



CHILD VIOLENCE

PROGRAM FACT SHEET

*Towards a national plan
of action on protecting
children from violence
in East Africa*

Introduction

In response to the continued violence meted against children in Africa, the African Network for the Prevention and Protection against Child Abuse and Neglect (ANPPCAN) jointly with the Save the Children Finland and with the support of the European Union, have initiated a programme – EIDHR – to curb the problem of violence against children in Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya and Somaliland.

The overall objective of the programme is to build capacity of policy makers and implementing institutions as well as civil society organizations and enable them to act appropriately and reduce occurrence of violence against children.

Objectives of the programme are:

- To enhance knowledge on violence against children among all stakeholders in the four countries
- Expand knowledge and commitment on violence against children among all stakeholders in the four countries
- Enhance advocacy and execution of laws on violence against children
- Establish regional platforms for dialogue and networking on the subject matter
- Formulation of multi-sectoral and multi-stakeholder based plans at national level to stop all forms of violence against children in the four countries

What is Violence against Children?

The World Health Organization (WHO) in its World Report on Violence and Health defines violence as the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in, or has a high likelihood or resulting in injury, death, psycho-logical harm, development or deprivation.

Types of Violence against Children

Physical and psychological violence mostly occurs in the form of punishment. According to Save the Children Alliance, “Physical and psychological punishment is the use of physical force or degrading treatment causing some degree of pain or discomfort, in order to discipline, correct, control, change behaviour or in the belief of educating/bringing up the child. Physical punishment can take many forms including hitting the child with a hand or other object, kicking, shaking or throwing the child, pinching or pulling the hair, caning or whipping. Psychological punishment takes various forms such as humiliation, threat, neglect, degradation, demeaning and ridicule”

Child Labour is also an important aspect of physical violence against children. Child labour besides being hazardous, also interferes with child’s education and is harmful to the child’s health, physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development.

Sexual Violence is another form of violence committed against children. Sexual violence is understood here in a wider context constituting sexual abuses like rape and commercial sexual exploitation including

child prostitution, pornography and trafficking. It also covers “all forms of sexual threat, assault, interference and exploitation” in violation of the fundamental right to personal security as recognized in international human rights laws and which inflicts serious harm and injury to the victims, their families and communities.

The violence project aims to contribute to stopping all forms of violence against children in the four countries in the Horn of Africa -Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya and Somaliland

Strategies in Stopping Violence

The project uses four strategies to advocate for stopping violence against children in the Horn of Africa. These strategies are interlinked and complementary.

Building Knowledge

Decision makers and public at large need reliable and up-to-date information about the problems facing African children in order to make the required changes. The project seeks to provide relevant information by synthesizing existing knowledge and undertaking additional research.

Speaking out on Violence against Children

The projects endeavours to speak out and bring African perspective to the dialogue on children’s rights by producing reports on the occurrence of violence in the Horn of Africa and will not shy away from identifying the perpetrators in order to create an environment conducive to change. The project aims to contribute to creating a movement and pressure for action on violence against children and strengthen the capacity of child rights organizations to mount effective campaigns.

Reforming Laws and Policies

Where rights are embedded in a legal framework, our advocacy will focus on legislation and policy change. Where rights are enshrined in law, we will focus on ensuring that legislation is put into practice. The aim is to assist governments and non governmental organization in developing and implementing effective pro-child policies and programmes. The project, further, endeavours to develop best practice guidelines and support advocacy campaigns of local organizations in changing laws and policies affecting children.

Building an Alliance of Child Rights Organization

The effective translation of advocacy materials and initiatives to end violence against children into effective action requires two mediating elements. One is the involvement of the media. Another is the launching or fostering of a movement that can take up the cause of children and pressure and lobby for attitudinal change and policy action.

The project contributes to this effort by engaging the disparate groups of child rights organizations and initiating the process of fostering unity and partnership amongst them. This will help move the violence agenda forward, improve the quality of work and serve as a unifying factor in child rights advocacy.

The violence project provides a platform to facilitate the coming together of child rights organizations, which, will eventually lead to the establishment of national and regional alliances of child rights organizations.

Target Groups

- Policy makers,
- Policy implementers
- Representatives of civil society organizations
- Children and Youth through children's organizations.

Beneficiaries

Boys and girls in the four countries, especially girls, currently suffering the consequences from physical, psychological or sexual violence