



Issue 1

March 2011

Welcome to CRPF newsletter

Dear readers,

This is the very first newsletter of the Child Research and Practice Forum (CRPF). The main objective is to contribute to the aim of the Forum to create a stronger connection between research, policy and practice by informing all Forum members about research disseminated during monthly seminars. It is hoped that future newsletters will also disseminate current global, regional and locally published information about research concerning children. The newsletter will reach you every three months.

In this edition you are invited to read about the CRPF focusing why the need of a Forum, whom it targets, what it does and what it intends to achieve. Summaries of research findings presented at each of the CRPF monthly seminars (September 2010– February 2011) are also part of this newsletter.

If you would like to know more about the Forum, or if you want to contribute to this newsletter please contact Simret Yasabu, Young Lives Communications Officer on +251116297160 or

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Introducing the CRPF

On 28-29 April 2010 Young Lives with funding from OAK foundation organised a consultation meeting in Addis Ababa with a group of researchers, policymakers and practitioners working in the area of orphans and vulnerable children in Ethiopia. During the consultation meeting possible actions for improving the connection between research, policy and practice were discussed and the establishment of a Research to Practice Forum was proposed.

After the consultation meeting informal discussions were held to further develop the idea of the Forum with representatives from the African Child Policy Forum (ACPF), CHAD-ET, Plan Ethiopia, Concern World Wide, Forum on Sustainable Child Development (FSCE), Norwegian Church Aid, Oak Foundation, Save the Children UK, Consortium of Christian Development Associations (CCRDA), Young Lives

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and UNICEF.

These meetings led to the creation of a Child Research and Practice Forum (CRPF) and the organisation of seminars to present new research related to children focusing on why there is a need for a forum and discussed with a wide audience of practitioners, policymakers and researchers.

Who is the Forum for?

The Child Research & Practice Forum would target policymakers, researchers (both academic and non-academic), journalists and staff from local and international NGOs, donors and international organisations working on children's issues in Ethiopia. It would focus on the link between research, policy and practice in the area of children in Ethiopia, including topics like child poverty, child protection, orphans and other vulnerable children, education, health, nutrition, livelihoods and social protection.

What does the Forum do?

The Child Research & Practice Forum would aim to create a stronger connection between research, policy and practice. Specific objectives of the Forum would include:

- Communicate new research from Ethiopia, the region and globally and other new documents related to children to a wide audience
- Promote the usage of online and physical resource centres
- Facilitate dialogue and consultation between researchers, policymakers and practitioners
- Provide practitioners with the skills to use research to strengthen their programmes for children

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Introducing CRPF...

- Make research more relevant to the questions practitioners and policy-makers raise

Activities

- **A newsletter:** issued every two months to communicate and highlight new documents related to children published in Ethiopia and internationally. The newsletter will initially report on the presentations at the monthly seminars and then include further information about ongoing research
- **Monthly seminars:** to present and discuss new research documents
- **Annual seminar with researchers, policymakers and practitioners:** where a topical theme and related research will be discussed.
- **Workshops for practitioners:** practical workshops for practitioners on how to strengthen projects at proposal, implementation and evaluation stages by incorporating research into the project cycle.



Research Summaries of the CRPF Monthly Seminars

This section covers the summaries of all the presentations made at the monthly seminars which are held on every last Friday of the month. If you would like to get further information on the research please fill free to get back to us and will facilitate to get the authors.

Summary: Children and Women Protection

By : Yonas Biremata and Professor Tilahun Teshome

Date presented: 24 September 2010

Children and women are more vulnerable to violence and abuse and are entitled to additional protection. Ministry of Finance and Economic Development with the support of several other ministries and the United Nations compiling a situation analysis on boys and girls; the Ministry overall analysis contains thirteen chapters one of which focuses on special protection measures for boys and girls.

The chapter reviews the international laws, the constitution and national laws that pertain to children who are victims of violence and abuse, orphans, children victims of trafficking, children with disabilities, children in conflict

and contact with the law, child labour, children on and of the street, child commercial sex workers and victims of harmful traditional practices in particular female genital mutilation/cutting and early marriage. The chapter assesses information available on what is known about the prevalence and causes of the issues and in some cases touches upon trends and regional disparities. The chapter looks at who is accountable in society for acting on the issues, the resources available to them and the capacity gaps that deter from them being able to act upon their responsibilities. The chapter ends with action points to help the state chart a way forward to the point where those accountable persons or institutions will have stronger capacities to implement the responsibilities. The action points are collected in the following categories: Legislative Framework and Enforcement Mechanisms; Policy Development; Service Delivery; Social Welfare System Strengthening; Communication for Social Change; Data Management and Evidence-Based Advocacy; Participation. One of the key conclusions is that budget allocations to those elements of the state accountable for realizing children's rights to special protection measures are underfunded leading to a need to review budget choices being made in this key area of children's rights.

Summary : Study on Early Childhood Education and Cognitive Development :Evidence from Urban Ethiopia

By: Tassew Woldehanna, Principal Investigator, Young Lives Study, Ethiopia, Ethiopian Development Research Institute

Date presented: 29 October 2010

Background and objective: Using data obtained from the Young Lives Longitudinal survey in Ethiopia, the effects of early childhood education attendance on cognitive development of preschool age children was examined in urban areas.

Data sources

- Young Lives younger cohort data – observed at age 1 and 5
- the cognitive development of children at the age of five, Peabody picture and vocabulary test (PPVT) and Cognitive Development Assessment – Quantity Test (CDA-QA)

Main Results

The results persistently show that early childhood education attendance is associated with children's cognitive development.

Policy implications

Despite the fact that preschool education has incalculable importance for children's cognitive development, public investment in this critical stage of education is currently almost non existence in the country. The majority of activities in this stage of education are rather left for private sector. As the result, the subsector is dominated by fee charging kindergartens in which children from low socioeconomic background have very little opportunity to attend this first and critical stage of education.

Therefore, given this low participation rate, and the fact that early childhood education is a foundation of later achievements in school, government has to do more in this first and essential stage of education.

Summary : An Assessment of Child Sex Tourism (CST) in Some Selected Tourist Attraction Sites in Ethiopia

By: **Desta Ayode** and **Dr. Getnet Tadele**, *ECPAT/FSCE*

Date presented: 26 November 2010

Background: In Ethiopia, little has been known so far about the magnitude and trend of the problem of CST. Cognizant of the dearth of data, ECPAT/FSCE in collaboration with the Ministry of Culture and Tourism carried out this research in six selected tourist attraction sites in the country.

Data sources : Girls/children engaged in commercial sex were the primary source of information. In-depth interviews (with key informants and victims) and focus group discussions (with children and the community in every study site) were employed to substantiate the findings from the quantitative data. A total of 359 informants (children and adults) took part in the study. In addition the existing policy and legal frameworks related to child sex tourism in Ethiopia were also reviewed.

Main Results

- CST is currently on the rise in all the tourist destinations included in the study and is rampant in some of the sites.
- Findings from FGDs in Harar, Gondar, Axum and Bishoftu and interviews with legal bodies in all the study sites show that incidents are underreported or not reported at all.
- Irrespective of various categories, young girls in general are said to be at risk of exposure to CST.
- Illegal tour guides, traffickers, brokers, taxi drivers, some hotel receptionists and hotel owners are major actors in facilitating the involvement of children in child sex tourism.

- Existing policy and legal frameworks revealed that there are clear provisions regarding sexual abuse and exploitation against children in the legislative framework. There are, however, drawbacks when it comes to the implementation and enforcement of these existing legal provisions.

Major Recommendations

Multi-sectoral interventions need to be fostered in order to design joint preventive, protective and rehabilitative programs. It is vital to strengthen the public information campaign on CST and sensitize the public on various preventive and protective measures.

Summary: Men's attitudes and behavior related to child sexual abuses and protection in Addis Ababa and Godino

By : Etsub Brhanesilassie and Awraris Alemayehu with support from OAK foundation and UNICEF

Date presented: 14 January 2011

Background: This survey was conducted to explore men's attitudes related to child sexual abuse and exploitation, and determine factors associated with men's involvement in child protection efforts in Addis Ababa and Godino near Debre Zeit in Oromia region .

Data sources: The cross-sectional survey involved 400 fathers from whom data was collected in May 2010. Attitude scores of men were calculated for the following question categories: child marriage; risky own sexual behaviors; and excuses to sexual abuses. Then men's scores were dichotomized in relation to mean values. Regression analysis was used to assess possible associations between socio-demographic characteristics or attitude scores with men's participation in child protection efforts.

Main Results

Results showed that forty-one percent of men scored below average for questions on own risky sexual behaviors. Sixty-five percent scored below mean for questions relating to traditional excuses to child sexual abuse. Adjusted logistic analysis has shown that men's sexuality attitudes are significant predictors of men's involvement in child protection initiatives. Most men hold harmful attitudes that appear to have a bearing on occurrence of sexual abuses and exploitations, and these attitudes are grounded on traditional gender and sexuality norms. There appears to be strong association between having positive attitudes and men's involvement in child protection programs.

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Summary: Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) Summary from Follow Up Survey of Harmful Traditional Practices in Ethiopia

By: Yayehyirad Kitaw, EGLDAM study with Financial Support from the Royal Norwegian Embassy in Ethiopia

Date presented: 28 January 2011

Background: In 1997, the National Committee on Traditional Practices – Ethiopia (NCTPE) (now EGLDAM) conducted a nationwide Baseline Survey (BLS) on Harmful Traditional Practices (HTP) in Ethiopia (NCTPE 1998). As the BLS was 10 years old, the need to update the information base for further action was critically felt by all partners. The main objective of the follow up survey was "to examine/measure changes observed on prevalence, knowledge, attitude, intention and behavior... towards HTPs at national level and to recommend appropriate strategies in future directions".

Data sources: The survey used both quantitative cross-sectional survey to gather data on HTP from the general population and qualitative methods – key informant interviews and focus group discussions (FGD) - for in-depth probing of certain aspects of HTP among 81 ethnic groups.

Results

- Over 70% of household respondents indicated having received information on FGM, Uvula cutting, Early Marriage and Marriage by Abduction.
- Most of the respondents received information on HTP from health facilities and meetings.
- Over all, there is an important (24%) decrease in the prevalence of FGM between BLS and follow up survey but the challenges ahead should not be underestimated

Summary: Child Vulnerability and Support Structures: A Qualitative Case-Study from Three Communities in Ethiopia (OAK-Funded)

By: Yisak Tafere and Nardos Chuta, Young Lives

Date presented: 25 February 2011

Background : This Young Lives sub-study, funded by the Oak Foundation, is focusing on questions of child risk, vulnerability and resilience.

On 28-29 April 2010 Young Lives organised a consultation meeting in Addis Ababa with researchers, policymakers and practitioners working on the subject of Orphans and Vulnerable Children in Ethiopia. The group agreed on guiding research questions for a qualitative research study to be carried out by

Young Lives to identify the sources of risk and vulnerability for children and young people, as well as strengths and gaps in their networks of support.

Source of data and methods: data were collected through a variety of methods including group Interviews, individual interviews, observations, timeline and generated in the form of audio and pictures as well as written reports

Main findings:

- 1. Conceptualizing Child Vulnerability:** multidimensional varying over the life course of the child.
- 2. Risks and vulnerability outcomes to all children included:** street life, migration (rural to urban & to Arab countries), school dropout, daily labour (workload/injuries), illness (also HIV/AIDS), addictions (shisha, chat, drinking, smoking, etc), limited paternal care (urban), growing up poor. Whereas Risks and vulnerability outcomes to Girls include FGM and abduction (rural), Rape/sexual abuse (more urban), Early sex (more urban), Sex related illness (HIV/AIDS), Early marriage/ pregnancy/ early child birth, Very Limited legal marriage, Engagement in prostitution. Support structures: limited resources and poor coordination focusing mainly on short-term and specific life of a child .
- 3. Achievements and challenges of the existing support structures:**
 - Families and relatives remain the main source of support for vulnerable children
 - Support from NGOs and others are still very essential for those who do not get enough support from families/relatives
 - Legal Protection of child abuse seems on the rise
 - The ambivalence of family support – ‘abuses are rarely reported’
 - NGOs and others support providers seem more focused on short and very limited targeting – not addressing complex nature of vulnerability – focus on child, rarely on household and little on wider community
 - Resources seem so limited
 - There is a very limited coordination among support providers to address the problem

Upcoming CRPF monthly seminars

- 29 April 2011: ‘Study of Therapeutic Feeding in SNPPR’, UNICEF
- 27 May 2011: Action Research on Child protection , Forum on Sustainable Child Empowerment

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(Note: photos are not of Young Lives participants)