This information brief provides an overview of the rationale, objectives, membership, and functions of the CP MERG.

The Child Protection Monitoring and Evaluation Reference Group (CP MERG) is a global forum for collaboration and coordination on child protection monitoring, evaluation and research.
Why do we need a CP MERG?

Monitoring, evaluation and evidence-based research are critical at project, programme, national and international levels for determining the scale of child protection violations, identifying vulnerable groups, ascertaining risk factors and protective assets and mechanisms, informing policy and programming, and ensuring accountability at all levels. The move to a systems approach in child protection, consistent with similar and historic shifts in the health and education sectors, also implies a need for a stronger evidence base of what works to protect children. While monitoring, evaluation and research in child protection is extremely important, it requires much improvement, as highlighted by numerous reports including a child protection meta-evaluation carried out by UNICEF in 2008 and an inter-agency global review of evaluations of community based approaches in child protection consolidated in 2010.

What is the role of the CP MERG?

The CP MERG is a global level forum established in 2010 for collaboration and coordination on child protection monitoring, evaluation and research. The CP MERG aims at strengthening the quality of monitoring and evaluation, research and data collection in child protection, through the development of standards, tools and recommendations, which are relevant for the sector. It also helps to facilitate coordination, communication and shared learning across organizations and entities on monitoring and evaluation of child protection.

What are the objectives of CP MERG?

- Regularly updated and assertive knowledge management of child protection monitoring and evaluation
- Consolidation of best thinking and cutting edge learning from multiple sources into more broadly accessible formats
- Development of child protection monitoring and evaluation standards, tools and recommendations in targeted niche areas
- Regular updates on opportunities and current work being conducted around child protection monitoring and evaluation.
Ways of working with the CP MERG

The work of the CP MERG is driven by the Core Members and coordinated by co-chair agencies. Within the current work plan period (2013-2014) the co-chairs are World Vision and Save the Children. Core members are drawn from a range of organisations who meet annually to decide on the CP MERG work plan and review and endorse CP MERG products.

The Secretariat administers the CP MERG and houses the knowledge management advisor. The Secretariat is supported by UNICEF NY HQ Child Protection Section.

Technical Working Groups (TWG) are convened by the CP MERG to take forward specific activities within the work plan. Each TWG is led by a chair or co-chairs from amongst the member organisations. At present CP MERG has the following TWGs:

- Measuring Violence against Children
- Children without Parental Care

To learn about new reports, technical guidance materials, news, vacancies and events related to child protection monitoring, evaluation and research, you can sign up to the CP MERG Quarterly Newsletter, Secretariat@cpmerg.org or visit the CP MERG website, www.cpmerg.org.

We welcome your feedback, suggestions for additional piece of work, or potential individuals or institutions, particularly from the Global South, that you feel may be well suited to becoming part of the CP MERG.