Child Protection in Crisis Network:
Three-Year Plan
Introduction

The Child Protection in Crisis (CPC) Network was established in 2008 to strengthen and systematize child care and protection in crisis-settings. It pursues its mission through innovative research that builds evidence to affect change in child protection policy and practice. Strong partnerships are the link between evidence and policy change. The CPC brings together policy makers, practitioners and academics in crisis-affected countries to determine learning priorities and ensure the results of these endeavors are put to good use. The CPC also works with coalitions of international actors to ensure field based findings are integrated into global practice.

The CPC now includes over 250 agencies working in 32 countries to develop the evidence base for the child protection community. Program Learning Groups (PLGs) with established knowledge transfer mechanisms are active in five countries: Indonesia, Liberia, Sri Lanka, Uganda and Jordan (Middle East initiative). New PLG initiatives also are being explored in Colombia, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Rwanda.

Eight million dollars has been mobilized to support CPC activities between 2008 and 2011.

CPC members have established a new three year work plan to address the following child protection priorities:
1. Child Protection Systems Strengthening
2. University Capacity Building and Curriculum Support
3. Evidence-Based Practices and Measurement

The projected cost of these three year plans is $14,254,906.

Mission Statement

Emphasizing learning, CPC undertakes innovative research and builds evidence to affect change in child protection policy and practice.

Strategic Partnerships for Change

Central to the Network’s commitment to developing evidence and affecting change in the field of Child Protection in Crisis are our partners. The Network consists of government, civil society, academic, donor and community leaders working together to ensure child protection programs and policies are grounded in evidence. The CPC prioritizes support for our partners in the Global South who shape and drive research agendas in their respective countries. Research and learning undertaken through these partnerships is also fed forward to influence global child protection policy and practice.
Approaches to Research and Impact

We are committed to a field-based approach, informed by demand at community, district and national levels. We have created and sustained direct links with local, national, regional and global networks, and include relevant stakeholders from the concept stage on, taking time to understand the context and dynamics of the communities in which we work, thus ensuring we focus on priority areas where research, leading to change, is needed. CPC findings and products are shared with key stakeholders and are disseminated locally, nationally and internationally through discussion, policy briefs, reports, learning events, curriculum reform, and academic papers.

Principles and Approach

Six key principles govern our work:
1. We are child-focused—putting children at the center of our work.
2. Our approach is ethical, respectful and based on the ‘Do No Harm’ principle.
3. We value partnerships and actively involve these partners in our research.
4. We are committed to supporting and developing international and local research capacities.
5. We are committed to widespread dissemination of our research findings.
6. We seek to work within the framework of child rights, and to have open and transparent relationships with international and local authorities in the environments where we carry out research.

CPC Network Structures

Membership: CPC is an open global network of representatives from governments, NGOs, UN agencies, donor agencies, academic institutions, and affected populations working together to ensure children’s right to care and protection in crisis affected countries. It is not a formal organization with bureaucratic functions, but rather a flexible and responsive mechanism which brings organizations and individuals together to facilitate collaboration, share experiences and resources, building capacity and engage in advocacy regarding child protection.

Global Secretariat: Columbia University (Program on Forced Migration and Health) serves as the CPC’s Secretariat. As such, it plays a strategic role in communicating, disseminating and filtering research to foster learning with the core belief in building the evidence base to find and apply practice that works in advancing child protection. The Secretariat also mobilizes funding, provides technical support, and organizes country, regional and global learning events.

Global Steering Committee: The CPC recently established a global Steering Committee to support the CPC Secretariat. The global Steering Committee is comprised of prominent individuals with diverse areas of expertise, including child protection, communication, strategic partnerships, and resource mobilization. Steering Committee members provide guidance on the Network’s strategic direction and priorities, profile and partnership development, program development, and resource mobilization.
**Task Forces:** Task Forces allow CPC members to work collectively on specific child protection concerns. Task Forces promote new learning, advocate for good practice, and collaboratively develop tools and resources to enable practitioners to ensure high quality programs to children in need of care and protection. Task Forces are led by member agencies and employ an open membership policy.

Task Forces include:
- Livelihoods and Economic Strengthening: Convened by the Women’s Refugee Commission
- Psychosocial Support: Convened by ChildFund International
- Measurement and Evaluation: Convened by Columbia University
- Emergency Response Assessment: Convened by the Child Protection Working Group (CPWG)
- Engaging Universities: Co-convened by Columbia University and the International Institute for Child Rights and Development (IICRD), and includes the University of Indonesia, Makerere University, Open University, and Mother Patern College of Health Sciences/Stella Maris Polytechnic
- Children without Family Care: Convened by the Better Care Network (proposed)

**Program Learning Groups (PLGs):** While the Network pursues research in more than 30 countries, it currently engages intensely in five PLG countries: Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Liberia, Uganda and Jordan (a Middle East regional initiative). PLGs are a focused, long term effort to affect change through the development of an integrated knowledge transfer model and are a CPC Network priority. PLG structures include steering committees (a structure for senior decision-maker engagement) and technical working groups (program and practice experts). Engagement of academia is a key component of an integrated knowledge transfer model—supporting their participation in PLGs and increasing their capacities over time—is a priority activity as well. PLGs steer their own research agenda and receive technical support from the Secretariat and relevant Task Forces. PLGs increasingly are serving as “hubs of learning” in their respective countries through expanded membership, active communication and innovative learning initiatives. Regional outreach and linkages between country level PLGs are envisioned as important next steps.
Global Strategic Priorities

The CPC has played a pivotal role in advancing the field of child protection and is well-positioned to build on its substantial body of work. In consultation with its members, the CPC Secretariat has established three overarching priorities to be pursued over the next three years.

1. Systems Mapping

The challenge
Ultimately, it is the state’s responsibility to respect, protect and fulfill the rights and well-being of children. Yet alarming numbers of girls and boys around the global continue to be exposed to abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence, underlining the need for holistic and sustainable solutions to prevent and mitigate violations against children. It is crucial to recognize, analyze and address the range of interrelated factors that contribute to violations of children’s rights in relation to the larger context of immediate and underlying causes. Yet because many children face multiple protection problems, a focus on individual issues can sometimes resolve one problem while leaving others untouched. A systems-building approach to child protection is required, especially in settings where formal systems are weak and communities must assume the vast major of the child protection burden.

What we have achieved to date
In Africa, a Columbia University faculty member partnered with Save the Children and a 17-agency global Reference Group to conduct action research in three countries on how to strengthen community-based child protection mechanisms by supporting better linkages with national child protection systems. More recently, the CPC Secretariat supported child protection mapping exercises in Uganda and Liberia to strengthen community systems, including their linkages to formal service providers.

In Asia, Columbia University and the University of Indonesia worked with the Indonesia Ministry of Finance, Social Welfare, and UNICEF to undertake a comprehensive analysis/mapping of Indonesia’s existing child protection information system. The assessment identified key information management governmental accountability gaps based on the specific mandates and responsibilities of different institutions and organizations as well as systems (or lack thereof) for ensuring coordination and proper flow of good quality information between different agencies. The assessment also articulated how the government can mainstream core child protection indicators in routine data and information collection by the Bureau of Statistics. In the end, the research resulted in a proposal to develop a comprehensive framework for a national child protection information management system.

Save the Children and Columbia University collaborated on an analytic framework to synthesize findings across national and community based child protection systems in South and Central Asia. Child protection system response was evaluated in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Maldives, Bhutan, Nepal, India and Sri Lanka. Findings are being used to lobby the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) and to influence national governments in the region.
UNICEF and Columbia University worked together in Papua New Guinea to evaluate the efficacy of a village court pilot project. The village court system is the most extensive justice system in Papua New Guinea and provides access to justice for more than 85% of the population, who cannot reach the formal court system. In a country where family violence is commonly reported to affect 75% of all women and child abuse is grossly under-reported, the village courts provide a crucial access point for these vulnerable groups.

A UNICEF-Columbia University team also assessed the treatment of child survivors and witnesses when they interact with the justice system in Papua New Guinea. This project investigated the ways in which the rights of such children are respected throughout the legal process in various regions of the country. The assessment led to an action plan to guide planning by the government of Papua New Guinea for implementation of existing legislation on this issue and for new efforts to protect the rights of child survivors and witnesses.

**What we will do**

In Uganda, the CPC will expand its Community-Based Child Protection Mechanisms Systems Mapping Program to address the problem of childhood violence in Ugandan schools and communities to additional districts. The project involves community mapping to document current community-based and formal child protection systems that respond to incidents of violence, sexual violence and other child protection concerns. Once existing systems are mapped, mobile phone technology is used to link communities to these identified protection response systems. Ultimately, the research will be used to inform policy and lead to changes, where necessary, to existing national and local systems through existing PLG channels.

In Liberia, the CPC will also scale up its initial Community-Based Child Protection Systems Mapping (CBCPSM) Program to strengthen national child protection by ensuring a better understanding of the day to day protective and risk factors children face in their communities, homes, families and schools. Systems mapping in Liberia will provide evidence on risk factors and low cost strategies to address them. It will also identify CBCPMs that can be strengthened and linked to formal child protection systems. Findings from this mapping exercise will be used in the second phase of the project in year two to bridge identified capacity gaps and strengthen linkages and coordination between informal and formal child protection systems.

In Indonesia, the Center for Child Protection will continue its support to the government to develop a comprehensive protection system for children. It will develop and share innovative investigative methods to better enable the government to gain a comprehensive picture of the magnitude of child protection risk factors, protection problems and trend data. The Center also intends to pilot a number of innovative initiatives using information and communication technology, such as cell phones, to track and link protection problems with program response.

Several related learning events are envisioned as well. In 2012, a lessons learned workshop will be convened in Africa to identify key attributes of successful mapping and synthesize lessons learned and guidelines which will be applied to future efforts. In 2013, a similar workshop will be convened in Asia. In 2014, a global workshop will be convened in New York to discuss how country level learning can inform a global framework on which subsequent mapping exercises could be based.
2. Engaging Universities

The challenge
Professionalization of the field of child protection practice requires the existence of operational actors with well-trained personnel whose work is guided by solid technical standards and ethical guidelines. It also requires the engagement of institutions of higher learning to prepare the next generation of leaders and practitioners through provision of relevant graduate training, mentoring and field experience. Indeed, the majority of national child practitioners currently working in PLG countries have indicated that their university education was not relevant to the realities of their day-to-day work in the field of child protection.

What we have achieved to date
The CPC has worked with dedicated organizations, academic institutions and child protection professionals to establish research centers and curriculum programs within universities in PLG countries, including:

- Establishment of the Center on Child Protection at the University of Indonesia, in partnership with the Ministry of Planning and Columbia University. The Center’s goal is to contribute to the systematization and professionalizing of the child protection in Indonesia through three inter-related sets of activities: research to support systems development and evidence-based programming and policy change; training to build the capacity of government officials and civil society practitioners; and curriculum support to design a skills-based concentration in child protection
- Creation of a national child protection curriculum in Uganda—an initiative lead by TPO and Makerere University in Uganda, with Columbia University support. The curriculum program also includes a three month certificate program to equip child protection practitioners with knowledge and skills to effectively deliver quality child protection services in their various capacities
- Completion of the first university undergraduate child protection course in Sri Lanka, which resulted from CPC and Open University collaboration. The course, which exists within the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, is envisioned by Open University as a prelude to a more comprehensive child protection curriculum program, as well as distance learning opportunities for university students in other parts of Sri Lanka
- Launching the CPC Network’s Global Classroom on the Protection of Children in Disaster and War. Some 100 graduate students and practitioners in Indonesia, Sri Lanka and the United States were simultaneously enrolled in this first global classroom which was co-taught by faculty at Columbia University, the University of Indonesia, and Open University. Classmates from the three countries met virtually each week to examine child protection from both reduction of physical risk and promotion of developmental well-being perspectives
- Establishment of a Task Force to systematically engage and support university engagement in child protection research and curriculum development
What we will do
The Network will continue to invest in long term development and capacity building of the PLG countries, focusing on training and curriculum development as part of a larger knowledge transfer:
• In Indonesia, the CPC will support the efforts of the Center on Child Protection at the University of Indonesia to expand their current curriculum, train government personnel, expand the child protection evidence base, and strengthen community, provincial and national systems development
• In Sri Lanka, Open University intends to develop a child protection center to promote inter-disciplinary research, a graduate training program, and distance learning courses to universities located in the eastern and northern regions of the country
• In the Middle East, a child protection training program will be established at Columbia University Middle East Research Centre (CUMERC) in Amman, Jordan to enable practitioners working in the region to enhance their knowledge and skills while also maintaining their current employment
• In Liberia, the CPC will work with Mother Patern College of Health Sciences/Stella Maris Polytechnic to integrate child protection into their new graduate social work training curriculum
• In Uganda, the CPC is establishing a Center of Excellence at Makerere University to support government and civil society efforts to reach child health, nutrition and protection goals in a holistic manner. The Center, guided by a board of directors comprised of government, civil society and academic leaders, will also develop the capacity of researchers from other universities to undertake rigorous operational research that contributes to community, district and national systems.
• In 2013, the Secretariat will convene a curriculum reform workshop to share lessons learned, explore distance learning options, and forge stronger partnerships for change.
The challenge
Recognizing years ago that the child protection sector lacked robust evidence and methods of measuring or conceptualizing difficult to capture or sensitive data, the CPC has worked to begin building a research base and to also to create tools and methodologies to understand issues within child protection. It is widely recognized that the lack of a robust evidence-base is a major constraint on advancement of the child protection sector in situations of crisis. A pre-requisite of building this evidence-base is the establishment of effective, appropriate, feasible and valid tools and methods for use in assessments and evaluations. Another pre-requisite of building this evidence-base is the existence of information that is accepted and used.

What we have achieved to date
Columbia University (as a CPC actor) has developed innovative methods and tools, and promoted rigorous surveys and evaluations that have significantly improved the way child protection is practiced. Examples include:
• Creation of 2010 Mapping Tools for Child Protection Monitoring and Evaluation
• Led technical support for the Child Protection Assessment in Emergencies – a review on the use of the Rapid Assessment Toolkit in various emergencies
• Developed and revised the Inter-Agency Guide to the Evaluation of Psychosocial Programming in Humanitarian Emergencies issued by UNICEF
• Developed manuals for Participatory Ranking Methodology and Rapid Appraisal in Humanitarian Emergencies
• Conducted a feasibility study for a Global Surveillance System for Attacks on Education issued by Education Above All and the Global Coalition to Prevent Attacks on Education
• Tested a pilot tool to measure the needs of children on the move on the Thai/Lao border
• Conducted an evaluation of the Village Court and Women and Children’s Access to Community Justice in Papua New Guinea
• Measuring violence against women amidst war and displacement using the “neighborhood method” in five countries
• Supported a UNICEF initiative on Grave Violations Of Children’s Rights And Mortality In The Central African Republic Results Of A Nationwide Survey September 2009
• 2010 assessment of child injuries and killings by armed groups in the Occupied Palestinian Territory
What we will do

The CPC will further explore and improve on the ethnographic research tools to support systems mapping in African countries—and disseminate lessons learned through learning events, policy briefings and publications. It will introduce a livelihoods component to the mapping research and expand these efforts to Asia and Latin America as well.

Promotion of innovative methods and strategies for capturing sensitive data will be accelerated and systematic methods training for PLGs and international agencies offered. Building on previous relationships and engagements, the Network will support national child protection prevalence studies, with agreements with government and civil society partners in Indonesia and Uganda already secured. Furthering the commitment to data, the network will promote local participation in community surveillance mechanisms, building on work done recently in the DRC.

As a new joint venture with the CPWG, the CPC will support emergency response capacity building and training to ensure comprehensive child protection assessments are undertaken at the onset of new, acute emergencies. It will also continue to promote the evaluation of rapid emergency response to inform and affect current practice.

Lastly the CPC will look to build current evaluation capacity in PLG countries as a capacity building priority activity. Several trainings and workshops are envisioned as part of the Network’s three year plan. The Secretariat and the Task Force on Measurement and Evaluation will also continue to provide technical support for member specific evaluation projects that are likely to contribute significantly to child protection evidence base needs and good practice determinations.

Moving Forward

The CPC is comprised of government ministries, donors, operational agencies and academic institutions committed to promoting critical learning that leads to change in the area of child protection. Network members are able to contribute to and draw on research and lessons learned in Asia, Africa, the Middle East and Latin America.

In moving forward, the CPC Secretariat will prioritize support for three critical areas of concern: child protection systems strengthening; university capacity building and curriculum support; and, evidence-based practices and measurement.
Moving Forward

The budget below projects core CPC Secretariat costs over the next three years and includes an estimation of funding needed to effectively implement PLG and Task Forces’ three year work plans. ¹

<table>
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<th>3 Year Annual Budget</th>
<th>Year 1 - USD</th>
<th>Year 2 - USD</th>
<th>Year 3 - USD</th>
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Moving Forward

The CPC Secretariat is housed in Columbia University’s Program on Forced Migration and Health. Currently, the Secretariat includes a Director, Coordinator and Program Development-Communication Officer. Moving forward, an administrative officer will be required as well. More information may be found on the Network’s website (www.cpcnetwork.org).

The Secretariat draws on wider Columbia University resources. Six Columbia University faculty members will support the CPC’s new three year agenda, either through leadership in a Task Force or direct technical support to PLG projects. The Secretariat also has access to 25 research associates through the Columbia Group for Children in Adversity (www.columbiagroupforchildren.com) and numerous graduate research assistants through the Program on Forced Migration and Health (www.forcedmigration.columbia.edu). Columbia University provides technical support in the areas of document search and retrieval, data analysis, and curriculum design, teaching innovation and distance learning.

Finance and Management

The CPC Secretariat draws on the Program on Forced Migration and Health financial and management staff support. It uses Columbia University’s research administration facilities to negotiate terms of all grant contracts, while retaining with the CPC Director the responsibility for negotiating the substance of grants supporting CPC research and capacity building activities.

¹ Individual PLG and Task Force Work Plans are available upon request.
The CPC Network thanks its generous donors for their support:
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
ChildFund International
Education Above All
Oak Foundation
Program on Forced Migration and Health, Columbia University
Save the Children
Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
United Nations Children’s Fund
United States Agency for International Development
United States Institute of Peace