CPC Network Task Force on Livelihoods and Economic Strengthening: Three-Year Strategic Plan
Introduction

Child Protection in Crisis, a network for research, learning and action, is a collaboration of humanitarian agencies, local institutions and academic partners working to improve the protection of children in crisis-affected settings. As a part of this effort, the Task Force on Livelihoods and Economic Strengthening seeks to enhance the protection and well-being of crisis-affected children through sustainable livelihoods approaches and economic strengthening (ES) of households. The Task Force strives to improve the design, quality and effectiveness of economic programming targeting crisis-affected populations, both with adults, and in economic interventions for adolescents themselves.

Global Priorities

- Gather and disseminate evidence on how livelihood/ES programs impact child protection and well-being
- Generate practical recommendations for action to UN agencies, governments, NGOs and child protection and livelihood/ES actors on the ground
- Advocate within the field for greater attention to measuring impact on children in livelihood/ES strategies and programs

Mission Statement

To make child protection and well-being explicit goals of livelihood and economic strengthening strategies and activities, through building the evidence base, member agency engagement and advocacy.
Strategic Partnerships for Change

The Task Force is made up of members from dozens of agencies, individuals from diverse professional and disciplinary backgrounds including child protection, early recovery, livelihoods, monitoring and evaluation, evaluation research, gender analysis, economic strengthening, and psychology. We share the goal to better understand how economic approaches can support child protection and well-being in crisis settings, to push the field to measure economic programs using child protection-focused indicators, and replicate identified good practices.

• Task Force learning translates from knowledge to change through three principal means:
  ◦ Engagement and uptake by participating agencies,
  ◦ publications and events,
  ◦ outreach and advocacy with the wider field of practitioners, researchers and donors.

• Partnerships are central to the CPC Network’s commitment to developing evidence and affecting change in the cross-sectoral area of livelihoods/ES and child protection. The Task Force works with partners in the global South including PLG members to shape the research agenda. Research is undertaken through these partnerships and shared with the global Task Force membership for feedback and dialog. Products of this process are used to influence and inform global child protection and livelihoods/ES policy and practice.

Terminology

A livelihood comprises the capabilities, assets and activities required for a means of living.

Economic strengthening is the portfolio of strategies and interventions that supply, protect, and/or grow physical, natural, financial, human and social assets.

Livelihoods refers to the assets and activities that households themselves have or do, while economic strengthening refers to the actions taken by governments, donors and implementers to improve them. Confusion often arises, as livelihoods is also used colloquially to refer to economic strengthening work, i.e., “livelihood program”.

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Approaches and Principles

Recognizing that child protection is a crosscutting issue that encompasses child rights, social welfare reform and broader social sustainability, we address child protection from a broad multi-disciplinary perspective. The CPC Network is committed to a field-based research approach, informed by demand at the national and community level. We have direct links with national and local networks, and include relevant stakeholders beginning with the concept stage, taking time to understand the context and dynamics of the communities in which we work, thus ensuring we focus on the priority areas where research, leading to change, is needed. Our findings and outputs are shared with key stakeholders and are disseminated both nationally and internationally through policy briefs, reports and academic papers. Key partners in our work include government ministries, research institutions, local community groups, humanitarian and human rights agencies, the United Nations, donors, and other intergovernmental groupings.

Six key principles govern our work:

• We are child-focused—putting children’s safety and well-being at the center of our work.
• Our approach is ethical, respectful, and based on the ‘Do No Harm’ principle. Many economic activities involve risk, which may not be avoidable. With this acknowledgement, still we actively seek to avoid harm.
• We value partnerships and actively involve these partners in our research.
• We are committed to supporting and developing national and local research capacities.
• We are committed to widespread dissemination of our research findings.
• We seek to work within the framework of child rights and to have open and transparent relationships with national and local authorities in the environments where we carry out research.
Critical Areas of Inquiry

The following priorities were identified through a polling process of experts at a 2008 CPC network meeting in Kampala, Uganda—perhaps the first global gathering on the theme of livelihoods/ES and child protection. These priorities also fall in line with those emerging from a comprehensive literature review process, dozens of expert interviews, and from PLG meetings that have been conducted since that time.

Priority One: Documenting the impact of livelihoods/economic strengthening interventions on child protection and well-being

The challenge
Most of what is “known” about impacts for children from economic interventions in crisis settings is, in fact, assumed. Rigorous research has been conducted on the effects on children from some approaches (cash transfers, in particular), but the effects on children from other approaches is mostly a matter of anecdotal evidence and conjecture. With so many types of interventions, combinations of interventions, possible effects, and types of beneficiary cohorts, it has been difficult to generalize lessons from programming.

In addition, while rigorous evaluation research on livelihoods/ES approaches is lacking even for development contexts, such research is virtually non-existent for crisis contexts. Much of the existing research will not be entirely useful to humanitarian practitioners.

What we have achieved to date
• Documented models and approaches taken to livelihood and ES interventions that focus on outcomes and impacts for children
• Collected the available secondary research on related themes
• Created a catalog of livelihood and ES interventions that have sought to rigorously measure the outcomes and impacts for children’s protection and well-being
• Provided technical assistance to evaluation research into the effects of livelihoods/ES approaches on children

What we will do
• Synthesize the learning from individual intervention experiences to identify the core child protection dimensions that should be taken into account in programs
• Assess the extent of the evidence base and identify the gaps in knowledge to form recommendations on possible future research
• Continue to engage livelihoods/ES actors to uptake recommendations for including child outcome indicators in their work
• Initiate and/or support original rigorous evaluation research into the effects of livelihoods/ES approaches and their effects on children in crisis contexts—an area where the evidence is particularly thin
• Contribute to ongoing CPC research into mapping of local child protection systems, looking at questions of livelihood

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Priority Two: Improving the understanding of effective means of implementation

The challenge
In general, the fields of child protection and livelihood/ES are without adequate program guidance that speaks to this confluence of issue areas. Programmers note the need for appropriate indicators, in particular.

What we have achieved to date
• Engaged a network of interested agencies and individuals
• Conducted dozens of expert interviews
• Co-authored minimum standards for Child Protection and Livelihoods, and contributed to the minimum standards on Child Labor in Emergencies, both as part of the Child Protection in Emergencies Minimum Standards process
• Advocated in various forums for greater attention to child protection and well-being in economic interventions

What we will do
• Research, publish and disseminate program guidance, fact sheets and advocacy briefs
• Raise awareness through engaging Task Force members in processes to develop the guidance and other products
• Hold and attend events on these issues
• Continue to identify and engage practitioners to participate in Task Force activities
• Work to establish program performance indicators, as well as processes to report on results
• Advocate the use of state-of-the-art approaches and methods in economic and livelihoods interventions intended to improve the well-being of children
• Participate in the development of curriculum components for university child protection programs
• Advocate that donors prioritize child protection within their livelihood/ES strategies, and vice versa
Support Structures

Steering Committee
The Task Force Steering Committee’s mission is to advise on the Task Force’s strategic direction and promote its standing and wellbeing.

Core Staff
Women’s Refugee Commission is the CPC’s lead partner for Livelihoods and Economic Strengthening, and houses the Task Force Coordinator, who in collaboration with the CPC Secretariat, is tasked with:

- management of the research,
- solicitation of feedback from Task Force members on deliverables and coordination of their inputs,
- dissemination of research results and other deliverables with the field,
- communication with Task Force members; and
- provision of technical assistance to field researchers and programmers.

Research Associates
The Secretariat has assembled a distinguished group of 27 research associates who are available to support or lead CPC Network projects. Master of Public Health level graduate students are available to support country level projects, and the Women’s Refugee Commission engages qualified graduate student interns to assist with desk research and document production.

Local and Global Linkages
The CPC Network is comprised of more than 100 agencies in 12 countries committed to promoting critical learning in the area of child protection. Through the CPC Network, the Secretariat is able to contribute to and draw on research and lessons learned in Asia, Africa, the Middle East and Latin America. It also partners actively with other global actors and networks, including the Child Protection Working Group, International Institute for Child Rights and Development, Better Care Network, the Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict, Inter-Agency Network on Education in Emergencies, the Global Coalition to Prevent Attacks on Education, among others.

Finance and Management
For the first year of the Task Force (2010-11), the CPC Secretariat granted Women’s Refugee Commission an annual budget that included the Coordinator’s salary and a portion of Task Force associated support costs. The below three-year budget includes these items as well as project expenses, to cover project-related travel.
### Budget

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<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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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Operating Expenses</td>
<td>107,220</td>
<td>110,437</td>
<td>113,750</td>
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<tr>
<td>Project-related Expenses (incl. travel)</td>
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<td>35,000</td>
<td>35,000</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Direct</strong></td>
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<td><strong>145,437</strong></td>
<td><strong>148,750</strong></td>
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<td>Facilities &amp; Administration @6%</td>
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<td>8,726</td>
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<td><strong>Total Projected Budget</strong></td>
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<td><strong>154,163</strong></td>
<td><strong>157,675</strong></td>
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