

*MAPPING OF STAKEHOLDERS WORKING ON VIOLENCE
AFFECTING CHILDREN AND YOUTH (VACAY)*

PERSPECTIVES FROM ORGANISATIONS

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Executive Summary

Introduction

Fourteen organisations representing relevant ministries, international and regional NGOs were interviewed with the objectives of understanding stakeholders' research interests in relation to VACAY and identifying key evidence gaps and opportunities for policy influence. The mapping further aimed at identifying key entry points where Young Lives findings can be effectively disseminated to policy audiences, and providing a mapping of key government, NGO and academic stakeholders working in the field.

Organisations and their engagements

Among the 14 organizations included in the mapping, four were ministries. The ministries, in most cases, work on policies, strategies and coordination of programs with the exception of Ministry of Health (MoH), which has not been working on VACAY as one of its areas of focus.

MoWCA is primarily engaged in policy, strategy and plan development. Accordingly, the Ministry has developed a draft National Child Policy. It is also engaged in awareness creation on violence against children and women using community mobilization, media, community radio, and the Women Development Army.

Federal Attorney General takes the role of coordination in addressing VACAY. It is engaged in identifying VACAY, looking into the effects of various forms of violence, the responses given by concerned bodies, identifying knowledge, awareness and structural gaps, and providing technical support. It also develops guidelines to implement programmes addressing VACAY.

The School Improvement Programme (SIP) at the Ministry of Education is organized as a directorate. SIP works to support studies in area of VACAY, disseminates research on violence, prepares fliers and posters to create awareness. It mobilizes resources, builds the capacity of Bureaus of Education and schools, monitors their activities, and provides technical support in their efforts to address VACAY. SIP addresses all forms of violence since they are hindrances for education of children, but especially corporal punishment and child marriage. The activities mainly involve giving orientation to students at the beginning of a school year, which is known as '*Yetimhrit Samint*'.

NGOs implement programmes in collaboration with partners including the government and other NGOs and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs). In addition to providing various type of preventive and responsive services to victims of violence and relevant community members, most NGOs work on system strengthening, strengthening structures, human resources, and work on attitude and norms of communities. There are also a number of them who are engaged in research as well as advocacy. They undertake a baseline and end line assessments. Data collection and analysis for monitoring purposes and midterm reviews are also part of their activities. In addition to these, organisations use various sources of secondary data such as surveys by the Central Statistical Agency (CAS), publications by UNICEF, Save the

Children, African Child Policy Forum (ACPF), Young Lives and others. The NGOs covered in the interviews target children below 18 years old with the exception of UNICEF that includes adolescents of 19 years old, Child Fund which covers youth up to the age of 24, and Goal Ethiopia that includes girls up to the age of 24 if they happen to have children under the age five.

ACPF works on violence against all forms of violence through various policy and strategy level interventions. ACPF is engaged in research and publishes a number of reports, specifically on violence against children independently and in collaboration with other organizations. Among its activities are conducting research, documenting evidences, providing policy and monitoring frameworks. It pushes to increase government accountability through generating evidence and disseminating reports.

UNICEF in response to VACAY supports the efforts to rehabilitate survivors through the provision of training, and in collaboration with the Federal Attorney General creates child friendly spaces to which victims can go to. The one-stop centre found in the Ghandi Memorial Hospital and the special investigation and prosecution Unit under the Federal Attorney General are two of such examples. It also has an adolescence programme that works in prevention as part of a project implemented by HIV Prevention and Control Office (HAPCO) focusing on the prevention of HIV/AIDS. It works on strengthening coordination among sectors.

Population Council focuses on research and advocacy. The major focus of Population Council is evidence based demonstration of models that work to be taken up by the government and other service giving organizations for scaling up. It implements two projects that address violence among other issues: Berhane Hewan in Amhara and Biruh Tesfa in Addis Ababa.

World Vision supports programmes that are holistic, the ultimate goal being strengthening Community Based Child Protection. A model that the WV is using is Channels of Hope (CoH) that brings available structures, organisational capacity, volunteers, local churches and faith based communities together to address the HIV pandemics. WV's programmes on VACAY include child marriage, child trafficking, child labour, and physical and verbal violence.

Plan International is involved in research, dissemination and initiating policy dialogue. It also works on structure and system strengthening through building the capacity of various stakeholders including government institutions, partner CBOs, community members and students. Plan international makes efforts to influence policy through its project with the Association of European Parliamentarians with Africa (AWEPA) that provides capacity building support to women parliamentarians.

Family Health International (FHI) works on system strengthening. The main strategy in a project implemented by FHI known as Yekokeb Berhan launched to reach highly vulnerable

children, is strengthening the capacity of government and community systems and structures to deliver essential services and increase resiliency. Yekokeb Berhan is operational in Amhara, Tigray, SNNPR, Oromiya and Addis Ababa. FHI supports and works with Community Care Coalition (CCC) composed of implementing partner staff and relevant government bodies to identify vulnerable children and bring together support services for preventing and responding to violence and other harms.

One of Save the Children's commitments is the protection of children against violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation. It implements a multi-sectoral approach working with relevant ministries and organisations. Under child protection, HTPs, child marriage, FGM and humiliating physical punishment are addressed. It conducts studies on child protection issues such as kinship care and children on the move in which some parts address abuse and violence against children.

Child Fund works on four groups of children: 0-5 and 6-14 years of children, and 15-29 years of young adults. The intervention for 0-6 group is on health and security. For those between 6 and 14, intervention focuses on the area of education. Violence is given a serious attention for the group between the age of 15 and 19. Its prevention activities are giving awareness on the ethics of child protection and response activities involve organizing child friendly courts and supporting victims of violence in their endeavour to get justice. In its work with partners, ChildFund facilitates a multi-sectoral approach, organises capacity building programmes and provides technical support.

Goal Ethiopia is working on street children and youth, the poorest of the poor who are vulnerable to violence. It attempts to bring street children and youth to the organization's Drop in and Rehabilitation Centre (DRC). Its programmes include rehabilitation including supporting children and youth to start income generating activities, and for young children family reintegration. It strengthens system and capacity by giving training on CRC to relevant employees of government organisations and NGOs.

Girl Effect's major activities are drama, music and talk shows that challenge people's perception of girls and women, and their role in the society as well as girls' and women's perception of themselves and their place. The vision is to make the radio programme 'Yegna', in Amharic 'Ours' a brand that everybody likes and associates with so that the messages are easily taken up. Girl Effect undertakes small area specific qualitative studies to design its programmes.

Legal and Policy Frameworks, Strategies and Guidelines

All organisations use international, regional and national legal instruments to frame their research and their interventions. In relation to international instrument the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) was mentioned by all interviewed organizations. The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child is also referred by most.

The Ministries use various national instruments depending on the sector in which they work. For example, SIP in the MoE uses the Ethiopian Education and Training Policy and school improvement frameworks developed by the directorate. The MoWCA uses the Constitution and the Revised Family Code. Others mentioned by the Federal Attorney General include the Revised Criminal Code, Criminal Justice Administration law, Inheritance law, General Prosecution Guideline, Special Prosecution and Investigation Guideline, Disability Mainstreaming Guideline and Psychosocial Support Guideline.

In addition to using relevant national laws and policies, there are some international organisations that have their own global child protection policy. These included Save the Children, ChildFund, Plan International and Goal Ethiopia.

With regard to availability of sufficient laws, policies, and strategies to address VACAY, three ideas emerged. Some said that implementing what is already in place will bring about significant changes. Others indicated that the Criminal Code does not address all forms of violence, for example harassment and stalking. There is also the contention that VACAY is covered in the Revised Criminal Code and other laws and that the challenge lays in the interpretation of these provisions in due process of the law. A gap highlighted was the unavailability of child policy, which could have clearly laid structures, prepared implementation guidelines, and outlined responsibilities of different stakeholders.

Challenges and Opportunities of Implementing Legal Provisions/Programmes

Resistance to change on the part of communities due to violence being a culturally embedded phenomenon was mentioned as a challenge, resulting into the lack of awareness and knowledge about VACAY. Unavailability of well developed structures in some project areas as well as staff turnover due to overburden and unavailability of attractive incentive systems were also drawbacks highlighted.

The lack of elaboration of VACAY issues in major development plans such as Growth and Transformation Plan 2 (GTP2) is considered as a barrier. Lack of implementation guidelines for relevant policies and other legal instruments is also cited as a challenge and limitations placed on the work of NGOs due to the Charities and Societies Proclamation is highlighted as another drawback. Lack of proper planning and evaluation, lack of coordination mechanisms among the different implementing partners, lack of recognition and commitment to VACAY programmes and the consequent lack of accountability among some government partners are also mentioned as challenges. Shortage of recent data on incidences, disaggregated by sex and age, reported and resolved cases, court decisions, and relevant studies were the other challenges highlighted by interviewees. The capacity factors paused as shortcomings include lack of funding and qualified and experienced staff among implementing partners, especially at Woreda level.

Among the opportunities mentioned is the high level of commitment shown by the government, for example, by the commitment to end child marriage by 2025. Along with this, availability of structures through which one can address VACAY is mentioned, for

example CSOs and Women Development Army. Another opportunity mentioned by many is the multi-sectoral approach and increased concerted efforts among government, CSOs and communities.

Causes of VACAY

The Causes of corporal punishment that were described include the power adults have over children, being unaware of the impacts of corporal punishment, misconception about proper child rearing practices, lack of parenting skills manifested in either very strict or controlling or very loose parenting, and lack of an alternative child disciplining methods.

Other factors for violence were low or absence of family income, drought and related insecurities, lack of access to services such as education and opportunities including employment opportunities leading to migration and living in poor and unsafe living and working environment. As indicated by an interviewee, in tough street life, frustrations due to various stresses and substance abuse could lead to violence against children.

Research Outcome Dissemination Forums and Policy Dialogue

A number of forums and groups where research outcome on VACAY can be disseminated and policy dialogue can be initiated were outlined. These include:

- The National Alliance to End Child Marriage in Ethiopia by 2025 lead by the MoWCA;
- Forums organized by the Integrated and Multi-Sectoral Response to Violence against Women and Children and Child Justice in Ethiopia.
- The Women, Children and Youth Affairs Structure Forum at the Federal Attorney General;
- The National Coordinating Body on Violence against Women and Children coordinated by Federal Attorney General;
- Child Protection – Civil Society Organisation (CP-CSO) advisory group meetings;
- Donors groups meetings coordinated by the UNDP;
- Child Policy Practice Forum that is held monthly;
- Events organized around some violence issues such as child marriage and FGM, and celebrations such as ‘Day of African Child’;
- The child protection working group coordinated by UNICEF;
- Child Protection – Gender Based Violence coordination group coordinated by the UNHCR; and
- Inter-ministerial committee under the Federal Attorney General; and
- Umbrella organizations such as Consortium of Christian Relief and Development Associations (CCRDA) and Network of Ethiopian Women Association (NEWA).

Research Priorities

A number of research gaps have been indicated, the most recurring being a lack of national study showing the prevalence of different forms of violence occurring in the country. In addition, the following has been mentioned:

- Context specific studies covering wider geographical areas and what works best in different contexts;
- Studies on prevention and best response mechanisms;
- Violence on marginalised groups such as orphans, children on the move and children with disabilities;
- Community response to violence and availability of services;
- Causes of violence in different areas such as schools, homes and others;
- Effectiveness of interventions or response mechanisms to minimize or eliminate violence in schools;
- The contribution of different structures, such as Parent Teacher Committees (PTAs) and Women Development Army in addressing violence;
- Factors behind the lack of implementation of different provisions on VACAY;
- Everyday harassment of adolescent girls;
- Domestic violence; and
- Various forms of violence and their causes.

Key Entry Points

All the interviewed organizations are willing to participate or support the planned Young Lives study on VACAY. However, among the ministries some have laid out conditions. They underlined that they need to be involved right from the initiation of the research, and participation need to be genuine and professional.

Though all the organisations covered in the interview are willing to participate, among the 14 organisations seven (MoWCA, Federal Attorney General, SIP at the MoE, ACPF, UNICEF, Save the Children and Girl Effect) are chosen to be key linkages.