

Community Child Protection Exchange

6 things to know about it
and why you should join

1) What is the Community Child Protection Exchange?

The Community Child Protection Exchange – or “Exchange” – is an online initiative which aims to improve the level of knowledge and understanding around community-based child protection mechanisms and national child protection systems.

The Exchange recognises the rich knowledge base which resides within the practitioners and implementers working with communities to protect children. This recognition is reflected in the Exchange’s “ground up” learning approach to information and knowledge exchange, which sees practitioners as experts in their field.

The Exchange website was set up in 2011 to enable practitioners from around the world to connect with each other and share information and learning on community-based child protection mechanisms and child protection systems. The Exchange also runs free access webinars with an emphasis on sharing experiences and encouraging lively dialogue between participants and speakers.

2) Why do we need a Community Child Protection Exchange?

Whilst numerous organisations and communities have been working to protect children for many years using a diverse range of responses and innovations at the local level, this important learning and experience is often not documented or shared widely.

The good news is that practitioners and researchers are increasingly starting to learn about and review the work they are doing with communities to protect children. However there is still work to be done in ensuring that practitioners incorporate key recommendations and implications from research into their work. Likewise, the wealth of information held at individual and community level needs to be shared more consistently with the national, regional and global levels.

In response, the Exchange aims to make information on community child protection flow more easily between practitioners.

Interagency Learning Initiative on Community-Based Child Protection Mechanisms and Child Protection Systems

The Exchange is part of the Interagency Learning Initiative on Community-Based Child Protection Mechanisms and Child Protection Systems. This initiative seeks to strengthen learning on community child protection mechanisms and how they link to national child protection systems. The initiative also supports action research on strengthening community-based child protection mechanisms in Kenya and Sierra Leone.

The working group includes: Child Protection Working Group, the Columbia Group for Children in Adversity, Human Sciences Research Council, IICRD, Oak Foundation, Plan International, REPSSI, Save the Children, Transcultural Psychosocial Organization Uganda, UNICEF, USAID DCOF, USAID PEPFAR, War Child Holland and World Vision International.

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The Community Child Protection Exchange is an online initiative for practitioners working with or supporting community-based child protection and child protection systems strengthening

Supporting communities to keep children safe



The Exchange also works to enable members to link with each other - to discuss challenging issues, share their thoughts and experiences or provide support to each other.

The Exchange’s friendly, easy to use website creates an informal environment where members can connect and share ideas. We also summarise key information and the latest thinking about community-based child protection mechanisms and child protection systems - through the development of short briefs, newsletters and webinars - to make it accessible and digestible to a broader audience.

3) What does a community-based child protection mechanism look like?

Community-based child protection mechanisms come in many forms and have evolved in response to their unique contexts. Commonly, they are in the form of community groups which focus on issues relating to keeping children safe and well in a village, urban neighbourhood, district or other community such as a camp or temporary settlement. These groups might be child protection, welfare or orphans and vulnerable children committees; anti-trafficking groups; women’s or youth groups or religious groups. These groups are made up of a diverse collection of people, often volunteers. In some cases community-based child protection mechanisms may not take a group form, for instance, where there are individual child protection focal points. They might also involve processes such as monitoring and referral mechanisms.

4) Who can join the Community Child Protection Exchange?

Anyone interested in child protection can join the Exchange. The Exchange’s “ground up” learning approach means that the website and webinars are specifically designed to serve our key audience - the practitioners and implementers of community child protection programmes and projects. However, people working on all levels of child protection will also find the Exchange an important information source on community child protection.

5) What are the benefits of becoming a member?

When you join the Exchange you become part of a global community of people working with local communities to keep children safe and well. You will be able to hear about other members’ work and experiences. You can ask for support from members, get feedback on an idea or swap experiences.

You’ll receive regular updates and alerts on the latest learning, events and other resources in brief, easy to read formats. You’ll also be able to join our webinars and link with the presenters. Finally, you can use the Exchange to post notices and increase awareness about your organisation and your work.

What do we mean by child protection systems strengthening?

A systems approach generally supports broader child protection frameworks at national, provincial, or other levels which take into account and work across different sectors including legal and policy contexts; institutional capacity; community contexts; planning, budgeting, and monitoring and evaluation.

This approach differs from child protection efforts focusing on single thematic issues, such as HIV and AIDS, children in emergencies or child labour. Single-issue approaches often lead to fragmented and unsustainable child protection responses.

A systems approach should ensure a more effective response across different child protection challenges.

6) How can I find out more about the Community Child Protection Exchange?


The simplest way to learn more is to visit our website and have a look around. Ask the community a question or just tell us what you’re thinking. You can also follow the Exchange using your favourite social media – on Facebook, Twitter, or LinkedIn.


In addition, the Exchange hosts are always happy to answer any queries or provide assistance where possible.


References: Strengthening Child Protection Systems in Sub-Saharan Africa - A working paper. Interagency working group on child protection, 2012.


What are we learning about protecting children in the community? An inter-agency review of evidence on community-based child protection mechanisms, Executive summary. Mike Wessels, published on behalf of the Inter-agency Reference Group by Save the Children UK, 2009

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 admin@childprotectionforum.org

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