



REPORT OF FINAL EVALUATION

Ilaa Linta Caruurta

**Children Protected in Families and
Communities in Somaliland**

Project Period 2017–2021
November, 2021
Somaliland



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IN PARTNERSHIP WITH YOVENCO



With support from
Finland's development
cooperation

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Cover photo: Child-friendly space at a camp for displaced people. Sacha Myers / Save the Children, 2021

Report of final evaluation

November 2021 - Somaliland



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements	1
List of tables	2
Acronyms	3
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	4
CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION.....	8
1.1 Background.....	8
1.2 Purpose of the project final evaluation.....	9
1.3 Evaluation Objectives	9
1.4 Scope of the evaluation.....	9
1.5 Child safeguarding and ethical considerations.....	9
1.6 Challenges experienced in the field	10
CHAPTER TWO EVALUATION METHODOLOGY	10
2.1 Secondary Data Collection	10
2.2 Primary Data Collection	11
2.3 Enumerator training and pre-testing of the tools	13
2.4 Data and Data Safety Management.....	13
2.5 Data Quality Management.....	13
2.6 Data Analysis.....	13
2.7 Debriefing.....	14
CHAPTER THREE FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION	14
3.1 Project relevance	14
3.2 Effectiveness of the project interventions.....	19
3.3 Efficiency	24
3.4 Impact of the project	26
3.6 Gender	31
3.7 Child participation.....	33
3.8 Key lessons learnt.....	34
3.9 Challenges encountered during the project implementation.....	35
CHAPTER FOUR CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	35
4.1 Conclusions.....	35
4.2 Recommendations	37
ANNEXES	39
Annex 1: List of desk review documents	39
Annex 2: Data collection sites by district.....	39
Annex 3: Enumerator training power point notes	39
Annex 4: Inception report	39
Annex 5: List of key informant interview respondents	39
Annex 6: ILC evaluation TOR.....	39
Annex 7: Data collection tools	39
Annex 8: Survey raw data - community members and government.....	39

List of tables

Table 1: FGD participants by age, sex and district	12
Table 2: Awareness levels on existing and upcoming laws and policies.....	18
Table 3: Total reach by year, age and sex	19
Table 4: Case management beneficiaries by sex and district.....	20
Table 5: Did you take action on child abuse case	21
Table 6: Annual budget disbursements to the implementing partner	24
Table 7: Key harms that affect girl's development and wellbeing in the community	28

Report of final evaluation

November 2021 - Somaliland



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Acronyms

AC	Air Conditioner
BVAs	Budget Variance Analysis
CBCPM	Community Based Child Protection Mechanisms
CFEM	Child Forced and Early Marriages
COVID	Corona Virus Disease
CP	Child Protection
CPWG	Child Protection Working Group
CRG	Child Rights Group
CRP	Child Rights Programming
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
CWC	Child Welfare Committee
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FGM/C	Female Genital Mutilation/Circumcision
HAVOYOCO	Horn of Africa Voluntary Youth Committee
HHs	Households
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
ILC	Ilaa Linta Caruurta
KII	Key Informant Interviews
MESAF	Ministry of Employment, Social Affairs and Family
MHPSS	Mental Health and Psychosocial Support
MICS	Multiple Indicators Cluster Survey
MOE	Ministry of Education
MOHD	Ministry of Health Development
MOJ	Ministry of Justice
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
ODK	Open Data Kit
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
PHP	Physical and Humiliating Punishment
PwV CA	Parenting Without Violence Common Approach
QoS	Quality of Service
RA	Research Assistants
SCF	Save the Children Finland
SCI CO	Save the Children International Country Office
SGBV	Sexual and Gender
SLHRC	Somaliland Human Rights Commission
SPSS	Scientific Package for Social Scientists
TOR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
UNICEF	United Nation Children Fund
YOVENCO	Youth Volunteers for Development and Environmental Conservation

Report of final evaluation

November 2021 - Somaliland



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The final evaluation of the *Ilaa Linta Caruurta (ILC) project (2017-2021)* took place in July 2021. The project's goal was to contribute to protection rights of children in Somaliland and more specifically to improved protection of children from abuse, exploitation, violence and neglect through strengthened child protection systems. The purpose of the final evaluation was to facilitate a process that would document project outcome and outputs and the project's contribution to impact. Specifically, the evaluation aimed to (1) assess the project's performance and achievements vis-à-vis the project's overall outcomes and outputs, the project indicators in the logical framework and the baseline data, (2) assess the project's relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability, gender effects and child participation, (3) generate lessons learned that will be useful for similar projects in the future, especially in regards to ensuring that children and their families have access to child protection services of high quality; children are able to grow in violent free families and communities; and child protection laws, policies and structures are strengthened to promote zero tolerance of violence against children.

Survey method, complemented by mixed methods approach for data collection, was adopted to inquire into the evaluation criteria among the representative sample. Quantitative and qualitative data was gathered from different sources to enable triangulation and comparison of views and facts. Qualitative data was gathered using key informant interviews and focus group discussions from the various project stakeholders, while quantitative data was collected electronically using Open Data Kit (ODK) software. In total, 535 (445 female, 90 male) respondents participated in the evaluation. These included 103 children (59 girls, 44 boys) and 432 adults (386 female, 46 male). The study was also complemented by desk review of available literature relevant to the evaluation. A total of 18 data enumerators (8 female) participated in data collection.

Overall, the project contributed to the SCI Theory of Change by not only becoming the voice for advocating for favourable social and legal environment for children, but it also taught children how to be the voice for their own rights. Children gained skills to identify and advocate with the relevant duty bearers on issues of concern to them, through child-led organizations (child right groups). The project facilitated building partnerships between child protection non-state actors and the government both at national and local levels. Through these partnerships, some progress was made towards delivering child protection legal frameworks. Effective partnerships were also established between the implementing partners and the child welfare committees (CWCs), caregivers, teachers and children to enhance child protection at home, in the community and at school. The project also used innovation in approaching child protection. In this regard, the bottom-up approach through establishment and strengthening of community-based child protection mechanisms (CBCPMs) was a strategic way to build more self-sustaining child protection (CP) structures. Introduction of children to child-led research was very creative as a way of equipping children with the skills needed for evidence based self-advocacy. Finally, the project helped to deliver results at scale for children in Somaliland by providing technical support to strengthen capacities of the relevant state level duty bearers and by supporting development and advocacy for passing/enactment of some legal frameworks including Child Protection Policy, Sexual Offences Act, Alternative Care Policy and the Plan of Action for Children. Linked to this, the project established effective referral pathways that included CWCs who were also involved in the management of child protection cases at the community level; Child Protection Working Group (CPWG) that mostly focused on advocacy level issues, child led institutions among others.

The systems building approach through which the project contributed to Save the Children breakthrough 'Violence against children is no longer tolerated' was well confirmed by the evaluation findings. Findings showed that the project creatively and successfully implemented an integrated bottom-up approach to protect the most vulnerable and marginalised children, including children with disabilities, from multiple child protection risks and violations. In this regard, the project enhanced the capacity and awareness levels of the community-based child protection structures (Child

Report of final evaluation

November 2021 - Somaliland



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Welfare Committees), caregivers/parents and child led organizations to identify and respond to child protection concerns at the community, school and at home. The integrated community-based child protection mechanism (CBCPM) was linked with the national level CP structures which included relevant state institutions (national and local government) and the CP coordination mechanism under the banner of the child protection working group (CPWG), through the referral mechanism as well as advocacy for CP legal frameworks.

Linked to the above was the project contribution through capacity building of the community and national level CP structures in identifying and responding to multiple child protection needs of the project beneficiaries. In this regard, the capacity of the Ministry of Employment Social Affairs and Family (MESAF) officials was enhanced to actively and meaningfully engage with the processes towards development and implementation of the CP legal frameworks in the region. Findings for instance indicated that through the project support to enhance their capacities, 81% of the government officials (46% Hargeisa, 54% Berbera) participated in the development of CP legal frameworks in various ways. These included through initiating the bills (77%), drafting (46%), consultations (77%), verification (15%), advocacy for approval (46%) and dissemination (23%). At the community level, the project enhanced the CWCs capacity in CP case management. In this regard, a total of 1,654 children (835 girls, 819 boys) benefitted from case management interventions.

Evaluation findings indicated that the project contributed towards the overall project goal, 'contribute to protection rights of children in Somaliland' through improved protection of children from abuse, exploitation, violence and neglect. Despite national survey lacking to validate the status of the various CP indicators at the time of the evaluation, compared to the baseline, there was 38% drop in the number of community members who reported there being high prevalence of CP violations in the project locations. On the other hand, case management data indicated a drop in physical and humiliating punishment at the family and community level that was linked to positive parenting interventions. In addition, the project improved duty bearer's accountability to children through provision of quality and gender sensitive services to them.

The project contributed to change in attitude and practice in care and educating of children at home, community and school levels through supporting positive parenting approaches that significantly influenced levels of child abuse in the target communities. In this regard, evaluation findings confirmed that child-to-child, child-caregiver and child-teacher relationships significantly improved. For instance, on the child-care giver relationship, the Parenting without Violence (PwV) formative evaluation results showed that there was 10% points increase in the frequency that the caregivers spent time with their child one on one. On the teacher-child interaction, there was 52% points increase in the proportion of girls who perceived that their teachers/facilitators of the children's group sessions always respected their opinion. On the other hand, concerning the child-child relationship, findings confirmed that there was 40% points increase in the proportion of girls who always helped other young people compared to the pre-assessment, while the proportion of girls and boys who always felt accepted and appreciated by their peers increased by 46% points and 6% points respectively compared to the pre-assessment. Findings also confirmed that children are able to solve their own problems and those of their peers.

The project embraced gender sensitive and inclusive programming approach to improve visibility and social position of girls in the target communities and schools. This was evident through the various interventions implemented that ensured representation and participation of girls was visible. For instance, gender balance was observed in constituting the membership of the child rights groups (CRGs), children's group sessions in positive parenting activities and in the disability support groups. In this regard, during the project period, 23 CRGs were established in the project locations. Membership comprised 460 children out of whom 227 were boys and 233 girls. Girls as well as boys were also included

Report of final evaluation

November 2021 - Somaliland



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in the training activities. For example, 16 children (8 boys and 8 girls) from CRGs were trained in child-led participatory action research. Issues identified through the child-led research informed their CRG activities, which were aimed at improving self-protection from violence. According to the ILC project 2020 annual report, a total of 16 children with disabilities who included 11 boys and 5 girls were targeted with case management interventions most of who came from deprived families and IDP communities in the project locations. Further, in case management, female caseworkers were engaged to handle cases involving girl survivors while male caseworkers handled boy's cases. This made case management gender sensitive.

The project also embraced adaptive programming in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, which was reported for the first time in Somaliland in March 2020. This disrupted project activities at different levels especially those at community level. Community members were hesitant to participate in activities because of fear of infection. To ensure project activities were implemented, alternative approaches were initiated that included reprogramming and online sessions, reduction of participant number in the project activities, use of personal protective items was introduced in the group activities and enforcing social distancing. Eventually by end of the project, almost all activities were implemented except few that were ongoing at the time of evaluation.

Among the lessons learnt, the bottom-up model in promoting child protection was hailed as a success if well resourced and supported and was described as the most self-sustaining model in child protection programming. The linkages with the national level structures (legal actors, education, health service providers, law enforcement structures etc.) was described as the best culmination for effective child protection referral pathways. A key lesson from child participation to protect themselves and their peers was that 'children are the best change agents'. Once empowered, they are able to defend themselves through evidence-based advocacy.

Moving forward, strategic partnerships should be established with state level institutions directly involved in legal frameworks in the region. In this regard, SCI should work with the Ministry of Justice, Somaliland Human Rights Commission and Somaliland Lawyers Associations to enhance advocacy for and support for the CP legal frameworks. Linked to this is the need to develop/design a comprehensive capacity enhancement support programme targeted at MOJ to enhance its ability to deliver CP legal frameworks. Linked to this, there is need to initiate an inter-ministerial consultative forum for upcoming and already approved laws. The forum would provide a platform for disseminating the approved laws, sensitize other government ministries on the legal frameworks in the pipeline and solicit for their support in pushing for the frameworks.

Programming around CP legal and policy environment should be broader and more encompassing to create community-national level linkages. Findings indicated that the project approached and restricted CP legal and policy activities at the national level. Communities reported low awareness and knowledge levels on existing CP frameworks. It is thus recommended that national level as well as community level activities are included in future programmes. The programme should also support development of popular versions of the approved laws and policies in local language and disseminate widely. Popular media may provide a platform for dissemination. Linked to this, legal and policy formulation processes should be highly consultative including at the community level to increase buy-in.

There is need to adopt integrated child protection programming to enhance resilience at the family level. This should include livelihoods support for the neediest families through skills training and support to initiate income generating activities through small grants, support supervision, monitoring and reporting. Village Savings and Loan Scheme model or "table banking" with groups of most vulnerable caregivers could be tested and rolled-out.

Report of final evaluation

November 2021 - Somaliland



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Future programming should mainstream disaster risk reduction and integrate disaster preparedness approaches in the project design in order to accommodate unexpected changes in the context and to be better prepared in case of any humanitarian crisis, like what happened due to COVID-19 pandemic.

Establishment and strengthening child protection referral pathways are directly linked to existence of functional and effective child protection structures at the community and national level. Referral pathways also benefit from well-capacitated community level structures that are able to identify and respond to child protection violations. Communities that had benefitted from the ILC project interventions reported more successes in identifying and responding to CP violations than those in the control sites. Scaling up the interventions to establish and strengthen CBCPMs that are well linked with the national level CP service providers is recommended. This should also target locations not reached by this phase of the ILC project.

Limited skills and capacities were reported among the various stakeholders. Future programming should include an integrated capacity building interventions for police force to enhance CP support for children in contact with the law as well as enhance referrals among volunteer case management workers, CWC members, Community Health Workers etc. to sustain support for survivors of child protection violations; and train children living and working on the streets in life-skills and vocational skills for self-reliance.



CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Save the Children Finland (SCF) commissioned a final evaluation of the SCF funded project, *Ilaa Linta Caruurta - Children Protected in Families and Communities, 2017-2021*. The project was implemented in Somaliland by Save the Children Somalia/Somaliland Country Office (SCI CO) in partnership with YOVENCO. The project was implemented in seven locations in Hargeisa (3 in IDP camps, four in host communities), and five in Berbera (2 in Berbera town, 3 out of town), at a total funding amounting to € 1,500,000, for a 5 years period. Utilizing a bottom-up approach that was complemented by capacity building and strengthening of the beneficiary communities and other key stakeholders including child protection service providers (both formal and informal), capacity was built to respond to child protection concerns, with a key focus being to enable the beneficiaries to identify and respond to potential risks of abuse, violence, harm and neglect of children at the community level, and improve case management and referrals of CP concerns. In 2018, the project started piloting the “Parenting without Violence” (PwV) Common Approach, whose focus was to (1) Provide fathers, mothers and caregivers with the knowledge, skills and attitudes to parent positively without using violence; (2) Empower children and ensure they can feel valued, respected and safe within their family and community; (3) Support communities so that they are willing and able to protect all children, girls and boys from violence and (4) Strengthening equitable and gender-sensitive child protection systems. Due to the high incidences of gender-based violence against women and girls in the country, gender considerations were key throughout the implementation, and hence constitute an area of interest in the evaluation.

The project contributed to the SCF’s Global Programme 2017-2021 outcomes through ensuring (1) Community CP systems are strengthened, in particular to meet the needs of the most deprived and marginalised children and to respond effectively to emergencies and other shocks (2) Children, including those on the move, have improved access to appropriate family-based support, protection and care (3) Following a rights-based approach or child rights programming (CRP) and give a special focus to gender sensitivity, promotion of child participation, integration of disaster risk reduction (DRR) and strengthening of the civil society as well as the government (duty bearers).

In the last two years, the project was implemented in the context of COVID-19 pandemic that was confirmed in Somaliland in March 2020. According to the ILC annual report (2020), government restrictions and fear of infections affected other aspects of the ordinary lives such as food security and education. The Ministry of Health containment measures that included social distancing, suspension of schools, ban on public gatherings and face-to-face events like trainings, workshops and community dialogue sessions disrupted project activities particularly those at community level. Community members were hesitant to participate in activities for fear of infection. Follow-up visits to identified/supported children and families were minimized. To ensure project activities continued, alternative approaches were initiated that included reprogramming and online sessions. Eventually by end of 2020, most activities were implemented except few that were ongoing during the evaluation.

In June 2019, the project implementation was temporally affected in Hargeisa following a relocation of Sheedaha IDP that was constructed on a main road in Hargeisa. This affected about 500 households with about 2,000 children whose daily routine and access to services was disrupted. After settling in the new location, the project resumed CP work with the IDP community.

Report of final evaluation

November 2021 - Somaliland



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1.2 Purpose of the project final evaluation

The main purpose of the final evaluation was to facilitate a process that would help to document project outputs and outcomes and the project's contribution to impact. By learning from the process, achievements and challenges encountered in the project, the evaluation would inform and advise on future programming. Findings would be expected to inform a meta-analysis of all CP project evaluations, which have contributed to SCF's Global Programme 2017-2021.

1.3 Evaluation Objectives

The evaluation sought to respond to three specific objectives (i) To assess the project's performance and achievements vis-à-vis the project's overall outcomes and outputs, the project indicators in the logical framework and the baseline data for the indicators gathered at the start of the project (ii) To assess the project's relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability, gender effects and child participation (iii) To generate lessons learned from the implementation of the project's activities and the outcomes achieved that would be useful for similar projects in the future, especially in regards to ensuring that children and their families have access to CP services of high quality; children are able to grow in violent free families and communities; and child protection laws, policies and structures are strengthened to promote zero tolerance of violence against children.

In assessing these objectives, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) framework was used. Focus was based on evaluation criteria – relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability to determine the merit or worth of the intervention. In this regard therefore, SCF provided a set of key questions (TOR article 2.2) that guided the line of inquiry. The questions were used to guide development of an evaluation framework that linked the questions to the project log frame outline, the data sources and the data collection tools as detailed in the inception report.

1.4 Scope of the evaluation

The evaluation was conducted in Hargeisa and Berbera districts. The project operated in seven locations in Hargeisa (3 in IDP camps, 4 in host communities); and five in Berbera (2 in Berbera town; 3 out of town). For purposes of the evaluation, another seven (7) control sites were sampled and included for comparison.

1.5 Child safeguarding and ethical considerations

Prior to the commencement of the assignment, the Lead Consultant signed SCI Child Safeguarding Policy as a commitment to ensure that the evaluation process and specifically field data collection exercise adhered to the Child Safeguarding Principles. A session on child safeguarding was held with the enumerators. In addition, written informed consent was obtained from the caregivers consenting that their children could participate in the interviews. A clause requiring that respondents provided consent was also included in all the tools including survey tools. During the FGDs, the child chaperons in some cases provided written or verbal consent. Child safeguarding clause was also included in the enumerator's service contract.

During the enumerators training, a number of ethical considerations were emphasised. These included the need to obtain informed verbal or written consent, voluntary participation, confidentiality, rapport with the respondents, elaborating the objective of the evaluation to the respondent, respect for the respondents, adherence to the COVID-19 protocols,

Report of final evaluation

November 2021 - Somaliland



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reporting of any child protection incidences to the SCI partner, research ethics including honesty and integrity to ensure data originality among others. See details in Annex 3: Enumerators Training Notes.

1.6 Challenges experienced in the field

- i. The evaluation was conducted in the context of COVID-19 health pandemic. To comply with the government COVID-19 protocols, the following measures were observed.
 - a. All enumerators were provided with facemasks and hand sanitizers during the field data collection exercise.
 - b. All FGD participants were provided with facemasks before start (where they did not have) and their hands were sanitized before they started risk mapping (children) and discussions (adults).
 - c. All interviews were kept short whenever possible
 - d. No physical interactive group activities like games were carried out in the FGDs to ensure appropriate social distancing and avoidance of body contact especially while working with children.
- ii. Some FGD participants delayed to show up especially those that were scheduled to start at 9:00am. At times, it upset those that had to wait longer. The facilitators assured them that they would keep the discussions short but detailed to make up for the lost time.
- iii. Child Protection Working Groups (CPWGs) were unavailable to participate in the evaluation in both districts. MESAF in both locations noted that there lacked consistency in attendance of CPWGs meetings and this impacted continuity and availability of members whenever they were needed on a short notice.
- iv. Hotels were very costly in Berbera (\$35 per day) due to high temperatures and the demand for use of air conditioners (AC). Upkeep allowance (\$10 per day per enumerator) was inadequate in the circumstance. Enumerators would only get accommodated in hotels without AC.
- v. Some control groups were not very responsive since the project did not support them.
- vi. Availability of children in Berbera was challenged by school's closure and relocation of most children to cooler locations. High temperatures also prevented most FGDs from being conducted in the community and instead participants were invited in YOVENCO office where there was an AC. Two FGDs could not be done due to unavailability of children. In some cases, respondents were drawn from originally unsampled locations but still within target locations.
- vii. Like in the baseline, most qualitative tools were not translated into Somali.

CHAPTER TWO EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

Survey research method complemented by mixed methods for data collection was adopted in the evaluation. Quantitative and qualitative data was gathered from different sources to enable triangulation and comparison of views. Qualitative data was gathered using key informant interviews and focus group discussions, while quantitative data was collected electronically using Open Data Kit (ODK) software. Desk review of literature relevant to the evaluation was also conducted.

2.1 Secondary Data Collection

2.1.1 Desk Review

Report of final evaluation

November 2021 - Somaliland



Secondary data was gathered from review of documents relevant to the evaluation. Literature reviewed guided finalization of the key informant tools (others were available from the baseline assessment). Desk review also generated relevant background information about the project, target beneficiaries, project locations etc. During the inception sessions, there was consensus that the Quality of Services (QoS) tool would most likely take longer to apply and required longer orientation to enable the research team to effectively apply it. SCF recommended that QoS data for 2021 be collected at a later stage by the SCI CO team. QoS data was collected annually since project inception except in 2021. To fill this gap, it was recommended that data from the past assessments/annual reports be reviewed to give an indication of the status of the QoS indicators. Findings in this regard are incorporated in Chapter 4 under findings. See Annex 1: List of desk review documents

2.2 Primary Data Collection

Primary data was gathered from different sources to enable triangulation. Selection of the respondents in this regard, and the data collection tools and methods were as follows.

2.2.1 Sample Size and Sampling Method

A representative sample was generated from the 12 project locations (7 Hargeisa, 5 Berbera). As much as possible, data collection replicated locations targeted during the baseline assessment and the control groups. However, in some circumstances, some IDP camps had been relocated hence location names changed even though the same respondents were involved in the evaluation. In other cases, for instance in Berbera, children from child rights groups had relocated to cooler locations hence were unavailable to participate in the FGDs. This necessitated sampling with replacement targeting other villages not in the sample but benefitted from the project. In total, seven locations (intervention communities/IDP camps) and seven comparison communities/IDP camps in the two districts were involved. See Annex 2: Data collection sites by district.

In most cases, tools used in the baseline assessment were used since they benchmarked the indicators. These included the child FGD tool (risk mapping), CWC tool on case management, CWCs & CPWG FGD tool and adult survey tool. Extra questions were included in the tools to cover the evaluation criteria of relevance, effectiveness, most significant change, lessons learnt and sustainability as well as challenges experienced. Additional tools were also developed to guide KIIs with the project team, teachers who are facilitators of CRGs, government officials and NGOs.

2.2.1.1 Quantitative survey sample

Sampling for the quantitative sample was guided by adult study population used in the baseline survey. The study population comprised 1,800 adults. In the baseline assessment, only adults (government officials and community members) participated in the survey. In the final evaluation, the same categories participated in the survey. In determining the sample size, Raosoft Sample Size Calculator was used to generate a sample of 317 adult survey respondents from the 1,800 adult beneficiary population using a margin of error of $\pm 5\%$ and 95% confidence level; $P = 0.5$ (Raosoft, 2004). The survey included a control group in the community members category as was in the baseline. At the final evaluation, control group was used as a comparison group. In this regard, 50% of the sample or 159 respondents was assigned to the treatment group and 50% (158) to the control group. The sample was then distributed equally to the two districts. Simple random sampling method was applied in identifying the respondents. A sampling range of 10 households was

Report of final evaluation

November 2021 - Somaliland



used. Sampling with replacement was used to replace respondents unavailable or unwilling to participate in the evaluation. Survey tool was applied electronically using ODK software.

A total of 302 survey interviews were conducted with the community members (150 Hargeisa, 152 Berbera). Separately, 16 surveys were conducted with the government and NGO officials (10 government, 6 NGO representatives in both locations). These respondents were purposively identified to ensure only those that participated in CP programming were involved. Combined therefore, a total of 318 respondents (302 community members; 16 government and NGOs) were reached. This was 100.3% success rate. A total of four enumerators (4 females) conducted the surveys lasting four days.

2.2.1.2 Key Informant Interview (KIs) Sample

A total of 23 KIs with 13 males and 9 females (15, Hargeisa, 7 Berbera) were conducted with purposively selected stakeholders drawn from MESAF, SLHRC, Horn of Africa Voluntary Youth Committee (HAVOYOCO), SCI CO, YOVENCO, 6 schools (3 Berbera, 3 Hargeisa), Ministry of Justice in Berbera, Local Government, MOHD Berbera and the Ministry of Education (MOE). Key Informant Checklists guided the KIs.

2.2.1.3 Focus Group Discussion (FGD) Sample

A total of 26 FGDs (12 intervention, 14 control groups¹) were conducted (16 Hargeisa, 10 Berbera). Further, out of the total FGDs, 10 FGDs involved children drawn from CRGs while 16 involved adults. Further breakdown as follows.

Table 1: FGD participants by age, sex and district

CHILDREN	Intervention		Control		Total
	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	
Hargeisa	20	11	13	9	53
Berbera	19	10	12	9	50
Total	39	21	25	18	103

ADULTS	Women	Men	Women	Men	Total
Hargeisa	16	8	18	3	45
Berbera	21	3	20	3	47
Total	37	11	38	6	92

Each child FGD involved maximum 10 participants while adults involved five (5). A higher number was allowed in child FGD to accommodate diverse age groups of the children who participated in the CRGs. COVID-19 protocols including wearing facemasks and sanitizing hands were observed in the FGDs. As much as possible, facilitators were required to keep FGDs short to reduce risk of COVID-19 transmission. Working in pairs, eight facilitators (4 female) conducted all FGDs in both locations.

¹ Two child FGDs could not be conducted due to unavailability of children in Berbera following relocation to cooler neighbourhoods.

2.3 Enumerator training and pre-testing of the tools

A total of 18 enumerators (8 female) were engaged. The enumerators were selected from Hargeisa with the support of the project partner and SCI CO team. Selecting enumerators from Hargeisa enabled joint enumerator training and pre-testing of the tools. The team was then shared between the two locations (9 Hargeisa; 8 Berbera). Gender balance was observed in appointing the enumerators. The enumerators were supported by three child protection staff (one female) from SCI CO and two from YOVENCO (one female).

Prior to the field data collection, a two days enumerator training and pre-testing of the tools was conducted in Hargeisa. See Annex 3: Enumerator Training Notes. See also Annex 4: Inception Report for details on enumerators selection. Data collection tools were pre-tested to confirm the duration of application, test for common understanding of the questions, check if any questions made the respondents uncomfortable, and repetition of questions and logic of flow among others. Caution was exercised to ensure that the pilot testing was carried out in a non-targeted location/village to avoid contamination of data and the target groups. The pre-test sample comprised of 10 surveys, two FGDs with children (one mixed group) and one FGD with caregivers.

2.4 Data and Data Safety Management

In addition to a Local Consultant, two (2) male Research Assistants (RAs) were assigned (one in each location), to support with coordination and support supervision. Daily sessions were held either virtually or physically between the consultants, the RAs and the enumerators to review progress achieved and challenges experienced in each day. The enumerators submitted completed tools daily to the RAs to avoid data loss. At the end of the field data collection, FGD facilitators and KII enumerator transcribed data into soft versions. A joint session was held at the SCI offices to do data cleaning, sorting and organizing the data and submission to the principal consultant.

2.5 Data Quality Management

The consultant ensured that the data collected related to the evaluation purpose and employed data collection methods and procedures that were rigorous, defensible and that produced empirically verifiable evidence that is valid, reliable and credible with regards to the ILC project for the period 2017-2021. To do this, the consultant ensured questions asked to the respondents were short, clear and concise yet not embarrassing; also, that the data collection tools had been pre-tested and adjusted accordingly, data was cleaned of any gaps and irregularities and data loss was prevented. Of importance was to ensure the consultants, assisted by the designated evaluation team closely monitored the enumerators to ensure original primary data was collected and not fabricated elsewhere.

2.6 Data Analysis

Both quantitative and qualitative methods of data analysis were employed to analyse data gathered through the various methods used in data collection. Specifically, data obtained from the quantitative survey responses was cleaned up, coded, extracted using the Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS) and uploaded into excel for analysis. Analysed data was summarized and presented in charts, tables and other descriptive statistics to illustrate the views on changes or lack thereof against the various measurement indicators and outcomes expected from ILC project. Analysis of qualitative data was mainly through content analysis and establishment of themes. The findings from the qualitative data triangulated the quantitative data to inform the final conclusions from the evaluation findings.



2.7 Debriefing

Debriefing was held between the principal consultant and the SCI CO teams to share preliminary findings at the close of fieldwork. The partner was not available to attend. The briefing helped to generate preliminary views and feedback from the team, as well as additional suggestions on the expected structure and detail of the analysis.

CHAPTER THREE FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Chapter Three presents and discusses the evaluation findings. Findings are organized under the key evaluation criteria capturing the project relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability, gender and child participation; lessons learnt and challenges experienced. Analysis of outcomes/outputs and indicators is used to validate the results under each criterion.

3.1 Project relevance (Are we doing the right things?)

3.1.1 Relevance of child protection systems strengthening approach

Overall, the evaluation sought to assess how relevant child protection systems strengthening approach was in improving access to child protection services to vulnerable children and their families. In this regard, the project embraced a bottom-top approach in establishing and strengthening community-based child protection mechanisms (CBCPMs) that included Community Welfare Committees (CWCs) that were involved in management of child protection (CP) cases at the community level; Child Protection Working Group (CPWG) that mostly focused on advocacy level issues and child led institutions also called Child Rights Groups (CRGs). At the national level, the project worked with the line ministries including the Ministry of Employment Social Affairs and Family (MESAF), local government, Somaliland Human Rights Commission (SLHRC) and civil society organizations (CSOs) involved in child protection work. These structures provided a conduit through which children accessed diverse services including psychosocial support, medical, nutritional, capacity building, mobility for children with disabilities and educational among others. The approach also helped to create the most needed linkages between the community and the state level structures. Child led organizations provided a child friendly platform that not only enhanced child participation but also provided an avenue for self-advocacy on issues of concern.

The project was very relevant to the child protection context in Somaliland. Available data indicate that violence against children in Somaliland is prevalent. Children are exposed to many risks such as child, forced and early marriage (CFEM), child labour, and gender-based violence (GBV), including female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C). One in 10 Somali marriages occurs before the girl is 15 years old, and about half before they are 18 (UNICEF, 2016). Save the Children study on violence against children in Somaliland (2014) revealed that 95% of children in the study areas had experienced different forms of violence (sexual, physical, and psychosocial) both at home, in schools and in other government and private institutions. Such types of violence are highest among IDPs and unaccompanied children. Moreover, a UNICEF Multiple Indicator Study (MICS) (2011) showed that 78% of children aged 2-14 years' experience violent disciplining,

Report of final evaluation

November 2021 - Somaliland



which includes both psychological aggression and physical punishment². In this regard, the project used an integrated approach to enhance prevention and response to child abuse in the project locations. These included national level interventions through support for promotion of a favourable legal and policy environment for children, and community level interventions through awareness raising, establishment and strengthening child protection structures, access to quality child protection services to children and capacity strengthening of CP actors.

At the national level, the project contributed to the Somaliland government priorities as contained in the National Development Plan II of 2017-2018 Pillar 3: Good Governance, Pillar 3 sub article 3.5.2.2 on Justice and Human Rights and Pillar 4: Social Development. In this regard, the project supported advocacy for a child friendly legal environment as well as provided technical support to strengthen capacities of the relevant state level duty bearers to develop child protection laws and policies. As a result, the Child Protection Policy, Sexual Offences Act, Alternative Care Policy and the Somaliland National Plan of Action for Children were developed and approved. Other critical frameworks like the Children Act and the Social Protection Policy are on course. The project contributed towards Pillar 4 through establishing and strengthening child protection referral pathways that were linked to the case management. In this regard, children who required health, psychological and other social support interventions were linked with the relevant service providers.

The project was in line with Save the Children's global child protection sub-themes. Under the sub-theme "Child Protection Systems", Save the Children committed globally that by 2030 all children are protected through a strong child protection system, integrating both formal and informal components. Findings indicated that the project creatively and successfully implemented an integrated bottom-up approach to protect the most vulnerable and marginalised children, including children with disabilities, from multiple child protection risks and harms. In this regard, the project enhanced the capacity and awareness levels of the community-based child protection structures (child welfare committees), caregivers/parents and child led organizations to identify and respond to child protection concerns at the community, school and at home. The integrated community-based child protection mechanism (CBCPM) was linked with the national level CP structures which included relevant state institutions (national and local government) and the CP coordination mechanism led by the child protection working group (CPWG) through the referral mechanism as well as advocacy for CP legal frameworks.

Linked to the above, the project contributed to strengthened CP systems through capacity building of the community and national level CP structures in identifying and responding to multiple child protection needs of the project beneficiaries. In this regard, the capacity of MESAF officials was enhanced to actively and meaningfully engage with the processes towards development and implementation of the CP legal and policy frameworks in the region. Findings for instance indicated that through the project support to enhance their capacities, 81% of the government officials (46% Hargeisa, 54% Berbera) participated in the development of CP legal frameworks through initiating the bills (77%), drafting (46%), consultations (77%), verification (15%), advocacy for approval (46%) and dissemination (23%). At the community level, the project enhanced CWCs capacity in CP case management. In this regard, a total of 1,654 children (835 girls, 819 boys) benefitted from case management interventions.

The community-based child protection mechanisms were adaptive to the context and to the emerging community and children needs. After the declaration of the first COVID-19 case in Somaliland, the CWCs in the project locations-initiated campaigns to popularize the containment measures with an aim to enhance child protection at the community

² PD CP SCF 2017-2021 revised Jan 2019

and family level. Findings indicated that closure of schools and restricted movements as well as the harsh socio-economic effects arising from the restrictions at the family level triggered more cases of child protection concerns. In this context, the CWCs increased their CP response through case management and outreach support at the family level.

3.1.2 Relevance of parenting support in improving care and well-being of children

In 2018, ILC project introduced parenting without violence (PwV) common approach (CA). A formative evaluation was conducted in March 2021 on the PwV. The purpose of the evaluation was to examine the effectiveness of the contextualized PwV CA in Somaliland. Specifically, it sought to establish the extent PwV CA contributed towards reducing physical and humiliating punishment (PHP) in the beneficiaries' homes and schools, as well as to understand the challenges and opportunities for the common approach.

Evaluation findings confirmed positive change in the attitude, perception and practice around caring and educating children among the caregivers, teachers, community members and children themselves, as illustrated by the findings below.

As a single intervention, the PwV common approach helped to clarify the role of the caregivers in caring, educating and disciplining their children. The caregivers particularly profiled their role in protecting their children from all forms of harm, even though this only seemed to be appreciated by the female caregivers, as the community norms associated caregiving role with females. Linked to this, compared to the pre and post assessment results, there was 8% points increase in the caregiver's perception that it wasn't necessary to use physical violence or emotional violence (18% points) to educate or raise a child. Physical violence was associated with negative impacts on the child. Most caregivers articulated the impact of physical punishment on children, which indicated good progress in the efforts to stamp it out altogether.

There was an overall decrease (21% points) compared to the pre-assessment in the perception that a spank on a 5yr old's bottom is good if she/he does something dangerous. In addition, there was a decrease in the perception change (10% points) in the number of caregivers who at the pre-assessment supported use of a spank or swat in getting children to listen. There was also significant increase (35% points) compared to the pre-assessment in the proportion of the caregivers who strongly disagreed with the view that if parents did not punish their children, then they would get spoilt. Further, there was an increase (32% points) in the proportion of those who strongly disagreed with the view that a caregiver had the right to decide whether to spank a child. Further from the responses, there was an increase by 15% points in the proportion of caregivers who confirmed to set rules with their children, and an increase by 9% points in the proportion of those who set the rules jointly with their children as compared to the pre-assessment. These changes were directly attributed to the child protection sessions delivered to the parents/caregivers during the positive parenting sessions.

On verbal punishment, there was increase in the category of parents/caregivers who reported to have never shouted/yelled/screamed at their child accounting for 44%-point change at the formative evaluation compared to the pre-assessment. In addition, there was an improvement (by 40%) points in the proportion of caregivers who never called their children dumb, lazy or other name like that compared to the pre-assessment. Further, there was increase in the proportion of caregivers who never swore or cursed at their children recording a cumulative change of 42% points compared to the pre-assessment. Still, there was an increase by 16% points in the proportion of the caregivers who never threatened to kick their child out of the house compared to the pre-assessment despite the slight drop from a high of 17% points at the post assessment. On the use of threats to spank/hit him/her but did not do it actually, formative

Report of final evaluation

November 2021 - Somaliland



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evaluation findings indicated an increase in the proportion of caregivers who never used this method of punishment accounting for 29% points compared to the pre-assessment.

Findings confirmed that positive parenting sessions helped to improve the child-caregiver relationship, created bonds of friendship, improved communication between children and their caregivers, and built trust and mutual understanding. On the other hand, children became more open on issues of concern, developed confidence, public speaking skills, listening skills, conflict resolution skills, problem solving skills among others. For instance, the proportion of girls who always opened up to their caregivers on matters of concern increased by 17% points compared to the pre-assessment.

In regards to how the PwV CA impacted child self-esteem and confidence, mixed results were realized. For instance, the proportion of girls who always felt happy about themselves increased by 28% points compared to the pre-assessment while that of boys decreased by 36% points compared to the pre-assessment. Similar results were realized on child-school interaction with the proportion of girls who always found their school/centre as a safe place increasing by 39% points compared to the pre-assessment, unlike that of boys that dropped by 12% points. On the other hand, bullying decreased amongst boys and girls, while there was an increase by 15% points in the proportion of girls who always concentrated in the classroom/during PwV activities.

With regards to child decision making and problem-solving skills, mixed results were realized. For instance, the proportion of girls that always took time to think before they acted increased by 43% points compared to the pre-assessment, while that of boys in the same category dropped by 11% points. On the ability to find solutions to problems, both girls and boys improved in always being good at solving problems 44% points and 4% points respectively, compared to the pre-assessment. Child-child relationship also improved recording increase by (40% points) in girls who always helped other young people, unlike boys in the same category who dropped by 10% points compared to the pre-assessment.

Findings on whether the project enabled children to develop knowledge and skills to protect themselves and their peers indicated that the project enhanced bonds and trust between children and their caregivers and improved self-protection skills among children. Caregivers reported that children were increasingly confident talking to them (caregivers) on child protection concerns and their behaviour towards others had significantly (positively) changed. Teachers who are facilitators of CRGs reported that the project imparted self-protection skills to the children. They learnt advocacy skills and are able to disseminate lessons learnt to the others. Risks facing children have reduced as interventions targeted at children and community members are implemented. Through the CRGs, children have been educated on their rights. They are able to identify risks facing them in their homes, community, and at school. They acknowledge that teachers do not have to physically punish them, as it is their right to be corrected differently.

3.1.3 Relevance of evidence-based advocacy to strengthen child protection legal/policy frameworks and their implementation

A total of 25 government and NGO officials (10 male, 15 females) participated in key informant interviews and survey to establish if the project was relevant in strengthening CP legal and policy frameworks. Findings confirmed that ILC project contributed to increased awareness levels about the CP legal context in Somaliland through direct involvement of the stakeholders in the advocacy activities. Findings indicated that during the five-year project period, only one law, one policy and one plan of action that applied to child protection were passed/approved. These included the Sexual Offences Act, Alternative Care Policy and the National plan of Action for Children. The Child Protection Policy had been passed earlier in 2016 while others like the Children Act, FGM/C Bill and the Social Protection Policy are work in

Report of final evaluation

November 2021 - Somaliland



progress. In terms of the implementation of the approved law and policies, the Child Protection and the Alternative Care Policies are on course while Sexual Offences Act is suspended following an objection raised by the religious leaders. The leaders were concerned that the act contained clauses that contravened the Islamic teachings as well as the Somali culture. The National Plan of Action for Children was also approved but implementation has not been commenced.

The project was however very instrumental in increasing the awareness levels about the child protection legal context among the state and non-state stakeholders. In this regard, there was 37% points drop in the proportion of those that were not aware of the CP legal frameworks (approved and in-progress) in Berbera, 100% of whom at the baseline said they didn't know of any laws or policies. Table 3 provides a summary comparison of baseline and final evaluation findings on awareness levels.

Table 2: Awareness levels on existing and upcoming laws and policies

	Final Evaluation	Baseline
Total	16	16
Children Act	88%	63%
Sexual Offences Act	63%	63%
FGM/C Bill	81%	63%
Diversion guidelines	44%	0
Alternative Care Policy	81%	31%
Child Protection Policy	94%	0
National Gender Policy	69%	0
FGM/C Policy	69%	38%
National Plan of Action	50%	69%

From the findings, there is an improvement in the awareness levels at the individual and district levels about the existing child protection legal frameworks. Participation of the government and NGO officials in the development and or advocacy for the legal frameworks could have contributed to this change. In this regard therefore, asked if they participated in the development of any/all of the CP frameworks, 81% (46% Hargeisa, 54% Berbera) said yes. They participated in various ways including through initiating the bills (77%), drafting (46%), consultations (77%), verification (15%), advocacy for approval (46%) and dissemination (23%).

Commenting on the relevance of the project in enhancing CP legal frameworks, the project team noted that 5 years back, the government ministries were significantly unconscious about CP than today. There is great improvement in government response to CP issues especially by MESAF. MESAF is also very supportive of the CP actors. Government line ministries are more concerned about CP cases and often reached out to the CP partners whenever they received them. They reported that the project spearheaded joint advocacy interventions for approval of the laws and policies so far approved. It provided a good platform for planning and coordination of the advocacy activities. The government has also started dissemination of the Child Protection Policy.

Asked the extent they could attribute to SCI efforts and progress made so far in the development, approval of the children's legal frameworks, most (5) government institutions said to some extent while three (3) said a great extent. The government view was that SCI has played a very significant lead role but other actors have also participated in

Report of final evaluation

November 2021 - Somaliland



pushing for the frameworks. HAVOYOCO attributed the success to the advocacy and training efforts by SCI in law making. On the extent, SCI's efforts could be attributed to the implementation of the frameworks, both government and NGOs said to some extent, as this is work in progress. Implementation was described as gradual.

3.2 Effectiveness of the project interventions (Are we doing the right things well?)

The evaluation sought to establish whether ILC project was effective in delivering all the planned outcome and outputs. In this regard, the following three areas were assessed.

Overall, the project had exceeded its total reach targets by end of 2020 to directly reach 9, 403 people (3, 164 children, 6, 364 adults) after correcting for double counting from January 2017-December 2020 as further summarized in table 3.

Table 3: Total reach by year, age and sex

CPS MFA - Ilaa Linta Caruurta – Children Protected in Families and Communities 2017-2020								
	Yr.	People Reached Directly						
		Children Reached Directly			Adults Reached Directly			Total Reached Directly
		Girls	Boys	Sub-Total	Women	Men	Sub-Total	
Total Reached after correcting for double counting	2017	351	341	692	1062	582	1,644	2,336
	2018	447	472	919	750	280	1,030	1,949
	2019	465	363	828	1440	450	1,890	2,718
	2020	385	390	725	1243	557	1,800	2,400
Total Reached		1, 648	1, 566	3, 164	4, 495	1, 869	6, 364	9,403
Expected Target		750	750	1500	1,065	740	1,805	3,305
Exceeded target		898	816	1,664	3,430	1,129	4,559	6,098
% of exceeded target		60%	54%	111%	322%	153%	253%	185%

Source: 2017-2020 Total Reach Tracker - Ilaalinta Caruurta

From the summary table, the project expected to directly reach 1,500 children (750 girls, 750 boys) and a total of 1,805 adults (1, 065 women, 740 men) directly; and 3,840 children (1,920 girls,1,920 boys) and 5,288 adults (3,339 women, 1,949 men) indirectly. In this regard therefore, by end of 2020, the project had already surpassed its targets for direct reach by a significant margin. Overall, the project exceeded the total direct reach target for children by 111% to reach 1,664 more children (898 girls, 816 boys). It also exceeded the adult direct total reach target by 253% to reach 4,559 more adults (3,430 women, 1,129 men). Combined children and adult targets were exceeded by 185% to reach 6,098 more people (1,664 children, 4,559 adults).

3.2.1 Extent interventions achieved/expected to achieve improved access to CP services for girls and boys (and specifically the most deprived and marginalized)

Report of final evaluation

November 2021 - Somaliland



Under this evaluation criterion, the project focused on access, quality and gender sensitivity of the services provided to children during the project period. In this regard, the CWCs involved in case management were asked to what extent the project effectively improved case management, through which children accessed CP support. From the responses, all intervention sites said a great extent. Asked therefore the greatest successes they have realized in case management, Hargeisa intervention site respondents cited awareness raising activities to prevent especially children from being locked up in the houses or burning children (which was reported as having significantly reduced). Berbera intervention had successfully managed 43 cases involving families in addition to children's cases. In total, case management workers reached 1,654 children (835 girls, 819 boys). Cases involved rape, neglect, FGM/C, children from extremely poor families, separated children, and IDP children. Direct support provided to the children with protection concerns promoted their general wellbeing and reduced exposure to further risks. Further disaggregation of cases reached reflected in table 4 below.

Table 4: Case management beneficiaries by sex and district

	Hargeisa		Berbera		Total
	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	
2017			54	72	126
2018	120	113	126	103	462
2019	104	98	116	87	405
2020	97	103	110	97	407
2021(Jan-June)	56	92	52	54	254
Total	377	406	458	413	1, 654

Source: YOVENCO

Overall, on access to CP services, findings confirmed that by close of 2020, through the various child protection systems and structures, the project had reached a total of 3,556 beneficiaries through service provision. These included 45% or 1,590 children (805 girls; 785 boys) and 55% or 1,966 adults (1,348 females; 618 males). By sex, 60% of the total beneficiaries were female and 40% were male. Services provided included training in mental health and psycho-social support (MHPSS), sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) and disability inclusion, support of child protection concerns identified through case management, facilitation of quarterly service provider meetings for information sharing and support of placement of university graduates as intern case management workers.

In terms of quality of service, by end of 2020, a review was done on 24 service providers (16 informal; 8 formal) in both locations who included government institutions (local government, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, police, attorney general's office), NGOs and CWCs. Compared to the baseline, out of the 24 institutions assessed, 20 (83.3%) scored green (standard achieved or exceeded), 3(13%) scored amber (standard almost achieved) and only 1 (4%) scored red (standard not achieved). It is the evaluator's view that by end of 2020, this indicator had progressed very well towards achieving the set target. Further, linking this indicator and the perceptions of girls and boys on the quality and accessibility of CP services in their communities, there is a strong correlation in the positive results realized and the outcomes of this indicator.

In terms of gender sensitivity of the services provided, and as further elaborated under sub article 3.6.1, by close of 2020, findings from child friendly QoS reviews showed that to a great extent, CP services provided by SCI or partner were

Report of final evaluation

November 2021 - Somaliland



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child, gender, and disability sensitive. Children mentioned that in most cases, children were treated equally by the state and non-state CP service providers.

Outcomes for children from the services received including through referrals included psychosocial therapy that helped to resolve behavioural and emotional problems among children including child-child aggression, bullying tendencies, child-child conflicts, threats and telling lies; outcomes from emotional support included resolving problems related to anxiety, low self-esteem and feelings of insecurity. The support also helped to resolve academic related problems that resulted in positive peer relations at the school level, reduced peer influence, bullying and discrimination, poor performance and children being committed to doing homework. Other support aimed at resolving social/relationship problems helped children to be make and maintain friends, maintain good relationships with peers and siblings. Free legal aid enabled those especially sexually and physically abused to get justice, while medical support enabled children to heal from physical and other injuries.

Feedback provided by the case management workers illustrated a comprehensive approach to case management and referrals. Both the child and the family were involved from identification to case closure. By the time of the evaluation, most cases had been closed except those that took longer to resolve especially those involving legal procedures. At the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, caseworkers adapted through reduced home visits and embracing technology including telephone calls to follow up on cases.

3.2.2 Better care and support of children by caregivers and communities and improved knowledge of children to protect themselves and their peers from protection and harm

A review of the indicator: *% of children (disaggregated by sex, age) from targeted HHs who feel supported/receiving better care* confirmed that positive parenting sessions helped to improve the child-caregiver relationship, created bonds of friendship, improved communication between children and their caregivers, and built trust and mutual understanding. On the other hand, children became more open on issues of concern, developed confidence, public speaking skills, listening skills, conflict resolution skills, problem solving skills among others.

The project also improved community response to CP cases over the five years period. In this regard, asked if they responded to child protection violations, responses summarized in table 5 were provided.

Table 5: Did you take action on child abuse case

Total	Baseline		Final evaluation	
	Intervention	Control	Intervention	Control
Yes	42%	19%	70%	62%
No	58%	81%	14%	35%
Other	0%	0%	16%	4%

From the responses, there was 28% increase in the number of community members that took action on child protection case in the intervention sites compared to the baseline. More women (90%) in the intervention sites took action. On the actions taken, most respondents in the intervention group 16 (53%) (or 14 females) talked to the parent. Another 10 (33%) all females in the intervention reported to the CWCs yet another 5 (31%) (8 females) in the intervention sites reported to a local leader. These findings were very similar to the baseline results in which, for those that took action, majority from the intervention sites reported to parents (48%), CWCs (18%) and local leaders (44%). For those that did

Report of final evaluation

November 2021 - Somaliland



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not do anything at the final evaluation, most from the intervention groups 5 (83%) and 7 (78%) in the control group (all females) did not know what to do about it. This reason was similar to that echoed during the baseline survey.

A survey on *% of community members who demonstrate improved awareness on child protection* was done. Asked therefore about the frequency of child abuse and neglect in their communities, only 22 (14%) (20 female, 2 male) community members in the intervention and 31(21%) (all females) in the control group said, it was very common. This was 38% points drop in the number of community members in the intervention sites (52%) of whom reported that the prevalence was very high at the baseline. There was also 35% drop in the proportion of community members in the control sites who shared in the same view. It is the evaluator's view that despite absence of national survey to verify change in the prevalence rate of child protection violations; this finding somehow validates the overall project goal measurement indicator that aimed to result in reduced prevalence of CP violations.

The evaluation also reviewed progress made on *children (girls/boys) demonstrating knowledge and skills to protect themselves and their peers from violence, abuse and exploitation*. The aim was to assess if the project effectively developed skills and knowledge for self and peer protection. In this regard therefore, a total of 103 children (59 girls, 44 boys) participated in child FGDs through which they were guided to do risk mapping by identifying all the locations in their villages that they perceived as either safe or unsafe and explaining their perceptions. In addition, key informant interviews were conducted with six teachers who facilitated CRGs in schools and six caregivers drawn from the PwV caregivers' sessions to triangulate children views. From the findings, children have developed skills in risk mapping as they drew village maps and identified locations in which they felt safe or unsafe, and explained the reasons for their choices. They also made recommendations on how their safety could be enhanced including through proper lighting, walking in groups, self-defence through shouting or hitting the attacker with stone or running to the nearest place with an elder. They also emphasized the need to report any child protection incidences to the existing community-based structures. Findings also indicated that whenever children needed help, they sought it from their parents, teachers and neighbours or the village chief. They observed that the only way children could protect themselves is through being alert and only interacting with people known to them.

From the risk mapping exercise, home and school were identified as safe places by girls and boys. While evaluation findings could not directly attribute the safety of children in these and other social places to the child protection activities, it can be argued that the activities may have significantly influenced the safety of children at home and at school through positive parenting activities at the family level, CRG activities in schools as well as the awareness raising targeted at the general community.

On the other hand, the caregivers and teachers were asked how effective the project was in building the required self-protection skills in children. In this regard, caregivers from the intervention sites reported that children have developed skills in relationship building with peers and caregivers hence reducing conflicts at home. They developed the ability to identify and report violations against them to their caregivers unlike before when they were very afraid to do so. They also developed problem-solving skills. On the flip side, the caregivers from the control groups reported that children in their villages did not know much about child protection. Low awareness levels have meant sexual abuse cases are dealt with culturally since they did not know how else to tackle them. The caregivers further reported that children in their villages (control sites) were shy to report any CP violations. The caregivers acknowledged that many CP violations happen in their community and are happy to learn how to identify and report them. Teachers from Berbera intervention sites reported that children now can constructively engage in class discussions as they freely participate, they report to the teachers the reasons for absence from school, and peer support has improved. They effectively participate in school activities and are able to strengthen their groups. They advocate for those that drop out to return to school. However,

not much has been done about children with disabilities. In Hargeisa, in the IDP camps (intervention sites), teachers observed that children report every incident that they encountered. They were trained in conflict resolution and problem-solving skills. They resolve peer conflicts as well. In addition, they formed Child Rights Committees through which they were trained in leadership skills. In other non-IDP schools (intervention sites), children created groups to mobilize other learners on how to report incidents they faced in school for instance if a teacher beat a learner, if a child is neglected by family or sexually abused. They learnt how to raise awareness among the peers about the risks in their schools and in the community. They also learnt how to record and report CP incidents that happened to them or their peers at school and at the community.

3.2.3 Strengthened child protection systems/structures

In assessing how effective the project was in strengthening child protection systems and structures, the surveyed community members confirmed that the project had effectively strengthened the CWCs to respond to issues of child protection in the project locations. In this regard, survey findings reported 36% points increase in the proportion of community members in the intervention sites reporting that CWCs are very effective compared to the baseline. On the other hand, according to the 2020 ILC annual report, more than 57% children reported that CWCs are very effective. Most child respondents (90%) reported that they felt confident approaching CWCs if they needed help or support. At the final evaluation, most adult respondents 127 (82%) (121 female, 6 males) in the intervention group said, they were confident to consult CWCs whenever they had a child protection concern.

Concerning the effectiveness of the ILC project in building the capacity of the CWCs to improve case management, the CWCs clearly outlined how they handled case management. In this regard, the CWC members demonstrated an in-depth understanding of case management approaches and process from identification, assessment, support, referrals, documentation, follow up and closure. This was directly attributed to the project support through skills training and support supervision by the project team. Further confirming this view, CWCs reported that overall, the project supported awareness raising among the CWCs, children and parents, whose effects are likely to spread to the unreached villages. It has enabled CWCs to engage in effective case management, strengthened referral pathways and enabled them to meaningfully engage in and coordinate emergency response especially the COVID-19 pandemic.

The project was effective in strengthening CP coordination mechanisms³. In this regard, findings confirmed that CWCs in the intervention sites fulfilled most of the functionality criteria including having clear terms of reference, criterion for membership, holding regular meetings, documenting minutes, developing and implementing action plans and conducting follow-ups on CP cases. CWCs reported to prepare and successfully implement action plans. CWC members confirmed to understand their role in child protection. All CWCs had a governance structure. Minutes are taken and shared with members. In both intervention groups, there is some coordination/collaboration with the government but none in the control groups. CWCs discussed progress and challenges in their regular meetings and child protection needs in the community. On the successes achieved from implementing their plans, the Hargeisa intervention CWC said they have done a lot of awareness raising in CP, while the Berbera intervention CWC reported to have succeeded in family mediation. CWCs document their activities in notebooks and files. Files are kept in the groups' offices. All have good working relations with other actors including the government (similarly reported at the baseline). In the intervention groups, members are invited by other actors to their meetings unlike the control groups. In all CWC cases, children are

³ Functional refers to Clear TOR, regular meetings, minutes, % of meeting participants, action plans, number of action plans implemented, reports, conducting follow-ups; satisfactory to be determined when baseline tools will be developed.

Report of final evaluation

November 2021 - Somaliland



invited to update members on the upcoming events or share other views as may be required. Compared to the baseline results, there is significant improvement in involvement of children in the CWCs as baseline results showed that none of the CWCs involved children in their meetings/activities before.

Asked to what extent they could attribute their current performance/status to the support of ILC project, CWCs in both intervention sites said to a great extent. From the project team's perspective, CBCPMs model is very effective. The model is community/needs driven hence stand high chance to succeed. It has high community ownership and is most self-sustaining.

Linked to sub article 3.1.3. above, it is the evaluator's view that the project could have realized better results under output 3 on strengthening CP legal and policy frameworks could it have worked more directly with MOJ, the SLHRC, and the Somaliland legal fraternity/associations. It should have initiated an inter-ministerial consultative forum involving among others MESAF, Ministry of Religious Affairs, MOHD, MOE and the Ministry of Finance and National Planning. The forum would have helped to secure support from the government across the divide towards the contested and the pending laws and policies, as well as to push for increased budget allocation for the implementation of CP frameworks. The project could have initiated well-coordinated and managed media campaign in support of the CP frameworks. It should have stepped up community consultations, established and built capacity of community legal volunteers to rollout legal education and gather community feedback on the legal frameworks, step up engagement with the local government, establish strategic consultations with religious leaders and engage the youths (Theatre for Development on CP frameworks); and could have engaged the police as well in the consultative sessions for the upcoming new laws.

3.3 Efficiency (How well are resources being used?)

3.3.1 Budget administration

The evaluation sought to establish the project budget administration, burn rate and possibility of variance at project closure; value for money, relationship between the two implementing partners, challenges encountered and how they were resolved. It also sought to draw recommendations on how the project administration would be improved in future phases. In both cases, the project finance managers from SCI and YOVENCO were interviewed. The Project Managers as well as the YOVENCO Executive Director were also interviewed.

From the discussions, the following project budget breakdown as summarized in table 6 was shared, being the five years budget transferred to the partner (YOVENCO) on annual basis.

Table 6: Annual budget disbursements to the implementing partner

SGA	Annual budget in USD	Annual Budget in EUR
Agreement CPS 2017	58, 418.13	55, 110.99
Agreement CPS 2018	153, 069.93	128, 578.74
Agreement CPS 2019	142, 573.07	125, 573
Agreement CPS 2020	163, 178	146, 250.53
Agreement CPS 2021	150, 666	122, 809.19
Subtotal	667, 905.13	578, 322.45

Report of final evaluation

November 2021 - Somaliland



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Source: SCI CO Finance Office

On budget spend vs variance, the project partner (YOVENCO) is up to date with burn rate and there is unlikely going to be any variances at the project closure in December 2021. In terms of project budget administration, good practices like preparation of monthly budget estimations linked to the monthly activities and use of activity TORs among others were observed. Further, a review of the project accountability was done focusing on timely financial and narrative reporting, accountability documents, incidences of fraud and timeliness of financial disbursements. From the project partner side, occasionally some delays were experienced in the implementation which necessitated carry-over of the monthly activity unspent funds to the following month. The monthly schedule for settling monthly accounts and providing accounting documents was constraining and unrealistic on the partner and occasionally resulted in delay in accountability. This was often occasioned by the delay to transfer accounting documents from Berbera office (where the project finances are administered) to Hargeisa. Occasionally some overspend on some activity lines was experienced which was resolved by trying to underspend in related activity lines. No incidences of fraud or delayed approvals were experienced.

From SCI, to enhance the grants management and ensure timely accountability, joint budget variance analysis (BVA) meetings were introduced in April 2021 and have since reduced accountability delays from the partner. The BVA has reflected the actual dates of reporting in every month (25th). SCI clarified that in the past years before the introduction of the BVAs, reporting delays were experienced and occasionally, procurement dates on the accounting documents failed to match the approval procedures/dates. In other occasions, time sheets and or participant lists were missed.

The project teams confirmed that the budget disbursements were made on monthly basis. The partner described the reporting schedule as very tight and unrealistic, which also required that hard copy accounting documents were submitted with the reports for verification. The partner observed that overall, SCI financial reporting system is overwhelming and puts unnecessary pressure on the partner. On the implementation hand, COVID-19 posed a big challenge to the project by causing disruption of the project activities including the PwV sessions. Male caregivers' participation in the positive parenting caregiver group sessions was very low. This was witnessed as well in other CP activities. In May-September each year, schools were closed hence no school-based activities were implemented.

To mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 on the project, participants in the various project activities were reduced, use of personal protective items was introduced in the group activities, and social distancing was observed. On the inflexibility of the reporting, negotiations were held with SCI senior management even though no positive outcome was realized.

3.3.2 Value for money

Value for money was assessed against good procurement procedures, negotiated discounts in supplies and contracts, lowest-highest bidder versus quality etc.

Responses from the implementing partner indicated that in an ordinary procurement process, a TOR describing the activity/item was prepared followed by a purchase request then verification by finance. The Procurement Committee further verifies the purchase request against the TOR, and if satisfied a purchase order is raised. This is followed by request for quotations from the pre-qualified suppliers. In selecting the supplier, the partner considers the lowest bidder, quality and flexibility for prize negotiation. During the entire project period, no capital items or equipment were procured by the partner except project activity supplies. The partner has in place a procurement policy, elaborate procurement procedures and a procurement committee. Competitive bidding procedures were adopted when outsourcing from frame

Report of final evaluation

November 2021 - Somaliland



agreements and pre-qualification of suppliers. There was also prioritization of needs to determine the most critical/immediate in a context of limited resources.

Some issues raised by SCI on the procurement procedures of the partner include occasionally there lacked clear role segregation in regards to raising procurement request, checking/verification, raising of local purchase orders, approvals, goods receipt and accountability. In other times, there was mismatch in dates in the procurement documentations. SCI also clarified that the partner used annual framework agreements launched every start of the project year for services, refreshments, hire of vehicles, fuel, stationery and visibility. Pre-qualifications for other services and consultants were also done at the beginning of the year. SCI procured project laptops earlier and supplied to the partner.

3.3.3 Partnership management

The partnership between the two implementing partners was grounded on the principles of good partnership including equality, transparency, joint results-oriented approach, responsibility, open communication, complementarity and mutual support. From YOVENCO side, the relationship with SCI CO remained cordial during the 5yr project period. No delays on disbursements as the accountability was timely. Feedback from SCI was also timely. Capacity building opportunities were available and effective. In this regard, the partner received training from SCI on procurement, human resources and financial management. SCI provided relevant technical support to the local partner.

Flexibility was allowed in project implementation; communication was good and teams adopted a one-team-approach in responding to project concerns; the teams worked well with the administration and finance teams on both sides. On the other hand, technical support by the CP Technical Advisor (Working for Save the Children Finland, but based in Lusaka, Zambia) was relevant. Jointly, the partners benefitted from trainings on case management, gender and disability, mental health and psychosocial support. However, only one advanced training on child participation was provided to the partners. On the flip side, SCI flagged high turnover of the trained accounts personnel as a key challenge in working with the partner as the project accountant role kept falling vacant, which affected progress. Furthermore, those already trained on SCI financial procedures including reporting left a gap upon quitting. The staff turnover often impacted segregation of duties in finance and accounts, which necessitated the Human Resources officer to occasionally participate in the procurement process. These pointed to weak internal controls.

3.3.4 Project impact on financial management skills of implementing partners

SCI confirmed that monitoring was done on semi-annual basis to the partner by SCI finance team to review financial procedures including petty-cash management, an activity that provided further opportunity for learning by the partner finance team. Capacity building refreshers were conducted by SCI on the local partner. In other occasions, both SCI and partner finance, procurement and HR teams were trained in project audit procedures and requirements, procurement procedures and compliance, human resources, financial procedures and child safeguarding. On the partner hand, support supervision led to timely implementation of the project overall while skills acquired improved financial and procurement management. Timely feedback helped to move decisions in addition to timely finalization and submission of reports.

3.4 Impact of the project (What difference have the interventions made?)

3.4.1 Significant changes in the lives of the children

Report of final evaluation

November 2021 - Somaliland



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From the findings, there is reduced prevalence of child protection violations in the project locations. Findings indicated a 38% drop in the proportion of community members reporting high prevalence of child protection violations compared to the baseline. This resulted from improved perceptions, knowledge and attitude of the community members towards violence against children. Further, case management data indicated a drop in physical and humiliating/corporal punishment at the family level. This was mostly attributed to positive parenting interventions. Monitoring and annual reports indicated a change in attitude among the community members, most of whom are now willing to support children. Knowledge levels on child rights and child protection have increased among the community members and children. There is improved response to child protection cases with about 50 university students having been trained and deployed to work as case management interns in the project locations. This has injected significant expertise in case management, with many children being able to access child protection support at the community level. The trained social workers work very closely with the CWCs, which has helped in the transfer of CP case management skills to the community members, translating to better support for children.

The project resulted in increased awareness levels about child protection among the children and community members. In this regard, feedback from the project team estimated that at least 80% of the caregivers/community members were well aware and knowledgeable about child protection through the interventions supported by the project. Caregivers were more conscious about CP case identification and reporting. Despite this, more needed to be done as most sensitive cases particularly those that are sexual violence in nature still went unreported especially if they happened at the family level. This was to safeguard the family honour.

The project contributed to changes in attitude and practice of child protection among the children, caregivers, teachers and community members. For example, there is improved trust between children and their caregivers resulting in improved child engagement with their caregivers on matters of concern. Through the children, caregivers are now able to closely work with the child rights groups through referral pathways. Teachers reported high improvement in their relationship and cooperation with children. The project also improved life skills among children and their peers. Children are now aware about their rights. “One of the best things children gained from ILC project is the confidence to report if they experienced child protection incidences”. Teacher in Hargeisa. Children also developed self-protection and peer support skills; a view further upheld by the project team. Through CRGs, children benefitted from a total of 12 trainings in life skills, group management and child-led research. They were trained on foundations of research and how to identify and analyse issues of concern to them. Using the skills, children collected data on issues of interest in their villages and jointly analysed it, findings of which were used to initiate child-led activities. In the trainings, children were encouraged to report to the community-based child protection structures any issues of concern. On the other hand, positive parenting children sessions exposed children to training in child protection and enabled them to influence decisions of interest at the community and school level.

The project supported establishment of functional referral pathways through which children benefitted from diverse services including psychosocial support that helped to resolve behavioural and emotional problems including child-child aggression, bullying tendencies, child-child conflicts, threats and telling lies; anxiety, low self-esteem and feelings of insecurity. The support also helped to resolve academic related problems including peer relations at the school level, peer influence, bullying and discrimination, poor performance and support with homework. Other support aimed at resolving social/relationship problems including the inability to make and maintain friends, maintaining good relationships with peers and siblings. Free legal aid enabled those especially sexually and physically abused to get justice, while medical support enabled children to heal from physical injuries. The Ministry of Education (MOE) declaration and ban on corporal punishment and the subsequent support by SCI to develop Teachers Code of Conduct was reported to have reduced corporal punishment in schools.

3.4.2 Progress towards the actual project impact

It is the evaluator's view that the project has progressed well towards the expected impact with most indicators having already achieved good results. At the impact level however, absence of a national survey limited the possibility to establish the status of the impact indicator. Despite this, progress has been ascertained by measuring the output level indicators that helped to indicate the progress towards the impact. For instance, findings confirmed that government officials and NGOs have increased the level of knowledge and awareness about the contents of the various CP legal frameworks. They also demonstrated good awareness of the existing policies and laws that protect children in the country. Further, they confirmed to have either directly participated in the development of the laws and policies or engaged through other activities including awareness raising, verification, advocacy or dissemination. While this was very progressive and good results were achieved as reported elsewhere, the Children Act has remained a draft five years later. Further, despite the Sexual Offences Act having been signed into law, its implementation was objected by the religious leaders as it contained content that was inconsistent with the Islamic teachings and cultural norms. These two legislations are very instrumental in child protection. Pushing for their approval is work in progress that should be sustained.

One of the expectations of the ILC project was to strengthen national as well as community level child protection mechanisms. In this regard, the project aimed to influence for and secure the commitment of the government and CSOs in the advocacy for child protection legal frameworks. In this regard, all the interviewed government officials/ministries as well as the collaborating NGOs participated in the development of the children's legal frameworks. MESAF in this regard co-chaired the advocacy committees, Ministry of Justice (MOJ) supported free legal aid for children, HAVOYOCO is part of advocacy committee, participated in the validation of the draft frameworks and also in consultative meetings. All respondents in Berbera except the Ministry of Health Development confirmed to be involved in the implementation of the frameworks. HAVOYOCO noted that the ILC project has supported establishment and strengthening of community-based CP structures including CWCs, and that the implementing partners (SCI and YOVENCO) are active players in the CPWG chaired by MESAF. Continued support towards these efforts will most likely lead to better outcomes for legal protection of children. Furthermore, implementation of the approved CP frameworks is work in progress and should be supported.

Towards reduction of prevalence of child protection violations, findings indicated gradual progress on key violations against girls in the project sites as summarized in table 7 below.

Table 7: Key harms that affect girl's development and wellbeing in the community

Key harms	Intervention			Control		
	Overall responses			Overall responses		
	Final evaluation	Baseline		Final evaluation	Baseline	
Early/forced marriage	59	38%	34%	43	29%	20%
FGM/C	34	22%	21%	43	29%	10%
Physical violence in home	2	1%	NA	4	3%	NA
Sexual assault/ abuse	21	14%	NA	17	12%	NA
Emotional abuse	6	4%	NA	1	1%	NA

Report of final evaluation

November 2021 - Somaliland



Lack of education opportunities and resources	16	10%	25%	1	1%	18%
Having to work rather than go to school	5	3%	NA	13	9%	NA
Street children/ separated children	1	1%	NA	3	2%	NA
Don't know	11	7%	NA	1	1%	NA

From the findings, increase in the number of community members who can identify early/forced child marriages, FGM/C and sexual violence as key violations against girls is good indication that community members are more aware about these violations. Of importance to note is the high number of females identifying all three as significant violations against girls. This may be attributed to the positive parenting interventions and to the awareness raising in the target communities. The high awareness levels may also be linked to the increasing reporting levels of these three violations. It is the evaluator's view that these three violations have denied girls their fundamental rights to dignified childhood. More targeted interventions including awareness raising, increased case management and positive parenting sessions should be implemented to reduce their prevalence. Furthermore, continued advocacy to pass the Children Act and implement the Sexual Offenses Act will make a major contribution in this regard.

On violence against children in general, community members from the intervention sites strongly disagreed that it is acceptable for an adult to hit or slap a child, beat a child with a belt or other object, scream or yell at a child, or to sexually abuse a child. From these responses, it is evident that most community members reject violation of children right to protection. This therefore is good progress towards realization of the overall project goal.

3.5 Project sustainability (Will the benefits last?)

3.5.1 Access to child protection services for girls and boys

To sustain the results in case management, CWCs observed that they have been equipped with the requisite knowledge and skills and they will continue to support the community and the children on voluntary basis (Hargeisa intervention). For the Hargeisa control, "To help our community is our priority and even without any project support, we continue to". Berbera groups were not clear on how to do it. On the other hand, CWCs in Hargeisa intervention noted that the extent of community contribution to CP activities is high. Most community members desire to see children safe and free from harm. They focus on addressing the vulnerabilities and the risk factors and helping to meet the child's unmet protection needs. On the other hand, Berbera intervention cited the continuous cooperation/collaboration with the local government and the existing NGOs as a big contribution to sustainability. According to the ILC midterm report, Oct. 2019, CWCs are recognized, respected and known by community members and children. Their capacity has been strengthened through several trainings and support. There would be potential to scale up this approach and use existing CWCs to provide coaching and mentoring support to new CWCs. In addition, linkages with other SCI and partner projects will contribute to sustainability of the results.

3.5.2 Strengthened child and gender sensitivity of caregivers and communities

Report of final evaluation

November 2021 - Somaliland



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Most caregivers reported that they would continue to support girls and boys to improve their self-protection beyond the project. Caregivers see themselves as the primary duty bearers hence have the obligation to continue taking care of their children. Caregivers also committed to strengthen the link between themselves, children and the CWCs. They also reported that they will continue to create awareness to their neighbours who did not participate in positive parenting sessions to improve child safety especially on the key violations affecting girls (sexual violence, FGM/C and forced child marriages). Teachers in Berbera intend to continue supporting children and train other teachers in CP to sustain the results. In Hargeisa, teachers suggested that schools should seek for financial and other support from alternative organizations to sustain CRG activities. They also recommended extension of the project to reach more children. For the IDP schools, further dissemination of what the children learnt to other children will help to keep the lessons alive in the IDP community. In doing this, teachers as well as the caregivers appreciate the vulnerabilities that face girls and children with disabilities in the community and at school and the need for their support to be alive to these realities. CWCs involved in case management observed that they would continue to undertake case management including for children affected by FGM/C, early and forced child marriages and sexual violence, and that they will continue to involve girls and boys in their activities.

3.5.3 Strengthened child and gender sensitivity of child protection systems/structures

The project team observed that while sustainability of the results at the national level may not be guaranteed, those at the community level may be. In Berbera for instance, there is strong link between CWCs, CPWG and other community-based child protection committees, with the local government. In some cases, the local government houses the community-based CP structures. This would ensure they continued being functional with or without the project support. CWCs are not salaried/incentivized but rather are community volunteers engaging in CP work. As such, they will likely continue being functional even without the project support. Case management interns are closely linked to the CWCs. In addition, they come from the same communities where they operate. They are most likely going to continue supporting the CWCs in child protection beyond the project. However, having been incentivized interns, this may not be guaranteed. The team observed that currently, the partners have witnessed the largest population of transformed community members. This is likely to remain beyond the project. In addition, teachers who are facilitators of the child right groups, the facilitators of the children group sessions and the mentors of the caregiver's sessions in the positive parenting sessions were all drawn from the same locations as the activities' implementation. Beyond the project period, they are likely going to continue monitoring the results realized from PwV activities.

Asked how the implementation of the approved laws could be sustained, respondents (government and NGOs) suggested the need to integrate CP as much as possible in the government national agenda, influence the government to allocate budget for the implementation of already approved frameworks, and consolidate support from other actors (UN, private sector, diaspora, religious sector etc.). There is also need for sustained engagement with the local media and the CSOs to enhance awareness levels, and map out centres of influence and actively engage with them. Further views indicated that SCI country office should directly work with MOJ on laws/policies. During the project lifespan, no direct engagement was initiated with MOJ. SCI should also engage with SLHRC to enhance support for children's legal frameworks. Other suggestions include the need for sustained advocacy on CP legal frameworks, strengthen MESAF/MOJ (technically, financially), enhance coordination of actors around CP frameworks (increase frequency of coordination meetings as well), strengthen ownership transfer of the frameworks to the public, conduct additional trainings for strategic actors and implement additional awareness programmes/interventions at all levels.

As reported in the ILC 2020 annual report, the project invested in building knowledge and skills of the community-based structures in child protection, child rights, case management and community mobilization in collaboration with the

relevant ministries. The structures are now in better position to identify and respond to incidences of violence against children at the community level. This is likely to continue beyond the project. On the other hand, referral pathways were reported to be well established and functional. The project established linkages between community-based structures and the national child protection systems through referrals. CWCs were trained on referral pathways and are aware of the key child protection stakeholders.

Knowledge institutionalization will result in more self-sustaining practices in child protection. For instance, mainstreaming child protection key concepts and knowledge in the education sector through training teachers in child protection in collaboration with the Ministry of Education. CRGs have also provided a platform for children's continued engagement on matters of concern to them. Skills transfer in child-led research and self-advocacy for instance will contribute to continuity of the CRGs.

3.6 Gender

3.6.1 Extent the project has been gender sensitive/transformational in design and implementation as per SCI Gender Equality Guidance

Some of the SCI gender equality guidance checklist require that description of project activities include specific measures to address gender-based barriers or gaps identified in the needs assessment, activities are designed to ensure girls, boys, women and men participate equitably, and have equitable access to project services and resources; the project explicitly identifies and addresses discriminatory social norms and institutions which reinforce gender inequalities; advocates for legislation and policies that promote gender equality and that the project directly supports the creation of an enabling environment within which girls, boys, women and men can all fulfil their equal rights.

Evaluation findings confirmed that ILC project used gender responsive approaches in its design and implementation of interventions. Girls as well as boys, and children with disability, children from marginalized backgrounds including IDP children participated in the project activities. This view was confirmed by the ILC project 2020 annual report observing that during the development of the detailed implementation plan, gender perspectives were considered including equal representation of adult males and females and boys and girls in community-based structures and groups. CRGs, child-led initiatives including child-led research and child participation included boys and girls. Child led initiatives were gender transformative as they contributed to the empowerment of girls and boys in self-advocacy and self-protection. In addition, the design recognized the cultural exclusion of girls hence extra efforts were made to mobilize girls into the activities. Boys and men were sensitized on the importance and value of their involvement in positive parenting sessions.

As part of the design, girls and boys as well as adult male and female caregivers were involved in the project monitoring and review sessions. They were consulted for their views at the project baseline assessment with 185 (90 girls, 95 boys) participating. Even though the number was not specified, the baseline report indicated that involvement of children with disability was very low. Adult males and females also participated in the baseline assessment with 227 (147 women, 80 men) participating. During the mid-term review of the project, a total of 110 children (68 girls, 42 boys) and 97 adults (65 females, 32 males) participated. The number of children or adults with disabilities was not specified. In the PwV formative evaluation, a total of 87 children (45 boys, 42 girls) and 87 adults (82 females, 5 males) were involved. Despite this involvement however, findings from the PwV formative evaluation raised concern about the mixed design of the children group sessions noting that this was culturally insensitive. In addition, some sessions like 'My Body' in the children's sessions were termed as culturally insensitive and recommended for exclusion. Male caregiver's participation

Report of final evaluation

November 2021 - Somaliland



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in the final cohorts was very low as well, which was blamed on their perception that child-care giving roles are reserved for women. Most were also engaged in livelihood activities.

Children as well as adults actively participated in the project implementation. For instance, in the 2018-2019 PwV activities, a total of 150 children (86 girls, 64 boys) and 150 caregivers/parents (134 females, 16 males) participated in the positive parenting sessions. Through the sessions for instance, girls posted more positive opinion about the safety of their school/centre with the proportion of those who always found their school/centre safe place increasing by 39% points compared to the pre-assessment. There was an increase by 15% points in the proportion of girls who always concentrated in the classroom/during PwV activities, and a further increase (40% points) in the girls who always helped other young people compared to the pre-assessment.

By close of 2020, findings from child friendly QoS reviews showed that CP services provided by SCI or partner were child, gender, and disability sensitive. Children mentioned that most of the children were treated equally with a few children (one group) reporting that a few people emotionally abused children with disabilities and those with mental illness by calling them harsh nicknames. On the other hand, case management activities equally reached girls and boys as reported earlier. According to the ILC project 2020 annual report, a total of 16 children with disabilities who included 11 boys and 5 girls were targeted with case management interventions. The report went further to confirm that most of the supported children were from deprived families and IDP communities from the project locations. Further in case management, female caseworkers handled cases involving girl survivors while male caseworkers handled boy's cases.

The country office recruited a gender specialist who supported the organization in the implementation of Save the Children Gender Equality Policy to advance gender equality in the project, advocate, partner and organize, and translate global thematic strategy into local objectives and initiatives. In addition, the country office collaborated globally with peers and participated in relevant global initiative working groups, including the Global Gender Equality Working Group and the Gender Equality and Humanitarian Technical Sub Working Group, to achieve thematic outcomes in gender equality.

3.6.2 Extent project has identified gender inequalities and successfully addressed their root causes

Exclusion of the girl child is a common practice in the project locations. To address this, the project design as elaborated under sub article 3.6.1 was gender and inclusion responsive. It equally engaged with boys as well as girls. Each was given equal chance to actively participate in the project cycle. Case management was another platform through which the prevailing inequalities that translated into child protection violations were identified and resolved jointly with the child survivors and their families. As reported elsewhere in the report, a total of 1,654 children (835 girls, 819 boys) benefitted from this support for a period of 5 years. In addition, children with disabilities also benefitted from the case management interventions. In Hargeisa, the PwV evaluation report indicated that one child and one caregiver living with disabilities were involved in the positive parenting sessions. Selection of venues was disability friendly to enable the two beneficiaries to effectively participate in the sessions. On the other hand, the project established two disability support groups with a total of 20 child members. The aim of the groups was to advocate for the rights of children with disabilities. Further, despite the low participation, male caregivers as well as female caregivers were involved in the positive parenting sessions and other child protection activities. On the other hand, the elaborate efforts made to institutionalize prevention and response in child protection through child protection laws and policies is linked to the need to address child protection and gender inequalities including SGBV more comprehensively and exhaustively. Once the proposed laws

Report of final evaluation

November 2021 - Somaliland



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and policies are approved, they will deliver results at scale as it aims to benefit all children in Somaliland and not just those in the project locations.

3.6.3 How the project increased/improved reporting of SGBV cases and support to survivors of SGBV

At the final evaluation, 37 (86 %) (34 females, 3 male) intervention and 24 (92%) (23 females, 1 male) control group respondents identified girls as the most affected by abuse and neglect. This is unlike at the baseline when boys were reported to be the commonly abused accounting for 61% intervention and 56% control group responses. As reported elsewhere in the report, interviews with case management workers as well as community members indicated that reporting of CP cases including sexual violence against children has improved, despite that of FGM/C remaining low. Respondents attributed improvement in reporting of CP cases to the increasing awareness levels in the community. By close of 2020, the project had reached 3,556 beneficiaries through service provision supported by the project. These included 45% or 1,590 children (805 girls; 785 boys) and 1,966 adults or 55% (1,348 females; 618 males). By sex, 60% of the total beneficiaries were female and 40% were male. Among the services provided was case management and referrals for SGBV.

3.7 Child participation

3.7.1 What added value did child participation bring to social and behaviour change on violence against children among families and communities?

The project established two disability support groups with a total of 20 child members. The support groups aimed to advocate for the rights of children with disabilities to access social services. These groups were part of establishing and strengthening CBCPMs. Advocacy through these groups contributed to influencing community attitude and perception about children with disabilities, as well as their and their caregiver's inclusion in the community-based CP interventions. As reported elsewhere in the report, participation of children in the child rights groups and in the children's sessions in the PwV activities led to improved child-child, child-teacher and child-caregiver relationship. There was also improvement in peer support and peer protection, and child led research and advocacy. From the PwV interventions, children improved their abilities in decision-making and self-esteem and confidence in reporting CP concerns. The sessions improved the child-caregiver ability to jointly make rules and follow through. Caregivers learnt to avoid physical punishment on children and rather adopted more progressive approaches including dialogue and negotiation. Most caregivers also highly disagreed with use of emotional or verbal violence to punish children. As reported elsewhere, these positive changes contributed in the reduction of PHP of children at home and at school. On the other hand, participation of children in the CWC meetings provided them a platform for reporting CP concerns to the CWCs. They also got a chance to influence decisions of the CWCs on matters of child protection.

3.7.2 How did child participation increase/improve self-protection of children against violence?

Children learnt how to conduct child led research and how to analyse and communicate their issues. In this regard, 16 children (8 boys and 8 girls) from CRGs were trained on tools and methods to carry out child-led participatory action research. Issues identified through the child-led research informed their CRG activities. These included four (4) child-led

Report of final evaluation

November 2021 - Somaliland



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initiatives in each location. They also learnt how to do risk mapping and to analyse areas that are safe or risky for them. Findings not only helped to flag the risky areas but also the causes/risk factors that needed to be addressed. For instance, according to the ILC project 2020 annual report, children mentioned that they sometimes felt unsafe in school because teachers sometimes beat them. Confirming this for instance, an FGD with girls from Burao Sheikh FGD observed that “some teachers beat us if we miss a class or homework, hence, some of us feel unsafe in school” At the time of the final evaluation, this notion had changed as no FGD or child identified school as an unsafe location. Most said security structures and teachers made them feel safe at school.

Children also engaged in self-protection initiatives through CRGs. During the project period, 23 CRGs were established in the project locations. Membership comprised 460 children (140 in Hargeisa and 320 in Berbera). The children included 227 Boys and 233 Girls. CRGs were established and strengthened in close consultation with CWCs and school principals to ensure that different groups were engaged in the school and community. The groups were trained in group structures, core life skills, child protection, child rights, case management and advocacy. Capacity-building sessions enhanced their skills and knowledge of child rights and CP both at school and community level. The members were supported and are now familiar with their mandate including roles and responsibilities. According to the ILC project 2020 annual report, the trained children confirmed that participating in the child-led research and life-skills training increased their self-esteem and confidence to report child protection violations.

3.8 Key lessons learnt

Bottom-up approaches in child protection programming has proved more self-sustaining in identifying and responding to child protection needs, at least as compared between the intervention and the control project sites. Investing in community-based child protection structures/mechanisms and scaling up the approach in other unreached locations would significantly contribute to improved child protection and welfare indicators. This model should also be tested in the far to reach locations/districts particularly those that have continued to experience limited government presence and those still being impacted by protracted conflicts and natural hazards in the region. Linkages between the community-based CP structures and the local government should be enhanced to increase their support at the local level.

Development and implementation of child protection legal and policy frameworks should be approached from a multi-sectoral and multi-agency perspective. Suspension of the rollout of the Sexual Offences Act after the presidential ascent was blamed partly on limited consultation with relevant stakeholders including the religious leaders to moderate its content. Support for establishment and coordination of such a structure would increase commitment, support and ownership of the policy and law-making processes. Community representation should be integrated to enhance ownership of upcoming and concluded laws and policies at the community level. Furthermore, the role of the community legal volunteers should be embedded to enhance legal education and awareness at the community level.

Positive parenting model has been seen to have good outcomes for children at the community, home and at school. Caregiving role is however affected by community norms that have left the caregiving role to the female caregivers. There is limited participation of the male caregivers in the positive parenting interventions. It would be strategic to learn more on the reasons or factors making the male caregivers be disinterested in positive parenting interventions. More integrated approaches that strengthen the uptake of positive parenting interventions among the male caregivers should be explored. Integrating livelihoods programming for child protection, use of modern communication technology including virtual sessions may help to influence their participation. It is also strategic to invest sufficient time in continuous



training of children and caregivers in CP. There is also the need to contextualize PwV approaches to make them culturally responsive.

Children are agents of change, at least as reported and confirmed from the findings. Once equipped with the relevant skills and guidance, they are capable of changing their own situations and that of their peers. Child-led institutions provided a conducive child friendly avenue through which children could plan and execute their own advocacy activities. Further support towards these institutions would be a strategic undertaking. Furthermore, the child led institutions should be extended to other unreached locations.

3.9 Challenges encountered during the project implementation

Limited successes were realized in output 3 on improved implementation of child protection laws and policies. During the five years project period, only a few outputs were realized (Sexual Offences Act, Alternative Care Policy and the National Plan of Action for Children). CP frameworks that would deliver results at scale for children including the Children Act, FGM/C Bill, Early Marriages Bill remained unapproved. Sexual Offences Act could not be rollout despite its enactment following suspension on religious leader's recommendation. Limited political will and expert support, limited involvement of the strategic actors including the Ministry of Justice and the Somaliland legal fraternity, religious leaders and limited resources were blamed on the slow progress towards delivering comprehensive CP legal and policy frameworks in the region.

The project was implemented in the context of COVID-19 in 2020 and 2021. COVID-19 containment measures disrupted implementation of the project activities. Organizations and businesses were required to implement containment measures that also included social distancing, suspension of schools and the closure of different entry ports like airports, a ban on public gatherings and other face-to-face events like trainings, workshops and community dialogues. This disrupted project activities at different levels especially those at community level. Community members were hesitant to participate in activities because of fear of infection. To ensure project activities were implemented, alternative approaches were initiated that included reprogramming and online sessions, use of telephone calls in case management, participants in the various project activities were reduced, use of personal protective items was introduced in the group activities and social distancing was enforced.

CHAPTER FOUR CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Chapter Four provides conclusions and recommendations drawn from the above evaluation findings. Recommendations are structured around the evaluation criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability.

4.1 Conclusions

- 1) From the foregoing analysis, the evaluator concludes that the project contributed to the SCI Theory of Change. In this regard, the project not only became the voice through joint advocacy for a favourable legal environment for children, but it also taught the children to be the voice for their own rights. In addition, the project facilitated building partnerships between the child protection non-state actors and the government both national and local. Through these partnerships, some progress was made towards delivering child protection legal frameworks. Effective partnerships were also established between the implementing partners and the CWCs, caregivers, teachers and children to enhance child protection at home, in the community and at school. The project also used innovation in

Report of final evaluation

November 2021 - Somaliland



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- approaching child protection. In this regard, the bottom-up approach through establishment and strengthening CBCPMs was a strategic way to build more self-sustaining CP structures. Introduction of children to child-led research was very creative as a way of equipping them with the skills needed for evidence based self-advocacy. Finally, the project helped to deliver results at scale for children in Somaliland through supporting development and passing of some legal frameworks including child protection policy, alternative care policy and sexual offences act.
- 2) The CBCPMs provided a platform for identification and response to CP cases. Communities are more engaged and responsive to CP. The strong linkages from community to national level have helped to strengthen child protection pathways in the project locations. Communities are more engaged in prevention initiatives like awareness raising as well as response to child protection violations through case management, positive parenting approaches and guidance to children. Linked to this, the project effectively created awareness about the role/functions of the CWC in child protection. It is the evaluator's view that community members have consistently recognized CWCs as critical CBCPMs and parents/caregivers as playing key role in reporting and responding to child protection cases. Moving forward, it would be strategic to enhance the role of these two actors to improve identification and reporting of child protection cases at the community level. Furthermore, the key role played by the parents/caregivers is attributed to the positive parenting sessions. Scaling up of this intervention would help to enhance these results.
 - 3) The project may not have been very effective in bringing on board and sustaining participation of the male caregivers/parents in the various project interventions including in positive parenting sessions. Earlier findings from a formative study on parenting without violence (PwV) common approach in the project locations (2018) indicated that male caregivers were 90% of the time away from home leaving female caregivers with the caregiving responsibility without proper social support structures. Findings from ILC final evaluation show that only two (2) male caregivers participated in the adult survey. None participated in the PwV formative evaluation. The PwV evaluation confirmed that despite the project having reached 26 male caregivers in 2018-2019 cohorts, and having participated at the pre-assessment, none participated in the second cohort or in the formative evaluation due to competing priorities. Through the project however, female caregivers/parents including CWC members have acquired valuable knowledge, skills and awareness in child protection. This is positive contribution by the project in enhancing the abilities of female caregivers in preventing and responding to CP violations.
 - 4) Development of some laws especially those targeted at dealing with sensitive cultural practices like sexual violence and FGM/C experienced drawbacks that were blamed on limited consultation and involvement of the relevant centres of influence. Lesson learnt is that law making processes should be highly consultative and inclusive to enhance consensus and progress. Linked to this, strategic targeting and involvement of key actors in CP legal frameworks holds the success to the development and implementation of the laws. MOJ was reported to have been missed as a strategic primary actor in this regard. MOJ overlooks the legal fraternity in the country, and the competencies required in drafting, interpretation and implementation of legal frameworks. It will be strategic that direct engagements are established and sustained with MOJ to improve the legal protection of children in the country. Strategic alliances with other legal structures including the lawyers' associations and SLHRC will add value in the CP legal frameworks processes.
 - 5) The uptake of the already approved laws, policies and guidelines by the community and the general public was reported as very low. Popular versions in Somali language are not available, nor has any advocacy work done to sensitize them on the provisions of the legal frameworks. Strategic approaches to deliver legal education to the communities should be devised and implemented. As much as possible, information communication and education materials should be widely used to disseminate the frameworks.
 - 6) Findings indicated good progress towards improved prevention and response to child protection violations at the community and government levels. Community members and caregivers in the project locations were described as knowledgeable and conscious about child protection. This was linked to the increasing cases of CP violations



reported and acted upon by the case management workers. On the other hand, the government was described as increasingly becoming conscious and responsive on child protection, and more willing and open to supporting child protection actors.

- 7) The project was effective in improving case management. In this regard, CWCs involved in case management demonstrated adequate knowledge, expertise and skill in identifying, managing and disposing of child protection cases. They illustrated the process taken in case assessment, consultation with the child and caregivers, monitoring and follow up of cases, referrals of cases beyond them as well as case documentation, confidentiality and access only by those permitted to do so.

4.2 Recommendations

In addition to the recommendations made under the different sections in the report, the following recommendations are made.

- 1) Strategic partnerships should be established with state level institutions directly involved in legal frameworks in the region. In this regard, SCI should work with the Ministry of Justice, Somaliland Human Rights Commission and Somaliland Lawyers Associations to enhance advocacy for and support for the CP legal frameworks. Linked to this is the need to develop/design a comprehensive capacity enhancement support programme targeted at MOJ to enhance its ability to deliver CP legal frameworks. Linked to this, there is need to initiate an inter-ministerial consultative forum for upcoming and already approved laws. The forum would provide a platform for disseminating the approved laws, sensitize other government ministries on the legal frameworks in the pipeline and solicit for their support in pushing for the frameworks. Furthermore, different ministries interact with children in different sectors hence are equally responsible for the successful implementation of the frameworks relevant to their jurisdiction.
- 2) Programming around CP legal and policy environment should be broader and more encompassing to create community-national level linkages. Findings indicated that the project approached and restricted CP legal and policy activities at the national level. Communities reported low awareness and knowledge levels on existing CP frameworks. It is thus recommended that national level as well as community level activities are included in future programmes. Expert support could be drawn from the pool of unemployed lawyers to facilitate community level dialogue sessions in CP legal frameworks. The programme should also support development of popular versions of the approved laws and policies in local language and disseminate widely. Popular media may provide a platform for dissemination. Linked to this, legal and policy formulation processes should be highly consultative including at the community level to increase buy-in. Moving forward, the programme should also support negotiations on the sexual offences act with the religious and traditional leaders to unlock possibilities for its implementation. Advocacy to push for enactment of the Children Act should also be sustained. Further in this regard, there is need to continue to support MESAF to enhance coordination and advocacy for the other remaining/relevant child protection laws and policies.
- 3) There is need to adopt integrated child protection programming to enhance resilience at the family level. This should include livelihoods support for the neediest families through skills training and support to initiate income generating activities through small grants, support supervision, monitoring and reporting. Village Savings and Loan Scheme model or table banking with groups of most vulnerable caregivers could be tested and rolled-out. High household poverty and lack of disposable incomes have led to caregiver's inability to provide basic support to their children. Domestic violence was also associated with poverty and hopelessness at the family level with significant effects on CP indicators.

Report of final evaluation

November 2021 - Somaliland



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- 4) Future programming should mainstream disaster risk reduction and integrate disaster preparedness plans in the project design in order to accommodate unexpected changes in the context, and to be better prepared in case of any humanitarian crisis, like what happened due to COVID-19 pandemic.
- 5) Establishment and strengthening child protection referral pathways is directly linked to existence of functional and effective child protection structures at the community and national level. Referral pathways also benefit from well-capacitated community level structures that are able to identify and respond to child protection violations. Communities that had benefitted from the ILC project interventions reported more successes in identifying and responding to CP violations than those in the control sites. Scaling up the intervention to establish and strengthen CBCPMs that are well linked with the national level CP service providers is recommended. This should also target locations not reached by this phase of the ILC project.
- 6) Limited skills and capacities were reported among the various stakeholders. Future programming should include integrated capacity building interventions for police force to enhance CP support for children in contact with the law as well as enhance referrals; volunteer case management workers, CWC members, Community Health Workers etc.) in child protection and referrals to sustain support for survivors of child protection violations; train children on the streets in life-skills and vocational skills for self-reliance.
- 7) An integrated model to enhance child led advocacy for self-protection is a strategic and more self-sustaining approach in CP, at least as demonstrated by the project. Skills building in child led research, establishment and strengthening child led organizations that served as advocacy platforms for children was seen to provide the impetus for child participation as agents of change in the project locations. It is recommended therefore that child rights groups activities should be scaled up and strengthened as structures for child protection and platforms for self-advocacy and life skills building for children.
- 8) Recommendations made under the PwV formative evaluation should be implemented in full to improve positive parenting through future programs. Moving forward, the project should devise more specific strategies of actively bringing on board male caregivers. Linking positive parenting intervention with strengthening livelihoods options for the beneficiary families may encourage male caregivers to attend positive parenting sessions. A workable timetable should be developed jointly with the male caregivers to enable them to attend the sessions. A similar timetable with the female caregivers is highly recommended. Linked to this, there is need to improve gender mainstreaming to be more gender-transformative by ensuring that interventions to empower the male caregivers are put in place to encourage them to participate in child protection activities.
- 9) There is still a gap in programming for children with disability. Specialized services remain largely unavailable. Their referrals are ineffective due of lack of programmes/services tailor-made to their unique needs. Their participation also remains low at least as confirmed by their significant absence in the positive parenting children's activities (only one child participated in cohort four). In this regard therefore, it is recommended that SCI finalizes translation and contextualization of Handicapped International Manual (Ref: TA trip report, Dec. 2020) to support interventions on children with disability.
- 10) Against the improved reporting of the sexual violence cases, SCI does not directly support BAHICOOP, which is the only well-established institution dealing with SGBV cases. It would be strategic for SCI to establish a strategic partnership with BAHICOOP to enhance referrals and response to SGBV cases reported at the project locations.
- 11) Support to equip offices of the CWCs to effectively deliver for children (Recommended by Local Government in Berbera). The government in most cases host the CWCs but cannot provide basic furniture and stationery to them).

Report of final evaluation

November 2021 - Somaliland



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ANNEXES

Annex 1: List of desk review documents

Annex 2: Data collection sites by district

Annex 3: Enumerator training power point notes

Annex 4: Inception report

Annex 5: List of key informant interview respondents

Annex 6: ILC evaluation TOR

Annex 7: Data collection tools

Annex 8: Survey raw data - community members and government

Report of final evaluation

November 2021 - Somaliland



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Further information about this evaluation report

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