

**NGO Resource Centre  
Child Rights Working Group**

**Draft Meeting minutes  
21 September 2009**

Chaired: Mr. Tuan from Plan International in Vietnam

Noted by: NGORC

Outline:

- 1) Opening and introduction
- 2) Briefing of the result of Taskforce Meeting on September 11
- 3) Presentation of the final draft of CRP Complementary report & final feedback
- 4) Discussion and agreement on the remaining activities for report finalization and submission
- 5) Sharing- CR related issues- Johanna Risse, Terre des hommes- Lausanne, and Paul Finnis, Saigon Children Charity make a presentation of Child Protection Policy with use of a toolkit called "Keeping Children Safe"
- 6) Next meeting scheduled November 5th with key topic on child protection

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**1) 13:30-13:45 Opening and introduction- NGORC and Plan**

\* Introduction by Marko with a special welcome to colleagues from the South

**2) 13:45-14:00 Briefing of the result of Taskforce Meeting on Sept 11 – Save the Children and Consultant**

\* Eva, the consultant, presented an overview of the Taskforce meeting in Sep 11, 2009 and also the previous process of collecting comments from all members (Power point notes from the meeting will be available online)

\* Main Points: the state and complementary report covers only period 2002-2007 & should ideally be a maximum of 30 pages. 2 options for submission are also raised- (January 2010 or defer until 2010 or 2011)

\* A discussion on these options was conducted, and finally it was agreed by all that:

- The report should be completed and submitted to CRC in Geneva in January 2010;
- Additional findings and recommendations could be made afterwards and sent to CRC in Geneva upon actual need and/or requirement from CRC

**3) 14:00-15:30 Presentation of the final draft of CRP Complementary report and final feedback**

\* The updated report failed to be sent via the mailing list and will be emailed ASAP with more inputs from this meeting

\* Eva presented what has been improved/ modified with each of the report sections for further comments from the meeting participants

\* Most of these improvements were accepted by all. The participants just added more points for the following:

o Cooperation with civil society:

+ Comment by Marko: The passing of the law on national associations has recently been placed on hold. However, the law on international NGOs will hopefully be approved by the end of this year.

+ Mr. Marko informs the group that there are 2 kinds of local associations that are registered differently by VUSTA. This month, the PM will define the categories under which civil society organizations are allowed to work. The recently released categories primarily focus on organizations with a scientific and natural sciences background which may exclude more grassroots and human rights groups. There have been rapid changes in legislation in the last year regarding civil society organizations.

o Definition of the Child (page 89):

+ Comment: One recommendation from the Vietnam Association is to conduct research on raising the age of responsibility to the age of 18.

o Respect for the views of the child:

+ Commentator: We should recommend greater dialogue WITHIN the Government and within the National Assembly.

+ Tuan said that we should be more specific when we mention where children should participate (e.g Plan is conducting a project for participation of poor children and adults in annual Social, Economic and Development Plan). We should show specific examples about where and how children could participate and the value added from their participation.

\* After the presentation, Chairman Tuan argued that there is a need to refocus. The Government has many recommendations and suggestions, and many overlap with the complementary report.

o Marko noted that these recommendations should be highlighted in the executive summary in the first page of the report.

o Eva responded that there are 6 current key recommendations in the report summary:

1. National protection systems
2. Strengthening the new generative department
3. Improving implementation – lack of implementation
4. Children's Ombudsperson
5. Child participation
6. Need for adequate data

\* Geeta from UNICEF responded that that many of UNICEF recommendations coincided with the recommendations of the complementary report and that she was very happy with this

\* Everybody agreed on these key recommendations.

\* Tuan suggested that it was necessary to add “Non-discrimination” principle into these recommendations, especially the one about child participation, by putting special note about the most vulnerable children groups such as children with disability and HIV. Eva and everybody agreed to this idea.

\* The report is currently 24 pages and should be finally below 30 pages

#### **15:30-15:45 tea break**

#### **4) 15:45-16:00 Discussion and agreement on the remaining activities for report finalization and submission- All members**

\* Timeline for Complementary CRC report finalisation and submission was reviewed and agreed by all as follows:

o The updated report after this meeting would be sent to all and final ideas would come to the consultant by Friday Sep 25

o The report completion: the end of this October, 2009

\* Question: Who will edit the final document? Answer: It is suggested that if there are sufficient funds, we should hire a professional translator. Tuan proposed that the task force should be responsible for editing. This would be discussed and agreed later.

\* Question: Who signs the complementary report? Answer: The organizations that are part of the CRWG group should sign the final report

\* Question: Should we include organizations in the South? Answer: Yes

\* Question: How should the report be presented to Government? Answer: Someone suggested that an informal presentation should be given to a smaller group of government representatives to highlight the main points of the report and to answer any questions. In addition, a copy of the report will be shared with the government

\* Question: How many copies of the supplementary report will be sent to Geneva and how? Answer: 25 copies must be sent to Geneva via post. Johanna will be travelling to Geneva on December 15<sup>th</sup> and we should contact her again later to see if she can take some.

\* Question: When is the official submission deadline? Answer: Official submission deadline is January 2010

**5) 16:00-16:45 Sharing- CR related issues-** Johanna Risse, Terre des hommes - Lausanne, and Paul Finnis, Saigon Children Charity made a presentation on work currently being undertaken by the CRWG in Ho Chi Minh City on Child Protection with use of a toolkit called “Keeping children safe”

- After discussion it was agreed in HCMC to do some work together on Child Protection. There are several aims for this work:
  - To share a common understanding of the problems and response
  - To develop a set of guidelines for INGOs and NGOs operating in Southern Vietnam to use to help in developing their own policy
  - To use the shared approach as a means to support discussions with government, the media and other related organisations

- Ultimately to deliver a series of workshops as well as written material to help particularly small local organisations to develop an effective but appropriate policy
- The work will be based on Keeping Children Safe toolkit.
  - This was developed by a consortium of organisations including Save the Children, Plan. Oxfam, World Vision, Terre des Hommes and others.
  - Paul and Johanna showed the pack and gave the website address ([www.keepingchildrensafe.org.uk](http://www.keepingchildrensafe.org.uk)). All the materials are available on-line and to download.
- There was a discussion about which organisations already had a policy of their own and about how well the policy is shared and adhered to.
  - Someone raised the point that larger organizations are more likely to have child development policies compared to smaller NGOs.
  - A comment from a local NGO highlights that simplicity is paramount. The need to create structure and that can be used by smaller NGOs as well as larger NGOs.
- Paul and Johanna expressed the hope that this is something that we can work together with Hanoi on. Is this possible? Paul and Johanna said that they feel it will be substantially stronger if Hanoi and HCMC share the same views and would be better value (in terms of time commitments) if this became a Vietnam-wide piece of work.
- The process has already started in HCMC and the meeting today was an important part of that process. HCMC will start work on this tomorrow (22<sup>nd</sup> September) and will be using the materials and DVD etc taken from the KCS pack. The idea is to begin to share our thoughts with the aim to discuss and hopefully agree a core set of general principles on child protection.
- Johanna then talked the group through the introductory parts of the KCS video – especially the element about what it feels like for an NGO worker, a child and a child abuser to work within an organisation with a policy and also an organisation without a policy.

## **Discussion**

Paul and Johanna then posed the key question: “Would Hanoi like to be part of this?”

The answer was “Yes” and that the next meeting would focus on this topic further. Johanna and Paul will be happy to help by participating in discussions and liaising with the HCMC CRWG.

+ ACTION: Tuan said we should have another meeting where HCMC present the results of their findings in order to work together.

+ Question: How will we work together? Tuan responded that at the next meeting, the CRWG would continue focusing on child protection and that as we go into the subject, a way to work will emerge.

+ ACTION: Each organization can kindly exchange their policy or guidelines via email.

**6) 16:45-17:00 Discussion on next meeting agenda and other- All members**

- \* Topic for next meeting will be child protection
- \* Tentative date: Monday, November 9th

17:00-17:10 – Wrap-up and closing