have been followed through to completion as planned (e.g. 15-Child Protection Indicators for Vietnam; 114-Multidimensional Model for Child Maltreatment Prevention; 118-Monitoring and Evaluation of Sexual Gender Violence Programs in Tanzania). In general, many reports and measures are marked as 'draft', suggesting either a failure to finalize work or to disseminate finalized work effectively.

The picture presented is thus one of extensive innovation but lesser consolidation. The building of an assessment framework for psychosocial work in Palestine (94) on the basis of guidance in a field-testing draft of evaluation guide (86-Evaluation of Psychosocial Programming in Emergencies); and the explicit modeling of 109-Manual for the Measurement of Indicators of Violence Against Children on 82-Manual for the Measurement of Juvenile Justice indicators are rare examples of explicitly building one tool upon the foundations of another. This issue picked up on again later in the context of 'outputs', but suggests that one role for MERG will be enabling a greater stability and coherence to the development of measures, building on previous efforts more often than beginning new processes.

**Recommendation: If established, a MERG should encourage greater attention to the consolidation of previous efforts, countering current trends emphasizing new initiatives and efforts disconnected to previous activity.**


## Main Users

Predictably, the identified main intended users of tools were either practitioners or researchers, however, these labels were generally used loosely and interchangeably to describe a range of individuals gathering monitoring and evaluation data. The majority of tools did not specify intended users of the tool in any great detail, but some usefully did so. For example, for tool 5 (Child Friendly Locality) it is specified that a team including a community midwife, planning officer, paralegal workers, volunteers, and representatives should all gather to use the tool and conduct the evaluation. Tool 38 (Operation Child-ID) is recommended for use by physicians, nurses, social workers, public health professionals, psychologists, and childcare experts, with authors noting that the range of users is a strength of the tool.

Perhaps more important than identifying specific users of a tool is identifying the level of knowledge and experience necessary for appropriate its appropriate use. Over the sample of tools reviewed, however, little attention was generally given to the issue of the competences required of users for effective implementation of the M&E tool under discussion (22- Indicators for Measuring Child Well-being Outcomes from World Vision being a notable exception). This is an important issue. Inadequate preparation of staff was, for example, the major constraint regarding use of the Inter-Agency Emergency Child Protection Assessment Toolkit in a recent multi-site evaluation[7]. Usability issues were, in general, only consistently addressed in the context of participatory assessment methods (where explicit guidance on approach and materials was common, see 93-Are We Making A Difference; 16-Qualitative Assessment for Program Planning) and with regard to implementation of case management systems (where interface design was often given good attention, see 11-Child Protection Unit Database Software; 45-MRM Information Management System). Further commentary on usability of measures in the critical analysis of the next section is severely constrained by this lack of attention to such issues in documentation.

**Recommendation: Much greater attention needs to be given in documentation regarding M&E tools to addressing issues of usability, threshold capacities for use, and experiences of (and modifications prompted by) field testing.**


## Type of Tool

The search methodology explicitly sought to elicit a broad range of potentially relevant material. Accordingly, there is a wide diversity in what constitutes a 'tool' within the review matrix. For example, some tools comprise elaborate modules or programs implemented with children, families, and/or communities, within which there is an M&E component (e.g., 4-Keeping Children Safe modules). Other tools are focused questionnaires or survey instruments (e.g. 96-Child Psychosocial Distress Screener and 72-Questionnaire on FGC Prevalence in Egypt). Other tools constitute some

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[7] Ager A, Stark L and Blake C, Child Protection Assessment in Emergencies: Case Studies from Georgia, Gaza, Ethiopia and Central African Republic. NY: UNICEF, 2010

form of case management systems (e.g. 57-Case Management in Bangladesh, 37-Homelink). Given this diversity, a broad taxonomy of tools was developed to assist in the navigation of relevant material. This taxonomy is shown below in Table 6 detailing how tools are categorized and providing accompanying definitions, and list the types of tool falling within that category. These categories were used to populate an additional field within the review matrix (see Annex 1).

**Table 6: Number of Tools associated with each Type of Tool Category**

| Tool Category | Tool Category description | N |
|---|---|---|
| Questionnaire/ Survey | An instrument that collects structured information from individuals, usually as part of broader data collection from a sample or population [questionnaire (28), survey (10), psychometric measure (3), scale (2)] | 43 |
| Indicator / Framework | A structured listing of measurable variables indicative of the progress of an individual or programme. [indicator (16), framework (4)] | 20 |
| Guide / Manual | A technical document that details specific steps in process of monitoring and/or evaluation | 17 |
| Case management form | A tool for routine data collection to document specific characteristics of child protection cases | 10 |
| Case management system | An electronic database or other form of structured records system that compiles case information at unit, district or national level | 9 |
| Participatory | A method that involves action-oriented, and generally child-focused, data collection | 8 |
| Methodology | A distinctive means or process of data collection | 6 |
| Various | Other forms of qualitative and/or quantitative tools not accommodated within any other category | 11 |

## Methodology and implementation

Such diversity of purposes, contexts and approaches is clearly reflected in the range of methodologies for implementation adopted. These ranged from routine data entry into child protection information systems to field surveys to participatory engagement with children and communities. Many tools focused on routine monitoring for specific areas of child protection with simple survey instruments, such as questionnaires and psychometrics.

Included in the analysis were several specific approaches to measurement that represent interesting examples of methodological innovation. Tools such as the Tracer Methodology to Measure Longer Term Impacts on Children and Families of Interventions against Child Labour (33); the Multidimensional Model for Child Maltreatment Prevention Readiness in Low- and Middle-Income Countries (113); AVSI OVC Project East Africa methodology for mapping the social network of children (53); and WorldSAFE: A Model of a Multi-National Study of Family Violence (102), for example, all illustrate innovative means to address specific challenges of measurement in the field of child protection. Although these methodologies may be very focused on addressing a specific child

protection concern (and therefore may not be suited for widespread adoption), they nonetheless illustrate the potential for innovative approaches within the sector.

The review provides evidence of an increasing number of creative, innovative, child-focused participatory methodologies being developed, shared and refined across the child protection sector. Some of these are of exceptional high quality and warrant active dissemination. For example, Hart et al., (2007) gave detailed instructions on how to conduct participatory evaluation methods with children affected by armed conflict (97-Participatory Tools for Evaluating Psychosocial Work with Children in Areas of Armed Conflict, see box below). Other examples of good practice in this area include 93-Are We Making a Difference, 38-Child Led Indicators and 104-Listening to Young Voices.

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*Evaluation Tools Quantify Data and Help Sri Lankan Children Affected by Armed Conflict Identify Their Own Strengths Needs and Concerns*

*(97-Participatory Tools for Evaluating Psychosocial Work with Children in Areas of Armed Conflict: A Pilot in Eastern Sri Lanka)*

*A pilot project was conducted in eastern Sri Lanka to develop a participatory approach to evaluate psychosocial interventions with children affected by armed conflict. Pilot testing was organized within the project activities of a local non-governmental organization, Koinonia, and took place in Batticaloa district of eastern Sri Lanka. Batticaloa has been affected by the ethnic conflict between the Tamil separatists and the Sinhala-dominated government. The conflict has been characterized by inter-community-violence, human rights abuses, and the recruitment of children by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Elam (LTTE). At the time of the pilot testing, Koinonia was running networks of after-school play centers for children, where psychosocial programs were being implemented. The participatory tools are mainly for children over the age of 8 and include: (1) risk and resource maps, (2) body maps, (3) spider diagrams, (4) problem trees, (5) wellbeing exercise [adapted from Jon Hubbard's functioning exercise], and (6) image theatre exercise [adapted from Augusto Boal's "Games for Actors and Non-Actor", 1992]. One of the strengths of this collection of tools are the explicit instructions providing practical step-by-step details on how to conduct each activity. Despite methodological challenges such as ensuring that the words of children are properly recorded and appropriately grouping children according to gender, age, socio-cultural, and religious background, the tools were useful opportunities to quantify data, while their participatory nature allowed for children to identify their own strengths, needs, and concerns. This paper has been extraordinarily influential on practice and is widely cited by other tools and manuals. In addition to the focus of the work and its relevance to evaluation, there appear to have been two major factors contributing to such influence. First, the material is presented in a very clear and concrete manner, encouraging replication. Second, by publishing the work within a journal (an earlier version was in a Refugee Studies Centre Working Paper Series) its dissemination has been significantly facilitated.*

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There are relatively few examples of tools utilizing 'mixed methodologies', that is combining quantitative and more qualitative or participatory approaches. If a MERG is established with a view to seeking to strengthen monitoring and evaluation practice it would usefully promote cases of good practice in such incorporation of diverse methodologies (e.g. the recent UNICEF child protection assessment in Ethiopia drawing quantitative and qualitative tools from the Inter-Agency CP Emergency Resource Toolkit, 24).

**Recommendation: Encourage utilization of 'mixed methods' within child protection M&E strategies by seeking to promote tools that incorporate both quantitative and more qualitative or participatory approaches to data collection.**

Overall, however, documentation of tools commonly exhibited a lack of detail regarding methodology. Issues of ethics were frequently noted (in terms of sensitivity of working with children, and the importance of confidentiality of data), but concrete detail regarding mechanisms of implementation was often lacking. This poses many challenges for conducting effective M&E work. Tools are commonly shared with field offices through email, but staff may commonly lack either the expertise required for their appropriate implementation or the resources to secure trainings in their appropriate use. Tools such as 93-Are We Making a Difference? and 16-Qualitative Assessment for Program Planning (see box below) were in this regard fine examples of providing sufficient detail to substantially raise the likelihood of efficient and effective implementation.

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*Detailed Guidance on Assessment Based on a Decade of Field-based Refinement of Methodology*

*(16-Qualitative Assessment for Program Planning - A User Manual for Program Implementers Child Version. Paul Bolton, Judith Bass, William Weiss, Laura Murray, World Vision and Johns Hopkins University)*

*This manual describes a qualitative methodology focusing on understanding child-focused problems from a local perspective. This methodology was first developed in 1998 to assist humanitarian organizations identify and understand adult priority health problems from a local perspective, and now has been adapted in draft form to focus on children.  This group has had wide influence in bringing a rigor to qualitative approaches, particularly with regard to eliciting local cultural understandings of needs, priorities and resources. The tool provides guidance on program planning, the purpose of research, research methodology, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation of child-focused programs. The fact that the methods and approaches described have been shaped by over ten years of field studies across a range of settings makes this work somewhat unique in its exposure to refinement. The tool is thus likely to serve as an important 'how-to' manual (once finalized) for conducting qualitative research with children on children's well-being in the field. It will also likely prove a valuable resource for training and capacity-building.*

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**Outputs produced**

Most of the tools found through the computer search had identified outputs, as the results of the tool were used for the publication of the source paper. The lack of identified outputs for the majority of tools identified through professional networks was, however, striking. As noted earlier, methodological constraints (e.g. varied understandings of the elicitation message with regard to what constituted relevant material for submission; time pressures on staff limiting response to follow-up messages requesting further documentation) may have contributed to this failure to identify examples of use. However, as with the above analysis regarding 'stage of development', this finding supports a picture of more emphasis being placed on the development of tools and frameworks than with on follow-through in their use, refinement, and application.

There were some good examples where outputs did show extension and transfer of learning. This included tool 47 (Children in Residential Institutions), an assessment of child institutions and the children residing there that was put in place for the residential institutions transformation plan in Azerbaijan. The 2008 assessment provided a vivid picture of the child care system, and showed that there were, in fact, fewer children in the residential child care system than suggested in official governmental statistics. Based on the effectiveness of this work for policy development, the questionnaire used in this assessment is currently being adapted and piloted for use in Kazakhstan. Similarly, tool 60 (the Orphans and Vulnerable Children Wellbeing Tool developed by Catholic Relief Services) has been used in a number of country settings, and ongoing refinement of tool is reported. Nonetheless, such examples are uncommon.

**Recommendation: Outputs reporting on the use of measures are an important evidence-base for judgments on utility and usability. Greater attention needs to be given to documenting monitoring and evaluation activities conducted with specified tools and frameworks.**

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*Assessment in Kazakhstan Reflects Learning from Azerbaijan*

*(47-Children in Residential Institutions, UNICEF Kazakhstan)*

*This is an assessment, based on various questionnaires, that elicits general information on the number and gender of children in state child care and on reasons for their placement, origins, family situation, staff of institution and infrastructure. In 2008 it was initially conducted in Azerbaijan at 55 institutions with 14,389 children. The methodology presents an example of a full-cycle of tool development, implementation, and evaluation. Throughout the process, particular best practices were identified in order to maximize the rigor of the assessment that ultimately presented a clear picture of the child care system in Azerbaijan and established a monitoring system and continues to be developed. Thus, this tool is promising on various fronts – as it presented data and significant findings in Azerbaijan that contributed to the transformation of existing residential child care system and is potential adaptability in Kazakhstan with the recent (April, 2010) piloting questionnaires, incorporating lessons learned, and potential dissemination methodology.*

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## Noted Strengths/Constraints

There was a general lack of critical analysis within the documentation provided, reflecting upon the strengths and constraints of the particular measure. There needs to be greater encouragement for such analysis if the reflexivity and refinement required for advances in methodology are to be cultivated. Again, there were some exceptions to this general trend. For example, tool 120 (Action Research for Evidence based Policy Making in Sierra Leone) and tool 43 (Child Exploitation Psychosocial Assessment Tool, CEPAT) both comprehensively detailed strengths and constraints in the use of their methodology.

**Recommendation: To assist learning and appropriate use, documentation of tools and frameworks needs to more explicitly consider the strengths and constraints of the measures described. Such reflection is not an addendum to a documented measure but a vital element of its clear specification.**

## IV.    Critical Analysis

The sample of 124 M&E tools collated in Annex 1 represents tools respected by professionals (and thus forwarded for review) or having reached threshold quality required for publication. It thus constitutes a relevant body of material with respect to which apparent trends and patterns in the field can be noted. This was the focus of the preceding section. In the current section, the focus is a more critical analysis of the technical strengths and weaknesses of collated tools, reflecting both on specific examples of good or promising practice and more general strengths and weaknesses. The basis of this analysis is this critical review of each tool summarized in the final column of Annex 1.

### Making Better Use of Case Management Systems

Case management tools are an important basis for an effective, comprehensive child protection system, and there are a number of good examples of tools for such purposes (7- Interagency Child Protection Database, Administrators Guide; 9- Case Registration Form for Violation of Child and Adolescent Rights; 11- Child Protection Unit Database Software, Terre des Hommes Foundation; 33- Medical Birth Registry at Kilimanjaro Christian Medical Centre; 45- MRM Information Management System; 57- Case Management in Bangladesh; 77- Justice (Afghanistan); 79-Juvenile Justice, Iran). These potentially provide the foundation for effective monitoring of child protection systems through routine data collection and also for evaluation of interventions. The Center for State Foster Care and Adoption Data (54), with a repository of data on 1.5 million foster children, provides the most vivid example of the power of collating case data in a systematic way. However, there is little evidence that the potential monitoring and evaluation power of case management systems is being fully exploited.

The Inter-Agency Child Protection Database (7) is a particularly potentially powerful tool in this regard, spanning national contexts and agencies, but reports confirm that aggregation, collation and analysis of data is not commonly undertaken at national (or cross-national) levels. The would appear to be significant potential benefit in seeking to promote a culture of use of case management systems to support monitoring and evaluation activity, acknowledging that the key drivers for the development of such systems are generally the quality of individual case management. Systems generally provide robust mechanisms for data protection, with strong processes in place to avoid unauthorized or inappropriate release of personalized information. Collation and analysis of aggregated data should not be seen as a serious threat to the integrity of individual data records. Rather, there needs to be an awareness of the potential value of such use of aggregated data, and technical guidance for the compilation of appropriate analyses. In an otherwise sophisticated and well documented case management tool, for example, it is striking that documentation of the Terre des Hommes Child Protection Unit Database (11) makes no reference to the value and means of aggregating data and, through this, identifying valuable trends (and potential determinants of protection outcomes).

**Recommendation: Technical guidance should be prepared and disseminated regarding the collation and analysis of aggregated data available through child protection case management systems. Such guidance should be incorporated into systems documentation, encouraging routine use of data from such sources to inform service development and evaluation. Guidance should be constructed in a way that it is relevant to case management systems of all levels of technical sophistication.**

<u>**The Value of Triangulating Data from Multiple Sources and By Multiple Methods**</u>

Many of the tools, especially the psychometric measures, make use of self-report data, which poses a concern that scores can be easily exaggerated or minimized by the person completing them (child, parent, or teacher). Like all questionnaires, the way that the instrument is administered can have an effect on the final score. Few tools comment on how this is controlled for in field use and thus 'capacity requirements' are difficult to judge. Furthermore, many of the tools involve interview only one individual, namely the child (e.g., 67-Child Depression Inventory, 96-Child Psychosocial Distress Screener, 68- Children's Manifest Anxiety Scale, 110- ICAST Child Abuse Screening Tool). In such cases, young children are usually excluded, because the tool is not developmentally appropriate (e.g., the young child may be pre-lingual or of limited language capacity). Gathering data from adult sources also needs to be treated with caution, as parents' own experiences (e.g., trauma, poverty, illness) may affect their ability to assess their child's safety and well-being. A few tools gather data from multiple sources (e.g. 89-Achenbach's Child Behavior Checklist and Youth Self Report and Teacher Report Form and 23-Child Status Index), which helps triangulate the data about the child from differing perspectives, creating a fuller picture of the child's experience as well as providing verification for the other data provided. We consider that such approaches offer the more robust and reliable route to valid determination of children's well-being. The preferred option is generally not just triangulation across different sources, but also across different method. This can offer rich and detailed information about the lives of children and their families vital to deeper understanding child protection issues.

**Recommendation: Promote utilization of tools that employ multiple sources of data in order to gather a detailed and balanced appraisal of the nature of child protection issues.**

<u>**Moving From Measures of Specific Protection Risks to Comprehensive and Systems Assessments**</u>

Many tools have been developed in respect of particular protection risks and 'best practice' in terms of rigor often appears to be in areas where such singularity of focus has enabled crisp and replicable case definitions (see for example, 40- IOM Performance Indicators for Human Trafficking Projects and 59- Manual for the Measurement of Indicators for Children in Formal Care). However, given the move within the field of child protection to note risks as cumulative and responses as appropriately integrative, there is a need to bring such 'best practice' to more comprehensive measures of child protection rather than those focused on specific protection risks. Measures with broader focus tended to be less precise and specific in terms of case definitions and indicators (e.g. 2- Child Rights Indicators Guidance and Framework; 24-Inter-Agency Emergency Child Protection Toolkit). The challenge is in defining a manageable set of clear, concise indicators (and relevant data sources for their measurement) when the sphere of concern is not a narrow area of vulnerability, but the whole gamut of protection concerns that may put children at risk.

**Recommendation: If integrated programming is to be promoted on the basis of sound data, the precision of case definition and specified sources of data developed for some specific protection risks needs to be brought to bear in comprehensive, integrated measures of protection concerns. If measures are to be manageable in scope, this will require a clear**

**focus on core indicators of children's well-being (rather than attempts to represent all areas of potential vulnerability).**

Although, as noted earlier, the majority of tools clearly were focused on the circumstances and well-being of children, a number reflected the growing interest in measuring aspects of the broader child protection system. These ranged from very broad measures (e.g. 12-Toolkit to Map and Assess Child Protection Systems) to tools addressing very specific aspects of the system supporting a child in a particular service context (e.g. 46-Codes of Conduct for Health Workers, Iran).

Boxed text below highlights two particularly promising approaches to the broader question of systems. The work of Andy Dawes and colleagues (8, 58, 83, 85) reflects systems thinking in two ways. First, it understands the well-being of children with respect to a multi-sectoral context, reflecting on mechanisms by which family, community and various service structures can exacerbate or ameliorate the vulnerability of children. Second, it sees data routinely collected by the health sector, by schools, by municipalities etc. as the most reliable basis for compiling indicators reflecting the circumstances of children.

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*Major Program of Specifying Child Protection Indicators with Respect to Data Collected From Routine Sources*

*(8) Indicators for Child Protection, Andrew Dawes with Ingrid Willenberg and Wahbie Long. Child, Youth, Family & Social Development, Human Sciences Resource Council, South Africa. 2006; (58) Core Indicator Set 9: Street children. Catherine L. Ward, Amelia van der Merwe, Andrew Dawes & Rachel Bray; Core Indicator Set 10: Child labour, trafficking and commercial sex exploitation, Lucy Cluver, Rachel Bray, Andy Dawes, Amelia van der Merwe; (85) Core Indicator Set 12: Children in statutory care. Jackie Loffel, Amelia van der Merwe, Andrew Dawes & Rachel Bray; (83) Core Indicator Set 13: Children in conflict with the law. Lukas Muntingh, Amelia van der Merwe, Andrew Dawes & Rachel Bray. In Monitoring Child-Well Being: A South African Rights Based Approach, edited by Andrew Sades, Rachel Bray and Amelia van der Merwe, published by HSRC in 2007.*

*An extraordinarily thorough and conceptually well-founded attempt to establish a broad indicator framework in relation to (potentially) routine data sources (from governmental and other relevant bodies) for a broad range of child protection concerns. Developed by a South African group (under the leadership of Andy Dawes) with technical support form Save the Children Sweden, indicator sets are specified for a broad range of groups and circumstances. In terms of populating indicators with respect to routine data collection, the approach is clearly tailored to the South African context, but there is potentially much to learn of wider relevance from this work. This not only includes the conceptual approach to risk, specification of indicators and the identification of relevant data sources. In the coming years the implementation of the system described needs to be tracked, determining obstacles to adoption and strategies to address such challenges.*

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Svevo-Cianci and colleagues' work (115) illustrates the manner in which data can be collected on a cross-national basis regarding the comparative functioning of child protection systems. In this instance, Comparative Qualitative Analysis was used, triangulating judgments of country experts with documentary evidence form CRC-related reports.

*Tool Engages Child Protection Experts Professional Perspectives on the Implementation of the United Nation's Convention on the Rights of the Child in Countries Where They Work*

*(115-Svevo-Cianci, K.A., Hart, S.N., Rubinson, C. (2010). Protecting children from violence and maltreatment: a qualitative comparative analysis assessing the implementation of U.N. CRC Article 19. Child Abuse & Neglect, 34, 45-56)*

*This tool identifies which UN Convention for the Rights of the Child (CRC) recommended child protection measures (e.g., policy, reporting systems, and services) for child abuse and neglect victims were most important in establishing a basic level of child protection in 42 countries. Child protection experts from 42 countries completed the questionnaire, which was focused on CRC Article 19's required child protection measure implementation. The respondents rated their country's effectiveness in implementation, the current level of effectiveness of child protection, and the relevance of improvements in child protection since the CRC was adopted in 1989. Responses were checked, adjusted as necessary, and validated based on information provided through the Concluding Observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child, and related indicators on children and social conditions from UNICEF, WHO, Transparency International, ILO, and World Bank. Qualitative comparative analysis (QCA) was used to identify child protection measure implementation effectiveness. Although this tool is limited by the sample individuals who were interviewed, its strength lies in the fact that it offers rare insight into child protection workers' professional perspectives on the workings of child protection in their countries.*

## Valuing Both Local Innovation and Global Generalizability

There are a number of examples where tools have been developed locally, and appear to be well suited to prevailing institutional and cultural contexts (e.g. 72-FGC questionnaire in Egypt, 32-Medical Birth Registry in Tanzania). There is little expectation of 'generalization' to other contexts from such measures, however, examples of such local innovation would usefully be shared more widely to encourage others – not to duplicate – but to see develop of local measures a feasible undertaking.

**Recommendation: Without expectation that these would be adopted for widespread use, examples of locally developed tools and measures should be widely shared as an encouragement of the feasibility of developing locally 'tailored' M&E tools.**

Notwithstanding the value of such local innovation, a major issue for any group such as a MERG will be encouraging cross-context learning and, potentially, comparison regarding protection concerns and program effectiveness. For this to be achieved, measures need to be *designed* to be suited for cross-context use – such generalizability cannot simply be assumed. A common approach to this challenge appears to be the design of a methodology and then piloting in a few different country settings (e.g. 32- Universal Psychosocial Indicator for 5 year olds (UPSI 5); 82- Manual for development of Juvenile Justice Indicators; 102- WorldSAFE). This appears an appropriate approach though, as noted earlier, it requires a commitment to documentation of field-learning such that refinement of measures is genuinely driven by this process. Such refinement is nowhere better documented than with the set of tools developed by Achenbach and colleagues (89), which has resulted in the collation of norms for a wide range of cultural settings. There are some examples,

however, of other approaches to fostering cross-context generalizability, notably the cross-cultural consultation process used in the work of Zolotar and colleagues (110) detailed below.

**Recommendation: An important workstrand of a group seeking to promote best practice in monitoring and evaluation will be considering the requirements for tools and measures to be useable in a valid and reliable manner across diverse cultural settings. The expectations (and limits) of cross-context comparison need to be clearly specified to allow the clear design of appropriate measurement strategies and methodologies.**

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*Multi-Lingual Child Abuse Screening Tool Developed Through Global Consensus-Based Process*

*(110-Zolotar et al. (2009). ISPCAN Child Abuse Screening Tool Children's Version (ICAST-C): Instrument development and multi-national pilot testing. Child Abuse & Neglect, 33, 833-841)*

*The ICADT-C was developed under the premise that a major weakness of child abuse scales is that few are based upon the consensus of experts and few have been field-tested in cross-cultural settings. The development process of the ICAST-C makes it unique. First, drafting the instrument involved input from child protection researchers and practitioners from 40 countries. Second, a Delphi study of child protection experts' opinions resulted in the culmination of the final instrument. Thirdly, the instrument was translated and back-translated into six languages - Hindi, Arabic, Marathi, Russian, English, and Spanish. Finally, the instrument was field tested in four countries - Colombia, India, Russia, and Iceland - using a convenience sample of 571 children 12-17 years. The final ICAST-C (Home version) has 38 items and the ICAST C (Institution version) has 44 items, which serve as screeners for child abuse. Positive endorsements are followed by queries for frequency and perpetrator. Field testing indicated that the tool worked well, identifying endorsement for various forms of victimization ranging from 0 to 51% in all domains. However, the tool should be used in conjunction with other tools as a complement. For example, the tool doesn't contain questions about child neglect and other forms of victimization. Also, it cannot be considered a summative estimate of the prevalence of child abuse, because the acts of violence addressed in the tool comprise only a proportion of the ways in which children can be maltreated. Rather the importance of the instrument is that it has been endorsed by an international faction of individuals committed to child protection and that it has been cross-culturally field-tested.*

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<u>**Keeping Track of Developments**</u>

A large proportion of material reviewed is either in some draft form or signaled for limited circulation. Finalized versions of material submitted in draft form may, of course, be in existence, but the fact that such versions were not submitted at the very least suggests that circulation of updated and finalized material is inefficient. For example, from different sources several different versions of the Inter-Agency Child Protection Assessment Toolkit (24) were submitted for inclusion in the review, spanning well over a two year development period. Discrete version numbers of the Toolkit had not been allocated, nor were all versions dated. This was perhaps the most vivid example of challenges in managing processes of dissemination, but is not unique. As a result, there appears to be significant risk of both duplication and failure to build upon other measures or approaches. The lack of identified 'outputs' from many measures noted earlier also points to the unsystematic manner in which measures are developed, shared and learned from (or not). Any

grouping seeking to address strengthening of monitoring and evaluation in the field of child protection should see provision of a 'repository ' of materials – and active dissemination of promising work held there – as key functions.

**Recommendation: If established, a MERG should work to provide a regularly updated 'repository' of materials developed for use in monitoring and evaluation within the child protection sector. Active knowledge management of this repository – in terms of some degree of quality control and proactive dissemination – will be required.**

## Strengthening the Processes That Translate Guidance into Practice and Evidence

Few of the tools reflect the cycle of design-pilot use-refinement-field testing-revision-evaluated use that is fundamental to the development of robust, effective measurement tools. There are a large number of conceptually strong, well written and effectively illustrated monitoring and evaluation guides (e.g. 20- Child Rights Based Monitoring and Evaluation Tools and Mechanisms; 55- Developing and Operationalizing a National Monitoring and Evaluation System for the Protection, Care and Support of Orphans and Vulnerable Children; 80- Criteria for the Design and Evaluation of Juvenile Justice Reform Programmes etc.) but far fewer examples of concrete tools that have utilized such guidance and been established as effective and validated local practice (62- Guide to Monitoring and Evaluation of National Response for Children Orphaned and Made Vulnerable by HIV/AIDS and 34-Handbook for Action-Oriented Research on the Worst Forms of Child Labour, see box below, are rare examples of a guide that gets down to this level of detail of local data collection).

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*'Tips from Experience' Provide Professional Insight from Specialists*

*(34-Handbook for Action-Oriented Research on the Worst Forms of Child Labour including Trafficking in Children; Regional Working Group on Child Labour in Asia (RWG-CL), December 2002)*

*This extensive handbook provides information on how to conduct effective, action oriented research on child labour, including trafficking, using a children-centered approach. Building off the previous effort of Improving action-oriented research on the worst forms of child labour: Proceedings of a regional workshop and resource materials (2000), the handbook presents an accessible guide to participatory action in relation to child labour. Outlined in three parts, the tool is intended for practitioners who may have limited experience of conducting research and offers a series of clear steps, examples and ideas to increase practitioner capacity to conduct action oriented participatory research. Insightful, structured guidance is provided in Part III with the "handbook toolkit" that describes methods to use in research, exemplars of forms and "tips from experience". This "tips from experience" are particularly important as they offer the user valuable insights from practitioners with specialist experience of working in the field of child labour. Although somewhat old, this document is an excellently detailed, well presented and accessible guide to participatory action learning in relation to child labour.*

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Overall, the culture appears one of heavy investment in consultation and the preparation of high-level guidance, but weak investment in follow-though at local levels to establish robust, reliable and realistic systems for data collection. There is a welcome trend towards the notion of 'field testing' in

the refinement of measures, but such field-testing is generally poorly documented with significant potential for the loss of learning that would usefully shape the usability and reliability of measures. As noted earlier, 16-Qualitative Assessment for Program Planning is a rare example of a tool that comes with a ten year history of field refinement, much of which has been widely shared and disseminated.

Figure 1 provides a brief schematic to illustrate this issue. Guidance on programming and evaluation practice is crucial to align monitoring and evaluation practice with programmatic priorities; this leads to consideration of the formulation of appropriate indicators; such indicators require the collection of data by one of several means; this data needs to be collated and analyzed with respect to program goals; this then informs the process of program review and evaluation.
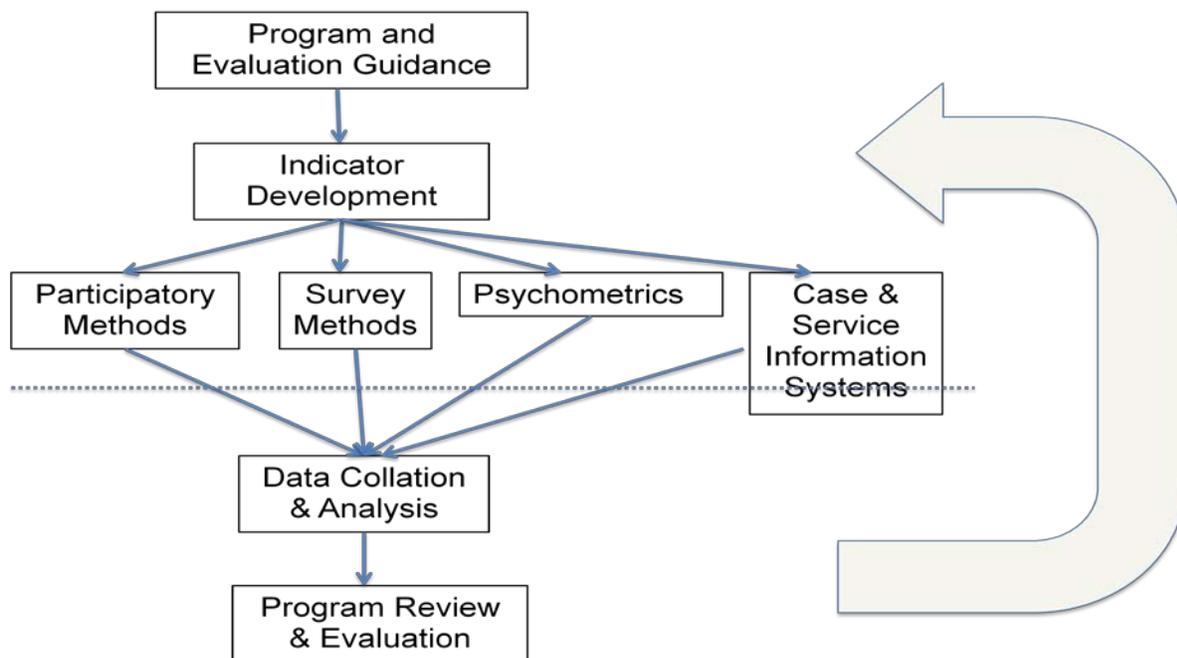


*Figure 1: Schematic Representation of Components of Monitoring & Evaluation Process*

With respect to these 'layers' of the monitoring and evaluation process, the first – program and evaluation guidance – is clearly the one with respect to which there is the strongest documentation, with a broad diversity of generally sound tools. There is also, as is clear from Annex 1, significant material related to the development of indicators. However, when it comes to lower 'layers' of the process, guidance is often more generalized and less precise. Tools suggest potential indicators but then offer little guidance on the sources of data by which they may be populated (e.g. 80-Criteria for the Design and Evaluation of Juvenile Justice Reform Programmes) or suggest the use of surveys, but provide little guidance on how sampling may be determined (e.g. 20- Child Rights Based Monitoring and Evaluation Tools and Mechanisms). Then, as noted earlier, documentation provides little evidence of how data has been collated and analyzed, and still less how it has informed program priorities or judged program effectiveness. The absence of details in documentation provided related to these final 'layers' of working may, in part, be an artifact of the manner in which material was solicited. However, as indicated by the arrow in this figure, it is such data from *use* of a

tool that should refine its design. The lack of evidence of such 'feedback' from field use being a significant factor in refining and reformulating tools is thus troubling.

**Recommendation: In seeking to strengthen the monitoring and evaluation capacity of the child protection sector, investment strategy needs to ensure that resources are distributed in a balanced manner to support not only preparation of guidelines, but also formulation of these into practicable measures, local piloting, refinement and introduction into use, mechanisms for documenting local experience and means for this to be fed back into processes of tool development.**

## V.      Summary of Recommendation

**Recommendation 1: If work of the proposed MERG is to initially focus upon areas where there has been a clear track record of development, appropriate areas of focus include children without family care, violence against children and psychosocial.**

**Recommendation 2: To identify emerging best practice in such fields as harmful traditional practices, children affected by armed conflict, child trafficking, child migration, and child injuries – areas of extensive literature but comparatively sparse published documentation on M&E tools – will require a more focused, proactive strategy of search within appropriate professional and practice networks**

**Recommendation 3: There needs to be greater exchange between academic and practice communities working in the field of children protection M&E. The lack of overlap in material disseminated through professional networks and the published literature is striking, and needs to be addressed if learning is to be effectively captured and shared.**

**Recommendation 4: Given the increasing strategic significance of a 'systems perspective' for the field of protection, focused attempts to identify, promote and develop M&E methodologies adopting a more integrated child protection systems focus are warranted.**

**Recommendation 5: Acknowledging the global capacity of UNICEF and Save the Children in the areas of child protection M&E, there is a need to develop a proactive engagement strategy with a broad range of other organizations if the maximum benefits of learning are to be gained.**

**Recommendation 6: If established, a MERG should encourage greater attention to the consolidation of previous efforts, countering current trends emphasizing new initiatives and efforts disconnected to previous activity.**

**Recommendation 7: Much greater attention needs to be given in documentation regarding M&E tools to addressing issues of usability, threshold capacities for use, and experiences of (and modifications prompted by) field testing.**

**Recommendation 8:** Encourage utilization of 'mixed methods' within child protection M&E strategies by seeking to promote tools that incorporate both quantitative and more qualitative or participatory approaches to data collection.

**Recommendation 9:** Outputs reporting on the use of measures are an important evidence-base for judgments on utility and usability. Greater attention needs to be given to documenting monitoring and evaluation activities conducted with specified tools and frameworks.

**Recommendation 10:** To assist learning and appropriate use, documentation of tools and frameworks needs to more explicitly consider the strengths and constraints of the measures described. Such reflection is not an addendum to a documented measure but a vital element of its clear specification.

**Recommendation 11:** Technical guidance should be prepared and disseminated regarding the collation and analysis of aggregated data available through child protection case management systems. Such guidance should be incorporated into systems documentation, encouraging routine use of data from such sources to inform service development and evaluation. Guidance should be constructed in a way that it is relevant to case management systems of all levels of technical sophistication.

**Recommendation 12:** Promote utilization of tools that employ multiple sources of data in order to gather a detailed and balanced appraisal of the nature of child protection issues.

**Recommendation 13:** If integrated programming is to be promoted on the basis of sound data, the precision of case definition and specified sources of data developed for some specific protection risks needs to be brought to bear in comprehensive, integrated measures of protection concerns. If measures are to be manageable in scope, this will require a clear focus on core indicators of children's well-being (rather than attempts to represent all areas of potential vulnerability).

**Recommendation 14:** Without expectation that these would be adopted for widespread use, examples of locally developed tools and measures should be widely shared as an encouragement of the feasibility of developing locally 'tailored' M&E tools.

**Recommendation 15:** An important workstrand of a group seeking to promote best practice in monitoring and evaluation will be considering the requirements for tools and measures to be useable in a valid and reliable manner across diverse cultural settings. The expectations (and limits) of cross-context comparison need to be clearly specified to allow the clear design of appropriate measurement strategies and methodologies.

**Recommendation 16:** If established, a MERG should work to provide a regularly updated 'repository' of materials developed for use in monitoring and evaluation within the child protection sector. Active knowledge management of this repository – in terms of some degree of quality control and proactive dissemination – will be required.

**Recommendation 17: In seeking to strengthen the monitoring and evaluation capacity of the child protection sector, investment strategy needs to ensure that resources are distributed in a balanced manner to support not only preparation of guidelines, but also formulation of these into practicable measures, local piloting, refinement and introduction into use, mechanisms for documenting local experience and means for this to be fed back into processes of tool development.**