A Handbook on Planning Children and Youth's Protection Through the Area Strategic Planning Process

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I. Introduction

ChildFund partners with communities to support children's development. Our key program interventions are tried and tested methods intended to promote the protection and the healthy development of children into successful and productive adults. Through these interventions, we aim to equip children, youth, families and communities to ensure children and youth achieve their life-stage milestones. However, a significant proportion of children face tremendous obstacles to successful development. Children who live in environments that do not protect them from abuse, exploitation or neglect are often prevented from healthy development. For effective and meaningful change that promotes children's healthy development, our programs must address the root causes of the obstacles to this development to lessen the vulnerability of all children and especially for those in difficult and vulnerable situations.

The following three e-learning modules are designed to help ChildFund staff to strengthen their programs using methods that promote child and youth protection through an approach that is consistent with ChildFund's Strategy and programming approach. The primary focus is on the Area Strategic Planning process, but the core content should also inform project design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. Each module presents key concepts mixed with interactive exercises. At the end of each module, a practical field exercise is provided to help participants apply new skills and information.

Each module contains a Child Protection Practice Standard. These three practice standards are aligned with ChildFund's Core Values, Area of Excellence and Core Outcomes. The standards provide helpful guidance for ensuring that child protection risks are being addressed through ChildFund programming.

ChildFund Child Protection Practice Standards

Module One

1. Accurate understanding of child and youth vulnerability to better inform programs —

With a life-stage consideration to the diverse situations of children, ChildFund promotes robust methods for understanding children and youth's vulnerability in order to better meet their needs through quality programs. (Consistent with ChildFund's Strategy's First Core Outcome)

Module Two

2. Children and Youth participating in their own protection —

ChildFund promotes children and youth's ethical, safe, meaningful and appropriate participation for reducing protection risks. (Consistent with ChildFund's Strategy's Area of Excellence)

Module Three

3. Communities networked for children and youth's protection —

ChildFund promotes locally led partnerships between children, families and local organizations critical for fostering a protective environment for children and youth. (Consistent with ChildFund's Strategy's Second Core Outcome)

Audience:

These modules are intended for Area Strategic Planning (ASP) leaders to prepare National, Area office and Federation staff involved with organizing Area Strategic Planning Processes.

Key Considerations: As a representative and leader in the ASP process, it is critical that there is a focus in preparing other ASP participants to facilitate discussions and learning to better understand the child protection issues and local contexts of vulnerability with the staff they supervise/coordinate.

Overarching Training Purpose: This training will enable participants to integrate child protection into program needs assessments, planning and designing programs, implementation and monitoring, and evaluation review processes. The entry-point for the use of these methods is the Area Strategic Planning Process. Therefore, the APS process is a primary focus of this training. However, throughout the document references to other program processes are highlighted to help users integrate child protection considerations through ChildFund programming.
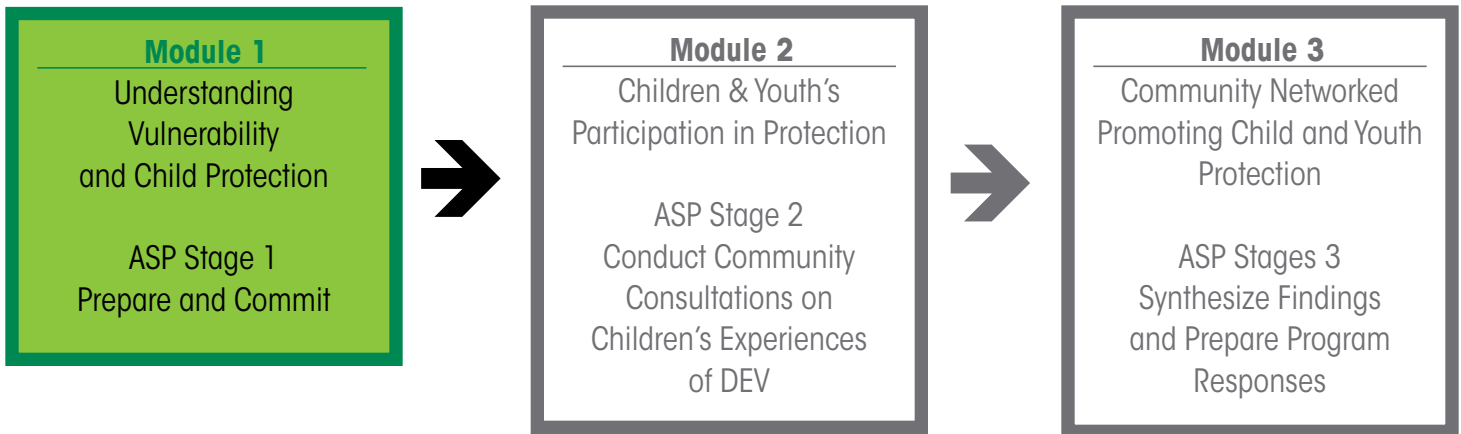
Area Strategic Planning

An Area Strategic Plan (ASP) describes a series of three-year programs that

- Respond to the causes of child poverty in a specific, geographic location
- Aim to bring lasting improvements to the lives of deprived, excluded and vulnerable children

The process to develop ASPs - area strategic planning - is participatory and applies best practices for program planning. It is applicable to all ChildFund programming efforts with local communities. Community-based partner organizations, such as local partners, carry out area strategic planning in collaboration with ChildFund staff. Children and youth participate and lead consultations with their peers.

Overarching Training Purpose: This training will enable participants to integrate child protection into program needs assessments, planning and designing programs, implementation and monitoring, and evaluation review processes. The entry-point for the use of these methods is the Area Strategic Planning Process. Therefore, the APS process is a primary focus of this training. However, throughout the document references to other program processes are highlighted to help users integrate child protection considerations through ChildFund programming.

II. Module I

Module 1 Understanding Vulnerability and Child Protection ASP Stage 1 Prepare and Commit	→	Module 2 Children & Youth's Participation in Protection ASP Stage 2 Conduct Community Consultations on Children's Experiences of DEV	→	Module 3 Community Networked Promoting Child and Youth Protection ASP Stages 3 Synthesize Findings and Prepare Program Responses

Module Purpose: This module will introduce participants to important child protection concepts and identify specific actions participants can take to ensure child protection is integrated into their ASP planning process (stage 1).

Outcome: Participants will be able to responsively plan and prepare to integrate child protection considerations into the ASP.

ChildFund Child Protection Practice Standard One

Accurate understanding of child and youth vulnerability to better inform programs —With a life-stage consideration to the unique age and gender needs of children, ChildFund promotes robust methods for understanding children and youth's vulnerability in order to better meet their needs through quality programs.

Why is this necessary for my job?

As defined in ChildFund's core intent, our programs focus on children experiencing deprivation, exclusion and vulnerability. Because program resources are limited, we must carefully assess and prioritize the protection needs of children where we work. Understanding what vulnerability means requires multiple inputs and is rarely an easy thing to assess. Therefore, targeting programs to meet children's protection needs must be validated by multiple sources of information and opinions.

This Module is particularly relevant to Stage One of the ASP. The concepts and practical exercises will help you to strengthen your planning.

Session 1: Understanding Child Development through the life-stages

Guiding Questions:

- How do you understand a child's development?
- What is meant by a child's life or developmental stage?
- How is the development of boys and girls different in terms of their gendered upbringing?

Key Messages:

- Child development can be generally broken into three life stages: Early Childhood, Middle Childhood, and Adolescence
- Although at each life stage of development boys and girls develop relatively similar, their social development in relation to gender upbringing can differ.

Designing interventions to better support the resilience of children and minimize factors that contribute to their vulnerability must be understood by exploring the unique gendered and age-defined needs a child goes through from infancy to young adulthood. ChildFund has approached this understanding through a differentiated approach of children within defined life-stages, roughly equating to age groupings of: 0-5, 6-10, and 11-25. These age ranges overlap, and what is critical is not necessarily the ages but the developmental stage and needs of children.

In addition to the life stage of a child, most children will go through various degrees of gender-specific development. Based primarily on the expected roles, responsibilities, social conduct, and behavior taught and/or given to a boy and/or girl child, children will grow and develop into these anticipated roles.

Gender stereotypes are simplistic generalizations about the gender attributes, differences, and roles of individuals and/or groups. Stereotypes can be positive or negative, but they rarely communicate accurate information about others. Traditionally in many cultures, the **female stereotypical role** is to marry and have children. She is also to put her family's welfare before her own; be loving, compassionate, caring, nurturing, and sympathetic. The **male stereotypical role** is to be the financial provider. He is also to be assertive, competitive, independent, courageous, and career-focused. These sorts of stereotypes can prove harmful; they can stifle individual expression and creativity, as well as hinder personal and professional growth. Gender stereotyping can also create child protection risks depending on the type of expectation on a child to fit that gender role.

The weight of scientific evidence demonstrates that children learn gender stereotypes from adults. As with gender roles, socializing agents—parents, teachers, peers, religious leaders, and the media—pass along gender stereotypes from one generation to the next.

To understand a child's risk or resilience to different factors that may contribute to vulnerability, it is essential to not only recognize developmental life stages of a child, but the gender-specific stereo-type upheld by cultures will both influence and promote protection risks or empowerment within children.

Early Childhood (Birth - 5 years)

This is a period of rapid mental and physical growth. Movement becomes progressively more coordinated: at 18 months the child can drop things intentionally, at 2 years a ball can be thrown in a specific direction and at five the ball can be bounced on the ground and caught with both hands.

Language development is marked. In all cultures, a relationship between walking and speech is evident. The utterance of recognizable words coincides with the child's first steps. In most cases, the basics of grammar and the ability to talk in elementary sentences will have been acquired by the age of three.

From 3-5 years of age, playing increasingly includes "pretending" and make-believe. These games of the imagination let children overcome fears and anxiety. In the game, frightening events can be safely re-enacted; or the child's version can replace actual events and experiences.

In contrast to younger children who will be frightened by loud, unexpected noises, unfamiliar people or animals, the 4-5 year old will also be frightened of imaginary dangers. At this age nightmares become increasingly common. Children of this age also often find new or unfamiliar surroundings a cause for apprehension, especially if they are not accompanied by their parents.

Through parental discipline and interaction with other family members, the child begins to acquire knowledge of right and wrong, to be able to exercise self-control. Appropriate behavior is reinforced by the child's identification with the parent, his/her social role model.

The gender-specific stage for children during this time is less pronounced, though every culture is different in terms of the expectations they have on girl or boy children in early infancy and toddlerhood. How society speaks and interacts with a child and/or encourages various activities can be associated with whether they are a boy or a girl. For example, young boy children may be engaged in rough play more often than girls, whereas girls may be given dolls to play with, where pink, and/or made to sit quietly instead of playing or speaking loudly like their boy peers. Every culture has gender stereo-types. It is important to explore these to understand the full development and risks children face.

Middle Childhood (6-10 years)

Children gradually develop the capacity for logical thought and can see things in "relational" terms. He/ she is able to see the reverse of things and put himself in the place of others. Between 6 and 8 years of age children are able to understand the idea of death in relation to their parents or themselves.

The learning process continues, as more children enter formal education, through teachers at school (reading and writing) or through other adults in the community (e.g. practical skills required in the community to earn a living or to make a home). People outside the family become important: other adults as social and cultural role models, and peers for self-esteem (the child assesses his/her successes and failures by comparison with his/her fellows). Stable family and adult-child relationships are critical factors for healthy development during this period. Feelings of self-esteem are not only related to personal achievements and failures but to the perceptions of the family. Conditions in the home may lead to a sense of pride for the family, or feelings of shame and embarrassment. Attitudes to work, the community, social roles and responsibilities also begin to be learned and reinforced at this stage.

Due to the stronger understanding of social roles and responsibilities, gender stereo-typing may start to become more pronounced and reinforced at this stage. Whereas before in earlier development where much of the gender roles were introduced to children by adults, the middle aged child begins to explore these gender expectations much more readily as they mimic and copy adults and role models.

Adolescence (10-19 years)

In early adolescence rapid growth and major changes in body and appearance can lead to strong, conflicting emotions, and feelings of insecurity and self-consciousness. The adolescent's sense of identity is consolidated during this period. The sense of identity is bound up with relationships (positive and negative) with others; family history and traditions; religious beliefs, political ideas, social/cultural values and standards; role choices; physical and mental well-being. Personal identity gives the adolescent a strong sense of who he/she is, what he/she believes, what he/she can or cannot do. If no coherent idea of the self evolves, the resulting confusion may give rise to anti-social behavior that reflects their continuing self-doubt.

The process of becoming independent from the family in adolescence is a gradual one, but adolescents need their parents even if they experience a dichotomy between independence and dependence towards parents and family. Peer relationships become more important as family bonds are loosened. Yet, while the adolescent may be capable of independent thought, of taking responsibility for his/her own actions and making choices, he/she will tend to continue to rely for some time on his/her parents for advice, security and material support.

The gender aspect of a child's development during adolescence is most pronounced now compared to other stages. As girls and boys physically mature and develop, reaching puberty, many cultures recognize this stage through different gender-specific ceremonies, traditions, and/or more responsibility. Boys may go through ceremonies of circumcision, where girls in some cultures may be seen ready to marry. Gender-stereo typing children during adolescence creates both opportunities and risks for a child. A girl child might be expected to do more household chores and care for younger siblings. A boy child might be expected to earn more income for the family. Both situations, due to the gender-specific stage in their development may face decisions as dropping out of school or recruitment into armed forces, for example.

Session 2: Understanding Child Vulnerability

Guiding Questions:

- What do you know about children's vulnerability in your area and how do you know this to be true?
- What are the conditions and contexts that might change or influence the type or degree of vulnerability in children in your area?

Key Messages:

- "Seeing" vulnerability accurately relies on understanding children and their protective environment and collecting accurate data
- Within the ASP, ChildFund's Deprivation, Exclusion, and Vulnerability (DEV) Framework involves children, reflects children's perspective and opinions on DEV, and describes and analyzes the important factors that influence DEV in their experience.
- A child's level and condition of vulnerability/resilience continually changes over time

Understanding the shifting complexities and influencing factors of a child's vulnerability is essential in effectively targeting children most in need of targeted programming assistance and in applying the ChildFund Child Protection Practice Standards. The complexities and degree of children's vulnerability will often shift over time and effectively understanding these factors is essential if targeted interventions hope to enable children's survival. To understand vulnerability means to "see" how these factors are influenced and change and this requires relevant knowledge of children's Life stage development and their unique age and gendered needs of children. Robust sampling methods should be used to ensure the inclusion of children who are disabled and poor. Many of the key principles in ChildFund's DEV Framework help illustrate children's perspective of what vulnerability means to them and the impact it has on them in their daily lives. Children's perspectives often differ quite dramatically to adults opinions on how vulnerability impacts children.

Deprivation

Deprivation relates to how children experience poverty as it relates to their material conditions (living, assets, safety etc) and access to basic services (shelter, food, water, education and health).

For ChildFund's child protection programming, this translates to work with local partners and duty bearers to provide multisectoral, child friendly services. Child friendly services are organized in a way that involves and respects children, supports their well-being and promotes access for children and youth populations.

The concept of deprivation also tries to identify the severity, intensity and context. For child protection programming, this translates into whether children/youth's lives are threatened (severity), whether the protection issue comes at the height of an acute hardship or part of the general environment (intensity) or if this is experienced because of the cultural/social context where these children are living.

Exclusion

Exclusion is said to be the process by which children individually or in groups are wholly or partially marginalized or discriminated against from full participation in the society in which they live.

For ChildFund, child protection programming translates this into the promoting age-appropriate levels of participation in programming and addressing the barriers to this participation in their context. There are many levels of participation that need to be recognized such as being present, voicing an opinion, being part of a leadership group for the community, initiating programs/ awareness raising, older children helping to make decisions about the direction of programs.

Children and youth have a right to participate in programs designed. An important barrier arises when adults speak or decide for children. Adults' opinions may not always be the same as a child's and at times may contradict a child's perspective. ChildFund thus, recognizes the importance of child participation at many levels and aims to support child-led activities and processes in its child protection work in order to ensure respect, dignity and support that responds to the child's expressed needs and rights.

Additionally, the exclusion may result from a child's cultural, social, economic and/or ethic status and may predetermine well known barriers to inclusion. For example, the girl child may experience greater barriers to accessing education. Lower caste groups in India do not receive equal treatment as other children.

In order to confront these realities and ensure inclusive programming, ChildFund child protection programs work with all children while supporting a systems approach that is designed to ensure that the most marginalized are identified, tracked, supported and receive additional assistance when needed but are not sepa-

Vulnerability

'Vulnerability' is explained as the potential for harm due to the exposure to risk. Children living in adversity (experiencing deprivation and exclusion for instance) are described as 'vulnerable' because the high-risk nature of their environment threatens the child's harmonious development. Some examples of risk include gender discrimination, lack of accessible health and educational services, domestic violence and low household income.

It can be said that all children and young people are vulnerable, due to daily risks they face and their lack of power within society structures among others. However not all are vulnerable to the same extent. Many social scientists agree that 'vulnerability' has two sides – one which describes individuals or groups exposed to stress and those who lack the means by which to overcome this adversity. The use of the concept of vulnerability is intended to highlight how harm to children emerges and subsequently how it could be reduced (Schiller et al, 2007).

It is important to remember that exposure to risk does not necessarily mean that significant harm will occur for example if a child has to work it does not automatically mean that he/she will have to drop out of school. Children and young people often show great strength and resilience in adverse circumstances, and should be taken into account when analyzing the vulnerability of children and young people.

Vulnerability looks at the dynamic nature of children's experience of poverty in terms of how they are affected by and/or resilient to the array of changing threats in their environment.

Exclusion and Vulnerability of Girls

Very often girls are likely to be excluded from school and are vulnerable to various forms of exploitative work. They are also more likely to be at risk of child trafficking and harmful traditional practices, such as early marriage. It is important that we pay special attention to the situation of girls by collecting and disaggregating data. We can use this information to design programs that take into consideration and address the obstacles to healthy development that girls in particular face.

Understanding vulnerability is critical at the assessment stage of a program, where an analysis of children and their vulnerabilities must be done at the outset to ensure that program plans incorporate a clear picture of all the children and their needs. As noted above, in order to identify these needs, all children should be consulted, and those that are more difficult to reach or may be hidden away due to particular problems they

may have need to be sought out and included in the analysis stages of programming. [2]

Vulnerability refers to the ever changing balance of negative and positive factors in a child's life. It is not static. Vulnerability of a child is always changing depending on the factors that positively or negatively influence the child's environment and situation.

- When unbalanced negatively (more negative factors) may result in children's rights not being fulfilled and/or cause significant physical or emotional harm.
- When unbalanced positively (more positive factors) can empower individuals. (Resilience)

(Resilience can be described as, 'a dynamic process whereby individuals show adaptive functioning in the face of significant adversity' (Luthar et al.,2000;Rutter,1990 cited in Schoon, 2006:6)

Vulnerability is **not** measured by labels (for example: Orphan, trafficked child, child labor) but rather by the factors that each individual child experiences, acquires, or lacks.

Examples of Positive Factors:

- A child has self-esteem
- A child's parents are educated about the risks of child labor
- A child recognizes signs of danger or risks by potential abusers
- A health clinic is established in a community
- There are qualified teachers within schools

Examples of Negative Factors:

- A community does not value the importance of girls' education
- A child has no role models or guidance
- A child does not know where they live if they were to become lost or separated from their community
- A child has no access to health services

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[2] Wendy Wheaton, Child Protection and DEV Framework, 2007

Understanding the *balance* of vulnerability is an essential step in the protection of children from abuse and exploitation. Although there are many factors that may influence a child more vulnerable to the risk of violence, abuse and exploitation, **no one factor creates a direct link**. For example, not all children living in slums and that lack education are abused. Poverty or inequality does not equal violence and abuse. Although these may be vulnerable factors, it is important to recognize and take into account the child's options, survival skills, decision-making process, and overall resilience of a child and his/her family to protect a child from abuse and exploitation. For this reason, the greatest risk factor to violence and/or other forms of abuse and exploitation is the lack of or no access to adequate protection.

Strengthening the protective environment and creating community-based child protection mechanisms (discussed and emphasized in Module 3) reduces the vulnerability of children to violence and abuse.

It is important to recognize that vulnerability can affect all children regardless of their situation. At the same time we also know that children affected by specific situations and risks are often times at a greater disadvantage to experiencing positive factors within their environment. Below is a list of example vulnerable groups that without support and appropriate resources to build positive factors, are likely to experience greater vulnerability.

Essential Reminders about factors that increase a child's vulnerability to Violence, Abuse and Exploitation:

- It is the lack of balance towards attacking factors that results in greater vulnerability
- Vulnerability increases when protective factors are taken away
- Vulnerability decreases when protective factors are added
- Vulnerability is not static and can change over time
- Vulnerability Balance can be achieved by working on factors that increase vulnerability (absence of caregiver), supporting factors that decrease vulnerability (better security), and adding factors

Example groups that may experience greater negative factors that increase their vulnerability:

    a. Street Children *(Children working and living rough or away from family or usual caregivers);*

    b. Working Children *(Children working on the street but going home at night)*

    c. Separated Children

    d. Orphans *(in the community or institutions)*

    e. Children in other residential or alternative care

    f. Formerly Abducted Children: Children Associated with the Fighting Forces *(current & former soldiers, laborers, abducted girls, etc.)*

    g. Children with disabilities *(physical or mental)*

    h. Children in Female Headed Households

    i. Children in elderly-Headed Households

    j. Child headed Households

    k. Children/youth In Conflict with the Law

    l. Minority Children

    m. Children deprived of their liberty

    n. Girl Children

    o. Child Asylum seekers

    p. Displaced Children *(IDPs and refugees)*

    q. HIV/AIDS affected children or children whose parent(s) are HIV/AIDS affected

    r. Children born out of wedlock

    s. Children from mixed marriages

    t. Other vulnerable groups identified by community and children

Session 3: What is Child Protection?

Guiding Questions:

- What is child protection?
- What are examples of protection issues?

Key Messages:

- Child protection is the response to and prevention of abuse, neglect, exploitation, and violence against children

Child Protection—is the response to and prevention of abuse, neglect, exploitation, and violence against children.

1.1 Components in Child Protection

Abuse: can happen in physical, emotional or sexual forms.

Neglect: is the failure of providing for, or securing children's rights to basic needs to physical safety and development either deliberately, or through carelessness or negligence.

Exploitation: Child exploitation refers to the use of children for someone else's advantage, gratification or profit often resulting in unjust, cruel and harmful treatment of the child.

Violence: can be committed by individuals or by the State as well as groups and organizations through their members and their policies. It results not only in fear of/ or actual injury but also in fundamental interference with personal freedom.

❯ Common examples of Child Protection Issues in ChildFund Country Programs

Abuse, exploitation and violence against children knows no boundaries. Violations of the child's right to protection are massive, under-recognized and under-reported barriers to child survival and development, in addition to being human rights violations. These violations cut across race, class, religion and culture. The scale of the problem is massive and the statistics below give some indication of the need for greater resources both human and financial to child protection in all settings.

Violence Against Children

Worldwide, between 500 million and 1.5 billion children experience violence annually.[3] There were 53,000 child deaths in 2002 that were homicides. An estimated 150 million girls and 73 million boys have experienced rape or other forms of sexual violence. Every year as many as 275 million children worldwide witness domestic violence. Between 20% and 65% of school-aged children reported being verbally or physically abused. Certain groups of children are particularly vulnerable to violence, including children with disabilities, children belonging to minority groups, children living on the streets, adolescents in conflict with the law, children living with persons that are not legally recognized as parents/caretakers, displaced and migrating children. Children with disabilities are particularly vulnerable to physical violence and sexual, emotional and verbal abuse, and in some instances, the disability is itself caused by maltreatment. Generally, boys tend to be at greater risk of physical violence and girls face greater risk of neglect, sexual violence and exploitation.

Children affected by and/or associated by Armed Conflict and Fighting Forces

It is estimated that over 200,000 children are child soldiers worldwide. Many more children who are affected by conflict experience various forms of abuse, violence, and exploitation as gender-based violence, separation and/or death of caretakers, and risk of injury or death from landmines and IEDs. In addition, child soldiers and children experiencing armed conflict may lose access to education, health and basic services, property, and can suffer psychosocial harm from events witnessed and experienced.

Harmful Traditional Practices

Early Marriage: More than one third of young women 20–24 years old in developing countries have reported that they were married or in union by age 18. The proportions are highest in South Asia (46 per cent) and sub-Saharan Africa (39 per cent)[4]. Early marriage leads to the denial of childhood and adolescence, the curtailment of personal freedom and the lack of opportunity to develop a full sense of selfhood as well as the denial of psychosocial and emotional well-being, reproductive health and educational opportunity.

[3] UN Study on Violence Against Children 2005
[4] UNICEF Press Center -- Child Protection 2010

Female Genital Mutilation/ Cutting: More than 70 million girls and women 15–49 years old have undergone Female Genital Mutilation/ Cutting (FGM/C) in 28 countries in Africa[5]. Beyond the obvious initial pain of the procedure, the long-term physiological, sexual and psychological effects of FGM/ C are well documented.

Exploitative Child Labor

150 million children 5–14 years old worldwide are engaged in child labor. This estimate is based on data from 102 countries. Exploitative child labor is most common in sub-Saharan Africa, where more than a third of children work[6]. Every year, 22,000 children die from accidents related to their work. In addition to the physical harm there are developmental consequences of missing educational opportunities as well as the mental and emotional harm of being forced to work long hours.[7]

Child Trafficking

600,000– 800,000 people are trafficked each year across international borders[8]. One sixth to one half of these people are children. More than 20 per cent of victims of all trafficking, both within countries and across borders, are children. In parts of West Africa, the Mekong region in East Asia, and some countries in Central and South America, children are the majority of persons being trafficked.

Sexual Exploitation

The commercial sexual exploitation of children is estimated to be a multi-billion dollar industry, drawing in over 1 million children each year worldwide. Most of the children exploited in the sex trade are between the ages of 13 and 18, although there is also evidence of children younger than 5 being sexually exploited. "Sex tourism" has been documented in Southeast Asia, North America and Eastern Europe. However, sex tourism involving children is also a concern in several African Countries as well. A large portion of child prostitutes catch sexually transmitted diseases (including HIV/AIDS), are forced to have abortions, and suffer serious psychological trauma. Many circumstances, such as poverty, lack of education, and parental pressure, force children into the sex industry

Migration

One third of migrants from developing countries are youths between 15 and 25 years old. While not all migration is harmful for children and youths, in some contexts it is. In the source communities, children left behind by migrating parents must cope with the psychological impact of being separated as well as with heightened risks of physical or sexual abuse. Children separated from their parents due to migration are twice as likely to experience emotional distress. In the destination communities, migrant children, especially those who are unregistered, may face discrimination and marginalization,

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[5] UNICEF Press Center -- Child Protection 2010
[6] UNICEF Press Center -- Child Protection 2010
[7] Free the Children: Children helping children through education 2010
[8] UNICEF Press Center -- Child Protection 2010

including lack of access to education and medical services. Being outside their familiar social safety network also tends to weaken their normal coping mechanisms.

Birth Registration

Birth registration enables a child to receive medical treatment, go to school, inherit property, prevent child exploitation and find legal work. All these rely on birth registration to prove identity and thus entitlement to basic rights. Yet the births of around 51 million children in 2007 were not registered, almost half of them in South Asia. Nearly two out of three children in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia were not registered in 2007.

Why are Child Protection Issues important to my programming sector?

Child Protection Issues impact the holistic development of a child. The holistic development of a child means how a child's physical, spiritual, emotional, cognitive, and social development is achieved and nurtured. An effective way to address these holistic issues is to include **multi-disciplinary and multi-sectoral approaches** (linking closely, for example, with work in education, health and criminal justice). This approach is often referred to as *Mainstreaming Child Protection* and in essence is what these training modules aim to accomplish through the ASP process.

Session 4: Who is responsible for children's protection?

Guiding Questions:

- Who is responsible for protecting children?

Key Messages:

- Children are surrounded by people who have legal, moral, traditional responsibilities for their protection

—Rings of Responsibilities in Child Protection.

The CRC (UN Convention on the Rights of the Child) includes a comprehensive set of rights for children. However, rights don't just "happen". There are different people who have roles in realizing rights in the child's environment. Children are surrounded by people (e.g. parents, siblings, neighbors, community leaders, school and government officials, children themselves, teachers, peers, etc.) who have **legal, moral,** and **traditional responsibilities** for this protection. There are different layers of sets of actors (or duty-bearers) with the responsibilities of contributing to this protective environment. Diagram 1 represents these different layers of the ecology of the child. The Rings of Responsibility is the framework for understanding, responding to, and supporting child protection.

Convention on the Rights of the Child

In the past 25 years children's needs and rights have been recognized in a political arena. The Convention on the Rights of the Child was drafted over a 10 year period and adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations in 1989.

The CRC transformed children's needs into rights. When a State ratifies the CRC they have obligations to change laws, to develop policies and practices which lead to the fulfillment of children's rights. It represents a shift in the status of children from objects to people. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child is the most ratified human rights Convention in the world.

The structure and content of the CRC

The CRC has an introduction, the "preamble", which is followed by three different parts explaining the 54 articles. According to the CRC a child includes **children aged 0 – 18 years of age.**

The Principles of CRC

There are four principles on which the CRC is based. These are:

Non-discrimination (Article 2)

The principle of non-discrimination means that all children should enjoy their rights. No child should suffer discrimination, irrespective of the child's or his or her parents' or legal guardian's race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status. Governments are obliged to take measures to address patterns of discrimination.

The Best Interest of the Child (Article 3)

This principle recognises that while children are competent human beings with a right to influence matters affecting their own lives, they are at the same time vulnerable and in need of special protection and support. When, for example, governments make decisions and allocate resources, they must give primary consideration to the best interest of girls and boys. This does not mean that only the interest of the child shall be considered, but it should always be given primary consideration.

Survival and Development (Article 6)

The principle of survival and development clarifies that every child has an inherent right to life and that governments shall ensure the child's survival and development to the maximum extent possible. This article

recognises that children are vulnerable and need special protection and support. Protection from violence and exploitation is vital to maximum survival and development. The CRC recognises that children carry within themselves the potential for their own development. They should be supported to develop according to their own potential. To play and explore, to interact, to think for themselves, and to have their views recognised are part of such development.

Children's Participation (Article 12)

The principle of participation means that governments shall assure a child who is capable of forming his or her views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child. The views of the child shall be given due weight in accordance with the child's age and maturity.

What responsibilities do these different layers of duty-bearers have?

The diagram shows concentric ellipses labeled from center outward:
Child
Family
Community
Institutions
National
International

The Child: self-esteem, self-respect, peer support

What are children's responsibilities to realizing their rights and the rights of other children?

It is important that we recognize children's role in their environments. Parents and other adult community members sometimes reject the notion of child rights. They feel that it is a threat to their role as parents or leaders. People want children to learn that along with their rights come responsibilities—It helps to introduce rights in a way that builds on existing practices and does not give children a 'blank check.'

A child is better protected if first he/she is equipped with positive factors that help the child protect him/herself. For example, a child that has high self-esteem or who knows who to turn to when needing help is better equipped with protective skills than a child who is isolated and has little confidence. A child is at a greater risk of abuse if for example, they are unaware of signs or threats of abuses in their community. If a child becomes separated from his/her family but is aware of support services that he/she can turn to, he/she is better protected then a child who does not have this information nor knows how to get it.

We place the child in the center because children have a right to participate not only in decisions that affect them but in the entire protective system. The child is not a passive participant receiving support from those surrounding him/her, but is an active contributor in his/her own protection and has the responsibility to play a role in the system to strengthen protective factors not only for him/herself but for his/her peers as well.

The Family: love, care, food, clothes, shelter, discipline, structure.

As is stated in the Convention on the Rights of the Child in article 5, the family has the primary responsibility to provide, care and protect a child. Families are the basic unit of society. In almost all cases, the family provides the best environment for meeting a child's developmental needs. In addition to providing care and protection, the family is where children learn how to interact with other people, where they discover their family history and the language and customs of their community.

The Community: traditions, culture, neighbors sharing resources, security.

Based on the social identity that contributes to the formation of communities, communities will reflect certain commonalities. Some commonalities include: language, expression, habit, religion, social customs, behaviours, norms. These commonalities not only define a community, but they provide protective factors for the child. Religious leaders or elders can encourage strong morals and/or provide a sense of purpose to families and individuals building up trust and faith and good relations between one another within the community. Each of these is a positive factor that can protect a child.

Institutions: education, health services, support services, security.

Institutions are made up of all the organizations and services within a community, for example schools, churches, police, local community-based NGOs, social welfare services, and other groups within civil society. Institutions provide a protective service to communities, families and children. They are often within one community or support several communities/villages. Where a community cannot provide protection to the family and child, organizations are there to counter these gaps. Community-based organizations might offer counselling support to children and families affected by abuse/violence. A school provides education for children to learn. Police offer physical protection against crime. Each of these organizations provides protective services that strengthen positive factors in a child's life.

National: government, law and order, policies, public services.

The government is responsible for making the laws but they are also responsible for making sure that services and programs exist within communities to protect children. The National level of responsibility is to work through the other rings of responsibility to strengthen their protective services and ability in order for these duty bearers to better protect the child.

The International Community: International laws, capacity-building.

The role of the international ring in supporting child protection within the system is a supporting role. Laws and treaties are created to support governments to create national laws of protection. International NGOs help to fund and build the capacity of national organizations and services like schools, social services, and/or health clinics that are offering protective services to children. International

organizations are not there to take the place of local services but to strengthen and empower the government and partners to better protect their own people. It is important to remember that the family and community come "before" institutional support, and the institutions and national rings come before the international ring. International NGOs should not take the place of the community or family, or act on their behalf, but rather support existing structures. ChildFund is part of this international community. Our role is to help bridge the capacity gaps of government, communities and families. However, our role is not to assume their responsibilities or replace them.

The layers of the Rings of Responsibility are there to support children, but sometimes these roles breakdown or become a risk to the child's protection.

Break=natural or unintentional disruption that can lead to negative factors on a child. (Usually a natural disaster like an earthquake)

Risk=intentional harm or practices that create negative factors on a child. (Abuse, harm, exploitation done by those within a ring)

The Rings of Responsibility is the framework for strengthening child protection at every level of society. It should be used when thinking through programs, prevention strategies and capacity building. Each ring has a level of responsibility based on its location and distance to the child. The closer the ring the greater the responsibility to protect the child, but also a greater threat to a child's vulnerability if that ring breaks or becomes a risk.

An important reminder, is that the role of NGO programs is not to replace the actors in this environment; rather it is to bridge the capacity gaps of the actors and to enhance their capacities. There are often people in communities that help children. It's important that we that recognize the assets in the community for child protection that already exist. When children, their families and their communities lead the process of protecting children they become owners of that process. This ownership is related to the second core outcome and is a ChildFund Child Protection Practice Standard (see Module 3).

Reflective Questions

Child Protection within the rings of responsibility

For this exercise we will focus our concentration on the rings of responsibility between the child, family, community and national (country) levels.
As we have learned earlier, many people are responsible for the protection of children, not only the immediate family. Take some time now to brainstorm a list of the various stakeholders within each ring that play a

part in the protection of children.

(Facilitator Examples:)

- **Child:** siblings, classmates, peers

- **Family:** Mother, Father, Aunt, Uncle, Grandparents,

- **Community:** Elders, Neighbors, Cultural/traditional leaders

- **Institutions:** Schools, police, local NGOs, hospitals

- **National:** government, national policies/laws, government departments

- **International:** UN, International treaties/laws, Int'l NGOs (ChildFund)

When you are done listing these stakeholders take some additional time to describe and discuss the various roles and levels of importance that each of these stakeholders might play in the life stages of children. What capacities might these stakeholders provide in protecting children?

(Note: Consider all the different family and extended family members; community, institution (school, church, etc).

Additional Questions:

- Think about the ways in which there can be breakdowns in any of the rings, affecting the protection of the child. How could one of the rings become weakened or completely "break"? Ask for some examples, such as family separation during a cyclical work season or care giver death, a family moving and having to reestablish community connections, a school burning down, laws protecting children not being enforced by the state, the international community failing to intervene, etc.

- There are times as well that one of the rings can become a risk factor for a child. Ask partici-pants when this might occur (examples given by the participants: abuses within the family, incest, domestic violence, sexual abuse by teachers or by priests, etc.). Other examples might be when a parent abuses a child, when a community discriminates against a child because of the child's eth-nicity, when a girl cannot continue going to school because of a community belief, when a child is excessively teased at school (bullying) and wantes to stop going, etc.

Session 5: Guiding Principles in Child Protection

Key Questions:

- Who is responsible for protecting children?

- What are the guiding principles for child protection?

- How do you understand the principle of Do No Harm?

- How can we as duty bearers to children's protection do harm to children through our programming?

- What is meant by the Best Interest of the Child?

- How do we determine the Best Interest of a Child?

- What is non-discrimination?

- How do we ensure child protection programs do not discriminate?

Key Messages:

- Child protection principles should be part of the guidance of our work

- Do No Harm entails efforts/initiatives taken to protect and/or support individuals must be made in a manner that minimizes possible negative effects and maximizes possible benefits.

- The Best Interest of the Child **relates to our DECISION MAKING process with regards to children's rights, well-being, positive development, protection and children's own wishes**.

- Non-Discrimination ensures that our programs and initiatives protect each child from any kind of discrimination, irrespective of the child's or his or her parents or legal guardian's race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth and status.

The Principle of DO NO HARM

Do No Harm is based on the Hippocratic maxim to first do no harm; in other words, that efforts must be made to minimize possible negative effects and maximize possible benefits. It is the responsibility of those engaged in (aid, development, research, child protection response, etc.) to protect individuals from harm, as well as ensure that they experience the greatest possible benefits of involvement. Often associated with the medical field and applied as an oath for doctors, the Do No Harm principle has expanded to include aspects of both aid and development work. Aid and support can both help and hinder, both stop and drive, and both empower and disempower both child protection problems and the people caught within them. In the context of Child Protection, the Do No Harm principle applies on several levels (refer back to the Rings of Responsibility: the Child Protection Framework):

- Child (or individual) level

- Family and/or community level

- Institutional and program level

- National Policy/Advocacy level

- International level

And it refers to our actions in terms of:

- Program design and implementation

- Identifying, reporting, referring, follow-up on CP cases

- Research, assessments and evaluations

- Media/Communication

- Policy and well-being decisions (Best Interest of the Child)

CASE STUDY: DO NO HARM

A program started in a village outside of Bangalore seeks to empower children and youth in the community. The program raises awareness about children's rights and educates children how to advocate for their rights. Despite the success of the program raising awareness with children about their rights, because the program failed to educate children about their responsibility regarding their rights, in addition failed to educate parents in the community, the program has had a backlash of problems with adults in the community rejecting children's rights. Parents complain that children have become spoiled and refuse to do their homework or household chores because children say they have the right to play. To stop the negative messaging, the organization doing the program reassessed their objectives, outcomes, and strategy. A new program has now refocused the approach to empower children and families in both responsibility and protection of children's rights.

It is the responsibility of all relevant stakeholders in child protection to protect those individuals (children/families/community members) from harm as well as ensure that they experience the greatest possible benefit from their involvement in activities and programs. A child's involvement in a program or willing participation in a set of actions must not only add value but must be greater than any harm that might be caused by the action. To Do No Harm, actions should empower individuals enabling them to take greater control of their lives rather than enhancing vulnerabilities and risks.

The Principle of The Best Interest of the Child

The Best Interest of a Child relates to our DECISION MAKING process with regards to children's rights, well-being, positive development, protection and children's own wishes.

We emphasize three applications when we make decisions or determine the best interest of the child in regards to child protection. These applications include: policy decisions (what policies/laws the government passes to protect or harm children), programming decisions (what decisions organizations (NGOs and others) make in terms of program initiatives, activities, monitoring, evaluations, and how these impact children), and individual decisions (what unique decisions are made for each individual child that intends to protect or better the well-being of the child).

How the Best Interest of the Child applies to ChildFund Programming:

Program Decisions: Similar to how the government must create policies for the protection of all children in the state, organizations designing programs or making programming decisions on behalf of all children in a program location must do so considering how the rights, well-being, positive development, protection and children's wishes will be affected on a broad scale. Therefore, rather than look at an individual child, organizations will assess a given population and design programs that will benefit this entire population. For example, an organization may design an awareness raising campaign on the reintegration of former child soldiers. The program itself is not targeting any one child, but intends to bring awareness to support all former child soldiers. Participants should understand that the design of their activities can have an impact on an individual child or groups of children depending on how the activity is planned and implemented. In addition, how they respond (identify, report, refer, follow-up) to child protection cases must be carefully thought through on the basis of the Best Interest of the Child with careful evaluation to ensure that decisions are not solely made in the interest of the parent, the agency responding, or sometimes even the child's own wishes.

How the Best Interest of the Child applies to ChildFund Interventions and/or Interaction with Individual Child:

The Best Interest principle recognizes each child as unique and deserving of protected measures based on their specific, individualized circumstances. Decisions affecting one child may be greatly different for a child in another context. For example: It may be customary for a child to live with his mother if the parents are to divorce. However, if the mother is engaging in illegal activities this situation may not be in the best interest of the child despite cultural norms. Sometimes difficult decisions must be made and each individual right of a child must be assessed to determine the best interest of the child. In another example, in the case of a divorce a child's right to education may be hindered if he/she lives with his mother and the mother is unable to provide school fees due to poverty. However, if the child lives with the father, although the child may receive school fees to continue education, a factor that could impact a child's rights could be that the father is emotionally abusive to the child.

To help participants understand how to go about making the BEST decision for a child, explain to participants that they should take into consideration FIVE key concerns:

1. Take into consideration the rights of the child

   Are the child's rights being promoted or violated?

2. Take into consideration the welfare of the child

   Are basic needs being met?

3. Take into consideration the positive development of the child

   Is the child's development (physical, emotional, cognitive, spiritual) affected?

4. Take into consideration the protection of the child

   Is the child safe?

   Will more harm be done to the child by the decision?

5. Take into consideration the child's wishes

   How does the child feel?

Explain to participants that when making a decision they should ask themselves questions that will help them consider the five points above. Some examples of these questions include:

- If the family is unable to respond to the problem, can I involve the community in helping to address this issue?

- What are the community resources available that may help the child in addressing this issue?

- By tapping into community resources will I create further harm to the child? Will the child be stigmatized or discriminated against?

- By making a decision to #### will the child's rights be affected?

- Have I considered the welfare of the child if the child stays in this living situation?

- What type of impact and/or risks will this child face if I report the incident to the police?

- Am I prepared for the consequences of the result of my decision?

- Have I spoken to the child about how they feel about the decision that is going to be made?

- Have I spoken to the child about what they wish to do?

- Does the child have the capacity to participate in the decision-making process?

- Will including the child in the decision-making process pose risks to the child?

- Will my decision have any effects on the culture?

The Best Interest of the Child principle emphasizes that in addition to the decisions being made about a child, the evolving capacity of the child should also be considered in terms of their own participation and opinions concerning an action. This does not mean that what the child says or wishes should necessarily be granted. Including the child's wishes and participation in the decision-making process means evaluating whether or not the child's wishes/participation is harmful to their protection, rights, and well-being. The evolving capacity of the child reflects on whether or not the child is physically and mentally able to understand and make decisions. A 2 year old child that says that they only want candy for dinner may not have the capacity to understand that candy does not have enough nutrition to provide a healthy meal and support the growth and development of the child. Therefore, it is important that one engage the child to seek their opinions, wishes; however the age and development of the child must be taken into consideration.

The Principle of Non-Discrimination:

Discrimination means treating an individual and/or group of people less well because of whom or what they are. Discrimination can be defined as any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference which is based on any ground such as race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status and which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by all persons, on an equal footing of all rights and freedoms.

According to the CRC, Article 2 states that, "States shall respect and ensure the rights set forth in the present convention to each child within their jurisdiction without discrimination of any kind, irrespective of the child's or his or her parents or legal guardian's race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth and status." In other words, every child within a State's jurisdiction holds all CRC rights without regard to citizenship, immigration status or any other status. Refugee chil-

dren, asylum seekers, and rejected asylum seekers are entitled to all rights of the CRC.

States parties should take all appropriate measures to ensure that a child is protected against all forms of discrimination or punishment on the basis of status, activities, expressed opinions or beliefs of a child's guardians or family members.

Non-Discrimination Exercise:

Groups of boys and girls discriminated against:
(Question to ask: **Who** is discriminated against?)

> » Children with disabilities
>
> » Child Soldiers
>
> » Children affected by HIV/AIDS
>
> » Street Children
>
> » Working Children
>
> » Orphans
>
> » Etc.

Reasons for Discrimination:
(Question to ask: **Why** are they discriminated?)

> » Poverty and other economic reasons
>
> » Traditional/Cultural beliefs and practices
>
> » Lack of education
>
> » Lack of awareness
>
> » Family environment
>
> » Sex
>
> » Etc.

Discrimination Behavior:
(Question to ask: **What** is the result of the discrimination?)

> » Limited opportunities (limited access to education)

> » Limited scope of participation

> » Inheritance law

> » Abuse

> » Family values boys over girls

> » Etc.

Actions for preventing and combating discrimination may include, but not limited to:

(Question to ask: **How** can you prevent discrimination?)

> » Self empowerment

> » Openness

> » Awareness raising

> » Creating advocacy groups and organizations (national organization of sex workers, disabled people to protect their rights and that of their children)

> » Social mobilization

> » Referrals and Networking

Based on the categories of discrimination that each group comes up with ask participants to think through the above issues and to think about the root causes and immediate causes of discrimination. The facilitator should then lead participants in a discussion about what might be some community actions that could combat each of these root or immediate causes of discrimination.

# Session 6: Planning The ASP

Key Questions:

- How do you begin to find sustainable solutions for responding to child protection problems?
- What is meant by triangulation?

Key Lessons:

- Primary stakeholders have the best knowledge and perspectives on understanding negative factors that contribute to vulnerability in children in the community.
- Information gathered from primary stakeholders needs to be compared through primary and secondary data to fully understand the unique conditions and impact of vulnerability.

We should consult at least three different sources of information (referred to as "triangulation") to help us better understand the complexity of child protection problems and the important factors that might help provide a sustainable solution. In most cases this information is found in part through consultations with children, families and other adult community members (such as neighbors, leaders, teachers, health workers, police, etc.)

Primary Stakeholders (children, families, and communities) have knowledge and perspectives on what local child vulnerability looks like and how best to measure this. Their knowledge and perspectives need to be collected and triangulated or compared through primary and secondary data to more fully understand the unique conditions and impact of vulnerability. Once local definitions and perspectives on vulnerability are collected, planning appropriate local solutions of response are possible to program for in the ASP.
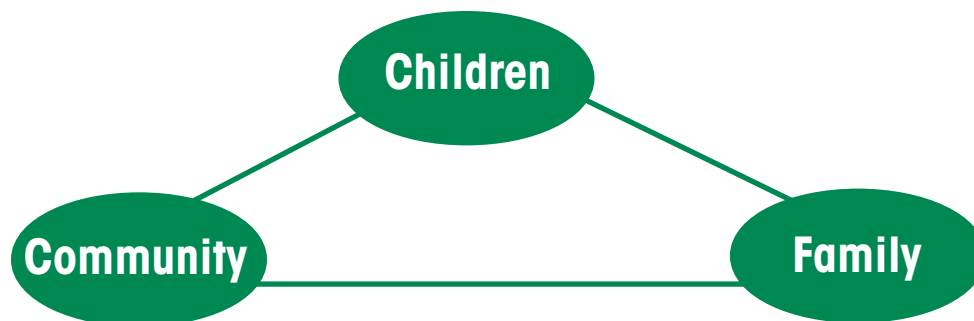
Case Study

Interactive Design notes: Reference the ASP guidance matrix in section 3.1.2 as an important tool to consider. Participants will consider this matrix and process more fully in Module 3.

It might be helpful to have children's actual voices mentioned more explicitly in the examples below and use an actual child's voice in the on-line version of this activity.

Kalita is a small town about 150 km from the capital city. Residents' main source of livelihood is subsistence agriculture. The town is comprised of three clusters of dwellings with about 200 households. Most of the adults work during the day in the fields or in the trading center selling vegetables and small household items.

1. Early Childhood

Many parents leave their children at home with older siblings while working. This prevents the older siblings from attending school, some of whom are not much older than the very young children they are minding. Home fires started by unattended children are not uncommon. There are also anecdotal reports that some adolescents are engaging in prostitution at a video house and bar at the edge of the trading center. On occasion it is said that the adolescents bring the very young children to watch sexual transactions as a way of introducing them to prostitution.

2. Middle Childhood

St. John's is the only primary school serving Kalita, and one other community, with approximately 600 children enrolled. The school is 5 kilometers away from Kalita and is very crowded with 100 pupils per class. However, only about 30% of the children in the school are girls. In fact, only 35% of school aged girls in Kalita are enrolled. Some of the parents claim that they are afraid that there girls will become pregnant if they send them to St. John's, as this has happened in the past with other girls. Other parents say that it is more important for their boys to receive education and there is work for the girls to do at home.

3. Adolescence

Kalita has no secondary school. The closest secondary school is a boarding school and is 25 kilometers away. Many adolescents in Kalita work with their parents in the fields or trading centers during the day. Some stay at home to mind younger children. However, there are an increasing number of adolescents who are leaving Kalita for work elsewhere. Many girls are moving to the city to work as domestic servants or in prostitution. Some adolescent boys are being employed by plantation owners in farms about 10 km from Kalita.

Questions:

- What do you think the protection risks (abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence) are for the children in Kalita?
- Who is responsible for reducing the protection risks in Kalita?
- What is preventing them from reducing these risks?
- What can be done to help those responsible to reduce protection risks for children in Kalita?

Module 1
Homework Excercise

Objective: To develop a better understanding the characteristics of child and youth vulnerability in our communities in order to develop a sampling framework for the ASP consultations.

Four Steps:

Step one:

1 In preparation for the ASP, participants should identify key informants in the community who work with or on behalf of children. This could include teachers, religious leaders, social workers, police, parents (participants should refer back to each layer within the Rings of Responsibility to identify the key stakeholders. Who at the family level should be included? Who at the community, institutional, national levels should be included?)

Step two:

2 Arrange interviews with these key informants to develop a better understanding of the types of vulnerabilities affecting children and youth in the communities and about sub-groups of affected children.

The following questions can be used as a guide for your interview:

- Who are the most vulnerable groups of children in your community?
- How do you know they are vulnerable?
- Are girls more vulnerable than boys? Or Vice versa? Why?
- Are certain ethnic/ religious groups more vulnerable?
- Are there certain locations or circumstances where they are more vulnerable (e.g. at work, at school)?
- What makes them more vulnerable?
- How are they more vulnerable and how is this manifested?
- What other characteristics make children more likely to be vulnerable?
- What are these children doing?

- How many children are in each sub-group?

- Where are they?

- How might they be engaged in consultations?

- What is the severity of these children's vulnerability (or child protection issue) to their holistic development (different stakeholder groups will likely have different opinions of this)

- What is the prevalence of a vulnerability category (child protection issue)

- Are there available resources to address child protection issues?

- Is there human capacity

- Are there available public/government services to assist children?

- Are there other people (e.g. pastors, imams, women's or youth groups) that can help children.

- Are there networks, laws/policies?

You should also inquire about the resources in a community to reduce child protection risks. Our programs should focus on strengthening these resources and to avoid targeting/labeling and increasing the protection risks for these children, not to mention the neglect of other children because program. Our interventions should be focused on strengthening entire systems/resources, rather than on only particular sub-groups of vulnerable children.
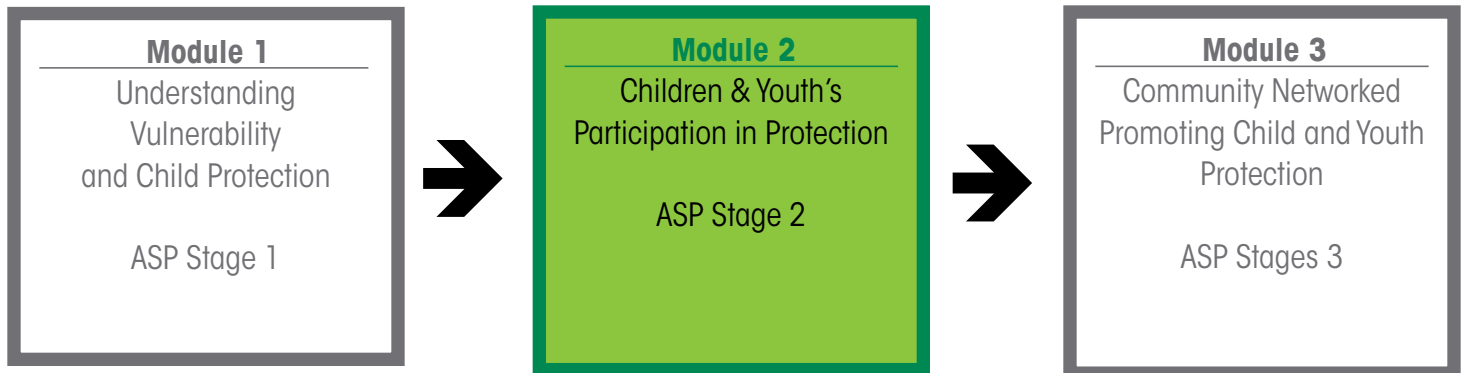
Step three:

3 • Review ASP's detailed implementation plan (DIP) to see if they will be able to include vulnerable sub-groups of children in Stage 2 of the ASP.

- Will the ASP DIP be able to fully understand the local resources that can help vulnerable children?

- Pay attention to "doing no harm". How can you include vulnerable children and youth in the ASP process without putting them in potential risk of harm?

Step four:

4 Reflect on the process of the consultations with various groups of stakeholders by answering the following questions:

- What challenges did you face when speaking with the different groups of stakeholders?

- Did you find you were able to gather information without bias or one group dominating over another?

- How did you mitigate the challenges?

- What issues were most difficult to discuss? Why?

Module 2

Module 1		Module 2		Module 3
Understanding Vulnerability and Child Protection		Children & Youth's Participation in Protection		Community Networked Promoting Child and Youth Protection
ASP Stage 1	➜	ASP Stage 2	➜	ASP Stages 3

Module Purpose: This second module will introduce participants to the rationale and methods for promoting child and youth participation in planning, implementation and monitoring and evaluation of programs.

Outcome: Participants will understand the importance of child and youth participation for improving protection and will know how to use methods and tools safely and effectively for involving them in ASP process.

Child Protection Practice Standard Two:

Children and Youth participating in their protection — ChildFund promotes children and youth's ethical, safe, meaningful and appropriate participation for reducing protection risks.

What does this mean for you in relation to the ASP Process?

You need to ensure that children and youth have the opportunity to participate in the ASP in a meaningful way. Their involvement should help you to better understand child protection risks. Their participation should not put them at risk of distress or of repercussions from others.

Session 1 – Child and Youth Participation: Introduction

Guiding Questions:

- Why is it necessary to include children in the APS process?
- What can children tell us about child protection issues in their community?
- How do you engage children to participate in a meaningful way?
- Are their protection risks involved when children participate?

Key Lessons:

- Children and youth's meaningful participation is critical for identifying and developing program responses to reduce child protection risks
- Methods and tools to promote children and youth's participation in consultations should be used in a manner that is safe and respectful.
- This the second of three modules designed to help staff involved in facilitating the five stages of Area Strategic Planning (ASP) process. **Module One** focuses on Stage One of the ASP – (the initial planning stage). While **Module Two** (this module) focuses on Stage 2 of the ASP process – (the consultation stage) [ASP Guidance LINK]. Stage Two involves carrying out consultations in their communities with children, youth and parents.

This module will help you to:

1. Carryout the consultations in a way that ensures the safety and wellbeing of child and youth participants.
2. Facilitate sessions with children and youth that helps reveal issues related to abuse, exploitation, neglect and violence in their communities.

Participation provides children with the possibility to protect themselves and challenge abuses of their rights, either directly or through informing a responsible adult. Children are often most vulnerable in situations where they have the least opportunity to voice their views and to become involved in programs. Having the opportunity to participate helps children to share their experiences and gain more control of their lives. Additionally, it lessens the risk of exploitation and lessens the fear that can prevail in living in a situation where trauma is silenced and strict rules of behavior are observed. Experience shows that when children have had easy and safe access to adults prepared to take their views seriously, hidden or ignored instances of violence have surfaced.

Review Homework from Module 2
What did you learn about vulnerability and child protection?
How might this inform your work in the ASP?

Session 2 – Strengthening Programs through Child Participation

Guiding Questions:

- How can children and youth's participation strengthen your programs?
- What are the benefits of children and youth's participation?

Key Lessons:

- Children have a Right to participate
- ChildFund has developed the Child and Youth Friendly Participatory Action Research Toolkit to better support staff to engage with children for the ASP process and other initiatives.
- ChildFund's strategy is centered around child's participation.
- There are benefits to both children and adults when children participate.

ChildFund values the perspectives of children and youth. Their understanding of the situations in their communities can add value to our programs. In fact, they are often better able than adults to recognize the protection risks that they are exposed to in their environment[9].

With this appreciation for young people's perspectives, ChildFund has developed and is using methods and tools to involve children in identifying problems in their environments. The **Child & Youth-Friendly Participatory Action Research Toolkit**, includes methods and tools for facilitating children and youth's participation in identifying problems and resources in their communities, prioritizing these problems, understanding the root causes of the problems and planning for solutions. These tools and methods have been successfully piloted in numerous countries and now have been integrated into the **Area Strategic Plan Guidance.**

Through our piloting of the **Child & Youth-Friendly Participatory Action Research Toolkit** we've found that children often identify issues related to their physical safety and their exposure to violence and abusive or exploitative situations. Through good facilitation young people are able to reveal issues that are affecting them, in a manner that will not cause them distress or will lead to resulting negative ramifications.

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[9] Wordsworth, D, et al, Understanding Children's Experience of Poverty: An Understanding of the DEV Framework, Children and Poverty Working Paper 1, ChildFund 2005

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ChildFund's Strategy and Child and Youth Participation

ChildFund recognizes the importance of child and youth participation. **The Strategy's Area of Excellence** – placing children's experience of deprivation, exclusion and vulnerability at the center of our policies and practices.

This means that we:

- Work with children to understand their experiences. We ensure they have a seat at the table. We respect their voices.
- Align what we learn from children with best practices in our field to develop and deliver our programs and sponsorship approaches.
- Incorporate children's own evaluation of their progress as an important factor in how we measure our success.
- Know that lasting change comes from children. As we change a childhood, we change the world.

Children's Right to Participation:

As previously mentioned in Module 1, one of the guiding documents for ChildFund International's work with children is the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC, 1989). ChildFund International is in an exciting position to help children reach their full potential and to experience their participation rights through the promotion of child and youth agency. A commitment to helping young people express their views is essential to ChildFund International's goal of placing children at the center of development efforts.

The duty of adults to take children's views into account is well established in the UNCRC. ChildFund International staff and partners have an obligation to help children fully participate in all aspects of programs and governance. **Article 12** of the Convention on the Rights of the Child states that children have the right to express their view and be heard in all matters affecting them. This article and articles 13, 14, and 15 establishing the child's right to access to information, freedom of belief, and freedom of association, are some of the important articles that support a child's right to participation in family, community, culture and broader civil society. These rights apply to all children irrespective of age, gender, disability, ethnicity, income etc (article 2: non-discrimination). However, the rights and responsibilities of parents are also respected to ensure guidance for the child that is appropriate to his or her evolving capacity (article 5 parental guidance and child's evolving capacity). Furthermore, the right to special support for children with disabilities (article 23) is articulated to promote self-reliance and facilitate their active participation in the community.

Benefits of Participation for Children

Child Participation:

- Increases self-confidence in children's abilities to accomplish goals they set;
- Increases children's skills, development, and knowledge (communication, negotiation skills, conflict
  resolution, team work);
- Builds upon children's resilience, resourcefulness and creativity
- Increases children's understanding of their ability to effect positive change in their own lives and community of others;
- Enhances children's protection and well-being, and fosters protective mechanisms within the wider environment;
- Develops a network of new friends including community role models and resource people;
- Increases respect for children and children's views from adults in the community which contributes to increased protection of children's rights.

Benefits of Child Participation for Adults

Child Participation enables adults to:

- Interact with young people in positive and helpful ways;
- Invest time and energy in the future of the community;
- Gain the respect of young people by working in partnership with them;
- Provide opportunities to act upon innovative ideas from young minds in the community that will

contribute to the betterment of the lives of adults and young people.

By encouraging children to get involved and share their voices, participate in community decisions, and develop relationships with each other and with adults in their community, we are in fact promoting healthy child development and strengthening the realization of children's rights.

Looking at reality through children's eyes – Reflection Exercise

One problem we face in seeing the world through a child's eyes is that we are no longer children. We have forgotten what life is like for a child.

Reflect on the following questions:

- Think back to when you were a child and share those memories:
- Ask yourself:
  - » "What made you happy?
  - » When did you feel safe and protected?
  - » What did you fear?
- Think about the circumstances (gender, ethnic, religious, social status, wealth, language, traditional practices, laws of the country, etc.) that affected you and think of those as either something that contributed to your protection or your harm.

Adults usually do not try to understand what children's ideas, thoughts and feelings are and often do not know what children's problems and priorities are. We think we know what children live, think and believe, as if we could project our experiences on them. Unfortunately, too often adults tend to dismiss children as unimportant, immature or childish, and not worth listening to.

Adults often say 'Children are the future', but sometimes we do not take seriously into consideration what sort of future is in store for them based on their present realities and roles. The future starts today. Children are not the future, but the citizens of today.

Key Messages

- Children can identify risks and resources that can help to improve their protection.
- Understanding children's views is important because children's experiences affect their development and children may see things differently than adults..
- Understanding children's views does not mean you disagree with adult's views – both are valid.

Session 3: How to facilitate children and youth's identification of child protection risks in a safe and protective manner.

Guiding Questions:

- How do you engage with children to encourage their participation in a safe and protective manner?
- What are the principles and guidelines for children's participation in the ASP process?

Key Lessons:

- ChildFund emphasizes the following principles when participating with children during the ASP process: Ensure Transparency/Honesty/Accountability, maintain a child-friendly environment, ensure equality of opportunity, uphold the safety and protection of children, and strengthen and support the commitment and competency of adults who engage with children
- The Area Strategic Plan Guidance calls for the participation of children and youth throughout its five-staged processes. In particular, Stage Two includes the involvement of a significant number of children and youth through community-based consultations. There are a number of principles that you should consider when carrying out the consultations.

Principles of Child and Youth Participation in the ASP Process[10]

1. Transparency, honesty and accountability

What do we mean? Adults involved in ASP consultations with children follow ethical and participatory practices and put children's best interests first.

Why is it important? There are inevitable imbalances in power and status between adults and children. Transparency, honesty and accountability are needed for children's participation to be genuine and meaningful.

Example: All opportunities for young participants to voice their opinions (through presentations or taking on tasks at a consultation, such as chairing a discussion) are well planned by consultation staff and clearly communicated to young participants – with ample opportunity for them to prepare.

2. A children-friendly environment

What do we mean? Children's involvement in the ASP consultations takes place in a safe, welcoming, inclu-

sive and encouraging environment that enables participation.

Why is it important? The quality of children's participation and their ability to benefit from it are strongly influenced by the efforts made to create a positive environment for their participation.

Example: Young people trained in PAR help to guide discussions with children through drawings and games that are interactive and tailored to the capacity of the children's development stage.

3. Equality of opportunity

What do we mean? The ASP consultations should include groups of children who typically suffer discrimination or who are often excluded from activities, such as girls, working children, children with disabilities and rural children.

Why is it important? Children, like adults, are not a homogeneous group. The ASP consultations should provide for equal opportunity for all regardless of age, location, ethnicity, gender, abilities, class, caste or other factors.

Example: ASP organizers proactively identify and engage working children and get their informed consent to participate in consultative sessions in locations and times that they choose.

4. Safety and protection of children

What do we mean? Involvement in the ASP consultation should not expose any young participants to threats or actual harm to their well-being. A child's safety and health is considered in every possible way, with safeguards put in place. This includes both physical and emotional well-being.

Why is it important? Organizations have a duty to protect the children with whom they work and to minimize the risk of abuse and exploitation or other negative consequences as a result of their participation.

Example: A formal procedure is set up to allow any young participant to make a complaint, in confidence, about any issue concerning involvement in the consultation.

5. Commitment and competency of adults

What do we mean? Adults working with children are committed to the aim of consulting with children and youth. This commitment is realized through increased training and support for adults to better understand the rights and protection of children. This dedication and ability will allow them to carry out participatory practices. Commitment also ensures

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[10] Modified from Plan International Principles for Children's Participation – in "Monitoring and Evaluating with Children" 2006

Why is it important? Adults can only encourage genuine children and youth's participation effectively and confidently if they have the necessary understanding and skills.

Example: All ASP facilitators and organizers receive briefings and/or training on children's participation and the specific procedures developed for a consultation.

Protective methods of promoting child and youth participation

Ensuring child participants are safe and protected is our responsibility. This means that we must prepare for children's participation. There are a number of important considerations for this preparation.

- **Informed Consent:** True consent is an agreement between people on an **equal power level.** It is important to explore the relationship between different stakeholders to understand the power dynamics between different groups. To explore this, ask yourself the following questions:
- Is a social worker and a parent on an equal power level?
- Is a child and a teacher on an equal power level?
- Is a family and an NGO on an equal power level?
- Is a child from a two parent household and a child from a single parent household on an equal power level?
- Are two sisters in a household on an equal power level?

> ### Reflective Questions
>
> Participants are asked to reflect on the following questions:
>
> How are these principles relevant to your work during the consultation phase?
>
> How will aligning your consultations with these principles strengthen the process and outcome?
>
> How could you ensure that these principles are respected through your ASP process?

In most situations concerning children, their participation will be at an unequal power level than the Child-Fund staff or others asking for their participation. This is primarily due to the child's age and evolving capacity. When the power level is unequal, it is the responsibility of the person with more power to ensure others are safe and informed.

Children must be told why you are doing the exercises, what it entails and how the collected information will be used. Most importantly, `*informed*' consent means agreeing to something out of free will and voluntarily, and it entails knowing and understanding the consequences and risks of participating. It is general practice to look at the evolving capacity of the child to determine if they are capable of making decisions and/or taking action where they understand the implications of their participation. Keep in mind, this does not mean they are necessarily INFORMED.

It is important to recognize and respect that parents are the most important source of security and protection for children. Parents of the child participants should be informed and give consent to their children's involvement. In some cases, a child may not have a parent to give consent. In such cases, an adult that the child has close contact with, such as a teacher, a social worker or a neighbor identified by the child, should be approached. An exception to this rule, however, is if seeking permission from the parents/caretakers will actually endanger the child further. Great care should be taken to consider the best interests of the child to prevent harm when seeking permission from parents/caretakers. Finally, children should always feel free not to participate or to discontinue their participation in the activities.

Confidentiality: Some of the information shared during the child-friendly assessment exercises may be sensitive, regardless of whether we think it is or not. We must be careful not to unintentionally put children in danger through their participation because shared information is leaked and associated with particular children. Children should feel free to speak about issues that concern them, without the fear that they may be blamed later for airing dirty laundry or pointing fingers, etc. Information will be summarized and shared with others; however, individual children will not be identified and associated with the information.

Confidentiality consists of four key components:

1. It ensures that information is accessible only to those <u>authorized</u> to have access and information is shared only on a need to know basis.

2. It refers to <u>oral, written and circumstantial information</u>. It ensures that information is kept private unless there is an understood agreement or an informed consent that the information can be shared

3. It is not bound by <u>timeframes or limits</u> unless an agreed upon timeframe for disclosure of information has been agreed upon

4. It establishes <u>trust</u> as key to understanding the depth of the term

> ### Do No Harm:
>
> When gathering information on sensitive issues, there may be difficult choices to make about whom to approach; the potential risks to respondents of providing sensitive information; as well as whether, where and how to approach them. Careful decisions must be made to minimize any potential risk to interviewees. In general, only seek information that respondents feel comfortable and safe providing, but also consider the risks to children of not obtaining information on immediate threats to their safety. Be sensitive to information that may be socially or politically sensitive.

Confidentiality is primarily defined as sharing information on a need to know bases, but there are ethical rules of protection and legal norms of mandatory disclosure that children need to know about. In other words, a child may share information that he/she is being sexually abused by a caregiver. Although told in confidence, it is the ethical responsibility of the person told to ensure that the child is protected. In such a situation, a breach of confidence is necessary to protect the child from further harm and abuse.

Based on the above understanding of confidentiality, participants should also discuss the importance of confidentiality with child participants and facilitators should take precautions to protect the information being shared. Community members may be curious about the session and will want to listen. It is important to be transparent with parents, community leaders and other members about the objectives and content of the sessions. However, it is important that children feel comfortable to speak openly about their experiences. Explain politely to onlookers about what you are doing and that the information will be summarized and shared with others later. Make strong attempts to find confidential meeting spaces where curious outsiders are minimized.

Protection Referral Plan: In some cases children will disclose that they have been abused during or after the exercises. It is important that facilitators handle these disclosures appropriately. It is recommended to prepare for this event before the participatory exercises by identifying and contacting local service providers who you can refer to for assistance and follow-up for the children. They should be competent and prepared to respond adequately to the needs of an abused child. If possible and appropriate, these child protection service providers may attend and observe the participatory session—keeping in mind the principle of confidentiality

If a service provider and consultation staff come in contact with distressed children and/or youth through the consultations, they will need to stop the consultation questioning and offer, or find someone to offer, basic support and help, like PFA (Psychological First Aid[11]). PFA utilizes empathetic listening to offer compassionate support and appropriate planning to help the child transition from overwhelming distress to a safer and more stable state.

Complaint Procedures: It may occur that children have had negative experiences during in preparation for or during the consultations. These are problems perceived by children as a result of the consultations. This may include intentional or unintentional inappropriate behavior of a facilitator or someone else at the ASP consultation. All participants should be able to make confidential complaints, without negative repercussions. This ability to make complaints should be made known to all participants at the start of the process. All complaints should be reviewed and considered seriously by ChildFund and partner ASP organizers; there is no reason why adults should not respect and believe children's complaints, if a child lies and you believe him there is no harm (nothing happens), but if the child lies and you don't believe him there might be serious harmful consequences.

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[11] Psychological First Aid Field Operations Guide, 2nd Edition developed by the National Child Traumatic Stress Network and National Center for PTSD, July 2006. Available on: www.nctsn.org and www.ncptsd.va.gov

Case-Study.

There is an ASP scheduled in the Kalita area and a team from ChildFund and partners are organizing the process. The team planned to include children and youth in their consultations. They identified 24 young people to serve as facilitators. However, the ASP team was short on time and thus was only able to provide a very brief training. Each facilitator was assigned to work with groups of 24 children. The young facilitators gathered their groups and sat in shaded areas under trees in the village. A group of men stood near the tree to listen to the children's discussion, both adults in the community and other children from the community were curious to learn what this was all about.

They began their sessions with introductions and a short warm-up exercise. This was followed by a community mapping exercise. The children first drew the streets and rivers in their community, followed by specific the school, the mosque and their houses. They were then asked to identify risks and to mark them with sad faces. Some of the children drew a sad face on the mosque. When asked why the child did that she replied "because the mosque marries young girls to older men". Two other girls agreed.

Later in the exercise another girl in the group drew sad face in the schoolyard. This resulted in a few of her friends laughing at her. The facilitator then asked why she drew the sad face in the schoolyard. Without a response, he repeated the question two more times, when one of the girls explained that the teacher in the school beats us. Following this reply, the girl who drew the face began crying. So the facilitator asked her to leave the group because it was a disturbance.

The mapping exercise resumed and was completed several minutes later and all of the children were allowed to leave.

Questions

- Were all of the protective methods for promoting children's participation followed?
- What was not followed?
- What were the potential problems as a result?
- What could the facilitator have done better?
- What should the facilitator do next?

Session 4: Identifying and Engaging Children and Youth to Participate in the ASP Consultation

Guiding Questions:

- What are some of the obstacles children may face in participating in ChildFund's ASP consultation process?
- How do you gather samples of children for the ASP consultation?

Key Lessons:

- It is important to reach the most marginalized children when doing ASP consultations
- There are specific characteristics that must be determined when selecting children to participate
- ChildFund uses several sampling methods to ensure the full participation of all children

ChildFund partners with communities to support children's development. Our core programs are tried and tested methods intended to promote children's successful transition through the life cycle. With the support of the core program interventions communities and families will be better equipped to ensure most children will achieve their life-stage milestones which will help them transition to healthy and productive adulthood.

However, many children have significant obstacles for this successful transition. Children who live in environments that do not protect them from abuse, exploitation or neglect are often prevented from healthy development. For effective and meaningful change that would promote children's healthy development our core programs should address the root causes of the obstacles to this development. Often there is an assumption that collective poverty is the primary root cause. We often treat communities as if they are homogeneous units with common interests – poverty reduction. While poverty is a significant problem for many in the community, unequal access to resources is often overlooked. A deeper understanding and informed approach to power dynamics and asymmetrical relationships in communities is necessary to address the root causes of these obstacles. Examples of relationships that may result in protection risks include:

- A stepparent or an older sibling reluctantly caring for an infant;
- A teacher without guidance or checks and balances and his/her influence over students;
- A child with a disability who is hidden indoors by his mother;
- An employer of a child domestic servant, who has no vested interest in the child's healthy development;

- An alcoholic parent with the custody of a child;

- Youth involved in illicit activities negatively influencing their peers;

- Parents encouraging their children to engage in prostitution or to migrate to urban areas for work;

- A dominant ethnic tribe with control over political and economic institutions in their community and the exclusion of a minority ethnic tribe;

- A community with culture and traditions that do not value girls' participation in decision-making or access to services.

Just as not all children live in the same life circumstances, not all children have the same perspectives. It is crucial that we are able to identify and to facilitate the involvement of the poorest and most marginalized. **Module One** helped you to better understand factors that contribute to vulnerability and sub-groups of young people that are at a higher risk of being affected by these negative factors of vulnerability. **Module Two** will help you to sample and engage these sub-groups of vulnerable children and youth and will provide you with the tools and methods to develop understanding of the risks that they are exposed to and how to remove them.

Selecting children to participate in the participatory action research (PAR) is a very important step. It is critical that you use the appropriate methods for selecting them. It is usually impossible to include all children in a targeted area in the child-friendly PAR exercises. In fact, it is not necessary. A good sample can help ensure that the interests of the most vulnerable children are represented.

There are good and not so good methods for selecting a sample. Often program staff members use convenient methods of identifying children for involvement with research. They may choose children attending a nearby school or they may ask community leaders to identify child representatives. However, through these approaches the most vulnerable children in the community are usually not identified. In fact, often the most privileged children, who are able to attend school or are favored by the community leaders, are selected.

Depending on our research needs it may be useful for us to hear from children who have access to services, such as education. However, we must also strive to reach children who are marginalized. This is more challenging because often marginalized children are harder to reach and sometimes not recognized as being marginalized. They are often busy working or some adult community members do not necessarily want these children to be heard (for example, disabled children who may cause shame to families in some cultures, domestic servants whose employers do not want them to leave their work, etc).

The homework exercise in Module One helped you to identify relevant vulnerabilities and sub-groups of children and youth affected by these vulnerabilities through interviews with local key informants. This understanding will help you in creating a sampling framework and for eventually selecting your sample of participants for your ASP consultation.

There are certain characteristics that should be considered when selecting our sample for participation in the ASP Consultation:

- Gender
- Life-stage
- Rural vs. Urban place of residence
- In and out-of school
- Working vs. not working
- Socio-economic background
- Religious/ ethnic minority status
- Family structure and composition
- Children with disabilities

There are useful methods for identifying individual children and youth that ensure that your sample is representing children with vulnerabilities identified through the homework exercise in **Module One**.

Snowball sampling: Just as snowballs in cold climates accumulate more snow as you push them along the ground, snowball samples are designed to accumulate more relevant research subjects as you proceed. This method involves asking subjects to introduce the researcher to other subjects with similar circumstances, who in turn introduce other subjects, etc. This method is typically used to find subjects who are hard to reach sub-groups. For example, a researcher interested in learning more about children involved with commercial sexual exploitation may have difficulty identifying respondents because of the social stigma and/or illicit nature of their situation. There is likely not a comprehensive list available of children in this situation, which a sample could be drawn from. However, children involved in this activity likely know others involved in the same situation. Through the help of a few contacts, others research respondents can be identified.

You should organize separate PAR sessions for children in the same situation (e.g. working girls). However, protective preparations are particularly important for vulnerable sub-groups. Please see the **Ethical Measures for Engaging Children in Research in Section 3.**

Opportunity sampling: Often sub-groups, such as working children, congregate in certain locations at particular times (e.g. water-pump at midday, bus-rank in the evening). Knowledge of when and where these groups congregate and actually going to the appropriate places will facilitate identifying children who are typically invisible. Identified children should be invited to attend PAR sessions with necessary special arrangements made for their attendance, such as gaining informed consent from them and their caregivers.

With particular sub-groups of marginalized children and youth, such as working children, finding the location and time which is convenient and safe for them to participate is important, but can be a challenge. Nonetheless, their participation is crucial for us to fully understand their perspectives and to develop appropriate responses. Your ability to be flexible is vital. Not all sub-groups of children will be able to participate in the regularly scheduled consultation sessions. Special and perhaps smaller sessions, that may be apart from the larger process, but that are more accessible to marginalized groups of children, should be arranged. Of course their informed consent and all of the other aforementioned protective measures should be prepared for.

Reflective Questions

- What are possible sub-groups of marginalized children and youth in your community?
- Why might it be important to include them in the ASP consultation?
- What might the challenges to their inclusion be?
- What methods could you use to overcome these challenges?

Session 5: ASP Consultation Tools –

Guiding Questions:

- What is the ***Child and Youth-Friendly Participatory Action Research Toolkit?***
- How do you decide which PAR activity to use?
- What skills are needed by the facilitator to ensure the PAR activities are carried out suc-cessfully?

Key Lessons:

- The Child and Youth-Friendly Participatory Action Research Toolkit is a tool to help conduct PAR or consultations with children. It provides useful exercises and guidelines to determine the appropriateness of each activity.
- PAR activities can be broken up into four categories: Identification, Prioritization, Analysis, Planning
- There are useful tips to better facilitate and carryout PAR activities with children

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Understanding Young People's Environments

Children and youth are actors in different environments. Often environments include: the household, school, the wider community, and sometimes their work environment. It's important to understand the risks of these different environments and how children and youth experience these risks. There are a number of tools described here that can help with this understanding. Body mapping, community mapping and drawing spaces are very helpful tools to help probe with young people for specific protection risks and possible resources to reduce these risks.

The Stage 2 of the ASP process includes consultations with children and youth using participatory methods. These tools are all contained in the **Child and Youth-Friendly Participatory Action Research Toolkit** [LINK]. It's not necessary to use all of these tools for your consultation. You might want to select only a few tools from each category using the suggestions below and those provided in the toolkit to help you select the most ap-propriate method to match your need.

The tools in the Toolkit are divided into four categories of tools:

Identification: to help children and youth to identify problems and resources in the community.

- Community Mapping: To enable girls and boys to identify positive and negative aspects of their local communities.
- Body Mapping: Reflecting on one's senses to enable identification and discussion of issues affecting girls and boys
- Puppet Show/ Drama: To enable girls and boys to highlight issues, likes and dislikes affecting them through theatrical methods.
- Drawing spaces: Identify and discuss risks and resources affecting children in specific places such as their household or school.
- Life Timeline: To identify events in children's life that impacted them positively or negatively.

Prioritization: to help children and youth to prioritize the problems they've identified through the previous set of tools.

- Diamond Ranking: To discover the top priorities that concern children
- Pair-wise/ Matrix Ranking: To identify the key priority issue through a simple matrix.
- Dot Voting: To use voting as a means to prioritize an issue
- On the line: to establish the possible impact and frequency of occurrence of key issues children are faced with through the use of simple objects and a 'priority-line'
- Paper Houses: To illustrate children's priorities and needs in development, emergency and reconstruction programs and policies
- Heavy Voting: Using the vote as a medium to establish the priority of a subject.
- Most and Least Severe: this tool helps to: 1) identify and rank the issues within a group by using a simple set of criteria; 2) look at the problems with a historical perspective; and 3) to assess the impact of each problem from the point of view of those involved in it.

Analysis: to help children and youth to understand the root causes and contributing factors of the problems that they've prioritized through the previous set of tools.

- Why? Why? Why?: To analyze the root causes of an issue.
- Tree Analysis: To analyze the root causes and the impact of an issue affecting girls and/or boys
- Venn Diagram: To analyze access and power of people on issues that children want to influence.
- Spider's Web: To examine an issue (conflict, family dynamics, community problems, social issues) and the relationship between each.

- Gender Clock: To develop an understanding of the different male and female roles in a community.
- Triangle Analysis: To develop an understanding contributing societal causes for a problem.

Planning: to help children and youth to develop solutions to problems that were analyzed through the previous set of tools.

- Visioning: To dream of a vision and to identify steps to move towards the vision.
- Time Machine: To dream of a vision and to identify steps to move towards the vision.
- How? How? How?: To develop activities that can respond to an issue/ problem.
- Solution Tree: To develop activities that can respond to root causes.
- Rocks and Cart: To enable action planning and to sensitize the participants to the idea tha many problems could be solved through internal resources.
- SWOT/C Analysis: The aim of any Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats/Challenges SWOC analysis is to identify the key internal and external factors that are important to achieving the objective.

Facilitation

All of the tools are designed to help facilitate simple, animated and fun exercises that can be helpful for children to generate accurate information. Your facilitation can help participants to identify/ reveal protection risks as well as potential resources that prevent or reduce these risks. However, the tools by themselves will not help with this identification. Good facilitation techniques are important for helping young participants to identify child protection issues.

Gender and Age of Facilitator:
Finding the right people to facilitate the consultation sessions with children and youth will be important. Often young people feel more comfortable speaking with someone of closer age and the same gender. You should find facilitators that fit these characteristics.

In addition to these characteristics, there are important competencies that facilitators should have.

- Ability to feel comfortable with children to engage them in varied communication styles
- Ability to use language and concepts appropriate to the child's age and stage of development, culture
- Acceptance that distressed children might not trust an unfamiliar adult
- Ability to appreciate that children may view their situation in differently than adults (fantasize, use symbols, invent)

Additional Useful Tips

◊ Patience: Allow child to set the pace. Give adequate time to the child to express himself/ herself.

◊ Tap into and monitor energy level: Use games and cultural activities when appropriate to break the ice or to refresh children's energy.

◊ Use cultural and age appropriate language

◊ Learn, don't teach: The ASP consultation is meant for collecting information. We are here to learn from children and youth and not to teach them.

◊ Encourage participation: Give every participant a chance to talk.

◊ Listen attentively and demonstrate that you have heard the child

◊ Avoid pressuring the child to talk

◊ Allow for silences

Being prepared with probing questions can also be helpful but care must be taken to allow children to proceed at their level of comfort. If you see a child starting to become anxious as they recall experiences from their past and present, you need to back off and ensure that this topic is not distressing them unnecessarily. Having a series of questions that you can use as a guide may be useful. However, it is very important that you listen carefully to what young participants are saying. Asking appropriate follow-up questions is essential for drawing out important information relevant to child protection.

The following list of questions may be used to help young participants to think about and to discuss protection concerns in their communities. This is not an exhaustive list but should be used as a reference guide for the types of questions you might want to use for any of the Identification Exercises in the ***Child and Youth-Friendly Participatory Action Research Toolkit.***

Probing Questions for Children and Youth

1. Tell me about your community/home/school/etc; what do you like and dislike about it? Why? Are there people in your community/home/school etc. that you like or don't like? Why? What things can you use to help you stop the bad things in your community/home/school?

2. Are there people in your life (friends, family) that can help you make the bad things better? Who? Why can they help you? Do they know they can help you? Have you asked them to help you?

3. Are there places you can go to help you or your friends make things better at home/school/community? If yes, have you ever visited these places? What was your experience like? Was it good, helpful, bad? Why?

4. What do you need to help you make things better?

5. If ever you were in a bad situation, who would help you? Where could you go for help? Do you know how to get help for different bad things?

6. Do you know friends that have experienced bad things in the community/school/family? What happened to them? How did they get better? Who helped them? Do they still need help?

7. Who do you talk to when you are sad, angry, scared? Why? What do you do when you are sad, angry, scared? Why?

8. What things in your family/school/community scare you? Why?

9. Who scares you in your family/school/community? Why?

10. Are there any dangers or bad things in your community that may hurt you physically? Your body?

11. What about dangers or bad things that may hurt you emotionally? Hurt your heart and mind?

12. Please tell me about the problems or bad things which you've identified?

13. Why is this important?

14. What does it mean to you?

15. What are the causes of these problems or bad things? Why do they happen?

16. Are there other possible causes? What are they?

17. Are there people in your community who contribute to causing the problems or bad things?

18. How do they contribute to the problems or bad things?

19. Are there other problems or bad things which happen in the homes?

20. What are some examples of these problems or bad things?

21. What is the cause of these (why do you think these) problems or bad things that happen in the homes?

22. Are there other problems or bad things which occur in the school or on the way to school?

23. What are these problems or bad things?

24. Please provide examples of some of these problems or bad things?

25. Are many children affected by these problems or bad things?

26. Why are some children affected by these problems or bad things?

27. How do these children feel about these problems or bad things?

28. How do they react to these problems or bad things?

29. Why aren't people preventing these problems or bad things from happening?

30. Are there people in your community who can help prevent the problems or bad things and help fix or make things better or good?

31. How can they prevent these problems or bad things or make things better?

32. Are there other things/ places in your community which you feel good about?

33. Why do you feel good about them?

34. How do you use these things/ places?

Session 6

Homework Excercise

Preparation: Prepare for the ASP Consultations using the steps for safe and ethical use of tools described in the above Section 3.

Sampling for the Consultations: identify vulnerable and excludes sub-groups of children and engage sub-groups through the methods described above in Section 5. Ensure that you have consultation sessions with pre-identified sub-groups of excluded and vulnerable children. With particular sub-groups of marginalized children and youth, such as working children, finding the location and time which is convenient and safe for them to participate in is important, but can be a challenge. Nonetheless, their participation is crucial for us to fully understand their perspectives and to develop appropriate responses. Your ability to be flexible is vital. Not all sub-groups of children will be able to participate in the regularly scheduled consultation sessions. Special and perhaps smaller sessions, that may be apart from the larger process, but that are more accessible to marginalized groups of children, should be arranged. Of course their informed consent and all of the other aforementioned protective measures should be prepared for.

Conduct consultation exercises with vulnerable sub-groups using tools from the Child and Youth-Friendly Participatory Action Research Toolkit [LINK]

Use the question guide included in **Section 5** to help facilitate sessions.

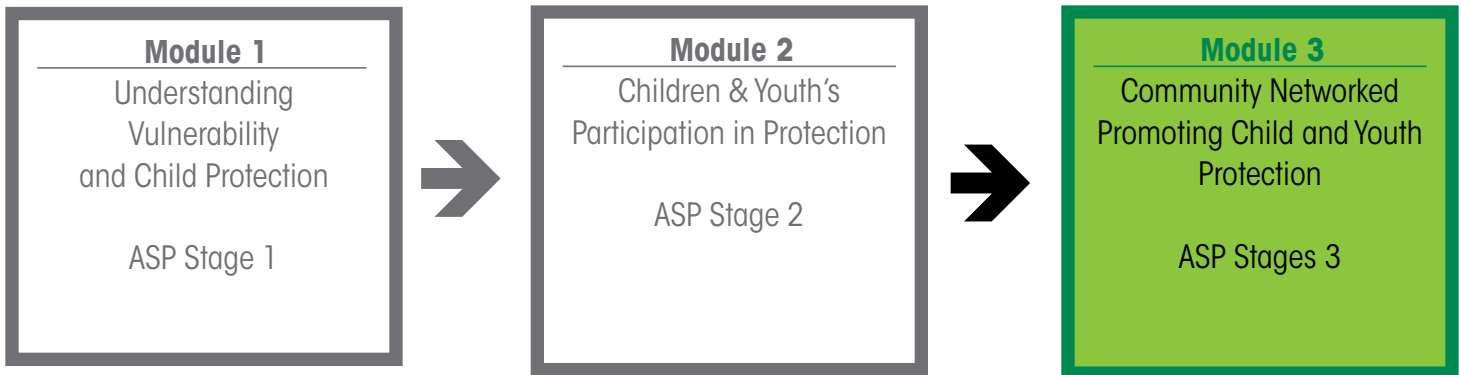**Analysis/ reflection step (reflection questions).**
- Were the types of issues identified by the sub-groups different from adults who were consulted? Other children who were consulted? Were there differences between sub-groups?
- Did participants identify problems related to abuse, exploitation, violence and/or neglect?
- What types of problems related to abuse, exploitation, violence and neglect were identified?
- Is there a possibility that participatory approaches could upset the power balance between young people and adults, leading to backlash against the young people?
- What can you do to reduce risks of this happening?
- What challenges did you face when speaking with the different sub groups of children?
- Did you find you were able to gather information without bias or one group dominating over another?

- How did you mitigate the challenges?

- What issues were most difficult to discuss? Why?

- How difficult was it to carry out PAR activities with the children/youth?

- Which PAR activities worked better than others? Why?

- How difficult was it to carry out PAR activities with the children/youth?

- Which PAR activities worked better than others? Why?

- Were you able to ensure children were protected during the PAR exercises?

- Did you follow the ethical guidelines (confidentiality, informed consent, Do No Harm, etc)? If not, why not?

What you've learned from this homework exercise will be important for the next phase of the ASP planning process. Module three will help you use information collected through the ASP consultations to plan for program responses that will reduce risks of abuse, exploitation, violence and neglect of children.

Module 3

Module 1 Understanding Vulnerability and Child Protection ASP Stage 1	→	Module 2 Children & Youth's Participation in Protection ASP Stage 2	→	Module 3 Community Networked Promoting Child and Youth Protection ASP Stages 3

Module Purpose: The third module will further explore ChildFund's 2nd Core Outcome and apply this approach through the ASP process and implement responsive child protection systemic support of the most vulnerable children.

Outcome: Participants will be able to responsively implement child protection systematic considerations into their ASP.

Review Homework Exercise and key points of Modules 1 and 2.

- Were the types of issues identified by the sub-groups of children and youth different from adults who were consulted? Other children who were consulted? Were there differences between sub-groups?

- Did participants identify problems related to abuse, exploitation, violence and/or neglect?

- What types of problems related to abuse, exploitation, violence and neglect were identified?

ChildFund's Child Protection Practice Standard Three

Communities networked for children and youth's protection — ChildFund promotes locally led partnerships between children, families and local organizations critical for fostering a protective environment for children and youth

Why is this necessary to my job?
Any problem identified in a community must be understood and inclusive of community members to ensure effective implementation and sustainability of programming efforts once a program transitions. Failing to build local ownership of child protection issues and solutions will result in poor programming and little hope of lasting impact of efforts.

Section 1: Homework Work Review and utilizing the Filter Matrix Tool

Guiding Questions:

- How do you use the information collected from the PAR exercises with children in the ASP process?

Key Messages:

By using the DEV framework, alongside the life stages of children and information collected from the PAR, we are better able to classify child protection issues and more responsibly target programs to respond and support the children experiencing the most vulnerability in the community.

We will now take a look at what we have done and learned during our homework assignment from the last module. To help us process this we will refer to page 57 of the ASP Guidance document in section 3.1.2. The filter matrix and descriptions here outline many of the key concepts we have discussed and applied in the previous modules. Some of you may have used this matrix in Stage 3 (Synthesis) in past ASPs. You will use this filter matrix in a more complete process with your ASP team but we would like to briefly practice using this matrix to apply the key terms and concepts covered in Module 1 and 2.

The matrix on page 57 of the ASP Guidance simply presents the DEV Framework alongside of the Life-stages of Children and will be a useful starting point to consider child protection issues related to exclusion and vulnerability. However, while deprivation is important, and is especially related to poverty, it usually gets sufficiently covered and there is often an emphasis on deprivation made by adult ASP participants. On the other hand, exclusion and vulnerability is often under emphasized and/or misinterpreted. Exclusion is related to "discrimination", as discussed in detail in Module One, and is a core principle within the CRC. Many children suffer various forms of abuse and neglect because of discrimination. To fully protect children we have to address discrimination, or exclusion, and vulnerability to prevent and respond to abuse, neglect and violence against children.

Therefore, this exercise will help us to take a closer look at how to use this simple tool and slightly adapt it to help us better understand child protection issues and more responsively address children's experiences of Exclusion and Vulnerability.

Life-stage	Deprivation (Survival and Development)	Exclusion (Non-discrimination)	Vulnerability (Child Protection)
Early Childhood		Data Source 1 (child) Data Source 2 (family) Data Source 3 (community)	Data Source 1 (child) Data Source 2 (family) Data Source 3 (community)
Middle Childhood		Data Source 1 (child) Data Source 2 (family) Data Source 3 (community)	Data Source 1 (child) Data Source 2 (family) Data Source 3 (community)
Adolescence		Data Source 1 (child) Data Source 2 (family) Data Source 3 (community)	Data Source 1 (child) Data Source 2 (family) Data Source 3 (community)

Take time now to review your consultation findings and use post-it notes to capture the following:

1. Use post-it notes to determine the Exclusion and Vulnerability issue with an attributed data source and place it in the Life-Stage box.

2. Group the examples of Exclusion and Vulnerability (Child Protection Issues: abuse, neglect, exploitation, and violence) into causal relationships and general categories and to reduce duplication, but record the numbers of data sources that represent the Child Protection Issue. Consider the list below of common Child Protection Issues as some possible titles.

    a. Abuse

        i. Corporal punishment or other negative child rearing practices

        ii. Rape

        iii. Extreme and/or long-term humiliation

        iv. Children in adult detentions

        v. Certain sub-groups of children at more risk of abuse based on gender, ethnicity, religion, socio-economic status, dis/ability.

b. Neglect

    i. Environmental Hazards: drought, floods, landmines/UXO, damaged buildings, rubble, exposed cables, drainage problems, trash build-up of, broken glass, exposed sewage, dangerous rivers/water sources, traffic hazards

    ii. Separation from families, institutionalization (orphanages, boarding schools, etc.)

    iii. Orphaned and unattended children (long periods without adult supervision)

    iv. Drug abuse and other destructive behaviors

    v. Exclusion from protective services based on gender, ethnicity, religion, socio-economic status, dis/ability.

c. Exploitation

    i. Trafficking

    ii. Sexual Exploitation

    iii. Child Labor

    iv. Abduction

    v. Prostitution or increase in unprotected sex among adolescents

    vi. Early marriages

    vii. Certain sub-groups of children at more risk of exploitation based on gender, ethnicity, religion, socio-economic status, dis/ability.

d. Violence

    i. Sexual Violence (boys or girls)

    ii. Gender based violence (domestic and other non-sexual threats)

    iii. Recruitment into gangs or other violent/armed groups

    iv. Ethnic tensions, other non-war related conflicts (political, tribal etc)

    v. Pervasive crime

    vi. Certain sub-groups of children at more risk of exposure to violence based on gender, ethnicity, religion, socio-economic status, dis/ability.

3. Rank the issues above on the Prevalence within the Life-stage group (HP-high prevalence), (MP-moderate prevalence), and (LP-Low Prevalence)

4. Rank the issues on the immediate or long-term impact a Child Protection Issue poses to children's development. It is important to recognize that understanding the immediate or long-term impact.

5. Now consider the excluded and vulnerable sub-groups that experience these types of Child Protection Issues. There are often different sub-groups of children who encounter similar child protection issues. It may be helpful to consider some of the following groups:

    a. Street Children (Children working and living on the streets or away from family or usual caregivers);

    b. Working Children (Children working on the street but going home at night)

    c. Separated Children

    d. Orphans (in the community or institutions) or other residential care

    e. Formerly Abducted Children: Children Associated with the Fighting Forces (current & former soldiers, laborers, abducted girls, etc.)

    f. Children with disabilities (physical or mental)

    g. Female Headed Households

    h. Elderly-Headed Households

    i. Child headed Households

    j. Children/youth In Conflict with the Law

    k. Minority Children

    l. Children deprived of their liberty

    m. Girl Children

    n. Child Asylum seekers

    o. Displaced Children (IDPs and refugees)

    p. HIV/AIDS affected children or children whose parent(s) are HIV/AIDS affected

    q. Children born out of wedlock

    r. Children from mixed marriages

    s. Other vulnerable groups identified by community and children

Keep in mind, that although the list of examples above shows higher incidences of child protection issues, children that lack protective factors (no matter what their situation) are at the highest risk of abuse. Therefore, it is important to remember that if, for example, former child soldiers are provided with necessary support, have strong social skills, are linked to necessary resources and networks, and have confidence and determination, they are less vulnerable than the child living in a two parent household (who from the outside seems normal) but where the child is exposed to constant arguing and/or has low self-esteem, and lacks the knowledge of how to find support.

Therefore, as you categorize vulnerable groups of children, it is important to also identify the resources,

networks, and support systems that already exist for these children. This will help you to better identify true vulnerability and not just targeted or labeled groups of children.

6. Next, select the top three Exclusion issues and top three Vulnerabilities with corresponding vulnerable sub-groups and list them in each of the Life-stage boxes. These boxes now represent the most vulnerable children in your area that you should consider activities with. You should also list the available resources in your community that can help prevent, mitigate and respond to these vulnerabilities.

Section 2: Child Protection Systems

Guiding Questions:

- What do we mean by child protection systems?
- Who and what is part of the child protection system?
- How can you support or strengthen the child protection system?

Key Messages:

A systems-based approach to child protection entails the coordinated effort of different stake-holders and resources at various levels connected together to reinforce and support efforts to strengthen the protective environment for children.

What is a Child Protection System?

A child protection system is a comprehensive approach to the protection of children that encompasses coordinated components at various levels. These components provide connected support that reinforce and strengthen the effectiveness of each other to ensure there is a protective environment for children. ChildFund supports Child Protection Systems to ensure universal and equitable protection for all children especially the most vulnerable. Systems should encourage ownership and understanding of children's developmental needs and capacities and establish minimal standards of care that are locally defined and evidence-based.

A system-based approach to child protection builds off of the child protection framework, the **Rings of Responsibility** that was covered in Module 1. Strengthening each layer of the Rings of Responsibility helps to build stronger families, communities, and policies and government-run programs for the well-being of children. It also helps to create linkages and coordinated networks between the layers in order to establish a system that can respond to protection issues by tapping into all available resources.

Each layer (or duty-bearer/ring) has various degrees and access to resources (human capacity, physical protection, services, networks, policies/laws, and cultural or traditional resources). To strengthen a child protection system, it is essential to map out these resources in order to identify the gaps, prioritize where capacity strengthening is needed, and initiate awareness-raising/advocacy campaigns where child protection issues can be addressed in a more holistic and coordinated manner.

Strengthening community resources to prevent and respond to child protection issues is an essential first step to-

wards the empowerment of communities to take ownership of child protection issues. Listed below are some examples of resources that NGO practitioners should both assess and engage to build stronger communities and networks to prevent child protection issues:

Human Capacity:
- Social Workers
- Doctors
- Elders
- Religious Leaders
- Youth Groups
- Parent Teacher Associations
- Teachers

Physical Protection:
- Schools
- Protective Space (Child Friendly Space)
- Playground
- Immunizations
- Food/Clothing/Shelter
- Telephone
- Bicycle/vehicle
- Posters / Signs

Services:
- Hospitals
- Police / Fire
- Hotlines
- Specific Program Activities: Books on Wheels, etc.
- Micro-credit/Loan programs
- Vocational training

Networks:
- Child Well-Being Committees (CWBC)

- CP working groups
- Children's Groups
- Local Council/Government

Laws and Policies:

- Indian Constitution
- Convention on the Rights of the Child
- Code of Conduct
- Child Protection Policy

Cultural and Traditional Resources:

- Cleansing Ceremonies
- Dance
- Religious related ceremonies (baptism, prayer, etc)
- Actions to ward off evil spirits

While mapping resources is an essential part of understanding the full scope of the child protection system, there are additional components that make up a strong system. Some key components that comprise a child protection system include:

1. Child Protection laws and policies (traditional and national)
2. Meaningful coordination linked throughout the national government and between various critical holistic child services and at different levels (i.e. village, parish, sub-county, county, district, national)
3. Knowledge and data on child protection issues and good practices
4. Effective regulation, minimum standards, and oversight
5. Preventive and responsive services
6. A skilled child protection workforce
7. Adequate funding
8. Children's voices and participation
9. An aware and supportive public

Some practical considerations in building/strengthening
a National Child Protection System

It is important to recognize that there is no one correct way to
begin the process of strengthening or building a child protec-
tion system. However, there may be a few basic steps.

- Establish a starting point – are your activities better
  suited in supporting the existing
  Government-led top-down process or
  would it be more effective to facilitate a
  multi-sectoral process?

- Consider commissioning a review of the existing child
  protection system vs. the costs of not having an effec-
  tive child protection system

- Identify leaders, experts and political
  champions on child protection to lead or advise the
  process of system reform which include the highest
  levels of the National Government

- Establish a multi-disciplinary working group or task
  force with one organization dedicated to providing
  administrative support

- Identify and make arrangements to ensure there is skillful facilitation of system reform efforts to
  ensure the process moves forward and includes diverse and productive discussions

- Make sure you are inclusive of all key
  stakeholders in order to ensure ownership of the process and resulting efforts. Take special consid-
  eration to ensure that children and youth's voices are heard in accurate, meaningful and appropri-
  ate ways.

- Avoid creating parallel systems! Start from an existing national child protection system and priori-
  ties and link to this when possible.

- Take time to resolve confusion or different interpretations of key terms with key stakeholders in a
  child protection system (i.e. child protection, psychosocial, etc.)

- Anticipate the challenges of bringing together diverse organizations, departments, and individuals
  with different interests, opinions and priorities. Strive to keep meetings brief, targeted, and action-
  able.

- Hold regular meetings but ensure there is a general commitment to this

- Formalize all agreements into written protocols so that everyone is clear on their roles and responsibilities

- Public awareness and visibility is important. Be prepared to be
  opportunistic about media coverage to highlight serious child protection issues and any successes

- Identify one government department or agency that serves as a strategic point of contact for the responsibility of ensuring child protection is prioritized across the government.

Section 3: Community–Based Child Protection

Guiding Questions:

- What is community-based child protection?
- How can community-based child protection groups protect children?
- What factors influence the success of community-based child protection groups?

Key Messages:

- Community-based child protection groups are a vital means of mobilizing communities around children's protection and well-being.
- Community-based child protection groups are most effective when they: owned by the community, build on existing resources, include support from local leaders, engage children to participate, manage issues of power, establish linkages and avoid tapping into resources that are not sustainable or that create parallel systems.

Community members play a vital role in protecting children. When we think back to what was discussed in Module 1 on the "Rings of Responsibility" we looked at the different layers of duty-bearers responsible for children's protection. ChildFund's role is not to directly protect children and replace families or communities. It is our role to help bridge the capacity gaps of these duty-bearers to fulfill their responsibilities towards children's protection and development.

The Second Core Outcome of the ChildFund's Strategy [LINK] is "Families and local organizations networked in their communities promoting the development and protection of children and youth." Our programmatic responses should include facilitating this networking within communities and beyond. Through the ASP process we should be trying to develop an understanding of who are the actors, groups and local organizations in the community that can contribute to a more protective environment for children and youth and how they can do it. The roles of these different community stakeholders should include:

- Surveillance: collecting information about the situation of children in the community
- Prevention: preventing abuse, exploitation, neglect and violence from occurring
- Response: responding to problems of abuse, exploitation, neglect and violence
- Coordination: working together in a coordinated manner to make the best use of time and resources and to ensure that children are receiving adequate help.

There are different groups and actors in the community that are potential resources to promoting children and youth's protection. As discussed in Module 2, these actors include children and youth themselves. However, we must consider and include other actors in the ASP process in order to get sufficient ownership and support for programs that will strengthen communities' capacities to protect children. This strengthening may include identifying and working with existing local organizations or groups that aim to protect children and helping them coordinate and to work together. It also includes mobilizing communities to establish new groups.

Community-based child protection groups are a vital means of mobilizing communities around children's protection and well-being. Through our programs we can strengthen the capacities and support these groups to identify, prevent and respond to significant child protection risks; mobilize communities around child protection issues; and provide a base of local support and action that can be taken to scale through linkages with other community groups and with national child protection systems.

Community-based child protection groups should be grounded within the context of cultural, economical, societal and traditional values within a given population. They draw upon the effective participation of community members in the initial stages of formulation, planning, decision-making, implementing and controlling/managing activities, and they support community-driven choices that respond with the community and not on behalf of the community.

The framework of a community-based child protection group promotes community ownership that is sustained by its local membership and joint commitment that is focused on addressing real needs and interests of the people within the society. Ideally, such groups arise from a community's own desire and initiative although they may also be established through the support and capacity of various humanitarian and government agencies working within communities.

To fully appreciate and respect the dignity of the peoples' priorities, humanitarian agencies, such as Child-Fund, supporting community-based groups are seen as a catalyst for increasing the capacity, opening dialogue and strengthening the groups by working with initiatives to identify and draw upon local resources to create long-term and sustainable change.

Through an Inter-Agency review of the evidence on community-based mechanisms or groups for child protection[12] , seven factors were identified that influence the effectiveness of community-based child protection groups.

> 1) Community Ownership: Communities should feel ownership over the aims and work of the group. Involving community members throughout the process is essential for fostering community ownership.

2) Building on existing resources: often external agencies, including ChildFund, will start new groups without finding out what child protection mechanisms already exist in the community; some programs disrespect and marginalize local culture and don't do enough to build on positive existing practices. Part of our role is to understand what already exists and to involve these mechanisms in the process.

3) Support from leaders: engaging traditional leaders can be a challenge but is necessary, especially when child rights and child protection run counter to traditional practices. Support from community leaders can add legitimacy to the program but needs to carefully consider the overarching power struggles that often exist within communities (i.e. traditional vs. progressive political power).

4) Child participation: in most cases child participation in community based protection groups can improve quality and impact. However, it is very important that their participation is meaningful and not tokenistic.

5) Management of issues of power, diversity and inclusivity: Diversity and inclusivity are important characteristics for groups, as they tend to invest time and effort in ensuring power issues are managed.

6) Resources: to be effective, groups need both human and material resources; however, we need to think carefully about how the resources we provide can strengthen local initiatives and can avoid creating parallel systems or undermining existing systems and community ownership.

7) Linkages: links to both formal (e.g. government coordination procedures with various service providers) and non-formal (e.g. families and neighbors sharing information and support) systems and structures are crucial.

Case-Study.

Tenton town has 200 households and is located about 150 kilometers from the capital city. The main source of livelihoods is agriculture. However, there are some shop keepers in the center of the town. There's one primary school and primary school enrolment is 60%. Most adolescents work with their parents in the field. However, many young people are leaving Tenton to find work in urban areas. There are two churches and the Ministry of Health has three trained Community Health Workers in Tenton. The Ministry of Social Welfare has one social worker that covers Tenton, but she is based at the district capital 30 kilometers away.

Questions:

- What might be some of the child protection risks in Tenton?
- What could you do to help reduce child protection risks in Tenton?
- What steps would you take?
- Who would you involve in the steps and how would you involve them?

Session 4 Partners in a Child Protection System

Guiding Questions:

- What is the role of ChildFund in supporting child protection systems and community-based child protection groups?

- Who are the key partners in the child protection system?

Key Messages:

- No one actor or group can protect children. The framework of child protection, the rings of responsibility, illustrates the importance of a multi-duty bearer system and network that protects children only if it is working together.

- ChildFund's role and responsibility is to support, build the capacity, and advocate for policy changes where there are gaps in the different Rings of Responsibility. The role of ChildFund is not to replace the family, community, institution, or government responsibility in protecting children.

No one actor or group can fully protect children. A protective environment for children and youth requires participation of multiple stakeholders. Community-Based Child Protection mechanisms or groups play a critical role in this system. However, it is important that we recognize government's role in contributing to a protective environment for children.

Think back to Module One's description of the "Rings of Responsibility". Although families are the primary duty bearer or stakeholder for the protection of children, there are some things that families and communities need support with to help realize children's rights. Most states have ratified the CRC and this ratification means that they have agreed to harmonize national laws with the CRC. Often this harmonization is in the form of a child or children's act or law. These acts or laws should then be operationalized or made more specific explaining how they will be implemented through operational plans. These plans should provide specific details on how the government commits to support children, families and communities work on improving protection, through providing services, for example.

It is important to acknowledge that communities may not be able to provide all the required protective support for children and therefore, it is the governments' responsibility to provide this support. ChildFund's work can help the government to fully realize their responsibilities towards children, families and communities through advocacy and to help bridge their capacity gaps to fulfill their responsibilities through targeted training of service providers.

The community is a crucial source of potential support since it includes friends, neighbors, traditional leaders,

elders, teachers, youth groups, religious leaders and others who provide valuable care and protection. In addition, local organizations are key points of intersection between the government and civil society.

To provide adequate protection for children and families, communities need wider support systems organized by the government, which bears a legal responsibility for children's protection and well-being. Government actors and institutions are obligated to provide for security, maintain law and order, and develop child-friendly services, regulations, and policies that promote children's protection and well-being. This includes interconnected protective mechanisms at different social levels. Ideally, a systems approach to promoting the protection and development of children and youth will bring together formal, statutory elements and non-statutory or non-formal elements in a comprehensive, coordinated manner.

Community mechanisms are an essential component of wider systems. Strategically, local organizations such as community-based child protection mechanisms (e.g. Child Wellbeing Committees) and participatory school governance structures are useful in part because they interconnect different levels of national systems, such as the middle and macro-levels of the ecological model that holds government accountable for the use of public resources for necessary child and youth-friendly services. However, this interconnection often needs to be facilitated as government ministries/ departments lack the capacities to monitor communities and to reach them with required services.

Session 4

Homework Excercise

In Stage 3 of the ASP Process you will have the opportunity to have a workshop to synthesize and prioritize the data collected during Stage 2 and to use these data to develop program responses. Participants of the workshop will include community stakeholders that will help with this process. This will be an opportunity to apply what you have learned in all three modules, but particularly the learning from this module.

It will be important to have the right people at this workshop for you to successfully carry out this exercise. The right people should include community stakeholders that can be part of a network of stakeholders protecting children. One organization cannot and should not attempt to protect children with different types of vulnerability. As illustrated by the Rings of Responsibility diagram in Module 1, it takes many different actors in the community to do this. This network is referred to as a community-based system. These are actors within the community working together with different responsibilities towards helping to realize children's protection rights. Many of these actors should be present at the workshop. This may include, but may not be limited to:

- Members of a community-based group working for children's interests
- Teachers
- Health staff/ including community health workers
- Government social workers
- Police
- Community leaders
- Religious leaders
- Youth group representatives
- Members of women's groups
- Members of Parent Teacher Associations

There are four basic steps to the exercise that you will carry out during the workshop as part of 3.3 of the third stage of the ASP, when you begin to develop a program vision and desired outcomes. The work that you do here will inform your ultimate program design.

Four Steps:

Step one:

1 Use the synthesized and prioritized data collected through Stage 2 to identify at least two different child protection issues per life-stage. You might want to refer back to the work carried out in Module 1 on vulnerability and child protection.

Examples of child protection issues:

» Early marriage

» Environmental hazards

» Sexual exploitation in the community

» Domestic violence

On index cards write down 3 to 5 and place these cards on the bottom of a piece of flip chart paper.

Step Two:

2 Then on more index cards, write the titles of each of the stakeholders in the community (this should include many of the people represented at the workshop). Position these index cards above the cards with the vulnerability types. Now ask them how they could collectively help these children. Specifically, ask them:

» How could they find out about the issue in their community?

» How could they coordinate together with their assistance?

» How could they prevent this issue from happening?

» How could they respond to this issue?

» What should children and youth's role be in reducing the risks associated with the issue?

Ask them to draw lines, using different colors, reflecting the different answers (e.g. Information collection, coordination, prevention, response). Make notes on the flip chart on what these lines represent.

Step Three:

3 When participants have completed drawing their lines representing what could be done, ask them now:

» What is happening now?

» What isn't happening now?

» Who should be responsible for doing what (duty-bearers)?

   » What are the capacity-gaps preventing the duty-bearers from information collection, coordination, prevention and responses from happening?

They can draw symbols on the various lines to signify the obstacles/ capacity gaps.

Step Four:

4 In this step you are starting to think about programmatic responses to strengthening a community-based child protection system. Once participants have completed Step Three, ask them:

   » How can these obstacles be removed?

   » How can these capacity gaps be bridged?

Write down all of the capacity gaps in a column on a piece of flip chart paper and in the next column write down participants suggestions for how the gaps will be bridged. These results should be used in ASP Steps 4 and 5 for developing program responses.

Next Steps:

As a result of this exercise you will have a list of possible programmatic responses which can be included with the responses generated in session 3.4.5. This list should be refined through the validation processes of Stage 4. However, it is important that the programmatic responses for promoting child participation and community owned child protection are not lost during the final two stages of the ASP.