Evaluation of Afghanistan’s Child Protection Action Network

June 2016 –February 2017
Kabul, Afghanistan

SAYARA RESEARCH

Commissioned by UNICEF for MoLSAMD
Acknowledgments

The evaluation team would like to take the opportunity to acknowledge the extensive support provided throughout the 9-month duration of this evaluation. Acknowledgment needs to be given to MoLSAMD – including senior advisors, Sayed Khushal Haris and all DoLSAMD staff who provided their time and support during provincial field visits. Furthermore, the evaluation team would also like to thank the UNICEF team – including Sevara Hamzaeva (Evaluation Specialist), Yoko Malena Wada (Child Protection Specialist) and Sami Hashimi (Child Protection Specialist). Without their commitment and ongoing support, the evaluation team would not have gained the necessary insight and access to areas pertinent to CPAN activities. Furthermore, particular thanks needs to be given to all research participants – both CPAN members and families who were willing to share their stories and experience of child protection in Afghanistan. Without their enthusiasm to share their experiences and attitudes towards CPAN and CP in Afghanistan, the evaluation team would not have been able to capture a realistic and contextualized understanding of CPAN throughout the provinces. Finally, this evaluation would not have been possible without the ongoing support of all those who collaborated in the design, implementation and analysis of the evaluation report – those part of the evaluation team, external experts with the Humanitarian Advisory Group in Melbourne, Australia and the valuable insight provided by Senior MoLSAMD advisors.
CONTENTS

Acknowledgments .................................................................................................................. 2
ACRONYMS ............................................................................................................................... 5
GLOSSARY ................................................................................................................................. 6
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY .......................................................................................................... 7
  Introduction: Background and Evaluation Objectives .......................................................... 7
  Relevance ............................................................................................................................... 8
  Effectiveness: Advocacy and Community KAP ................................................................... 8
  Effectiveness: CPAN Member Awareness and Capacity ...................................................... 9
  Effectiveness: Case Management ....................................................................................... 9
  Efficiency .............................................................................................................................. 10
  Sustainability ....................................................................................................................... 10
  Impact .................................................................................................................................. 11
  Conclusions and Recommendations ................................................................................... 11
  Structure .............................................................................................................................. 11
  Staffing ................................................................................................................................. 12
  Advocacy .............................................................................................................................. 12
  Monitoring and Reporting ................................................................................................. 12
SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION .................................................................................................... 13
  1.1 Evaluation of CPAN ......................................................................................................... 13
SECTION 2: EVALUATION PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES ....................................................... 18
  2.1 CPAN Theory of Change ............................................................................................... 18
SECTION 3: EVALUATION METHODOLOGY .......................................................................... 21
  3.1 Data Collection Methods ............................................................................................... 21
  3.2 Secondary Data Collection Methods ............................................................................ 21
  3.3 Quantitative Research Methods .................................................................................... 23
  3.4 Qualitative Research Methods ...................................................................................... 28
KAP SURVEY DEMOGRAPHICS ............................................................................................... 33
  CPAN Member Survey (n=268) ......................................................................................... 34
SECTION 4: LIMITATIONS AND ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS ................................................ 35
  Limitations........................................................................................................................... 35
  Ethical Considerations ........................................................................................................ 36
  The Evaluation Team .......................................................................................................... 39
SECTION 5: FINDINGS ............................................................................................................... 40
  5.1 Relevance ....................................................................................................................... 40
  5.2 Effectiveness .................................................................................................................. 54
    5.2.1 Member Awareness of CPAN and CP ................................................................. 74
    5.2.2 Case Management ................................................................................................. 78
      STAGE 1: IDENTIFYING CHILDREN AT RISK .......................................................... 80
      STAGE 2: ASSESSMENT OF CHILDREN AT RISK ...................................................... 85
      STAGE 3: REFERRALS SYSTEMS .............................................................................. 87
      STAGE 4: PROVISIONS OF DIRECT AND INDIRECT SUPPORT .............................. 88
      STAGE 5: MONITORING AND FOLLOW UP ............................................................... 95
STAGE 6: EXIT STRATEGIES OF CASES ............................................................... 99
5.2.3 MANAGEMENT PROCESSES .................................................................... 103
5.2.4 TRAINING ................................................................................................ 111
5.3 Efficiency .................................................................................................... 115
Concluding Comments .................................................................................... 118
5.4 SUSTAINABILITY ....................................................................................... 119
CPAN CONTRIBUTION TO NATIONAL PLANNING AND BUDGETS .......... 120
Summary and Key Recommendations ............................................................ 121
5.5 IMPACT ...................................................................................................... 123

SECTION 6: CONCLUSIONS .......................................................................... 125
Relevance ......................................................................................................... 125
Effectiveness ................................................................................................... 125
Efficiency .......................................................................................................... 126
Impact ................................................................................................................ 126
Sustainability ................................................................................................... 126

SECTION 7: RECOMMENDATIONS ............................................................... 128
Structure .......................................................................................................... 128
Staffing ............................................................................................................. 129
Advocacy .......................................................................................................... 130
Monitoring and Reporting .............................................................................. 131
**ACRONYMS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ANDS</td>
<td>Afghanistan National Development Strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGE</td>
<td>Anti-Government Elements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CP</td>
<td>Child Protection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPAN</td>
<td>Child Protection Action Network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSO</td>
<td>Civil Society Organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRC</td>
<td>Convention on the Rights of the Child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DCPAN</td>
<td>District Child Protection Action Network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DM</td>
<td>Deputy Minister</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DoLSAMD</td>
<td>Department of Labour, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DoWA</td>
<td>Department of Women’s Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FGD</td>
<td>Focus Group Discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HRBA</td>
<td>Human Rights Based Approach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDI</td>
<td>In-depth Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JRC</td>
<td>Juvenile Rehabilitation Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KII</td>
<td>Key Informant Interview</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MoLSAMD</td>
<td>Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MoE</td>
<td>Ministry of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MoI</td>
<td>Ministry of Interior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MoJ</td>
<td>Ministry of Justice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MoPH</td>
<td>Ministry of Public Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MRM</td>
<td>Monitoring and Reporting Mechanisms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-Government Organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCPAN</td>
<td>National Child Protection Action Network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSFCAR</td>
<td>National Strategy for Children at Risk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NTA</td>
<td>National Technical Assistant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PCPAN</td>
<td>Provincial Child Protection Action Network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOW</td>
<td>Scope of Work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOC</td>
<td>Theory of Change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNICEF</td>
<td>United Nations Children’s Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WAW</td>
<td>Women for Afghan Women</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
GLOSSARY

**Baad:** The traditional practice of settling disputes among families, communities or tribes in which a young virgin girl from the culprit’s family is traded to settled a dispute for her older relatives

**Badal:** The traditional practice where girls are exchanged as brides between two families. The practice generally involves the marriage of a brother-sister pair from two households. Often this practice is done between blood relatives

**Case Management:** A collaborative process that assesses, plans, implements, coordinates, monitors, and evaluates the options and services required to meet the needs of children and families

**Case Worker:** The key worker in a case who maintains responsibility for the child’s care from identification to case closure

**Direct Support:** Support provided directly through social workers or case workers in central CPAN roles in DoLSAMD / MoLSAMD

**Referral:** The process of formally requesting services for a child or their family from another agency

**Tashkeel:** An organizational chart detailing all staffing positions and levels for a given department or ministry

---

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction: Background and Evaluation Objectives

Background:

The situation for children in Afghanistan has been an issue of concern for the Government of Afghanistan and international agencies. There has also been a significant focus on designing and implementing appropriate protection mechanisms to prevent and respond to the violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation of children and to bring about both immediate and sustainable changes to the lives of children.

Despite on-going efforts to implement protection mechanisms, issues of age, ethnicity, religion, gender and socio-economic status all influence the likelihood of violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation of children. These vulnerabilities are further exacerbated by poverty, insecurity, conflict and natural disasters, in addition to the low capacity and knowledge of immediate care givers and duty bearers. All of these factors negatively impact on children’s physical and psychological development and their opportunities to achieve optimum development. According to UNICEF there is a necessary responsibility to recognise children’s rights to protection appropriate to their physical and psychological maturity.

The Child Protection Action Network (CPAN) was initiated to prevent and respond to the reality of these child protection concerns. CPAN is currently present in 100 districts in 33 provinces of Afghanistan. CPAN is headed by the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disability (MoLSAMD) and members include domestic and international NGOs, UN agencies, government ministries (including the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Public Health, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Women’s Affairs, General Directorate, Prosecutors office and the Court of Justice) and other relevant stakeholders who advocate for and respond to child protection issues. Operating at national, provincial and district levels, CPAN carries out prevention and response interventions protecting children at risk.
Evaluation Objectives:

This evaluation is a formative evaluation of MoLSAMD’s Child Protection Action Network, undertaken in cooperation with UNICEF. Conducted by Sayara Research, a local Afghan research firm, the evaluation measured the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact of CPAN as the main child protection mechanism in Afghanistan. The evaluation also took a particular focus on the extent to which human rights, gender and equity approaches were incorporated into protection practices. The evaluation period was between June 2016 and February 2017. A total of 11 provinces were targeted in this evaluation: Kabul, Khost, Nangarhar, Kunar, Wardak, Bamyan, Badakhshan, Helmand, Kandahar, Balkh, Herat.

Relevance

Overall, the evaluation team found that in theory, CPAN was highly relevant to the context of Afghanistan. It takes a holistic approach to strengthening CP mechanisms and implementing both prevention and response activities, even more so at grassroot / community levels. The functionality of CPAN however, was not so positive. With a partial coordination and institutional commitment from MoLSAMD and some CPAN members at national, provincial and district levels, the potential for preventing and responding to CP issues effectively is limited. Currently, the functionality of CPAN at national and provincial levels rely heavily on UNICEF support and National Technical Assistants (NTAs) who bridge the gaps in CP capacity across the country.

Most importantly however, the evaluation team questioned the current relevance of the DCPAN. While DCPAN is the foundation for community based approaches to CP, the structure does not function as such. At district levels, there was a clear lack of a CP network. There was little to no evidence to suggest that DCPAN has active connections and collaboration with PCPAN or NCPAN in most provinces. We also found limited NGO presence and no figures about the number of community based members. To ensure DCPAN is functional and effective, the current model needs to be revised and closer collaboration is needed from higher CPAN tiers.

Likewise, the evaluation team suggests that there is a clear overlap between the responsibilities of NTAs and CPAN officers – which are both desk based jobs. Instead, the evaluation team found that staffing structure was crying out for more front-line social workers, those who could identify and manage cases in the field. Finally, as CPAN remains an informal CP mechanism, the effectiveness of the network currently depends predominately on individual commitment and motivation. So far, despite the general relevance of CPAN, the functionality of the model is questionable.

Effectiveness: Advocacy and Community KAP

A significant component of CPAN is to conduct advocacy and outreach work with local communities, building awareness and improving practices concerning child protection. Currently, provincial and district CPAN offices are responsible for carrying out these interventions, and they generally take place in the form of community dialogue sessions. To measure the effectiveness of CPAN’s advocacy work, the evaluation team hypothesised that individuals in CPAN districts should have a greater awareness of child protection. Through the use of KAP surveys and focus group discussions, the evaluation team sought to identify how communities in CPAN districts, who have been exposed to prevention and response interventions, compared to those in non-CPAN districts. The evaluation team however, was unable with any confidence to see an increase in knowledge, awareness and practices of communities exposed to CPAN advocacy work. There was generally a lack of awareness of risks facing children, and how to report incidences of CP. Furthermore, for those who reported hearing information on CP, it
was sourced predominately from TV or radio, rather than from community events. The only exceptions to these findings was the significant focus on ‘child marriage’. Communities, particularly those within CPAN districts, had significant awareness that child marriage was illegal.

While the value of community dialogue sessions cannot be denied, it appears however, that community dialogue sessions do not go far enough to socialise information shared in sessions. There was little evidence to suggest that information from sessions had reached and been internalised in the wider community, so as to influence their attitudes and behaviour regarding children at risk.

Effectiveness: CPAN Member Awareness and Capacity

The evaluation team assessed the extent to which CPAN members had the necessary CP awareness and capacity to protect and respond to children at risk. Overall the general awareness and knowledge of CP and the purpose of CPAN was mixed. While most could easily identify risks facing children, such as child marriage, child labour and physical violence, there was limited awareness of other risks – such as children in conflict with the law, sexual crimes, physical violence and abandonment. Furthermore, knowledge was particularly low concerning the types of vulnerabilities faced by children, such as issues of gender, remote geographic location, and ethnicity. Likewise, awareness of CPAN activities was also particularly low. Many members were unaware that CPAN did more than respond to children at risk.

These findings highlighted that there are significant gaps in the knowledge and awareness of CP and the role of CPAN among CPAN members. These gaps ultimately impact on the quality of support CPAN provides to children and families at risk. Furthermore, the findings also show that CPAN overall, may not be effectively disseminating their aims and outcomes among other all CPAN members across the country.

Effectiveness: Case Management

After a thorough analysis of how cases are managed and recorded across 11 provinces, the evaluation team found there were significant gaps. The various challenges influencing the effectiveness of case management were identified as follows:

• There was little evidence that CPAN members could accurately identify children at risk independently, and instead relied heavily on the services and front-line work of non-central CPAN members – such as NGOs. As such, the cases CPAN teams chose to deal with, were generally confined to a relatively small range of organisations which were operating in their associated provinces.

• CPAN did not appear to deal with all types of risks facing children, and often the types of cases more predominately dealt with including; ‘children in conflict with the law,’ ‘abandoned children,’ and children with health concerns.’ (All which were thematic focuses of local NGOs)

• Central CPAN members appeared to be unaware of various types of services which may be available to a child and family at risk. For example, at a community level there was a strong reliance on community elder mediation but these cases were not brought to the attention of CPAN through a proper case management and referral process to ensure the child no longer remained at risk.

• There was a complete lack of appropriate and ongoing monitoring activities. While teams reported that this was due to limited resources, there was particularly low capacity among members and their understanding of the purpose and relevance of monitoring in a CP case.
• There was little to no evidence that exit strategies had been designed to ensure that children and their families were out of risk.

**Record Keeping and Case Management Files**

Overall, children’s case files CPAN had significant gaps. While most case files included basic information, brief documentation on referrals and some evidence of support planning, there was a great deal of missing information. CPAN staff were not accurately filling out and maintaining case management files. Files generally did not explain in detail the case at hand, details of the child and family involved, support planning, monitoring and follow up details and finally a planned exit strategy. Moreover, cases at district levels were reported to be very rarely documented with PCPAN. As a result, district level case management was not evaluable, and therefore no specific comments could be made regarding quality.

**Efficiency**

The evaluation team found that the overall efficiency of CPAN was questionable. With limited qualified staffing, and even more limited financial resources, CPAN is struggling to grow and increase its level of effectiveness and efficiency. Interviews highlighted that CPAN members were often forced to choose between which cases they could and could not manage based predominately on the availability of human and financial resources. Moreover, there is a significant limitation in the potential for central CPAN members to reach further into communities, to expand protection and response for children at risk. While the evaluation team recognised that there were financial restraints regarding the amount of money which is available to CPAN, strong consideration needs to be had about the marginal value of increasing budget allocation, while a formal child protection system remains absent.

**Sustainability**

The current model of CPAN has the potential to be sustainable as an approach to protecting and responding to children at risk. The Government of Afghanistan has numerous ministries and departments – including MoLSAMD, MoJ, MoI and MoE that have structures, process and personnel to contribute substantially to child protection. Due to inadequate documentation, the full extent of such influence could not be ascertained by the evaluation team. Nevertheless, the collaborative spirit of CPAN has been instrumental in attempts to protect and respond to children at risk. Furthermore, the value of NCPAN lies in its key position of influence with other ministries to make advances in child protection.

The systematic acquisition of formal financial and human resources to allocate to the full range of CP work of CPAN remains unrealized. Currently, most funding comes from off-budget resources. The evaluation team found that a critical factor was the absence of an overarching child protection policy framework and a plan for action with budget estimations, which, in itself, would be an indicator of sustained commitment.

A final concern for CPAN is the fact that the MoLSAMD appears to offer the least effective human capacities with low performance noted among CPAN officers, social workers and DCPAN members. A number of PCPAN and NCPAN were also strongly dependent upon NTAs, which is not the most sustainable model. This may be remedied with the appointment of additional tashkeel staff to the Ministry’s Child Protection Secretariat.
Impact

The evaluation team found that in some instances, CPAN has made strides to improve and strengthen the Afghan response to children at risk. Interviews found that CPAN appears to have influenced the design of several child-focused strategies and codes, and encouraged coordination among CP agencies and local communities to protect and respond to children at risk. While agencies previously worked independently; addressing CP violations based on donor requirement, CPAN has been able to establish some networks which encourage participation and coordination among CP actors. These are positive steps towards the impact highlighted in the TOC – ‘children are better protected formally and informally through communities and institutions’ – considerable efforts however, still need to be made.

The absence of NCPAN leadership is a particular barrier that will continue to inhibit any real long-term impacts. The absence of a national forum does not encourage formal institutions – such as other government departments of development actors – to align and streamline their structures and practices to address immediate and long term threats facing children. As a result, this trickles down to the provincial and district levels. This was evident through the fact that provincial and district teams did not appear to be actively identifying and addressing root causes of violence, abuse and exploitation, rather relied on the technical, human and financial resources of local NGOs.

Conclusions and Recommendations

While in theory CPAN offers a valuable opportunity to prevent and respond to children at risk, in practice the evaluation found there were various gaps which inhibit the network’s potential to ensure ‘children are free from threats of violence, abuse and exploitation in the home and public sphere.’ Significant efforts have been made to introduce a wide and dynamic network of CP workers who are trained to respond to children at risk and conduct prevention activities. But, there were overall gaps in coordination, collaboration, capacity and general interest in CPAN as an effective child protection mechanism. Without addressing these key areas of concern, CPAN will be unable to sustainably provide the necessary assistance to children nor bring about any real long term positive contributions to child protection across the country.

The following are a set of recommendations made by the evaluation team to improve the overall relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact of CPAN as a CP intervention.

Structure

A strong national management should be established, led by MoLSAMD, with a high-level chair who has the authority to muster the active engagement of state bodies and senior-level representatives.

CPAN needs to develop formalised processes at national, provincial and district levels so all CPAN members understand clear agendas and outcomes regarding CPAN work.

CPAN at national levels should make more efforts to disseminate information on the outcomes of CPAN and its relevance; whereby providing central CPAN members and general CPAN members with an understanding of the activities and outcomes.

Collaboration and coordination between ministries was not very apparent during the evaluation. Encouraging collaboration and joint purpose among ministries at national levels can add considerable value to CPAN prevention and response activities. For example, representatives from the 11 departments which signed the joint agreement, should be involved in ongoing discussions about the roles of children without family care, child labour and the disabled – all areas that MoLSAMD alone is unable to address.
Further stress should be placed on improving communication and collaboration between ministries; allowing ministries to draw on one another for support. Potentially this support could be formalised whereby ministries are contracted to participate and support CPAN activities.

**Staffing**

MoLSAMD needs to re-consider the institutional structure of CPAN, which is currently dependent upon many NTAs and is not sustainable. Instead, MoLSAMD should focus on the provision of increased number of qualified social workers to conduct case management.

Moving forward the recruitment of front-line staff should be based on merit, with regular performance reviews to assess the extent to which they are effectively fulfilling their responsibilities.

MoLSAMD should provide more detailed training on how to do individual assessment to identify the most prominent risks in each district / province, rather than following ‘external national trends’.

MoLSAMD should develop gender policies within CP activities. This should include training on issues of gender and gender sensitivity practices in prevention and response activities, in addition to the recruitment of female front line workers. Understandably, it is difficult to recruit females for front line CP positions. Given the segregated nature of Afghan society however, efforts need to be made to ensure that girls have access to female appropriate support services – services which cannot be provided by males.

**Advocacy**

CPAN members should consider introducing additional advocacy activities, such as community theatre, weekly discussions at mosques on a Friday (which are already present in some provinces), and more regular campaigning among communities.

Advocacy activities should not be managed and implemented by NTAs or CPAN officers, they should be managed by an external team which has the expertise, time and capacity to appropriately design community dialogue sessions and train trainers at community levels.

Awareness raising in community dialogue and other activities should also focus on targeting difficult topics – such as sexual abuse. These are issues which are often hidden in communities, and rarely spoken about. Bringing these particular issues into the public consciousness will require concerted efforts at advocacy. Difficult and sensitive discussions need to be had, though this can be done in appropriate ways. For example, looking at issues from a religious perspective or ensuring the voice of the discussions is a well-respected member of a given community.

**Monitoring and Reporting**

MoLSAMD need to design, train and implement clear guidelines and processes for monitoring and reporting.

Individual and randomised reviews on case management reporting and case worker performance should be conducted on a regular basis, whereby ensuring the capacity and performance of CPAN members meets the required needs.
SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

This evaluation of Afghanistan’s Child Protection Action Network (CPAN) was conducted by Sayara Research, a local research firm, to measure the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact of CPAN as the main child protection mechanism in Afghanistan.

The situation for children across Afghanistan is particularly problematic. Levels of violence, abuse, exploitation, and neglect result from a myriad of vulnerabilities in both the public and private spheres, including the effects of age, ethnicity, religion, gender and socio-economic status. Individual dynamics of vulnerability are further exacerbated by poverty, insecurity, conflict and natural disasters, in addition to the low capacity and knowledge of immediate care givers and duty bearers. All of these factors impact on children’s physical and psychological maturity and their opportunity to achieve optimum development.

Led by MoLSAMD, with support of UNICEF and from numerous government and non-government organisations, efforts are being made to strengthen child protection systems to prevent and respond to threats of violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation of children. These actors are working to strengthen coordination among child protection actors, establish legal, institutional and legislative frameworks, and conduct advocacy and awareness building activities with communities and families. These efforts all take a holistic approach to strengthening child protection practices across the country. The result of these efforts are seen in the establishment of CPAN. CPAN is Afghanistan’s response to child protection needs of the country and currently present in across 33 provinces.

1.1 Evaluation of CPAN

The Child Protection Action Network (CPAN) is a prevention and response mechanism for child protection concerns currently operating in 33 provinces of Afghanistan. CPAN is headed by the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disability (MoLSAMD). CPAN members include domestic and international NGOs, UN agencies, government ministries (including the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Public Health, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Women’s Affairs, General Directorate, Prosecutors office and the Court of Justice) and other relevant stakeholders who are advocating and responding to child protection issues. Operating at national, provincial and district levels, CPAN carries out prevention and response interventions protecting children at risk.

CPAN is an initiative focused on child protection, which aims both to improve children’s lifetime potential, as well as ensure they are raised in the spirit of peace, dignity, tolerance, freedom and equality. The network is the result of a national action plan – the National Strategy for Children At-Risk (NSFCAR) of 2006 that was developed by the MoLSAMD with support of UNICEF. It seeks to ensure that all children can reach their full potential free from abuse, exploitation, neglect or violence, and enable their full participation as citizens of Afghanistan. CPAN currently functions at three levels – national, provincial and district levels. Within each level, CPAN members have their own individual set of activities, outputs and outcomes which collaboratively aim to prevent and respond to children at risk. CPAN protection mechanisms, present at both local and national levels, engage a range of stakeholders including government, international and national NGOs. These mechanisms involve policy development, advocacy and coordination, programming and operational responses and information collection and monitoring. Officially established in 2006, CPAN has increased its presence from 11 provinces to 33 by 2016. It has made significant progress engaging in ‘upstream policy work’ and leveraging new partnerships and resources to ensure appropriate protection mechanisms are available for families and children.²

² Ibid.
As Afghanistan’s primary response to child protection issues, UNICEF requested an evaluation of CPANs across the country. The evaluation assessed the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability of CPAN. The evaluation also took a particular focus on the extent to which human rights, gender and equity approaches were incorporated into protection practices. A total of 11 provinces were targeted in this evaluation, including; Kabul, Khost, Nangarhar, Kunar, Wardak, Bamyan, Badakhshan, Helmand, Kandahar, Balkh, Herat. Target populations included CPAN members from the above mentioned provinces, and a total of 2401 members of the general population in CPAN associated districts and non-CPAN associated districts.

**Background of Children at Risk in Afghanistan**

The situation for children in Afghanistan has been an issue of concern for the Government of Afghanistan and international agencies over the past 60 years. As a result, mechanisms which can effectively respond to instances of violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation of children have been a significant focus for agencies and government bodies, in addition to further interventions to prevent such risks.

Despite on-going efforts to implement protection mechanisms, issues of age, ethnicity, religion, gender and socio-economic status all influence the likelihood of violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation of children. These individual dynamics can all make children more vulnerable to abuse, violence, exploitation and neglect. These vulnerabilities are further exacerbated by poverty, insecurity, conflict and natural disasters, in addition to the low capacity and knowledge of immediate care givers and duty bearers. For example, across the country children are expected to adhere to strict and conservative social norms. Norms which often require children to take on adult responsibilities, such as employment and marriage, due to issues of poverty, geographic remoteness and social expectations. All of these factors negatively impact on children’s physical and psychological development and their opportunities to achieve optimum development. According to UNICEF there is a necessary responsibility to recognise children’s rights to protection appropriate to their physical and psychological maturity.

In the most recent child protection statistics available (from 2012), suggest that of children between the age of 5 and 14, 10.3 percent of all Afghan children are involved in child labour, at 11 percent of males and 9.6 percent of females. Child marriage is at 15 percent for girls under the age of 15 and 40 percent for girls under the age of 18. In addition, UNICEF found that of children between the ages of 2-14 years old, 74.4 percent of children are violently disciplined (psychological aggression and/or physical punishment). Active steps must be taken to protect children from such situations and ensure they have the opportunity to reach a fulfilled life.

**Background of Children’s Rights and Child Protection Efforts in Afghanistan**

Child protection aims to ensure that every child has the rights for development free from violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect during emergencies and non-emergencies. Strengthening a child protection systems involves the following:

- Strengthening government commitment and capacity to fulfil children’s rights to protection

---

4 Ibid
6 Ibid.
• Promoting the establishment and enforcement of adequate legislation
• Addressing harmful attitudes, customs and practices
• Encouraging open discussion of child protection issues
• Building capacities of families and communities
• Providing essential services for prevention, recovery and reintegration
• Implementing ongoing and effective monitoring, reporting and oversight

Internationally, duty bearers are responsible for implementing the aforementioned policies and practices, to effectively prevent harm and respond to children at risk. These duty bearers are made up of government, civil society, non-government organisations, communities and families. Furthermore, the Government of Afghanistan is intended to lead all CP activities across Afghanistan, while humanitarian and development agencies, civil society organisations (CSOs) and community based leaders support national mandates and fill in gaps when necessary.

According to UNICEF, one major component of a comprehensive child protection system that addresses the aforementioned issues of violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect, is a legislative framework that creates a safe environment for children according to the principles and provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UN-CRC). The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), which defines a ‘child’ as “every human being below the age of eighteen years,” provides all children, without discrimination, specific rights and protections under international law. The CRC encompasses broad expectations of both guardians and policy and law makers, including the protection of children’s rights and the idea that any actions that might affect children, should place the child’s best interest at the forefront. Substantive directives of the CRC include right to nationality, personal identity and beliefs, and the family unit; rights to education, healthcare, and leisure; and protection from exploitation, including child labour, sexual abuse, drug abuse, human trafficking, child marriage, and the effects of armed conflict, inter-alia. Additionally, the CRC outlines specific rights given to children with disabilities or who are members of minority, indigenous, or refugee populations.

Though Afghanistan ratified the CRC in 1994, war and political, economic, and social instability prevented the submission of an initial country report on actions and mechanisms for child protection until 2009. This report outlines legislations and policies enacted and actions taken between 1994 and 2008 to address child rights and protections. Among these are:

• The Education Law (2008), which “guarantees the right of every child to accessible education”;
• The Law of Labour (2007), which protects “children from exploitation and forced and hazardous labour”;
• The Juvenile Code (2005), which establishes rights and protocols for children in conflict with

10 Ibid.
the law as well as mechanisms for protecting at-risk and victimized children during legal proceedings;

- The Law of Juvenile Rehabilitation Centres (2009), which “focuses on the rehabilitation and education of children placed in juvenile detention centres”; and

- The Law on Counter Abduction and Human Trafficking (2008), which combats “abduction and human trafficking and... supports victims of such crimes, especially women and children.”

- Law on the Rights and Privileges of People with Disabilities and Martyrs’ Family in 2010


In addition, the following legal provisions on children’s age have been implemented by the Government of Afghanistan:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Legal Provisions</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Definition of a child</td>
<td>Under 18 years</td>
<td>Constitution</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Min age for child justice procedure for children in conflict with the law</td>
<td>13 years</td>
<td>Juvenile Code</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Max age for child justice procedure for children in conflict with the law</td>
<td>18 years</td>
<td>Juvenile Code</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum age of Marriage</td>
<td>18 years</td>
<td>16 years (15 with permission of father / guardian)</td>
<td>Civil Code</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age of sexual consent</td>
<td>As per marriage</td>
<td></td>
<td>Criminal Code</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum age for legal employment</td>
<td>18 years</td>
<td></td>
<td>Labour Law</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum age for voluntary recruitment into armed forces</td>
<td>Completion of 18 years</td>
<td>Presidential Decree 97, 2003</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum age for direct participation in hostilities</td>
<td>Completion of 18 years</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Furthermore, the 2009 Initial Report outlines the definition of the child according to Afghan law, providing a comprehensive review of all legal codes and constitutional articles that address national, legal compliance with the CRC. Nevertheless, legislative frameworks for child protection remain incomplete and difficult to enforce due to “weak enforcement, a limited level of awareness of the legal norms, widespread corruption, and the application by courts of provisions drawn from customary or Sharia law.”

However, efforts to improve the protection of Afghan children include expansions of CPAN and the 2011 Action Plan to end and prevent the recruitment and use of children in the Afghan National Secu-

12 Ibid, pp. 20-75.
rity Forces (ANSF), a practice which was officially banned by presidential decree in February 2015. Unfortunately, the complete passage of legislation has stalled and impunity persists for those guilty of recruiting underage soldiers. In addition, UNICEF is working to build and strengthen national child protection systems with the development of a Child Protection Secretariat through MoLSAMD – that is focused on formalising and streamlining CP practices - and have embarked on a national child protection system mapping and assessment exercise. This mapping exercise looked specifically at the following points:

- Critical issues facing children in Afghanistan
- System and organisational structures regarding child protection
- Policies and legislation
- Child Protection facilities
- Current capacities for child protection
- Availability of services to support children at risk
- Situational analysis.

Furthermore, UNICEF in collaboration with MoLSAMD are also developing the ‘Child Act’ which is expected to outline processes and practices for respondents and protecting children at risk. Overall, in addition to the existence of CPAN, efforts are being made to strengthen the protective roles of families and communities by mobilising girls, boys, youth, women, men, parents, local leaders, frontline workers and local communities to draw on community based interventions to prevent and respond to child protection concerns across the country.

SECTION 2: EVALUATION PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

CPAN was first piloted in 2003, and was established in 2006 in light of results from a child protection assessment study. This evaluation was called at a turning point of CP practices in Afghanistan. Currently, the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Martyrdom and Disabilities (MoLSAMD) is assessing, with the support of UNICEF, how effective the CPAN approach is to child protection.\(^{16}\)

This evaluation measured the extent to which CPAN’s various activities have improved the livelihoods of children at risk, with a particular focus on advocacy and awareness raising, information collection and monitoring, policy development and programming and operational responses (including case management and case referrals). An assessment of these activities was completed at a national, provincial and district levels. The evaluation is to provide the Government of Afghanistan, UNICEF, donors and other stakeholders of CPAN at national, provincial and district levels with the necessary insight to understand the strengths and weaknesses of CPAN as a child protection mechanism. It is also expected that community members and children will be informed of results.

The objectives of the evaluation as identified in the CPAN TOR are as follows:

1. Assess the extent to which Terms of Reference of national, provincial and district tiers of CPAN are achieved\(^{17}\)

2. Evaluate the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact of CPAN’s various activities with a particular focus on case management, awareness raising, preventing violence against children and providing support to affected children, their families and communities

3. Use qualitative and quantitative analysis methods, our expertise in development policy standards and the CPAN TOC to determine recommendations for improving the effectiveness and efficiency of CPAN based on identified lessons learnt and good practices

2.1 CPAN Theory of Change

Since the formal establishment of CPAN in 2006, CPAN members have been implementing activities based on the terms of references. While there was a body of documentation which provided insight into activities and some intended outputs and outcomes in three tiers of CPAN – national, provincial and district, the causal linkages between interventions, however, so far had not been articulated in the form of a Theory of Change (ToC), which is able to map the intended outcomes and impacts generated by the work of CPAN. As such, the starting point of this evaluation was to derive a proposed ToC from the aforementioned documentation in collaboration with UNICEF child protection staff.

Problem Statement

Although there are currently no overall estimates of the number of children faced with child protection concern in Afghanistan, it is suggested that 10.3% of Afghan children are involved in child labour, 15% of girls under the age of 15 experience child marriage (40% for girls under the age of 18), and 74% of children between 2-14 years of age experience violent discipline in the form of psychological aggression and/or physical punishment thereby suggesting the extent of child protection concerns faced by children.\(^{18}\)

---

\(^{16}\) For the purpose of this evaluation, the term CPAN will be used when discussion CPAN as a mechanism of Child protection. The term CPANs will be used when discussion the network as a decentralised structure, such as at district and provincial levels.

\(^{17}\) TOR of National, Provincial and District levels available in Annex

This level of violence, abuse, exploitation, and neglect result from a myriad of vulnerabilities in both the public and private spheres, including the effects of age, ethnicity, religion, gender and socio-economic status. All of these factors impact on children’s physical and psychological maturity and their opportunity to achieve optimum development.

**Barriers to Child Protection**

Despite ongoing efforts to strengthen child protection systems in Afghanistan, there are various barriers inhibiting its success. These include the following:

- Lack of political will and allocation of adequate level of resources at national, provincial and district levels by government ministries and departments
- Lack of institutional and legislative frameworks, national mandate and policies recognising the important of child protection mechanisms
- Influential and conservative social norms which fail to recognise children’s entitlement to special protection
- Inadequate provision and availability of services (education, health, justice, security, social welfare) to prevent and respond to child protection cases
- Limited capacity and knowledge of CPAN members of CP who undertake the majority of prevention and response activities

**Interventions Level**

This TOC documents the CPAN activities that take place at multiple levels of governance and across various types of intervention. By taking a holistic approach to strengthening child protection systems, each area of activities addresses necessary child protection needs, including advocacy; policy development; information collection and monitoring and programming / operational activities.

**Assumptions**

The CPAN TOC took into consideration a number of assumptions. If these assumptions are not properly identified and documented, it will impact on the way activities lead to outputs, outputs lead to outcomes and outcomes lead to impacts, whereby causing a breaking the causal chain. For example, the TOC assumes that nominated staff in government ministries are motivated to contribute to achieving CPAN’s intended outcomes. In the event that certain outputs or outcomes are not achieved the evaluation will consider the assumptions underlying the intended change and identify where the causal chain has been broken.

The assumptions made at each level of the TOC are detailed below.

- Assumptions at activity level:
• That regular advocacy and outreach activities take place and lead to increased opportunities for community members to identify potential child protection issues and refer cases

• That CPAN members regularly monitor CPAN activities and use the information to design/adapt appropriate interventions and prevent bottlenecks

• That CPAN members are given technical assistance by UNICEF and MoLSAMD/DoLSAMD on best practice for prevention and response activities for child protection

• That training provided to CPAN members is high quality and appropriate for carrying out activities for prevention and response

• The capacity of CPAN members is appropriate to carry out activities

• CPAN members recognise the issues and barriers currently presented within the network

• That the different levels of CPAN regularly communicate and coordinate

• That adequate resources exist to fund and equip CPAN activities

• At output level:

  • That building the awareness of child protection issues at institutional and community levels will lead to changed attitudes

  • That by building the awareness of local communities and duty bearers, communities are able to recognise violence, abuse and exploitation of children and can report cases to CPAN

  • That nominated staff in government institutions at different levels are motivated to achieve CPAN outputs and outcomes

  • That relevant and appropriate services exist (education, health, justice, security, social welfare) and referral system is functional to respond to child protection cases

• At outcome level:

  • That changed attitudes of community members, families, and government and non-government institutions will lead to changed practice in child protection

  • The national CPAN receives relevant information from provincial and district levels to inform policy discussions

  • That operating at multiple levels (national, provincial and district) and various sectors (social service, education, health, judicial, internal affairs) CPAN can contribute to strengthening child protection system in Afghanistan
SECTION 3: EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

The evaluation team conducted a quasi-experimental and multi-level mixed methods approach, ensuring that expectations, experiences and perceptions of all stakeholders are reflected in findings and recommendations. The evaluation was conducted using gender and human rights based approaches. The methodology has been designed to explore CPAN institutionally, as a child protection intervention, as well as its outputs, outcomes and impacts at national, provincial and district levels. The evaluation also provides recommendations to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of CPAN through lessons learned and best practices identified.

Quantitative research methods provided statistically valid data to examine general attitudes, capacity, challenges and experiences of violence against children in both comparison and treatment regions. Qualitative research provides meaningful, participatory opportunities of stakeholders and control and treatment group participants, allowing them to both share experiences and play an active role in evaluations activities by leading discussions and participating in analysis.

3.1 Data Collection Methods

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation Method</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Review of Key Programmatic Documentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Random Review of CPAN cases (case study)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Perception Survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPAN Service Provider Survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key Informant Interviews (KII)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus Group Discussions (FGD) with Adults</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interactive Focus Group Discussions (FGD) with children</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.2 Secondary Data Collection Methods

*Review of Key Program Documentation*

The team undertook a comprehensive review of relevant program documentation to inform the development of a ToC and the methodology (including tool development). During the course of interviews, the team was directed to a series of already existing documentation related to CPAN which was referred to throughout the analysis period.

*Rubric Analysis of CPAN Cases*

In order to effectively assess how CPAN functions at the district and provincial level regarding case management, the evaluation team used a rubric assessment. A rubric for assessment, in the case of the CPAN evaluation, was a matrix in which case management reports were reviewed and graded based on a pre-determined set of criteria. Case management, as previously described, was the collaborative process that assesses, plans, implements, coordinates, monitors, and evaluates the options and services required to meet the needs of children and families at risk. This approach was based on the assumption that cases were documented at a district and provincial level. In instances where cases were not
documented, they were categorised as not having appropriate documentation. The evaluation team acknowledged that this did necessarily mean cases were completely mishandled, but rather appropriate processes and practices for documentation were not being applied. Nevertheless, the evaluation is based on the assumption that documentation is fundamental to measuring and assessing case management performance. During the assessment process, the evaluation team reviewed data with the utmost confidentiality. No specific and identifiable case details were shared with outside stakeholders. All case review activities occurred on-site in DoLSAMD offices and were overseen by either the responsible NTA or CPAN officer for that province. Though not all cases were anonymised, only senior members of the research team were privy to these reports. Notes were only taken on non-identifying information, such as ages and numbers of cases per district.

This rubric is designed to assess to what extent case documentation meets good practice standards:

**Section A: Standards in a Province**
- Document outlining case management process
- Mapping document of referral services
- Case files: case codes used to de-identify children and families
- Case files: stored in locked cabinets process

**Section B: Standards of Individual Cases (the following are selection of points to be measured in the rubric)**
- Clear assessment of vulnerabilities and abilities of children and families in the case file
- Case plan clearly documented in the case file
- Notes from Case Management Committee
- Child centred approach
- Informed consent
- Confidentiality
- Documented referral to appropriate services
- Do no harm policies for individual cases
- Extent of collaborative case management
- Records of follow up activities completed
- How was the case referred to CPAN?
- What referrals were made as a result of CPAN’s involvement?
- Evidence of a documented exit strategy (or that the case has been closed)
- Time frame of case
3.3 Quantitative Research Methods

The evaluation team conducted two surveys during this evaluation. One survey was conducted with the general public to assess public perceptions and awareness of child protection and child protection mechanisms such as CPAN. The second survey was directed at service providers – in this case CPAN stakeholders. This survey assessed the knowledge, awareness and practices of stakeholders with regards to CPAN activities and procedures.

**Community Perception Survey [Total 2401]**

The evaluation team conducted a community perception survey which is statistically representative at the provincial level. 11 out of the 33 CPAN provinces were be purposefully selected based on the following key criteria:\n
1. Secure and insecure provinces (based UNICEF’s identification of secure and insecure provinces,
2. Old and new participating CPAN provinces,
3. High performance and low performance,
4. Other key defining factors.

The perception survey addressed the following research areas:

- General knowledge and awareness of types of violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation experience by children,
- General knowledge of child rights,
- General knowledge and awareness of child protection and child protection services,
- Experiences with outreach / community awareness activities on child protection,
- Ability to identify pathways of reporting child protection cases to relevant CPAN members.

**Sampling**

To yield findings which are representative of the populations of districts served by CPAN programs, target CPAN populations at a district level, the evaluation team calculated the sample size based on the overall CPAN population (ie. Districts where CPAN is working). The team then took a multi-stage sampling approach. Our first stage of sampling was the purposeful selection of provinces based on a series of profile characteristics. These included the following:

- High performing provinces and low performing provinces (provinces which have been identified by MoLSAMD and UNICEF staff as those which are closely fulfilling CPAN responsibilities and those which are not)
- Levels of security (secure vs insecure provinces)
- Any other defining characteristics (Nangarhar for example, does not have a technical assistant, instead DoLSAMD has employed more social workers)
- Geographical location

\(^{19}\) Further details on sampled provinces and their criteria are described in Section 3: Evaluation Scope ‘Geographic scope’
Within each of the purposefully selected provinces, the evaluation team identified districts in which CPAN currently works. The sample size was then calculated per province based on the population of these CPAN districts. In the next stage, the team randomly selected three CPAN districts where three or more were available. In cases where three or less CPAN districts were available, all districts were selected. The final stage of sampling required the evaluation team to randomly select villages within these districts.

In addition to this multi-stage sampling, the team also added an additional control district in each of the selected provinces. To ensure findings could be accurately compared to CPAN districts, the evaluation team kept in mind common characteristics such as economic levels, socio-cultural norms and the level of security. The use of control and treatment districts allowed the evaluation team to identify differences in perceptions, awareness, knowledge, behaviour and exposure to child protection. Control and treatment districts will be selected based on similar characteristics such as urban / rural, secure/insecure, socio-economic levels, local industry, access to services. According to CPAN TOR, provincial and district level members are required to conduct advocacy and community dialogue work, to increase the awareness and understanding of child protection. The leading assumption in this sense is that districts who have CPAN members should have a greater awareness of child protection that those districts which are not involved. Nevertheless, it is important to keep in mind that without providing a directly counterfactual comparison group, the evaluation team is only able to provide suggestive and correlational findings.

In summary, a total of 2401 surveys were conducted in Bamyan, Kandahar, Kabul, Nangarhar, Herat, Badakhshan, Ghazni, Wardak, Kunar, Mazar and Helmand. The statistically representative sample has been calculated with a 95% confidence level and 4% margin of error. The survey was further stratified so that results equally represented male and female perspectives, with 50/50 male/female.

This sampling approach has been used to provide statistically representative findings regarding the
populations directly exposed to CPAN activities, whereby accurately highlighting the impact of CPAN as an approach to strengthen child protection mechanisms.

**Overview of Sampling**

- **Sample universe**: The total settled population of CPAN districts in the eleven selected provinces plus one randomly selection non CPAN district based on 2016-2017 The Central Statistics Office (CSO) estimate of settled populations. Sample universe n = 6,512,900.\(^{20}\) Target provinces include:
  - Kabul
  - Nangarhar
  - Badakhshan
  - Mazaar
  - Herat
  - Bamyan
  - Wardak
  - Kunar
  - Kandahar
  - Khost
  - Helmand

- **Data Source**: CSO published this data in 2016, based on inferred growth from the Household Listing data from 2003-2005.

**Description of the Sampling Frame**: The 2016-2017 CSO estimates of the rural and urban settled population in each of Afghanistan’s minor (district or municipality) civil divisions and the evaluation team’s Master List of rural settlements and urban neighbourhoods. Because no census has been conducted in Afghanistan since 1979, the sample design relies upon the most recent population estimates.

**Sample Size**: N = 2401.

**Sampling Error (Margin of Error)**: The margin of error associated in an N = 2401 is 4% with a 95% confidence level. The evaluation team noted that statically, the margin of error should be 2%, but a clustering approach can have an effect on the margin of error up to 2%.

- **Primary Sampling Units (PSUs)**: CSO official districts and municipalities within the 5 target provinces. The PSUs are selected systematically with a probability equal to the PSU’s proportion of the province’s urban and rural population.

- **Stratification**:
  - **Male/Female (50/50)**: Sampling to the extent possible will interview 50 percent women and 50 percent male. All interviewees must be over the age of 18. Male and female interviewers will travel together to each sampling point as security allows.
  - **Control / Treatment**: District selection will be allocated based on those which have active district CPANs and those which do not. A total of two control districts will be

selected per province

- **Household Selection Method:** Random walk systematic selection. The Sampling Plan specifies a systematically selected starting location, walking direction, and the first household to be contacted for an interview at each sampling point. After an interview is obtained from the first household, the male interviewer selects every third household on the right-hand side and the female interviewer selects every third household on the left-hand side along the walk in rural areas, and every fifth household in urban areas.

- **Respondent Selection Method:** Random selection using the 2-step Kish Grid procedure. First all eligible members of the household are listed. Then the random numbers in the grid cells are used to randomly select the respondent from the list. Interviewers conduct up to two call-backs to obtain an interview with the selected respondent. If the interview is not completed after 3 interactions with the household, the interviewer contacts the adjacent household and randomly selects a new respondent.

- **Risk Analysis and Mitigation:** Each and every sampling point in the Sample Design included with this proposal must undergo a risk analysis before the design can become an achievable Sampling Plan. Some rural districts with larger populations fall into the “Very High Risk” category. These very high-risk districts are too insecure for survey fieldwork (see risk analysis section below). For the sampling points in these districts, two options may replace a sampling point while still ensuring representativeness.

  - **Replacement of Sampling Points:** If sampling points must be replaced because of insecurity or other exigencies, replacement sampling points in a more secure area of the same district, or a neighbouring district in the province, will be chosen from a randomly selected list. The random selection of replacement sampling points mitigates the sampling error and bias that might result if Sayara’s field team were given discretion over the replacement of sampling points.

  - **Weighting:** To ensure that the data properly represents the target population it may be necessary to post-weight the data at the PSU level to correct for any observed over- or under-sampling in the final dataset. If necessary to ensure the representativeness of the sample, the survey data may be weighted on the rural, urban, and/or gender of the respondent dimensions in the CSO population data.

**Note:** Findings from Helmand were excluded from the final analysis. Due to issues of poor data quality and cases of fraud which were caught through field back checking exercises, the evaluation team decided to exclude all data collected in Helmand.

**CPAN Service Provider Survey [Total of 262]**

The evaluation team conducted a series of 262 surveys using a questionnaire with CPAN stakeholders across targeted provinces. The survey, which will be made up of predominately closed questions and some open-ended questions, will assess to what extent CPAN stakeholders are aware of CP policies and legislation, CPAN practices, and referral systems. This survey will aim to answer the following research questions:

1. To what extent is there increased inter-agency and stakeholder relations to strengthen CP?

2. To what extent are CPANs at a national and provincial level drafting policy and legislation on CP
3. To what extent are referral systems working effectively? (referrals to CPAN members and from CPAN members?)

4. How effectively are cases managed?

5. To what extent are provincial level CPANs providing inputs into legislation and policy decisions?

6. To what extent is there increased community awareness of CP?

7. What evidence suggests there is increased local capacity to address CP?

8. What evidence are district levels providing for national advocacy?

9. To what extent are children at risk referred to relevant services?

The evaluation team conducted the survey with the following CPAN stakeholders throughout the target provinces:

1. NGO staff

2. Ministry officials
   a. Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled
   b. Ministry of Public Health
   c. Ministry of Education
   d. Ministry of Women’s Affairs
   e. Ministry of Justice
   f. Ministry of Interior
   g. General Directorate
   h. Prosecutor General Office
   i. Court of Justice

3. Police officer

4. Social Worker

5. National Technical Assistants for CPAN funded by UNICEF

6. UNICEF Staff (including UNICEF national and international Afghan based child protection team)

7. Community Elder / Community leader

During interviews with National Technical Assistants (NTA) in Kabul and Herat, the above ministries were identified as members of CPAN. Irrespective of their level of participation in CPAN, the ToC suggests that there should be widespread awareness of CPAN activities and functions across child associated ministries. Therefore, this survey assessed the extent of awareness and knowledge of the above
stakeholders regarding CP practices, as well as identifying the extent to which they could effectively report and respond to CP cases.

**Sampling**

As agreed with UNICEF, a non-representative sample of approximately 30 of the above CPAN stakeholders, were selected in each of the 10 provinces to participant in the CPAN member survey. They were selected from National, provincial and district levels. A total of 30 were interviewed when possible, but due to either the unavailability or refusal to be interviewed and limited CPAN members in some provinces - such as Khost – less than 30 surveys were often conducted. CPAN members were purposefully selected by the evaluation team and identified through provincial UNICEF, CPAN, MoLSAMD staff.

### 3.4 Qualitative Research Methods

Based on the questions in the research matrix above, the following qualitative methods were identified as being the most appropriate to capture in-depth narrative information. The following research methods were selected:

**Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) with CPAN members**

Key informant interview was a fundamental research tool to provide valuable insight into characteristics and functions of CPAN, how effectively information is shared among CPAN members across governing tiers, case management policies and process, funding and sustainability, and general strengths and challenges of the strategy. Interviews included the following key informants, with additions during the research process if certain informants are identified during the desk review:

- a. CPAN stakeholders at a national, provincial and district level
- b. Participating ministry staff from Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MoLSAMD) (national, provincial and district level)
- c. Participating UNICEF staff
- d. Provincial Technical Assistants
- e. Child Protection Policy Experts working under the National Strategy for Children At-Risk (NSFCAR)

The evaluation team separated key informants into two categories, and as such designed two key informant interview guides.

**Key Informant Interview Guide 1 (KII1): National CPAN stakeholders and National / International UNICEF staff**

The KII1 guide was designed to capture national and international level information on CPAN activities and functions. It was specifically focused on understanding how CPAN reflects national and international policies on child protection, and the types of legislation national level stakeholders implement and practice.
Key Informant Interview Guide 2 (KII2): Provincial and district CPAN stakeholders and provincial UNICEF staff

The KII2 guide was designed to capture localised information on CPAN functions and activities. This guide provided insight as to how effectively CPAN was working at a community level, identifying strengths and weakness regarding child protection activities and awareness at community levels. These interviews took place with TAs, CPAN members and DOLSAMD staff.

The KIIIs followed a semi-standardised form, where the bulk of the question guide is made up of open-ended questions. The evaluation team recorded KIIIs when permission was given, and notes were taken on important topics covered during the course of the interview.

Sampling

The identification of key informants from each of the groups listed above was selected purposefully in collaboration with UNICEF and members of CPAN. UNICEF child protection staff and technical assistants were key points of contact, as they were widely aware of local CPAN members, MoLSAMD staff and other relevant stakeholders. Key informants were selected based on their level of experience and interaction with CPAN. A specific criterion was not designed for this, but rather interviewees were selected iteratively, based on research findings as they came through.

Focus Group Discussions with Adults (FGD)

Focus Group Discussions (FGD) were conducted to explore knowledge, awareness and practices of adult who received CPAN services and the general population. FGDs were a useful tool for capturing narrative data among subgroups of the population which contributed to quantitative findings from the perception survey. Within FGDs, the evaluation team were specifically interested in exploring the following research points:

- To what extent are communities aware of CP rights?
- To what extent are communities aware of their responsibility regarding CP and what actions are taken?
- To what extent are referral systems working effectively (referrals to CPANs and from CPANs)?
- What strategies have been used to reach out to children whose cases were reported?
- Have these strategies been designed with an understanding of local community’s behaviours and needs?

In order to measure the impact of CPAN activities with target groups, the evaluation team conducted a series of control and treatment FGDs. Treatment group were made up of care givers of child survivors, and community members who had either made referrals to a CPAN member or had been involved in outreach activities. A comparison group was made up of members of the general population who have had little to no exposure to child protection activities. By comparing the results of findings from both FGDs, the evaluation team attempted to measure the extent CPAN has improved levels of awareness and attitudes toward child protection practices, both preventative and responsive.

FGDs were not be mixed, they were conducted with either female or male participants. Sayara will aimed to have 50% of FGDs with males and 50% with females. Aside from these practices in line with cultural sensitivity, evaluators ensured all participants’ self-determination in consenting to participate was respected.
Comparison Group | Treatment Group
---|---
- Members of the general population | - Care givers of children who had been involved in a CPAN case
- Care givers of children who had been involved in a CPAN case | - Community members who have made referrals to a CPAN member
- Community members who have made referrals to a CPAN member | - Community members who have been involved in CPAN outreach activities
- Community members who have been involved in CPAN outreach activities

The FGD guides followed a semi-standardised form, with the bulk of the question guide made up of open-ended questions.

**Sampling**

The identification of FGD participants came from a review of cases from the province. After a review of cases – ensuring they are accurate and real cases – the evaluation team liaised with DoLSAMD offices to contact actors who were identified in these cases and asked them to join the FGDs. By selecting participants though previous cases, the evaluation team attempted to ensure that participants were legitimate CPAN target groups. In addition, there was less potential for CPAN staff in the province to influence the choice of participants and as such potentially the outcomes of the FGD.

In addition, an equal number of FGDs was conducted with control and treatments groups. For example, if a treatment FGD is conducted in Jalalabad, then a comparison group was also conducted in the area. By organising FGDs in the same geographical location, participants should have had similar characteristics while also limiting the number of external variables. For example, we could not effectively compare finding from a treatment group in urban Nangarhar with findings from rural Nangarhar, as there would be too many different variables and we would be unable to conclusively make accurate comparisons.

**Focus Group Discussions with Children (FGD)**

Any research concerning children, particularly child protection, should ensure that the voices and opinions of children are incorporated into all findings. Therefore, in order to effectively incorporate children into this evaluation, Sayara used participatory FGDs with children who received services from CPAN and a selection of children from the general population. FGDs had been chosen to avoid challenging and often sensitive discussions with children about their experiences with violence. Sayara was not directly interested in hearing specific cases from children, as the potential for causing harm was too high and Sayara was unable to provide the necessary services to children should interviews bring up traumatic information. Therefore, FGDs had been chosen as they provided an interactive and friendly environment for children to share their stories and opinions on life.

While conducting FGDs, Sayara incorporated a series of games and interactive activities to build rapport between FGD moderators and children, and also to facilitate an open and safe environment. The use of activities depended on the group of children being interviewed. For example, a series of drawing games and interactive movement games were used with young children, whereas older children were more comfortable with different forms of conversations. Sayara’s child researchers are trained to adapt their approach to FGDs based on the age, history and gender of children.

Comparison group | Treatment Group
---|---
- Children randomly selected from the general population | - Child survivors who have been involved in a CPAN case
Like the FGDs with adults, the evaluation team conducted control and treatment discussions. This allowed us to compare the results between CPAN target groups and children within the general population. FGDs were not mixed, they were conducted with either female or male participants. Sayara aimed to have 50% of FGDs with males and 50% with females.

Prior to the start of field work involving children, all interviewers went through child protection and working with children refresher training. This included a thorough overview of methods for respecting the rights, safety and consent of children participating in research. We will also provided them thorough project knowledge, so they could better adapt FGD guides on a case by case basis. In addition, interviewers were required to gain care giver consent for a child’s participation prior to conducting the FGD.

**Sampling**

Again, like in adult FGDs, the identification of FGD participants came from a review of cases from the province. After a review of cases – ensuring they were accurate and real cases – The evaluation team’s field team contacted actors identified in the cases and ask them to join the FGD. By selecting participants though previous cases, we could ensure they were genuine recipients of CPAN support. In addition, there was less potential for CPAN staff in the province to influence the choice of participants and as such potentially the outcomes of the FGD. In order to effectively measure differences between control and treatment groups, it is paramount that the most appropriate research participants are selected.

FGDs with children will be recorded and sent back to Kabul for translation and analysis.

**Evaluation Analysis**

The analysis focused predominately on identifying and discussing underlying causes, constraints and strengths of CPAN. These were covered by measuring the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact of CPAN as a CP mechanism. The evaluation also conducted research activities ensuring that human rights, equity and gendered perspectives were incorporated into all findings. This included some of the various points:

- Situational analysis of provinces and Afghanistan (where and who is more affected)
- What rights are at stake?
- Whose rights are at stake?
- Why problems are occurring? (looking at the underlying and root causes of exclusion, discrimination and inequality)
- What capacities are needed for those affected and those with a duty to take action?
- Identifying contextual constraints and opportunities between men and women
- Capacity of duty bearers to reach out equally to boys and girls / women and men
- Identifying the various ways men and women experience problems

**Quantitative data analysis:**

- Descriptive analysis: Disaggregating data based on some of the following variables

---

• Location
• Age
• Sex
• Exposure to child protection outreach work
• Experience with children who were survivors / victims of violence, abuse, neglect and exploitations
• Education background
• Employment position (Service Provider survey)
• Involvement with CPAN (Service Provider survey)
• Control / treatment provinces

These variables will be cross tabulated to identify differences or similarities regarding perceptions of child protection in Afghanistan. In addition, when appropriate, Sayara research will implement Chi square analysis to identify statistically significant correlations in the data.

**Qualitative Analysis:**
Qualitative interviews were mostly analysed using thematic coding in NVIVO. The evaluation team individually coded interviews, using nodes and trees to track patterns across data.
KAP SURVEY DEMOGRAPHICS

Total Interviewed: 2257

CPAN
Live in districts where CPAN does not operate 29.6%
Live in districts where CPAN operates 70.4%

Gender
53.1% male (1197)
46.9% female (1059)

Location
10.4% rural
89.6% urban

Education
No education 56.2%
1st - 6th grade 18.9%
Some high school 8.9%
High school graduate 6.8%
Some university 1.7%
Bachelor’s degree 1.3%
Trade/technical/vocational training 0.6%
Madrassa 4.5%
Other 0.9%

Ethnicity
Pashtun 62.5%
Hazara 9.3%
Tajik 17.4%
Uzbek 4.8%
Arab 2%
Other 3.9%

Survey Sampling by District
Badakhshan
Argo (60), Jerr (30), Khoristan (30), Yaftal Sufia (40)
Bamyan
Panjshir (50), Bamyan (70), Shibar (20)
Herat
Herat (357), Karokh (50), Koorkh (100), Andarasia (100)
Kabul
Gol Dara (30), De Sabz (40)
Kandahar
Darni (10), Kandahar (410), Spin Boldak (80), Malwa (50)
Khost
Gorfi (40), Bok (20)
Kunar
Darafsh (40), Morewa (20), Naray (20), Shegal (30)
Maydan Wardak
Jaghdar (40), Nerik (50), Hesse Avail Behsood (30)
Mazara Sharif
Balhi (90), Chahar Boldak (60), Marmol (20), Sholgara (90)
Nangarhar
Boshid (90), Lalpoor (30), Kuz Kunar (40)
CPAN Member Survey (n=268)

- **Level of Involvement of CPAN**
  - National: 10
  - Provincial: 202
  - District: 50

- **Gender**
  - Male: 232 (87.2%)
  - Female: 32 (12%)

- **Education**
  - No education: 3
  - 1st - 6th grade: 6
  - Some high school: 5
  - High school graduate: 32
  - Some university: 10
  - Trade/technical/vocational training: 80
  - Bachelor's degree: 101
  - Master's degree: 14
  - Doctorate degree: 4
  - Madrassa: 1
  - Other: 8

- **Position in CPAN**
  - Child Protection Officer (NGO/CSOs): 20
  - DoLSAMD Staff: 21
  - Ministry Official: 6
  - Police Officer: 16
  - Social Worker: 9
  - Lawyer: 18
  - Prosecutor: 8
  - Social Affairs Officer: 3
  - Technical Assistant (UNICEF): 6
  - UNICEF Staff: 6
  - Community Elder / Leader: 12
  - NGO Staff: 41
  - Other: 41

- **Location**
  - Rural: 67 (25.2%)
  - Urban: 201 (74.1%)

- **CPAN members by Province**
  - Kabul: 20
  - Wardak: 26
  - Bamyan: 28
  - Herat: 22
  - Nangarhar: 8
  - Khost: 11
  - Badakhshan: 24
  - Kunar: 11
  - Kandahar: 20
  - Helmand: 16
  - Mazar-i-Sharif: 24
  - Kandahar: 20
  - Wardak: 26
  - Bamyan: 28
  - Herat: 22
  - Nangarhar: 8
  - Khost: 11
  - Badakhshan: 24
  - Kunar: 11
  - Kandahar: 20
  - Helmand: 16
  - Mazar-i-Sharif: 24
SECTION 4: LIMITATIONS AND ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Limitations

The evaluation team met several challenges and limitations throughout the duration of this evaluation. The following were some of the most prominent:

- The evaluation team questioned the evaluability of CPAN. With large gaps in documented evidence of CPAN activities, there was little physical evidence from which to draw conclusions. This included the availability of clear scopes of work and TORs of key CPAN members. While some documentation was provided, much of it was not formalised under UNICEF or MoLSAMD. Furthermore, since the establishment of CPAN, there has been no formal monitoring conducted: monitoring which assessed outputs and some outcomes. An evaluability assessment, prior to the commission of this evaluation, would have provided the evaluation team with a clear understanding of gaps in available evidence.

- The documentation that was available was often delayed. In some instances, information requests took almost four weeks to come back. This included the efficiency of feedback and collaboration between UNICEF the evaluation team, particularly during the inception phase. As a result, the evaluation was delayed by almost 10 weeks.

- A major challenge and set back at the start of this evaluation was the lack of a physical theory of change (TOC). The evaluation team, with its initial limited understanding of the complexity of CPAN, struggled to identify clear outputs and outcomes from CPAN. Moving forward, a closer collaborative approach with the UNICEF / MoLSAMD team would assist to design a physical TOC in a more efficient time frame.

- While conducting the CPAN member survey, many CPAN members were reluctant to provide their time. This caused delays in field work, as enumerators often went to meet CPAN members (after agreeing on a specific time) only to have a member decline to participate (this was most relevant to field staff). As many CPAN members were part of CPAN out of choice, rather than obligation - they were free not to participate in the survey. However, we do not feel that this self-selection limitation imposed bias on the sample.

- Security is an overarching concern when conducting research in Afghanistan. While this did not have a direct impact on the evaluation work, it did prevent access to some areas while conducting the KAP survey. In these instances, the evaluation team had to rely on replacement sampling points to mitigate the potential biases security concerns could impose on the sample.

- CPAN member – particularly central CPAN staff were hesitant to provide specific information on CPAN activities as they felt that the evaluation team was conducting an evaluation of their individual performance. While CPAN members were told on numerous occasions that this was not the case, and that the evaluation team simply wanted to better understand CPAN processes, it did create some tension during field work. We were conscious of this perception in interpreting and analysing the qualitative data collected, to remain wary of potential reporting biases.
Ethical Considerations

The evaluation team was committed to ensuring the safety, integrity, dignity and confidentiality of all research participants. Our attitude and practices towards ethics are ingrained in our research approach and implementation.

Code of Conduct

The evaluation team’s ethical approach to research is in compliance with the ICC/ ESOMAR International Code on Social Research. The self-regulatory framework for implementing this code has been used by Sayara and international research groups for many years. The ICC/ ESOMOAR code is designed and implemented to fulfil the following objectives:

1. Set out ethical rules which social researchers follow

2. To enhance participant confidence in research by emphasising their rights and safeguards

3. To emphasise the need for special responsibility when seeking opinions of young children and young people

4. To minimise the need for government and/or intergovernmental legislations or regulation

   a. The code of ethics, which will be adhered to by this research project, are as follows:

   1. Researchers shall conform to all relevant national and international laws

   2. Researchers shall behave ethically and shall not do anything which might damage the reputation of research

   3. Researchers shall take special care when carrying out research among children and young people

   4. Respondents’ cooperation is voluntary and must be based on adequate, and not misleading, information about the general purpose and nature of the project when their agreement to participate is being obtained and all such statements shall be honoured

   5. The rights of respondents as private individuals shall be respected by the researcher and they shall not be harmed or adversely affected as the direct result of cooperating in a market research project

   6. Researchers shall never allow personal data they collect in a research project to be used for any purpose other than research

   7. Researchers shall ensure that projects and activities are designed, carried out, reported and documented accurately, transparently and objectively

   8. Researchers shall conform to the accepted principles of fair competition

In addition to the above social science codes, Sayara implemented the following practices, which are focused predominately on sensitive research topics:

1. Honesty: Researchers shall not abuse the trust of participants or exploit their lack of experience or knowledge.
2. The safety of respondents and the research team are paramount and guide all research design

3. Respect the autonomy and dignity of all persons involved in research

4. All researchers will be involved in specialized training and be provided with on-going psychological support if necessary

5. Fieldworkers staff will be available to provide referrals to local services and support centres if necessary

6. Sayara ensures that all research found will be interpreted and used to advance policy and intervention development

7. All questions referring to violence or sensitive questions will only be incorporated when we can ensure all ethical guidelines will be met

8. Ensure that all research conducted is transparent and accountable

9. Informed Consent: Participants’ cooperation in a research project is entirely voluntary at all stages. Participants shall not be misled when asked for their cooperation.

10. Transparency: Researchers shall promptly identify themselves and unambiguously state the purpose of the research.

11. Recording and Observations: Respondents shall be informed before observation techniques or recording equipment are used for research purposes, except where these are openly used in a public place and no personal data are collected. If respondents so wish, the record or relevant section of it shall be destroyed or deleted. In the absence of explicit consent, respondents’ personal identity shall be protected.

Research with Children

The evaluation team adopted the UNICEF and UNCRC approach to ethical research with children. In this research, a child was defined as “every human being below the age of 18 years unless the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier.” The evaluation team was responsible for ensuring that all participating children were afforded decision making opportunities and respect in exercising their rights (including the right to be heard, to information) with their age and capacity.

All research deemed to respect and value children, the context of their lives and recognise their dignity. This included always gaining informed consent from care givers for research involvement. Children were asked individually if they also agree to participate in the research to ensure coercion has not taken place. In addition, this required all our researchers to understand the innate power relations between adults and children. These unequal power relations were constantly negotiated throughout the fieldwork, with the aim of encouraging the participating children to voice their opinions openly and without the threat of consequence. Prior to the start of each interview, children were explained the purpose of the research and how their opinions and shared stories were used in the research. In addition, as it is culturally inappropriate for girls above the age of 12 to be interviewed by men, only female moderators will be used. There was also always to be more than one moderator, to ensure children are not threatened by the presence of one moderator. Sayara does not allow parents or local community members to sit in on their sessions, as this can often create a bias among child participants. We also

inform all participants that should they wish not to continue, they are allowed to finish the interview at any point and leave the room.

The following are additional measures the evaluation team put in place when working with children:

- Be able to justify why the research is being done and why children or a specific group of children are being included in or excluded from the research.
- Participation should benefit the children involved.
- Employ strategies to minimise distress for children participating in the research.

### Strategies to minimise distress for children in this evaluation include the following:

- Not asking children directly about their experiences of violence, abuse, neglect or exploitation
- Creating a child-friendly environment, with the use of games
- Using moderators who are trained in conducting research with children and have participated in child protection training and ‘do no harm’ sessions.
- Inviting multiple children to an FGD session – children are often more comfortable when other children are around
- Allowing children to stop leave the discussion should they feel uncomfortable
- Providing the children, the opportunity to talk individually to moderators after the session should they so wish. Any information pertaining to threats or abuse, violence, neglect or exploitation will be reported to a local CPAN member for further investigation
- Have child protection protocols in place to safeguard children from abusive or incompetent researchers.
- Consult locally when planning the research and developing protocols, without jeopardising children’s safety or well-being.
- Take measures to ensure that harm is not caused to children, families or communities in the dissemination of the research findings. This will include confidentiality and anonymity of all research participants. In addition, should an interviewee wish to have their interview sealed and not used during analysis, this can be discussed on an individual basis
- Ensure that support for children, if needed during and after the research process, has been planned for. This will mostly be in the form of allowing children to speak openly to moderators should they want to, and moderators then making referrals to CPAN members for further investigation and support. Sayara is unable to provide any financial, physical or psychological support to participants
The Evaluation Team

The evaluation team consisted of one team leader – Nama Vanier, one lead analyst and project manager – Lee McAneney, national team leader – Dr. Haroon Rasheed, analyst – Ahn Wei Lee and the support of a national team which was made up of 50 staff, two of which were based in Sayara’s Kabul office, and the remaining field teams across the 11 targeted provinces. In addition, a protection specialist – Kate Sutton from the Humanitarian Advisory group (based in Melbourne, Australia) and Dr. Violeta Schubert from the University of Melbourne (Australia).

The evaluation team was divided into several teams. Lee McAneney and Dr. Haroon Rasheed completed the qualitative field work in Herat, Mazaar, Badakhshan, Nangarhar and Kabul. Ms Ahn Lee completed the qualitative field work in Bamyan and national senior researcher – Ahmad Shoaib completed the field work in Khost, Wardak, Kunar and Kandahar. Ms McAneney, Ms Vanier, Ms Sutton and Dr. Rasheed were involved in the final analysis stages. All members of the evaluation team were selected for, and instructed in the commitment to impartiality in the selection of participants, elicitation and evaluation of responses.
SECTION 5: FINDINGS

5.1 Relevance

1. To what extent does the CPAN structure meet the CP needs in Afghanistan?
2. To what extent does the staffing of CPAN meet CP needs in Afghanistan?
3. To what extent do CPAN activities align with CP needs in Local Communities?
4. To what extent has the technical assistance provided by UNICEF to CPAN focused on the most relevant CP issues?
5. To what extent are CPAN activities aligned with the vision and mandate / mission of UNICEF?

Aligned with National Priorities of Afghanistan

CPAN was created to function under the Government of Afghanistan, managed by the MoLSAMD. The following sections looks at the extent to which the national, provincial and district levels of CPAN meet the national priorities of Afghanistan. It breaks down the national, provincial and district priorities of CPAN and shows how they align with the national priorities of Afghanistan.

National level

According to its terms of reference, the NCPAN is required to promote priority child protection issues and associated strategies or programming principles drawn from national priorities and plans, and from international and national best practices. It may also identify key gaps in responses to national child protection, and engage in resource mobilisation to support child protection. The key objectives of its work are to engage in sound coordination to build consensus on all child protection-related advocacy and action, drawing upon national- and field-sourced evidence provided by its PCPANs. (TORs for NCPAN, PCPAN and DCPAN)

CPAN members take general guidance from the National Strategy for Children At Risk (NSFCAR) launched in November 2006 by the MoLSAMD with UNICEF support. It is aligned with the UN-CRC and human rights based approaches. NCPAN collaborated effectively to identify the 12 categories of children most at risk within the Afghan context. The Strategy provided an outline of progressive annual actions towards the achievement of UN-CRC compliance and thus it was, and is, a useful reference for action. However, it does not appear that it was followed up with the envisaged plan of action and budget. Many actors, and the MoLSAMD itself, appear to align their child protection interests with the more limited categories of at-risk children identified in the Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS) 2008-13, as did the Ministry’s own first strategic plan of 2013-16, which ultimately went unimplemented.

The continued absence of this dedicated child protection programme at the national level, until the present time, means that the NCPAN has only been able to act as a platform mechanism to support the work of MoLSAMD, rather than facilitating and expanding child-focused interventions across...
ministries.

To date, NCPAN members reported that NCPAN has not actively engaged in a detailed documentation or analysis of lessons learned to identify and disseminate in-country best practices. Furthermore, interviews with MoLSAMD members highlighted that they are not particularly equipped to identify best practices, due to a lack of individual capacity or availability of time. In various instances, the evaluation team noted that CPAN MoLSAMD members were often required to fulfil other responsibilities, limiting the amount of time they could dedicate themselves to CPAN work. In the past, NTAs seconded to the MoLSAMD by donors or CPAN agencies have made efforts in this last regard, for example by collaborating with NCPAN members to develop contextualized ‘Guidelines for Standards for Residential Care Services for Children’; however, the NCPAN has not actively promoted their use. Consequently, PCPAN and Orphanage Officers do not follow through on compliance.

Furthermore, observations and analysis of desk review documentation highlighted that NCPAN may not be using provincially-generated data to significantly inform advocacy or intervention activities at the national, provincial or district levels. In addition, interviews with MoLSAMD staff highlighted that the repository of data generated at a provincial level and submitted to a national level, has never been published or made readily accessible. This implies that these data are not being used by the Ministry or NCPAN to position child protection in the national agenda. Even though, in 2015, MoLSAMD staff said data management would improve through the establishment of a database in the Ministry’s General Directorate of Social Protection, the evaluation team has yet to see clear outcomes from this data management activity.

Despite challenges concerning the management and use of provincial CP data through CPAN, the NCPAN has produced some results in coordinated advocacy. This was seen in relation to ‘special children’s days’ which are celebrated throughout the year, with topics agreed upon and shared with PCPANs for local-level interpretation and implementation. Senior MoLSAMD staff speaking on the topic of resource mobilization, indicated that the NCPAN generally acquires financial resources for these celebrations from donors and, less often, from Ministry resources. However, it does not appear to have learned from the success of these programs to advocate for on-budget support to substantial child protection services. A clear illustration of this gap was the closure of short-term residential care facilities for trafficked children when IOM-funding came to an end: absent NCPAN advocacy, the MoLSAMD, despite its oversight responsibility, was unable to provide funds without the support of donors. According to a senior MoLSAMD advisor, the Ministry has explicitly communicated its expectation that child protection activities be financed by international donor off-budget mechanisms. In contrast, the NCPAN, led by DM Social Affairs, has successfully advocated, over a period of around 5 years, for an expansion of human resources. This was intended to focus on introducing human resources in locations where resources were scarce. As a result, there are currently personnel at the national and sub-national levels in the MoLSAMD tashkeel dedicated to CPAN and social work, and a modest number of social workers included in the tashkeel of the MoJustice to work within the Juvenile Rehabilitation Centres.

In summary, the NCPAN does not appear to pro-actively focus its actions totally in alignment with its stated purpose and objectives and appears to have missed opportunities to actively promote issues that ought to be of priority concern, and learn from current programs and outcomes. In the absence of an over-arching child protection programme, the NCPAN has been limited in its potential to develop an advocacy strategy to influence this gap in national planning. At the present time, the objective of the NCPAN using PCPAN data as an evidence-base to formulate advocacy or other actions on child protection is limited. Finally, resource mobilisation from government sources has not been part of its

---

routine work, and approaches to external sources have focused on international donors for relatively small-scale initiatives.

In some instances, key gaps in regards to child protection have been successfully recognized and pursued by NCPAN actions in collaboration with and in support of formative action initiated by other government entities. An illustration of this phenomenon was the need for specialised child-oriented systems, procedures and professionals throughout the field of juvenile justice. This resulted from the confluence of three factors: with the Ministry of Justice’s (MoJ) interest in developing its juvenile justice system, external support from UNICEF, and a revealing assessment of the juvenile justice system by an NCPAN member and MoJ partner agency. The NCPAN collective deliberations led to the development and introduction to the MoJ of a ‘Social Inquiry Report’ to be maintained for every individual, a tool to ensure timely processing of a child through court procedures. This tool continues today to provide a priority-monitoring role for DoLSAMD’s PCPAN officers and social workers. NCPAN members also provided training to both Justice and Interior personnel on child rights and child protection.

A further illustration of such action was the identified need for the development and training of social workers to support children in a range of circumstances such as in conflict with law and in detention, and for re-integration with families and communities following detention, trafficking, sexual exploitation and treatment for substance abuse. Although such training had been identified even earlier than the establishment of the CPAN and was already the subject of a UNICEF-funded social work coaching project, the growing demand of NCPAN and PCPAN members compelled UNICEF to fund the development of a standardised training program for child-oriented social workers under the MoLSAMD’s National Skills Development Project. This ultimately led to the establishment of academic degree qualifications in Social Work at Kabul University.

In the absence of specific tasks such as those exemplified above, senior MoLSAMD advisors reported that monthly NCPAN meetings tapered off. As a result, leadership of sub-national actions was effectively abandoned. Furthermore, several early and enthusiastic NCPAN members withdrew their participation as meetings were reduced to agency updates of their monthly work.

**Strategies and Objectives of UNICEF**

The strategies and objectives of CPAN are very much in-line with UNICEF mandate in Afghanistan. According to UNICEF, in Afghanistan it “advocates for the prevention, response to and eradication of violence, abuse and exploitation of children ... to ensure children have the space, freedom and safety to enjoy childhood and grow to healthy adults.” The CPAN model closely aligns with UNICEF’s country programme achievements to fulfil the right to a protective environment to all children in Afghanistan, especially the most vulnerable. UNICEF’s role in Afghanistan is to develop ‘comprehensive outreach efforts to engage communities, NGO’s and local and national government.’ UNICEF’s collaboration with the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled (MoLSAMD) is a reflection of the UN’s approach to development in Afghanistan. Through the provision of technical and financial support, UNICEF is supporting the development and strengthening of child protection through national governments. This collaboration is an effort to both build the legitimacy and capacity of the Government of Afghanistan to support children at risk in a sustainable and local means. Therefore, this evaluation finds that, the activities and visions of CPAN are aligned closely with the mandate of UNICEF in Afghanistan.

---

PCPANs are intended to undertake regular monitoring of CP cases and report these routinely to NCPAN; to help inform provincial programming and the development of national advocacy and policies. They are responsible for the coordination of Case Planning Committees on regular and emergency bases, and undertake cross-regional visits to share experiences and lessons learned.

PCPANs’ specific objectives are to ensure programming and operational responses to child protection issues, develop short and long-term strategies to address immediate concerns and needs of local populations, to identify gaps in child protection responses or services and make recommendations to address them, to establish systematic monitoring/reporting of CP cases at local level using common tools and mechanisms, to develop referral mechanisms for children at risk and victims of human/child rights violations, to raise awareness of communities on child rights and protection, and to contribute to policy development through sharing concerns and experiences to NCPAN. (TOR of Provincial CPAN)

The evaluation team found substantial differences among PCPANs in fulfilment of its stated objectives. Commitment and actions to ensure compliance with national policies and legislation vary across provinces. There appears to be a selective response to child protection issues. For example, KII interviews by three PCPANS, including in Herat and Mazaar, revealed that they felt unequipped do anything about child labour, so they simply did not address it. There is virtually no evidence of addressing protection issues for children with disability, despite the claim by the Ministry’s Division of Martyrs and Disabled that it coordinates numerous actors on these issues. Similarly, children in institutional care, a practice which is internationally regarded as not usually in the best interests of the child, receives no attention. Nor do issues of violence against children or trafficking – particularly highly-profiled concerns such as bacha bazi or child sexual exploitation - seem to have featured strongly in data returned to NCPAN, nor in discussions with the evaluation team. While the evaluation team recognises the sensitivity surrounding such violations against children, it is vital that they are still recorded to an extent to ensure UNICEF and MoLSAMD can effective track trends in these practices. Although informants complained of the difficulties in traveling to distant areas, no strong evidence indicated that PCPAN personnel carried out activities such as reintegration of children to families and communities following detention, violence and abuse, trafficking, or other separation from family. A key oversight in all CPAN work at all levels seems to be the active promotion of the best interests of the child. Another key oversight, especially in response activities was the absence of principals on gender mainstreaming.

While boys and girls are both supported through CPAN interventions, there was little evidence to suggest that CPAN, as a CP mechanism, systematically and consistently applied a gender based approach. Interviews, observations and desk review all suggested that gender was not a consideration in CPAN activities. Interviewees were unable to highlight how they had incorporated gender mainstreaming into programing. In Badakhshan for example, the female social worker and CPAN officer reported that there was little difference in the roles of female and male social workers. Furthermore, there were no evident policies or guidelines explicitly focused on gender mainstreaming, to hold members accountable for gender equality in their prevention and response activities. There was no notable difference between CP mechanisms to recognize the differences in risks and needs of boys and girls. Likewise, there was no evidence to suggest that teams had been trained on gender-sensitive approaches to child protection. This was also generally evident in advocacy work, as no CPAN teams were able to provide the evaluation team with evidence of gender-mainstreaming or sensitivity towards gender in their community dialogue sessions. While some sessions were focused on issues of ‘child marriage,’ the concern of gender did not appear to be directly introduced.

Furthermore, there was little evidence that CPAN members were aware of the types of support girls
may need after being involved in a case. The damage done to the name of a girl and her family is generally recognised to be far more detrimental than the damage done to a boy and his family. Therefore, specific actions should be taken to ensure all CP activities are carried out in such a way as to ‘do no harm’ to the girl and her family in the future. This often requires greater sensitivity during case management processes and more specialized support in follow ups.

It is probable that some of these gaps reflect the distance and lack of clarity between structural and functional responsibilities among the MoLSAMD’s divisions at both the central and provincial level. But, it also implies that a lead child protection structure in Afghanistan, PCPANs, are not playing any instrumental role in addressing quite a range of discriminatory or harmful practices and attitudes. More importantly, it likely implies that protection issues for these categories (such as *bacha bazi*, sexual violence etc.) of children and specifically for girls are inadequately addressed, if at all. A similar pattern of non-involvement is found in relation to protection issues that are the focus of other specialised projects, such as child trafficking which has been led by IOM, recruitment of children into armed groups which is addressed by UNICEF-funded Monitoring and Reporting Mechanisms (UN Security Council Resolution 1612) for child violations under armed conflict, low/no access for girls to education, and so on.

Observations and interviews with NTAs and CPAN officers highlighted that there was limited evidence to suggest that PCPANs inform provincial-level child protection interventions or, in most provinces, develop their own strategy or time-bound work plan to address local needs. This does not suggest that PCPANs fail totally to collaborate with principal-level authorities or other partners, but that the engagement does not extend to joint provincial planning to incorporate actions for child protection.

**DCPANS** collect information on child abuse, report to PCPANs for action, attend monthly PCPAN meetings to address cases reported in communities, and promote awareness on child protection in communities. Their specific objectives are to ensure protection of children by acting as a focal point for child protection issues, and responding to issues of child exploitation, abuse, or neglect at district level. (DCPAN TOR)

**District level**

Virtually no representatives, with the exception of those in Herat, were able to provide evidence of their work. A fairly standard explanation was that they did not document most of their cases because they were referred back to communities to resolve. Furthermore, the evaluation team had difficulty locating several DCPAN representatives due to their unexplained absences. This raises the questions of how clients in need manage to do so. Child marriage comprised the majority of examples of pertinent protection issues provided to the Evaluation Team. While it is unknown the extent to which child marriage was indeed the most prominent concern at a district level, it did appear to the be most easily cited. This practice does not align with the operational processes that have been introduced – which require appropriate documentation of all cases. The key concern is the relative absence of any ‘case management’ measure to ascertain how or when cases at district levels are resolved. The absence of information on outcome means there is no knowledge of whether these outcomes are in alignment with national law, informal justice or even customary practices that are prohibited in Afghanistan’s Constitution. Though they are fully aware that traditional decision-making bodies often discriminate against women and girls, they may not recognise that the lack of documentation, and thus of reporting, skews much-needed data of incidence. The CP System Mapping highlighted that the community based mechanisms currently used are trusted approaches to resolving conflicts locally. Yet, in the absence of direct linkage with formal CP case management systems, such mechanisms are not documented for
The concerns in this regard are compounded by reports that activities on awareness raising on child rights and protection are not provided (see section above on PCPANs). While this may have been done in the past, it is reasonable to conclude that the repetition of key messages and renewed exposure to arguments on different ways of resolving issues are essential to positively influencing deeply entrenched attitudes and values.

**Structure and Staffing Relevant to CP Needs**

**Relevance: To what extent is the structure and staffing of CPAN relevant to meet CP needs?**

The evaluation team found that CPAN exists and functions within the structures of MoLSAMD, with technical and financial support from UNICEF. Functioning at three tiers; national, provincial and district – CPAN is made up of humanitarian and development actors (both international and national agencies), law enforcement, community leaders, social workers, child protection officers, teachers, health professionals and civil society organisations (CSO). The focal points for CPAN nationally and in the provinces, is MoLSAMD/DoLSAMD. Responsibility for CPAN activities lies with the technical assistants (when present) or CPAN officers (which are direct employees of DoLSAMD. These CPAN officers are on occasion also required to take on the roles of social workers. They are further supported by social workers (when available). Observations and interviews found that in general, CPAN officers or NTAs were responsible for CPAN work within a given province, and oversight was generally taken by the deputy minister for social affairs for that province. Outside of this central group of MoLSAMD/DoLSAMD CP staff, all other members are voluntary and can choose to what extent they wish to collaborate, coordinate and participated in CPAN activities. This central team of CP staff at the ministry is the foundation of CPAN. They are the driving force for CPAN in each province. If the central team is not performing well, it impacts on the potential for other network members to provide the most support to CP initiatives.

---

**CPAN Structure**

---

In theory, the structure is relevant to the CP needs of Afghanistan. Humanitarian and development agencies, in addition to CSOs and law enforcement are mandated to support the government in fulfilling their obligations to protect and respond to children at risk. The actions of these groups, therefore should not replace the purpose of MoLSAMD and DoLSAMD but rather support governing positions. These agencies provide the necessary support, when MoLSAMD is unable to. In theory, central CPAN staff should be managing and tracking cases and leading prevention activities, with the support of agencies. In this sense, the structure has been designed in such a way that it can meet CP needs in Afghanistan, while keeping the government as the foundation for all actions and activities.

Furthermore, CPAN is regularly referred to as a ‘community based CP mechanism.’ This is assumed to take place at a district level, yet there has been no specific evidence to suggest that any structure or staffing has been made to encourage ownership within communities. Apart from community dialogue sessions, and interactions only reportedly take place through occasional linkages with community leaders in resolving cases.

While the structure of CPAN is appropriate for the Afghan context in theory, in practice there are challenges which impact on the effectiveness of the CPAN structure.

**National Level**

As findings previously highlighted, NCPAN is failing to effectively fulfil its scope of work (SoW) particularly with regards to advocacy and coordination activities, programming and operational responses, information collection and policy development (as highlighted in the TOC). Therefore, while in theory the model of the NCPAN is relevant to the needs of Afghanistan, there are numerous gaps NCPAN members need to overcome in order to effectively fulfil its mandate of protecting children at a national level.

**Provincial Level**

Similarly to the national level, observations and interviews highlighted that PCPANs appear to take an ad-hoc approach to child protection at provincial levels. There is a heavy reliance on non-central CPAN members, such as participating NGOs to identify, address and resolve cases. While collaboration with local NGO’s is not necessarily negative, piggybacking on the operations and staff efforts of other organizations has meant that CPAN members are recording cases as ‘CPAN work’, but rely on others to engage in case management, follow up and documentation activities with PCPAN. Furthermore, we observed that the kinds of cases central CPAN members choose are in turn influenced by thematic concerns and mandates of the non-central organizations they are working with. When CPAN itself is not initiating action, advocacy work suffers; though advocacy work takes place in some locations – such as Nangarhar and Herat – we found that there is little to no community awareness in the remaining targeted provinces. The remainder of this evaluation will highlight the challenges pertaining to provincial level CPAN and their activities in the field in depth.

**District CPAN**

While in theory, the DCPAN is a logical and practical way to engage with local community as well as respond and prevent child protection issues at a grass roots level, there are significant gaps in its implementation. As previously described, the DCPAN has the obvious advantage of tapping into informal mechanisms to prevent and resolve cases. Furthermore, by drawing on trusted and influential community leaders, DCPAN has a more positive opportunity to increase levels of trust and interest in CP. Nevertheless, as previously highlighted, in practice the evaluation team has been unable to identify how these theories have been translated into practice. With documented evidence virtually unavailable, with the exception of some districts in Herat, it was difficult for the evaluation team to determine the extent to which DCPAN structure was relevant and appropriate for CP needs at grassroots levels.
in practice. Interviews with TAs and DCPAN members highlighted that DCPAN members are rarely exposed to the same learning opportunities as their national or provincial counterparts. At a district level, there are few humanitarian and development agencies and existing government entities from which to draw support. Therefore, most activity at a district level -unless referred to a provincial level, does not function as a network – but rather falls to the responsibility and initiative of one or two district level social workers or CP staff.

The evaluation team also noted overall challenges in the structure of CPAN.

**CPAN as Child Protection Mechanism**

While CPAN exists within MoLSAMD /DoLSAMD, it is not a formalized system for protecting and responding to children at risk. Currently, CPAN is not included in legislation to give institutionality to its activities. According to UNICEF however, CPAN has been incorporated into the latest draft of the ‘Child Act’, which is to be presented to the Government of Afghanistan. Nevertheless, currently with the exception of donor funded CPAN officers and National Technical Assistants, and some funded social workers, there are no paid CPAN positions. As such, there are no formal obligations to participate in and support CPAN activities, and non-central CPAN members (including NGOs, and CSOs) have no formal obligation to participate in CPAN. The involvement of NGOs, government ministries and departments, CSOs and community elders is on a volunteer basis. Individual work commitments, thematic interests and individual motivation all influence how involved a CPAN member chooses to be.

Likewise, interviews highlighted that as most members are not obliged to participate in CPAN, their motivations and level of commitment can vary over time. For example, the head of the JRC in Badakhshan and a member from the department of Haj in Herat reported that initially they felt motivated about the potential of CPAN. Overtime however, they saw little results of their involvement, and limited outcomes from CPAN activities. The head of the JRC described how originally, he regularly attended monthly meetings, but over the period of a year he stopped attending; commenting that the same discussions came up every month and no actions were ever taken and as such he started sending his junior social worker in his place. This was similar in Herat, as the NTA reported that participating ministries rarely sent the same members to each monthly meeting. He interpreted this as result of a lack of accountability and individual investment by non-key CPAN members in CPAN.

“Meetings are sometimes just for the show of it, everything said is not practically executed. Sometimes partner organisations are not even participating in meetings. We talk about all the issues and we give our reports but nothing comes of it. For example, I reported on the JRC and said that there were no teachers there, no facilities. We report these to the partners, but it just falls through the loops and we see that things don’t take place and issues are not taken care of. These are issues which are not outside the capabilities or resources of partner organisations, they are able to work on them but they just don’t. Another example is issue related to children’s health. Representatives from the MoPH and the director of Narcotics have taken a pledge to take children in need of treatment for addiction to hospitals but we have never seen them do this when we report such cases. We often talk about these issues again in the following month’s meeting and again promises are made and are not implemented.”

(Social Worker, DoLSAMD, Badakhshan)

Furthermore, non-central CPAN members (NGOs, CSOs etc) also noted that as their involvement is not formalised, they often had other work priorities. Members are sometimes unable to attend meet-
ings and provide support when requested. An interview with the health of the JRC in Bamyan for example, described that he often had to send another staff member to meetings – staff members who had little understanding of CPAN and the JRC’s involvement.

**Minimal Communication and Coordination between Tiers**

While the ToC highlights effective communication and coordination between tiers as key to strengthening overall child protection practices, the extent to which this is happening is mixed. A total of 54% of CPAN members reported that communication across the different tiers of CPAN was effective, while 40% reported it as ‘very effective.’ Contrary to these findings however, interviews suggested that communication and coordination between tiers was limited. Across many of the targeted provinces, provincial CPAN members highlighted that they had ongoing challenges communicating with DCPAN members, and rarely received feedback from national and regional offices. For example, in Badakhshan, the CPAN officer highlighted his troubles coordinating with national, regional and district tiers. “In the last three months, we have not received any feedback from our regional office in Mazar or from the central office in Kabul. Regarding communication with the district, we talk over the phone but unfortunately, we can’t coordinate well with district levels and train them in the districts.” In Herat, it was a similar situation. Due to increased security threats, the provincial CPAN team was unable to visit and coordinate with DCPAN. He did report however, that when possible they communicated through the phone. In Nangarhar, the central CPAN team reported that up until two or three months ago, the DCPAN teams were not functioning, and very rarely communicated with PCPAN. Since the introduction of two more CP officers at DoLSAMD, the team report they have been better able to organize and communicate with DCPAN.

**Staffing In CPAN**

CPAN is made up of a series of CP professionals at national, provincial and district levels. The evaluation team considered the staff who work in MoLSAMD / DoLSAMD with child protection to be CPAN staff. These include CPAN officers, social workers, child protection officers and national technical assistants (NTA). In every DoLSAMD office provincially, there is generally one CPAN officer who is responsible for the management and facilitation of CPAN activities, and as previously noted occasionally takes on social worker responsibilities. They are the focal point for all CPAN activities; receiving cases, making referrals and managing case management processes. They are also generally responsible for facilitating monthly CPAN meetings and case planning committees. An NTA is a CP professional, who works for MoLSAMD but is funded by UNICEF. The NTA is responsible for providing the necessary technical support to CPAN teams in the provinces. They conduct capacity building training for provincial teams, and provide technical support on how to best conduct prevention and response activities. These individuals are considered to have a higher capacity in CP, and are an important focal point for teams in the provinces when dealing with CP issues. NTAs however, are not available in and allocated for every province, and often one NTA is responsible for several provinces. Social workers on the other hand, are the frontline child protection teams. They are responsible for meeting and interviewing children once they have been identified at risk. They generally accompany children to court, or in cases of unaccompanied children, they bring them to identified care givers. Finally, child protection officers had similar roles to CPAN officers. While a CPAN officer is responsible for the general management of CPAN interventions, child protection officers support the general running of child protection activities of the given province. CP officers were not present in every province, but most commonly noted in Nangarhar (which does not have an allocated NTA). Important to note however, there appears to be little difference in the duties of a social worker and a CP officer, apart from the designated title. This was the case in Nangarhar, where CP officers fulfilled the roles of social workers, both working with children and managing cases.
In this evaluation, we will refer to this team of staff as ‘Central CPAN staff.’ This evaluation is predominantly concerned with assessing the effectiveness of the roles and activities of this central team. There is a very clear overlap of NTA and CPAN officer roles. In Bamyan for example, both the NTA and the CPAN officer reported that they were both doing the same job, and there was no difference in their responsibilities. The TOR provided by UNICEF was also labeled as ‘responsibilities for CPAN officer / National Technical Assistant. Currently the NTA and CPAN officer roles, appear to be predominately desk based, and have limited front line responsibilities. One of the biggest needs are individuals who have access to children at risk, as the front line in identifying and responding to their situations. The relevance of staffing distributions and divisions of labor, however needs to be questioned. While NTAs are responsible for various provinces, they appear to base themselves predominantly in one province, rather than regularly traveling and supporting other provinces. In Badakhshan for example, CPAN members noted that they never received assistance from a NTA. In this instance, the CPAN officer is responsible for the daily management and facilitation of CPAN activities. In provinces, such as Mazaar and Herat, however, there are both CPAN officers and NTAs present in each office, each fulfilling similar if not the same responsibilities.

Interviews highlighted that one of the biggest needs was the increase in staff and the presence of social workers, with currently only 46 social workers across the country. Within the central CPAN staff, there are limited front-line bodies; those who are able to reach affected children in remote districts, those who in the field identifying children at risk. Although CPAN is a complimentary mechanism to the social work system, they are mandated to provide responses to children in coordination with CPAN in case management and regarding support services. There was little evidence across the provinces that this was taking place due to the limited numbers of social workers and additional poor capacity (which will be discussed at a later point in this evaluation). Therefore, an increase in the numbers of qualified social workers as well as placing both a CPAN officer and NTA funded by donors in the same province should be strongly considered.

Another challenge observed by the evaluation team was that in instances where social workers were not available, CPAN officers and NTAs had to take over their responsibilities. Observations found that, despite reasonable capacity and experience, some NTAs and CPAN officers were not be suitable for this level of community based field work. Their accessibility to other districts is often limited because of security and cultural constraints. For example, it is well known across Afghanistan that those who are not local to a particular area often have challenges. In these instances, surveys highlighted that often social workers at district levels were hired from those areas, and therefore had a better understanding and access. Survey findings and observations suggested that there are often limited levels of trust among community members towards those who are not local to the area, or those who have limited experience with local community based resolution practices, such as conflict resolution through jirgas. If CPAN wants to continue with the current model, there should be consideration of alternative local engagement. For example, PCPAN could be involved in selecting either a capable local community leader, or a locally present NGO to ‘lead’ and be a focal point at a district level, or choose staffing (when possible) from that area While DoLSAMD may not be able to provide staff at community levels, they can draw on the structure of a network and PCPAN can align themselves with trusted sources of information and support. This approach however, would require standardized procedures and high levels of monitoring and training.

Furthermore, the overwhelming majority of male staff represents a failure to recognise the necessity of female support in CP cases for female youth and girls. For example, in Badakhshan, a total of 12 girls were being held in the local JRC – all accused of so called “immoral crimes” – and no girl had ever been supported by a female social worker. According to the Afghan Penal Code (1976), “immoral crimes” or hudud violations are defined by and come under the jurisdiction of the sharia court. The girls in the JRC were accused of immoral crimes, which are crimes defined by the sharia court. This highlights the importance of including female social workers in this work.
men and teenage girls to be in the same rooms, or even speak to one another. Furthermore, topics of sex and sexual abuse are highly taboo in communities. Asking a male to speak with a young girl is not just socially inappropriate, but also puts girls in more vulnerable positions. These are unknown men, and should communities find out that young girls spoke with unknown men on issues of sex, the potential for harm is greatly increased. These young girls were not provided the opportunity to speak with a female social worker about their case, and therefore not able to share potentially important details. In Afghan culture, most men and women spend then lives separate and generally the only men that women or girls speak with are family members. CPAN, particularly in this instance, has failed to address this cultural norm, by not providing enough female staff. While the evaluation team recognizes that there are often cultural constraints about females being able to work outside of the home, there was limited evidence to suggest that female social workers were a priority for CPAN teams. The absence of appropriate female staffing prevents girls from fully participating in decisions regarding their livelihood, as was seen with the 12 girls being held in the JRC in Badakhshan, who had reported to the evaluation team that they had little support or understanding. A necessary step is the provision of female social workers, who can ensure young girls are receiving assistance through culturally appropriate interventions.

The Value of National Technical Assistants

As previously mentioned, the national technical assistant is responsible for providing technical support to CPAN teams in the provinces. With an expected higher capacity than most provincial CP staff, they are required specifically to do the following based on their TOR:

- Understand and implement guidelines from CPAN
- Maintain updated data base system of services in given provinces
- Ensure referral mechanisms are established in each province
- Coordinate CPAN meetings
- Accurate documentation of monitoring and response of cases
- Identify capacity gaps and capacity development among CPAN members
- Proper documentation of CP practices, innovations and response to cases
- Organise learning sessions on CP for CPAN members based on their needs
- Coordinate community dialogue at provincial and district level
- Document all CD session details

The Effectiveness of Technical Assistants

Of all respondents (266) who reported receiving technical assistance while participating in CPAN, a total of 39.8% (106) reported receiving direct assistance from the NTA – direct assistance referring to any support outside of capacity building training. Provincially, the rates of support received from NTA varied. For example, in Wardak reported assistances was the highest at 96%, followed by Kandahar with 75%, Mazar-i-Sharif with 70%, Bamyan 66% and Kabul with 65%. Direct support was particularly...
low in Kunar with 9%, and Badakhshan with 0%. This may be a result of the fact that neither Badakhshan nor Kunar have a designated NTA based in their respective province. Nevertheless, these findings suggest that NTAs are generally providing support when necessary. Special attention however, should be paid to Badakhshan and Kunar, to better ascertain the impact on limited association with NTAs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>Received Assistance from NTA*</th>
<th>Didn’t Receive Assistance from NTA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bamyan</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wardak</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kunar</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khost</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helmand</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mazar-i-Sharif</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kandahar</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nangarhar</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Herat</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Badakhshan</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kabul</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Number of CPAN members who reported receiving direct assistance from TA sourced from CPAN member survey

When CPAN members were asked the extent to which they thought assistance was useful, all respondents suggested that it was either very useful or useful. CPAN members commented that the NTA was able to help them with some of the following issues:
The NTA in Bamyan and Kabul/Wardak appeared to be some of the most active across the provinces. The Bamyan NTA was noted for taking a front-line role in child protection. He explained his role in CPAN: “I helped to build the capacity of staff in Bamyan and have worked with the justice ministry and have been building their capacity for the past seven years. I trained social workers about CP issues, how to deal with their cases and how to talk to children so they feel more relaxed and discuss their problems with us. Also, I have been able to help Bamyan CPAN to develop their overall capacity. We work on capacity building for any necessary staff member, with diligence and full responsibility.” An important note, is that the Bamyan NTA was reported as being a respected member of the communities, with many years of experience working with children. He was capable of working with local communities, who respected his opinions. The Kabul NTA on the other hand, was notable for his accuracy in managing CPAN activities and documentation. As one of the few provinces who maintained files electronically, he made regular updates to case forms.

During the evaluation process, the evaluation team was made aware that some national level CPAN members were hesitant about the effectiveness of technical assistants. For example, in Nangarhar, the CPAN team requested to replace their NTA with multiple CP officers. The NTA was replaced with a regional CP officer and two provincial officers. Without knowing the capacity of the previous NTA, it is difficult to determine the extent to which the situation has become better since their replacement. Nevertheless, the CPAN team in Nangarhar report that they are now happier with the increased numbers of staff. One CP officer commented on the replacement of the NTA. “Previously there was one NTA performing all tasks, now there are four people that can manage operations in a better way. In line with national salary scale for social workers, the salary of one NTA has been divided among 3-4 people, which allows us to carry out activities and meetings smoothly.”

In every province, staff highlighted that they lacked enough staff to manage CPAN activities and effectively address CP concerns. The NTA in Mazaar for example, highlighted the challenges he faced in fulfilling his responsibilities.

“I have to be in one of three provinces and whenever there is a workshop or seminar, the head of CPAN is asked to participate even though the meeting or workshop may not be related to CPAN at all, but I’m asked to attend. Our head of social activities is computer illiterate, so I have to do all of his work. We don’t have social workers, who else can register cases? Some of the cases you saw in the files are cases that I personally attend to ... we don’t have the available resources or human capital to follow up on cases...we just not the down in our register but we can’t pursue the cases.”

30 Wardak and Kabul currently share the same NTA
Findings suggested that overall, the capacity and knowledge of NTAs was much higher in comparison to the general capacity and knowledge of other CPAN staff, and CPAN members reported receiving helpful assistance. MoLSAMD however, needs to decide moving forward, the most relevant and effective approach – either increasing staffing but potentially having lower capacity among CPAN members and replacing NTAs in the CPAN tashkil, or continue with NTAs, at a higher cost and continued low staffing. While continuous capacity building could help to an extent, the cost of CP professionals will always inhibit the potential for more frontline staff if further funding is not provided to CPAN (discussions on the financial viability of CPAN is discussed later in the evaluation). Nevertheless, should MoLSAMD / UNICEF wish to continue with the NTA model, there needs to be closer collaboration from a national level. While NTAs report that they are overworked and understaffed, observations did suggest that some NTAs may not be as committed to their roles as stated. For example, the evaluation team noticed that some NTAs were sometimes not in the office, or decided to leave the office early on a regular basis for personal issues. Without direct management, there is the potential for NTAs and other central CPAN staff to abuse their liberty.31

Conclusions and Recommendations:

The overall structure of CPAN at a national and provincial level has proven to be relevant to the CP needs of Afghanistan. While taking a holistic approach to strengthening CP mechanisms, NCPAN and PCPANs, are designed to address strengthen the need for both preventative and responsive actions. Nevertheless, the functionality of the NCPAN and PCPAN are highly dependent on NTAs to fulfil their technical needs, as the capacity of MoLSAMD / DoLSAMD staff is still of limited levels. There is limited active leadership at both a national and provincial level, and an absence of streamline processing (as will be highlighted later). Thus, while holistic in theory, the structure practically still needs improvement.

The relevance however, of DCPAN is still questionable. While in theory, the DCPAN is the foundation for community based approaches to CP, the structure does not currently function as such. At the district level, there is an evident absence of a network. With little to no connection with government departments at district levels, limited NGO presence and no figures about the number of community-based members, responsibilities are given solely to DCPAN / DoLSAMD members. While this cannot be said about everyday DCPAN operations, with exceptions noted in Herat and Nangarhar which did show some evidence of DPCAN contributions to CP, MoLSAMD needs to consider how relevant it is to continue stretching limited resources on a tier which to date, has had little impact and poorly monitored and trained.

Likewise, the relevance and effectiveness of current staffing requires further consideration. Observations and interviews highlighted that there was a great deal of overlap between the CPAN officers and NTAs. Both were identified as predominately desk based positions, with occasional travels to provinces. While NTAs reported, they were often responsible for several provinces, evidence suggests that not all allocated provinces were being equally supported. Likewise, in central regions such as Mazar and Herat, there is a double up on positions. Furthermore, the PCPANs lack necessary front-line social workers. NTAs and CPAN officers were noted as not necessarily appropriate to conduct frontline work, especially in remote areas of a province. In these instances localised staff were far more appropriate, and should be present at a district level. Therefore, strong consideration needs to be had to determine the extent to which both NTAs and CPAN officers are the most effective and relevant model for addressing CP needs at provincial and district levels.

Furthermore, the effectiveness of the network will depend predominately on individual levels of com-

31 For exact details of these individuals, the evaluation team should be contacted independently. The team deemed it inappropriate to directly name individual CPAN officers or NTAs in this report.
commitment and motivation. While the commitment of non-central CPAN members is uncontrollable, a management and accountability processes should be introduced to ensure that central CPAN staff are performing well and fulfilling their obligations. A model should be designed where MoLSAMD and DoLSAMD are held accountable for their commitment and activity at national, provincial and district levels to enhance CPAN performance.

Finally, a lack of non-central CPAN member commitment to CPAN appears to be the results of limited understandings about the effectiveness and impact of CPAN. While members continue to attend monthly meetings, and on occasion work directly with central CPAN staff, many reported that they became disengaged with the network because they didn’t recognise the usefulness of CPAN activities. Moving forward, activities should be introduced to engage non-central CPAN members. These may be discussions in monthly meetings about the outcomes of cases, or even shared evidence that cases which have been discussed are being actively addressed. This would demonstrate to non-central CPAN members that their participation is valid and that their actions contribute to strengthening overall systems.

5.2 Effectiveness

Community Dialogue and Advocacy Work

- To what extent does CPAN aligned with the CP needs in local communities?
- To what extent are communities contributing to the prevention of CP issues?
- To what extent are communities responding to CP issues?
- Have communities increase their knowledge of Child protection issues?
- To what extent has CPAN influenced communities to prevent and respond to children at risk?

An important component of CPAN is how effectively it engages local communities on child protection. By increasing knowledge, awareness and behaviours, CPAN hopes to strengthen the potential for communities to identify, prevent and respond to children at risk. Currently, CPAN’s involvement with communities takes place through community dialogue (CD) sessions. These sessions are intended to engage community members – including elders, religious leaders and parents. Interviews highlighted that sessions, led by local community members or CPAN members, facilitated discussions on experiences and perspectives of child protection. While community dialogue sessions cannot possibly reach the entire population of a given district, it is expected that information learnt in sessions will be shared and socialised with family and friends. By tapping into informal methods of information socialisation; CPAN aims to increase the knowledge and awareness of CP and also improve practices of CP at community levels.

Awareness of Risks Facing Children

In order to assess the extent to which CPAN interventions increase awareness and knowledge of CP issues, Sayara conducted a KAP survey with comparison and treatment districts in 10 targeted provinces. A total of 23 districts were included into the CPAN KAP survey, with 14 CPAN districts and 9 non-CPAN districts. CPAN districts were identified as those which had a CPAN presence, and were reported to have hosted community dialogue sessions with local communities. A total of 1560 respondents were interviewed in CPAN districts, while 697 were interviewed in non-CPAN districts. Overall,
the evaluation team found that there was little evidence to suggest CPAN community intervention activities increased the awareness and knowledge of CP issues in CPAN associated communities. As the following findings will demonstrate, in some instances awareness was higher in districts without CPAN presence. Nevertheless, these findings should provide valuable insight into current levels of knowledge, attitudes and practices of communities. With this information, gaps in current knowledge can be identified to tailor future programing to better address emerging issues.

In certain categorized, awareness of risks was slightly higher in Non-CPAN districts (total of 697 respondents /30.9%), than in CPAN districts (with and without outreach) (total of 1560 respondents / 69.1%). While the evaluation understands that there is a myriad of variables which can account for differences in levels of awareness concerning, there is suggestive evidence to argue that community dialogue sessions may not have increased the awareness of the most immediate risks facing children in their provinces, as there is little difference between general awareness of risks in CPAN and non CPAN districts. It is important to note however, that CD sessions are often thematic, with a particular focus on one or two types of risks facing children. Commonly cited themes included ‘working under the age of 15’ and ‘child marriage.’ Nevertheless, awareness of these issues was relatively equal across comparison and treatment districts.

Looking at gender differences, there were little variation among genders in CPAN areas and Non-CPAN areas. For example, females in CPAN and Non-CPAN areas tended to have similar perceptions of risks facing children. The rate of awareness of ‘physical violence against children’ for CPAN females stood at 42.5%, while awareness of the same issue among Non-CPAN females was 48%. This was similar for neglect of children: 38.4% of CPAN females and 42.2% of Non-CPAN females suggested it was a risk. What was most obvious from findings however, were the differences in awareness or perceptions of risks among males and females. In various instances, female perceptions of risks were higher than that of males. For example, a total of 45.4% of CPAN female respondents and 62.9% of Non-CPAN female respondents reported child marriage as a risk, compared with CPAN males 36.6% and Non-CPAN males at 35.2%. This was also clear concerning the abandonment of children, with 17.9% of CPAN females and 27.3% of Non-CPAN females suggesting it was a concern, while only 2.5% of

“The biggest challenge is poverty, children are obliged to work and win bread for the family, pick up potatoes from the field, collect twigs and wood for burning…”
(Mother, Bamyan)
CPAN males and 7.7% of Non-CPAN males. These findings demonstrate that, while there are little differences among CPAN and Non-CPAN, males and females do have different understandings of the risks facing children. These differences should be kept in consideration when designing community dialogue sessions. For example, the below tables highlights where males and females potentially have lower levels of awareness. These could be potential thematic topics for future sessions, ensuring that the community on the whole has an understanding of the potential threats facing children.

### Gender Disaggregation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender Disaggregation</th>
<th>CPAN</th>
<th>Non-CPAN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working Under the Age of 15</td>
<td>65.40%</td>
<td>80.90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attacks Against Hospitals</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>0.90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unaccompanied Children</td>
<td>17.30%</td>
<td>20.30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Recruitment by Armed Forces</td>
<td>8.40%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attacks Against Schools</td>
<td>11.50%</td>
<td>3.20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Killing and Maiming Children</td>
<td>13.10%</td>
<td>4.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Violence Against Children</td>
<td>42.50%</td>
<td>49.80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child in Conflict with the Law</td>
<td>5.60%</td>
<td>1.90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neglect of Children</td>
<td>38.40%</td>
<td>35.60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baad</td>
<td>19.40%</td>
<td>11.30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Street Children</td>
<td>18.80%</td>
<td>24.90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abandonment of children</td>
<td>17.90%</td>
<td>2.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kidnapping</td>
<td>23.50%</td>
<td>9.30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual Violence</td>
<td>23.30%</td>
<td>11.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Marriage</td>
<td>45.40%</td>
<td>36.60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children with Disability</td>
<td>30.90%</td>
<td>29.50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Marriage of Girls Under the Age of 15

Across the board, respondents either somewhat or strongly agreed that marriage of girls under the age of 15 was unacceptable. The overall rate of disapproval was 86.5%. Surprisingly, however, in Non-CPAN districts the rate of disapproval was even higher (92.6%) compared to CPAN districts (85.2%). Among those who reported having received information on child protection in the past 10 months, statistics were again similar. For those from Non CPAN areas and reported receiving CP information, the rate was 90.9%, for those from CPAN districts with no outreach work and received CP information, the rate was 81.1% and finally those from CPAN districts with outreach and had received CP information was 80.9%.
Further analysis showed that 4.8% of respondents from CPAN districts agreed with child marriage, versus 2.2% from Non-CPAN Districts. More specifically, the analysis found that, out of the 146 individuals who ‘agreed’ with early marriage, 69.2% were from CPAN districts.

Looking closely at differences within provinces, there also appears to be little difference between CPAN and Non CPAN districts. The following table highlights examples from three provinces – Nangarhar, Kandahar and Herat. The table demonstrates that, among CPAN districts and Non-CPAN districts, there was little difference among attitudes that ‘child marriage’ was inappropriate.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>District</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither Agree or Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly or Somewhat Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nangarhar</td>
<td>Beshood (CPAN)</td>
<td>96.7%</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lalpor (CPAN)</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kuz Kunar (Non-CPAN)</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kandahar</td>
<td>Daman (CPAN)</td>
<td>96.7%</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kandahar City (CPAN)</td>
<td>73.4%</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
<td>13.2%</td>
<td>6.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Spinboldak (CPAN)</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
<td>6.3%</td>
<td>11.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Maiwand (Non-CPAN)</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Herat</td>
<td>Herat City (CPAN)</td>
<td>95.8%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Adraskhan (Non CPAN)</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Karokh (CPAN)</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Koshk (CPAN)</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While these three provinces are only a sample, findings were similar across the provinces. There was also limited difference between urban and rural regions. Findings suggested that 86.2% of rural respondents either somewhat disagreed or strongly disagreed with child marriage, versus 89.5% in urban areas reported that they strongly disagreed. A total of 72.5% of females from urban areas strongly disagreed, compared with 78.6% in rural areas. Among males, 93.1% from urban areas strongly disagreed with child marriage, compared with 80.6% in rural areas. This suggests that, while there is a limited difference between CPAN and non CPAN districts, awareness is generally high that child marriage practices are unacceptable. Furthermore, it appears that awareness may not be a result of CPAN advocacy work, but rather the high levels of disapproval may be general knowledge among communities, despite the fact that child marriage continues in spite of this knowledge. Therefore, future advocacy work should focus on alternatives for families who practice child marriage.

**Acceptability of Children Under the Age of 15 to Work and Not Go to School**

Generally, respondents also reported that it was unacceptable for children under the age of 15 to work and not go to school. For those in CPAN districts with outreach a total of 82.7% disagreed with children working and not attending school, while in CPAN districts with no outreach the rate of disagreement was 86.1% and in non CPAN districts the rate was 92.7%. Rates again were similar among those who reported receiving information on CP in the past year. For those who had received CP information the rate in non CPAN districts was 88.1%, in CPAN districts with no outreach 84.4% and in CPAN districts with outreach 80.4%. The evaluation team did not assess the extent to which other organisations were working in non-CPAN areas, as this was outside the scope of this evaluation. Further mapping exercises would need to be conducted to better ascertain the extent to which non-CPAN communities may be influences by other CP stakeholders.
Looking closely at districts, little difference appeared among CPAN and non CPAN districts. In Kandahar for example, in Daman (CPAN district), a total of 93.3% disagreed that children under 15 should work and not attend school. In Kandahar City (CPAN district) it was similar with 81%, and slightly lower in Spinboldark (CPAN district) with 78.8%. In Maiwand (Non-CPAN district) the rate was 80%.

As the bar graph below also highlights, there was little variation between males and females, who had relatively similar attitudes that children working under the age of 15 was inappropriate. Interestingly however, respondents from CPAN districts with outreach had lower levels of disagreement.

**Rural and Urban Differences:**

Further analysis however, revealed that there were significant differences between CPAN and Non-CPAN districts when comparing urban and rural areas. At the urban level, most respondents who disagree with having children work instead of attending school were from Non-CPAN districts with 69.4% and CPAN with 34.1%. This suggests that there needs to be a greater push in urban CPAN districts. In rural areas, people from CPAN-districts are more likely to disagree with having children work instead of attending school (84.5%). However, we also find that the majority of individuals from non-CPAN districts (94.7%) in rural areas also disagree with children having to work over getting an education.

Again, there is little evidence to suggest that CPAN interventions have had any impact on attitudes towards CP regarding children working under the age of 15. While participants were generally aware
that child labour was unacceptable, children were still working in place of going to school. Although, similarly to early child marriage, rates suggest that the general population is aware that working in place of education is not appropriate for children under the age of 15. This also shows that simply passing the message that child labour is inappropriate may not be the most effective means of countering such practices, and that the identification and targeting of specific factors may be needed.

**Acceptance of Care Givers Beating Children**

Respondents were asked to what extent they agreed that it was acceptable for a care giver to beat a child who behaved badly. Care givers here refers to anyone who was responsible for a child’s well-being when in their custody. This included teachers, religious leaders, parents, family members, and community leaders. Findings suggest a mixed response regarding the acceptability of beating children. For respondents from Non CPAN districts, a total of 54.7% disagreed with beating children if they behaved badly. This was similar in CPAN districts with outreach activities, which had a rate of disagreement of 40.2%, but noticeably lower in CPAN districts with no outreach, where the rate was 35.2%. For those who reported receiving CP information over the past year, in Non CPAN districts the response was 37.8% who disagreed with a care giver beating a child. In CPAN districts with no outreach activities, the rate was 11.7%. In CPAN districts with outreach activities, the rate was 27.3%.

**Gender Differences**

When looking closely at gender, there was some slight difference. As the above table highlights, the extent to which women agree that beating a child is acceptable is mixed. A total of 53.6% either strongly or somewhat agree with beating a child, while 39.5% either somewhat or strongly disagree with beating a child. Males, on the other hand, were more likely to disagree with beating a child. For example, a total of 54% of males reported that they either strongly disagreed or somewhat disagreed with beating a child. Only 39.2% strongly or somewhat agreed. There are various reasons why this may be the case, but it was not incorporated into this particular study. This thematic area however, could be explored in greater depth in community dialogue sessions. Such sessions could foster discussion and a better understanding of the wide split in opinions concerning the appropriateness of beating children.

**Rural and Urban Differences:**

Further differences appeared between urban and rural areas. In urban areas, findings reveal a signif-
significant relationship between CPAN presence and acceptance of physical abuse. In fact, analysis found that residents in Non-CPAN districts are less likely to approve of physical abuse of children than those from CPAN districts. A positive correlation suggests that the likelier one is to live in Non-CPAN district, the likelier they are to disagree with physically abusing of children. From all urban surveyed areas, the 14% who agree with physically abusing children are from CPAN districts, and 8.7% from Non-CPAN districts.

In rural areas, however, findings are slightly different. In CPAN districts, a total of 41.4% of respondents reported either strongly or somewhat approving of beating children. Of those from non-CPAN districts, only 32.9% reported that they either strongly or somewhat agreed with beating children. While there is little evidence to suggest these are correlated to community dialogue sessions, it does highlight that in rural areas there is greater acceptance of beating children.

The evaluation team did further inferential analysis to look at predictors (location, age and gender), to explore attitudes towards child abuse. Findings were also stratified by CPAN presence. The model proved that gender and location are significant indicators of attitudes, regardless of CPAN presence. Age, however, does not appear to significantly predict attitudes. Results found that Afghans living in urban districts, with or without CPAN were significantly more likely to disagree with physical abuse. Furthermore, the model predicts that Afghan women are significantly more likely to agree with physical abuse than Afghan men, although this finding only holds for women in CPAN districts, whereas it is in the inverse district without CPAN.

*Parental Beating of Children is a Private Matter*

Respondents were further asked to what extent they agreed that a parent beating their children was a private matter. From Non CPAN districts, a total of 44.8% disagreed that beating a child was a private matter. From CPAN districts with outreach activities a total of 32.4% of respondents disagreed that beating children was a private matter and from CPAN districts with no outreach the rate was 28.6%. Rates were similar among those who reported receiving information about CP in the past year. For those from non CPAN districts the rate was 24.5%, from CPAN district with no outreach the rate was 11.7% and those from CPAN districts with outreach activities 21.3%.

*Awareness of Laws, Services and Resources*

*Awareness of Laws*

Respondents were first asked whether they were aware of any specific laws in Afghanistan that were relevant to CP. Awareness of laws was particularly low, with an average of 22.6% across all provinces. Among Non CPAN districts awareness of laws was reported at 20.4%. In CPAN districts with no outreach activities the rate was 26.4% and for CPAN districts with outreach the rate was 22.3%. Nevertheless, Chi-squared indicated that there was a statistically significant difference among awareness in CPAN areas. These are statistically significant at the 99% confidence interval. This suggests that there might be important differences between each CPAN association, but at the same time there is no qualitative evidence that points to what types of differences these might be. As there are too many potential variables which could explain
these difference, it is challenging to create a standardized measurement. Much awareness may depend predominantly on the individual, and therefore specific patterns cannot be identified from these data. Data cannot highlight systematic differences, only circumstantial differences across the different location types.

Nevertheless, among respondents who reported that they had received information about CP in the last year, rates were slightly higher. In Non-CPAN districts, the rate of awareness was 51.7%, in CPAN districts with no outreach the rate was 50.6% and in CPAN districts with outreach the rate was 47.1%. These findings suggest that exposure to CP information may have an impact on the level of awareness of laws associated with CP. Although, rates were still higher in Non CPAN districts and CPAN districts with no outreach, there was no evidence to suggest that CPAN community outreach activities have increased the level of awareness about laws in Afghanistan.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General Awareness</th>
<th>Awareness when exposed to CP information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CPAN no Outreach</td>
<td>26.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-CPAN</td>
<td>20.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPAN with Outreach</td>
<td>22.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Findings therefore, suggest that individuals who received information about child protection in the last year have potentially had greater exposure to laws involving the rights of children. Furthermore, respondents from CPAN districts are more likely to know about existing CP laws than respondents from Non-CPAN. Finally, effects were the greatest at the urban level. Analysis showed that 74.3% of all urban respondents were unaware of child protection laws, 55.9% of which were from Non-CPAN districts. Therefore, overall CPAN district respondents were significantly more aware of child protection laws than their Non-CPAN counterparts, particularly in urban areas.

The Types of Law Cited by Respondents

Of those respondents who reported knowledge of laws, the following table breaks down the content of the law. Despite the fact that there is little to no official legislation regarding child protection, the highest cited subject of law included ‘child’s right to education’ with an average of 75%, and ‘child marriage’ with an average of 64%. Nevertheless, awareness that a law existed prohibiting ‘child marriage’ was much higher in CPAN districts with 97%, and lower in Non-CPAN districts with 42%. There was little to no awareness however of any legislation regarding theft and criminal activity or child recruitment by armed forces.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject of Law</th>
<th>Percentage Who Reported They Knew a Law Concerning this Issue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CPAN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Marriage</td>
<td>97%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Abuse</td>
<td>54.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Labour</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual Abuse</td>
<td>13.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theft and Criminal Activity</td>
<td>0.04%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child Recruitment By Armed Forces or Armed Groups</td>
<td>0.01%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
These findings suggest that awareness of CP laws are thematic. Research found that respondents in both CPAN and non-CPAN areas had low awareness of child labour, sexual abuse issues, children in conflict with the law. The highest levels of awareness regard child marriage and the right to education. CPAN districts had the highest awareness of laws related to child marriage in comparison to Non-CPAN districts. This may suggest there is a correlation between awareness and exposure to information presented through community dialogue sessions. One of the most commonly cited themes of community dialogue sessions was child marriage, and awareness of child marriage as illegal was particularly high in these areas.

Sources of Information on Law

One concerning finding is the low rate of respondents who cited that they received information about laws from community based events. Of those who reported knowing about laws regarding CP, the most commonly cited source of information was from radio and television, rather than community based interventions. Government official and community events were the least cited option with CPAN districts with no outreach recording 0.006% and CPAN districts reporting 0.01%.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Non CPAN</th>
<th>CPAN no outreach</th>
<th>CPAN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Radio</td>
<td>Radio – 49%</td>
<td>Radio – 57%</td>
<td>Radio – 49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TV</td>
<td>TV 33%</td>
<td>TV 22%</td>
<td>TV 15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mosque</td>
<td>Mosque 0.05%</td>
<td>Mosque 0.06%</td>
<td>School 0.09%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Awareness of Where to Discuss or Report Issues of Child Protection

Respondents were asked whether they were aware of people or places they could go to report or discuss CP issues. The greatest awareness was noted in CPAN districts with no outreach (51.6%), followed by CPAN with outreach (23.2%). Figures were not higher among respondents who reported receiving information over the past 6 months. In fact, awareness was lower. This suggests that overall, perceived awareness of where to discuss or report CP is generally low in CPAN and Non-CPAN areas. Furthermore, being exposed to CP information also does not necessary increase the rate of awareness of where to report issues of CP.

Interestingly, there were significant disparities across the provinces. In Badakhshan for example, perceived awareness of where to discuss or report CP issues was slightly higher in CPAN with no outreach (70%) and non-CPAN district (74.8%). In Nangarhar results show that 17.5% of respondents in CPAN locations were aware and in non-CPAN areas rates were 27.5%.

As the tables below highlights, there was relatively low awareness of where to report issues of CP. Furthermore, findings suggest that being part of a CPAN district had little impact on awareness. In fact, the most relevant indicator for awareness of where to report findings actually appears to be the province. Therefore, moving forward, CPAN should place a particular focus on building the awareness with community members about where and with whom people can discuss issues of CP.
Furthermore, findings also highlighted the extent to which respondents who reported receiving information about CP in the last year knew where to report issues of CP. Overall, findings suggest that their knowledge and awareness was also particularly low. While these findings do not suggest that information was received through CPAN directly, it does demonstrate that respondents in CPAN districts, and had had exposure to CP information, but awareness was most regarding where to report incidences of CP. Only a total of 1.1% could suggest that they knew where to report incidences of child abuse, exploitation or violence. This further highlights that there may be little correlation between the presence of CPAN and overall community awareness of how to report child abuse. While reporting mechanisms may be discussed in community dialogue sessions, they do not appear to be translating to the broader community.
Awareness of CPAN and Experience with Child Abuse, Exploitation, Violence and Neglect

*Awareness of CPAN*

Respondents were directly asked whether they had heard of CPAN in their community. A total of 4.5% of all respondents, in CPAN and non-CPAN districts reported being aware of CPAN. Awareness of CPAN was higher in districts where CPAN had a presence, and significantly lower in non CPAN districts. Of those from CPAN districts a total of 4.5% (53) had heard of CPAN, in CPAN districts with no outreach activities there was a total of 8.3% (45) who had heard of CPAN and in Non CPAN districts the total was 2.2% (17).
Disaggregated by province, there were some slight differences. As the graph below shows, there was relatively little awareness of CPAN in most of the target districts. There was however, greater awareness in Bamyan 25% (35).

Of those who reported knowing CPAN, they were asked to describe what CPAN was. The following were the most commonly cited responses:

- A charity NGO for children
- Programmes for saving children
- International community that works for the rights of children
- Health and education programme
- Don’t know

Therefore, while there are some respondents who reported hearing of CPAN, their understanding of CPAN and its work is not accurate. Therefore, there should be a stronger focus on promoting CPAN and its role concerning children and child protection at ongoing community dialogue sessions. FGDs demonstrated that one of the biggest concerns about child protection was that families are not readily able to identify a point of contact for reporting children at risk. Promoting CPAN as this point of contact, may be an active step towards not only increasing awareness but allowing CPAN to become a public symbol associated with child protection.

Experiences with Child Protection and Child Abuse

Respondents were asked if they had ever seen or heard of an incident of either violence, abuse, neglect or exploitation in the community. As the graph to the right demonstrates, a total of 28.9% (201) respondents reported that they had witnessed a child protection issue. This was similar in CPAN without outreach with 27.7% (80) and in CPAN with outreach with 26.10% (331).

The province with the highest rate of respondents who reported seeing an incident of CP was in Badakhshan with 54.7%, Nangarhar with 51.2%, Kunar with 39.1%. Lowest reports were in Kabul (10%), Herat (24.7%), Kandahar (28.8%), Mazaar (9.6%), Khost (25%), Wardak (7.5%), Bamyan (20%). The table below presents the breakdown of respondents who identified an incident of child abuse, violence, exploitation or neglect within each province and also broken down by CPAN and Non-CPAN districts. It is important to keep in mind however, as previously discussed, that awareness of various types of risk facing children was generally low, ultimately affecting a respondent’s capacity to identify children at risk.

As we can see, in some provinces the evaluation showed that CPAN districts had a higher number of respondents who had identified a type of violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect. In Kandahar for example, there was a dramatic difference between Non-CPAN and CPAN districts, with 12 reports in non CPAN districts and 152 in CPAN districts. This was similar in Nangarhar with 16 reports in non CPAN districts and 66 reports in CPAN districts. This however, was not the case in Kabul, Herat and Mazaar.
Of those who reported seeing an incident of a child at risk, the most common response among Non-CPAN members was ‘to keep quiet / do nothing’ with 46%, followed by ‘reported abuse’ and comfort the child with 20%. For CPAN with outreach the most commonly cited response was also ‘keep quiet and do nothing’ with 53%, followed by report abuse with 24%. In CPAN districts with no outreach the most common response was to also ‘keep quiet / did nothing’ with 44%, or comfort the child with 43%. Interestingly, there is notably little difference between the behaviours of community members in CPAN districts and Non-CPAN districts. In fact, findings suggest that respondents in CPAN districts were more likely to ‘keep quiet / do nothing’ compared with Non-CPAN districts.

When respondents were asked why they didn’t report the incident, the most commonly cited reason for not reporting was ‘not knowing where or who to report to’ (37.5%), followed by ‘no action is likely to be taken if I report an incident’ (20.1%).
Within CPAN and Non-CPAN districts

When looking closely at the data comparing Non CPAN, CPAN without outreach or CPAN with outreach districts, we notice limited differences in the underlying reasons for which respondents did not report an incident of abuse. The most common reason for not reporting was still ‘don’t know where or to whom to report.’ In Non CPAN districts respondents were more likely to cite ‘don’t know where to or to whom to report’ than any other reason. This was the same for CPAN districts with outreach. In CPAN districts without outreach, the most commonly cited reason for not reporting was that the issues was considered as ‘not my business.’ These findings however, suggest that the three biggest barriers preventing communities from reporting incidences of child abuse include:

1. Community members don’t know who to report to
2. Community members believe no action is likely to take place
3. Community members believe that it was not their business

Therefore, for future programming it is important to not just provide members with phone numbers of CPAN members but also communicate some of the following:

- The wide sources of CP supporters including local police, community elders / religious leaders, CPAN, local NGOs and government members.
- Provide communities with an understanding of the processes of CP and highlighting the type of support and services CPAN can provide to children and families at risk
- Encouraging the importance of protecting children, and that it is the responsibility of the local community to identify and support any child at risk – irrespective of community’s relation to the child at risk.

Respondents Who Identified and Reported Incidences of Child Abuse, Exploitation, Violence and Neglect

Of the 27.1% of respondents who reported seeing an incident of child abuse, and 5.4% who reported these incidences, a total of 40 people (5.8%) were from Non CPAN districts, 4 people (1.4%) from CPAN with no outreach and 78 people (6.2%) from CPAN with outreach. As the below graph demonstrates, of those who reported an incident of child abuse, the most common point of contact was com-
munity elders. This was highest in **CPAN without outreach** with (75%), followed by **Non-CPAN** districts (56.1%) and **CPAN** districts (39.5%). In **CPAN** districts, this was followed by the police (20.7% / 17), government officials (7.3% / 6) and mullahs (6.1% / 5). For **Non CPAN** districts the most common point of contact was also community elders (39.5% / 17), mullah (23.3% / 10), police (16.3% / 7).

In control and treatment FGDs, participants were asked how they would respond if they saw a child at risk. There were slight differences among respondents. While most reported that they would talk to a community leaders, those who had been involved and directly assisted from CPAN often suggested that they would contact them again if a child was a risk. Roughly half of the participants in the treatment FGD in Bamyan reported that they would contact CPAN or DoLSAMD. One mother suggested “I will do my best to help, there are organisations helping children, we can also contact CPAN and report to them…” The other half however, commented that they would try to help a child but did not know who to contact.

**Experiences with CPAN**

During treatment comparison groups, the most common pathways of identifying and communicating with CPAN appeared to be either through mutual acquaintances or by visiting the DoLSAMD office. There were no target groups who reported knowing about CPAN prior to receiving assistance from them. For example, a woman in Bamyan described how she personally went to DoLSAMD in Bamyan and asked for assistance concerning her disabled son. She requested that her son and other children be put in a shelter because she could not care for them. By talking with DoLSAMD she was put in contact with one of the central CPAN staff. Another example from Bamyan highlighted how a woman was put in touch with the Bamyan TA through a mutual friend they had in their village.

These findings suggest several things:

- The most commonly used points of contact appear to be community based elders or mullahs. As a trusted and accessible source of information, communities refer to these sources of
information. Therefore, special considerations should be made during community dialogue sessions to not only increase the awareness of community members but also that to increase the capacity of mullahs and community leaders to refer cases actively, onto CPAN.

- Additionally, police are still valid points of contact for reporting cases of children at risk. Nevertheless, it is unclear which types of risks are commonly reported to police.

Finally, it is essential to highlight that local NGOs and Government officials are not commonly used among communities in both CPAN and non CPAN areas. Qualitative interviews highlighted that this is either because local communities are not directly aware of the pathways to contact NGOs or government officials, or that they are simply not accessible to more rural communities. NGOs and government officials work heavily at a provincial level. Therefore, there should be a specific focus identifying appropriate focal points within rural and urban communities, in addition to creating pathways for information to move to NGOs and Provincial government groups when necessary.

Need for Child Protection Services

Overwhelmingly a total of 97.5% of respondents in the 9 targeted provinces reported that they thought more child protection services were necessary in their communities. It was similar among Non CPAN districts (97.7%), CPAN with no outreach (99.7%) and CPAN with outreach (97.2%). Results were relatively the same except in Kabul where only 72.9% of respondents thought that child protection services were required.

Exposure to Child Protection Information

Respondents were also asked whether in the last year they had received information about child protection in their community. A total of 24.9% of all respondents reported hearing information about child protection. Figures were similar among men and women. In non-CPAN a total of 19% of men reported heading information, and 15.3% of women. In CPAN with no outreach the rate was 28.9% male and 24.3% female. In CPAN districts the rate was 24.7% male and 34.2% female.

Rates however, were slightly higher in CPAN areas with outreach, suggesting that more respondents had been exposed to information on CP.
Looking closely at the provinces however, rates of respondents who reported hearing about CP were mixed. The following table highlights these results:

![Rate of Respondents who Reported Hearing Information about CP](image)

Among respondents from CPAN districts, the highest rate of exposure was seen in Nangarhar (50.8%), Kandahar (41.3%) and Bamyan (40%). Rates were significantly lower in other provinces, particularly in Herat (8.5%), Khost (22.5%), Wardak (4.4%) and Kabul with (3.3%). Interestingly however, rates of awareness were still particularly high in non CPAN areas. In Badakhshan for example, 62.5% of respondents reported hearing about CP issues, while in Kunar 88.3% also reported.

![Media of Communication from which Respondents Heard about CP](image)

When respondents were asked from where they heard information about CP, the majority reported they heard information from radio (48.8%), followed by television (17.7%) and at the mosque (14.7%). Among respondents who were from CPAN districts, the most common source of information was also radio (61.8%), at the mosque (15.6%) and TV (12.6%). A total of four respondents suggested that they had heard information from community events. Qualitative information however, suggested that many community dialogue sessions take place in mosques.

Nevertheless, as the above graph demonstrates, information concerning CP does not appear to be generated from a grassroots / community level. This further suggests, that messaging from community dialogue sessions may not be reaching the wider community. Further research would need to be conducted specifically on community dialogue sessions to better understand their scope.

In addition to asking where they heard about CP information, respondents were also asked to identify
what themes the information spoke about. The most common theme was ‘rights of children’ (47.7%), followed by ‘not beating children’ (35%) and ‘types of violence experienced by children’ (9.2%). Some of the biggest gaps however, were seen in ‘what do you do if you see/ hear about a child protection issue.’ A total of 4.4% of respondents had heard about what to do if you see children and risk, and 1.7% about ‘services available to children who are at risk.’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Not Beating Children</th>
<th>Non CPAN</th>
<th>CPAN no Outreach</th>
<th>CPAN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rights of Children</td>
<td>52.9%</td>
<td>59.7%</td>
<td>44.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Types of Violence, Abuse and Exploitation that face Children</td>
<td>12.6%</td>
<td>10.4%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What to do if you see / hear about child protection issues</td>
<td>8.7%</td>
<td>14.2%</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services available to children at risk</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some participants in FGD groups highlighted that they had participated in some community events which spoke about CP. One female from Bamyan reported that she participated in a community dialogue session. She commented that a workshop by CPAN came to her village, and “they spoke about child labour, child marriage and badal...They shed light on these issues, they advised us on CP issues and in the end the people promised to stop these violations in their communities.” Another participant cited her experience participating in an information session with the Human Rights Commission. Both participants reported that the dialogue sessions appeared to make a good impression on the audience, and they seemed receptive to the information presented. They also reported that after these sessions people spoke about the lessons learnt in these sessions.

Findings from FGDs also suggests that those from comparison groups – Non-target groups – do appear to have lower exposure, experience and knowledge. For example, in Khost, no participants reported being involved in community events about child protection. They all reported however, that they thought it was very relevant to discuss CP issues among families. One male from Khost commented, “there are very few people and very rarely have I encountered people who are talking about child protection issues”. This is a society where, even if you talk to someone about something good, in a sweet tone, they will still mind it – because they think they already know everything. There are so many people who don’t listen to others and think they are right about all issues.”

Conclusions and Recommendations

In order to measure the effectiveness of CPAN’s advocacy work, the evaluation team hypothesised that individuals in CPAN districts should have a greater awareness of child protection and hopefully greater involvement in strengthening child protection mechanisms at a community level. These individuals should be more sensitised to CP dialogue, and therefore performed better in survey questions. While the use of a survey can identify differences in sensitivities towards CP, answers cannot be considered as causations, but rather correlations. As the research team was unable to provide account for counterfactual characteristics, we can only suggest that community dialogue sessions have done little increase wider community awareness of CP. It is important to take into account that there are potentially other confounding factors which correlations cannot take into account.
Therefore, Sayara was interested in exploring evidence of higher sensitivity. Nevertheless, based on this analysis, the evaluation team has been unable with any confidence to see an increase in knowledge and awareness of child protection. With a comparison between control and treatment districts (Non-CPAN vs CPAN), there was little evidence that residences in CPAN districts had greater sensitivity towards child protection practices. Overall, there was a limited awareness of risks facing children and the vulnerabilities which put them more at risk. Furthermore, most respondents were unable to identify to whom and how to identify children at risk and report incidences of CP violations. Of those who reported hearing information about CP over the past year, the majority stated that information came from TV and radio, rather than through community based events, or even through family and friends. Finally, apart from individual exceptions, there was little evidence to suggest that as a result of CPAN interventions, communities played an active role contributing to the prevention of CP violations. The only exception to these findings was the increased awareness of child marriage as an illegal practice. While there has been a significant focus on child marriage over the past few years, particularly in community dialogue sessions, there is still not enough evidence to suggest that the high levels of awareness concerning issues of child marriage can be directly correlated to community dialogue sessions. While the value of community dialogue sessions cannot be denied, the evaluation team suggests that community dialogue sessions do not go far enough to reach the widest audience, or influence attitude and behaviours change regarding children at risk. As suggested, it may be more suitable if CPAN were not directly responsible for community dialogue sessions. This appeared to conflict with schedules and capabilities. Based on these findings, the evaluation team cannot say with any confidence that community dialogue sessions alone, are enough to strengthen community based child protection mechanisms. While community dialogues are a proven approach to sharing information about issues at a community level, this one activity alone is not enough to socialise information and whereby internalise it among families. Sayara’s past research projects have explored the socialisation of information among Afghans.32 Research looked at patterns of how families source information, and how it was subsequently internalised. It is only through helping communities internalise information on CP that advocacy activities can hope to increase levels of sensitivity toward CP, whereby strengthening grass-roots protection mechanisms.33

Findings from this and previous research, highlight that information landscapes are continuously changing. With a rise in popularity and availability of television and radio, communities are identifying other sources of information with which to form opinions on their lives.34 When respondents in this survey were asked where they had heard about CP, the most common responses were TV and Radio. This suggests that irrespective of the types of information they hear in their own community, most identify their sources of information as TV and radio. One of the benefits of technology based information is that it provides audiences with technical information that local sources of information (such as religious leaders and community elders,) may not be familiar with. Sayara’s prior research found that when people are asked why they listen to radio and TV, a large part is because of its accessibility and professional presentation of information.35 Audiences recognise that these are sources of information feeding outreach information and often available in their own houses. Research however, has yet to determine however, the extent to which information seen on TV and radio is trusted and internalised. This use of technical sources of information however, should not be used in place of local and trusted sources of information. As these findings suggested, there appears to be a great deal

---

33 Ibid, 2016
34 Ibid, 2016
of trust in local elders. For example, for respondents who cited that they reported an incident of CP, they most commonly reported it to community elders. Previous research found that often, community members (particularly in rural areas), gave more value to the opinions of community elders than to television and radio. Community elders and religious leaders play an important role in circulating information; therefore, a key point of contact in communities should be local elders and religious leaders. Though they alone cannot influence and increase knowledge and attitudes concerning CP, they should be an important part of the process of socialising information.

Furthermore, it is important to keep in mind that individuals are often only interested in seeking out information and internalising it, when it is of interest to them. As this evaluation has found, communities have limited awareness of child protection issues, and limited knowledge about how to best deal with children at risk. Communities need to not only increase their knowledge on CP, but also understand why this knowledge is important for them. UNICEF and MoLSAMD should therefore, think not only about the themes of community dialogue sessions, but also about how to better structure advocacy work that is relevant to the needs and interests of communities. Simply using community dialogues sessions does not go far enough to reach wide audiences, nor to inform communities about how they can practically strengthen CP mechanisms. Community dialogues alone cannot fill the void of information which currently exists about CP. The evaluation team recognises that there are significant resource restrictions concerning advocacy work. Nevertheless, without making advocacy activities formal obligations, there is little incentive for provincial and districts CPANs to make active efforts at not just conducting community dialogue sessions, but also implementing other advocacy activities. Furthermore, previous research also found that audiences were more receptive to outreach information when it was ‘shown’ rather than ‘told.’ While CPAN members highlighted that many community dialogue sessions involved them telling community members about the risks facing children, activities which ‘showed’ these risks were rarely reported. Moving forward, UNICEF and MoLSAMD should consider how to better integrate activities which ‘show’ audiences how to strengthen CP practices.

Focused discussions need to be had within MoLSAMD and UNICEF concerning community dialogue sessions, questioning the extent to which they are the most practical means of conducting community based advocacy work. Attempts need to be made to take into account how information moves within communities, how individuals source information, trusted sources of information and how then, this information is internalised and can influence attitudes and practices concerning child protection.

Some sustainable examples may include the following examples may include the following:

- **Community Based Theatre:** This could involve the use of mobile theatres, whereby an audience is shown, for example, a mother who has to make a decision between sending her son to work and sending him to school. Ultimately the mother made the decision to send her son to work, but it was physically laborious and he could not continue. Therefore, not only did the family not have money, but he also had no education. To internalise the risks facing children, communities need to understand the realistic consequences of children who are put at risk and the impact this can have, not just on the child but on the family. In this approach, rather than telling audiences that child labour and child marriage is bad (which most respondents already reported knowing), activities need to demonstrate the negative effects of such practices in a relatable way. Families who feel they have no choice but to send their children to work, need to be informed of the outcomes and whereby make informed decisions about the potential consequences of making their children work or marrying their child before legal age.

- **Collaboration with local mosques and religious leaders** to introduce weekly comments about
children who have been identified at risk, and how the community can support them.

- Community advocacy work should aim to illustrate others who have adopted child protection practices. This can demonstrate to communities the benefits of adopting such practices in their own lives. Likewise, efforts should be made to demonstrate those who have adopted such practices, are similar to the target audience, whereby increasing a level of trust and increasing the likelihood of communities to appropriate such practices.

- Community advocacy work may be out of the scope and capacity of many central CPAN members. UNICEF therefore, should consider separating the prevention activities – such as community dialogue, and response activities – case management. Central CPAN teams regularly commented that they were unable to handle the ‘burden’ of both case management work, advocacy work and their ‘other’ responsibilities within DoLSAMD.

5.2.1 Member Awareness of CPAN and CP

- Have CPAN members increased their knowledge of child protection issues?

The evaluation team is unable to determine the extent to which CPAN members have increased their knowledge and awareness of CP issues since they joined CPAN, as no baseline or monitoring activities were conducted to measure improvements. Therefore, this section is focused on measuring the extent to which CPAN members currently have the appropriate knowledge and awareness of CP violence and practices.

Awareness of Risks Facing Children

Firstly, survey results suggest that there may be gaps among CPAN members regarding their awareness on the types and extent of problems facing children in Afghanistan. During the survey, CPAN members were asked which of the above-mentioned risks were problems for children in Afghanistan. Finding suggest that the highest number of CPAN members are aware of the risk of ‘children working under the age of 15’ (95.1%), followed by ‘physical violence against children’ (78.4%) and ‘child marriage’ with (80.2%). Lower awareness included the ‘abandonment of children’ (50.4%), ‘kidnapping’ (47.4%), ‘children in conflict with the law’ (47.8%) and the ‘killing and maiming of children’ (38.8%). While interviews and desk reviews highlight that CPAN members are familiar working with abandoned children and children in conflict with the law, these findings may suggest that these partic-
ular risks are not easily recognised as particular threats facing children’s safety, but rather ‘issues that children find themselves in. Notably, these findings were reflected in key informant interviews. Issues of abandonment and children in conflict with the law were rarely cited as risks facing children.

When CPAN members were asked on which issues CPAN focused, they suggested ‘child labour’ (72.4%), ‘child marriage’ (60.4%) and ‘physical violence against children’ (50.7%). These findings however, contradict the types of cases which were reported in case files and those discussed by CPAN members. For example, in all provinces the most predominant reported case type was ‘children in conflict with the law.’ Survey results however, suggest that less than half of CPAN members recognised ‘children in conflict with the law’ as a problem facing children and that only 47.8% of respondents thought that CPAN worked on such cases. Furthermore, there were little to no case files demonstrating that CPAN worked on issues of ‘children working under age.’ This shows a disconnect between the types of problems CPAN members reported that they deal with and the types of problems that 1) their case files document, and 2) what problems community members perceive them as dealing with.

General awareness of situations which make children more vulnerable, were mixed among CPAN members. Although 92.2% of respondents were able to identify poverty as a vulnerability, less than half were able to identify other common vulnerabilities such as armed conflict (41.8%), harmful traditional practices (40.7%), remote geographic locations (22%) and age (19.4%). While the evaluation team does not question that CPAN members are aware of the risk of conflict and harmful traditional practices. It appears however, that they are not readily identified as vulnerabilities. Further support needs to be provided to ensure CPAN members, especially central CPAN staff, can accurately identify the myriad of vulnerabilities facing children. The identification of vulnerabilities is essential to providing children with the most appropriate and effective support.
### AWARENESS OF CPAN ACTIVITIES

The evaluation team also wanted to understand the extent to which CPAN members understood the purpose and activities of CPAN.

Awareness of activities were highest among UNICEF staff, TAs and child protection officers. As the contingency table below highlights, UNICEF staff, NTAs were the only CPAN members that scored over 50% for every area of CPAN activity. Nevertheless, awareness of the roles and purpose of CPAN appeared to be limited among non-key CPAN members. This was particularly evident with Ministry officials, police officers, social workers, prosecutors and youth workers.

#### Roles and Awareness of CPAN Activities (Disaggregated by position)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Support the Development of Policies to Respond to CP issues</th>
<th>Collecting Information on CP Cases</th>
<th>Conduct Regular Follow Up With Victims</th>
<th>Make Referrals</th>
<th>Hold Committee Meetings about Cases</th>
<th>Hold Monthly Meetings among CPAN members</th>
<th>Carry Out Advocacy Activities</th>
<th>Develop Strategies and Operational Guidelines</th>
<th>Conduct Training on CP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CP Officer</td>
<td>80.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>70.0%</td>
<td>85.0%</td>
<td>75.0%</td>
<td>95.0%</td>
<td>85.0%</td>
<td>80.0%</td>
<td>80.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DoLSAMD Staff</td>
<td>76.2%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>61.9%</td>
<td>76.2%</td>
<td>76.2%</td>
<td>90.5%</td>
<td>90.5%</td>
<td>76.2%</td>
<td>81.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ministry Official</td>
<td>46.4%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>28.6%</td>
<td>33.9%</td>
<td>37.5%</td>
<td>66.1%</td>
<td>35.7%</td>
<td>35.7%</td>
<td>57.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police Officer</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>87.5%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>66.7%</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Worker</td>
<td>37.5%</td>
<td>83.3%</td>
<td>37.5%</td>
<td>31.3%</td>
<td>37.5%</td>
<td>75.0%</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
<td>31.3%</td>
<td>62.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lawyer</td>
<td>66.7%</td>
<td>93.8%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>55.6%</td>
<td>44.4%</td>
<td>88.9%</td>
<td>44.4%</td>
<td>66.7%</td>
<td>88.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prosecutor</td>
<td>38.9%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
<td>27.8%</td>
<td>44.4%</td>
<td>61.1%</td>
<td>22.2%</td>
<td>27.8%</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Affairs Worker</td>
<td>62.5%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>37.5%</td>
<td>75.0%</td>
<td>75.0%</td>
<td>87.5%</td>
<td>75.0%</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>75.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth Officer</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>66.7%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>66.7%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>66.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Most members were aware that CPAN collected information on CP cases (72.6%), conducting training for CPAN members and community influencers (64%), holding monthly meetings (72.2%) yet were not as aware of their involvement in the following:

- Developing strategies for operational guidelines and CP practices (37.6%)
- Carry out advocacy work (40.7%)
- Holding case committee meetings (45.3%)
- Making referrals (42.7%)
- Conduct follow ups with CP victims (35.1%)

These findings were reflected in interviews with CPAN members from across the provinces. While CPAN members reported being aware that key CPAN members collected information and ran training sessions, they were not specifically aware of CPANs role to conduct advocacy work, holding case committee meetings and making referrals.

**Participation in CPAN Activities**

CPAN members were also asked to identify in which CPAN activities they were involved. When looking closely at the members, NTA’s reported that they were responsible for each of the above-mentioned activities. Child protection officers reported that they were predominately responsible for ‘supporting the development of policies to respond to CP violations (85.7%),’ ‘conduct training for CPAN members and Community influencers (85.7%).’ Interestingly however, only 61.9% reported engaging in referrals, 42.9% conducting follow ups with victims and 61.9% for collecting information about CP cases. Results for social workers were even lower. A total of 62.5% reported that they were responsible for collecting information on cases; only 12.5% were participating in referral activities, and 12.5% conducting regular follow ups with victims. These findings more widely reflect the role of PCPAN rather than NCPAN; suggesting the awareness about the purpose of NCPAN is low. Furthermore, that there is limited connection between CPAN and its role in contributing to policy and legislation development.

These findings suggest that they may be a disconnect between awareness of activities, and the activi-

---

37 These CPAN members included Government department officials, police officers, Lawyers, Prosecutors, social affairs officers, youth officers, community elders, NGO staff and others.
ties that are being conducted by the necessary CPAN members. While there was relatively high awareness that all the above-mentioned actions were part of CPAN activities, few CPAN members reported conducting these activities. This was particularly the case for social workers, CP officers and DoLSAMD staff.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Overall, general awareness and knowledge of child protection and the purpose of CPAN was mixed. The evaluation found that there was substantial variance among central CPAN staff and CPAN Members. While most members could identify risks including child marriage, child labour and physical violence, there was limited recognition that ‘children in the conflict with the law’ and ‘abandonment’ were issues at which children were at risk. Furthermore, knowledge was low concerning the types of vulnerabilities facing children. Likewise, awareness of CPAN activities was also not high. Of CPAN members who reported knowing CPAN activities, very few were aware of the role of NCPAN.

These findings highlight that there are gaps in the knowledge and awareness of CP and the role of CPAN. These gaps ultimately impact on the quality of support CPAN members can provide; limiting their capacity to identify risks facing children and the vulnerabilities they are exposed to on a daily basis. Furthermore, the findings also show that NCPAN and to an extent PCPAN are not effectively communicating their aims and purpose among CPAN members.

The evaluation team recommends that future training take into account these gaps in knowledge, and address them in future training. Furthermore, an important activity moving forward is promoting the purpose of CPAN at both provincial and national levels. The promotion of CPAN should tie in well with increasing general awareness and purpose of CPAN as an important mechanism for increasing commitment among non-central CPAN members.

5.2.2 Case Management

Effectiveness

- How effectively does CPAN identify cases and monitor CP issues emerging in the community?
- How effective are pathways to make referrals to service provider?
- How effectively does CPAN respond to referrals from the community?
- To what extent are cases being managed according to national and international best practice (including reporting of cases, following case procedures, follow-ups etc.)?
- Have CPAN members increased their capacity to address child protection issues?
Efficiency

- How timely have the CPANs been in following up with cases of children?

CPAN seeks to address the full spectrum of risks facing children across Afghanistan. In collaboration with non-government organisations, government bodies, local communities and families, CPAN aims to strengthen all components of child protection, and case management is essential to the pursuit of this aim. Case management should ideally be completed by social workers of DoLSAMD. Due to a lack of staffing however, these responsibilities are often being completed by CPAN NTA and CPAN officers.

**Purpose and Structure of Case Management:**

Case management is the means of organising and carrying out work to address an individual child’s (and their family’s) needs in a sensitive, systematic, appropriate and timely manner. Cases are managed either through direct support and/or referrals, and in accordance with national child protection practices. Case management can be provided in emergency and development settings to address a range of issues which primarily concern the protection of children. Systematic case management processes are fundamental to ensuring quality, consistency and coordination of services, while ensuring best outcomes for children at risk.²⁸

Internationally there are accepted best standards for steps involved in case management which have been echoed through interviews with senior CP officers in UNICEF and MoLSAMD and the basis of case management practices in CPAN.

The following section on will focus on each stage of the case management process; identifying strengths and weakness of current case management practices among CPAN members.

---

STAGE 1: IDENTIFYING CHILDREN AT RISK

Origins of Referrals

Identifying and referring children at risk is the first step of response in case management. There are many ways that a child at risk can be identified, including: the child being reported through community members, family or neighbours; reported through local authorities; local NGOs; identification through CPAN members independently, children reporting themselves and identification through the media.

Awareness of these various pathways among CPAN members however, were mixed. Survey findings suggested that the most common way of identifying children at risk was through community members such as neighbours, employers, friends and family with a total of 59.7%. This was followed by identification from professionals such as teachers, lawyers and health workers with 54.9% and through CP workers who identify children at risk during field visits with 54.9%. Fewer members identified receiving reports from children directly (24.3%). Interestingly, awareness of these pathways was mixed among central CPAN staff. For example, of the seven TAs interviewed, only four recalled that children could be identified by CP workers during field visits, in addition, only two mentioned that children could make themselves known to CP authorities. It was also mixed among social workers, with only 12.5% (2) suggesting children could make themselves known, and 52.4% of CP officers suggesting the same.

The CPAN officer from Badakhshan highlighted the most common origins of referrals in his network: “we get reports through telephone and we get official reports and I also follow on cases every month. I go to the police headquarters, to the women directorate, to the Women for Women network and ask what kind cases have come to them and how CPAN can help. We also get cases from the attorney office here about cases related to crimes.” The CPAN officer in Mazaar reported that CPAN found cases through the local JRC, monthly meetings and when local NGOs or law authorities contacted them. In Herat however, there appeared to be an increase in the number of reports from community members. With the availability of the ‘child-help line’ – sponsored by War Child – children and communities had an accessible pathway to report incidences of abuse, exploitation, neglect or violence. Specific figures however, were not available to the evaluation team. Nevertheless, there was little evidence to suggest that cases were being actively sought by CPAN members or that CPAN was being directly referred to by local communities.

These findings suggest that either awareness or experience with varied pathways of identifying children at risk may be limited. Central CPAN staff appear to either be more aware or have more commonly dealt with referrals from communities or CPAN members. It also suggests that central CPAN

Example of Community Made Referrals:

In Herat a young boy reported that his nine-year-old sister was engaged to marry her twelve-year-old cousin. The young boy, who had previous connections with a DoLSAMD staff member, reported the case which was passed through to a DCPAN member. Public referrals appear to be much more common at district levels, with families and elders referring to local DoLSAMD staff, or governors to report suspected incidences of child abuse, exploitation, violation or neglect. Although there is little to no documented evidence of cases being referred from district levels, interviews highlighted that some communities were able to identify violations and referred.
members may have less experience personally identifying and reporting children at risk, or having reports sent from professionals within communities. This also suggests however, that CPAN members do recognise the value of using communities to identify children at risk.

**Origins of Referrals from Non-Central CPAN members**

What was most noticeable during the evaluation, was that the majority of cases in CPAN records were not directly referred to DoLSAMD (Central CPAN). Cases tended to be referred from community members or local authorities to NGOs directly, or to the prosecutor’s office. There were limited cases that appeared to be directly referred to central CPAN staff. While this is not an immediate and concerning issue, it does raise the question to what extent central CPAN staff are actively involved in identifying children at risk and directly managing cases.

One common example across the provinces was the prevalence of cases concerning ‘children in conflict with the law.’ In all provinces, the most commonly cited case type was ‘children in conflict with the law.’ In some provinces, this type of incident made up almost 80% of cases (Mazaar, Badakhshan, Nangarhar). Cases involving children in conflict with the law most commonly came through the prosecutor’s office or the JRC. Interviews highlighted that in most cases, police arrested the children and sent them to the prosecutor’s office or the JRC. By legal obligation, the JRC or prosecutors then contacted central CPAN staff in DoLSAMD to notify them of the incident. The Kabul TA explained this process. “In agreement with security administration, there is a section which mentions that police should contact social workers to tell them about incidents. These representatives are generally key members of CPAN in the DoLSAMD offices. CPAN then comes and they fill out a form called the SIR. This is a process of interviews with the police and the prosecutor, religious scholars and classmates of children. The collected data is placed in a form …regarding CPAN, they interview those involved in the case.” These cases therefore, are not directly referred to CPAN, nor discovered through CPAN’s own activities, but rather are only reported to DoLSAMD because of legal obligation, and incidentally recorded as CPAN cases by the social workers and CP officers who are already employed with DoLSAMD and happen to represent CPAN.

A further challenge with these types of referrals is the extent to which the JRC and prosecutor’s office contact social workers to advocate for additional support to children, rather than their legal obligation. Interviews with JRC staff in Herat and Badakhshan highlighted that ‘once a form is filled out, CPAN has not been able to do much.’ The prosecutor’s office and the JRC are the only institutions with CPAN membership that have a legal obligation and incentive to inform social workers. Central CPAN offices therefore, are not carrying out activities to identify cases, but rather reply on the JRC as a point of contact for identifying children at risk.

Irrespective of the existence of CPAN, DoLSAMD CP staff would still be required to connect and document information regarding children in conflict with the law. As will be discussed later, there is little evidence to suggest that in general CPAN does more than information collection during the identification and assessment phases of case management regarding children in conflict with the law.

This reliance on non-central CPAN members to identify and refer children at risk was common in most provinces. This was evident by the variety of cases found in DoLSAMD offices. For example, based on official CPAN reports from UNICEF, in Badakhshan the most commonly cited cases included ‘children in conflict with the law,’ ‘recruitment of children by armed groups/forces,’ and crimes committed against girls (such as rape, and physical abuse). There was a total of 59 cases reported in 2016, 37 involved children from the JRC (either those in conflict with the law or those who had been recruited by armed forces), a total of 20 cases involved females and a total of 9 cases with children separated from their families.39 When we look at the most common CPAN members in the province, they included

---

39 Findings were taken from CPAN excel records of cases reported and managed in 2016 and provided by UNICEF senior CP staff.
Women for Afghan Women and the JRC – both who solely deal with issues of crime and female associated crime. While it appears that CPAN Badakhshan has a wide variety of cases involving children at risk, in fact, the types of cases being dealt with are in direct correlation with the thematic interests of CPAN members. This was also evident in Balkh, where the most commonly cited CPAN member was the JRC. According to UNICEF / DoLSAMD records a total of 64 children were registered with CPAN in 2016, 51 were with children in conflict with the law and 10 were children separated from their families.

This suggests that rather than each provincial CPAN taking a holistic approach to identifying children at risk, it appears to be filtered by the thematic interests of other CPAN members. This further suggests that central CPAN staff may not be taking active frontline roles in the identification of children at risk. As there is no documentation of district level cases, Sayara is unable to comment on the types of cases being identified through DCPAN activities.

Selective Case Registration

As briefly mentioned before, findings suggest that CPAN often takes a selective approach to the types of cases they identify and register for case management. While there is little doubt that CPAN is making efforts to identify and respond to children at risk, members don’t appear to be actively identifying and taking referrals for all types of cases facing children. The main areas of interest appear to be ‘children in conflict with the law,’ ‘child marriage,’ ‘unaccompanied minors,’ ‘child recruitment by armed groups/forces’ and ‘children with life threatening health concerns.’ There is limited focus on ‘child labour,’ ‘children with disabilities,’ ‘violence against children’ – especially sexual and physical violence against females and ‘kidnapping.’ Findings suggest that there may be various reason for selective case registration, interviews highlighted the following:

- Referrals are predominately made by CPAN members who have their own thematic interests. These thematic interests may be a result of donor expectations, or simply the thematic focus on the NGO. For example, Women for Afghan Women is predominately concerned with females at risk, while IOM is concerned with unaccompanied children who have come over the borders and the JRC is only concerned with children in conflict with the law.

- According to senior MoLSAMD staff, and DOLSAMD CPAN officers, they had been given direct orders not to accept particular children at risk. Interviews with CPAN members highlighted that for children who are at risk and disabled, MoLSAMD has a blanket policy that they are not to be accepted by CPAN. They are considered to be the concern of the Ministry of Public Health and are therefore excluded from MoLSAMD’s child protection services.

- Children who are in inaccessible areas are rarely get support from CPAN. This may be a result of geographic remoteness which are inaccessible for CP teams, or that there are high levels of insecurity and risks of harm are too high to CP teams.

Nevertheless, it is not to say that these are challenges in all provinces. Bamyan is a successful model of their holistic approach to identifying children at risk. A review of their cases and discussions with CPAN members highlighted that many cases are directly referred to central CPAN staff and that local NGOs effectively coordinate with one another to ensure the most appropriate member/members are selected to deal with a case. Field observations and interviews suggest that central CP members play an active frontline role in CP.

The following are highlights of the most common types of cases found in each province, based on desk reviews of case files.
Bamyan

In Bamyan, case reviews highlighted that some of the most prominent types of issues which are addressed through CPAN include:

- Child Marriage
- Children in Conflict with the Law
- Health related issues with children

The most common CPAN members who provided direct support to cases included:

- ICRC (particularly for health-related cases)
- International Medical Corps (health and female abuse related cases)
- Police
- Child Prosecutors (children in conflict with the law and Child marriage)

Kandahar

In Kandahar, a total of 25 cases were reviewed during Sayara’s desk review. Case reviews highlighted that some of the most prominent types of issues which are addressed through CPAN:

- Children in Conflict with the Law
- Sexual Abuse of Girls
- Children Recruited by Armed Forces

Nangarhar

Case reviews highlighted that some of the most prominent types of issues which are addressed through CPAN include:

- Children in Conflict with the Law
- Children Recruited by Armed Forces
- Unaccompanied Children

The most common CPAN members who provided direct support to cases included:

- JRC
- Terre De Homme
Badakhshan
Case reviews highlighted that some of the most prominent types of issues which are addressed through CPAN include:

- Children in Conflict with the Law
- Physical Violence and Female associated violence
- Unaccompanied Children

The most common CPAN members who provided direct support to cases included:

- JRC
- Women for Afghan Women

Herat
Case reviews highlighted that some of the most prominent types of issues which are addressed through CPAN include:

- Children in Conflict with the Law
- Unaccompanied Children

The most common CPAN members who provided direct support to cases included:

- JRC
- Children’s Shelter
- Prosecution office

Wardak
Case reviews highlighted that some of the most prominent types of issues which are addressed through CPAN include:

- Children in Conflict with the Law
- Unaccompanied Children
- Health
- Physical Violence

Cultural Norms and Sensitivities and Awareness of Communities
Commonly cited challenges to identifying children at risk among CPAN members, were the cultural sensitivities and lack of awareness to reporting incidences of abuse, violence, exploitation and neglect. In order for a child to be effectively supported when at risk, it is paramount that they are identified. While understanding of definitions of child protection and child abuse differ among CP practitioners and communities, cultural norms and sensitivities often prevent the identification of children at
risk. For example, the normalization of physical abuse is often not identified as a form of abuse. Furthermore, the issue of pride and shame among traditional communities often prevents families and neighbours reporting violations. This was particularly highlighted among FGD participants in Herat and Nangarhar. Women reported that they were often reluctant to talk about issues with their children, especially regarding violence because of the impact it may have on their social standing. With the fear of violations becoming public knowledge, types of violence, abuse and exploitation are often kept within the family. Without families and communities being willing to report violations, there are always going to be children who continue to be abused, exploited, or neglected. Furthermore, as the KAP survey demonstrated, the awareness of communities to report children at risk was also significantly low. If a child cannot be identified as being a risk, it is not possible for CPAN to provide the necessary support to help the child at risk.

Conclusions

Overall, while there are several pathways to identifying children at risk, many of them are not being used to their full potential. A strong reliance on CPAN NGO members and local law enforcement does not allow for a holistic approach to identifying children at risk. With central CPAN staff failing to play active frontline roles, and limited awareness among communities, there are still many challenges facing the identification of children at risk. The identification of children at risk is the first step in response and already there are several breaking points preventing the identification of children. Moving forward, a particular focus needs to be made on how central CPAN staff can identify children at risk. Potentially revising current TORs of Central CPAN staff to ensure they are playing an active front line role, not just in providing direct support but also during the identification stages of case management. While CPAN NGO members are effective focal points, their thematic interests limit the potential for reaching a wider scope of children at risk.

STAGE 2: ASSESSMENT OF CHILDREN AT RISK

Once a child has been identified as being at risk, and referred to a CPAN member, the case worker involved is required to conduct a thorough assessment of the child, their family and the risks facing both the child and their family. Without a thorough and documented assessment of a child at risk, CPAN members will be unable to provide the most necessary and effective support. A thorough analysis of this reporting will be discussed in the following section on ‘Assessment of Case Management Reporting.’ Nevertheless, one common activity during the assessment and identification stage is to hold ‘case planning committees.’

Case Management Committees

These committees are organised in instances where DoLSAMD cannot provide direct support to a child and family at risk. A case management committee is generally called within 72 hours of a case being referred to CPAN. It is made up of relevant CPAN members which have been identified as potentially providing assistance to the child at risk. As the CPAN officer for Badakhshan described “the cases that

Purpose of Case Management Committee (Kunar)

“The purpose is to benefit the child in complex scenario, for example, when a child is apprehended for any offence or crime, the social worker needs to reach the child within 24 hours before the case is registered with the police and the child is detained. Our job is to help the child with any mental or physical pressures ....and then coordinate with the relevant child respective agencies to work on the details and assign the case manager. The social worker is responsible then for following the case, the official from the health department is responsible for helping with any psychological issues and health problems.... We hire defense lawyers for children who cannot afford it.”
we know we can handle on our own, we don’t involve members and have a case planning committee.” Within a case management committee, CPAN members reported that they ‘sit down and discuss the case, its effects on the psyche of the child and what the child wants.’ They reported that after discussing the case in detail they can best decide how to proceed. It was also a noted practice in Helmand that if a case was not progressing as expected, they often held follow up planning committees to review how to better support the child and their family. The NTA of Helmand provided insight into the processes and purpose of case management committees:

“It depends on the nature and range of each case. In general, (at a case planning committee) we have a representative from the attorney office, from the education directorate, a member from the court, a member from the directorate of justice and one from the health directorate. These members are in the meetings on permanent basis. In the first 24 hours or within 72 hours we hold case planning committees. If the case is urgent we hold it in 24 hours, if it isn’t urgent we hold it within 72 hours. In some cases where a member is not available for the meeting we take notes and then show them after.” (NTA, Helmand)

Awareness and experience with case management committees however, appears to be mixed. Survey findings found that only 46.7% of CPAN members were aware of case planning meetings. Of central CPAN staff including NTAs, DoLSAMD staff, CP offices and social workers, a total of 66.1% reported being aware of case planning committees. A total of 100% of NTAs were aware, 66.7% of CP officers, 43.8% of social workers and 71.4% of DoLSAMD staff. CPAN members were also asked how regularly they participated in case management meetings. NTAs reported that they participated in all committee sessions, while there were mixed responses among social workers, DoLSAMD staff and CP officers. A total of 52.4% of CP officers reported always attending while only 12.5% (2) social workers.

CPAN members were also asked what they discussed during case management meetings. CPAN members were surveyed to measure awareness of areas of interest in assessment phases. Of the CPAN members who reported knowing of case management committees, roughly half were aware of all discussion areas. The most commonly cited discussion in these meetings were the ‘type of support needed’ (78%), followed by how to involve ‘the voice of the child’ with 51%. These findings, however, suggest that in some instances specific areas of assessment and case planning may not be regularly discussed among CPAN members. These gaps were reflected in case reporting documents (discussed later in evaluation). Without accurately discussing and agreeing on all of the above-mentioned points when appropriate, it makes it less likely that best practices are being followed with any consistency and less likely that case will be managed based on the needs of the child. The quality of care will vary arbitrarily from case to case, and whereby potentially adversely affecting the outcome for the child and family.

Conclusions
While there are ongoing challenges practicing child protection in Afghanistan, ensuring that case management committees are following best practices should not be an area of difficulty. The development of a check list or document template requiring CPAN members to ‘tick off’ all areas of discussion could be beneficial. This should help to ensure CPAN members are making a valid assessment of the child at risk.

**STAGE 3: REFERRALS SYSTEMS**

In comparison to referrals made to central CPAN from outside sources, such as the police, local communities or other NGOs, central CPAN staff are also responsible for managing and facilitating referrals to participating agencies. If unable to effectively and efficiently provide direct support, central CPAN staff should call on network members who can provide the necessary support to the child at risk. As previously discussed, the evaluation found that in many instances, referrals more often than not were made to NGOs and service providers, rather than being referred to CPAN and then outsourced among members. This was evident in all provinces. For example, in Badakhshan, Women for Afghan Women highlighted that the police or community members made direct referrals to them for assistance and they then reported these cases to CPAN during monthly meetings. No particular assistance was provided through central CPAN staff, as Women for Afghan Women (WAW) reported they were able to manage the solved cases internally. While this does not reflect negatively on the role of CPAN in making referrals, it does suggest that central CPAN staff are not as regularly required to manage cases internally by providing direct support or referring them to external CPAN members.

Nevertheless, there are instances where CPANs have coordinated effectively to respond to children at risk following the assessment phase of case management. One example of this was seen in Bamyan, when central CPAN staff coordinated emergency support for a new born child who was left in the woods in the middle of winter in a district of Bamyan.

**Case Study: Child Born Out of Wedlock - Bamyan CPAN**

In Bamyan, the NTA reported a case of a young child who was born out of wedlock, and abandoned in a nearby district. The child was found by police around 10pm at night in the winter, and they attempted to make contact with a local clinic to help. The clinic refused to take the child that time of night, so the police contacted one of the DCPANs in Bamyan. Through a network of calls, the Bamyan DCPAN member contacted the head of the human rights commission and the governor who then both called the mayor of this area. They mayor then requested that the clinic be opened for this child until it could be transferred to Bamyan central hospital. Due to a lack of emergency funds through CPAN, they contacted Aga Khan Foundation (AKF) to help transport the child to central Bamyan. AKF and CPAN then coordinated with local community elders to find transport during the night. Another organisation – Hager International – was also involved and provided a nurse to stay with the child during trans-
portation. The child was eventually transferred and treated in Bamyan. The child then remained in CPAN’s care and the care of the local hospital until suitable housing could be found. The NTA reported that over a period of 10 days they approached local families who would be willing to adopt a new born; vetting families and looking closely at their finances and ability to provide for the child. Eventually they found a young married couple who were looking to adopt a child and the child was handed over.

In this case, we can see a very clear process of communication within the district and provincial CPAN. A child was identified as being at risk, and the local police had the appropriate knowledge of who to report the incident. DCPAN was also then able to effectively draw on the network of CP workers across the district to support the child. Most importantly however, is that the case remained with CPAN and was not passed onto an NGO. CPAN managed the case from start to finish, and drew on support from other CPAN members. These NGOs supported the existing child protection processes, and provided assistance where the NTA and DCPAN member could not. This is a key example of the potential of CPAN, not just in emergency cases, but their potential for effectively solving cases in general. Furthermore, the NTA reported that since this event the local clinic involved in the case accepted that they had a responsibility to support children at risk, even if children were reported out of working hours.

In these instances, central CPAN staff act as a key point of contact for facilitating emergency support to children. Interviews highlighted that this emergency support was evident and successful across various cases, particularly regarding unaccompanied minors. In emergency cases, CPAN in all targeted provinces appeared to have the knowledge and capacity to react to children at risk. The existence of a network of service providers was an important source of information for central CPAN staff; calling on the necessary teams with the appropriate skills and thematic area of work.

**Challenges in Referrals**

Notable challenges in the referral process based on desk reviews and observations of case management included:

- In all provinces one of the major reasons why children could not be supported was because of a lack of resources and support systems available to children at risk. In Herat for example, the TA noted that the issue of child labour was widely known. When asked however, the types of services and support being provided to these children, they reported that there were no services available to help the children, and therefore CPAN could make no referrals. This is a notable breaking point in the case management process. If CPAN does not have the necessary resources or there are no available support services in the region, then a child cannot be referred and whereby be brought out of risk.

- A second notable issue was cultural norms and sensitivities. As previously explained, these cultural sensitivities may prevent families from receiving or accepting specific types of support.

**STAGE 4: PROVISIONS OF DIRECT AND INDIRECT SUPPORT**

The basis of this evaluation was focused on central CPAN activities, and therefore the evaluation team has not conducted field work about the case management activities of non-central CPAN members. Therefore, the following section focused on the extent to which central CPAN staff have been able to provide relevant and effective direct support to children at risk. These findings are predominately based on anecdotal discussions with CPAN members, as most cases in which CPAN reported providing direct support were not documented.
**Awareness of Child Protection Services**

The above-mentioned support services are internationally identified types of support which are often provided to children in developing countries as part of case management. CPAN members were asked to list the types of services which could be provided to a child. The most common type of service identified was education (70.3%), followed by legal services (64.3%) and livelihood services (such as cash assistance) (61.3%). There was limited recognition of vocational services (31.6%), community based mediation (32%) and living with another family member (42.5%). Levels of awareness however, did vary among the provinces.

As the graphs highlight, awareness surrounding the variety of services is mixed across the provinces. Awareness of the types of services which a child may need during a case was highest in Herat, Kabul and Wardak. Awareness was lowest in Kunar with the highest level of awareness concerning legal services (83.3%). Awareness was particularly low in Kunar regarding mental health services (4.2%), public health services (4.2%), Livelihood services (16.7%) and informal community based mediation (8.3%).

These findings suggest that overall awareness and ability to recognise different support systems for children vary across the provinces. Levels of awareness are also reflected in the performance of provincial CPANs. For example, the evaluation has found that performance was higher in Herat, Kabul and Bamyan. These findings are expected based on the on level of exposure to CP activities and opportunities for training. CPAN Kabul for example, is based in the nation’s capital, it is based in the central MoLSAMD office and has access to all training session run by MoLSAMD. Furthermore, it has the greatest exposure and access to NGOs, simply due to locality. This is similar for Herat. As Herat is widely considered the capital in the west, they are the centre point for the region, have the greatest exposure to NGO and CP activities. This is also relatively similar in Bamyan. As Bamyan is one of the most peaceful provinces in the country, NGOs have more accessibility and often more funding. It should be expected then, that levels of awareness and exposure to CP practices should be higher. In provinces, such as Kunar, Badakhshan, Khost and Nangarhar, there may be a connection between lower levels of awareness and exposure with experience with CP activities.

Although there appear to be some exceptions to this rule (ie. Helmand, Mazaar and Kandahar), there is evidence to suggest that there may be a link between levels of awareness of types of support and exposure to CP activities. CPAN members in provinces that have a higher awareness of the types of services which a child may need, may have a better understanding of how to support children at risk.

---

Direct Support Being Provided by Central CPAN

While the above mentioned section focused on awareness of types of support CPAN can provide children at risk, the following section provides examples of how central CPAN staff have provided direct support. The evaluation highlighted that central CPAN staff played a more active role in the following types of cases:

- Children in Conflict with the Law
- Unaccompanied Children
- Child Marriage
- Child Labour

Direct Support Provided for Children in Conflict with the Law

While this evaluation has highlighted that central CPAN staff have limited involvement in cases with children in conflict with the law, there are reports that some CPAN staff have assisted to increase the speed of case resolutions. Where previously the prosecutor’s office was not required to push through cases with children, the consistency of follow-ups from central CPAN staff have reportedly pushed legal staff to deal with child related cases faster. An interview with a representative from Women for Afghan Women highlighted that cases which were previously solved through the courts were lengthy and sometimes took up to four years to solve. She suggested however, that when the CPAN officer from Badakhshan checked up on cases, they were often resolved faster. As such, in instances where cases were progressing slowly, WAW could refer to central CPAN staff to step in with prosecutors. This was a similar case in Nangarhar and Mazaar. Nevertheless, there was no evidence that specific measures were in place to support the re-integration of a child back into their families and communities following their sentence.

Direct Support Provided to Unaccompanied Children

One of the most common case types which central CPAN deals with directly are instances of unaccompanied children. Often children are unaccompanied because they have run away, the death of parents or they have been deported from neighbouring countries back into Afghanistan. In instances where children have been deported from neighbouring countries, the most common CPAN partners included IOM and Hager International. Representatives from these organisations would contact central CPAN / DoLSAMD and request they take responsibility of the children until family could be found. Central CPAN staff appear to be most comfortable and experienced dealing with unaccompanied children, and regularly resolve cases quickly. The CPAN officer from Badakhshan highlighted his office’s experience and confidence dealing with cases regarding unaccompanied children “we know we can handle cases on our own, and don’t need to involve other CPAN members. These are cases such as the reunion of separate children with their parents, children who were smuggled by traffickers. We only involve other organisations when the issue is out of our hands and we need assistance. Other than that, we don’t want to disrupt the schedule of other organisations and members of the committee.” In these cases, it was not uncommon that social workers or CP officers made visits to identified family members and then personally accompanied children to their families. They then followed up with the children by phone. One particular case was noted in Mazar:

A young boy was taken from Mazar by his grandfather after his father died. He was taken to Kandahar forcibly. The young boy reported that his grandfather was beat-
ing him and treating him poorly. The young boy was told by a community member to talk to DoLSAMD to see if they could help him with his situation. He told DoLSAMD that his mother lived in Mazar and wanted to return home to her. DoLSAMD sent him to Kabul and in Kabul he stayed for a few days and through the Mazar CPAN office they brought the boy’s mother to Kabul. A situation came where the boy could not meet his mother in Kabul, and they then sent him to Mazar through the NGO ‘Hager.’ He was then handed over to his mother. CPAN Mazar coordinated with CPAN Kandahar and CPAN Kabul to coordinate his return.

**Direct Support Provided to Children at Risk of Marriage**

As child marriage continues to be practiced across the country, in both rural and urban areas, CPAN reports to take an active role in countering such practices. Child marriage is a highly sensitive practice, with many families reluctant to admit to supporting child marriage. Nevertheless, CPAN has reported several incidences of child marriage across the country, most of which appear to take place at district levels. CPAN members in Herat, Badakhshan, Nangarhar and Helmand all commented that they used informal methods to stop child marriage. They referred to local religious leaders, community elders and family members to convince families to either cancel the engagement or postpone it until the child is of legal age. On most occasions, CPAN officers reported that local leaders asked families to sign a document stating that they would not marry their child, and that they would wait. One such example of a child marriage resolution through informal mechanisms was reported in Badakhshan:

“We work on child marriage because these are children who belong to very poor families and they wed them at early ages. In our experience, when a community finds out about a child marriage, the elders contact DoLSAMD / CPAN and then we work with the community to solve the case. In 2009, we had a case of a child who was married and the elders intervened and cancelled the marriage and save the child; returning her back to her family.” (Social Worker with DoLSAMD in Badakhshan)

**Direct Support Provided to Child Labourers**

Similarly, to direct support provided to children at risk of child marriage, CPAN takes the same approach to supporting child labourers. While CPAN members regularly commented that they were often not able to provide support to working children on occasions informal mediation sessions were held with families to try and persuade them to allow their child / children to stop working. One such example was reported by Bamyan CPAN. Bamyan CPAN reported that in 2013 in Khamard district, there were reports of children in the worst form of child labour who were working in coalmines. The children were involved in excavating coal. Once informed of the incident, CPAN located the employer and requested that he no longer hire children. The mine owner agreed to check the taskera of future employees to identify ages. CPAN Bamyan reported that since that time, the mine has continued to work but no children have been identified working there.

The biggest challenge however, was that often families understood their children should not work, but due to poor financial situations they felt there was no other alternatives. Discussions with families involved in CPAN cases from Bamyan discussed this reality:

*The biggest challenge in my village is poverty. Children are obliged to work and win bread for their families, pick potatoes from the field and collect twigs and wood for burning. These all keep them away from school and endanger their future. I tried*
to play my part though, without salary or money I held workshops in my village and tried to each family about child protection and how we can safeguard our children from risks. I talked specifically about child labour, but the irony was that when a participant asked me why I make my own son work. I had no answer, I had no answer to my poverty either. Me and my 14-year-old son have laid over 6,000 bricks to build a wall. I wouldn’t let him drop out of school, so I made him work with me at night instead. He worked with me instead of playing football or spending time with his peers. I couldn’t allow him not to work because of the severe poverty I am in...”

(Female from CPAN treatment Group in Bamyan)

Furthermore, FGDs with CPAN target groups highlighted instances where CPAN provided direct assistance. In Kandahar for example, one family reported how they moved to Kandahar as IDPs and sought assistance from CPAN to help enrol their children into school.

**Child Marriage: Helmand**

An interview with the TA in Helmand identified that since January 2016, they had two cases of child marriage. He reported that these cases were reported through Department of Women’s Affairs (DoWA) and individuals from families who were involved in child marriage. The TA highlighted that child marriage was a particularly sensitive issue in communities, and formal methods of resolution were often not appropriate and in keeping with local kinship practices. He reported that by formally addressing such issues they ran the risk of increasing tensions among families, and therefore throughout the communities. As a result, CPAN tended to rely on local informal mechanisms to resolve issues of child marriage. One example of CPAN Helmand’s approach to child marriage was when a local community member reported that a 12-year-old girl’s father wanted her to be married. Before looking at administrative formalities they spoke with religious leaders and community elders to identify the most appropriate means to put the message across to the family. After these discussions, they were able to come up with an alternative story and approach the family to request not to marry the child before she was 19 years old. After talking with the family with local leaders CPAN was able to take a guarantee from the father that she would not be married. Helmand’s TA reported that they did not formally register the case due to cultural sensitivities, but did write up documentation for their own internal record keeping.

When asked whether a follow up had been conducted to ensure the father was following his guarantee, the TA reported that two local elders and religious leaders were selected to monitor and report on the child for the next few years. These reports are provided informally to the TA. The two elders are also required to sign an oath that they would monitor the child.

This example of child marriage is characteristic of many child marriage cases across the country. Most CPAN members recognised that the most appropriate way of preventing a child marriage was to deal with it at a community level and through informal CP structures. This approach, although appears to be stemming some cases of child marriage, may not be addressing the root causes of why the child was to be married in the first place. The KAP survey demonstrated that most people understand that child marriage is wrong, irrespective of community dialogue sessions. In this approach, CPAN is responding to incidences of child marriage, rather than exploring the root causes of why the child was to be married. There is also no guarantee that the child will not be married of at another time in the coming years, without addressing the original concern.
Challenges Providing Quality Intervention

Lack of financial and human resources

A regular comment from central CPAN staff was that they were often not able to provide interventions because of a lack of human and financial resources. In Mazaar the TA highlighted the challenges facing his ability to provide direct interventions to children at risk. As the TA of three provinces, he reported that he was responsible for organising community dialogue sessions, providing training and attending regular meetings and information sessions requested by the deputy direct of DoLSAMD. As a result, he suggested “(with my schedule and the poor capacity of my counter part) we don’t have available resources of human capital to follow up on all cases and provide support to children, we just note them down in our register but the cases cannot be pursued.” Another example of the financial challenges involved in providing direct support was highlighted in Badakhshan. In the rural districts of Badakhshan a 12-year-old boy was arrested for committing a crime. As the child was under the legal age of incarceration and therefore remained with this family during the court processes. The CPAN officer described the challenges involved in this situation, as the child lived in a remote village in Badakhshan. The social worker had to travel back and forth from the remote village, which took a burden on the financial resources available to CPAN members. CPAN members report that a lack of resources – both human and financial – impact on abilities to effectively address all children at risk. On several occasions, CPAN members admitted that they were unable to deal with cases put in front of them, either due to high numbers of cases, lack of man power to deal with cases or lack of services available to children.

Geographic Remoteness and Insecurity

While CPAN is active and present in provincial centres, there is limited presence across provinces. The choice of districts with CPAN presence appeared to be those which are easily accessible and secure. Discussions with CPAN members highlighted that in many instances, the number of children who have cases which remain open and unresolved are often those who are located in insecure and remote location, because they are not readily accessible for case workers. This is a breaking point in the case management process. Without being able to access the child at risk, support can be effectively and efficiently provided. CPAN is only ever able to reach a limited number of children throughout the country.

Limitations in inter-agency Communication and Commitment

NGOs are often reporting that they will provide a certain type of support to a child at need. On various occasions it was noted by CPAN members that although this support was promised, it was often not provided. For example, in Badakhshan a social worker reported that a child was unaccompanied because his mother had died and father was in prison. The child was blind and needed immediate attention and housing. This was brought up in front of several CPAN members who promised assistance. “We discussed it in monthly meetings about two months ago... still nothing has come of it.” In another instance in Herat, CPAN members noted that the Ministry of Public Health regularly promised that they would provide assistance to children in need of treatment for addiction. This support however, was reported never to have happened. In this instance, CPAN members are not formally accountable for providing support, and therefore despite promises, cannot be forced.

Limited Capacity in CPAN Members

Limited awareness, experience and capacity of CPAN members impacts on CPAN’s ability to provide direct support to children at risk. With limited understanding of how support should be provided, the type and extent of care may be affected. As previously highlighted these are some of the limitations in capacity which have already been highlighted in this report:
• Limited awareness of the purpose and roles that should be played by CPAN
• Limited understanding and capacity to effectively manage cases through the six stages as highlighted above
• Limited awareness of potential risks facing children – particularly among Non-key CPAN members and social workers
• Limited awareness of types of services which can be provided to children at risk

Cultural Sensitivities in Communities

On several occasions throughout this evaluation, CPAN members noted that they faced ongoing challenges working with families because they were reluctant to receive assistance from NGOs or government bodies and did not want their family business to become public knowledge. This was particularly so with cases regarding girls. Culturally girls who have either been engaged or involved in ‘inappropriate behaviour’ are generally not socially accepted; bring shame to their family name. Opportunity to effectively work with families to resolve cases becomes challenging.

Lack of Services

The lack of services available in Provinces for referral of children remains a constant challenge for PCPAN operatives to fulfil their mandate. PCPAN interviewees frequently spoke to the evaluation team about a need for ‘welfare-orientated’ support and occasionally (Bamyan), they provided it. Such concerns are valid in that best practice does not segregate protection issues for children from the wider context of the family. PCPANs however, do not seem to make referrals to organisations who may be able to offer relevant opportunities to a parent in cases where poverty is the driving factor behind the child protection issue. This may be a result from a failure by DolSAMD to foresee the merits of collaborative actions and to encourage the development of a local directly of all potentially relevant service providers; whereby establishing more concrete relations – even partnerships – to broaden the range of potential support to children at risk and their families.

STAGE 5: MONITORING AND FOLLOW UP

Monitoring and follow up in case management is fundamental to effective case management. Based on best practice, the following were highlighted as reasons why effective monitoring and follow up is required in case management practices:

- Provide support and guidance to child during the case management
- Monitoring the child’s perspective and opinions about their situation
- Ensure that the child and family are accessing the necessary services in line with the care plan
- Update the child and caregiver on progress made in the case
- Monitoring and mitigate further instances of violence, abuse or exploitations

41 The evaluation team based ‘best practice’ on a series of papers produced by International NGOs regarding appropriate CP practices in conflict zones. These included some of the following:

• Ensure that service providers are providing the necessary services

**Awareness of Monitoring and Follow-Up Among CPAN Members**

Awareness of the purpose of monitoring and follow up was mixed across the provinces. The highest awareness of the purpose of monitoring and follow up was found in Kabul, Wardak and Bamyan. Most CPAN members were aware the monitoring was required to ‘provide guidance to the child (69.5%), followed by ‘monitor and mitigate further instances of violence, abuse, exploitation or neglect (54.1%). There was limited general awareness however, of monitoring for ‘ensuring service providers were providing the necessary support’ (25.9%) and to ‘update the child and care giver on case progress,’ (32.7%). This suggests that although there is general awareness among CPAN members that monitoring and follow up is part of the case management process, many members may not understand the extent of its purpose.

![Purpose of Monitoring and Follow Up](chart)

**Awareness of Key CPAN staff**

When looking closely at the central CPAN staff, responses were also mixed. Surprisingly awareness was not particularly high among NTA staff. While NTAs are supposed to be the focal point and technical expert for CP in each region or province, these noticeable gaps in their awareness of monitoring and follow up may be of concern. While general awareness of case management practices was high
among NTAs, their gaps in awareness regarding monitoring are concerning. NTAs should be responsible for ensuring that case management processes are being implemented to the extent possible with best practice. If the TA is unable to direct and support other CPAN members to complete monitoring activities, this ultimately impacts on the quality of care being provided to a child. Results were also low among social workers and child protection officers.

**Monitoring and Follow-up Practices**

While awareness of the purpose of monitoring and follow-up was low, the extent to which monitoring and follow up takes place is also mixed. In many instances, there does not appear to be any follow up conducted on cases.

Interviews with central CP members highlighted that monitoring and follow-up rarely occurred in cases which they managed directly. While interviewees were widely aware that monitoring and follow-ups should take place, they reported various barriers prohibiting them from implementing this aspect of case management.

These included the following:

- Lack of financial and human resources
- Geographic remoteness and insecurity
- Cultural sensitivities of communities

For example, in Nangarhar, one child protection officer reported that often monitoring did not take place as it was not culturally accepted. “Intervening in cases directly is not tolerated here (in the districts). Therefore, we tend to go to community leaders and representatives and some other known people in the community to research a reasonable and satisfied outcome.” In some instances, CPAN members reported that local leaders were delegated the responsibility of following up on cases. The extent
to which this occurs and is communicated to CPAN members however, is unknown. Despite cultural sensitivities, it is the best interest of the child that cases are regularly followed up. This is an important balancing act for CPAN members, and something that needs to be built upon in further activities.

Most follow up activities however, appear to happen for cases when children are in conflict with the law. In Badakhshan for example, the social worker reported that he follows cases with the courts and the JRC. “I follow cases in the court and make sure that the case is being completed in the court. If it is pending I go and ask for clarification on why the case is pending, if they say that it is processed then I check with other relevant departments to make sure the case is fully worked out and processed accordingly.” Although this is a means of monitoring the process of cases, social workers don’t appear to check up on the children themselves and inform them on the process of their cases and check that their needs are being met. For example, Sayara’s team conducted interviews at the JRC in Faizabad and discussed the situation of 12 girls who were residing in the JRC at the time. Of all 12 girls, none of them had spoken with a social worker or been approached by any member of CPAN regarding their case. According to the female social worker in Faizabad, once every two weeks she went to the JRC to check on paperwork without meeting with the girls. The girls however, had never been spoken to by a social worker or a female about their particular case details.

Furthermore, according to CPAN officers in Nangarhar, there are formal restrictions in place that prevent them from monitoring the cases of children. “We don’t have direct authority over prosecutors and their work...it is not in the law to intervene and checkup cases under the work of the prosecutor. The prosecutor provides us with general report of the cases during a month....”

Approaches to monitoring and follow-up appear to be ad-hock, rather than streamlined into the case management process. One example in Bamyan highlighted this. One boy in Bamyan had been part of a case with CPAN. For unassociated reasons, the CPAN member involved went to the father’s office (at the police headquarters) and sat with the father. “I sat with him and he offered me tea, we talked about the child and then the child came and joined us too. I saw him and I saw he was improving...he is still not going to school but he was healthier.” In this instance, although the boy had been checked on, this was not a scheduled monitoring visit.

Nevertheless, interviews and survey results also highlighted that limitations in capacity and individual motivations may also impact on the quality and quantity of monitoring and follow ups. While qualitative interviews suggest that central CPAN staff were aware of monitoring and follow up, very often it did not take place because it was not a formalized part of the case management plan. Furthermore, observations suggested that individual motivation was a significant indicator as to whether monitoring took place. Often CPAN members referred to the remoteness of children, lack of finances and human resources, but also relied on other CPAN members to ensure monitoring took place. For example, in Mazar, the CPAN officer was asked whether he was involved in the monitoring of cases. He reported that it was the responsibility of the lawyers involved and as such did not conduct monitoring visits.

To date, findings suggest that in general CPAN members are not effectively completing monitoring and follow up activities, which are in line with case management processes. While there is evidence that monitoring does on occasions take place, it is an ad-hock approach and rarely formalized in case management planning. The lack of monitoring appears to be a result of poor awareness of its purpose, limited individual motivation and poor human and financial resources. In provinces where human and financial resources are not often available, provincial CPAN members need to prioritize cases which may and may not need regular follow up. For example, a child in the JRC may not need as regular follow up as a child who is in situation of child labour or child marriage. In instances of child labour and child marriage children should be regularly monitored to ensure families have not relapsed on their agreements. While monitoring can be challenging given the security and geographical environment of Afghanistan, monitoring still needs to take place. Alternative methods of monitoring and follow-up
should be brainstormed and introduced to case management practices. For example, in instances where a child can be contacted by phone, or a local community elder can check on the child on behalf of CPAN, this should be used. There are a variety of ways in which children can be monitored both directly and indirectly, and these should be introduced into monitoring practices.

Monitoring and follow ups are fundamental to the success of case management. Without conducting monitoring and follow-ups a case cannot be solved and ultimately closed, and there is no evidence then that the support provided to the child was effective and appropriate and that the child is no longer at risk. Moving forward, UNICEF and MoLSAMD need to over-hall current attitudes and practices regarding monitoring. It needs to become a formalized and documented stage in case management, whereby all CPAN members involved in a case are responsible for ensuring monitoring takes place.

STAGE 6: EXIT STRATEGIES OF CASES

A planned and appropriate exit strategy should be the final step in the case management process. International practice suggests that cases should be closed when the goals of the family and child are met, and the child is no longer at risk. The extent to which cases were effectively and appropriately closed in CPAN was challenging to identify. With a lack of documented evidence when a case is closed, Sayara was unable to provide figures on the average number of solved cases.

Interviews with key CPAN staff highlighted that there were specific challenging ensuring cases were closed solved in a timely and suitable manner. Due to a lack of resources and poor accessibility to districts, CPAN members were often limited in their ability to effectively track and close cases.

Cases that were most commonly solved however, were unaccompanied minors who were reintegrated with family members. In these instances, CPAN members often travelled with the unaccompanied minors to their families – which were often in other provinces – to ensure their safe arrival. They reported also that they made regular phones to families to check on the integration of the child. In most instances, however, the case was considered to be solved and closed once the child was safely returned to family.

In instances of child marriage, cases were generally considered to be solved and closed once the family agreed and signed a release in which they promised that they would not continue with the marriage until the children were of age. One particular challenge with this approach however, is to what extent CPAN members have been able to ensure that families stay true to their promise. CPAN officers highlighted that this was a challenge as they often did not have the resources to physically check up on the child. In Herat for example, one CPAN officer reported that they often unable to personally check up on cases, but that community elders and religious leaders often took responsibility for monitoring the child and family. The extent to which this is an effective alternative to case worker follows ups is unknown, but in place of a lack of resources, the use of community based monitors is a means of holding families accountable to protecting their children.

DURATION OF CASES

This evaluation was also concerned with understanding the efficiency with which CPAN members could solve cases. While each case has its own nuances, and rarely are two cases the same, Sayara expected to be able to identify some patterns in time frames. There was not however, sufficient documented evidence to map potential patterns. As the closure date of cases was rarely documented and often unknown, we were unable to determine the average length of cases. Interviewees were also asked the average duration of cases; especially regarding child marriage, children in conflict with the law and unaccompanied children. They too were unable to provide us with sufficient insight. Many commented
that it was different for every case and we can’t tell you how long. In Herat, they reported that sometimes the resolution of a case can take a day, a few weeks or even some years – this was particularly the situation with children in conflict with the law. Nevertheless, concrete details on the duration of cases was not available. Sayara was not provided documentation cite the amount of cases which were closed and solved. Therefore, without sufficient evidence and insight, the efficiency of case resolutions is unevaluable.

There was evidence however, to suggest that there was substantial interest among members in systems or procedures for tracking cases more appropriately. In Bamyan for example CPAN members from the department of public health and human rights commission reported that during weekly and monthly meetings they would like to know more about the cases that were referred to CPAN. They would like to better track cases and know how cases are resolved.

**Overall Challenges in Case Management**

Case management is a multi-dimensional activity; requiring successful completion of various steps to ensure a child is effectively supported and that quality care is provided. In order for CPAN to provide a child with the necessary help, each stage of case management needs to be accurately completed. For example, without a thorough assessment of the child and their family, CP workers would be unable to identify the types of risks facing a child and their family. If these risks are not appropriately identified, then direct support or appropriate referrals could not be made. If inappropriate support is provided, then the child will continue to remain at risk. Based on the noted challenges in above section, the flow chart below above highlights all the areas of concern in case management processes. Starting with stage one in case management, there were four identified barriers; ‘selective case registration;’ ‘awareness of community to report children at risk;’ ‘referrals being made directly to agencies rather than being directed through CPAN,’ and ‘cultural sensitivities of communities.’ These are all barriers which have been identified as inhibiting appropriate case management practices. For example, for ‘selective case registration,’ if a child is not identified because a particular CPAN does not recognise children who are disabled, or children in remote areas, then they will never be identified as being at risk and therefore can never progress through case management steps.

Furthermore, the challenges can be broken into various thematic areas, which the evaluation team have identified as the following:

- **Environmental** (such as insecurity, geographic remoteness). These are all barriers which are often outside of the scope of CPAN and cannot be directly addressed
- **Structural** (such as poor capacity, limitation in agency coordination, lack of accurate data keeping etc.). These are areas of capacity which can be assessed and appropriately improved
- **Socio-cultural** (such as cultural sensitivities of communities). Cultural practices and communal taboos (such as discussing issues of child protection, sexual crimes and even exposing challenges within a family)

As this flow chart highlights, there are several challenges facing successful completion of case management. The greatest bottle-necks however, were evident in stage four – ‘provisions of direct and indirect services’ – and stage five – ‘monitoring and follow ups.’ In both steps, there is the greatest chance for case workers to meet challenges which would prevent them from effectively moving onto the next stage of case management. The following table is supposed to present the barriers and challenges, and not specifically to show how the various sections of case management work. The table is only intended to demonstrate the current challenges in each stage of case management. The previous text describes how these areas are being addressed, and how to best rectify and mitigate these challenges.
BREAKING POINTS AND BARRIERS IN CASE MANAGEMENT

**STAGE 1: PATHWAYS OF IDENTIFYING CHILDREN AT RISK**
- Selective case registration
- Awareness of communities to report children at risk
- Referrals continuously being made directly to agencies rather than being directed through CPAN
- Cultural sensitivities of communities

**STAGE 2: ASSESSMENT AND IDENTIFICATION OF CHILDREN AT RISK**
- Capacity of CPAN members to conduct thorough assessments and identification of children at risk and their families
- Cultural sensitivities of communities

**STAGE 3: REFERRALS**
- Limitation of services available to support cases
- Cultural sensitivities of communities

**STAGE 4: PROVISION OF DIRECT AND INDIRECT SUPPORT**
- Lack of financial and human resources
- Geographic remoteness of children
- Insecurity
- Limitations in Inter-agency coordination and commitment
- Limited capacity in some CPAN members
- Cultural sensitivities of communities

**STAGE 5: MONITORING AND FOLLOW UPS**
- Lack of financial and human resources
- Geographic remoteness of children
- Insecurity
- Limitations of central CPAN member’s awareness on importance of monitoring and follow up
- Lack of accurate and detailed record keeping
- Cultural sensitivities of communities

**STAGE 6: EXIT STRATEGIES**
- Limitations in human and financial resources
- Geographic remoteness of children
- Lack of record keeping
Conclusions and Recommendations

The evaluation team has found that there are significant gaps in case management processes, while also a lack of appropriate documentation to accurately assess the quality of case management. For example, in most instances where appropriate documentation was not available, which highlighted the process of case management, the evaluation team was unable to measure the extent to which appropriate referrals and support are being provided and the extent to which satisfactory solutions are found. It was clear to the evaluation team however, that choices of cases appeared to be confined to a relatively small range of child-orientated organisations. There was little evidence that CPAN members could accurately identify the various types of risks facing children, likewise that central-CPAN staff were using support services outside of community-based mediation. Furthermore, there was a complete lack of appropriate and ongoing monitoring activities. While teams reported that this was a result of limited resources, it is paramount to the successful closure of a case.

Overall, there needs to be significant changes in the way cases are managed. This should include the development of guidelines for case management, design of templates which can better support CPAN members to fulfil the requirements of each stage of case management, and ongoing technical monitoring and support to ensure CPAN members are managing cases following best practices. As this section highlighted there are various barriers which prohibit the successful completion of case management, and as such children – despite being provided some kind of support – will go home and generally still be at risk.

**Recommendations:**

- There should be a particular focus on increasing the awareness of front line professionals who deals with children day to day such as teachers, health practitioners, madrassa teachers despite they are not officially obliged to report children at risk under national legislation as they are a relevant and effective point of entry into the lives of children at risk.

- These findings also identify that future training could focus on how to better work with local communities and the CP community to identify and report children at risk. There was little evidence from interviews suggesting that CPAN members (both key CPAN staff and participating NGOs and CSOs) were actively identifying children at risk in their daily work, but rather only dealt with cases that were being directly referred to them.

- CPAN meetings should allocate a period of time to document cases which are considered closed and/or solved. Meetings are a prime opportunity to have all CPAN members together; allowing them to share the outcomes of cases which were either directly referred to them, or referred by central CPAN staff.

- A template should be revised and re-introduced into CPAN activities; asking central CPAN staff to fill out for every case monthly in a centralised folder or data base. This will allow CPAN teams to better identify the number of cases that are currently open, and they can be systematically reported as closed. The most appropriate method may be the use of an excel database, in which CPAN members complete in addition to the individual case forms for children at risk. Furthermore, introducing such a data base will help to ensure that cases are filed in a systematic manner, as well as allow CPAN and UNICEF to generate trends, and follow cases are open and closed.
5.2.3 MANAGEMENT PROCESSES

Assessment of Case Management Records:

The evaluation team found that case management records were being poorly managed across most provinces. UNICEF provided CPAN members with a template – Individual Case Report of Child Rights Violations (refer to Annex 1) – to fill out for every case that was reported through CPAN. Reports were irregularly filled out, and most often than not, lacked accurate details to provide insight into case files. Quantitative data was not complemented by any narrative about new or changing trends in issues or characterization of those seeking support. This may be due to the reporting formats, but it denies opportunities to the best of the PCPAN to share their valuable perceptions and insight which come to light only in workshops organized in Kabul by NTAs.

Based on document review of best practice standards for case management from 11 provinces, the evaluation team designed and identified six key indicators with which to measure the quality of case management records. These indicators included the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator (Definitions found in Annex 2)</th>
<th>Sub Indicators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Performance Indicator 1</td>
<td>A case worker was assigned to the case</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance Indicator 2</td>
<td>Assessment and Information of Case</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance Indicator 3</td>
<td>Individual Support Planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance Indicator 4</td>
<td>Documented Referrals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance Indicator 5</td>
<td>Evidence that the case has been monitored, followed up and reviewed:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance Indicator 6</td>
<td>Evidence of a documented exit strategy or evidence that the case has been closed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

42 These were the 11 provinces selected by the evaluation team, and described further in the methodology. The provinces included: Kabul, Wardak, Kunar, Nangarhar, Badakhshan, Balkh, Herat, Khost, Bamyan, Helmand and Kandahar.

43 An assigned case worker could include those from central CPAN staff or a participating agency.

44 The evaluation team noted that not all children require referrals, but this indicator is to determine if a referral was made when necessary.
PERFORMANCE SCORES FOR TARGET PROVINCES

The following table provides a snapshot of cases which were reviewed by the evaluation team. During field visits, most teams only had data readily available from 2015 and 2016, therefore most of the following review is based on cases which were documented between 2015 and the end 2016.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case Worker was assigned to the case</th>
<th>Bamyan</th>
<th>Kandahar</th>
<th>Nangarhar</th>
<th>Badakhshan</th>
<th>Herat</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A case worker was assigned to the case</td>
<td>73% (a total of 17 out of 23 cases)</td>
<td>100% (A total of 24 out of 24)</td>
<td>13% (A total of 3 out of 16)</td>
<td>6% (a total of 1 out of 17)</td>
<td>47% (A total of 9 out of 19)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Case Files: Identification Information included:
- necessary identification information
- family history
- Location and information of registration
- Initial protection concern

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Individual Support Planning</th>
<th>Bamyan</th>
<th>Kandahar</th>
<th>Nangarhar</th>
<th>Badakhshan</th>
<th>Herat</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Type of assistance being provided to child</td>
<td>73% (a total of 17 out of 23 cases)</td>
<td>50% (A total of 12 out of 24 cases)</td>
<td>0% (A total of 0 out of 16)</td>
<td>6% (a total of 1 out of 17)</td>
<td>57.8% (A total of 11 out of 19)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where assistance takes place</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member responsible for providing assistance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of time support is to be provided</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Documented Referrals:</th>
<th>Bamyan</th>
<th>Kandahar</th>
<th>Nangarhar</th>
<th>Badakhshan</th>
<th>Herat</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To Whom referral has been made</td>
<td>100% (a total of 23 out of 23)</td>
<td>100% (A total of 24 out of 24)</td>
<td>37.5% (Total of 6 out of 16)</td>
<td>100% (a total of 17 out of 17)</td>
<td>57.8% (A total of 11 out of 19)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Evidence that the case has been monitored and reviewed:
- How often Monitoring has taken place
- Who is responsible for conducting the monitoring
- Notes from monitoring visits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evidence of a documented exit strategy or evidence that the case has been closed</th>
<th>Bamyan</th>
<th>Kandahar</th>
<th>Nangarhar</th>
<th>Badakhshan</th>
<th>Herat</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13% (a total of 3 out of 23)</td>
<td>0% (a total of 0 out of 24)</td>
<td>0% (a total of 0 out of 16)</td>
<td>0% (A total of 0 out of 17)</td>
<td>0% (A total of 0 out of 19)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Indicator 1: A Case Worker was Assigned to the Case**

Involvement of cases workers were consistently high across most provinces. In Kandahar, Wardak, Kunar and Khost, recorded involvement was 100% across all case files reviewed. The involvement in Bamyan, Herat, Nangarhar and Baskhshan were less comprehensive at 73%, 47%, 13%, and 6% respectively. Interviews with TAs however, suggest that the involvement of social workers and TAs or CPAN officers was often more than that which was recorded. In Badakhshan for example, several CPAN members reported that the CPAN officer regularly went to the prosecutor’s office or to NGOs supporting children to check up on the progress of the cases. This however, is not documented in Badakhshan’s case management files. Furthermore, the specific role of the case officer in the case management process is not noted in reports. Field visits highlighted that TAs and CPAN officers were

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Wardak</th>
<th>Kunar</th>
<th>Khost</th>
<th>Kabul</th>
<th>Helmand</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A case worker was assigned to the case</td>
<td>100% (A total of 22 out of 22)</td>
<td>100% (A total of 30 out of 30 cases)</td>
<td>100% (A total of 20 out of 20 cases)</td>
<td>N/A (a total of 0% out of 23 cases)</td>
<td>50% (a total of 4 out of 8)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Case Files: Identification Information included:**

- necessary identification information
- family history
- Location and information of registration
- Initial protection concern

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Wardak</th>
<th>Kunar</th>
<th>Khost</th>
<th>Kabul</th>
<th>Helmand</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>100% (A total of 22 out of 22)</td>
<td>100% (A total of 30 out of 30)</td>
<td>85% (A total of 17 out of 20)</td>
<td>80% (a total of 19 out of 23 cases)</td>
<td>75% (a total out of 6 out of 8)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Individual Support Planning**

- Type of assistance being provided to child
- Where assistance takes place
- Member responsible for providing assistance
- Length of time support is to be provided

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Wardak</th>
<th>Kunar</th>
<th>Khost</th>
<th>Kabul</th>
<th>Helmand</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>86.6% (A total of 19 out of 22)</td>
<td>40% (A total of 12 out of 30)</td>
<td>75% (A total of 15 out of 20)</td>
<td>60% (a total of 14 out of 23)</td>
<td>25% (a total of 2 out of 8)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Documented Referrals:**

- To Whom referral has been made

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Wardak</th>
<th>Kunar</th>
<th>Khost</th>
<th>Kabul</th>
<th>Helmand</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0% (A total of 0 out of 22)</td>
<td>100% (A total of 30 out of 30)</td>
<td>50% (A total of 10 out of 20)</td>
<td>0% (a total of 0 out of 23 cases)</td>
<td>0% (a total of 0 out of 8)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Evidence that the case has been monitored and reviewed:**

- How often Monitoring has taken place
- Who is responsible for conducting the monitoring
- Notes from monitoring visits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Wardak</th>
<th>Kunar</th>
<th>Khost</th>
<th>Kabul</th>
<th>Helmand</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0% (A total of 0 out of 22)</td>
<td>0% (A total of 0 out of 30)</td>
<td>0% (A total of 0 out of 20)</td>
<td>52% (a total of 12 out of 23)</td>
<td>25% (a total of 2 out of 8)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Evidence of a documented exit strategy or evidence that the case has been closed**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Wardak</th>
<th>Kunar</th>
<th>Khost</th>
<th>Kabul</th>
<th>Helmand</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5% (A total of 1 out of 22)</td>
<td>3% (A total of 1 out of 30)</td>
<td>25% (A total of 5 out of 20)</td>
<td>8% (A total of 2 out of 23)</td>
<td>0% ( a total of 0 out of 8)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Evaluation of Afghanistan’s Child Protection Action Network

generally responsible for registering cases, nevertheless the extent to which they were involved after this reported was not documented.

**Indicator 2: Assessment and Identification Information**

Assessment is the process of gathering and analysing information in order to inform planning decisions about a child’s situation. The process of collecting information on a child and assessing their situation should not be just an exercise in data collection, but the basis in which decisions regarding support are made. During this stage, the case worker (CPAN member) should be concerned with not just the immediate risks facing the child, but also the potential resources already available to the child, protective influences and potential strengths of family and community members involved.45

According to CPAN practices, all cases which come through CPAN members should be registered and documented centrally in the provincial DoLSAMD office. The case file should hold a written record of all information pertaining to the child and family which is relevant to how their protection concerns need to be addressed. There should be detailed information about where and when the child was identified, the initial protection concern and the description of the case. In general, most cases reported the initial protection concern, the gender and age of the child and a summarised description of the incident at hand. For the purpose of the evaluation, the cases that met these requirements were given a ‘pass.’ Nevertheless, there were significant gaps in all cases regarding detailed identification. For example, only in Mazaar did CPAN officers, TAs or social workers provide written reports on family background. These details however, were not attached to individual case forms, but rather kept in separate folders. The challenge in this instance was trying to match case files with corresponding family background documents. There was no systematic approach to identifying cases and their corresponding family history. Furthermore, often there was a lack of information about the location of the incident or location of the child at risk. Of course, strong considerations need to be made regarding ethical CP practices and confidentiality. For the purpose of monitoring and assessing effectiveness of case management however, at least the district or the village should be noted in case descriptions.

**Inconsistencies of Dates:**

The dates of reporting within provinces were also often inconsistent. For example, in Bamyan, at least six of the reviewed cases were reported on the same date. It is not clear if dates refer to the date of incident, date of referral or date of reporting to CPAN; suggesting inconsistencies about the way cases are being reported. To ensure effectiveness of reporting, the dates of incident, date of referral and registration should be accurately reported, whereby allowing CPAN teams to measure case timelines more appropriately.

**Issues of Identification:**

In some provinces CPAN members changed the names of children involved in cases. The CPAN officer, for example, in Mazaar reported doing this in order to protect the identity of the child. As a result, he wasn’t able to recall the identification information of many children involved in cases preventing effective follow up on the progress of cases. In this particular example, in order to follow up with cases the CPAN officer shared case details with the local JRC to see if they recalled the contact details. All identification details and contact information was not kept or known by CPAN in the DoLSAMD office. This was also reported to be the case in Nangarhar. Nevertheless, there was little evidence to suggest that this was action was common place, but rather an individual decision based on the perceptions of individual CPAN members.

Lack of Case Information:
In most instances, the nuances of cases are not being documented. In case management documentation, surface level summaries are made about the child and the risks facing the child. For example, a child protection case in Badakhshan reported that ‘a 16-year-old girl was made known to the police by a member of the community for running away from home and committing adultery. Her case was reported to be with the prosecution’s office.’ As we can see from this description, there is very limited nuanced details about this case. It is unknown to what extent the risks concerning this girl have been identified by the responsible case worker. There was no detail as to why the girl had run away, or details on her ‘reported’ adultery.

Discussions with CPAN members across the provinces highlighted that there were generally specific reasons why a girl would run away and according to the head of the JRC in Badakhshan, that accusations of ‘adultery’ were often made based on assumption rather than hard evidence. For example, the CPAN officers in Badakhshan highlighted that often girls ran away because they were being beaten at home, or were unhappy with their living conditions. By running away however, and being unaccompanied for several hours, girls left themselves open to accusations of adultery. These discussions alone, highlight that there is generally a reason why a girl may run away from home, but is not documented in this case file.

Furthermore, this particular case report provided no evidence as to whether the girl had been spoken to by a CPAN member, whether she admitted to her crime and whether she was facing other unknown risks. Although CPAN may not necessarily have the resources for various types of intervention, it is paramount that they are still able to identify and document all types of risks facing the girl. By effectively identifying these – rather than that she was solely being prosecuted for adultery – CPAN could capture a more realistic and holistic foundation with which to make decisions about how to best support her. Although this is just one example of poorly reported case information, this was a common pattern across all DoLSAMD offices.

Case Records and Interagency Coordination
One of the major challenges involving case reporting however, was the unavailability of case file information which was kept with participating agencies. While humanitarian and development organisations provide most of the support to children at risk, details of cases and case management information are not shared with CPAN. While each organisation has their own CP protocols and ethical requirements, central CPAN actors are unable to accurately map incidents of children at risk, types of support provided and the resolution of cases.

Negotiations need to be had among CPAN members to formalise a systematic and centralised approach to recording cases. One area of the Theory of Change suggests that in order to create a national data base of information on CP trends to strengthen CP legislation and policies, all CPAN members need to coordinate effectively to ensure CPAN at a national level is collecting accurate information on CP trends and best practices regarding case management processes.

Performance Indicator 3: Individual Support Planning
As a case is opened and an assessment of the child has been done by a case worker, CPAN may either request a case committee to be held, directly refer the case to another CPAN member or start dialogues with local community members. All these processes are part of individual support planning. During this time CPAN should identify what types of formal or informal support is required to meet the child’s immediate or long term needs. Notes from these discussions should be reported in case files, including the precise assistance to be provided. Reviewed cases did not indicate what services and support was required to meet the child’s immediate and long term needs. According to UNICEF staff, ideally the
Plan is developed with the participation of the family, child and other relevant stakeholders. In most instances, cases from all provinces did not provide this type of in-depth discussion. On most occasions case files identified the support that would be provided, for example hospital care, housing in shelters or in the JRC. Therefore, if a case file identified any type of support service provision, then it positively passed the performance indicator 3 (individual support planning). Nevertheless, a thorough case file should include accurate information on the assistance being provided, and how discussions with family members and children were incorporated into this decision.

For example, in a review of one case file from Balkh, a 16 year old boy was accused of theft. In the section of the template marked ‘Type of support and provided by whom,’ the report simply said ‘legal services.’ This description, although identifying that the case is currently being processed through the legal system, did not describe the type of support that a CPAN member was providing. Irrespective of CPAN, this child would have been processed through the legal system. Specific details about the type of support being provided should have been reported, including the role of a social worker, the current housing situation of the child, and the involvement of the family to ensure best interests of the child.

In another example from Nangarhar, for cases which were referred to the JRC, the type of support provided was only noted as ‘stationary provided by TDH.’ This was noted as support provided to those accused of adultery, kidnapping, theft and smuggling. In this instance, it appears that the NGO TDH provided stationary to children in the JRC so they could continue their education. The notes however, are not indicative of individual support provided to cases. There were no details about the individual support being provided by the JRC, legal services or CPAN key members. As a result, there is no record that any support is being provided through CPAN which was based on the individual assessment of the needs of the children involved. Reasons for this lack of explanation may be one of two things. Firstly, support is in fact being provided but not being documented or that no further support is being provided from CPAN members, and that the reference to ‘legal systems’ is the extent to which the child is having access to service. As this evaluation, will later discuss, there is evidence of both.

**Indicator 4: Documented Referral**

As the previous indicator highlighted, case planning should be detailed in each case file. UNICEF staff highlighted that referrals both to CPAN and from CPAN needed to be accurately documented then put into database. This was thought to help identify common trends about how cases are brought to CPAN, in addition to who the major formal and informal service providers are in each province. As CP cases are often multi-faceted, it is unlikely that the risks facing a child can be effectively addressed and resolved through one referral, therefore records should be kept centralized in one location documenting all the actions regardless of actors involved in a child’s case. The extent to which this is being accurately reported however is mixed. For the purpose of this evaluation, if a case file reported to whom a case was referred then the case passed that criteria. Nevertheless, in many instances such as in Herat, Badakhshan, Nangarhar, Kandahar, Kunar and Wardak, for cases that involved ‘children in conflict with the law’ the only referral made was to either the JRC or to a ‘defence lawyer.’ As previously stated, this does not suggest that there is any direct support or referrals made through CPAN. For example, in Wardak, notes reported that case management committees had taken place for most cases. Case planning committees are generally made up of CPAN members who can provide access to relevant services based on the needs of the child. The documentation however, fails to describe who was present at these case management committees and as such who would be providing what type of support during case management.

In other instances, such as in Kandahar and Kunar, referrals were marked as ‘provincial CPAN.’ For cases involving ‘children in conflict with the law’ or medical situation, this reference does not accurately reflect the actors involved in the case. Provincial CPAN would rarely be solely capable to manage
and formally resolve cases which needed to be processes through formal justice systems. This type of reporting failed to identify the main CP contributors to support a child.

**Performance Indicator 5: Evidence that the Case has been Monitored and Followed-Up**

A key element of case management is monitoring and follow-up of cases as they progress. Follow up ensures the state of the child is improving and services are being appropriately and effectively provided. It is important that notes on visits are recorded and filed; allowing social workers and CPAN members to accurately track the progress of cases.

Across 171 case files reviewed in 8 provinces not a single file recorded notes on, or dates for, follow up visits. In some cases, the individual responsible for follow up was noted, most commonly a defense lawyer, but no notes were provided. During the interview process, it was noted on some occasions that monitoring and follow up occurred on an ad-hock basis but notes were rarely put in case files. In Herat for example, the TA explained that social workers were generally responsible for follow ups and any notes pertaining to these follow ups were kept individually with social workers and not integrated into CPAN case files.

In Nangarhar there was another instance of monitoring informally. A young boy was being forced to work by his uncle and not allowed to attend school. According to a CPAN officer in Jalalabad the local community elders and the CPAN officer intervened and requested that the boy’s uncle allow him to attend school. The CPAN officer reported that on several occasions he went to visit the boy informally to check on his situation, but that no further actions were taken and no documentation was drawn up on the case or monitoring notes provided. “We just followed up on the case through the community and closed it. Sometimes the community leaders / representatives because of some ethical or cultural issues don’t want cases to be officially recorded or documented. As a child protection officer I cooperate with them...” Furthermore, the same member in Nangarhar commented that they did not write up monitoring notes because they understood there to be no template to register monitoring information.

The lack of evidence that monitoring and follow-ups makes it difficult to reach conclusions on the effectiveness of case management. It also suggests that monitoring and follow up is not regular practice among central CPAN staff.

**Performance Indicator 6: Evidence of Documented Exit Strategy**

In addition to frequent and effective reporting of monitoring and follow-ups, cases should also include details on exit strategies and the date of case closure. A key aspect of case management is to determine how and when a case should be closed. Therefore, case files should include notes on discussions of exit strategies. Once a case is closed, it should also be recorded. Among the provinces evaluated, Khost performed the best with a total of 25% of cases being reported as either ‘ongoing’ or closed. All other provinces on most occasions failed to provide updated information on the progress of cases. As a result, Sayara was unable to track the rate of cases which were ongoing and those which had been solved. Furthermore, it was unclear that when cases were marked as ‘ongoing,’ whether this was the comment which was written when the case was first drawn up, or whether this was updated as case management progressed.

In instances when dates were provided for the closure of cases, it was only when cases were resolved within two to three day from the initial report. This was generally children who had run away or were lost and then re-integrated with their families, children who had died or children who sought assistance for medical emergencies.
Information Management (IM)

The evaluation team noted that there were several challenges involving information management (IM). While in Kabul appropriate IM procedures were observed to be in place, there was little evidence of such practices in other provinces. Accurate and secure information management is paramount to ensuring that case files are stored appropriately, but also accurately filed and shared with the necessary stakeholders. Information management in this evaluation refers to how information is collected, stored and shared with respect to child protection cases. Field work however, highlighted several concerns regarding current IM processes.

**Issues of confidentiality and data security**

One particular issue which was identified across the provinces was the lack of safe and confidential information management. Case files in all provinces except for Herat, Kabul and Mazaar were not kept in secure and locked cupboards. In most cases, case files were kept in hard copies in folders which were kept in CPAN offices in DoLSAMD. These offices were generally public places, with various staff members from DoLSMD coming in and out, in addition to members of the public. Cases were not de-identified through coding systems. Although there is no legal mandate on how data should be stored, there are examples of best practice in relation to information management that could be used as a basis for changed practice in other provinces. Kabul is one example of how electronic copies of cases can provide an increased level of security and ease of updating cases on a regular basis. In the MoLSAMD office in Kabul, the TA keeps all records of cases in electronic versions, categorised by quarters, months and then identified by case type. As a result, the TA is able to easily update cases on a regular basis, but also does not need to keep numerous folders of hard copies which may be accessible to non CPAN staff.

**Standardised Practices**

On a positive note, however, provinces are using standardised forms; ensuring uniformity in documentation across caseloads. Due to this, common issues with reporting were apparent across provinces and rarely specific to an individual province and DoLSAMD office; suggesting that current issues with reporting may relate to the current standardised forms and level of training and support provided to CPAN members.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Central CPAN staff are consistently engaged in child protection cases. There are some positive practices evidenced in the case file review and in interviews. Most notably case files consistently included basic information, brief documented referrals and some evidence of case planning. Nevertheless, there are also a number of areas that require significant strengthening. Without having clearly documented case files -- files that explain in detail the case at hand, details of the child and family involved, support planning, monitoring and follow-up details and finally a planned exit strategy -- CPAN and UNICEF are unable to monitor the effectiveness of CPAN response to children at risk. They also cannot assess common trends in case management practices to identify lessons learnt and best and worst practices.

One particular reason for these gaps in effective reporting may be a lack of understanding among CPAN members about the necessity for effective information management and keeping records of cases. In Nangarhar for example, when asked, one CPAN officer commented that he did not think that keeping this type of information was particularly beneficial, but that in the future he would aim to improve how information is being recorded and kept. Furthermore, there may be a lack of understanding that case reporting is an iterative process, whereby the case worker needs to continually update documents. All reporting and case files associated with case management should be understood as a set of fluid doc-
documents which need to be continually updated and adapted based on how the case progresses. CPAN members need to be trained in regularly updating cases, and monitored on this task.

Furthermore, in most provinces with the exception of Bamyan and Kabul, cases from district levels are not being registered and recorded. Although cases may be managed and solved through informal mechanisms, for the purpose of information management and understanding common trends and practices, all cases at both district and provincial levels should be registered and recorded with Provincial CPAN offices. Throughout this evaluation, it was difficult for Sayara to determine the extent to which case management happens at a district level and which types of cases were being identified and managed. According to CPAN teams, reports of case monitoring from the districts were not registered because they did not require any formal services. As a result, district level case management was not evaluable, and therefore no specific comments could be made regarding quality. Various suggestions that could improve how information management and reporting takes place within provincial and district CPAN offices include the following:

• Revise the current ‘individual case’ template. The current template is not formatted in such a way which encourages CPAN members to make detailed accounts of cases and regularly update the document. CPAN members appear to use the current template on a one off basis, and rarely update information as the case progresses. Directly asking for more detail (with very specific questions) would provide CPAN members with a clear guide to what information MoLSAMD and UNICEF are interested in collecting. Furthermore, including bullet points which directly ask CPAN members to fill out dates of monitoring and asking for specific notes on monitoring visits should also increase the awareness that monitoring is a necessary part of case management. By designing a template that asks CPAN members to regularly fill out notes on monitoring, UNICEF and MoLSAMD can hold staff more accountable for conducting monitoring and recording findings whether or not formal services were required.

• Conduct regular audits of case records reviewing how cases are being recorded and provide support to provincial and district CPAN teams to help them improve their areas of weakness.

• Standardise and centralise reporting among all CPAN agencies. This may include a process of negotiation with some NGOs such as ICRC. DoLSAMD offices however should be collecting information on all CP cases within their province, and recording cases as such.

• All cases should be registered and recorded, irrespective if they are managed through formal and informal systems. Cases from the districts should all be registered with provincial DoLSAMD office.

5.2.4 TRAINING

What technical Assistance has UNICEF provided CPAN to CPAN members?

According to UNICEF and MoLSAMD staff, UNICEF provides technical assistance to CPAN members, in addition to financial assistance. UNICEF provides technical support to CPAN members; building their awareness, understanding and capacity to implement prevention activities and respond appropriately to children at risk. Most of the technical support provided by UNICEF takes place in the way of training sessions. According to UNICEF senior CP staff and provincial CPAN members, training is held annually in Kabul and regionally (within Afghanistan). Training is generally led by senior CP staff at a national level, and by NTAs or CPAN officers regionally. CPAN also provide technical assistance through the provision of NTA. The NTA – as previously discussed, the TA is responsible for providing...
technical support to provincial CPANs, through individual assistances and capacity building sessions. Nevertheless, the evaluation team found that the technical assistance provided to CPAN members is holistic and generally provides CPAN members with the skills and knowledge to respond to children at risk. Senior UNICEF staff highlighted that in the past year they conducted the following training sessions to CPAN teams:

**2015:**
- Case Management for CPAN members for 32 provinces
- Refresher training on the Code of Conduct to ensure the following:
  - Confidentiality
  - Implementation of the rights of child in professional and personal life
  - Do no harm policies
  - Interaction with children
  - Psychosocial First Aid
  - Mapping Services

**2016:**
- Assessment Frame work for Child Protection Cases
- Child Protection Minimum Standards for Children in Emergency situations
- Appreciative Inquiry
- Lessons Learnt
- Sharing good Practices
- Community Dialogue Sessions
- Religious Leaders Conference

Overall, there was positive feedback among CPAN members regarding their experiences of training. Of the members interviewed for this evaluation, a total of 70.3% reported that they had received professional training associated with CP. A total of 100% of TAs reported receiving training, 80% of Child Protection Officers, and 71.4% of DoLSAMD staff. Interestingly however, only 68.8% of social workers reported receiving official training. Of peripheral CPAN members, 83.3% of community elders (10) reported receiving CP training, 83.3% of prosecutors (15), 66.7% of police officers (4) and 65.9% of NGO staff (27). Of those who reported receiving training, a total of 81% reported receiving the training through CPAN related activities.

These findings suggest, that although key CPAN members appear to regularly receive training (including TAs and CP officers), front line workers such as the social workers may not be getting the same exposure to training opportunities as senior CPAN staff. This was reiterated in an interview with social workers in Badakhshan. A female social worker has been on staff for approximately six months and

---

46 The specific themes that CPAN members were individually trained on were not included in this CPAN member survey.
had received no official CP training. She also had had no prior experience working in CP, and everything that she had learnt to date was from her fellow social worker. Social workers play an integral role ensuring children are provided with the necessary support to resolve the issues of their case. They are an important liaison between formal justice systems and children and their families.

Of those who reported receiving training, the most common type of training received were sessions on ‘children’s rights (84.4%), followed by 66.3% for case identification. Training included in ‘other’ generally concerned children and the law and children in emergencies. With regards to the scope of work of CPAN, these finding suggest there may be some gaps either in the type of training being provided or members’ abilities to recall the type of training in which they participated. These may include types of training like reporting and monitoring and data collection.

When asked the extent to which CPAN members through training was useful, 96% reported that it was either very useful or useful.

When asked how frequently training was being provided, CPAN members reported that 43% that they received training at least every 6 months. A total of 25% reported that they received training at least once a year, 1.6 % reported they received once every two years and then 22.4% reported that they had never received training. It is unclear why a total of 22.4% reported having not received training, when they previously had. The majority of this group was from Badakhshan.
Of those who reported receiving training, 52.9% thought the amount of training was sufficient for their needs, while 42% thought that more training would be beneficial.

“I started my work thinking children issues and their concerns is not a big deal, but as I entered the practice work and in the field, that I realized that children are caught in enormous challengers and concerns that we need to tackle. For instance, the right of a child to opinion, we have this custom that while elders are talking the youngsters don’t get involved or talk. Even when the turn of the child comes that he could speak we shut him up saying what would a child know? But in reality, the child has such important issues in his mind that an elder cannot apprehend but by shutting him we are not allowing him to be able to express himself.” (CPAN officer, Helmand)

Another CPAN member (head of the JRC) from Badakhshan reported that he had received regional training and found the topic and training to be particularly useful. “I had training about how to handle cases with children, and some of the procedures and rules that needed to be followed…I learned many things and it was very effective for me.” A social worker from Faizabad reported that prior to his current position he had never been trained in CP, and that training was a useful opportunity for members to share their experiences and learn from one another. “I bring back the information I learned and share it with my colleagues.’ One CPAN member from Bamyan highlighted the importance of sharing lessons learnt in training sessions. “My skills and knowledge have increased, I’ve learnt about issues that I didn’t know before…in the next phase we need to bring back the knowledge and training to the people in the province. We can teach people about CPAN...we need to transfer what we have learnt to people.”

Some members however, when asked if they had enough training thought that they had enough skill and knowledge and that to complete their job they did not require further training. One example of this was found in Nangarhar. When asked if more training would be useful, the CP officer reported ‘No, I am pretty mature in my field...’”. Another example from the CPAN officer from Helmand highlighted that his current knowledge and experience meant that there was nothing more he needed to learn about CP in Afghanistan. “In the course of my work for children I have been supported by French organizations for children and UNICEF and I have been awarded more than 50 certificates and appreciations in the 15 years of my work, so far I have had the self-capacity of conducting children related issues on my own and have not felt the need for any capacity building process as yet. I have the knowledge and the experience that I need to deal with children issues, and no one in the 34 provinces of Afghanistan to be able to give me workshop because I have experienced issues first hand.”

This suggests that some CPAN members may not realise the scope of work involved in CP, and the extent to which processes and knowledge need to be improved. While this is rarely possible to counter, it is

---

47 How effectively training was run, was not within the scope of this evaluation, and therefore cannot be discussed. In order to assess training effectiveness, rapid-assessments would need to be done during training assessments; measuring knowledge learnt and satisfaction with the training provided.
important to keep in mind when providing technical assistance, because such individuals will be less receptive to the introduction of new activities or processes; assuming they already know what it right. In these instances it may be worth adopting a coaching method rather than lecture/workshop models for training. This would allow a trainer to individual encourage and monitor the progress of staff who don’t recognise the gaps in their knowledge and work.

In conclusion, the evaluation team found that, although the UNICEF has regularly provided CPAN members with technical assistance, and CPAN members report positively about their experience, some frontline workers are not having the same exposure to training and some of the skills and knowledge learnt in sessions may not be directly translating into actions in the field. It is unknown why this may be the case, but there are certainly gaps in the type of support being provided to children – especially with regards to case management. Therefore, the evaluation team suggests that UNICEF and MoL-SAMD consider more follow up sessions after training. In this, the TA or a regional UNICEF CP officer, can observe central CPAN member managing a case, or assist them to accurately document a case in the individual case management form. It appears the support provided to CPAN members such as social workers may not be extensive enough, or appropriate to their levels of learning. Interviews highlighted that TAs and CPAN officers were quick to dismiss the role of social workers, insisting that they had poor capacity and were unable to provide necessary assistance. While Sayara recognises there are current programmes being put in place to develop a social worker curriculum and professional education systems, the current social workers should still be accurately trained and supported in their work.

**5.3 Efficiency**

To what extent does CPAN have adequate resources to achieve intended outcomes?

Reviews of CP activities and discussions with CPAN members and UNICEF staff highlighted that two of the biggest resource challenges facing the success of CPAN were the lack of human and financial resources. Deficits in these areas are some of the biggest factors influencing how effectively CPAN is achieving its intended outcomes.

Lack of Human Resources

The most notable challenge, as previously discussed in this evaluation, is the lack of human resources (both quality and quantity). While key CPAN staff include TAs, CPAN officers and social workers, interviews regularly highlighted that there was never enough staff to deal with scope of work in a given province. This inhibits CPAN from providing more effective direct support to children at risk. In most cases, there is a heavy reliance on Non-central CPAN members to identify and manage cases (such as NGOs and legal services). It is not surprising then that most cases dealt with by provincial CPANs are thematic. Central CPAN lacks the support and staffing to effectively identify and manage cases which are out of the scope of their thematic partners or those which are not easily resolved through quick interventions, such as ‘unaccompanied children.’

Furthermore, central CPAN staff regularly commented that they were not able to focus predominately on CPAN activities, as they also had other responsibilities within the ministry. These responsibilities, delegated by deputy ministers in the provinces, often prevented central CPAN members from conducting CPAN related activities. For example, the TA in Badakhshan regularly highlighted that he had to help the deputy with other duties around the ministry. This was also the case for Non-Central CPAN members. As previously discussed, many suggested that they often could not attend and support CPAN activities because they had other work priorities. As long as CPAN remains an informal system, CPAN activities may not be priorities for members.
Lack of Financial Resources

Interviews with UNICEF and central CPAN members highlighted that UNICEF is the primary financial support for all contributions made to CPAN. Currently, MoLSAMD covers the salaries of central CPAN staff – such as social workers and CPAN officers (excluding TAs). Nevertheless, as previously highlighted, social workers and CPAN officers are also required to fulfil DoLSAMD tasks outside of their TORs. According to UNICEF, the annual budget allocation for CPAN is USD 350,000. This includes the salaries of 16 NTAs in four regions and 3 social workers in the eastern region. The monthly UNICEF budget allocation to each CPAN is roughly 7000 AFS (approx. USD 105).\(^48\) Central CPAN staff reported that this budget is allocated for transportation, some administrative materials and refreshments for meetings. Based on these calculations, if 32 provinces are receiving roughly 7000 AFS per month (USD105), that is a monthly budget of USD 3,395 and annual budget of USD 40,700.\(^49\) This is an allocation for CPAN activities (excluding community dialogue sessions). Furthermore, a selection of provinces was chosen to receive funding for community dialogue sessions, which were separate payments made based on the number of community dialogue sessions conducted.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Budget Allocation Per Province for CPAN activities</th>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Cost per Unit</th>
<th>Total Units</th>
<th>Total Cost Monthly</th>
<th>Total Cost Annually</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monthly</td>
<td>7000 AFS (USD 105)</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>USD 3,395</td>
<td>USD 40,700</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Central CPAN teams regularly commented that the monthly budgets allocated to CPAN were not sufficient to complete their activities, especially with regards to transportation. A CPAN member from Kunar reported that a child came from Badakhshan to Kunar after being recruited through Anti Government Elements (AGEs) in Kunar. He was arrested by Afghan security forces and sent to the JRC. CPAN was contacted and informed of the case. The child was eventually released by the courts, but CPAN did not have the resources to help the child get back to his family in Badakhshan. Another example from Kunar highlighted how the lack of funding inhibits their advocacy work:

“We have 160 Mullahs in the area and to work with them we need resources, to call them and to bring them together we need resources, we need lunch, tea and transport. With resources, we will be able to do so much good, it is an important issue. Lack of resources hinders our ability to work with the community. When we call a Mullah, we need to pay 500 Afs for the transport at least. But we don’t have those resources. There are 7 members who can meet on their own expenses each month, but when we are talking of spreading the word and expand our activities, we need resources for that.” (CPAN member, Kunar)

Interviews also highlighted that central CPAN members were aware of the high salaries given to TAs. Many reported that they thought money could be better spent by increasing the number of staff mem-

---

\(^{48}\) Calculated at the exchange rate of 66AFS to the US dollar

\(^{49}\) These calculations have been made based on the exchange rate of 66AFS to 1 USD
bers, rather than paying one staff member at a higher rate. For example, a CP officer, also in Kunar, commented on the need for more staff rather than a highly-paid TA. “A lot of money is spent on the CPAN head in the province instead of CPAN itself. With that money, we can stretch CPAN all 15 districts, of Kunar and have it work where CPAN has not worked before. I know they would not be able to do everything, but at least having a presence there should help to create awareness – people can understand that children’s rights go beyond simply being fed, getting and education, and getting married. We need the presence in communities to make them much more aware of all the risks.” In Nangarhar, actions were already taken to replace the TA with three social workers / CP officers. While it is too early to identify how effective this approach has been, the CPAN team in Nangarhar are much happier and reported that they feel like they can cope with the amount of work required of them.

In addition to monthly funding allocations, UNICEF also reported that there is emergency fund available for provincial CPAN teams. This funding is to be used for emergency cases; cases which were reported as to be incidents in which a child was in severe and immediate threat, such as the new born in Bamyan who was left in the forest during the night. Nevertheless, the evaluation team found that, on some occasions, this funding may be used to provide families at need with cash. This was particularly the case in Bamyan. In the treatment FGD, all mothers who were interviewed reported that they received cash sums from CPAN to assist them. While the cash was beneficial to the families, it did provide long term resolutions to the families and children at risk. Cash sums included payments of 4,000 AFS to help families buy necessary materials. It was not clear the extent to which these cash transfers were provided in response to the need to address child protection issues. Of the FGD participants who reported receiving cash incentives, it was normally to cover food or fuel for the winter. Two participants reported that the money allowed them to send their child to school, rather than having to work.

The views of interviewees (albeit anecdotal) are that the institutionalization of child protection under formalized tashkeels, like MoLSAMD’s dedicated CPAN staff, is insufficiently funded. This militates against the realization of full support to child protection. Furthermore, staff do not exist in sufficient numbers or with sufficient capacities to ensure full-time or comprehensive child protection services. Both shortages of trained personnel and patterns of rotation impact the qualitative input to, even participation in, CPAN meetings at all levels of the CPAN system.

### Are activities undertaken cost effectively?

**Are there ways in which efficiency could be improved regarding human and financial resources?**

The extent to which activities are cost effective was challenging for the evaluation team to assess. The costs of transportation vary dramatically depending on the province, the distance of location. Therefore, is it difficult to determine the extent to which transportation and activities are being conducted in a cost-effective means. Several CPAN members commented however, that the provision of a motor bike or vehicle could decrease the cost involved in using city taxis.

#### Community Advocacy Work

The cost efficiency of advocacy work was also challenging to determine. According to CPAN staff, the cost of one community dialogue session was roughly 6,000AFS (USD 90.00). This cost includes the price of transportation, food and tea for participants and the cost of a trainer. Nangarhar has recently trialled a more cost-effective approach to community dialogue sessions. Instead of paying facilitators 1000AFS per session, as they had done previously, they have now mobilised local community members to run the sessions. According to the Nangarhar team, the cost of a session is now 3200 AFS (USD 47.00). A CP officer from central CPAN in Nangarhar reported that he has mobilised 16 males and
16 females to be trained and conduct community dialogue sessions. In the past quarter, Nangarhar reported conducting a total of 147 sessions, in stark contrast to other provinces such as Kabul, which completed 15, Wardak (15) and Helmand a total of 50. The extent to which sessions facilitated by local community members is effective, however, or conducted appropriately is unknown. Interestingly, Herat reported covering a total of 180 sessions (90 with men and 90 with women since 2016). The full costs of these sessions were covered by UNICEF funding, and tasks were reported to be completed at an average cost of 6000 AFS. While it is a cost-effective approach to increasing the scope of community dialogue, it shouldn’t be used in place of fewer but higher quality sessions.50

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>Total Community Dialogue Session Held</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Herat</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helmand</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wardak</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kabul</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nangarhar</td>
<td>147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Badakhshan</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mazar</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Concluding Comments

Overall, the evaluation team found that CPAN is working on a low budget. With limited staffing and even more limited financial resources, CPAN will continue to struggle to grow and increase its level of effectiveness and efficiency. Interviews found that CPAN members are often forced to choose between which cases they can and cannot manage based predominately on the availability of human and financial resources. Furthermore, there is significant limitation in the potential for central CPAN members to reach further into communities, in addition to their opportunities to deal with more cases. While the evaluation team recognises that there are obviously financial restraints regarding the amount of money which can be provided to CPAN. The evaluation team recommends that UNICEF strongly consider the marginal value of increasing budget allocations to CPAN. While a formal child protection system is absent, CPAN is the primary mechanism for supporting children at risk nationally.

50 Note that not all participating provinces provided the evaluation team with the number of community dialogue sessions held, and they could therefore not be included in the evaluation report.
5.4 SUSTAINABILITY

To what extent are CPANs likely to continue operating if UNICEF were not to continue direct support?

The extent to which CPAN is sustainable without the financial and technical support of UNICEF is extremely limited. There is no evidence to suggest that efforts have been made to keep CPAN functional without UNICEF’s financial support. CPAN members, particularly central CPAN members, all highlighted that without the financial and technical support from UNICEF they would not be able to continue their activities. The CPAN officer from Badakhshan highlighted this, stating that “only UNICEF gives us the funds to do out work. Without the financial support of UNICEF things would slow down dramatically and we would not be able to do any activities, we wouldn’t be able to hold our monthly meetings and we wouldn’t be able to deal with cases”.

In 2013, UNICEF pulled funding from CPAN, in an attempt to hand over the network to MoLSAMD. A senior CP officer from UNICEF highlighted that this attempt was a failure and that MoLSAMD were unable to access funding to continue activities — despite efforts. He reported that prior to the hand over, there were roughly 3000 cases a year. After the handover, all district CPANs ceased to function. Funding is fundamental to CPAN activities. Furthermore, interviews highlighted that MoLSAMD lacks the technical expertise to provide necessary support and build the capacity of DoLSAMD CP teams. Since it began to provide support, UNICEF has been crucial to increasing the capacity of CP practitioners across the country. As a focal point for technical expertise, UNICEF’s involvement in CPAN activities is currently paramount to any type of success. As this evaluation has demonstrated, there are still significant gaps in the knowledge, skills and capacity of CPAN members. Nevertheless, without the technical assistance of UNICEF, practices, knowledge and capacity of members are unlikely to improve.

When CPAN members were asked about what the state of child protection would be without CPAN, most were very pessimistic. A CP officer from Bamyan highlighted “If we look at our lives before 2007, and after 2007 when CPAN was formed in Bamyan, people are learning and we don’t see things that were happening in the past. Rome was not built in a day and so is the work of CPAN. CPAN has helped us to make a difference in our communities.” Another CPAN officer in Bamyan commented “I can tell you that without CPAN in a province, we will have a disaster .... CPAN is like the traffic lights in a city, directing traffic in the right direction. With the help of a network we are better able to refer people to the right places, and solve cases, we can expedite them.... without UNICEF people will become disen-chanted....” Sentiments were similar in the eastern region, with CPAN officers reporting that without UNICEF funding and support, there were no other alternatives, despite it being the responsibility of the government.

The lack of funding and staffing from the Government of Afghanistan is a reflection of current national priorities. With the absence of official policies and legislation on child protection, there is little momentum and incentive for Ministries and departments to allocate necessary resources. Afghanistan’s child protection sector’s dependency of international support is still very high. There was little evidence during this evaluation that this dependency has decreased over the past few years. As a result, the support of UNICEF is crucial to existence of child protection in Afghanistan. In general, there is little evidence to suggest there is a growing momentum among ministries to advocate for increased support and funding to child protection issues. In order to increase the effectiveness of CPAN and overall child protection mechanisms across the country, the Government of Afghanistan should be leading the push to introduce child protection practices. How can CPAN become a priority for ministries, agencies and even communities without an official mandate? Only when the government has created an environment where CP is officially recognised can government ministries and CP agencies be held more accountable for the work they do and the support they provide children. Agencies and ministries
can align their activities with the country’s laws and practices. In a place as volatile and unpredictable as Afghanistan, this is a necessary foundation. The lack of a solid foundation should be considered a lesson learnt for both UNICEF and MoLSAMD. Without the formal recognition and support of CPAN, it was always going to be a challenging environment for CP workers.

**CPAN CONTRIBUTION TO NATIONAL PLANNING AND BUDGETS**

To what extent have CPAN-related activities been integrated into government planning documents, including budgets

The extent to which CPAN-related activities have been integrated into government planning documents, including budgets, should be considered an indicator of the sustainability of the CPAN. In this regard, the evidence drawn from desk reviews and key informant interviews provides a mixed picture. The most positive illustration of commitment to child protection is the establishment within the MoLSAMD of a Child Protection Secretariat. The establishment of such a unit is in alignment with the UN-CRC. However, this unit is intended to be independent of any individual ministry, which is not the present case. A Senior MoLSAMD advisor suggests that the development of the Child Protection Secretariat has taken many years to materialize. While a building was provided and funded by the EU in 2013, a modest quota of staff to make it operational will only start from the 1st Quarter of 2017. Due to lack of data provided to the Evaluation Team, it is not possible to comment on how comprehensive are the functions it proposes to provide, beyond the fact that it should become home to NCPAN. Likewise, and because no published strategic plan by the MoLSAMD exists, it is not known what budget allocations have been sought or allocated for any envisaged services support that it may provide.

Another positive sign is that the MoLSAMD has succeeded in incorporating into its tashkeel a modest number of staff at both the national and provincial levels to provide CPAN with a cadre of dedicated human resources – despite CPAN members noting that at a provincial level they still lack adequate numbers. On the negative side, as discussed in ‘Resources,’ this expanded staff structure has not been complemented with budget allocations to enable these CPAN staff to effectively undertake their job roles - for example to travel within provinces, undertake peer review/learning visits to adjacent provinces - or to fund some fundamental CPAN-related activities. According to senior CPAN members and UNICEF, budget allocations have not been granted to the MoLSAMD for programs or projects to support child protection services, either for off budget or on budget interventions, with a single exception (for a pilot project to address Street Working Children) as is elaborated elsewhere in this Report.

In addition to the above, there is reason to believe that the CPAN has had positive influence on both the MoJ and the MoI, who over the past few years have incorporated into their respective tashkeels, a small number of specialised staff and a range of specialised services to support child protection. In both cases, there are now enhanced services to adolescents in contact and in conflict with law. For the Ministry of Interior, the repeated requests by CPAN members, who were also its partners, ultimately persuaded it to incorporate child protection support into its Family Response Units51 (FRUs) which were originally intended for women in conflict with law, but now seek to provide trained officers on child protection. It is important to note, however, that while CPAN may have influenced the incorporation of child protection into FRUs, there was no documented or cited evidence from the field that CPAN provides direct support to children involved. Nevertheless, while a senior advisor reported that FRUs are now fairly widespread, they are not uniformly provided across the country due to the shortage of female police officers, especially in rural areas. Furthermore, interviews highlighted

51 Family Response Units were, in turn, established in direct response to advocacy by agencies working for women’s access to justice – a powerful model to child protection that has never been subject to close analysis by the NCPAN to glean valuable lessons learned. Much benefit may yet be gained by seeking insights into the operational systems and processes that have gone into the establishment of the data-base housed within the MoWomen’s Affairs that documents and reports incidence of Violence Against Women and Girls.
that MoI also has officers trained in child rights and protection, though their deployment to address child related cases in any location is never guaranteed. The MoJ has made significant progress in its approach to justice for children. A senior advisor highlighted that while it is probable that progress on child protection by these government entities may have taken place independently, due to direct support of donors and partners to enhancing rule of law and provisions for adolescent in conflict with the law, a valuable impetus was most likely the introduction of the 2009 ‘Letter of Agreement’ between these (and other) ministries. This agreement addressed children in conflict with law and the provision of appropriate processes and services by Juvenile Rehabilitation Centres, the collaborative engagement in various reviews of national policies and legislation, and direct training for personnel. According to MoLSAMD, the need for such collaboration had long been promoted by both social workers (of MoLSAMD and other service providers) and CPAN members and though not necessarily documented in PCPAN reports to NCPAN, was raised to NCPAN in joint workshops or via visits of NTAs. As elsewhere, the NCPAN chair at the level of Deputy Minister was instrumental in engaging and positively influencing equivalent levels of other ministries. Perhaps an important lesson learned here is the key role to be played by this high-level of ministerial staff whose engagement enhances credibility, demonstrates political will, and builds a degree of confidence and solidarity among this level of decision-makers. Despite the challenges of less-than-ideal trickle-down of commitment to all lower-level staff (sometimes including those who participate in CPAN meetings), the collaborative actions by these ministries and the services they now provide to child protection will be sustained even in absence of a CPAN.

It is difficult to comment on CPAN incorporation into broader government planning documents without undertaking a fairly detailed review of the strategic plans and annual work plans of several ministries – which is not achievable within the present Evaluation.

Importantly, it is noted that the evaluation team has not gained strong input to suggest that CPAN capacities are institutionalised within the MoLSAMD. There is an obvious lack of vision and leadership to carry forward and efficient and effective child protection system. This gap is one of the greatest challenges that CPAN currently faces, though it is hoped that the new staff appointed to the Child Protection Secretariat will contribute with both enthusiasm and competency.

Summary and Key Recommendations

The MoLSAMD, Ministry of Justice and Ministry of Interior all have new structures, processes and personnel that contribute substantially to child protection. These all are at least partially attributable to the influence of CPANs and are expected to be sustainable. Due to inadequate documentation, the full extent of such influence cannot be ascertained but from anecdotal input, the Evaluation senses that such outcomes have been demand-driven and not the result of CPAN’s documented data or advocacy. Never the less, the collaborative spirit of Network members has been instrumental, and the high-level chairmanship of the NCPAN has added value to positively influencing other ministries to make advances in child protection.

The systematic acquisition of financial resources to allocate to the full range of child protection work of CPANs that is presently provided remains unrealized. Virtually all funds continue to come from external off-budget resources. A critical factor here seems to be the absence of any over-arching child protection policy framework and plan for action with budget estimations which, in itself, is an indication of sustained commitment.

A final concern for CPAN is the fact that the MoLSAMD itself seems to offer the least effective human capacities with low performance illustrated by DCPANs. A number of PCPANs as well as the NCPAN are dependent upon NTAs which are not sustainable, so that their roles are a matter of concern and
pose a significant threat to sustainability of the CPAN, particularly at central level. This may be rem-
edied with the appointment of additional tashkeel staff to the Ministry’s Child Protection Secretariat.

In order to sustain the CPAN as a constructive structure needs cool-headed review. First there is need
for the development of a national child protection policy and a time-bound progressive plan of action,
initially starting with a modest number of priority issues. Then there is a need to review the role of the
CPAN. The essential work it contributes (other than public awareness for which the Citizens’ Charter is
currently being proposed to assume responsibility) is that of a social worker in any developed country.
In Afghanistan, this too is nascent and strongly supported by UNICEF, so that there may be merit in
considering whether that role should be consolidated.

It would be beneficial to pare back the current range of protection issues to be addressed. This would
entail a limited initial focus, with a gradual expansion to a greater range of issues as time progresses.
In addition, it would be helpful to reduce the geographical distribution of child protection support by
working more intensively with teams of well-functioning and committed child protection actors. The
goal here would be to provide comprehensive support to the development of a fuller child protection
system as envisaged in the Child Protection Mapping Assessment by UNICEF, and build capacities
of personnel to provide an efficient and effective service to children at risk and their families. These
fewer areas of support would become models of good practice, and would gradually be extended out
with their actors acting as peer trainers to others.

With regard to the Child Protection Secretariat, it will be important to ensure that the functions it will
provide adequate and appropriate support child protection in line with a comprehensive CP system – and if not, that the MoLSAMD take courage and make rapid amendments. Some key concerns iden-
tified by this Evaluation include:

- Data management, which needs to be turned into a publicly usable information resource on
  issues of child protection
- The sourcing, interpretation, dissemination and use of nationally available data, and advoca-
  cy for any key gaps to be filled
- Need for comprehensive child protection service including support to children and families,
  follow up, and closure with time-bound follow up on sustainability of solutions
- Collation of national policies and legislations for extraction of key points and development of
  guidelines to inform practitioners and the wider public
- A monitoring mechanism and indicators for continuous assessment of child protection prac-
  titioner performance, with a publicly accessible complaints system to document abuse or
  malpractice
- Human resource development including training needs, provision and follow up; assessment
  of staffing needs and deployment.
5.5 IMPACT

To what extent has CPAN contributing to the changing perceptions of the target population regarding child protection?

As this evaluation has shown, there is little evidence that CPAN is contributing the changing perceptions of populations regarding child protection. While CPAN introduced a series of community dialogue sessions in some provinces, there is limited evidence that this has influenced attitudes, behaviours and knowledge in the general population. As the KAP survey and FGDs showed, there does not appear to be any difference between respondents from CPAN districts and those from Non-CPAN districts.

Nevertheless, while data collected from this evaluation does not highlight any noticeable impacts, interviews with CPAN members have suggested that they had directly seen improvements in attitudes and knowledge among individuals who participated in outreach activities such as community dialogue. In several instances, CPAN members reported that by introducing outreach activities from a religious perspective, they were able to convince families to stop some activities such as ‘child marriage’ and ‘child labour.’ Herat, for example was noted for particular efforts it has made to reduce child marriage across communities. CPAN staff claim that they were able to prevent 63 cases of child marriage in the past year due to community intervention. While the evaluation team was unable to find sufficient documented evidence of these cases, some DCPAN officers confirmed their existence. For example, in Koshan, 11 cases were reported in which child marriage was prevented. The DCPAN was able to confirm these cases. In Injil in Herat, a total of 33 incidences of child marriage were reported to be solved. When the evaluation team tried to verify these cases, however, the DCPAN team in Injil reported that they had never heard of them and that they knew only of two cases of child marriage in the past year.

Therefore, while CPAN may have informally contributed to changing perceptions of populations in such areas as child marriage and child labour, there was little documented evidence to confirm this. The evaluation team strongly recommends that moving forward, in order to effectively measure the impact on community intervention, that CPAN members accurately document these incidences and provide teams with necessary information to follow up directly with community members.

To what extent has CPAN improved the child protection system?

- How are issues highlighted through CPAN activities being translated into policies and practices of child protection organisations?
- How is the coordination forum of CPAN contributing to improved CP systems?
- To what extent have formal institutions aligned their structure and practices to contribute to addressing the root and underlying causes of violence, abuse and exploitation towards children
- To what extent have formal institutions aligned their structure and practices to address immediate threats to children

Overall, CPAN has made some strides to improve and strengthen child protection in Afghanistan. The evaluation found that previously CPAN has played a role in influencing the development of several codes and strategies for children, in addition to reported influences on departments such as the MoJ and MoI with regards to provision of support services for children, including the following:

- The Juvenile Code (2005)
• National Strategy for Street Children (date)

• The Law of Labour (2007)

• The Law of Labour (2007), which protects “children from exploitation and forced and hazardous labour”;

• The Law of Juvenile Rehabilitation Centres (2009), which “focuses on the rehabilitation and education of children placed in juvenile detention centres”; and

• The Law on Counter Abduction and Human Trafficking (2008), which combats “abduction and human trafficking and... supports victims of such crimes, especially women and children.”

• Guidelines for Standards of Residential Care for Children (date)

One of the most significant impacts of CPAN however, has been its model which attempt to unify CP agencies and practitioners in a streamlined approach to preventing and responding to children at risk. While agencies previously worked independently, addressing CP violations based on donor requirements, CPAN has been able to establish a network that encourages participation and coordination among CP actors. While considerable efforts still need to be made to improve this model in practice, in theory it is a promising approach to CP in a country that continues to lack resources and formal mandates on CP, and evidence of positive practice was seen in Bamyan.

Nevertheless, considerable challenges have prevented CPAN from making the greatest possible impact on CP. NCPAN has demonstrative its capacity to react, and was reported to provide guidance when presented with well-defined tasks. Interviews highlighted that the biggest push for child protection comes from NGOs and agencies like UNICEF. There was limited evidence to suggest that practical efforts have been made within the Government of Afghanistan. Ministries that signed the ‘Joint Agreement’ have yet to show any collaboration and contribution to CP practices at the provincial and national levels. Apart from the MoI and MoJ, there is little evidence to suggest that other formal institutions have aligned their structures and practices to address threats facing children. This is very much the result of a lack of leadership, and official mandates and processes. With ongoing delays and setbacks in the establishment of the Child Secretariat, and the failure of NCPAN at present date, hopes for CPAN influencing CP practices across the country are limited.

Furthermore, at the provincial and district levels, findings were similar. There is little evidence that the existence of PCPANs and DCPANs improving CP practices in a general way. PCPAN and CPAN were predominately responsive mechanisms, dealing with cases on an ad-hoc basis. Presently, there is no streamlined system or indicator for setting standards or monitoring of PCPAN and DCPAN performance. A basic number of cases cannot tell MoLSAMD and UNICEF whether PCPAN services are in great demand, whether they are efficient in their work and the extent to which caseloads reflect the reality of CP concerns in provinces. These limitations make is next to impossible to understand the true influence of PCPAN and DCPAN activities.

SECTION 6: CONCLUSIONS

Relevance

The overall structure of CPAN at national provincial levels has proven to be relevant to CP needs of Afghanistan. The functionality of NCPAN and PCPAN however, and highly dependent on NTAs and UNICEF to fulfil their technical needs, as the capacity of MoLSAMD / DoLSAMD is still of limited levels. The relevance of DCPAN however, is questionable. In theory, DCPAN is the foundation for community based approaches to CP, the structure does not function as such. At district levels, there is a lack of a CP network. There was little to no evidence of connections with government departments, limited NGO presence and no figures about the number of community based members. With few exceptions, the overall relevance and effectiveness of DCPAN is in question.

Effectiveness

While the TOC clearly maps out how CPAN can strengthen child protection in Afghanistan, it is thus far failing to meet the goal of ‘children free from threats of violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect in public and private spheres.’ One of the major reasons for this was the overall lack of direction and coordination within CPAN. Prior to this evaluation, a clear TOC had not been developed. Although some senior UNICEF and MoLSAMD staff were aware of the overall goals of CPAN, this knowledge did not appear to trickle down to CPAN members at provincial and district levels.

CPAN currently lacks clear leadership; senior MoLSAMD staff admitting that NCPAN currently does not exist as intended. NCPAN, PCPAN and DCPAN is all dependent on NTAs and UNICEF technical assistance to fulfil their mandates role; as ministry staff are not yet technically and physical capable. There is a lack of coordination and general interest among participating departments (11 of which signed the Joint Agreement in 2009). Most activities within CPAN are a result of NGO members whose organizational mandate is to protect and support children at risk. Nevertheless, as there is no official obligation to support CPAN, humanitarian and development agencies can pick and choose how and when they wish to support CPAN efforts.

While the evaluation team attempted to accurately convey the work conducted by CPAN, there was a clear lack of precise data from which to draw conclusions. CPAN at national, provincial and district levels were not appropriately documenting their work, whereby making it next to impossible for the evaluation team to understand the extent to which CPAN was preventing and responding to children at risk, and the extent to which it was done based on international best practice. Furthermore, data supplied at provincial levels was often unverifiable. DCPANs, with rare exceptions, provided no data about their work, so the evaluation team was unable to accurately comment on the outputs and outcomes of CPAN. This lack of documentation and monitoring of activities directly impacts the quality of care provided to children. As this evaluation highlighted, the provision of direct support was not enough to ensure a child was brought out of harm. Regular monitoring and follow-ups with families and children involved in cases is the only way to ensure the CPAN is providing the most appropriate and effective type of care.

Despite obvious challenges in the structure of CPAN, the network at national and provincial levels has, on occasion, demonstrated the capacity for reactive response and provided relevant guidance when presented with well-defined tasks – such as case management. Nevertheless, it does not appear that these actions can be attributed to CPAN as a model, but rather are the result of the commitment of individuals within the network. It is a result of their individual efforts that so many children have been identified at risk and whereby supported through case management.
Efficiency

Evaluation results found that two of the biggest resource challenges facing CPAN was the lack of human and financial resources. Central CPAN members regularly commented that they struggled to fulfil their responsibilities due to the lack of staffing, especially front line social workers. It was evident that there was a heavy reliance on non-central CPAN members – such as humanitarian and development agencies (NGOs). This increased the practices of ‘case selection.’ In these instances, the most common types of cases with which CPAN dealt corresponded with the thematic interests of participating CPAN members in that province. Likewise, limited finances prevented staff from being able to access children at risk, let alone to conduct regular monitoring and follow-ups. CPAN members were widely aware of the high cost of technical assistances, and commented that funds could be more appropriately used for front line activities. While CPAN continues to work on such low resources, it will struggle to grow and increase its level of effectiveness and efficiency. CPAN members are often forced to choose between cases they can manage, and those they cannot, predominately based on the availability of human and financial resources. While the evaluation team recognises the financial restraints involved in such a network, considerations need to be made about the marginal value of increasing budget allocations, or revising the current model to ensure quality over quantity.

Impact

The evaluation found that in some instances, CPAN has made strides to improve and strengthen Afghanistan’s child protection system. Interviews found that CPAN appears to have influenced the design of several child focused strategies and codes, and encouraged coordination among CP agencies and local communities across the country to protect and respond to children at risk. The evaluation team found that one of the most significant impacts of CPAN has been its attempt to unify CP agencies and practitioners in a streamlined approach to preventing and responding to children at risk. Previously, agencies previously worked independently, addressing CP violations based on donor requirements. Now, CPAN has been able to establish a network which encourages participation and coordination among CP actors. This all leads to the impacts highlighted in the TOC – ‘children are better protected formally and informally through communities and institutions.’ While considerable efforts still need to be made to improve this model, it is a promising approach to CP in a country which continues to lack resources and formal mandates on CP.

Particular challenges however, were noted stemming from the overall absence of NCPAN leadership. As a result, there is a lack of coordination to improve national approaches to CP. The lack of a national forum does not encourage formal institutions – such as other government departments and humanitarian or development actors - to align and streamline their structures and practices to address immediate threats. This trickles down to provincial and district levels. Provincial and district teams do not appear to be identifying and addressing the root causes of violence, abuse and exploitation; rather, they rely on the technical, human and financial resources of local NGOs.

Sustainability

The sustainability of CPAN in its current model is mixed. Commitment among members, particularly at national levels, is not particularly evident. The greatest asset to CPAN is the technical and financial support of UNICEF. Without UNICEF’s support and commitment to CPAN and child protection in general, findings suggest that CPAN would cease to function. As the lead for CPAN, MoLSAM has systematically gained funding allocations to fund a full range of child protection work. Virtually all current funding continues to come from external off-budget resources. A critical factor for the lack of
sustainability of CPAN appears to be the absence of any over-arching national child protection policy framework and plan for action. CPAN members are all involved based on individual motivations and commitment. Findings already suggest that levels of motivation and commitment are wearing thin across the country, with non-central CPAN members regularly commenting that they fail to see the specific benefit of CPAN and the contributions CPAN is making to CP work.

Another major concern for CPAN’s sustainability is the fact that MoLSAMD appears to offer the least effective human capacities with low performance – illustrated predominately by DCPANs. The strong dependency on NTAs for technical support is not sustainable. This may be remedied with the appointment of additional tashkeel staff to the Ministry’s Child Protection Secretariat. Significant changes need to be made to address these issues impacting the sustainability in CPAN. Without UNICEF support and the individual motivations of CP agencies across the country, CPAN would quickly fail both to provide comprehensive support to children at risk and to contribute to a fuller child protection system as envisaged in the child protection system mapping assessment conducted under the leadership of MoLSAMD.
SECTION 7: RECOMMENDATIONS

Structure

With the absence of a NCPAN, CPAN in general lacks clear guidance and coordination. To move forward, CPAN needs strong national management. While responsibilities currently fall on the CPAN in Kabul and shortly the Child Protection Secretariat. This is not sufficient enough to maintain the network across the country and to continue actions which will strengthen child protection. The introduction of an individual high-level chair with authority is a necessary step for future of CPAN. This should be an individual who is highly experienced and knowledgably about child protection and CP in Afghanistan. While NCPAN is the national board, it may be more practical for it to be led by an individual chair – such as a CEO. Technical leadership is currently led by NTAs, and the support of UNICEF. NTAs however, are not qualified or experienced enough to lead such a network at a national level. A high-level chair, while responsible for the overview of CPAN, should also have the authority to gain active engagement of other state bodies and senior-level representatives. While discussions highlighted that the Child Secretariat could potentially take this role, it is paramount that for the sustainability and effectiveness of CPAN that an allocated head is identified.

- The establishment of a strong national management, led by MoLSAMD, with a high-level chair who has the authority to gain active engagement of state bodies and senior-level representatives

CPAN currently claims to take a holistic approach to child protection in Afghanistan, with interviewees suggesting that there are no area/issues of child protection which should be exempt from CPAN’s work. As this evaluation has shown, however, CPAN is thus far failing to effectively address all areas of risk facing children. There are clear patterns of selective referrals, with some provinces dealing with only two types of risk and other dealing with more than seven. This holistic approach to CP may be over ambitious given the current capacity of CPAN members, provision of support services and availability of human and financial resources. While no development programme can claim to address all areas of a particular issue, they can make a contribution. Perhaps the most effective way for CPAN to move forward is to consider the tasks assigned to them, and assess the extent to which they are appropriate or not, given capacity and resources. By being selective members can streamline current processes – including case management, monitoring and reporting and the development of policy and legislation. CPAN cannot continue scarifying quality over quantity.

- CPAN should consider taking a selective approach to CP and prioritising specific risks; whereby members can focus their efforts on improving more tangible risk rather than attempting to address all areas of CP

Due to the informal structure of CPAN, the evaluation found that individual motivation was one of the most indicative indicators of commitment to CPAN work. Likewise, there was also significant evidence that non-central CPAN members are becoming disenchanted with CPAN as a mechanism for child protection. With a lack of direction, leadership, guidelines and national CP standards, non-CPAN members reported that they were unable to see the value of CPAN activities. A lack of leadership at national levels and evidence of CPAN outcomes, disenchantment among CPAN members has become a common trend. Therefore, moving forward efforts should be made to formalise processes in CPAN, so there are clear agendas and outcomes for all CPAN members to understand. Furthermore, efforts should be made at national and provincial levels to disseminate information on the outcomes of CPAN, and its relevance. This should assist in increasing general awareness among CPAN members of the relevance and value of CPAN, and the value of member involvement and commitment.
• CPAN needs to develop formalised processes at national, provincial and district levels so all CPAN members understand clear agendas and outcomes regarding CPAN work.

• CPAN at national levels should make more efforts to disseminate information on the outcomes of CPAN and its relevance; whereby providing central CPAN members and general CPAN members with an understanding of the activities and outcomes

• Collaboration and coordination between ministries was not very apparent during the evaluation. Encouraging collaboration and joint purpose among ministries at national levels can add considerable value to CPAN prevention and response activities. For example, representatives from the 11 departments which signed the joint agreement, should be involved in ongoing discussions about the roles of children without family care, child labour and the disabled – all areas that MoLSAMD alone is unable to address.

• Further stress should be placed on improving communication and collaborating between ministries; allowing ministries to draw on one another for support. Potentially this support should be formalised whereby contracting ministries to participate and support CPAN activities.

**Staffing**

The evaluation found that the current model of staffing may not be directly sufficient and effective based on CP needs at national, provincial and district levels. While NTAs and CPAN officers fulfil necessary management and coordination roles, and provide much needed technical assistance, there is evidence that roles overlap and may not be necessary in every province. The evaluation found that TAs, while based in particular province, were often responsible for several provinces. In various instances, however, the TA did not support all provinces equally, therefore defeating the purpose of a TA in those regions. Furthermore, reports continued to highlight the need for more front-line social workers – roles which neither the TA and CPAN officer are often suited to. The evaluation team therefore, recommends reconsidering the need to have TAs and CPAN officers in the same province, if the TA is not regularly monitoring and supporting their other allocated provinces. The current model with NTAs and CPAN officers is simply not sustainable and cost effective. While the evaluation team is aware that there is currently university programmes training future social workers, the rate of qualified social workers needs to increase significantly

• MOLSAMD needs to consider the need for as many NTAs and CPAN officers, due to clear overlaps in their roles. There is a significant demand for increased number of quality front line social workers who are trained on CP.

• The provision of qualified social workers under tashkeel should be the priority for staffing moving forward

The evaluation team found that there was significantly low capacity among some CPAN members – particularly social workers. Interviews highlighted the recruitment of CP staffing was often not conducted based on capacity or experience, but rather appeared to be a result of internal nepotism within provincial DoLSAMD. As previously highlighted, UNICEF is currently working with Kabul university to support social workers graduating as part of the BSW degree. The continuation of us programmes, and employing social workers with recognised qualification should improve the quality of front line support.

• Moving forward the recruitment of front-line staff should be based on merit, with reg-
ular performance reviews to assess the extent to which they are effectively fulfilling their responsibilities.

CPAN members – especially central CPAN staff – appeared to have a strong external vision on CP issues in Afghanistan. It seems that certain issues are regularly reported in meetings or in policy development that CPAN members appear to appropriate these issues in their daily work as it is the issue often cited of concern by population in general. This however, does not necessarily reflect the severity of the issue. In short, instead of internally (within CPAN) identifying the most prominent issues of a province, CPAN members are appear to be more influenced by issues which are identified by international or national actors. There is little evidence to suggest that at a provincial or district level, CPAN members were looking and addressing risks objectively as per its extent and severity. UNICEF should focus on providing training to CPAN members on how to better identify and address issues internally, instead of focusing on what is often visible. Furthermore, CPAN members need to start identifying and dealing with ‘difficult issues’ such as sexual abuse, bacha bazi, etc.

- UNICEF should provide more detailed training on how to do individual assessment to identify the most prominent risks in each district / province, rather than following ‘external national trends’

- It is recommended that MoLSAMD to develop gender policies within CP activities. This should include training on issues of gender and gender sensitivity practices in prevention and response activities, in addition to the recruitment of female front line workers. Understandably, it is difficult to recruit females for front line social work positions. Given the segregated nature of Afghanistan however, efforts should be made to ensure the girls have access to female appropriate support services – services which cannot be provided by males.

- MoLSAMD in collaboration with UNICEF should develop gender policies within CP activities, highlight issues of gender and gender sensitivity practices in prevention and response activities

**Advocacy**

The evaluation found that there was no evidence that attitudes and knowledge of child protection was generally higher in districts with CPAN presence. While community dialogue sessions encourage discussions on risks facing children and how to report children at risk, it appears the lessons learnt in these sessions are not being shared at community level, and increasing general awareness and knowledge of CP. Studies into communication activities, suggests the singular community events are not enough to socialise information and influence attitudes and behaviours.

- CPAN members should consider introducing additional advocacy activities, such as community theatre, weekly discussions at mosques on a Friday (which was present in some provinces), and more regular campaigning among communities.

- Advocacy activities should not be managed and implemented by NTAs or CPAN officers, they should be managed by an external team which has the expertise, time and capacity to appropriately design community dialogue sessions and train trainers at community levels.

- Awareness raising should also focus on targeting difficult topics – such as sexual abuse. These are issues which are often hidden in communities, and rarely spoken about. To bring these particular issues into the public conscious, advocacy efforts need to be made. Difficult and sensitive discussions need to be had, but can be done in appropriate ways. For example,
looking at issues from a religious perspective or ensuring the voice of the discussions is a well-respected member of a given community.

• The scope of information shared through community dialogue sessions should be expanded to include taboo issues of sexual abuse, physical violence against children and issues of children in conflict with the law.

Monitoring and Reporting

A complete over-hall is needed on monitoring and reporting practices. The evaluation team could not find sufficient evidence to suggest that monitoring and reporting was part of case management processes. There was a lack of accurate and detailed documentation at district, provincial and national levels. Current monitoring systems need to be re-designed and set up in such a way that they can track outcomes. UNICEF and MoLSAMD have a responsibility to report accurate numbers, and the current processes lack validity and accuracy. CPAN is a rare opportunity to collect accurate information on CP incidences across the country. The failure to capitalise on such an opportunity undermines the long-term objectives of CPAN, to strengthen child protection practices.

• UNICEF and MoLSAMD need to design, train and implement clear guidelines and processes for monitoring and reporting.

Accurate and regular monitoring of CPAN performance and activities needs to take place. Apart from occasional site visits by senior MoLSAMD staff, there is no mechanism in place for assessing the performance of CPAN members. While central CPAN members are under the jurisdiction of DoLSAMD, MoLSAMD is not actively implementing authority to ensure they are accurately fulfilling their roles and are not currently to ensuring the DoLSAMDs are not using CPAN members for to fulfil other tasks within the ministries / departments (which was noted in various instances). NCAPN (MoLSAMD) should assume a leadership role in leading regular performance evaluations; whereby regularly identifying gaps in knowledge and activities. Furthermore, it should not be simply individual performance which is measured, but regular monitoring of system performance – ensuing that the systems remains relevant, efficient and effective.

• Individual and randomised reviews on case management reporting and case worker performance should be done on a regular basis, whereby ensuring the capacity of CPAN members meets the required needs