



SYNTHESIS REPORT

Using Child Protection Assessment, Design, Analysis and Planning Tool (CP-ADAPT)

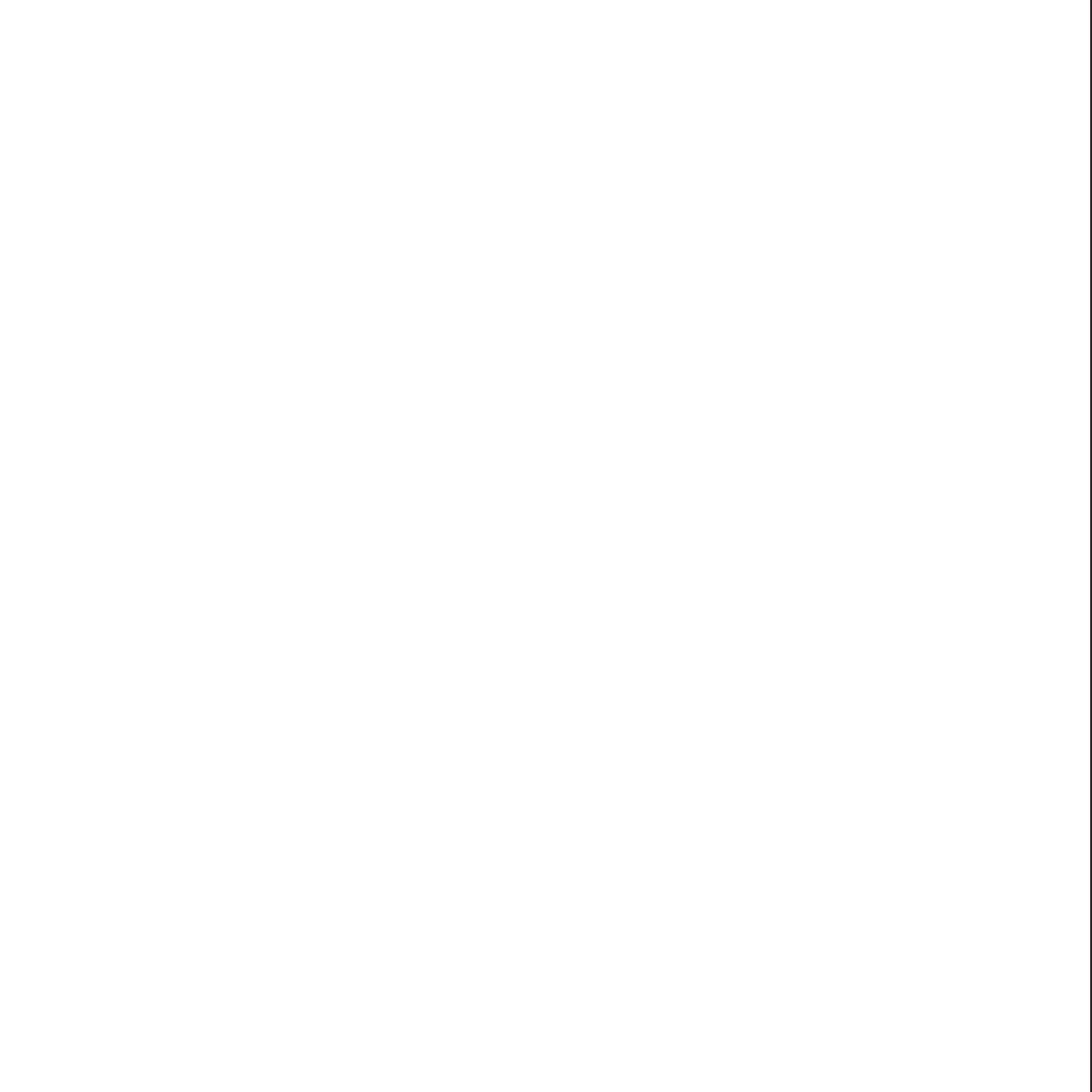


SYNTHESIS REPORT

of the assessment conducted at 18 Area Programs in Amhara, Oromia, SNNPR,
Benishangul Gumuze and Addis Ababa

CHILD PROTECTION ASSESSMENT, DESIGN, ANALYSIS AND PLANING TOOL
(CP-ADAPT)

WORLD VISION ETHIOPIA



ACRONYMS

ACPF	African Child Policy Forum
ACWRC	African Charter on the Welfare and Rights of Children
AGDM	Age Gender and Diversity Mainstreaming
AIDS	Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome
ANNPCAN	African Network for the Prevention and Protection Against Child Abuse
AP	Area Programs
BCC	Behaviour Change Communication
CBOs	Community Based Organizations
CCC	Community Coalition Care Committee
CCRDA	Consortium of Christian Relief and Development Association
CP-ADAPT	Child Protection Analysis Design and Planning Tool
CPCs	Child Protection Committee
CRC	Conventions on the Rights of the Child
CRDP	Committee on the Rights of Person with Disability
CSA	Central Statistics Agency
CSO	Civil Society organizations
E-Child	Educate a Child
EDHS	Ethiopian Demographic and Health Survey
EHRC	Ethiopian Human Rights Commission
EOI	Institution of the Ombudsman
FBOs	Faith Based Organizations
FDRE	Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
FGD	Focus Group Discussion

FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HTP	Harmful Traditional Practice
IEC	Information Education Communication
IHRL	International Human Rights Law
IMS	Information Management Systems
KII	Key Informant Interview
MOWYCA	Ministry of Women Youth and Children
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
NHRI	National Human Rights Institutions
NO	National Office
SNNPRS	Southern Nations Nationalities and People Regional States
UN	United Nations
UDHR	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
UNAIDS	United Nations Program on AIDS
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund.
VAC	Violence Against Children
VERA	Vital Registration Agency
WHO	World Health Organization
WVE	World Vision Ethiopia

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACRONYMS	1
ABSTRACT	1
I. BACKGROUND STATEMENT	3
1.1. CHILD PROTECTION IN CONTEXT	3
1.2. OBJECTIVE, PURPOSE AND EXPECTED RESULTS	5
1.3. ASSIGNMENT RATIONAL, PRINCIPLES AND METHODS	6
1.4. STATEMENT OF ETHICS	6
I. ETHICS IN RESEARCH	6
II. ETHICS IN ACTION	7
1.5. LIMITATION OF REPORT COMPILATION	7
2. METHODOLOGY	8
2.1. DESCRIPTION OF THE STUDY AREA	8
2.1.1 GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION	8
2.2. SAMPLING METHOD	8
2.3. METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION	9
2.4. METHODS FOR SYNTHESIZING AP REPORTS	10
2.4.1 QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS	10
2.4.2 QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS	11
I. FREQUENCY	11
II. RANKING	11
2.4.3 ANALYSIS	12
3. FINDINGS & DISCUSSIONS	13
3.1. VULNERABLE CHILDREN IN ETHIOPIA	13
3.1.1. NATIONAL LEVEL CHILD PROTECTION SYSTEM LANDSCAPE	14
I. LEGAL AND INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORKS FOR CHILD RIGHTS PROTECTION IN ETHIOPIA)	14

II. STRUCTURE OF CHILD PROTECTION SERVICES -----	20
3.1.2. COMMUNITY LEVEL CHILD PROTECTION ISSUES -----	25
3.2. CAUSAL ANALYSIS OF THE CHILD PROTECTION ISSUES -----	25
I. CHILD LABOR -----	25
II. CHILD TRAFFICKING -----	27
III. EARLY MARRIAGE -----	27
3.3. CHILD PROTECTION SYSTEM -----	28
I. LAWS, POLICIES, STANDARDS AND REGULATIONS -----	28
II. SERVICES AND SERVICE DELIVERY MECHANISMS -----	30
III. REPORTING AND SERVICE PROVISION -----	32
IV. CAPACITIES -----	33
V. COOPERATION, COORDINATION AND COLLABORATION MECHANISMS -----	34
VI. ACCOUNTABILITY MECHANISMS -----	34
VII. CIRCLE OF CARE -----	35
VIII. CHILDREN'S RESILIENCE, LIFE SKILLS AND PARTICIPATION -----	37
4. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS -----	38
4.1. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS -----	38
4.2. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS -----	39
I. LAWS, POLICIES, STANDARDS AND REGULATIONS -----	39
II. SERVICES AND SERVICE DELIVERY MECHANISMS -----	39
III. CAPACITY -----	40
IV. COOPERATION, COORDINATION AND COLLABORATION -----	41
V. ACCOUNTABILITY -----	41
VI. CIRCLE OF CARE -----	41
REFERENCES -----	43

ABSTRACT

Ethiopia's children make up 55% of the population, whilst young people (ages 15-29) are about 30% of Ethiopia's population of 82 million. About 84% (CSA, 2007) of the country's children are engaged in activities that may be regarded as child labour. Behind every statistic is a human being who deserves a better life (UNICEF, 2016). In line with its vision "... for every child life in its fullness; ...for every heart the will to make it so" World Vision is investing on child protection and holistic child development interventions in Ethiopia. With the intention of realizing its vision, the Organization has formulated a strategic plan which covers five years from 2016-2020. One of the strategic objectives is geared towards enhancing the protection, participation and holistic development of vulnerable boys and girls in the operational areas and beyond. To this effect, World Vision Ethiopia has developed a Technical Program named "Ethiopia Children's Holistic and Inclusive Life Development- E-Child" which is aimed at, among other things, empowering local communities, stakeholders and children themselves in order to strengthen child protection systems that prevent and respond to violence against boys and girls.

Before the launch of E-Child Program with its full scale, World Vision Ethiopia has conducted intensive assessment on the situation of violence against boys and girls at the grass roots level in selected operational areas that will eventually serve as benchmark for measuring the impacts of subsequent interventions. The assessment was conducted utilizing the techniques mentioned in the Child Protection - Analysis Design and Planning Tool (CP-ADAPT) manual for community level assessment following all the five steps including; 1) listening to children - setting the agenda, 2) listening to adults, 3) learning from key stakeholders, 4) analyzing and reflecting, 5) debriefing with the community. This study was conducted in the selected four Regional States and one City Administration of the country in some operational areas of World Vision Ethiopia.

The findings of the assessment revealed that; 1) child labor, 2) child marriage, 3) child trafficking, 4) sexual abuse including rape, 5) food shortage, and 6) female genital mutilation to be the most prioritized child protection issues and concerns. From the list of concerns, the national level rating depicts that top priority was given to child labor followed by child marriage, sexual abuse and child trafficking. Child marriage was identified as prior concern in Amhara and Oromia. On the other hand, Child labor is prioritized concern in Benishangul Gumuz and Addis Ababa where as being on the street and child trafficking are mentioned as the major concern in SNNPR.

The root causes leading into these concerns, as rated by the children respondents, are poverty, shortage of support with household chores with in the family, low level of awareness about child protection and related laws, poor parenting skills, family breakdown, and peer influence. It was also identified that the overall level of public awareness specific to laws and policies promoting child protection, child protection standards and procedures is minimal. Though there are different child protection service delivery mechanisms within the community, the quality of the services are significantly deterred by low level of institutional capacity. It was clearly identified that child protection systems are not strong enough to guarantee effective child protection services.

To improve the overall effectiveness of the child protection system and tackle the identified child protection issues it is recommended to design interventions aimed at strengthening the system. These include capacity development supports at children, family, community and institutional level. In addition, promoting positive attitudes towards children through awareness creation interventions, equipping the children with life skills to engage and influence the system, and assuring accountability of service providers and other key actors in the system are mandatory.

I. BACKGROUND STATEMENT

Every society has to think deliberately about how it will protect its children. Normative standards (laws, culture, religion) may shape how members of a community choose to protect children. The essential question being “how will children be protected from violence, abuse, exploitation, and neglect, as well as manmade and natural emergencies?” When it comes to protecting children, the family (including kin) plays a central role, particularly during the child’s earliest days. Children are also part of a broader community where their relationships, engagement, and roles deepen over time and take on increased significance, which makes child protection both a private and a public responsibility.

Historically child protection, within the international development cooperation, has focused on particular issues or specific groups of vulnerable children. This trend is changing as to what is referred as ‘a systems approach’ in order to establish and otherwise strengthen comprehensive child protection efforts. As guided by the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the systems approach differs from earlier child protection efforts, which have traditionally focused on single issues such as child trafficking, street children, child labor, emergencies, institutionalization, or HIV/AIDS. Although such efforts have produced substantial benefits, this diffused approach often results in a fragmented child protection response, marked by numerous inefficiencies and pockets of unmet needs. Many children have multiple child protection problems and, while fragmented child protection responses may deal with one of these problems, they rarely provide a comprehensive solution. At the same time opportunities are lost to provide more ‘joined up’ and effective support. Focusing on issues alone can result in ineffective programming, which is neither sustainable nor truly able to reach all children who are in need of protection.

Differences in child protection responsibilities and strategies are tied to geography, political and social history, religion, wealth, social structure, and a more general sense of purpose that blends cultural beliefs about how to protect children with everyday realities. Although there is no one best way to protect children, serious choices are involved and every society stands to do better when the choices it makes are grounded on tangible information that meets the rights of children.

Over recent years there has been a growing recognition of the limitations of a fragmented approach to child protection, which traditionally focused on specific child protection issues. The report from the UN Secretary Study on Violence Against Children recommended that ‘all States develop a multi-faceted and systematic framework in response to violence against children. Its clearly known that World Vision is committed to protecting children from abuse, neglect, exploitation and other forms of violence, and has chosen to utilize a systems approach to strengthen the protective environment around children.’¹

¹ The preamble to the Convention on the Rights of the Child establishes the family as “the fundamental group of society and the natural environment for the growth and development of all its members and particularly children . . .”

I.1. CHILD PROTECTION IN CONTEXT

The United Nations has identified Violence Against Children (VAC) as a growing public health and social development problem globally through a study commissioned in 2006. Violence is understood to mean all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse. UNAIDS (2010) also assert that children requiring care and protection are the main problems of developing countries, especially sub-Saharan Africa. The same have also estimated that of the 16.6 million children (aged 0–17) who have lost one or both parents to AIDS, 14.8 million are in sub-Saharan Africa. Within Ethiopia 5.5 million children, around 6% of the total population, are categorized as orphans or vulnerable children requiring different kinds of services. Children needing protection and support comprise almost 12% of Ethiopia's total child population. There exists some variation on defining vulnerable children/ children needing protection among various stakeholders and expertise in the field. A vulnerable child, according to the Ministry of Women, Children and Youth Affairs (MOWCA), is one 'whose survival, care, protection or development might have been jeopardized due to a particular condition, and who is found in a situation that precludes the fulfillment of his or her rights.

Child maltreatment includes all types of abuse and neglect of a child under the age of 18 by a parent, caregiver, or another person in a custodial role (e.g., clergy, coach, teacher etc.). Different forms of child abuse are commonly categorized into four: physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse and neglect (UNICEF, 2016). In recent decades some extreme forms of violence against children, including sexual exploitation and trafficking, female genital mutilation (FGM), the worst forms of child labor and the impact of armed conflict, have provoked international outcry and achieved a consensus of condemnation, although no rapid remedy. But in addition to these extreme forms of violence, many children are routinely exposed to physical, sexual and psychological violence in their homes and schools, in care and justice systems, in places of work and in their communities. All of these have devastating consequences for their health and well being, now and in the future (Pineiro, 2006).

Violence causes more than 1.6 million deaths worldwide every year. More than 90% of these occur in low- and middle-income countries. Violence is one of the leading causes of death in all parts of the world for persons ages 15 to 44. (Krug et al., 2002). Violence against children cuts across boundaries of geography, race, class, religion and culture. It occurs in homes, schools and streets; in places of work and entertainment, and in care and detention centers. Perpetrators include parents, family members, teachers, caretakers, law enforcement authorities and other children. Some children are particularly vulnerable because of gender, race, ethnic origin, disability or social status and no country is immune, whether rich or poor. The consequences of violence can be devastating. Above all, it can result in early death. But even children who survive must cope with terrible physical and emotional scars. Indeed, violence places at risk not only their health, but also their ability to learn and grow into adults who can create sound families and communities (Pineiro, 2006).

The Ethiopian Demographic and Health Survey (EDHS, 2014) estimates that 72% of children in the country live with parents, 14% with mothers only, 3% with fathers only and 11% live with neither of natural parents. The same survey

indicates that 18% of Ethiopian households are caring for orphans while 0.6% or 11,577 households were estimated to be child headed.²

Poverty, deaths of parents due to HIV/AIDS, war, recurrent drought and its subsequent food shortage/famine are the major factors that made a number of children vulnerable or prone to abuses in Ethiopia. However, vulnerability might be caused by other additional factors that include: severe chronic illness of a parent or caregiver; poverty, hunger; lack of access to services, inadequate clothing or shelter, overcrowding, deficient caretakers, and factors specific to the child, including disability, direct experience of physical or sexual violence, or severe chronic illness. Orphans and vulnerable children have been suffering from a lot of problems associated with these vulnerability factors.³

In East Africa violence against children affects communities at multiple levels (individual, household, institutional and societal). Moreover, establishing the precise magnitude of child abuse for many countries given the silent nature in which it occurs is still very difficult. The situation in developing countries is more challenging due to poor health information system, poor referral and reporting mechanisms, inadequate legal and police systems and sociocultural stigma that surround VAC. In many countries, violence prevention is still a new or emerging field in public health. The public health community has started only recently to realize the contributions it can make to reducing violence and mitigating its consequences (Hyder and Malik, 2007).

The deleterious effects of child abuse and neglect on a child's well-being call for effective prevention strategies at individual, family, community, institutional and national levels based on the socio-ecological model. Effective delivery of services, models and frameworks to address the problem of VAC are not fully explored although urgently there is a global emphasis to strengthen both formal and informal child protection systems at the community and national level to prevent and respond to violence against children.

In Ethiopia, as in most traditional societies, there exists strong culture of caring for orphans, the elderly, the sick, and disabled and other needy members of the society, in the past. Most of these care and protections were being carried out by the nuclear and extended family members, communities and religious organizations. However, the advent of urbanization, widespread of HIV/AIDS, recurrent drought, high population growth, shortage of land and other resources to meet the ever increasing demand have been challenging the informal efforts to address the problems of these destitute segments of the society including children. These manmade and natural factors have also claimed many lives. Consequently, thousands of children were left un-accompanied as neither family nor communities and religious organizations were unable to discharge their traditional roles and functions.⁴

2 Central Statistical Authority (2011). Ethiopian Demographic and Health Survey. Addis Ababa.

3 Skinner D, Tshenko N, Mtero-Munyati S, Segwabe M, Chibatamoto P, Mfecane S, Chandiwana B, Nkomo N, Tlou S, Chitiyo G (2006)

4 Tsegaye Chernet (2001). Overview of Services for Orphans and Vulnerable Children in Ethiopia. Addis Ababa

It is agreed that a systemic approach to child protection requires a considerable conceptual shift from the traditional stand-alone programming focus on particular groups of children in-need of protection, to the achievement of more sustainable, comprehensive and long-term responses to child protection issues. A systems approach addresses child protection more holistically, brings greater focus on prevention, and strengthens the critical roles and assets of the key actors responsible for child protection. These key actors include government, civil society, parents, caregivers, families and other community structures – which together provide formal and informal child protection mechanisms and services.

1.2. OBJECTIVE, PURPOSE AND EXPECTED RESULTS

Prior to establishing any policy, program or surveillance system to child protection, it is important to comprehensively evaluate the current state of the child protection system. A community- participatory approach is always best to capture data on the observed needs and the felt needs. In an effort to capture such results WVE has recently undertaken assessments in the field of child protection using the CP-ADAPT techniques and documented factual findings to illustrate the state of child protection systems and child protection concerns. The assessment has been conducted within 18 APs of WVE that are dispersed within five regions of the country. These assessments were completed at community levels to understand the risk and protective factors for child maltreatment, the root causes of the maltreatment, and for understanding disparities in child maltreatment within the target regions. Hence, the main objective of this assignment that is to standardize and synthesize these reports in to one national level report and produce a comprehensive qualitative and quantitative research report to be published and disseminated.

1.3. ASSIGNMENT RATIONAL, PRINCIPLES AND METHODS

Research is a careful and detailed study into a specific problem, concern, or issue using the scientific methods. Research leads to an expansion of knowledge and discoveries of new approaches. Studies have also led to breakthroughs in interventions informing implementers for better decision-making and enhanced project delivery. It is widely agreed that research assisted interventions typically bring the desired evidence based information. The use of the WV CP-ADAPT tool specifically helps with the identification; prioritization and root cause analysis of child protection issues, as well as with the identification and mapping of the systems that are in place to protect children.

1.4. STATEMENT OF ETHICS

Ethics Policy Statement

This research assignment has been accomplished within comprehensive ethical frameworks that is done through the freedom to push the frontiers of knowledge forward, within an ethical framework, for the global good of humankind. The ethical standards followed are listed below:

i. Ethics in Research

- **Integrity:** Studies and research are designed, reviewed and undertaken to ensure integrity, quality and transparency.
- **Quality control and Review Process:** All tools and methods, reports and outputs go through a multi-layered quality control and Review Process.
- **Scientific validity:** All research will be founded on strong scientific validity.
- **Availability of knowledge:** Whenever possible, research will be widely disseminated towards availability of knowledge.
- **Capacity Building:** During the course of each research project, capacities of those involved will be strengthened to pursue excellence in research.

ii. Ethics in Action

- **Independence:** The independence of the research/study is made clear, and any conflicts of interest or partiality is made explicit.
- **Cultural sensitivity:** The team will be sensitive to cultural norms and will always adhere to organizational/ local norms of decency and good behavior.
- **Low profile approach:** The entity will maintain a low profile in the field and disassociate itself from politicized groups unless strictly required for research.
- **AGDM approach:** The team/staff composition is based on an AGDM approach (Age, Gender and Diversity Mainstreaming) – notably through our recruitment.

I.5. LIMITATION OF REPORT COMPILATION

The study or the report collected from the APs has been limited to bring detailed information as its been expected in the CP-ADAPT manual of WVE. The limitations of the report collected from all the 18 APs are:

- CP issues prioritization not disaggregated by study participants groups
- Causal analysis was not broken down into root cause, underlined cause, immediate cause and common cause

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1. DESCRIPTION OF THE STUDY AREA

2.1.1 GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION

The study has covered and paid attention to 18 WVE operating areas that are dispersed/distributed in to four Regional State and one City Administration: Addis Ababa City Administration, Amhara Regional States, Benishangul Gumuze Regional States, Oromiya Regional Stets and the SNNPRS. These 18 APs in the target regions are distributed in 10 zones, as indicated in the Table below;

S.No.	AP name	Zone	Region
1	Habro	Harerege	Oromiya
2	Wenchi	Central Shoa	Oromiya
3	Homosha	Assosa	Benishangul Gumuze
4	Boset	E&S Oromiya	Oromiya
5	Goro	E&S Oromiya	Oromiya
6	Gulele	Addis Ababa	Addis Ababa
7	Hidahabu Abote	N.Shoa	Oromiya
8	Jille Timuga	N.Shoa	Amhara
9	Jimma Genet	Wellega	Oromiya
10	Kolefe Keranio	Addis Ababa	Addis Ababa
11	Angolela	N.Shoa	Amhara
12	Melkabello	Harerege	Oromiya
13	Kochore	Hawassa	SNNP
14	Libo Kemekem	Gondor	Amhara
15	Chilega	Gondor	Amhara
16	Tullo	Harerege	Oromiya
17	Jabitehinan	Gojam & Awi	Amhara
18	Jeju	E&S Oromiya	Oromiya

2.2. SAMPLING METHOD

This study was conducted in the selected four Regional States and one City Administration of the country reaching a total of 10 Zones within the mentioned regions and city administration. The study areas of the APs were selected

purposely with a desire of identifying CP needs in the target areas and also with the aim to strategically design future interventions in the areas covered.

The study respondents were selected utilizing purposive sampling along with availability sampling methods. Though there are some variation in the number and nature of respondents, the overall characteristics of the respondents or participants of the CP-ADAPT are:

- Focus Group with boys children age 10 to 17
- Focus Group Discussion with girls children 10 to 17
 - For both girls and boys respondents selected to respond to the Listening to Children of the data collection method. Participants were selected using purposive sampling techniques based on their in the target communities and their availability from rural and urban kebeles/ districts including children with disabilities, children from single parent, and also including children from vulnerable families.
- Focus Group Discussion with Male Adults
- Focus Group Discussion with Female Adults
 - Listening to Adults were also undertaken or by combining adults selected from urban and rural kebeles or districts. In addition the respondents were from different economic background. In this category local leader at kebele/village level, religious leaders and vulnerable people such as PWDs have also participated.
- Focus Group Discussion with stakeholders
 - This was part of the listening from key stakeholders. In this step different stakeholders engaged in child protection activities have been invited in FGD including sector offices representatives, school directors, religious leaders and social workers.
- Key Informant Interview with other stakeholders including administrative unit, police and justice

2.3. METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION

Primary data were collected from the sampled and/ or identified respondents of the study through Focus Group Discussions (FGD) and Key Informant Interview (KII). Data collectors or facilitators of data collection were trained at the National Office (NO) of WV-E Addis Ababa on how to undertake the assignment following the CP-ADAPT

guidebook. The data collection/ assessment was conducted using WV ADAPT manual for community level assessments. The teams leading the assessment have followed all the 5 steps as mentioned in the manual:

- Listening to children - setting the agenda
- Listening to adults
- Learning from key stakeholders
- Analyzing and reflecting
- Debriefing with the community

2.4. METHODS FOR SYNTHESIZING AP REPORTS

Synthesizing research/ assessments documents is a critical assignment both in the natural and social science fields. Synthesizing research works and producing a comprehensive document requires a solid understanding of the subject matter, examining a number of studies on the topic and also a practical knowledge of the tools used to undertake the assessment which in this case is CP-ADAPT. Below are the steps by step methods utilized to synthesize and produce one comprehensive report:

2.4.1 QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

i. Content Analysis

Content analysis is the main method that was employed to collect factual information and hard data that depict the ground reality specifically within the research area. Content analyses, for this particular assignment, have been done on the received 18 AP reports. This was the most important part of the assignment, as synthesizing of the reports have mainly dwelled on review of the findings of the assessments. Gaps and vaguely presented statements were further clarified through discussion with WE program team. The content analysis was followed by thematic analysis of the contents of the report. When doing the content analysis [Atlas.ti](#) qualitative analysis software was utilized. This qualitative software has improved examination of the multitude of artifacts and findings included in each AP reports.

ii. Report Area Categorization

Geographic categorization of all the submitted reports has followed desk review. This method have benefited the assignment from the perspective of responding to questions relating to intervention need, appropriateness and acceptability, as well as those relating to effectiveness without compromising on key principles developed. These geographic area categorizations of the reports were important especially to uncover the specific and unique need in

the area at community level. All the 18 AP reports have been imported to atlas.ti software for qualitative analysis and were labeled based on their regional and community level representation.

iii. Thematic Categorization

A codebook was prepared to code all the reports from each APs when undertaking the content analysis. After completing coding, cod families were developed for reports that have identical issues. The code families were done based on the seven elements of child protection systems that include Law and Policies, Services, Capacities, Coordination, Accountability, Circle of Care and Child Resilience. Following the finalization of the report coding by thematic areas, issues were discussed chronologically identifying how events were structured and actors were involved.

iv. Case Stories

Case stories in this case were researched facts that focus on and gather in depth information about a specific person, group, community or event. Case stories have contributed in the narration of the synthesis report as they evoke emotions and give the presentation a stick power. Case stories have depicted communities' need; gaps, beneficiary group or individuals' unmet need, addressed gaps and at the same time the process of service delivery. In general, the identified case stories have been used to supplement or justify the findings of the qualitative synthesis.

2.4.2 QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS

All the received 18 reports have been prepared using qualitative research methods. Efforts have been exerted to quantify the different findings in the AP reports by counting the number of happening or the number of times an issue is prioritized. The quantitative presentation of data can't be used to generalize findings to the wider public or to generalize at national levels, but can be applied to project specific context.

i. Frequency

Frequencies of issues were counted to capture the number of occurrences of a repeated event. The target respondents have prioritized various contributing factors to child abuse and service delivery needs. Issues that have been repeatedly mentioned as a cause or a need were quantified and presented at national and/or regional level.

ii. Ranking

Ranking was another method employed to present findings quantitatively. When doing Ranking, the consulting team has looked at the relationship between a set of items. Within the given priority area or rank the most frequently reported issues were given top priority or ranked higher.

2.4.3 ANALYSIS

The analysis part of the synthesis report was the main part of the document, for it illustrates the needs and the identified gaps. This benefits WVE to strategically design its intervention with specific context to Child Protection in the target APs. The analysis has also presented the quantitative and qualitative findings and discussed at length. This part has been compared and contrasted issues within the different geography: why similar and why different and also with available literature. Descriptive narrative approach has been utilized when discussing findings and comparisons of analysis.

3. FINDINGS & DISCUSSIONS

Under this chapter, the findings of the 18 study reports were discussed at length and the existing practices and the interventions needed were also presented. The data collected from all the 18 APs were analyzed and interpreted. The chapter is classified into three main sub sections. The first one presents the review of literature. The second part discusses the major child protection issues narrating the casual factors at the same time. Whereas the third main category of this chapter has discussed, analyzed the systemic aspect of Child Protection interventions responding to the thematic questions expected to be answered. Results are presented descriptively where causal analyses of factors are also narrated discussing the various elements functioning within the child protection system, per CP-ADAPT guideline.



3.1. VULNERABLE CHILDREN IN ETHIOPIA

The Ethiopian MOWCA defined a vulnerable child, as one 'whose survival, care, protection or development might have been jeopardized due to a particular condition, and who is found in a situation that precludes the fulfillment of his or her rights. Children, whose basic needs are not met in the home by their families and who may be isolated, stigmatized, or discriminated against by communities can also be called most Vulnerable Children – they are considered at-risk for not being raised up to strong and healthy adulthood that can positively contribute to societal wellbeing. This cant justify a total failure of vulnerable children in their adult life- many vulnerable children have witnessed successes in their adult life in the end – but it was much of a challenge than other children whose basic needs were met. In the national standard service delivery guideline for orphan and vulnerable children, the list of most vulnerable children category include:

- Child is an orphan (1 or both parents died)
- Child is HIV+ and/or the primary caregiver is HIV+
- Primary caregiver is chronically ill (meaning, she or he is often or always bedridden), or elderly or disabled
- Child is known (or appears to be) abused, neglected or exploited
- Child lives outside any family care (e.g. street child)
- Child is exposed to different forms of abuse, violence and/or exploitation
- Child is in conflict with the law
- Child has an obvious disability that is not receiving care and support
- Child lives in a child- or youth-headed household
- Child is malnourished (moderate to severe)
- Child is unaccompanied due to displacement
- Child is stigmatized or marginalized for other reasons

3.1.1. NATIONAL LEVEL CHILD PROTECTION SYSTEM LANDSCAPE

i. LEGAL AND INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORKS FOR CHILD RIGHTS PROTECTION IN ETHIOPIA)

The protection of child rights depends on the level of measures taken in order to implement CRC. Thus, since it is hardly possible for a state to implement the provisions, standards and principles of human rights in general and child rights in particular without establishing the proper legal and institutional frameworks by which the ratified provisions, standards and principles executed, this section discusses the established legal and institutional frameworks for child right protection in Ethiopia.

a) Legal Frameworks for Child Right protection in Ethiopia

Prior to the 1995 FDRE Constitution, written constitutions have been successively enacted in Ethiopia since 1931. As Getahun stated the 1931 constitution is the first written constitution of Ethiopia, which was designed, based on the Japanese Meiji Constitution (Getahun, 2007:77). However, the constitution was not clarified and contained many of the elements that were included in the traditional codes governing the relationship between crowns and subject i.e. it

declared Ethiopia a constitutional monarchy, headed by a monarchy who has got his ancestry from King Solomon of Jerusalem (Keller, 2010:63). Thus, since citizens were subjects of Emperors the constitutional recognition of fundamental rights of a person was the total result of the formation of a modern Ethiopia and a pressure from the international community (Alemayehu, 2010:40). Similar to the 1931 constitution, the tradition of claiming the mythical descent, the so-called Solomonic tradition was included in the 1955 Ethiopian constitution (Beken, 2007:15). As an effort to end this royal absolutism another version of constitution was formulated in August 1974 (Keller, 2010:70). However, the 25 changes took place were too little as well as late, as a result, the regime disbanded and the constitution easily aborted (Endalcachew, 2014:2-3). Again in the 1987 constitution of Derg, which is promulgated after 13-year constitutional lacuna the idea of human rights, was rarely considered as entitlement. Moreover, the constitution was demised by the liberationist struggles that continued till 1991 i.e. till the fall of the Derg and the new regime endorsed the Transitional Charter that served as constitution of Ethiopia for the time of the transition.

After a prolonged transition, a Federal Democratic Constitution was enacted in 1994 and came into force in 1995 (Tsegaye, 2009:298-299). The 1995 FDRE constitution shows a major transformation in terms of human rights as compared to its former constitutions (Adem, 2011:42). In addition to the transformation in terms of human rights in general Girmachew and Yonas contended as the Ethiopian constitution also declares the vulnerable position of children in particular and granted them rights as well as the subsequent protection for these rights (Girmachew and Yonas, 2012: 34).

Accordingly, under Article 36 the constitution recognizes the rights of all children to life, to name and nationality, and to know and be cared by their parents, to be protected from exploitative practices. Beyond recognition, the constitution prohibits the infliction of corporal punishment or cruel and inhumane treatment in schools and other institutions entrusted for the care of children as well as the accommodation of children in conflict with the law together with adults. It also gives special protection for orphans. Moreover, Article 36(2) articulates the principle of the best interest of the child as the primary consideration in all matters affecting children (FDRE Constitution, 1995: Article 36). Thus, based on the above notes it can be deduced that as compared to the former constitutions which guaranteed human rights to somehow the FDRE Constitution has guaranteed protection to the rights of children explicitly not for they are only human but also for they are vulnerable considering their age. Though the constitution point out these rights for children, the most debatable issue here is whether or how the CRC can be directly applied or incorporated in the Ethiopian legal system, especially in the court. Indeed as Braasch and his colleagues indicated the issue of incorporating the instruments of human rights within the Ethiopian law is controversial i.e. either only approving of the instruments is enough or it needs publicizing the international human rights instruments through the Ethiopian “Fedreal Negarit Gazeta” –an official magazine by which the government publishes its laws and declarations (Braasch et al, 2008:270). 26

As to the FDRE Constitution, the power to sign international agreements is granted to the executive, which after proper deliberation has to direct them to the House of Peoples’ Representatives (the legislature) for their ratification (Art.55 (12)). Thus, once they are adopted, all international agreements, including human rights instruments, are integral parts of the law of the land (art.9 (4)) without any additional measure to be taken by the legislature. However, art.2 (2) of the

Federal Negarit Gazeta Establishment Proclamation No. 3/1995 states that all laws of the Federal Government shall be published in the Federal Negarit Gazeta, whereas art.2 (3) states that all Federal or Regional legislative, executive and judicial organs as well as any natural or juridical person shall take judicial notice of laws published in the Federal Negarit Gazeta. Given the requirement of these provisions i.e. enacting national legislations in order to execute the provisions of international Conventions at the domestic level, hence, Ethiopia can be considered as dualist (Rakeb, 2002:15).

The FDRE Constitution, according to the opposing claim, holds the existing international Conventions within the Ethiopian law during the approval. Indeed, some argue, as international Convention may not get the ground for application till they have been adopted through national legislation during the process of making these treaties known to the masses. However, though the ground for such argument is the requirement of the Negarit Gazeta that entails the juries to take into account the judicial announcement of the international instruments via Federal, attention needs to be paid for the fact that the supreme law of the land – the constitution – that fails to recognize publication as criteria in order to give effect to adopted Conventions. The juries, therefore, can invoke the international human rights law (IHRL) at a time of resolving conflicts (Samrawit, ND: 10 & 13).

Another subject of debate in relation to the status of international human rights law in the Ethiopian legal system is about the hierarchy of international human rights instruments as compared to the Constitution (Braasch et al, 2008:271). Accordingly, there are two-tiered opinions concerning the normative position of ratified Conventions in Ethiopia's hierarch of laws, which is disclosed based on through evaluation of pertaining literatures on the status of human rights Conventions under the constitution of Ethiopia. At one level, the supremacy clause of Art9 (1) of the constitution, providing any inconsistent 'law, customary practice or a decision of an organ of state or a public official' null and void, has resulted the affirmation 27 that the constitution is superior to all adopted Conventions. At another level, the affirmation under Art 9(4) of the constitution that duly adopted Conventions are "integral parts of the law of the land" and its requirement under Art 13(2) that the Bill of Rights of the Constitution must be interpreted in compliance with adopted Conventions considered as a partial answer to the question of the hierarchical position of ratified Conventions (Takele, 2009: 132). In line with the first level of contention, the constitution is superior to all adopted Conventions. Adem argued that, due to the exact reading of Article 9(1) of the Ethiopian constitution, which declares the supremacy of the constitution, international instruments which are made an integral part of the laws of the land by virtue of Article 9(4) upon ratification are subordinate to the constitution (Adem, 2011: 47).

In the same manner, it is obvious that the constitution consists of interpretation clause concerning the chapter that deals with human rights and fundamental freedoms, i.e. Article 13(2). This entails the interpretation of the Bill of Rights based on the guiding principles laid down in the UDHR, International Covenants on Human Rights and based on those international instruments that are adopted by Ethiopia. Thus, instead of the provisions of international instruments that provides the particular rights to direct the interpretation of the principles and standards in the fundamental rights chapter, the interpretation simply requires a very simple adherence to the 'principles' – such as principles of universality, indivisibility and interdependency of all human rights, the duty to respect, to protect, and to fulfill. Moreover, being in line with the principles and standards is needed only during the time of interpretation that dismisses the cases where

visible differences found between the Constitution and international instruments. Being in line with the principles and standards also needed in those issues of clear constitutional principles and standards that simply want the practice of the Constitution (Ibid, 2011:46- 48).

Adem claims that the constitution is above the international human rights instruments since the constitution interpretation clause about the chapter that talks about human rights and fundamental freedoms needs compliance to the 'principles' instead of the provisions of international instruments that depicts the particular rights to lead the interpretation of the standards and principles in the fundamental rights chapter. However, Alebachew does not accept the claim the supremacy of the international human rights instruments over the Constitution because of the very fact that most of the human rights principles and standards came from international human rights instruments. He, therefore, presumes that probably those who frame the constitution would have been included this provision (art, 13(2)) for it is reasonable to provide a cross-reference its source as standards or guide for interpretation when there is no clarity. Hence, article 13 (2) of the Constitution provides a cross reference to the international human rights instruments when interpretation rather than putting them as superior to the Constitution (Alebachew, 2008:40).

In countering Adem's and Alebachew's argument Takele correctly suggested that, due to the customary nature of the UDHR whose provisions have make up the constitution's Bill of Rights almost impractical to alienate the constitutional Bills of Rights from international treaties adopted by Ethiopia. Thus, it is fair to conclude that treaties share at least the same status as the constitution. Moreover, due to the customary principles of good faith and pactasunt servanda, domestic law cannot sit in judgment of its hierarchical interactions with international law. Thus, any other interpretation let Ethiopia to stand against its international obligations (Takele, 2009:133 & 160). In line with Takele's suggestion Ibrahim also suggested that, by virtue of Article 26 of the Vienna Convention of Treaties state parties to a Convention carry out obligations at a time of adopting a given Convention. Thus, under international law if a state adopts human rights Convention they are supposed to implement it in good faith. Accordingly, this principle calls Ethiopia to give adopted international human rights Conventions a high position in their respective legal systems (Ibrahim, 2000:137).

To conclude, though Article 9(4) clearly asserts as the Constitution is the supreme law of the land, this does not lead to the conclusion that in case of conflict between adopted international human rights Conventions and the Constitution's provisions on fundamental rights and freedoms the latter would triumph over the former. Beyond this, in practical cases, Article 13(2) of the FDRE constitution could be employed to address this controversial issue.

As indicated in the provision, the fundamental rights and freedoms of the FDRE Constitution should be interpreted in conformity to the UDHR and norms and principles of international human rights Conventions ratified by Ethiopia. This assures as international human rights Conventions adopted by Ethiopia occupy higher or at least equal position, to the FDRE Constitution (Ibid, 2000:137-138). Seyoum and Aman also argue as international human rights Conventions adopted by Ethiopia have equal status with the constitution (Seyoum and Aman ,ND: 6). Thus, as one of the human rights conventions ratified by Ethiopia the CRC has place high up in the hierarchy so that it is authoritative guidelines for the interpretation of the rights of children guaranteed by the constitution.

Since Ethiopia does not have comprehensive child law in the form of a Children's Act or Proclamation the Family Code, the Criminal Code & criminal procedure code and the Labor Proclamation are the main instruments, which address child rights (ACPF, ND: 2 & Goel, 2009:144). Accordingly, in its various sections the family law entails the process, legal basis and effects of child adoption. It also discusses paternity, family relations, describing the rights and duties of minors and their guardians. Similar to above the family law, criminal law in its various sections criminalizes acts like sexual abuse, trafficking, infanticide, endangering the life of or causing bodily injury to children and failure in upbringing. The criminalization also extends to acts of Harmful traditional practices in general. The criminal procedure code mainly from Article 171 to 180 entails as to how the proceeding concerning young person has to be constructed, continued and concluded. The last but not least is the labor proclamation, which explicitly forbids the employment of children below the age of 14 years and gives special protections for child workers between the ages of 14 and 18 under Article 89. In addition from Article 90-91 the Code also sets the maximum working hours for young workers at seven hours a day and precludes the employment of young workers for night work, overtime work, and work on weekly rest days and on public holidays. Thus, based on the above notes it can be deduced as these laws address child rights in some part of their texts i.e. they are not fully or only designed to entail the procedures, mechanism and remedies for implementing the CRC so as to enhance the protection of child rights.

b) Institutional Frameworks for Child Rights Protection in Ethiopia

State parties to the convention are expected to establish permanent self-monitoring mechanism in order to follow up the implementation of the CRC (General Comment No 5, 2003:35-41). Accordingly, in Ethiopia the institution that is entrusted to follow up the implementation of CRC so as to protect the right of children is MOWCA. As per Article 10 of Proclamation No. 691/2010, which defines the common powers and duties of Federal Executive Organs (Ministries) among other MOWCA has the power and duty to initiate policies and laws, prepare plans and budgets, and upon approval implement same, to ensure the enforcement of the federal government laws, and to undertake study and research; collect, compile and disseminate information. In addition under Article 32 the MOWCA has also certain powers and duties, which define the power and duty of the MOWCA alone. Among other the Ministry is entitled to create awareness and movement on the question of women, children and youth, to collect, compile and disseminate to all stakeholders information on the objective realities faced by women, children and youth, to coordinate all stakeholders to protect the rights and well-being of children, and to follow up the implementation of treaties relating to women and children and submit reports to the concerned bodies (FDRE Proclamation No.691/2010: Article 10 &32).

In addition to self-monitoring mechanism Children need independent NHRIs to protect their human rights. Children rights should be given due consideration and special attention because of children's vulnerability. Thus, very state party to the CRC needs an independent and effective human rights institution with responsibility for promoting and protecting children's rights. Moreover, these NHRI should be constitutionally entrenched and must at least be legislatively mandated (General Comment No 2, 2002:8). Accordingly, Ethiopia has provided constitutional base for the establishment of these NHRI via Article 55(14) & (15) of its constitution, which empowers the House of Peoples Representative (HPR) to establish the Human Rights Commission and the institution of the Ombudsman determining

their power and function (FDRE Constitution,1995: Article 55(14) & (15)). The HPR, as a mandate given to it, established these institutions by promulgating two proclamations:“Ethiopian Human Rights Commission establishment Proclamation No. 210/2000” and “Institution of the Ombudsman Establishment Proclamation No. 211/2000” defining their mandate and powers.

The Establishment Proclamation of the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission (EHRC) states that the Commission is established in order to “educate the public to be aware of human rights, to see that human rights are protected, respected and fully enforced as well as to have the necessary measure taken where they are found to have been violated.” It is also established in order to ensure the enforcement of human rights as enshrined in the Constitution by all citizens, organs of a state, political organizations and other associations as well as by their respective officials. Thus, the Commission is empowered to investigate cases of violation of human rights enshrined in the Constitution, in its own initiative or upon a complaint submitted to it, to release reports on different human rights conditions like prison conditions and to “provide consultancy service on matters of human rights”(FDRE proclamation No.210/2000).

The Establishment Proclamation of the Institution of the Ombudsman (EIO) states that the Commission is established to “bring about good governance that is of high quality, efficient and transparent, and are based on the rule of law, by way of ensuring that citizens’ rights and benefits provided by law are respected by organs of the executive”. It is also established to receive, investigate and supervise action taken by any Ministry or department of Government or any member of such Ministry or department of Government and also non-state institution in order to conduct studies and research on ways of avoiding maladministration. Thus, the basic function of the Ombudsman is to protect citizens against administrative injustices and bureaucratic oppression and to provide citizens with accessible avenue for complaint when such injustices and oppressions occur.The Institution is much important especially in redressing human rights violations, which occur in work places/ administrative areas (FDRE proclamation No.211/2000).

In addition to NHRI, non-state actors play a significant role in child protection. ANNPCAN indicates that non-state actors have a crucial role in child protection often complementing government efforts in key priority areas. Some of the services granted by these organizations include provision of care and support, access to justice for abused children, educating parents on child rights, providing educational support and offering assistance to trafficked and abused girls through provision of shelter and family re-union services. They also conduct advocacy, capacity building and awareness creation concerning child protection. Non-state actors, whether local or international, have assisted countries to make considerable progress in terms of child protection (ANNPCAN, 2011:33).

Accordingly, NGOs and CSOs in Ethiopia have impact in three areas: advocacy on behalf of children, empowerment of marginalized groups, and providing emergency assistance. However, their impact was limited (Haggstrom, 2003:58). Moreover, the government of Ethiopia promulgated CSO proclamation as stated in the preamble with good intention of ensuring “the realization of citizens’ rights to association enshrined in the constitution and to aid and facilitate the role of civil society in the overall development of the Ethiopian people” (FDRE proclamation No 621/2009). Of those provisions of the proclamation, as Hopkins and his colleagues argued, the provision that hinder foreign NGOs from engaging in activities pertaining to human rights in general and child rights in particular has detrimental consequence (Hopkins et al., 2009:4).

Moreover, CSOs are supposed to function effectively in cooperation with NHRIs for they are the main actors in child rights protection (General Comment No.2, 2002:11). However, the shift of these organizations from working on child rights due to the CSO law put this assertion to doubt and it also reduces the participation of non-state actors like CSOs and NGOs in child rights protection in Ethiopia.

ii. STRUCTURE OF CHILD PROTECTION SERVICES

The legislative, executive, and judiciary protection and structure in Ethiopia in protecting the rights of children as well as the role of Ethiopian national human rights commission and non-state actors in protecting the rights of children are discussed in this section.

a) Legislative protection

The HPR, according to the Ethiopian constitution Article 55 (1) that states as the House of Peoples' Representatives have the power of legislation entrusted with the main task of making laws (FDRE Constitution, 1995:55(1)). Thus, after the executive signed (concluded) the CRC in 1991 the legislature in Ethiopia has been enacting subsequent legislations that protect the rights of children (has been taking measures in order to implement the CRC and protect the rights of children in the domestic legal order). Accordingly, since 1995 the legislature has given Constitutional protection to the rights of children under Article 25, 36(2), 14 & 29 5

In line with the four core principles of the Convention, namely the principle of the non-discrimination, the best interest of child, the right to life, survival and development and also the right to participation that are stated under Article 2, 3, 6, & 12 of the Convention respectively. Beside, as stated under Article 13 since the fundamental rights and freedoms in the Constitution are interpreted in light of the ratified international instruments i.e. the Article 25, 36(2), 14 & 29 the FEDR Constitution provides the right to equality and not be discriminated for every person, primacy for the best interest of the child in any action concerning them, right to life for every person and also the right to freedom of expression for every person respectively. Constitution has also given recognition to the prevalence of the Convention when there is conflict with domestic legislation.

In order to enhance the implementation of the CRC in the domestic legal order the legislature has also revised other prominent legislations that deal with the rights of children in conformity with the provisions of the Convention and enacted these legislations namely, the Family law of 2000, Labor proclamation of 2003 and Criminal code of 2004. For instance, unlike the old family law (Civil code of 1960) where the marriageable age of a girl's was fifteen but that of boy's was eighteen, in conformity with the CRC the revised Family code has made the marriageable age of both boy's and girl's eighteen. Another important development in the revised family code is determination of paternity for children born out of wedlock. In the old family law the grounds for determination of paternity are very limited and a number of children born out of wed lock left without father where as in the revised family code the grounds for determination of paternity became wider and for the determination of paternity marriage is not necessarily required. Similarly the 2004 criminal code added different provisions in conformity with the provisions of CRC i.e. it adds one full chapter in order

to criminalize harmful traditional practices.

Moreover, first, again gaps are identified in Family law after its revision in 2000 and the Criminal Procedure code of 1961 is being revised in order to make these codes in conformity to the CRC and enhance the implementation of the CRC in Ethiopian domestic legal order. Second, the enactment of Proclamation 454/2005 that declares as the judgment by the Federal cassation bench judges' carries force of law has enhanced the implementation of some provisions of the CRC due to the precedents given by the Federal Cassation Bench. According to them in practice the legislature has taken measures in order to enhance the current protection of child rights in Ethiopia by giving constitutional recognition to the principles as well the prevalence of CRC over domestic legislation and revising some of the provision of the existing laws in conformity with the Convention so as to facilitate its implementation in the domestic legal order. The legislature continuation of the revision of laws as well as the legislative enactment of Proclamation 545/2005 has improved the implementation of the Convention. However, others argue that, though the legislature enactment of proclamation 545 has enhanced the implementation of some provisions of the CRC to somehow, in order to facilitate the implementation of the whole provisions of the convention to the grass root level, especially to the lower tier of judiciary the legislature should enact domestic legislation or proclamation that entail the mechanism, procedures and remedies while implementing the Convention.

b) Executive Protection

As per proclamation No.691/2010 in Ethiopia the main executive body that is mandated with child rights in general as well as the implementation of the CRC in particular is MOWCA (Proclamation No.691/2010, Article: 9(20) & 32). Accordingly, Ministry is working in order to protect the rights of children independently and also in cooperation with other state and non-state actors. For instance, in order to follow-up the implementation of the CRC from the Federal (national) to kebele level the Ministry is working via inter-ministerial committee, which consists various state and non-state actors.

Though the very existence of institution entrusted with child rights at Ministerial level as well as the measure being taken in order to follow up the implementation of the convention is to be commendable, the Ministry being dedicated with various sections of the society i.e. women and children dilutes its focus on child care and protection.

In addition, as per Article 10 of the establishment proclamation, the Ministry is entitled to initiate laws for reform or review and follow up the implementation of existing laws (proclamation No. 691/2010: Article 10 (a & B). Accordingly, in practice MOWCA is initiating laws for reform or review after assessing the impact of a proposed law as well as conducting the tangible impact of the existing law. For instance, MOWCA was assessing the impact of Criminal Procedure Code which is under review and also evaluated the tangible impact of the Family code, particularly with regard to adoption.

In line with this Abduletif and his colleagues indicated that MOWCA has identified gaps in the Family code and Criminal Procedure Code (Abduletif et al., 2013:141). MOWCA is not only initiating laws but it is also following up

the implementation of CRC in those institutions that host children in need of care and protection as well as children in conflict with the law. Accordingly, in practice the implementation of the CRC and the subsequent laws in order to protect child rights is progressive (promising) for those officials who are responsible for the implementation of laws like policies, public prosecutors and judges are getting appropriate training that broadly incorporated the text of the CRC by the Ministry as well as other state actors. However, first, since there is no fixed time interval in which the training is delivered to them and also continuous follow up in order to ascertain whether the training is goal oriented or not. Second, despite the existence of training and the incorporation of child rights issue in the courses of the police training collage particularly the achievement of the police in terms of protecting the rights of children is not satisfactory due to lack of follow up and subsequent administrative measures to be taken in order to improve their an satisfactory record. In addition, limited number as well as the crowdedness of particularly correctional center being the main drawback for the implementation of the laws yet since the services and also the facilities of the institutions are not as per the standard set for them by MOWCA. In line with this, Abduletif and his colleagues indicated as the lack of correctional institutions hindered courts from implementing those subsequent legislations (Abduletif et al., 2013:141 & Fasil & Rakeb, 2014:34).

Under 10(1) (c) & 32(2) Article the proclamation also entitles the Ministry to gather, compile and disseminate data (information) or undertake research (study) (proclamation 691/2010, Article 32:2). In practice, though the Ministry in cooperation with non-state actors is installing Information Management System (IMS) that enables to have disaggregated data, there is no permanent department for undertaking research. Rather the common trend is to organize task force at a time when conducting research is needed. For instance, the task force has undertaken study on correctional centers. Thus, based on the finding of the task force there is a move in order to reduce the crowdedness of the correctional center via building correctional center that is capable of accommodating numerous children.

c) Judicial Protection

A state may witness progress in terms of concluding (signing) international human rights standards like CRC and also adopting these provisions in national legislations in order to protect the rights of children. However, what matters most is the effective implementation of these standards in domestic courts (Bayenew, 2011:75). Thus, since the judiciary is also one branch of state that ensures protection for the rights of children as guaranteed by the CRC, it is supposed to be effective while implementing CRC for it enables children to enjoy their rights as they are entitled by the Convention.

Accordingly, in practice in Ethiopia the judiciary i.e. higher tiers of the judiciary have started to implement the CRC. (Birhan, 2015) illustrates how the CRC is being implemented in the judiciary in practice. The case was an issue over the administration of the child's inheritance from his deceased mother between a father, who had never cared, protected and provided for his son, and a maternal aunt of the same child, who had brought him up from early childhood for 12 years. Claiming the best interest of the child the aunt appealed for the rejection of the legal guardianship, which the father had acquired and used for his own advantage in terms of financial, and property gain. Though all three levels of courts of the southern region dismissed her case claiming that the aunt could not have a legitimate ground for legal guardianship while the father is alive, in 2007 based on article 3(1) of the CRC and article 36(2) of the Ethiopian

Constitution that entails as the best interest of the child shall be primary consideration in deciding all matters concerning children the cassation bench of the federal supreme court to which the aunt applied on the basis of a fundamental error of law in the decision of the regional courts accepted her argument and appointed her as legal guardian.

Moreover, by virtue of Proclamation 454/2005, federal as well as regional courts on all levels are bound by the Cassation Division's decision for it carries force of law. Thus, the lower tier of the judiciary can also implement the convention. However, others argue that practically without any legislation that guide or entail the mechanism, procedure and remedies to the implementation of the CRC lower tier judiciary are not in a position to implement the whole provisions of the convention due to the general nature of provision of the CRC.

In addition, though the general nature of constitutional provisions as compared to specific legislation is a barrier for judges to frequently refer to the constitution, by virtue of Article 62(1) & 83 the ultimate power given to House of Federation in order to interpret the constitution at a time when there is a conflict to somehow has created the feeling, especially onto those judges at lower-tier of the judiciary, to consider themselves as having minimal role to interpret the constitution. Hence, the judiciary cannot refer it while adjudicating the cases' of children for they feel as they have little role in interpreting the Constitution.

With in the national court, professional discipline and technical capacity are highly demanded to recognize and deal with violations of human rights (Bayenew, 2011: 81). Thus, Judges needs to enhance their professionalism and technical capacity in order to oversee the breaches of the rights of children. Capacity of judges via appropriate trainings will enhance their knowledge on how to protect children's' rights. Hence, various trainings have been on CRC have been provided that have contributed to improved understandings of the concepts.

d) The Role of Ethiopia Human Rights Commission and Non-state actors (NGOs & CSOs) in Protecting Children's Rights

Per the proclamation No.210/2000 EHRC has the general mandate of promoting and protecting human rights (Proclamation No.210, 2000: Article 5 & 6). The commission is playing its part to protect the rights of children as its part the responsibilities of the commission general mandate to promote and protect human rights. In doing so, the commission in cooperation with state actors through provisions of training on the rights of children. The national report from the commission has also indicated implementation of CRPD through catering of trainings to institutions including organizations entrusted with implementing laws, leaders of associations of women, youth, persons with disabilities, organizations working for children and girls right as measures in order to promote and protect child rights (FDRE, 2012: 21-23). However, apart from all the promising steps, the Commission cannot continue doing the same due to financial shortage. What makes the issue worse is the 2009 CSOs proclamation that has devastated the cooperation of the Commission with CSOs from where it used to tap additional funds, as number of its partners that are 'Ethiopian charities or CSO' which were allowed to work on human rights have suffered from financial resource constraints.

In addition, Article 6 (2 & 5) & 6(6) of proclamation No.210/2000 & No. 211/2000 respectively describe that EHRC

and EIO are entitled to check whether laws are in line with human rights guaranteed by the constitution and also take action to initiate laws for reform and/or review (Proclamation No. 210, 2000: Article 6 (2 &5) & Proclamation No. 211, 2000: 6(6)). It is, in practice, the EHRC's coordination office of Children and women human rights and EIO's Children, women and disability Affairs directorate that has been initiating laws for reform or review after assessing the impact of proposed law in cooperation with MOWCA. For instance, EHRC & EIO was assessing the future impact of Criminal Procedure Code that have been under review and giving comment as to how it can be in line with CRC. In this regard, the country report concerning the implementation of CRPD indicated the Commission effort on examining existing legislations against human rights norms (FDRE, 2012:22).

Under Article 6(1 &4) of the proclamation the Commission is also entitled to follow the implementation of CRC while investigating matters with respect to child rights and make recommendations to improve the functioning of state organs (Proclamation No 210/2000, 2011: Article 6(1&4)). The commission has most frequently investigated juvenile home (correctional centers) and prisons. Various evidences testifies that the current treatment of children is not improving due to limited number of children correctional centers that have risen over crowdedness of centers which again have necessitates retaining of children in prison with adults especially in the regional states. Specific to this issue, the Commission report indicated that children are being held with adults' in prison and absence of willingness among actors to look for options to the better treatments of children (EHRC, 2012: 161-162 & 164-165).

According to Article 5 of the EIO establishment proclamation, the Institution is established with the objective of founding good governance (Proclamation No 211/2000, Article: 5). Hence, it receives complaint cases and seeks remedies if maladministration has happened. For children are dependents of their parents/ guardians, the probability of finding children's complaint is subject to the will of their parents/ guardians. Consequently, the number of compliant cases appeared at the institution are insignificant in number. To reduce the challenge the institution has established a total of 11 model children parliament in the two City Administrations and nine Regional States as a mechanism to directly acquire children opinion. These children parliaments serve as platform where children learn and exercise their democratic rights, join together to discuss their common challenges so as to let their voice heard by the executive organs, despite financial constraints.

Furthermore, non-state actors play a significant role in child rights protection by taking certain measure like provision of emergency assistance, awareness raising campaigns, advocacy on behalf of children and legal aid (public litigation). In the current state of the country, some of these actions supposed to be taken by non-state actors is continuing while number of them are non-existent due to restrictive provisions of the 2009 CSO proclamation.

Before the enactment of the CSOs proclamation CCRDA and Save the Children were advocating for implementations of laws and policies that have impact on the rights of children. Latter after the enactment of the proclamation these organizations were limited to running round table discussion (workshop) in to raise awareness of the society concerning child right and providing essential services like education, portable water; health services, particularly polio vaccination in cooperation with WHO for same children who are in need. Local partners these organizations have also abandoned to play those roles mentioned above. Apart from its importance, for these non state actors to do promotion that

enhance the protection of child rights, most of these actors preferred to function on areas other than rights due to the restrictive provisions of the proclamation on funding.

In line with this Debebe indicated that restrictions on foreign funding has affected both the function and existence of almost all CSOs in Ethiopia, particularly advocacy based CSOs. He further specified how this further exacerbated the situation due to reluctance of donors to engage in long term project agreements and also due to the absence of domestic (indigenous) funds that can replace the loss of resources as a result of the restriction or the difficulty of raising 90% of their income from local sources (Debebe, 2010:20-21). EHRCO with its 2009 report also witnessed that the possibility for Ethiopian CSOs to engage in child rights promotion and improve their protection has been hindered following the restriction on foreign funding compounded by difficulty of raising funds locally (EHRCO, 2009: Para 7).

3.1.2. COMMUNITY LEVEL CHILD PROTECTION ISSUES

Understanding community level Child Protection issues at community level are important if foundational changes are required. Community level assessments pave ways to understand the risk and protective factors for the causes of the child ill treatment and to identify the level of abuses. The current community level assessments, which were carried out in 18 operations areas of WVE, have explored a range of risk factors deterring the wellbeing of boys and girls. This synthesis report has compiled the separate findings in the 18 Area Programs (APs) and come up with; child labor, early marriage, child trafficking, food shortage, sexual abuse including rape and female genital mutilation as the most prioritized child protection concerns. Synthesizing of the community level assessments has enabled to illustrate national level priority concerns and to draw a better picture on which WVE is going to focus in the upcoming endeavors. Further study given to the field data shows that regional variation looks on the prior concerns within regions. Early marriage was a prior concern in Amhara and Oromia. On the other hand, Child labor reported to be the top priority in Benishangul Gumuz and Addis Ababa while streetism and child trafficking were noted to be top priority in SNNPR.

Table 2 CP Priority and casual analysis Table:

Source: (CP-Adapt assessment data, 2016)

Child labor was the second top prior concern in Amhara, Oromia, and SNNPR. In Oromiya Child labor and Sexual abuse were the second top concern in the region. Sexual abuse is also the other top concern in Benishangul Gumuz. The details of the prioritization table is annexed for ease of reference (See Annex I)

Table 2 CP Priority and casual analysis Table

Prioritized child Protection Issues					
		1st	2nd	3rd	
Root Causes	Amhara	Early Marriage		Child Labor	Child Trafficking
		1st	Tradition	Poverty	Low level of awareness
		2nd	Poverty	Tradition	Poverty
		3rd	Lack of awareness	Lack of family planning practice	Tradition
		4th	Lack of gender equality	Migration	
		5th	Weak law enforcement	Alcoholism	
	Addis Ababa	Child Labor		Food Shortage	Child Trafficking
		1st	Poverty	Low family income	Lack of awareness and misinforma- tion
		2nd	Lack of awareness about child labor	Limited employment oppor- tunity	Low family income
		3rd	Lack of access to education	divorce/ family separation	Illegal brokers involvement
		4th	HTP	Lack of support mechanism	seeking for better job and econom- ic independence
		5th	Lack of birth registration	Lack of family planning	Peer influence
	SNNPR	Streetisem		Child Labor	Sexual Abuse
		1st	Large family size	Large family size	Polygamy
		2nd	Polygamy	Shortage of farmland	Large family size and shortage of farm land
		3rd	family conflict	Alcoholism	Religious leaders influence not to use contraceptives
		4th	Divorce	Divorce	Family conflict and divorce
	Oromia	Early Marriage		Child Labor	FGM
		1st	Harmful tradition that promote early marriage	Family economic situation, poverty	Low awareness on the issue and resistance to change
		2nd	Lack of awareness	Traditional role of children in the family	Long standing tradition and related social norms
3rd		Poverty	lack of awareness on child labor & positive parenting	Economic benefit from FGM(for practitioners)	
4th		Intention of parents to use the children to advance their interest	Addiction(Alcoholism)	Ignorance on SRH Education	
5th		Fear of not getting husband it is not early and fear of abduction	Poor law enforcement	Poor law enforcement	

Source: (CP-Adapt assessment data, 2016)

3.2. CAUSAL ANALYSIS OF THE CHILD PROTECTION ISSUES

i. Child labor

Most children respondents of the study participants indicated poverty, unavailability of people for household chores, low level of awareness regarding child protection and related laws, poor parenting skills, family disintegration, orphan hood and peer influence as major causes of child labor and child exploitation. Children living with low-income families survive under food shortage, shortage of food and parental care and education. In addition, these children are expected to support the family with household chores as well as forced to engage in income generation activities. In such context, survival is prioritized and the possible implication on the children development will be neglected intentionally or unintentionally.

Divorce, separation and death of parents place children in a more risk for child labor and child exploitation. Orphan children might be forced to survive by themselves as street children or working children. The unfavorable economic and psychological situation in disintegrated households usually leads to similar outcomes per the report. Children that are under the care of guardians or stepparents are usually prone to health concerns as medical care is the least regarded for these children. Labor abuse and exploitations are also reported to be worse for children living with stepparents.

Lack of life skills has aggravated child labor and exploitation. Gaps with life skills including communication, decision making, goal setting, critical analysis among others are believed to limit the ability of the children to protect their interest and make informed decision. As a result, children become prone to exploitive employments. Majority of adult respondents have indicated limited understanding and practice of good/positive parenting skills to expose children to heavy labor works. Children respondents have expressed as excessive corporal punishment within the family as a push factor forcing children to look for options like early independence which leads to increased vulnerability for labor exploitation. Demand for cheap labor in the market has also aggravated the level of child labor, which increased the involvement of child traffickers.

ii. Child Trafficking

Child trafficking can be aggravated factors categorized as a 'push factors' and 'pull factors'. The push factors are poor capacities of the children caregivers to provide them basic needs that also include food, clothes, education, health care and affection. Excessive use of corporal punishment and poor knowledge of parenting styles that fosters positive relationship between parents/caregivers and the children are also push factors that force children to leave their place of residence. Children desire to have own income also expose them to trafficking. Lack of employment opportunities within the child community, drought and slow economic progress at community level were also mentioned as contributing factors. On instances, children guardians pass children to traditional weaving at the expenses of their education to support the family income. The pull factors are usually associated with inappropriate information from peers' and/ or from illegal broker about better working and living opportunities in major towns and abroad (usually Arab countries).

iii. Early Marriage

According to the community level report findings, early marriage is influenced by a number of factors. However, poor level of awareness's on the negative effects of early marriage, tradition, religious values and social norms are the major causes for early marriage. Poverty was also reported as the other factors that facilitate the practice even in areas where clarity on the risk of early marriage exists. Parents/ guardians influence children to get into early marriage deteriorates with the increase in girls age. Also poor parents, who can't economically afford the burden of providing care for their children take early marriage as a preferred route for the child's better survival. Participants of the study have also reveled that they are encouraged to promote early marriage due to religious dogmas. Poor understanding of the family laws, poor life skills among adolescent girls and parents, fear of unwanted pregnancy for their child, and need of marriage dowry for economic benefit were also mentioned as a root causes for early marriage. Early marriage is also seen as an opportunity to strengthen ones link to rich and powerful families in the community as to opinions of some community respondents. Furthermore, poor education background of the child and lack of birth certificates contribute the family and other actors to convince the girls as well as child protection actors to facilitate the marriage.

3.3. CHILD PROTECTION SYSTEM

Under this sub unit the findings and discussions are structured to clearly discuss the findings from the collected reports from perspectives of the seven components of child protection systems, according to the CP-ADAPT manual. The information were generated from key informants who answered to key questions under each components of child protection systems

i. Laws, Policies, Standards and Regulations

Ethiopia has well-defined legal and policy frameworks to assure child protection, as presented in this report. Specifically, Ethiopia has included child rights in the national constitution and has taken measures to harmonize domestic legislation. Chapter 3 of the 1995 Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia highlights fundaments rights and freedoms in which Article 36 provides specifically for the rights of children. The Article recognizes the rights of the child:

- To life
- To a name and nationality
- To know and be cared for by parents or legal guardians
- To be protected from labor exploitation and not to be forced to undertake work that may harm his or her education, health and well-being,
- To be free from harsh or inhuman punishment that may be inflicted on his/her body in schools or childcare institutions.

Ethiopia has a very clear detailed and aligned child protection legal frame work with heavy punishment delivered on to the person/ group that abuse children right. Offenders serving long sentence behind bars (maximum of life imprisonment when the victim is below 14 years of age). It has also accepted a number of international conventions including the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), the African Charter on the Welfare and Rights of Children (ACWRC) and many others.

The appropriate implementation of the existing laws, conventions and frameworks require huge investment. Per the report, the major challenges are poor awareness and understanding of the existing laws, policies, standards, and procedures by both the right holders and duty bearers. Most of the study participants were not that much aware of child protection child concepts and also unable even to name child protection laws. Some of the study participants from Jimma Geneti Woreda were hardly able to mention specific laws and policies around child protection and appeared careless about child protection concerns. Likewise, participants from Libokemkem were not able to mention specific kind of child protection laws or regulations except few knowing that children have legal provisions under the Ethiopian constitution.

According to the data from Libokemkem, the level of awareness and common understanding about the laws, policies, and regulations among the children, stakeholders and community at large was low. Nevertheless, there were few children who were able to mention the constitution of Ethiopia as a framework for the protection of children's rights. The level of awareness was found to be higher among study participants from urban areas than rural areas. The report has also showed an increase in child abuse, specifically in child marriage or early marriage and sexual abuses especially involving children under age of 14. Regular records from libo kemkem Woreda women and children affairs office indicate that 12 children experienced sexual abuse in the last two years, but the local government hasn't taken practical actions to expand child protection structures in the woreda according to the laws and regulations. Hence, slashing down efforts to address child protection in the community.

On the other hand, study participants were reveled that most community members and also duty bearers consider abuses happening on children as a normal phenomena that happen to every child in the world. This is particularly true for physical/corporal punishment, verbal abuses and child labor. There were also areas in rural and semi urban areas where early marriage was taken as a normal practice, particularly among Muslim communities. Child abuses happening within the same family members are perceived to be family matters that should only be resolved by family members, without any external intervention or support. Such cases discourage the commitment and motivation of duty bearers to enforce existing policies, laws, and standards. The community level report has clearly shown the influence of the prevailing cultural and traditional factors to effectively interpret laws, policies, procedures and regulations.

Low level of institutional capacity including human resource, logistics and finances were reported to impede efforts of the actors. Reports from Angolala showed mishandling of children cases due to capacity limitations to infrastructural facility and human resource. Respondents have also complained on key stakeholders irresponsibility ensure the rights of the child. For example, report from Gulele indicated, as there haven't been prompt actions taken from the concerned bodies such as polices, even FOBs and CBOs following reports of child abuse. Children respondents also expressed

similar observations as to the adults. Respondents from Jeju believe that members of law enforcing bodies to be with poor understanding on the importance of addressing child abuse cases.

Most of the key stakeholder such as polices, teachers and health workers know that there are laws and regulations under the Ethiopian constitutions and other international conventions endorsed by the country, but highlighted gaps in the interpretation of the law. Lack of commitment by government officials to protect the rights of the children was mentioned as a grave challenge. Respondents also indicated lack of determination and focus on part of the higher government officials to equally promote child protection in the country as other development projects such as health, education, agriculture and infrastructure.

In this regard, capacity building interventions, both human and institutional, are mandatory. Apart from the standards and regulations that are in place, government needs to enhance stakeholder capacities to better implement procedures. Awareness rising on the concerns and impacts of child abuse has to be done to community members including heads of the household, religious leaders, children and also to duty bearers as well. Awareness raising can be done through the use of various methods including the production of IEC/ BCC materials, billboards, training, organizing drama and theaters, coffee ceremonies and so on. Available local structures that provide care and protection services need to be restructured and staffed with competent [personnel that are able to provide quality services.

ii. Services and Service Delivery Mechanisms

At community level, there are informal community based and non-government services providers to support children that are prone to risk and those who have been victims of violence, abuse, and exploitation. The findings from the reports indicated that children who have been victims of violence and abuse have access to different services such as medical services and legal support. Families also protect children at home and in their neighborhood.

In some of the regions particularly Amhara and some parts of Oromia community based child protection coalition committee named community care coalition are established to ensure the promotion and protection of the rights of the child in Ethiopia. Such coalition are comprised of delegated of sectors offices, local administrative bodies and community representatives. Informal community support mechanisms are greatly contributed towards addressing children concerns. For example, when rape and abduction happen without the knowledge of families and elders, the community collaborates and tries to redress the damage through traditional arbitration mechanisms. But, on instances where such concerns are beyond the level of the community it will be referred to formal structures. Currently, the following are members, which respond to child protection issues community:

- Police
- Judiciary
- Justice

- Women and children affairs
- Labour and social affairs
- Education offices
- Health offices
- Schools
- Child protection committees
- Volunteers
- Idirs
- FBOs
- CBOs-Community based child protection coalition committee

In addition to community coalition care committee (CCC), Vital Registration Agency (VERA) or wesagn kunet and child parliaments also get involved in the resolution of child protection issues that arise in the community. Some of the types of child protection services reported by the study participants were medical services, legal protection (following up reported child abuse cases to guarantee justice), advice and counseling. Besides, educational, economic, psychosocial support, food and nutrition services are provided by some of the service providers.

Children who are victims of sexual abuse and rape mostly provided medical certificate from health centers and hospitals for strengthening the accountability of the perpetrators. In addition to the formal structures the informal structures like CCC's, Child Parliament, FBO's existing in the community mainly provides services to children who are victims of CP issues. Further, the assessment has showed some government offices like police and justice, women and children as having reporting formats to record and follow-up cases of child abuse.

Types of services provided by Women and Children Affairs Office, as reported by participants of the study, includes psychological treatment like counseling and mediation via referral, but without a trained focal person to provide a structured and standardized counseling. The office also facilitates alternative care options through family re-integration, sponsorship and foster care.

Various services are available within the community that promotes child protection. The level of satisfaction by the quality services varies from place to place. Most of the study participants indicated dissatisfaction by the quality of the services they receive. But, some expressed their satisfaction from the services they have received from schools in

response to child protection issues. According to the study participants, the services are not up to the standard due to low capacity and carelessness, which was also witnessed by the staffs of the service providers. Financial challenge and poor child protection skills were found to be the main challenges for poor service provision by key service providers. On the other hand, respondents of the Key Informant Interview, have revealed that significant number of children with child protection concerns require psychosocial support services that could play significant role in the recovery of the victims from traumatic factors.

Respondents of the study participants seem to agree that, in general, supports are insufficient to restore the health of an abused and exploited child, which even gets worse in rural areas. Consequently, children or family members opt to go to cities or towns in search for better treatment, which burdens a family with additional costs. There are also instances where either abused child or parents/ guardians of abused child don't prefer to utilize community level services for fear of stigma, security and confidentiality. It has also been found that various abuse cases in the judiciary system take long time for even before prosecution.

Jille respondents discussed the existence of the unjustified interference of the informal actors. According to them, Muslim leaders and "Shekis" interfere during handling of child protection issues and also arrange marriage of young girl children to older people. Service providers have complained on the contribution of such acts to the ineffectiveness of the service. Few respondents' also indicated request to get bribes before receiving child protection services by the service providers.

Above all, almost all of the service providers do not have child protection policies or code of conduct to protect from the possible child abuses that might happen during the service delivery processes. In describing the situation one of the study participants at Gulele said "while we are addressing child protection issues or cases, we don't have any separate code of conduct to be followed to treat children,we address child cases same as we handle cases of an adult which has discouraged abused girl children from reporting the situation to police especially when sexual abuses or violence occur".

iii. Reporting and Service Provision

The quality of service provision and service acquisition depends on the skills of the service provider to handle reported cases of abuse and also on the awareness of the community on the available services. The data from most of the study participants revealed that the incidents committed against children go unnoticed and remain unreported to concerned bodies. Child abuse and exploitation such as child marriage, physical punishment and rape, abduction are seldom reported and high tendency of being handled in a traditional way by the interference of local elders and religious people. On few instances, reports of sexual abuses go to local police, but fail before justice is done. Often time's families of victim children complain on the privation of justice and such cases ended up with the release of offender without any punishment. Children respondents from Libokemkem and Jille testified their confert when informing instances/ cases of abuses to their family, teachers, friends, CRCs and cousins than the police, militias and other formal structures like women affairs and religious leaders. As to these children, the probability of addressing the issue depends on the

relationship of the families of the victim with the service providers. Girl children, per the report gathered, prefer to seem comfortable when receiving guidance and counseling from teachers, friends, and families where as boy children prefer it within the family.

According to the responses of these children, the feedback from these bodies is diverse based on the sex of the children. School teachers looked to be more preferred by both boys and girls children respondents to discuss matters of abuses instead of a police or legal institution. Most children understand a policeman as one legal body that only accepts or listens to reports coming from adults only. Adult women also feel very uncomfortable/ unsafe to report cases of abuse to both formal and informal entities. Respondents of the Angolala woreda indicated that service providers are usually supervised and monitored by appropriate government body through reports and review meetings, yet the monitoring are not continuous to identify ongoing gaps and address challenges.

iv. Capacities

The capacity of the different actors involved in child protection to fulfill their roles and responsibilities in relation to the prevention and response to child abuse, neglect and exploitation was assessed. The findings from the different participants of the assessment showed that there are a number of capacity limitation areas on the part of the service providers. These are related to the human, physical and financial resources of the offices. These offices usually suffer to cover basic utilities costs like telephone, stationery materials, transportation and etc that are basic to accomplish their activities. The combined effects of all factors make the organization unstructured to establish or keep functional referral and coordination mechanisms. Satisfying facilities to provide structured services to abused and vulnerable children aren't also in place. Absence of Child protection policies within the concerned offices and organizations including Women and Child Offices, Police, Kebele Administration, Schools, Labor and Social Affairs mentioned as contributing factor to the weakness.

The different community based organizations as well as the community care coalitions supported by the government do not have offices in many instances which limits the full efficiency of the service providers. This also affects the documentation of the different sensitive cases requiring care and privacy. The situation appeared to be somewhat different at Kolfe and Angolala Woredas. In cases of Kolfe most of the study participants indicated as the formal and informal actors in the community are trained on professional standards and code of conduct, rules, regulations, policies and guidelines that exist with regard to child protection. They also reported as there exists better monitoring mechanisms that include reporting and review meetings. Participants of the study were fearful of the sustainability of the committee due to number of challenges, finance being the main. Committee members in Angollal are well trained on child protection policies and guidelines, but are newly formed and starting its activity.

Most key informants from sector offices and community-based structures highlighted receiving no training tailored to child protection issues. The study participants from Jimma Genet indicated that members of child protection committee don't know their roles and responsibilities as a committee member. It was also identified from the reports that teachers and health officers are not trained to protect children from abuse, neglect, violence and exploitation. On the other hand, representatives from police and religious leaders are well trained and know how to assist a child when abused and are able to suggest protection strategies as well.

Most stakeholders and partners in child protection do not have well established budget for fostering child protection activities. It was made clear from the assessment that government does not allocate separate budget for child protection. As a result, most families and children refrain themselves from reporting occurrences of abuses as families are financially weak to cover associated costs including transportation, food, accommodations, health and age screening costs. Budget shortage has also constrained the monitoring capacity of the major actors in the child protection system.

v. Cooperation, Coordination and Collaboration Mechanisms

Child protection requires the involvement of many actors in a coordinated manner. It cannot be dealt with one single organization or actor; for the fact that child protection issues require collaborative efforts of different offices. As can be found from the assessment reports, there is certain level of coordination with various offices indifferent sites. The inter agency agreements existing within the different government offices of the government structures created a platform for coordination. However, according to most of the study participants, the level of coordination, collaboration and cooperation is weak among the different actors, though their level of functionality, collaboration and coordination vary from site to site.

According to the data from Amhara Reginal States, coordination among parents, teachers, WVE-APs, and Woreda Women and Children Office and CCCs is relatively strong. Community elders and religious elders also meet and collaborate to address challenges regularly. On the other hand, the collaboration between and among police, teacher, health workers and parents was reported to be very loose on instances. According to respondents for Melkabello and Gulele there is no effective or functional local system or structure that brings together different duty bearers and stakeholders to work together to prevent and respond to child abuse.

Most children respondents indicated gaps in referral mechanisms and service linkages among offices working on child protection services. However, children respondents from Boset, informed on the existence of better collaboration among police, women affairs office, schools clubs and parliaments and also fair level of collaboration between Iddirs, families and schools was reported at the site. This collaboration has also resulted in conflict between the different actors. For example in Muslim dominated areas like Sinbite, Jeju and Abule religious leaders cover child abuses cases especially early marriage. Contrary to religious leaders, Child Council/Parlama committees' play a significant role in reporting child abuse cases specially abduction; early marriage and student drop out due to forced marriage.

The underlying factors that contributed to the weak collaboration and coordination with the different key actors include lack of defined budget for child protection, clearly articulated coordination strategies, lack of attention to the issue on the part of key actors in the child protection system, lack of integration on planning and implementation of activities and follow up of the activities, lack of knowledge and skill among the staff and limited institutional capacity were reported to negatively

vi. Accountability Mechanisms

Accountability is a key requirement of good governance. All institutions including government, non-government and the private sectors need to be accountable to the public. In lot of instances, an organization or an institution is expected to be accountable to an entity that will be affected by its decisions or actions. Accountability cannot be enforced without transparency and the rule of law (Center for the Study of Social Policy, 2011). An accountable system, specific to child protection, is one that responds and strives to address key child protection concerns, and functions according to the CRC, relevant laws and in the best interest of the child (World Vision International, 2011). Accountability requires determining whether programs are implemented correctly, the right programs and strategies are used, progress is measured appropriately to check whether children and families are benefiting. This is established through both monitoring results (accomplishments) and through monitoring of performances (process).

The overall community assessment report has showed poor or weak accountability at all levels. Low-level awareness of the community has contributed to poor accountability. Though there are monitoring strategies to ensure transparency using the scorecard, there isn't a strategy or a mechanism where the beneficiary provides feedback to the service provider in number of cases. Beneficiaries only provide feedback on a feedback-book to service providers where it's available.

The study participants at Boset expressed that there isn't a system through which parents and children can provide feedbacks to the service provider through an independent channel. It's also mentioned that communities doesn't even know if it's their right to provide feedbacks to poor services they have received and those who knew are ignorant of the appropriate place to complain or provide feedbacks to the poor services they have received.

Key stakeholder participants at Melkabeallo also complained delay in services delivery to number of requests specially related to child protection. Same respondents said that there is poor reporting from the community in general due to poor knowledge of accountability. Adult respondents have also highlighted lack of commitment by some government actors hence negligence to report cases of child abuse.

Accountability has also been overshadowed due to interference of authorities, local elders and religious representatives especially on cases like sexual abuse and early marriage. The study participants at Homosha reported that due to poverty and lack of knowledge about the law, families accept the compensation offered from abusers without being able to report when offenders have money and influence.

Regarding, their level of satisfaction by the quality of service they get from the different actors, most of the study participants expressed their dissatisfaction by the service quality. For example, the study participants at Angolela indicated as the quality and timeliness of services and response provided to child protection cases lacks consistency and uniformity both within the formal and informal CP structures. Respondents mentioned that there are instances where reported cases are delayed till the last minutes, due to poor accountability mechanisms. Respondents from Jille communities have expressed their disappointment with the services provided to them. According to adult respondents

of this community, had it not been for the little efforts by the traditional and religious support mechanisms, single cases of child abuse wouldn't have been settled by the formal structure.

vii. Circle of Care

The attitudes, values, behaviors and traditional practices operating within the specific community play a pivotal role in influencing child protection system. As positive attitudes, values, behaviors and traditional foster a caring, supportive and protective social environment, negative attitudes and practices also affect a community the other way.

In many parts of the nation, children are considered to be assets for a family that will bring wealth and also help to attain social prestige. Children are also thought to have their own fate implying that there is no need to worry on how a child should be raised as a saying goes "lije beedilu yadigal" a literal translation mean "every child has its own fate". Per the community level reports, in most communities there exists practice of discrimination among girl children. Most communities' level reports indicate communities' reluctance to send their girl children to school. Communities in Jille refer a girl child as incompetent to a boy child and hence associate girls to duty in the kitchen and boys to public responsibilities.

The responses of some of the study participants showed that children with disability, street children and girls are more likely to be sexually abused while children from very poor family are more likely to be exposed to child labor. Children with disabilities are also more affected by neglect and abuse even though there are some changes in mindset of the community about caring to such children. For example, the traditional practice of "GEBIR" is one illustration. The term "GEBIR" refers to bringing children with disabilities especially children who are blind from Rural to Urban by their colleagues or parents to engage in beggary and gain income. These people convince children to move from rural to urban areas. The children collect money and pay back to their family members in the form of compensation or "GEBIR".

The study participants at Gulele reported that girls are more affected than boys by child protection issues, particularly sexual abuse. Gulele participants reported that boys predominantly engage in traditional weaving at early age and girls in pottery work, gathering firewood for sale and with household chores, which contribute to school dropout and absentees.

As there exists bad traditions that aggravate child abuses, there are also positive circle of care that promotes positive attitudes, values and traditions among the target groups. "Adera" is one of such practices where people entrust the responsibility of looking after their children when they have long journey to markets, celebrations and cases at urban places to their neighbor or to the one they trust until their return.

In such situations trustee assumes the full responsibility of caring for the child at his/her custody. Further, the assessment findings indicated that the community excludes the perpetrators of children from community based institutions and faith based organizations such as idirs, and mahiber that are formed for serving the community which serves as a protective factor.

In addition to the care and support provided by faith based organization the participants of the assessment mentioned that teachers, child right committees, community police officers, family members, CBO's, health centers and aid organizations, child parliaments, women and children affairs provide care and deal abuse, exploitation and neglect.

In spite of the above, the circle of care is challenged by limited capacity of child protection actors and the prevailing unfavorable attitudes and traditional practices related to children. In addition, separation and divorce of parents, conflict between families and poor parenting skills affect the circle of care negatively.

viii. Children's Resilience, Life Skills and Participation

Accountability can be implemented through either an "extended route," whereby citizens influence policy makers who in turn influence service delivery or through a "short route," through which citizens individually and collectively—can directly influence, participate in, and supervise service delivery (UNDP, 2014). The context of child protection calls for the increase capacity of children to be aware of child protection issues and engage in the protection and safeguarding of their interest. This in turn depends on the life skills possessed by children. Life skills might be defined as a skill that will enable once to overcome challenges through out life skillfully.

The findings from all sites revealed that most children lack the required awareness, knowledge and skill to influence the child protection systems and their environment. The study respondents indicated that most children in their communities do not have access to life skill development activities. Most of this respondents reported that children, on many instances, fail to report abuse cases due to lack of self-confidence and communication skills. Children remain silent in revealing their abuse, especially girls who were raped may not tell to anybody because of fear and stigmatization by her own family and/or community member/s.

For children are not allowed to participate in various community activities, the developments of their life skill potentials are hampered. Though their participation in the community is limited, they can voice their demand through one-to-five structure, child parliament and school clubs. The study participants pointed out children parliaments, school clubs and child-led initiatives as mechanisms of enhancing children's life skills and participation. These structures could help to develop the life skills of children through trainings, peer-led initiatives and experience sharing. Participants have also explained that non-government organizations are supporting such structures through various trainings.

4. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The assessment was conducted to identify and priorities child protection issues in the target communities, identify the most important root causes of those issues, map the existence and effectiveness of the elements of the child protection system in the community. It was aimed at analyzing and understanding child protection issues and systems and also to strategically plan future interventions. The assessment was conducted according to the CP-ADAPT manual. It was successfully carried out involving all key actors within child protection systems such as children, community, stakeholders and key figures/focal persons. Including different stakeholders in the assessment process has facilitated exchange of knowledge and skills among the local people. The key problems identified and prioritized by the participants will serve as a strategic document when planning child protection specifically in the assessment area.

The findings of the assessment revealed that child labor, early marriage, child trafficking, sexual abuse including rape, food shortage, female genital mutilation, food shortage, marriage between old and very young girls were the most prioritized child protection issues. The top priority was given to child labor followed by early marriage, sexual abuse and child trafficking. Early marriage was identified as the top priority issue in Amhara and Oromia. On the other hand, Child labor reported to be the top priority in Benishangul Gumuz and Addis Ababa while streetism was noted to be top concern within SNNPR. Most child participants consider poverty, demand for child labor in the family, low level of awareness about child protection and related laws, poor parenting skills, family disintegration, orphan-hood, peer influence, and lack of life skills as a main cause for causes of child labor and exploitation. Number of push and pull factors in the family and within the community have fostered child exploitation.

It has also been noted that child protection systems aren't strong enough to guarantee effective child protection. The low level of the public awareness on laws, policies, standards, and procedures has contributed to poor performances of the system. Though there are service delivery mechanisms and services in place, the quality of the service provision are negatively affected by institutional capacity. The major actors in the service delivery and child protection mechanism include sector offices, law enforcement bodies, NGOs, CRCs, CCCs, CCs, children parliament, FBOs and other community based organizations. As much as there exist attitudes, values and norms that foster an enabling and supportive environment for children, there are harmful traditional practices, parenting styles and attitudes towards children that result in child abuse and exploitations. The accountability of the actors involved in the child protection system was also found to be weak.

In view of the findings of the study, practical actions and interventions are recommended to enhance the effectiveness of the child protection system and address the prioritized child protection issues in a systematic approach. The recommendations are discussed hereunder

4.2. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

i. Laws, Policies, Standards and Regulations

The overall understanding of the key stakeholders on the laws, policies, standards and regulations relevant to child protection is found to be poor, requiring serious engagement to improve their capacities. To improve the implementation of existing laws, policies, standards and regulations, there is a need to invest on the institutional capacity of key government offices, community based organizations, children parliaments and families. As capacity limitation also have implication on one's commitment and responsiveness, it is vital that the offices are well capacitated with the required human resource, infrastructure, and sufficient budget. Besides, the awareness level of the community at large and also the children on topics including child rights, child protection policies, laws, standards and regulations should be enhanced through different awareness creation mechanisms. Continuous dialogue among the different stakeholders could be instrumental to raise awareness. Provision of tailored trainings on key child protection issues is also vital. Its also important to revisit the existing curriculum and include child protection issues are also important.

ii. Services and Service Delivery Mechanisms

Within the community there are various institutions that are providing services to ensure child protection. The overall quality of the services are not satisfactory to address the basic needs of the children and the wider communities due to limited capacity of the service providers, poor referral linkage between and among the different actors and also due to low level of awareness about the available services on the part of the service seekers. In this regard, if ensuring child protection is important, the below seen action points need to be acted up on:

- Raise public awareness on the available services, service type, and the different delivery mechanisms
- Facilitate the provision of free basic and essential service to children including birth registrations
- Implementing participatory monitoring and evaluation of service delivery process, especially to children who experienced abuse and violation
- Serious of awareness raising programs must be provided for children, if children are to receive effective and efficient services from the service providers
- Service providers needs to be trained and equipped on effective and efficient service delivery mechanism especially for those children who are subject to abuse and exploitation. Facilities need to be child friendly and warm enough to the child to express his/her feelings openly in private
- Train child protection committees and other actors on monitoring service delivery for vulnerable and abused children

- Allocate appropriate budget to sector offices, local administrative bodies and public service providers to fulfill their child protection roles and responsibilities
- Awareness on special need children has to be done during planning and implementing child protection issues

iii. Capacity

Capacity is an element of the child protection system that stands to be part and parcel of every element of child protection system. The existing capacity of stakeholders at different levels is found to be nescient, providing a sub-standard services. Building capacities of stakeholders is important to protect child right before and after the abuse. To improve stakeholders' capacities, interventions are required on the below listed areas:

- Government need to take thoughtful steps to promote child right at different levels of its structure including federal, regional, woreda and keble level.
- Mobilizing traditional structures such as groups of cultural entity, religious, social activities and CBOs to engage them through community-based child protection mechanisms.
- Support the CPC committee's to enable them to monitor and implement child protection activities at the same time build their capacities on resource mobilization to efficiently execute their activities which will also sustain communities engagement
- Psychological and social support services should be provided by Women and Children Affairs at the woreda and district level free of charge. These offices need to be well staffed with the required resources including financial and human expertise.
- Build the capacity of CCC, child parliament and community based organization and government institutions to address HTP that are being practiced in the community behind closed doors and work on its root causes.
- Support need to be given to develop and strengthen children resilience, life skills and capacity to engage and to influence their environment.

Assertiveness for children can be increased in number of ways including:

- Provide life skills training and information on child protection services and service providers across the continuum of care to develop resilience and capacity for self-protection
- Facilitate the formation of child-led structures such as children's groups, clubs or parliaments as community-

based child protection forums where children raise and discuss number of own issues.

- Train children capacity in monitoring and advocacy. Once a child capacity is enhanced, he/she can also contribute in influencing duty bearers informally, aware parents and also mobilize resources
- Support children to participate in CPCs as representatives of children in the community to influence decision making
- Provide life skill trainings to enhance their assertiveness towards the choices they make

iv. Cooperation, coordination and collaboration

Strengthening coordination and collaboration is instrumental in enhancing the capacity of the actors to implement the laws, policies, standards and regulations. The existing collaboration among stakeholders is very weak and fragile. Often time stakeholders run into conflict in their effort to address child protection issues. To improve the level of cooperation and collaboration mapping of the key actors in the community need to be done. Key stakeholders should also prepare a formal partnership agreement through memorandum of understanding, establishing a clear referral mechanism, developing and disseminating service director would be required results. Close monitoring mechanisms need to be identified and stated transparent manner. In this partnership the role played by the women and child office is important which will in return calls for the increased investment of the office in managing such networks. School could also play a pivotal role in strengthening the leverage, particularly between and among parents, police, women and children office. On top of the above, integrated planning, implementation and monitoring system on child protection should be used as a pillar in assuring the effectiveness of Cooperation, coordination and collaboration mechanisms.

v. Accountability

Though public awareness and transparency of child protection actors is the key pillar in assuring accountability in the system, community level reports identified accountability within child protection system to be non-existent. Thus, it is important to increase community awareness on child protection issues, roles and responsibilities of the different actors in the system, and their right. In addition, feedback and complaint mechanisms should be clearly stated and known by the public.

Joint planning, monitoring and evaluation strategies need to be in place to promote transparent accountability of all key stakeholders.

vi. Circle of Care

A relatively better circle of care exists at the community level especially through the informal relations of the community. To further enhance and influence the circle of care the below suggested key points are forwarded:

- Increase parents awareness on parenting skills and child psychology
- Support “poor” families with economic strengthening interventions in order to enable them meet basic needs of the child
- Promote extended family traditional care and protection practices
- Create awareness among the community on inclusive and gender-equitable attitudes and behaviors
- Train and educate parents on conflict management
- Facilitate local adoption for those children who lost their parents and lack caretakers
- Creating awareness in the community and among different institutions about the special needs of children with disability
- Tackle traditional practices, negative attitudes and norms towards children through awareness creation sessions

Children's Participation in Data Collection



Exploring the views of children through balloon game

Risk mapping exercise by girls



Spider game exercise by children

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