



Theme 3c:
Inter-sectoral cooperation: Services for prevention and response, including community child protection systems

Issue and context

While prevention is a priority, we cannot ignore the thousands of children who are already experiencing sexual exploitation now and do not have access to the services they need to promote their full healing and recovery. Child victims of violence have a higher risk of mortality and suffer a variety of mental, physical and social consequences that if left unaddressed persist and affect quality of life and productivity. Long term consequences for national development are also significant.

Progress is being made towards enactment of legislation in Africa to protect children's rights, however, there is a clear gap between legislation and implementation on the ground. Enforcing legislation requires that there are measures in place to prevent exploitation and also to provide redress and recovery services for child survivors of sexual exploitation and violence. Appropriate early intervention and response systems can also contribute to prevention.

Response mechanisms to address the high levels of sexual and gender-based violence against children and adolescents are often inadequate, ineffective, unavailable, and unfriendly to children, as well as, based on anecdotes rather than research and human rights standards. The response systems themselves must operate using standard minimum procedures and need to move from a crisis management to a strategic management approach that not only responds holistically to the immediate needs of the victim and reduces secondary victimization but also that improves conviction rates, ends impunity and restores community confidence in the formal and traditional justice systems.

Opportunities for prevention and early intervention exist especially at the community level. Child and youth friendly reporting mechanisms, monitoring and early response plans help to raise awareness and promote demand for further development of needed services. While many good practices can be documented across the continent of strengthened community based mechanisms focused on child protection and child labour, the cooperation and linkage with government systems is not always well established or coordinated.

The UN Secretary General's Study on Violence against Children recommends that all States should 1) create accessible and child-friendly reporting systems and services; 2) provide accessible, child-sensitive and universal health and social services, including pre-hospital and emergency care, legal assistance to children and their families when violence is detected or disclosed; 3) develop the capacity of all those who work with children to contribute to eliminating all violence against children including families, teachers, child care, health and social services workers, police and others involved in justice systems; and 4) strengthen the government and civil society cooperation.



Africa Technical Regional Preparatory Meeting

for the World Congress III against
**Sexual Exploitation of
Children and Adolescents**

AU Call for Accelerated Action on the Implementation of the Plan Of Action Towards Africa Fit For Children (2008-2012)

“promote and implement multi-sectoral programmes on ending violence against children, including neglect, abuse, sexual exploitation, child labour and trafficking guided by the findings and recommendations of the UN Study on Violence against Children as well as support activities such as lifelines and safe havens to rehabilitate and reintegrate children victims of abuse, sexual exploitation, rape and trafficking;”

UN Study on Violence against Children recommendations:

Provide recovery and social reintegration services: This refers providing accessible, child-sensitive and universal health and social services, including legal assistance to children and, where appropriate, their families.

Create accessible and child-friendly reporting systems and services: States should establish safe, well-publicized, confidential and accessible mechanisms for children, their representatives and others to report violence against children.

Ensure accountability and end impunity - States should build community confidence in the justice system by, inter alia, bringing all perpetrators of violence against children to justice and ensure that they are held accountable through appropriate criminal, civil, administrative and professional proceedings and sanctions.

Address the gender dimension of violence against children - States should ensure that anti-violence policies and programmes are designed and implemented from a gender perspective, taking into account the different risks facing girls and boys in respect of violence.

Second Arab African Conference against Exploitation, Violence and Sexual Abuse Of Children, Rabat, (2004) Recommendations:

- Reinforce partnership between public authorities and civil society by the reinforcement of NGOs' capacities against SEC.
- Develop multi-sectoral and multidimensional partnerships: inter and intra public administration: police, justice, teaching staff, social workers, medical profession, and between groups of population/associations of students' parents, media, professional bodies, elected, etc.

Stockholm Agenda for Action against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children

- Provide social, medical, psychological counseling and other support to child victims of commercial sexual exploitation, and their families, paying particular attention to those with sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS, and with a view to promoting the self-respect, dignity and rights of the child;
- Undertake gender-sensitive training of medical personnel, teachers, social workers, non-governmental organizations and others working to help child victims of commercial sexual exploitation on child development and child rights, bearing in mind the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* and other relevant human rights standards;



Guiding Questions

What are the challenges faced in strengthening inter-sectoral cooperation for prevention and response to sexual exploitation of children and adolescents?

How can we promote strengthening of inter-sectoral prevention and response systems?

What can be done to strengthen the coordination between government and civil society in the prevention and response of sexual exploitation of children and adolescents?

What are the priority actions needed to ensure adequate monitoring and evaluation of inter-sectoral systems?

How can we generate resources to support building adequate prevention and response systems?

SESSION AGENDA

Introduction of Session (10 minutes)

Margie de Monchy, Regional Advisor Child Protection UNICEF Eastern and Southern Africa

Panel presentations (50 minutes)

Government Managed Inter-sectoral Response: Assisting women and child victims of sexual abuse and exploitation to access justice and become survivors

Adv. Thoko Majokweni, Special Director of Public Prosecutions, National Prosecuting Authority, Sexual Offences and Community Affairs Unit, Ministry of Justice, South Africa

A Community Based Model: Inter-sectoral cooperation for prevention and response in Kenya

Dr. Philista Onyango, Director, ANPPCAN (African Network for Prevention and Protection of Child Abuse and Neglect)

Key findings: Project on Psychosocial Support for Vulnerable Children

Alice Behrendt, Project Manager, Plan West Africa

Discussion and formulation of recommendations (60 minutes)

- Most pressing issues
- Actions needed (targets and goals)
- Requirements for monitoring progress

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