INTER-AGENCY CHILD PROTECTION DATABASE

Save the Children, the International Rescue Committee (IRC) and UNICEF are working together on supporting the standard inter-agency child protection database to facilitate Family Tracing and Reunification, DDR and other vulnerable children programs.

Working with separated children, children associated with armed forces and armed groups and other especially vulnerable children are major components of UNICEF, IRC and Save the Children's child protection programs, with family tracing and reintegration as a key element. Systems for gathering information, collating data, and monitoring are central to this work.

A number of organizations have worked together over the past ten years to promote and support standard approaches to working with separated children including standard registration forms and guidelines. Within this context, Save the Children UK and IRC have been working on developing a shared database. In addition to family tracing, the current database can be used as a case management and an information management tool to generate reports and analyses for

Example of information tracked on separated children

vulnerable children such as on specific protection concerns. This includes for example, for children associated with armed forces and armed groups, on reasons why children are recruited; a child's role within the armed group; and how, when and why they left. Such information is particularly useful for program planning, monitoring and evaluation and for our global advocacy work on child protection concerns.

How the Database Can Help your Child Protection Programs

- The inter-Agency Database is flexible and can quickly be implemented at the earliest stages of an emergency.
- The system can easily be customized to meet the countries and programs' specificities such as incorporating the different type of protection concerns vulnerable children are facing or highlighting participation in certain activities.
- The inter-agency database promotes a coordinated approach key for successful family tracing by gathering information at each critical step of family tracing and reunification from rapid registration, tracing, verification, reunification to follow-up.
- The inter-agency database promotes best practices by using standard forms and guiding principles developed by the inter-agency working group on Separated Children.
- Using a standard system already in place in multiple countries and agencies and having access to a global infrastructure for support and training will help streamline resources for development, maintenance, support and training.

- The system enhances child protection activities, program planning, monitoring and evaluation by facilitating case management and data analysis. The Inter-Agency Database can:
  - Quickly provide lists of children that need follow up, need specific attention due to their protection concerns, etc;
  - Facilitate planning for children such as outlining reintegration packages, durable solutions or specific responses for specific protection concerns;
  - Help evaluate changes over time and adapt your programs consequently;
  - Help understand trends and changes in cases;
  - Provide critical information for your advocacy efforts.
- The inter-agency database facilitates sharing of information in secured way between agencies and for cross border tracing.

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Description of the Consortium & Project

In December 2005, Save the Children and IRC formed an inter-agency consortium, with UNICEF on the steering committee, to coordinate the ongoing support, future developments of and training on this inter-agency system. The Child Protection Database Consortium's overall aim is to use a standard version of the Database and to jointly co-ordinate and oversee future development and maintenance of the system that can be deployed globally to support coherent and efficient response and enable compatibility across programs and agencies working in this field. The steering committee (SC-UK, IRC and UNICEF) oversees the usage and manages any changes required to the application.

The first phase of this project took place in January and February 2006 which focused on supporting, following up and improving utility of the database in West Africa where IRC and SCUK had already or were about to implement this system. Training to both database staff and child protection workers were conducted in Ivory Coast, Liberia and Guinea. This first phase also included the development of standard training tools for end users.

Phase Two, consisted of learning from existing usage, building capacity where the database was currently implemented, the further roll out geographically and an expansion in the number of agencies using the database. It included the provision and coordination of technical support and training for the implementing agencies, plus revision and further development of the database as a result of input from the field-testing. During phase 2, the training material was revised so they are more user-friendly, sustainable and less dependent on "in person" country trainings.

Phase Three, currently underway, main focus is the long term sustainability of the system, enhancing its flexibility, and ensuring its readiness for use in any new emergency. This will help child protection agencies respond efficiently to new emergencies, and to react effectively to address rapid changes in existing humanitarian contexts.

WHERE IS THE INTER-AGENCY DATABASE CURRENTLY IMPLEMENTED?

The database is currently being used in Liberia, Ivory Coast, Guinea, North and South Sudan, Uganda, Indonesia and Nepal by a number of different agencies including Save the Children UK, Save the Children US, Save the Children Norway, UNICEF, the International Rescue Committee, World Vision, Caritas, Christian Children's Fund, War Child, local governmental and non-governmental partners.

Example of Protection Concerns Reports that can provide you with quick access to list of children that need specific attention

To Learn More on the Inter Agency Child Protection Database

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