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Strategies for Improved Social Protection in Asia: Child Protection (Project and Program Issues)

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I. Background for Program Planning

A. Child Protection: A New Paradigm?

Child protection as a specific and separate aspect of social protection is a recent development in social protection policies around the world. Although children before were incorporated in social policy issues and strategies this was often in an implicit manner in which, for example, children would be supported through interventions directly targeting their parents. More explicit inclusion of children was as a rule reserved for cases in which a particular group or category of children was seen as the key issue or problem one was trying to address, for example 'street children' or 'child prostitution'.

There is no doubt that the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) has played a significant role in increasing the focus on child protection issues and formed the background for mainstreaming child protection in many contexts. In some of the leading donor countries children's rights have been incorporated into donor policies and been mainstreamed in one way or the other. The Netherlands, for example was one of the first countries to include child rights and child protection in its policies concerning work in the developing countries.¹ Sweden was soon to follow and the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) has mainstreamed child protection in its general work, following a number of studies of child protection issues in Swedish development aid.² All programs and projects are now checked for the extent to which they affect children's lives, similar to what is done in areas such as 'environment', and 'gender'. Many other national donor agencies have also given children much higher priority in their policies and strategies in recent years, for example the UK (Dfid), Norway (NORAD), Germany (GTZ), and Denmark (DANIDA).

At the international level the World Bank has increased its focus on child protection and children's initiatives in recent years.³ Key areas are education, where the World Bank is the largest external source of finance in the developing world, and child labor where the World Bank works closely together with two other key players, UNICEF and ILO. World Bank supported programs in Asia include a number of projects concerning child labor in South Asia, major primary education

1. Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1994, First Steps. Policy memorandum on children in developing countries, Development Cooperation Information Department, The Hague.

2. [references to be inserted]

3. The World Bank, 2000, The World Bank & Children, Washington D.C.

projects in for example India and Nepal, and support to the government back-to-school program in Indonesia in order to reduce school drop-out rates and prevent child labor from rising.

Not only has the last decade or so thus seen an increased attention to childhood matters in developing countries, but the way that we look at child protection, and our perception of child development in a cross-cultural perspective, has changed dramatically and to an extent which has led some observers to refer to an actual change of paradigms. Generally speaking the most profound change has probably been the realization that 'childhood' is culturally determined and context-dependent and that models based on 'Western' perceptions of childhood are not necessarily valid, appropriate or adequate in, for example, an Asian context.⁴

More specifically speaking one can identify at least five key areas in which our perceptions of and approaches to child protection and childhood development have changed over the last decade:

- (i) From needs to rights: The principle of non-discrimination employed in the CRC covers all children and implies that human rights cannot be divided. A needs approach focuses on an external assessment of what children need and are in a position to receive, an approach historically closely linked to charity. The rights approach is based on the convention ratified by the international community defining what provisions must be made by parents, families, guardians, governments etc. in order to comply with children's rights;
- (ii) From problem to resource: By defining children as human beings with political, economic, cultural, and social rights there is also a focus on their resources and obligations, and the role they may play in the family and local community. Rather than being considered a 'problem', children and young people are being regarded as active agents in finding solutions to their own problems, as well as those of the society at large;
- (iii) From charity to obligation: Children in developing countries have been characterized as 'poor victims', where international media reports on starving children with swollen bellies have persuaded those better off to 'give'. The CRC, however, clearly describes the obligation of the international community and governments to ensure that the rights of

4. See, for example, Boyden, J., B. Ling, and W. Myers, 1998, *What Works for Working Children*, Stockholm, Rädda Barnen; Woodhead, M., P. Light, and R. Carr (eds.), 1991, *Growing Up in a Changing Society: Child Development in Social Context*, Vol. 3, London, Routledge/The Open University; Johnson, V. et al. (eds.), 1998, *Stepping Forward. Children and young people's participation in the development process*, London, Intermediate Technology Publications; Panter-Brick, C. and M. T. Smith (eds.), 2000, *Abandoned Children*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

- the child are observed (Article 4 of the CRC). The CRC thus strengthens the role of governments in ensuring children's rights and help parents, families and local communities to support the child's survival, development, protection and participation;
- (iv) From object to subject: The child in the center of its own development. The CRC defines children's rights, including their right to play an active role in fulfilling these rights, which includes the right to participate in the identification of their own needs and in finding ways of meeting such needs. Children are thus no longer simply objects of international development aid, but active subjects in their own development; and
 - (v) New areas of concern: children's participation, right of expression, and right to information and knowledge. Traditionally the planning of and preparations for child protection projects have focused on adult views on a given problem. With the CRC children are increasingly being seen as active agents themselves. This change implies an increased focus on children's active participation in all stages of a given project – from planning to evaluation. Child participation should not be promoted on the basis of 'political correctness', but rather because experience shows that it leads to the achievement of better project results and higher efficiency.⁵

Summarizing these more specific changes in our perceptions of children and how to work with them, the shift from regarding children as 'passive victims' to looking at them as 'active agents' is of paramount importance. It also marks a shift in focus from looking at children's 'vulnerability' to explore how we may support and develop children's 'resiliency' and general coping strategies. Finally there has been a shift in emphasis from merely 'rescuing' or 'saving' children to approaches in which the involvement and empowerment of children is seen as part and parcel of the solution to their problems.

While there are thus many reasons to question the validity of western childhood models in an Asian context and acknowledge the contextual aspects of childhood and child development, there is reason to underline some of cross-cutting dimensions must be taken into account, especially when defining the target group. The situation of children living in especially difficult circumstances in different countries may of course vary considerably but there are a number of issues concerning the

5. For examples of the advantages of children's participation, including cases from Asia, see for example Hart, R., 1997, *Children's Participation. The Theory and Practice of Involving Young Citizens in Community Development and Environmental Care*, New York, UNICEF/Earthscan.

characteristics of a given group of children which must be taken into account in all cases: Age (see Table 2), gender, social class, cultural/ethnic background, economic background, legislation and national/local policies, family ties and kinship in general, and religion.

Although sectoral approaches in for example health or education evidently are to the benefit of the child population, there is increasing evidence that integrated, holistic and intersectoral approaches are needed in many areas of child protection. The close link between provision of educational services and possibilities to reduce child labor is but one frequently cited example.

There seems to be no doubt, as indicated by recent research and international conferences⁶, that one of the major hurdles in further developing and improving child protection strategies and the implementation of relevant programs is our lack of knowledge and data concerning the lives of children living in adverse conditions and the lack of experience in how to work with them. This is a general and global problem which, however, applies conspicuously in the case of Asia as well. This profound lack of knowledge and research affects the ability of state governments to formulate relevant national child protection strategies (such as country strategy papers defined by the CRC) and national policy issues on children in adversity. It also affects the ability to clearly identify and define relevant indicators – qualitative as well as quantitative – for interventions in child protection. The latter, obviously, affects our ability to carefully monitor the impact of programs which is more or less futile without relevant and reliable base-line data. The risk is that many projects may be implemented based on assumptions that in the worst cases may lead to counterproductive interventions which could worsen the situation for given groups of children.

The lack of knowledge and data also affects many Asian and Pacific countries' ability to report to the Commission on Child Rights and to carry out, for example, situational analyses of children in their countries, as described in UNICEF's handbook on the implementation of the CRC.⁷ It follows, that there is an urgent need to carry out more research and conduct more surveys throughout the region to provide policy-makers and project implementers alike with the relevant base-line data and information based upon which action may be taken. The international community and international organizations have a vital role to play in this through co-operation with national

6. See, for example, Boyden, Jo & Gillian Mann, 2000, Children's Risk, Resilience and Coping in Extreme Situations, Background paper to the Consultation on Children in Adversity, Oxford, 9-12 October 2000.

7. UNICEF, 1998, Implementation Handbook for the Convention on the Rights of the Child, New York.

governments and all stake-holders within the sphere of child protection. UNICEF is already taking on a lead role in assisting national governments in reporting on the CRC. At a regional level there is a need for a central body where research results, base-line data and the documented experience of work in child protection may be collated to the benefit of governments not only in Asia and the Pacific but also on other continents. It would prove useful also when it comes to improve coordination of efforts and exchange of experiences with child protection in different countries.

Indicators needed for child protection interventions will of course vary from country to country, and depend on the specific nature of the problem being addressed. One may, however, outline a number of indicators typical for different sectors. Table 1⁸ is an attempt to do this, mentioning mainly typical predominantly quantitative examples of indicators:

8. Based on UNICEF's follow-up work to the World Summit on Children, New York, 1991.

Table 1

Project type/sector	Indicators
Health	<p>Infant mortality rate, under-5 mortality rate (both need a relatively large sample population and may therefore be misleading in a specific very local context)</p> <p>Disease cases (e.g. diarrhea, respiratory infections, tetanus, measles, rubella)</p>
Nutrition	<p>Weight for height, height/age, weight/age.</p> <p>Breast-feeding and weaning practices.</p>
Education	<p>Literacy levels.</p> <p>School enrolment (proportion of school-going children in total population of children).</p> <p>School attendance (frequency, reasons for not attending).</p>
Water, sanitation & hygiene	<p>Access to pure drinking water.</p> <p>Access to sanitary facilities.</p> <p>Hygiene practices.</p>
Reproductive health and fertility	<p>Fertility rate.</p> <p>Use of contraceptives.</p> <p>Access to safe abortion.</p> <p>Access to reproductive health counseling and information.</p>
Participation, human/child rights and democracy	<p>Frequency of meetings and activities.</p> <p>Production of information material.</p> <p>Organizations.</p> <p>Degree of formal democracy within the target group.</p>
Institutional support	<p>Physical facilities such as buildings and equipment.</p> <p>Human and technical resources.</p>
Capacity building	<p>No. of children and adolescents taking part and involved in making decisions.</p> <p>No. of boys/girls taking part.</p> <p>Organizational and political skills.</p> <p>Experience with advocacy and results thereof (e.g. changes in legislation, reported cases of child abuse)</p> <p>Level of internal/external communication.</p>

Project type/sector	Indicators
Children in especially difficult circumstances	No. of children in especially difficult circumstances in proportion of whole child population (e.g. no. of child laborers among children of school age) or in relation to a geographical area (e.g. no. of child prostitutes in a given area). Health and nutritional status. School attendance.

Any strategic considerations of child protection need to take into account the fact that different age groups exhibit different 'typical' problems. Although the CRC has introduced 18 years as the universal age limit for childhood there is also reason to stress that in many cultures this may not necessarily make sense. Adolescence or youth may stretch well beyond the age of 18 and achieving adult status may depend on other factors than age itself. Table 2 is an attempt to specify so-called typical problems within specific age groups, the age groups used being those normally used in research and in policy documents but which, of course, may vary considerably from one society to another:

Table 2

Age group	Characteristics and level of dependency	Typical problem areas
0-2 years	Babies and infants are in most cultures defined as such until they have been weaned. The child depends completely on others to survive and develop and belongs, in this sense, to the most vulnerable age group.	Health, hygiene, nutrition, abuse and maltreatment, wars and armed conflicts, social and economic crises.
3-5 years	Toddlers and preschool children still depend very much on others but increasingly take part in the tasks of the household. In many cultures children in this age group – especially girls – begin to undertake household chores and look after their younger siblings.	Health, hygiene, nutrition, abuse and maltreatment, wars and armed conflicts, social and economic crises.
6-12 years	Primary school-age children increasingly take active part in social life. Normally children in this age group should be enrolled in primary education but are far too often not.	Physical and mental abuse, child labor/bondage, lack of schooling and education in general, sexual abuse, street children.
13-(18) years	Teenagers are often active participants in social life, take care of themselves and others. Lack of education and hope are in an increasing number of cases responsible for a 'no-future' syndrome in this age group.	Street children, crime, child soldiers, child laborers, sexual abuse, drug abuse, unwanted pregnancies, sexually transmitted diseases, lack of employment and leisure time activities.

We may, finally, distinguish between different types of intervention regarding child protection depending on the nature, scale and scope of the problem. There is, needless to say, a major difference between the situation of children under armed conflicts or natural disasters and those living under 'normal' circumstances, no matter how poor these may be. We may thus distinguish between three general areas:

- (i) Long-term development: Long-term interventions seeking permanent solutions to general problems and aiming at building up communities' own capacity to prevent future problems, thus achieving sustainable development;
- (ii) Shorter-term assistance: Usually addressing more specific problems of a temporary character, such as the immediate effects of an economic crises or the effects on food supply due to inadequate harvests. May, of course, turn into long-term problems requiring long-term solutions; and
- (iii) Emergency relief: Interventions in cases of emergencies such as urgent severe problems causes by armed conflicts or natural disasters such as droughts, earthquakes and cyclones.

The emphasis on an integrated approach to child protection implies the need to regard the three types or areas of intervention as interrelated, stressing the need to incorporate all three levels in national (and international) strategies for child protection. This means that relief work should be designed in a way which opens the way for longer term interventions while, similarly, long term interventions should take into account the need to prevent future emergency problems through for example disaster preparedness or peace and reconciliation.

1. Child Protection: The Asian Case

Within the wide range of social, cultural and economic variety of Asian and Pacific developing societies, three main forms can be observed at the current time: countries marked by economic growth that was affected by the 1997 'Asian economic crisis'; countries in the transition towards a market economy; and countries affected by conflict. These categories are not mutually exclusive, but rather an abstract typology through which the characteristics of social protection, particularly child protection, can be observed and analyzed.

In the first case, it is important to realize that, if not properly handled, economic growth can increase economic disparities, producing pockets of poverty in new groups of especially excluded and intransigent poor, whose children are hard to reach with social assistance and other program interventions.⁹ Although there is considerable information about the economic crisis in Southeast Asia 'little is known about the specific damage to children'.¹⁰ In general terms, however, child welfare appears to have declined primarily because of:

- (i) Decreased family income as formal sector employment decreased and adult workers took employment at lower rates in the informal sector;
- (ii) Declining real wages as the result of inflation, which had an impact on the price of food and health care; and
- (iii) Reduced government revenue, which influenced government's capacity to maintain social expenditures.¹¹

On the other hand, it has been reported that the impact of the crisis on most children has not been as marked as anticipated. The majority of children continued to attend school and received sufficient food and health care, largely because family resources were able to maintain an adequate level of support.¹² Children of informal sector workers, and children who are themselves informal sector workers, would already have been protected by existing coping mechanisms, often better than those whose parents had previously benefited from the economic 'miracles' whose income would have dropped sharply, or been lost altogether, as a result of the crisis. Nevertheless, it should be noted that the children of the poorest families became poorer.

From a social perspective, countries in economic transition and countries affected by armed conflict share one characteristic: whatever social protection had been operating to reduce the effects of poverty (whether based on state or family structures) has been subjected to unprecedented stress and transformation. There are some specific, discernible effects on children. In the case of transition economies, the transition from cooperative to private household economies increases the demand for child labor within the family. Linked to this, the cessation of state provision for childcare may

9. Mehrotra, S., Vandemoortele, J., and Delamonica, E., 2000, Basic services for all?, Florence, UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre, p. 2.

10. Kanchanda Piriyaarangsana, 2000 'Children as losers in economic development: Strategies and policies to promote the best interests of children in East and Southeast Asia (Manila forum pp59-64) at 59.

11. AusAid p 101 [check up reference]

12. Ibid p 102

place younger children in a particularly vulnerable situation, especially if there is additional requirement for female labor force participation.

Countries that have been affected by warfare (or for that matter natural disasters) find their basic health and education structures destroyed or damaged, food security deficient and family support dissipated. Under such circumstances, children cannot be provided with the requirements for healthy development. Indicators of poor child health and inadequate nutrition tend to rise, especially among children who have become separated from their families, who may be either forced to fend for themselves or 'cared for' in institutions that lack basic amenities and even, in some cases adequate food.

Both situations tend to promote large-scale migrations, either internally from rural to urban areas, or between urban areas, or across borders, in search of either better income generation opportunities or a safer environment, or both. The results are among others:

- (i) Wealth disparities increase in urban areas;
- (ii) Internal migration lead to people without identity, whose links to family social support have weakened or disappeared altogether, including unaccompanied children and other children without registered existence, who are ineligible for health care, schooling or social assistance; and
- (iii) Child workers fill niches in the labor market previous filled by adults, or take up family economic tasks, previously fulfilled by adults.

One particular Asian component of these population movements is cross-border trafficking for work of various kinds, which includes children. A further specifically Asian dimension is the multi-faceted relationship between migration and indebtedness among families and individuals that do not have access to official or low interest loan schemes and seek high interest loans from moneylenders.

Migration has undoubtedly played an important role in the booming of some Asian economies in the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s. Young migrants from rural areas provided flourishing businesses in several industries with access to an extremely cheap, flexible and disciplined work force. Bangkok's very profitable garment industry, as well as other export-oriented manufacturing, for example, relied heavily on the influx of mainly unmarried young women from rural areas. According to some migration surveys young women thus accounted for more than 60% of the total number of

migrants to Bangkok in the 1980s and about half of the migration to other urban centers.¹³ The majority of these young laborers never joined trade unions, unemployment benefit schemes or health insurance schemes, often due to employer pressure. For under-age children the situation has been even more vulnerable.

Children may need to work to repay family indebtedness (sometimes just paying off the interest) and cannot attend school, or they become bonded laborers in order to pay off family debts. Trafficking and forced or induced child migration in search of urban employment, or through brokers of various kinds, may also be related to family indebtedness. Such mechanisms of child exploitation are sometimes regional in scope and related to specific economic sectors, such as bonded labor in carpet manufacture, traffic related to commercial sexual exploitation, and the rural-urban movement of girls destined for domestic labor.

II. Child Rights Approach

Since its ratification the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) has provided a guiding framework for research, policy-making or programming activities concerning child protection.¹⁴ The social protection elements of the CRC are contained in articles concerned with budgetary provision for child rights, under Article 4, in combination with the general principle of non-discrimination (Article 2) together with specific health Articles (6, 24), education (Articles 28-9) and social security rights (26-7), support for parents/caretakers (Articles 5,18, including child care and pre- and post-natal care for mothers), and protection from non-functional families or substitution for non-existent families (Articles 18/19, 21-2), and adequate standards of provision (3c).

The 'best interest of the child' principle provides valuable guidance to decision-makers whenever the interests of children are affected, and applies to all actions by authorities and private institutions. The principle applies to both individual children and to children as a group, and implies the sum total of all rights.

International and national child welfare agencies, including UNICEF, now consistently use the term 'protection' to distinguish the provisions that protect children from abuse and exploitation from other provisions of the CRC referring to health and education (sometimes called 'survival and

13. See, for example, Anchalee, S.-R. and Nitaya, P., 1992, 'Changing Socio-Economic Roles of Thai Women and their Migration', in Chant, Sylvia (ed.), *Gender and Migration in Developing Countries*, pp. 154-173, London, Bellhaven Press.

14. See UNICEF, 1998, *Implementation Handbook for the Convention on the Rights of the Child*, New York.

development' or 'provision' rights) or to civil and political rights (sometimes called 'participation').

These include protection:

- (i) from exploitation in work and commercial sex;
- (ii) physical and sexual abuse, torture and inhuman punishment;
- (iii) drug abuse;
- (iv) the effects of armed conflict;
- (v) trafficking; and
- (vi) mistreatment in the judicial system.

This idea of protection also includes categories of children such as refugees, children with disabilities, ethnic minorities, orphans and other children outside parental care. This follows a tendency to think of children in victim categories, which predates the rights-based approach of the last decade, and has been largely associated with the term 'children in especially difficult circumstances'. Commonly referred to the world over as 'CEDC', this term was originally coined by UNICEF in the mid-1980s to describe a mixed category of vulnerable children that included working and street children, unaccompanied children in disaster or conflict situations, refugee children, children affected by war and children with disabilities.¹⁵ Over the years other groups of children were informally included as CEDC. Sometimes the inclusion was almost universal. Thus the list of CEDC categories included in any national context in UNICEF Situation Analyses, country reports to the Committee on the Rights of the Child and studies carried out by local researchers is specific to that country or region. But categories may also be locally defined. Relevant Asian examples include disability, emergencies, trafficking, child-bonded labor, child commercial sex workers, and early marriage.

A policy review in 1996, which had the aim of moving beyond the idea of 'children in especially difficult circumstances' provided a new perspective based on the concept of 'special protection measures', which had been 'formulated by the Committee on the Rights of the Child, to describe the actions required to redress special vulnerabilities of children so as to enable them to enjoy all of their rights'.¹⁶

15. UNICEF, 1986, 1986 Executive Board Report 'Children in Especially Difficult Circumstances', New York, UNICEF.

16. ECOSOC (United Nations Economic & Social Council), 1996, Review of UNICEF policies and strategies in child protection, E/ICEF/1996/14 April 1996.

The argument used against this approach is that human rights are indivisible. Children are not categories. The same child may be a worker, a consumer of health and social services, a school pupil or drop-out, a household member and child with disability. This indicates the necessity for an intersectoral, holistic approach to child protection. Close collaboration is necessary to assure that health, education and social protection policies are both consistent and mutually supportive.

Child rights cannot be reduced to protection, nor yet to provision and participation. The full range of rights must be considered. To give a critical example, birth and identity registration are basic to planning and cut across all other rights. Marginalized migrant children, who are not registered officially, find it impossible to access services or schools, which increases their social exclusion: A birth certificate is a ticket to citizenship. Without one an individual does not officially exist, and therefore lacks legal access to privileges and protections of a nation. Civil registration is also the basic tool by which an efficient government counts its citizens and plans the schools, health centers and other services they need. Yet many nations lack effective systems for recording births. Every year, about 40 million babies – one third of all births – go unregistered around the world.¹⁷

According to current approaches in child welfare circles and, as indicated above, 'rights-based' implies moving from a conventional approach in which children are seen as objects of concern to regarding them as subjects of rights. The move from a needs-based to a rights-based approach refers to the implications of some of the differences as shown in Table 3 below. As a result, development, welfare and aid agencies in general are now altering their mission statements to include greater consideration of rights, and declare themselves to be 'rights-based', particularly in their work with children. Nevertheless, as is the case with work that professes to be 'participatory', these claims are largely based on pragmatic considerations. A fully developed philosophy of 'rights-based programming' does not as yet exist, although some agencies are putting much effort into developing so-called 'child rights programming' (see below). Nor are there any agreed criteria for defining, evaluating and monitoring rights-based work. It has to be admitted that the only programs that can claim to be rights-based at this point are those advocating for greater awareness of an achievement of children's rights. Other examples that purport to be 'child-rights-based' are probably best described as examples of good practice in child welfare that attempt to take children's perspectives into account.

17. UNICEF, 1998, Progress of nations, 5-11.

Table 3: Common differences between rights-based and needs-based approaches to child protection¹⁸

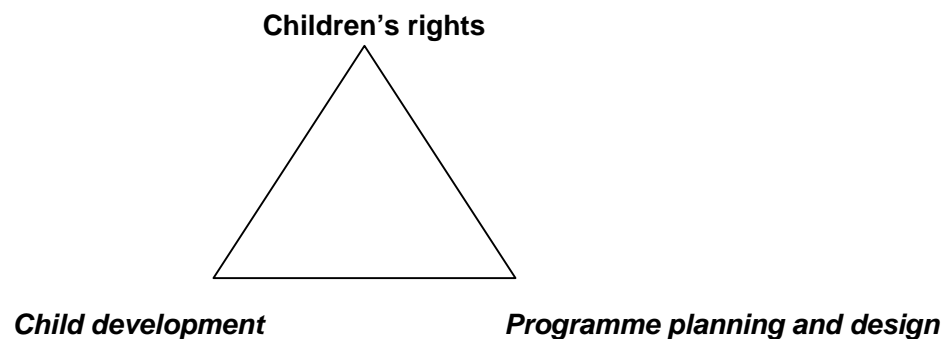
Rights-based	Needs-based
Children are entitled to help, as the subject of rights	Children deserve help
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governments have binding legal and moral obligations • Children are active participants by right • All children have the same right to fulfill their potential • There is an overarching goal to which all work contributes • All adults can play a role in achieving children's rights 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governments ought to help, but there is no clear obligation • Children can participate in order to improve service delivery • Given scarce resources, some children may have to be left out • Each piece of work has its own goal but there is no unifying overall purpose • Certain groups have technical expertise to meet children's needs

Currently a number of agencies, most notably UNICEF and the International Save the Children Alliance¹⁹, are developing the concept of child rights programming, emphasizing that children's participation is appropriate not only because it is defined as a 'right' but also because approaches based on children's participation appear to work better and lead to more sustainable solutions to problems concerning child protection. However, focusing on 'rights' in an isolated sense, may tend to ignore specific differences related to e.g. age or gender, and other specific aspects of child development. One can thus imagine activities within child protection interventions that undoubtedly relate to children's rights without necessarily taking into account the question of child development in the given context. A triangular model, as graphically illustrated in the figure below, in which children's rights and child development are linked to program planning, may help in avoiding this problem:²⁰

18. Source: SCF(UK), 1999, Guidelines on Child Rights Programming, London, SCF.

19. See for example Smith, Chris, 2000, (Draft) Handbook of Child Rights Programming. The Planning and Management of Programmes to Promote the Human Rights of Children and Young People, International Save the Children Alliance, Child Rights Task Group, London.

20. Model developed in conjunction with an evaluation of a program dealing with psycho-social support to children affected by armed conflict in northern Uganda. See Jareg, E., P. I. Crawford, and P. Okuma, 2000, Mid-term review of Gulu Support the Children Organisation's Programme with war-affected children, Phase II, Gulu District, Save the Children Denmark, Copenhagen.



Finally, child rights programming emphasizes the cross-cutting issue of raising awareness on children's rights at all levels and the ensuing focus on advocacy without which very little action may be taken. Advocacy is important at the local, national and international level. At the local level advocacy may e.g. lead to the passing of local by-laws that enhance the protection of children, or to improved reporting procedures that ensure that cases of child abuse are actually reported to the authorities and the necessary legal action taken. At the national level it is, needless to say, also a matter of adequate child protection legislation and the formulation of policies necessary to cater for child protection needs in all key areas. The central question is the extent to which a legislation that clearly define a framework for child protection have been drawn up. At the international level advocacy is instrumental in promoting the principles of the CRC, bringing cases of child abuse to the attention of the international community, and establishing fora for research on and documentation of child protection issues as well as meetings that enable constructive exchanges of experiences related to child protection.

III. Child Protection Programming

It is generally acknowledged that there is a need for capacity building in design, implementation, evaluation, and monitoring of child protection programming.

Each of the linkages between child protection and the labor market described in Section A provides opportunities for investment with both short and long term benefits.

The question is how to structure social protection for a large and significant population within an overall social protection framework. The available choices, which are not mutually exclusive and could be part of a phased-in approach to child protection, are:

- (i) Add child protection to current considerations such as labor market, social assistance, crop insurance;
- (ii) A special focus on children within all current considerations, but insist on child impact analysis as an integral part of program planning and evaluation, reducing the emphasis on categories such as households within which the impact on children can be obscured; a strategy that has the cost-effective advantage of improving some kinds of program targeting;
- (iii) Expand current labor market analysis, and associated social protection approaches, to include labor force participation of the population under 18 years of age; and
- (iv) Mainstream children into all aspects of ADB strategy, including developing appropriate institutional capacity.

The mainstreaming approach, if consistently monitored, could have several operational advantages. Firstly, there would be no need to establish new, parallel structures and networks in program planning and, secondly, it would ensure that common objectives among programs which otherwise would run parallel, are achieved more efficiently due to the full integration of measures. Mainstreaming may thus have a synergetic effect on the whole area of child protection. Finally, mainstreaming would also support the development of a broader discussion of social protection issues and the foundation for an improved integration of approaches.

To carry out mainstreaming of child protection measures into broader social protection programs there is a need for child impact studies. A series of indicators reflecting child protection and development would have to be included to ensure proper monitoring and evaluation of program outputs.

IV. Defining Child Protection activities

The ability to define appropriate child protection activities obviously depends on the availability, reliability and relevance of information and knowledge about key issues. In many countries there is a profound lack of such data. This suggests that more research and documentation must form part of a country strategy as a prerequisite for any kind of implementation. Once relevant, as defined by a (national or local) strategy, baseline data exists, the actual design of child protection activities can begin.

Different points of departure can be chosen in designing child protection activities. Among the various, complementary approaches, the aim of intervention may be to:

- (i) improve support to parents, beginning with a dialogue on children's rights;
- (ii) listen to children and recognize them as agents of their own development;
- (iii) encourage developmental environments for children;
- (iv) create a special focus on children with disabilities and other disadvantages;
- (v) promote competence-building among teachers and other professionals working with children;
- (vi) promote monitoring of children's development;
- (vii) monitor and influence macro-level and sector policies in terms of child development;
- (viii) encourage local research and comparative studies; and
- (ix) develop the use of CRC as a tool for policy making and international co-operation.

The relevant actual area of intervention will of course differ from country to country. For ADB DMCs as a whole there are a number of areas that seem to be relevant for all countries:

- (i) health, including reproductive health and HIV/AIDS;
- (ii) education (both formal and non-formal);
- (iii) early childhood development, i.e. interventions oriented towards children of pre-school age; and
- (iv) youth (especially adolescents with no or very little education who have dropped out of school or have few prospects of finding jobs);

There are in addition a number of areas that figure prominently in several or many DMCs:

- (i) child labor;
- (ii) children affected by armed conflict;
- (iii) child prostitution;
- (iv) ethnic minorities;
- (v) the girl child;
- (vi) children with disabilities, including landmine victims; and
- (vii) street children.

V. Program Preparation

There is seldom a single Ministerial body with overall responsibility for child protection. Some children (especially under-age workers, orphans and street children, and even adolescents as a group) may run the risk of not being the sole main responsibility of a particular line ministry and therefore lack access to the necessary forms of social protection. Responsibility for reporting to the Committee on the Rights of the Child can be a guide to where to go for information. All too frequently, however, it may only indicate a data assembly function, especially if it falls within the Ministry of Health, Office of the Prime Minister/President, or Foreign Affairs. Determining the implementing agency for any new child protection program or component can therefore be a difficult task.

For the above reason, among others, country strategies are important tools in program preparation, especially if they clearly define the responsibilities and obligations of key ministries and other government bodies, as well as those of other relevant stakeholders, including religious institutions, private and public educational institutions, NGOs, and local community organizations.

International organizations, especially UNICEF, and NGOs frequently deal with children's policy and have an advisory role with government, as well as being responsible for their own monitoring and drafting of reports to the Committee on the Rights of the Child. Defining relationships with these agents before implementation is recommendable. UNICEF, in many countries, assists governments in compiling data for situational analyses of children, often jointly on women and children. These situational analyses, alongside other relevant data, are extremely important to program preparation.

Economic and social implications of different policy and program options, including an assessment of risks, has to be made to identify the most appropriate intervention strategy.

The program design also needs to consider the relative merits and the balancing of priorities between for example:

- (i) welfare/service provision versus rights/participation,
- (ii) institutional care versus community-based care (and other options),
- (iii) survival & development versus children in need of special protection, and
- (iv) state provision versus family provision.

While targeted interventions are urgently needed for particularly vulnerable groups such as street children or unemployed youth, it is important to develop an integrated approach for various target groups. The approach should enable excluded and vulnerable groups to enter mainstream society by identifying their needs through participation and consultation, and by making the social, cultural, political, physical, and economic infrastructures of society fully accessible to all, and thus enable their fullest possible participation in their societies.²¹

A rights-based approach at the level of a national strategy for child protection can take its point of departure – especially if most of the information is not already available thru situational analyses etc. – in a series of analyses, analyzing the status of child rights, looking at the causes and obstacles and, finally, identifying who is responsible for what. An example of such a three-stage analysis is given in Table 4:

Table 4: Analytical framework for child protection programming²²

1. Status of child rights	2. Causes/obstacles	3. Obligations/responsibilities
<p><i>Analysis of the status of child rights:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incidence of child rights violations? • Intensity of child rights violations? • Child rights not yet covered by legislation and policies? • Are children's views being heard? • Are children participating in all matters concerning their own lives? <p>Specific data for specific children:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age • Gender • Location • Ethnic group • Religious group • Disabled children 	<p><i>Analysis of causes and obstacles:</i></p> <p>1. Macroeconomic:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic development strategies • Debt • Structural adjustment/reform • Monetary policy • Exchange rate • Trade policy • Capital flows • International rules (WTO etc.) and globalization. <p>2. Legislation (enforcement and application):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child labor • Child abuse and violence • Trafficking • Sexual exploitation • Citizenship (including birth registration, name etc.) • Child soldiers 	<p>Analysis of obligations of duty bearers, institutional structure and responsibilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents/guardians • Extended families • Service providers • Government departments (national and local level) • Legislators • Private sector and employers' associations • NGOs and CBOs • Religious bodies • Bilateral donors • Multilateral donors • UN organizations • World Bank, IMF, ADB (IFIs)

21. Kelles-Vittanen, Anne, 2000, The concept of social exclusion and vulnerability, Manila Forum, p 41.

22. See also Smith, Chris, 2000, (Draft) Handbook of Child Rights Programming. The Planning and Management of Programmes to Promote the Human Rights of Children and Young People, International Save the Children Alliance, Child Rights Task Group, London.

1. Status of child rights	2. Causes/obstacles	3. Obligations/responsibilities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Juvenile justice <p>3. Sector policies and programs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social welfare • Health and nutrition • Education (formal and non-formal) • Housing • Labor market • Agriculture/food security • Environment • Water & sanitation • Poverty reduction • HIV/AIDS prevention <p>4. Budget allocations compared against international agreements and commitments.</p> <p>5. Public opinion and cultural attitudes, including beliefs and practices.</p>	

Non-governmental organizations play an important advocacy role in child protection and they may be valuable sources of information. Using NGOs to deliver services can in some cases be more efficient than using government agencies and produce more flexible and effective service-delivery approaches. An important problem, however, is that NGO geographic coverage tends to be limited. Where complete or near-complete geographic coverage is needed, attention needs to be paid to how new NGOs will be created or existing NGOs expanded to fill the need, or the extent to which it is possible to strengthen local government authorities to take on the tasks. Where service delivery can be concentrated at a few locations, such as with residential facilities for orphans or geographically targeted intervention, these geographic limits are less of a problem.

Another concern is sustainability in project work. While working with NGOs and international agencies may provide more direct results, the risk is discontinuation of activities once grants are spent, and a lack of accumulation of lessons and experiences of use for future activities. Programs therefore also have to address the need for:

- (i) training of social workers who work with children and their families, sustained capacity building, professional skills and self-regulation;

- (ii) institutional transformations and support, development, management;
- (iii) new techniques of research, analysis, and documentation, and new indicators leading to effective monitoring (cost effective implementation);
- (iv) supervision and support; and
- (v) scholarships and exchange programs.

In developing the program components, an integrated perspective, which takes into account the complexity of social protection issues, has to be adopted. Dialogue with different stakeholders in civil society, social data of good quality to determine needs and identify causal relations, a measured perspective on social protection rights and entitlements, and definition of the priorities in social protection by political decision-makers, including Ministries of Finance and Planning, is needed to ensure the basis for successful implementation of any program.

Table 5 is an attempt to give an overview of typical features regarding responsibilities and constraints within a range of child protection interventions:

Table 5: Responsibilities and constraints in child protection

Key areas	Responsibilities/obligations	Constraints/challenges
<p>1. Child survival, health, environment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health • Reproductive health • Hygiene • Water & sanitation • Environment and pollution • Occupational health and safety 	<p><i>Family/extended family:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide clean, decent shelter • Access to safe drinking water • Safe and hygienic sanitation • Educate child on hygiene • Protect child against domestic dangers (toxic substances, fire, child molesters, bullying, drowning) • Healthy environment (clean, spacious) to prevent diseases • Waste disposal • Immunization and preventive health care • Adequate and appropriate clothing • Emergency preparedness <p><i>Community:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communal facilities, e.g. schools, water etc. • Facilitate and re-enforce healthy practices of households • Mobilize resources • Disseminate information, raising awareness on key issues • Monitoring and enforcing community decisions and practices • Provision and maintenance of structures which benefit the community <p><i>Civic society:</i></p> <p><i>(i) NGOs, CBOs, religious groups:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must inform government authorities of their mandates • Report to authorities on activities • Comply with standards set by national policies • Follow national legislation on delivery services <p><i>(ii) Commercial enterprises/employers:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pay living wage 	<p><i>Family/extended family:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited financial resources • Limited involvement in decision-making • Unbalanced resource allocation • Lack of cohesion (ethnicity, culture) • Social pressures, status symbols • Resistance to behavioral changes • Limited access to information and advice • Limited knowledge • Religious/traditional beliefs and practices • Other pressures may compromise safety <p><i>Community:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of cohesion, attitude problems • Limited resources (human and financial) • Limited social guidance/education on moral values • Negligence and corruption • Resistance to change and cultural, religious and traditional attitudes • Lack of exposure and knowledge • Quality of leadership and management • Lack of coordination • Dependency on national and international inputs <p><i>Civic society:</i></p> <p><i>(i) NGOs, CBOs, religious groups:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequate or unclear procedures • Lack of awareness of procedures • Inadequate and inappropriate supervision and monitoring by government • Weak reporting and monitoring within NGOs • Limited resources <p><i>(ii) Commercial enterprises/employers:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequate legislation

Key areas	Responsibilities/obligations	Constraints/challenges
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comply with occupational health and safety regulations • Ensure employees' access to health services • Provide hygiene facilities at work place • Provide protection against toxic and other harmful substances • Dispose of toxic and harmful waste in accordance with legislation and policies set by government • Adhere to legislation regarding child labor <p><i>Institutional (health, educational etc.):</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide basic facilities such as water & sanitation within institutions • Provide information and education on services available • Provide quality services within resources available • Monitoring, reporting and accounting to responsible authorities • Contribute to overall protection/management of e.g. the environment <p><i>State:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National policies and legislation • Country strategy • Monitoring and reporting on situation of children • Research and documentation • International and regional cooperation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weak or non-existent enforcement of legislation • Lack of policies • Limited resources • Need to remain competitive overshadows obligations • Resistance to change in perception of employer-employee relationship • Traditional management structures and leadership • Lack of adequate environmental monitoring standards and procedures <p><i>Institutional (health, educational etc.):</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bureaucracy in decision-making • Corruption • Low morale and motivation due to lack of inducement • Limited vision • Limited resources • Inadequate or inappropriate management skills • Inappropriate organizational structure • Limited social responsibility • Lack of coordination and exchange of experiences between institutions <p><i>State:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited resources and inappropriate budget allocations • Limited knowledge • Lack of political stability • Corruption
<p><i>2. Education and development:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality education fitting the needs of the community and country • Giving children the coping 	<p><i>Family/extended family:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide relevant and quality education • Provide a home that is safe, stimulating and conducive to learning • Seek special education for children with disabilities and other children in need of such education • Support the child's learning in all ways, e.g. 	<p><i>Family/extended family:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited financial and other resources • Value placed on education and learning within family and the time spent with children to support them • CWD may be left out due to shame or guilt within family • Ignorance about causes of disability and the

Key areas	Responsibilities/obligations	Constraints/challenges
<p>mechanisms they need to live a good life as contributing citizens</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring that all children have equal access to education that helps them develop to their full potential 	<p>by helping with schoolwork and talking to teachers and school staff</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage and ensure that the child has access to leisure and extra-mural activities Teach the child tolerance, good behavior and other aspects not necessarily covered by the school curriculum <p><i>School/educational institution:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supervise the child Inspire self-esteem in all children, including those with disabilities Tolerance towards people with a different background should be taught and exemplified by the school Teachers should reinforce and supplement good parental practice Help children realize their rights and ensure their participation in social life <p><i>Community:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting school and development committees Supporting all educational activities Support teacher/parent committees in educational institutions Encourage parents to educate children and support leisure and extra-mural activities <p><i>Civic society:</i></p> <p><i>(i) NGOs, CBOs, religious groups:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring education situation and alert society to problems Propose alternatives to existing educational system if needed, e.g. the need for non-formal education Help in raising awareness about the right to 	<p>options available</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prejudices of parents and lack of tolerance Traditional values may impede parents' willingness to let girls attend school Heavy work burdens within the family may lead parents to keep children at home <p><i>School/educational institution:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools and staff often geared towards the needs of children who are performing well academically Schools often treat all children as being the same without acknowledging their individual differences Teachers and other staff may serve as wrong role models, inducting children to bad behavior (drinking, smoking, abusing girls etc.) Limited knowledge among teachers on appropriate and updated methods of teaching and learning Lack of knowledge on how to teach children with a different cultural background or children with disabilities <p><i>Community:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of resources and time among parents. Lack of understanding of committees Differences in cultural and ethnic backgrounds Differences in views on e.g. gender Lack of cohesion and leadership, especially in communities fractured by armed conflict or ethnic disputes <p><i>Civic society:</i></p> <p><i>(i) NGOs, CBOs, religious groups:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of capacity to monitor, report and advocate Limited knowledge and ideas about alternative education strategies 'Competition' with government authorities

Key areas	Responsibilities/obligations	Constraints/challenges
	<p>education for all children</p> <p><i>(ii) Commercial enterprises/employers:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide education in some cases and support educational efforts in general • Offer grants, scholarships, and apprenticeships to young people <p><i>Institutions/State:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide basic facilities such as classrooms and school materials (books and equipment) • Develop curriculum nationally taking into account local differences (e.g. ethnic minorities) and differences between children (e.g. CWD) • National policies and strategies for formal and non-formal education • Monitor and account to public and parents 	<p><i>(ii) Commercial enterprises/employers:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attitudes towards mutual benefits of children's education • Limited resources, particularly in small companies • Reluctance to let labor costs increase even when the result is better qualified staff <p><i>Institutions/State:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited planning, management and material resources • Limited vision of what education means for society • In many countries structures and systems are based on colonial times and are hard to change • Poor skills within government authorities • Bureaucracy and corruption
<p><i>3. Identity and protection:</i> Ensuring that all children have an identity as an individual human being and citizen and that all children are protected against abuse, neglect, harmful and hazardous labor, sexual and other forms of exploitation. Interventions are particularly needed for children living in extreme adverse conditions. In Asia these include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child labor; 	<p><i>Family/extended family:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a safe and happy home • Give the child a positive stable identity • Give the child a decent education • Impart good moral and ethical values to the child • Ensure that the child has legal documents and identification papers • Ensure that the child will be able to access resources through government authorities • Protect the child from undesirable influences, abuse, and deprivation • Give the child love, care and affection so that the child is given a sense of belonging to the family and community <p><i>Community:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate the development of safe, happy homes • Help reinforce stable identities • Help parents ensure children's education 	<p><i>Family/extended family:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poverty • Parents may themselves lack stable identities • Priorities of parents may be wrong • Media and 'what others say' may affect parent decisions • Parents may have difficulties obtaining identity for child due to poverty, ignorance and illiteracy, or for political and ethnic reasons • Parents may have too little time for their children, being negligent due to stress • Parents/guardians may have been forced to accept parentage to children who are not their own in a biological sense <p><i>Community:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social norms may privilege adults, not children • Communities may not necessarily support identity in the best interest of the child

Key areas	Responsibilities/obligations	Constraints/challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children affected by armed conflict; • Child prostitution; • Ethnic minorities; • The girl child; • Children with disabilities, including landmine victims; • Street children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor and sanction parental behavior and that of others, including that of other children, to ensure that the best interest of the child is given priority • Providing safe environments for children in the community • Raise awareness on and encourage good parenting and support families living in adverse conditions <p><i>Civic society:</i></p> <p><i>(i) NGOs, CBOs, religious groups:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor the status of children and report on breaches of children's rights • Public awareness on children's rights and legislation affecting children's lives • Advocate on behalf of children and parents <p><i>(ii) Commercial enterprises/employers:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide child friendly working conditions for parents (m/paternity leave, leave if child is ill, time to breast-feed etc.) • Pay living wages <p><i>Institutions/state:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate acquisition of legal documents such as birth certificates • Provide public awareness on the situation of children and on their rights • Ensure that legislation does not counter the best interests of children, i.e. assess legislation impact on children in all cases • Ensure that the rights of all children are respected 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethnic minorities and other marginalized groups may be poor, uneducated and feel threatened by the majority population • Lack of cohesion in fractured communities such as many urban slum areas or refugee camps • Values of the community may not be compatible with that of a nuclear family. Problem in areas where the extended family is no longer the norm and traditional coping mechanisms of kinship groups have diminished <p><i>Civic society:</i></p> <p><i>(i) NGOs, CBOs, religious groups</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Few NGOs have specialized knowledge/experience in child protection programming and child rights • Weak advocacy capacity • Inadequate monitoring capacity • Limited resources for outreach work <p><i>(ii) Commercial enterprises/employers:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many companies, especially small companies, cannot afford measures • Weak monitoring of labor legislation etc. <p><i>Institutions/state:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bureaucracy and corruption • Data processing unreliable or inadequate • Suspicion towards the effects of guaranteeing children's rights (political or social backlash) • Social responsibility given low priority • Limited vision and knowledge • Lack of political stability • Structural adjustment may lead to lower priority for children's issues • Armed conflicts and natural disasters

VI. Conclusion

Child Protection is an integrated part of Social Protection, and an efficient means to reducing poverty and increasing future growth. Poverty hits children hardest. It has a disabling impact on their minds, bodies and future potential, and thereby helps perpetuate poor human development and weak economic performance. Investing in children's health, development and social well-being is a social and cost-efficient endeavor providing lifetime gains to the child and overall benefits to the society.