Exploring Child Care Arrangements & Reasons for Family Separation in Liberia & Laos

Mónica Ruiz-Casares, Ph.D.
Location of Studies Sites

- Liberia
- Laos
Children Living Arrangements

**Liberia**
- Live with both biological parents: 43.7%
- Live with mother only: 24.9%
- Live with father only: 23.2%
- Do not live with neither biological parent: 7.7%

7.2% have one or both parents dead

**Lao P.D.R.**
- Live with both biological parents: 84%
- Live with mother only: 6.3%
- Live with father only: 7.1%
- Do not live with neither biological parent: 2%

5.3% have one or both parents dead

Sources: Liberia DHS, 2013; LSIS 2013
CP-KAP Objectives

1. To establish a **baseline** of community Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices on child protection.

2. To identify **resources & barriers or enabling factors** for child protection & access & willingness to use prevention & response services.

Liberia CP-KAP household survey
CP-KAP Design

1 Desk review

2 Key informant interviews (n = 55)
   • Community leaders & service providers
   • Donors & public officials

3 Focus group discussions (n = 21)
   • Parents/caregivers of children (n = 52)
   • Children 7-11 years (n = 59)
   • Children 12-17 years (n = 88)

4 Household survey (n = 1547)
   • Parents/caregivers of children (n = 1160)
   • Children 12-17 years (n = 387)
Laos Study Objectives

1. To document family & community practices aimed at preventing parental separation & promoting care & reintegration.

2. To document alternative out-of-home care arrangements.

Ethnic Boarding School
Laos Design

1. Desk review*

2. Key informant interviews (n = 26)*
   - Community leaders & service providers
   - Policy makers & public officials

3. Focus group discussions*
   - Parents/caregivers of children (n = 192)
   - Children 7-11 years (n = 103)
   - Children 12-17 years (n = 191)

4. Case studies (PEI) (n = 20) *

5. Online survey (n = 8)
   - INGOs & UN

* Includes institutional settings
Exploratory Sequential Design

- Desk review
- Focus groups (visual methods & community mapping)
- Key informant interviews
- Case Studies (visual methods)

Apply select QUAL results to QUAN & QUAL phases

Sources Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007
Triangulation Concurrent Design

**Phase I**
- **QUAN data collection**
  - Household Surveys
  - Census

- **QUAL data collection**
  - Focus groups (visual methods)
  - Key Informant interviews

**Phase II**
- QUAN data analysis
- QUAN Results

- QUAL data analysis
- QUAL Results

- Compare & Contrast

- Interpretation QUAN + QUAL

Source: Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007
Recruiting FGD Participants

- Identifying the critical characteristics of participants
- Establishing the no. of FGDs
- Developing FGD protocols
- Recruiting participants (nonprobability sampling)

See: Ruiz-Casares, Rousseau, Morlu & Brown, 2013
Household Surveys

- **Stratified cluster survey**
  - Rural, Urban, and Metropolitan strata
  - 3-stages:
    1. EAs (PPS)
    2. Households (Modified EPI Method)
    3. Caregivers (Kish)

- **Sampling frame:** Liberia Population & Housing Census (2008)

- **Response rates:** 93% (caregivers) – 94% (child)

- **Sampling & post-stratification weights**
CP-KAP

Demographic & Household
- SES
- Marital status
- Income source
- Housing
- HH composition
- Child basic needs

Knowledge
- Community risk factors
- Problems of child separation
- Adoption & alternative care
- CP laws & systems
- Community resources for abused children

Attitudes
- Children w/o parents
- Different treatment
- Willingness to foster & send to alternative care
- Child reunification
- Physical discipline

Practices
- Communication & supervision
- Social support
- Child work
- Access to health(care) & education
- Physical discipline
- Reporting abuse
- Sources of CP information
• 52% of HH with children living away, mostly for schooling (48%)
• Child-R: lived with both (42%), one (32%), or no parent (27%)
  17% were single or double orphans
When parents cannot care for children, the law in Liberia says that children should be sent to orphanages.

If parents give their child up for adoption out of the country, they may be able to go to the US.

Most children in orphanage homes do not have living parents.
### Attitudes

**Willingness to...**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Foster</th>
<th>Send</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>child with disability</td>
<td>child to orphanage home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>child HIV positive</td>
<td>child with a non-relative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>child from other ethnic group</td>
<td>child with a relative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>child non-relative</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>child relative</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Foster**:
  - Strongly disagree
  - Disagree
  - Agree
  - Strongly agree

- **Send**:
  - Strongly disagree
  - Disagree
  - Agree
  - Strongly agree

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>0%</th>
<th>20%</th>
<th>40%</th>
<th>60%</th>
<th>80%</th>
<th>100%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>child with disability</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>child HIV positive</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>child from other ethnic group</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>child non-relative</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>child relative</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>child to orphanage home</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>child with a non-relative</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>child with a relative</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Attitudes
Children Not Living With Their Parents...

- Should only be sent to orphanage homes if there is no family to care for them
- Should be sent to orphanage homes if they have disabilities or special learning needs
- Are better cared in orphanage homes than in a family

Strongly disagree  Disagree  Agree  Strongly agree
Practices

Children sent to live with relatives/others

Children are registered to go to orphanages

Parents send children with disabilities to orphanages

Stepparent does not want to take children in

Parents treat own children better than other children

Children run away from home into the streets

- Never
- Sometimes
- A lot
Differential Treatment

Clothes  Some parents (...) will buy expensive clothes for their own children and used clothes for the other children.

Food     A few parents are still letting children especially those of family members and other people cook their own food with less ingredients; they and their own children eat the good food.

School   [Some parents] only send the ones that are clever to school, or send their children to private school and the family or other children to government school.

Play     Some caretakers will give you, the child, more work to do so that you, the child, will have no time to go to your friends to play.
Child Separation in Laos

**REASONS**

- Parental death
- Parental divorce/permanent separation
- Parental remarriage
- Access to education
- Parental work/farming
- Material poverty

**PROCESS**

- Relatives “adopt” children & care to continue schooling
- Neighbors care for children while parents are away
- Decision made by parent(s), grandparents, uncles/aunts, children &/or village authorities
- Village/district recruit EBS/SOS (quotas)
- Home visits

*Source: Ruiz-Casares, 2013*
Limitations

Scope & sampling
Excluded populations
Inaccuracy/out of date LISGIS data & indicators
Trade-offs
Non-probability (Laos)

Survey development & implementation
Questionnaire length (HH roster)
Community access & call-backs
Staff supervision
Self-report
Take Away

CP-KAP

TTT (Triangulate, Test, Train)
- QUAN, QUAL, & Mixed-methods
- Multi-voice

INDICATORS
- Parental marital history/death
- Differential & mal-treatment (disabilities)
- Access to education
- Living conditions
- HH Composition (children)

CONTEXT
- Cultural & ethical norms
- Critical reflection
Gratitude to Participants & …

CSSS de la Montagne
Don Bosco Homes
GIS/LIGIS
Lao Women’s Union
McGill University
Mother Pattern College of Health Sciences
National Traditional Council of Liberia
National Union of orphanages of Liberia
National University of Laos
Save the Children
SOS Children’s Villages
UNICEF
USAID
World Learning
For further information:

monica.ruizcasares@mcgill.ca