



III WORLD CONGRESS AGAINST SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS

Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
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UNICEF Burkina Faso - Good Practice:

Committed to curbing Sexual Exploitation of Children

The issue: In Burkina Faso children who suffer abuse and sexual exploitation due to commercial reasons are often those entrusted to someone's care or working in families; living in the street, beggars... or those from broken homes, undermined at social and economic levels. A recently-published study on violence against the children in Burkina Faso underlines this.

According to a national report carried out by the Standing Secretariat of the Committee to combat the canker, the youngest victim of sexual abuse in 2001 was 8. Three years later the age fell to 4. Since then, the youngest girl who has undergone sexual abuse in Burkina Faso is said to be 2 years and seven months.

Action: In the light of the above, UNICEF has been working closely with governmental counterparts and the civil society on the development and adoption of the National Policy for Social Action, which is a major step towards the adoption of different national action plans previously approved, among others that in connection with sexual violence to children.

UNICEF also supported the recently-published national study on violence against children. The study provides comprehensive information on the types of violence against children, their causes, manifestations and consequences so that relevant strategies are identified to combat this canker.

Impact: With UNICEF's technical and financial assistance the «Association Solidarité Jeunes» has made considerable progress in rehabilitating victims of sexual exploitation. The association has provided medical, psychological, socio legal cares to around 400 children, boys and girls equally (82% of girls and 18% of boys).

It is worth mentioning that people have been increasingly made aware of violence by communities, opinion leaders and the people involved in handling difficult childhood, as well as community-based organizations

Lessons Learnt and the Way Forward:

The major constrain in the fight against sexual violence to children remains the fact that legal procedures related to it have not been successful so far. Despite numerous denunciations, complaints and procedures instituted to a senior legal officer none of about thirty cases into which investigations were conducted has led to a trial. This raises the issue of the weak enforcement of existing laws.

Socio cultural taboo maintained by communities and professionals working with children on the phenomenon of sexual violence to children does not help curb the phenomenon.

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