

EVALUATION OF THE INTER-AGENCY CHILD PROTECTION INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM



FINAL REPORT JANUARY 2010
Christine McCormick



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This evaluation was commissioned by the Inter-Agency Child Protection Information Management System Steering Committee and Coordinator. It aims to evaluate to what extent the project has so far contributed to its original vision and achieved its stated objectives, as well as capturing 'lessons learned' and informing the future direction of the project.

Thanks go to the following people for making this evaluation possible:

Jennifer Morgan	IRC
Brown Kanyangi	Independent Consultant
Pernille Ironside	UNICEF
Alyson Eynon	Save the Children
Laura Boone	IRC
Marie de la Soudiere	UNICEF
Sarah Uppard	Independent Consultant
Severine Chevril	Watch List
Catherine Barnett	UNICEF
Jane Warburton	OAK Foundation
Tirana Hassan	Independent Consultant
Katherine Williamson	Independent Consultant
Stephen Hanmer	UNICEF
Nicole Brehnam	World Vision
Shyamol Chaudhury	Save the Children

UNICEF Nepal, especially Joanne Doucet, Radha Garung and Sumit Shah
Save the Children Nepal and Partners, especially Pratisha Dewan
World Education Nepal, especially Helen Sherpa and Sachin Khadka
UNICEF Southern Sudan, especially Silvia Pasti and Lucia Soleti
Save the Children Southern Sudan, especially Frederick Mukholi, William Deng and Philip Deng

Thanks also to the following organisations for providing valuable information through the questionnaires:

Chad	CARE and JRS
Democratic Republic of Congo	Save the Children
Ethiopia	IRC
Kenya	Save the Children
Myanmar (Burma)	UNICEF
Nepal	Save the Children and UNICEF
South Africa	Save the Children
Southern Sudan	Save the Children
Sri Lanka	Save the Children Sri Lanka and UNICEF
Uganda	Save the Children Uganda

CONTENTS

Abbreviations	4
Executive Summary	5
1 Rationale for the Information Management System	7
2 Management structure for the Information Management System	13
3 Usability of the Information Management System at field level	18
4 Conclusion and recommendations	26
Annexes	
A Note on methodology	
B List of evaluation respondents	
C Evaluation questionnaire and interview questions	
D Example of standard form (registration)	
E Example of list of database reports	
F Example of guidelines on data protection	

ABBREVIATIONS

CAAC	Children affected by armed conflict
CAAFAG	Children associated with armed forces and armed groups
CAR	Central African Republic
CBO	Community-based organisation
CPiE	Child Protection in Emergencies
CPWG	Child Protection Working Group
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
FTR	Family tracing and reunification
GBV	Gender-based violence
IAWG	Inter-agency Working Group on Separated Children
IRC	International Rescue Committee
IMS	Information Management System (abbreviated term for IA CP IMS)
JRS	Jesuit Refugee Service
ToT	Training of Trainers
UNHCR BID	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees – Best Interests Determination.
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Inter-agency Child Protection Information Management System (IMS), consists of three main elements:

- a set of standard forms used for the registration, documentation and assistance of separated and unaccompanied children, CAAFAG and other vulnerable children affected by emergencies;
- a database; and
- a set of confidentiality protocols or guidelines to inform data protection and the sharing of information on these vulnerable children.

The IMS, as it is recognised today, was first established in 2004/5 by IRC, Save the Children and UNICEF following a review of other information management systems set up by separate agencies responding to child protection needs in different emergencies. The initial aim of the IMS was to improve the co-ordination and collaboration of the different agencies so as to improve the quality of emergency child protection programmes, and quicken agencies' responses to children's needs. Its main target programmes were FTR and DDR programmes.

At its inception the IMS was used mainly by those agencies that collaborated in its establishment, in Liberia, Sierra Leone, Côte d'Ivoire and Sudan among others. As of October 2009, the IMS has been used in 16 countries, which currently include: CAR, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, DRC, Ethiopia, Kenya, Myanmar (Burma), Nepal, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan and Uganda. The number of agencies using the tool has also increased, with agencies such as CARE, JRS and World Vision using it within inter-agency networks in a number of countries.

As the number of emergency settings and agencies where the IMS is used has increased notably since its introduction in 2004/5, the Steering Committee of the IMS commissioned an independent evaluation to look at whether the IMS has achieved the original aims for which it was set up, and to look at how appropriate agencies and country programmes find it as a tool in their programmes. In carrying out this evaluation a questionnaire (available in English and French) was sent to all the current user-agencies. Members of the current Steering Committee and global team were interviewed, as were a number of other key informants including previous Steering Committee members and other child protection professionals who had collaborated in the tool's set-up, or had advised on emergency programmes that had used the IMS. In addition to this, visits were made to two country programmes that have been using the IMS for a number of years to support the types of programmes it had been originally set up to assist: a FTR programme in Southern Sudan and CAAFAG reintegration programme in Nepal. (More detailed information on the methodology is available in Annex A).

Overall, the evaluation found that the IMS has had a positive impact on emergency child protection programmes, in that it has encouraged and fostered better co-ordination and collaboration among agencies. In several country programmes the quality of information gathered through the use of forms that are influenced/guided by internationally recognised minimum standards and guidelines has increased agencies' understanding of children's circumstances; in turn, agencies have endeavoured to address these issues. In many countries, agency staff have gained a better understanding of the need to protect information gathered on vulnerable children, and of how that information should be managed. However, these successes

must be qualified: the evaluation has also shown significant gaps in agencies' understanding in key aspects of the purpose and benefit of the IMS, and in some key aspects of emergency child protection programming. Weaknesses and limitations of the tool itself have prevented agencies using the IMS to its full potential. Limited short-term funding and a lack of long-term funding (particularly at country level) have restricted the full benefits of the tool being realised.

A new version of the IMS is due to be available to country programmes in 2010. This new version will enable agencies to adapt the forms and database more appropriately to the specific needs of individual programmes in any particular country. Therefore, it will be able to be used to assist in the management of a much wider range of caseload of vulnerable children, and not just those children affected by emergencies (eg. children involved in hazardous labour and children affected by trafficking). Therefore, the scope of the use of the IMS will potentially increase significantly as the tool becomes appropriate for more agencies to use. A number of recommendations have been drawn up as a result of the evaluation's findings. These recommendations are not organised according to relevance to a particular stakeholder; and should be of interest and importance to all stakeholders. They are also not exhaustive. However, it is important that all organisations and donors who work in emergency child protection programming (and those who do not, but are interested in using the tool in future) take note and act upon these recommendations so that the IMS is used in the most appropriate and effective manner to address the protection needs of children.

1. RATIONALE OF THE INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Purpose of establishing the IMS

As it is recognised today, the Information Management System (IMS) was initially set up in 2004-2005, predominantly through the collaboration of IRC and Save the Children and the support of UNICEF. Prior to 2004-2005 several agencies, including IRC and Save the Children, had set-up and introduced separate databases and other information management systems in a number of countries in response to emergencies, and for DDR programmes where family tracing and reunification was required. Different systems being used in the same emergencies led to confusion over the type and quality of information available on vulnerable children. This had a detrimental knock-on effect on successful tracing, collaboration and information-sharing.

Following a review of these different systems in 2003, it was decided that standard forms should be developed so that the same comprehensive and appropriate information for registration, tracing verification, reunification and follow-up could be collected by all staff, irrespective of agency. In addition, a database was developed to aid in the management of cases, tracing and reunification, and to collect statistical information, which could more easily be used for reporting and/or advocacy purposes. Guidelines and best-practice protocols were also developed to inform country programmes on how to manage and share sensitive information collected on children. Although some agencies that already had similar information management systems may have had data protection protocols, similar forms and databases, the purpose of introducing a standard and comprehensive tool was to ensure collected best practice and collection of standardised information that could easily be shared among a group of agencies, to further ensure a prompt response to children's needs in emergencies and post-emergency situations.

Initially, a consortium agreement was drawn up between Save the Children and IRC to illustrate the commitment to collaborate and use standard tools (forms and database) in the case management of separated and unaccompanied children; and to foster better co-operation and collaboration at country level. This consortium has developed into a technical Steering Committee that includes UNICEF. At a global level the IMS is hosted by IRC with the Project Co-ordinator being managed by IRC. Despite the advisory role of the Project Co-ordinator and Steering Committee, neither has management control of the IMS and no rules or regulations for its use have been developed (though guidelines are available and provided to prospective users). Similarly, country programmes that use the IMS are not obliged to provide information to the Steering Committee or Project Co-ordinator on how it is used at country level, or on the level of its successful use. Rather, one of the main roles of the Steering Committee has been to promote the use of the IMS at a global level to donors and through co-ordination bodies such as the CPWG, and to advise on the future direction and use of the IMS.

Components of IMS

The IMS has three main components:

- set of standard forms;
- database; and
- confidentiality protocols on information sharing and data protection.

Standard forms

These are a set of forms to assist the identification, registration, documentation, tracing and follow-up of vulnerable children. The set of forms are comprehensive, covering rapid registration of vulnerable children, particularly the needs of CAAFAG, children under five years and the particular needs of girls. While the standard set of forms is distributed as the IMS is introduced, it is common that these forms are customised to a degree before use in order to fit the needs of the programmes using them. Such adaption will take into consideration local and national cultural norms regarding family names, etc, and sensitivities surrounding ethnic groups, family location, etc, which may be relevant for working with CAAFAG and other vulnerable children. Therefore, some questions may be taken out and more relevant ones added. This may be done when the IMS is introduced during a long-term emergency or CAAFAG programme (as is the case in Nepal). Alternatively, changes may be made to the forms following more detailed, specific assessments during the first phase of an emergency. This is the case in South Africa, where the standard forms were predominantly used in rapid response to an unexpected influx of unaccompanied children from Zimbabwe in the second half of 2009. As the response to this influx has developed and there is a better understanding of the children's circumstances and reasons to come to South Africa, the forms are being adapted to ensure the most appropriate information is collected, which informs the most appropriate assistance to these children.

Examples of forms used are provided in Annex D.

Database

This is a database with information inputted from the forms to assist in case management, and to store statistical information on children assisted in programmes. As the original purpose of the IMS was to aid programmes assisting separated and unaccompanied children and CAAFAG, the functions of the existing database are predominantly designed with these caseloads in mind. Therefore, there are a range of functions within the database, including a matching function that can be used in FTR programmes. While not every country programme that uses the database may need all these functions, there is a long list of reports that can be produced, from information stored in the database (from the forms), which can inform managers supervising case management and senior staff overseeing programme management who may be responsible for producing reports and proposals, and for advocacy purposes as well. Guidelines for efficient use of the database are available to provide some guidance prior to training and to compliment training when it is given.

A list of available reports that can be produced is in Annex E

Confidentiality protocols

This is a set of protocols and guidelines regarding data protection, information-sharing and confidentiality. These protocols cover the appropriate storage of information in hard copy (eg, case files on individual children) and electronically in the database. Guidance is also given on sharing information between agencies and on how staff within agencies should respect confidentiality. Examples of protocols and guidelines are provided to user-agencies as they start

to use the IMS (which might not be after they receive training). Experience from existing country programmes indicates that these protocols are adapted to the situation in a particular country and to the agencies using the IMS.

Examples of protocols and guidelines can be found in Annex F.

As of 2008, copies/versions of the forms, database and protocols are also available in French.

In addition to these three main elements, collaboration and co-ordination are strongly promoted through the use of the IMS. In most of the countries where the IMS is currently being used, it is done so by inter-agency groups or networks where different agencies are carrying out different activities (eg, registration, family tracing or follow-up) in different locations within a country, but need to share information on a regular basis. Information that is gathered in this way as part of organisations' programmes can then be shared in a confidential and agreed manner among agencies. Indeed, many country programmes have commented that it was introduced to encourage better co-ordination and collaboration between agencies working in the same/similar projects, and in most countries this has been the case.

Training and support is available to all agencies and country programmes using the IMS from the global team – Project Co-ordinator and Database Co-ordinator. Support by the global team is given through periodic phone conferences and in-country visits. Information is also available to user-agencies (and prospective users) via an intranet website. (Training and support is discussed in more detail in Chapter 2.)

Global reach of IMS and range of use

At its inception, the IMS was developed in three countries – Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire and Sudan – and was used mainly by Save the Children and/or IRC in those countries in collaboration with UNICEF. As of October 2009, the IMS has been used in 16 countries worldwide by these and other agencies, including CARE, JRS, War Child, and World Vision. Countries where it is currently being used include: CAR, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, DRC, Ethiopia, Kenya, Myanmar, Nepal, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan and Uganda. Some countries that initially used the IMS have now stopped, as it is no longer appropriate for the programmes they are running. This is the case for Liberia, which had historically developed a separate database to help with a large caseload of separated and unaccompanied children and CAAFAG, and was later heavily involved in the establishment of the IMS, but currently its child protection programmes have no need for a case management support tool. Similarly, the IMS was used in Aceh in 2004/2005 following the Asian tsunami. However, the need for the IMS in emergency child protection programmes in this area has now finished.

Agencies who are interested in using the IMS must contact either a member agency of the Steering Committee or the Project Co-ordinator through lead agencies or their HQ. While no application-like process is undertaken by project staff or the Steering Committee, prospective users need to show how and why they would like to use the tool. Detailed explanation is given on the purpose and benefit of the IMS and discussions are held between the committee member or the Project Co-ordinator and the interested agency concerning the suitability of the tool to the context and type of programmes. A particularly useful document that is given is a series of key questions that look at programme, management and information management considerations,

and at capacity. These questions are aimed at prompting the prospective user-agency or network of agencies to look carefully at whether the IMS is the most appropriate tool for their needs. The suitability of the country/programme situation and suitability and capacity of the prospective user-agencies is also discussed within the Steering Committee before agreement is made. If an agency (or group of agencies) decides it wants to use the tool, standard forms, protocol guidelines and a copy of the database are sent with guidelines on set-up. In some cases staff from the project team have been able to conduct training fairly soon after this process. In some cases this has not been possible, and training has been done up to one year after introduction, though support is available on-line and through telephone conference.

The process at country level to decide and determine whether the IMS is an appropriate tool to use should not be under-valued. A thorough understanding of the context of the emergency (whether first-phase or long-standing) is necessary, as is an understanding of the roles of different agencies involved and their capacities to understand and use the tool effectively. In seeing how and where the IMS can be used within a response strategy there should be a good understanding of the separate strengths and advantages of the individual elements of the IMS, and how they will be used (with the understanding that not all three elements need to be used immediately). These discussions should take place within an inter-agency forum. Without this, much time and resources can be wasted in introducing a tool that is not appropriate, or is poorly introduced and that will have a detrimental impact on the quality of programming and assistance to vulnerable children.

(On other occasions, the IMS is introduced at the start of the response to a rapid-onset emergency; this was the case in Myanmar, Aceh and, following post-election violence, Kenya.)

At country-level, the IMS is used in collaboration with other agencies. In most countries, it is most often used by an inter-agency network, where two or more agencies carry out similar or complementary activities in programmes for separated or unaccompanied children or CAAFAG, and with one of these agencies taking the role of lead agency and holding the responsibility of overseeing the overall use and development of the IMS in that country. An example of this is seen in Nepal, where organisations such as UNICEF (the lead agency), Save the Children, and World Education¹ (and IRC up to August 2009) carry out reintegration programmes for CAAFAG at a local district level through local CBOs. Other examples are seen in Chad, Southern Sudan, Sri Lanka and Myanmar. In these cases the use of standard forms (adapted to the needs and context) and a common understanding of data protection and information-sharing has proven to be particularly relevant. Within these networks, one agency may take responsibility for inputting all the information gathered in the forms into the database, and sharing this information with other network members as appropriate. In situations of inter-agency collaboration, there may be a single (national) database sitting in a central and/or district location. (This is the case in Southern Sudan, where Save the Children is responsible for collecting data from other agencies such as World Vision and inputting it into the database.) Alternatively, several of the network agencies may input their own information into a database, which is then sent to (and synchronised with) a central database held by the lead agency (as is the case in Uganda). However, regardless of what precise arrangements and roles and responsibilities exist in each country programme, they should have been arranged within the inter-agency network to ensure the most effective and beneficial use of the tool according to the needs of children and the programme, and the capacities of those agencies using (any part of) the tool.

¹ IRC was also a member of this network until the end of its programme in August 2009. After this its responsibilities were taken over by UNICEF; as of the end of 2009, IRC no longer works in Nepal.

In a few cases, there is only one agency that uses the IMS in response to an emergency situation. This is the case in Ethiopia, where only IRC uses the IMS in its work with separated and unaccompanied children in camp settings, and in Northern Kenya, where only Save the Children uses it for similar camp-based work. However, information collected through the IMS is still shared with other agencies. For example, in Ethiopia, IRC uses the information it collects on the particular circumstances and needs of vulnerable separated children to present to UNHCR in their collaborative work on resettlement of these children in third countries (eg, UNHCR BID process to settle children who cannot be reunited with family in the US.)

The IMS is increasingly being seen as a best practice tool when responding to child protection needs in emergencies (natural or conflict-related). Its use is promoted at a global level by the Child Protection Working Group and by UNICEF, Save the Children and IRC. For example, the IMS is included in the emergency child protection toolkits of both Save the Children and IRC. As a result, it will be increasingly used, in some form, in emergencies to which these agencies and others respond.

The IMS was originally set up to aid case management and overall management of FTR programmes and those assisting in the return and reintegration of CAAFAG, and it is still used predominantly for these types of programmes, as well as to aid the case management of separated and unaccompanied vulnerable children in long-term camp settings. There is increasing interest in the IMS being used for other caseloads of vulnerable children, in emergency and non-emergency settings. These may range from responding to the needs of vulnerable children in long-term camp settings, children engaged in hazardous labour, children affected by trafficking, and GBV (gender-based violence) programmes. Many of the concerns addressed in these types of programmes are issues that children affected by conflict and separation are also likely to face. Indeed, in a few country programmes agencies have continued to use the IMS in post-emergency/transitional phases in programmes that address pre-existing child protection issues. This is the case in Myanmar, where following the introduction of the IMS to assist in FTR activity after Cyclone Nargis, UNICEF now uses the database to cover all data on vulnerable children, as a result of advocacy achieved with the government². Use of the IMS in such programmes would increase the global reach of the tool, which would also enable it to be pre-positioned as a preparedness tool in case of emergencies in many countries.

There is interest from some government departments in the use of the IMS. In several countries some government staff have been trained in the use of the forms, and use these in the work they do with NGOs in tracing activities. (Examples are seen in Uganda and Southern Sudan). However, there are also reservations in government agencies using the IMS or having access to information generated through it in other countries, due to the potentially sensitive nature of information related to vulnerable children.

² As reported in the evaluation questionnaire returned by UNICEF Myanmar, who completed the questionnaire on behalf of an inter-agency group of child protection agencies working in the country.

2. MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

The role of steering committees and links to inter-agency co-ordination groups

The IMS has two Steering Committees providing advice. The first is a technical child protection group comprising of staff members from IRC (which hosts the IMS project), Save the Children (Save the Children UK, on behalf of Save the Children Alliance), and UNICEF (which funds the IMS) at HQ level. The purposes of this Steering Committee are to provide technical support and guidance to IMS project staff, to promote its use within their organisations at global and country levels, and to provide vision for the future use and direction of the IMS. Its role is not to manage and police the use of the IMS (although there is a recognition that it could do more to ensure that it is being used appropriately). Members of the technical Steering Committee all have experience in advising programmes that use the IMS. Meetings are held regularly between committee members and project staff.

The second Steering Committee is an IT committee, comprising IT staff from the three main agencies at HQ level; its purpose is to provide technical IT support for the development and management of the database. Despite its establishment, the IT Steering Committee is not functioning properly, with few, if any, discussions being held among its members. A reason given for this is, among others, a lack of time available by IT staff to commit to providing such support. With other developments to strengthen the IT support available in recent years, including the identification of an independent IT support company based in India to provide some remote assistance, the continuing role and purpose of the IT Steering Committee has been questioned and it is possible that it will be phased out in due course.

Over the past year developments have been made to strengthen the management and advisory structure of the IMS project at the global level. From a child protection perspective, attempts have been made by the Steering Committee to establish a group of key resource persons at global and regional levels. Key Resource Persons include child protection staff who are already trained and experienced in the introduction and management of the IMS (all three components, although with perhaps more emphasis on the database). Such persons are equipped to provide training and support to other user-agencies in the region. It is intended that they could provide support to other countries and contexts when required. (Training of these persons started in late 2009, but due to other urgent issues that have arisen since, this plan has not moved forward.) At a global level, the Steering Committee sees the need for a wider group of technical experts, or a reference group, in all sections of child protection who can provide technical advice to the committee and project staff. This is particularly necessary as the IMS starts to be used to support programmes for other caseloads of vulnerable children. Support for establishing this global group has come from the CPWG, although, to date, no agencies have identified available staff to give such support, due to existing workloads and schedules. (Another call for support will be made at the annual CPWG meeting in January 2010).

Initially, due to the nature of programmes using the IMS, there were strong links between the IMS project and the IAWG, and there was much support from the group in establishing the IMS as a good practice tool and linking it with internationally-recognised standards and guidelines such as the Inter-Agency Guiding Principles on Unaccompanied and Separated Children. However, in

recent years the CPWG has provided increasing support. An example of this is the inclusion of the IMS in the annual work plan of the CPWG. The Steering Committee has used the influence of the CPWG to encourage more agencies to use the tool in emergencies as well as lobbying for members of the CPWG to become key resource persons. Other benefits that could be gained from the CPWG should also include access to better funding and better promotion as a standard best practice tool for all agencies in responding to child protection needs in emergencies.

Training and support

Training has predominantly been provided by the IMS Project Co-ordinator and the Database Consultant. The timing of training has varied, with some country programmes receiving training from the global team as the IMS was introduced (eg, Sri Lanka), and other country programmes reporting that they did not receive training from the global team until some time after starting to use the IMS (eg, Ethiopia). Staff trained have predominantly included social workers, middle management staff (project managers and co-ordinators) and IT staff (database officers). Initially, training was focused towards IT staff, possibly due to increased focus on the role of the database, and was concentrated less on the IMS as a child protection tool. However, more recent training has started to show the importance and relevance of all aspects of the IMS within child protection programming, highlighting the links between the IMS and case management.

While the role of the database is important in many country programmes, a thorough understanding of the forms and how they should be used should not be underestimated. Experience in some countries has shown that time needs to be spent on ensuring that field-based child protection staff understand the information that needs to be collected and why. When this does not happen, incorrect or insufficient information is collected that cannot be inputted into the database, and case management cannot be done effectively³. Going through the forms carefully (which many staff have stated are too long) and customising them for the situation and caseload with all staff will give a greater understanding of what information needs to be collected, and why, in order to assist children effectively. This is a vital element of case management training and is closely linked to the purpose of the IMS; it should be done before training in the IMS.

There is a need to improve and strengthen training provided. Country programmes need to look honestly at which staff from which agencies should be trained, and need to ensure that there is a good mix of national and field-based staff. The components of the training programme should be revised, with more connection being made with training in case management and how senior management (programme, operations and country directors) can use information generated for advocacy and monitoring of trends. Further, inclusion of a ToT element to training given by the global team would aid those staff tasked with providing training to others, in ensuring that key concepts and practices are easily and comprehensively passed to others.

Following initial training by the global team, some country programmes have developed good training plans, which were facilitated by a dedicated staff, and have included a wide range of staff from local government social workers to programme managers. A particular example can be taken from Southern Sudan, where IMS training was developed and facilitated by a dedicated 'case and information officer'; this placed the IMS in the context of the programme, drawing upon

³ Experience from emergency response programming for the post-election violence in Kenya as reported by UNICEF; and as reported by Save the Children in the Dadaab programme, Kenya.

linkages between child protection programming and FTR activities, and information flows between north and Southern Sudan, etc. Attendees included staff from several NGOs and UN agencies, and government agencies such as the Ministry of Social Welfare and the DDR Commission. Other good examples can be seen in Uganda and Myanmar.

A significant problem several countries have experienced is the impact on the programme once trained staff leave the programme/organisation. (Indeed, referring to the above example from Sudan, it is notable that since the Case and Information Officer left the programme in 2008, very little training has been done, which has had a significant impact on the effectiveness of the IMS in the programme.) In such cases there is clearly a need to train new staff and/or conduct refresher training. Country programmes should ensure that such training is developed as part of any programme using the IMS, and that training materials and IMS resources are kept centrally and updated regularly so that information can be passed between staff quickly, in the event of someone leaving.

Generally, most country programmes have reported they are happy with the level of support they have received from the Project Co-ordinator and Database Consultant. However, programme staff have also stated that although support has been good, it is also limited (this was stated in support of the global team as programmes recognise the limited capacity and availability of the team). Examples of this have included the reliance on the database consultant to solve and mend software issues within the database, which takes time and impacts the effectiveness of the tool and how it can help the programme. Database staff in some countries feel that if they had administrator rights at country-level they would be able to fix some programming issues themselves, without risking information/parts of the database, which need to be sent away electronically to be fixed.

Another support feature that is available but little used is the IMS intranet site. Several useful resources are available on the intranet including: contacts for the current Steering Committee and global team; links to database updates and e-learning; guides and other documents in English and French on getting started in using the IMS; and other resources such as copies of protocol guidelines and forms. There are also links to pages for individual countries (although not all) where similar information is available. While it is good that such a site exists, it is not well known, or it is little used – few respondents to the evaluation stated they had used or knew much about the intranet. Moreover, many available documents and much information is out of date and there are few if any documents from individual countries. However, the intranet could be an excellent resource for country programmes and the global team. The global team requires better (or more) resources to ensure that the latest documents are posted onto the site, and that contact lists are up-to-date. Country programmes and user-agencies should have more knowledge about the site and should be prepared to post relevant documents and reports on learning and experience for the benefit of other agencies, and to ensure that what information is available on their programme is up-to-date. Indeed, several country programmes have stated that access to such documentation, and a general increase in sharing of lessons and experiences at this level, would be invaluable to them.

Funding

Despite some interest from other institutional donors, UNICEF has been the primary funder of the IMS since its inception to the current period. This is certainly the case at the global level, where UNICEF has funded the project that has included the employment of the Project Co-

ordinator and database consultant and their availability to provide training visits and remote support. UNICEF has also been a major funder at field level, with most programmes that use the IMS being funded by UNICEF (eg, Save the Children FTR programme in Southern Sudan, CAAFAG reintegration programmes by Save the Children and World Education in Nepal and Sri Lanka)⁴. Funding at country-level, in direct relation to the IMS, has mainly been for the position of database officer and may have included some training costs for other staff. (It should be noted that the cost of social workers who would be using forms for case management and other programme staff who would be bound by the data protection protocols have also been funded by donors as part of other programme costs, and not necessarily directly related to the IMS.)

Funding from UNICEF has been relatively secure at the global level and has continued for the IMS project since its start in 2004; it has seen the benefit of the IMS in improving the response to child protection needs in emergency and post-emergency settings. However, the project cannot rely exclusively on funding from UNICEF in the long-term and it is necessary to look for funding from other donors.

The steering committee has an idea to charge user fees to recoup some costs incurred at the global level (most support and training visits by the Project Co-ordinator and Database Consultant are already covered by country programmes). However, this is likely to be difficult and unpopular at country level and may dissuade agencies from using the tool.

At country level, funding has proven to be difficult, both for NGOs and UNICEF itself. One reason for this is the reluctance of donors to completely fund indirect project costs such as staff (despite the argument within child protection programming that social work staff are a direct cost due to the nature of programme work). With funding available for a limited number of staff, preference tends to go to a small number of social workers and programme management staff. Additional understanding and/or a clear, concise and convincing explanation of the role of a database (if used) within a programme is necessary to fund positions such as a database officer and adequate numbers of social workers. An additional problem for programmes at country level is the relatively short-term funding available to them. Most emergency funding (plus usual funding from UNICEF) is for short periods of time (normally up to one year) and breaks in funding are common. When NGOs themselves are not able to bridge these gaps with their own or other funding, it is usual for staff to be cut, and most commonly database officers whose position is not possible to fund from other child protection programmes. Perhaps connected to this is the difficulty some agencies have found in promoting the IMS within their own individual agencies at HQ level. Without the recognition of the use and benefits of the IMS at this level, long-term funding will naturally be more difficult. To this end, the CPWG can assist in increasing the level of understanding of member agencies.

⁴ It should be noted that UNHCR and OFDA have also funded programmes using the IMS, notably in DRC and Kenya. Other donors include DFID and ECHO.

3. USABILITY OF THE INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM AT COUNTRY LEVEL

Experience of user-agencies at country level

Generally, country programmes have commented that the IMS has helped them to appropriately and effectively respond to child protection issues in emergencies. However, this comment must be qualified.

The most successful and appropriate element of the IMS is the standard forms. Nearly all country programmes reported that the use of the forms has helped them in case management, and to share information with other relevant agencies⁵. As well as the positive impact on information-sharing and collaboration, the availability of standard forms (although customised for the circumstances in a particular country) has encouraged – and resulted in – an improvement in quality of information gathered; this has had a positive impact on the assistance given to children. Particular examples can be taken from many countries dealing with a number of different types and sizes of emergencies. These include, but are not limited to: South Africa (response to a growing cross-border influx of unaccompanied minors from Zimbabwe); Nepal (reintegration of children formerly associated with armed groups); Sudan (long-standing programme for cross-border and inter-country FTR of separated children); and Myanmar (FTR and assistance to separated and unaccompanied children following Cyclone Nargis).

Country programmes have also reported positively on the influence of the data protection and information-sharing protocols – and again, this should be qualified. While some agencies and programmes report that case files are kept in locked cabinets and that electronic information, including that kept in the database, is password-protected and available only to a limited number of staff, some local NGOs admitted that this is only done ‘as much as possible’ (possibly due to capacity and resources). Similarly, while agencies can be good at keeping individual case files locked securely, spot checks have shown that other personal information relating to children (eg, lists of children referred to other reintegration services) is kept in open files on shelves within open offices.

An added benefit to training on data protection and information sharing has been that linkages have been made in some country programmes between this and improved communication with children when dealing with sensitive issues.

An element that country programmes have not found so helpful has been the database. This has been for a number of reasons. First, most programmes have reported that it is too limited and rigid, and does not reflect the situation in their particular country/programme. This is mainly due to the original aim of the database – to aid case management for FTR and DDR programmes which have certain programmatic steps – although it is also now used for other programmes that support children affected by armed conflict, which may not include many of these programme elements.

⁵ It should be noted that the forms were originally developed through the work of the IAWG, and not created solely for the introduction of the IMS.

Secondly, a number of technical, IT issues several country programmes have experienced have prevented them from using all of the functions within the database available to them. It should be noted, however, that as these issues have been resolved with the assistance of the Project Co-ordinator and Database Consultant, agencies have been able to increase their use of the database to assist with case and programme management.

A third restriction of the database that some country programmes have faced has been the availability of suitable, trained staff able to use the database to its full extent. Reported reasons for this include: staff being required to use the database before they have had sufficient training; training of inappropriate staff in the use of the database (ie, staff without a child protection background; this can have an impact on the quality of information inputted into the database, and on the monitoring of protection issues from the information collected); a high turnover of suitably trained staff, with limited or no handover or training for those replacing them; a lack of appropriate staff trained in all aspects of the IMS, whether they be field-based social workers or senior management based at national level.

A fourth restriction has been the exclusively English language availability of the database, which may have inhibited staff in non-English speaking countries from using the IMS to its full extent.

The lack of awareness and understanding of the IMS by management staff (including programme and operations managers) is also stated to be a notable factor in its poor use. This is a significant point. While some programme management staff had received some training, there was limited evidence of such staff using all elements of the IMS to their full potential, whether in proper case management, advocacy and sharing of information, or in ensuring that all information on children is kept as securely as it should be. There are some instances where a lack of understanding has meant that information is simply sent from the field level to a national level with little understanding by some staff as to why it has been collected. Other senior programme staff have admitted that the tool is viewed as something that has been forced upon them and can only be used with a particular part of a programme, rather than as a tool that should help plan and inform child protection programmes in emergency and post-emergency settings more broadly (even in its current limited version). With this attitude and understanding, it is clear that funding of training and staffing of the database can be compromised to the extent that the tool becomes obsolete.

A key to the successful and appropriate use of the IMS tool is an understanding of the relevance of its composite parts and of what these parts can do. Many country programmes refer to the IMS tool as the database only; therefore, their view of whether in totality it is an appropriate and useful tool, is strongly influenced by their experience of the database element.

Despite the identified limitations of the database, there are some examples of where the IMS, in its entirety, has helped agencies to respond to child protection needs. This can be seen in Sri Lanka. Here, the IMS is used by Save the Children and UNICEF as part of the national CAAFAG programme. In addition to being used within the implementation of this programme, the IMS is used to record cases of grave violations under the UN Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism (ref. UNSC Resolution 1612 and 1882), which has had a positive impact on advocacy in this area. (It is important to note here that the IMS is not part of the monitoring and reporting mechanism of grave child rights violations, and it is not used in this role in any other country. The decision to use it as such was made by the country programme in Sri Lanka based on the situation there and the circumstances of the programme.)

Appropriateness of the IMS tool in emergencies

The IMS tool has been used in a wide range of emergencies, from complex, protracted conflict-related emergencies as seen in DRC and Northern Kenya, to rapid onset, natural disasters such as responses to Cyclone Nargis in Myanmar and in Aceh. It has also been used in smaller responses to cross-border movement of unaccompanied, vulnerable children such as in western Uganda and South Africa.

Whilst, the IMS is increasingly used in a variety of countries and contexts it is useful to look at how it has helped in different types of emergencies.

Looking at feedback provided by user-agencies in countries affected by natural disasters and those affected by complex, protracted, conflict-related emergencies; it is felt that the IMS has worked particularly well in responses to natural disasters. One reason that has been given for this that funding for rapid-onset emergencies is often far more significant than for protracted crises, and therefore the set up and co-ordination of the IMS to aid in the identification, tracing and reunification of vulnerable children has been well funded and resourced from the outset and for the appropriate period of time following the onset of the emergency.

Feedback from user agencies in Myanmar shows that the use of the IMS in the response to Cyclone Nargis was useful and productive, aiding to the prompt tracing of several thousand children and encouraging good co-ordination among agencies. It is reported that much of this is the result of:

- the IMS being seen as a priority tool within the response;
- good co-ordination within the child protection sub-cluster;
- sufficient available funding; and
- the recognition that the tool was only needed for a finite period of time.

In comparison, by their nature, complex, conflict-related emergencies in fragile states have provided particular challenges to user agencies, such as interrupted funding, staffing and other resources; and changes in co-ordination and programme needs over an extended period of time. (This is despite the fact that the IMS can be used in assisting caseloads of CAAFAG and separated and unaccompanied children.)

Another benefit of an increase in the number of country programmes that use the IMS is the possibility for user-agencies in neighbouring countries to coordinate in response to cross-border situations. In 2008, the IMS was used in the response to a large influx of refugees from Eastern DRC to Western Uganda. With the use of the IMS, separated and unaccompanied children were identified and information was able to be shared appropriately with child protection agencies on both sides of the border to aid reunification. The success of the use of the IMS in this response is seen to be due to its existing use in Uganda (and in DRC) and the good capacity of staff from Save the Children and UNICEF.

Overall, there is a need for a thorough understanding of the context and issues to be addressed before introducing a tool such as the IMS to assist programmes (for example, it is important to understand the nature and size of caseloads to be assisted). Such knowledge will help inform country programmes if the IMS is the most appropriate tool to use, and if so to what extent. The capacity of potential users should also be taken into consideration. Agencies should not be

pressured, or feel they are pressured into using elements of the IMS that are difficult or inappropriate for them to use, although adoption and adherence to data protection and information sharing protocols must be used in all child protection programmes. For example, for small caseloads the use of an excel spreadsheet to record and monitor cases may be more appropriate than the much larger, complicated database.

Similarly, reviews of contexts and appropriateness of the use of the IMS should be made in programmes that have been using it for some time. This will ensure that all user-agencies are using the tool appropriately and that it is still relevant and necessary to monitor effectiveness. Such information should be considered important when reviewing/evaluating programmes and seeking further funding for programmes that use the IMS as a tool. Documentation of these reviews and sharing them at a global level would also be beneficial to the Steering Committee and, potentially, to other programmes.

Promptness of establishment/use following an emergency

The success of the deployment of the tool following a rapid-onset emergency has been varied and there are examples of where it has been successful and where it has been unsuccessful.

Successful examples can be seen in Myanmar, Uganda and Sudan following an emergency.

In Myanmar, as part of the response to Cyclone Nargis, the IMS was established and used to aid programmes addressing the needs of separated and unaccompanied children in affected areas. It had not been used in the country before and took three weeks to be established and used by agencies such as UNICEF and Save the Children.

In Uganda and Sudan the IMS had already been established and set up to aid other programmes in those countries (ongoing FTR programmes in Southern Sudan and to aid in the case management of children being released from the LRA in northern Uganda, which unfortunately never happened). Existing knowledge and use of the tool in these countries meant that it could be easily and quickly used by agencies in response to other emergencies that subsequently occurred. In Uganda in 2008, Save the Children Uganda, UNICEF and other agencies used the IMS in response to an influx of displaced people including many separated and unaccompanied children coming from DRC. These agencies' staff were already knowledgeable and practised in using the forms and database systems. Training was given as a refresher to these agencies and initially to other relevant agencies such as UNHCR and government social welfare departments (who had some experience of it in northern Uganda).

In Southern Sudan, severe inter-tribal fighting on the border of north and Southern Sudan caused the separation of several hundred children in 2008. Following rapid training in the use of the standard forms for staff from local NGOs, Save the Children, UNICEF and local government departments, rapid registration of separated children was carried out and FTR activities could be started within weeks of the initial emergency. Local UNICEF child protection staff have commented that they would not have been able to respond so effectively to the emergency had the forms not been available, or if their agency colleagues did not have prior knowledge of how to use them.

The above examples from Southern Sudan and Uganda bring to mind the usefulness of the IMS as an emergency response tool in emergency prone contexts. Certainly, some countries have been

able to take advantage of the existing use of the IMS in response to other emergencies. It is also understood that IRC have looked at including the IMS in its emergency preparedness plans in west Africa. However, respondents in this evaluation commented that more work is needed to build the capacity of current user agencies and sector coordinators before the IMS can more comprehensively be included in emergency preparedness plans.

Effective use in continuation of care

Key to understanding how effective the IMS has been in guaranteeing continuation of care following a first phase emergency is appreciating what different agencies understand to be continuation of care. Different country programmes have different understandings or interpretations, which range from follow-up of children after reunification where they may be referred to other necessary reintegration services, to addressing other protection issues that may arise in chronic or post-emergency settings with particular links to exploitation, abuse and neglect. Another influencing factor is the level of understanding of what the IMS does and how it can help a programme.

As a result, the views of country programmes as to whether the IMS is useful in guaranteeing continuation of care within this evaluation are mixed. Some country programmes, including Nepal, feel it is not relevant to their current programme, viewing it more relevant for other caseloads of vulnerable children that may need assistance in a post-conflict setting. However, evidence at field level shows that the IMS does influence assistance following reunification, as the forms used by social workers have encouraged them to identify other needs that children and their families have and how these can be addressed within communities. Such information has also helped agencies identify issues to be addressed by other programmes.

Other countries have recognised the benefit of the forms in this regard, and evidence can be seen in country programmes such as Sri Lanka of how elements of the IMS have helped in the referral of children to necessary reintegration services such as education, vocational training, etc.

The issue of continuation of care is likely to be more clearly addressed by the newest version of the IMS software, which will allow agencies to customise both the forms and database more particularly to the precise needs of their programmes and the situation of the children they are assisting. It will also allow agencies to use the IMS in their response to other caseloads of vulnerable children and, hence, address other care and protection issues that arise in non-first and second phase emergency settings.

Confidentiality

Promotion and use of data protection and confidentiality protocols has encouraged country programmes to ensure good primary procedures – that is, keeping individual case files in locked cabinets (in the majority of cases); ensuring that there is limited access to computers holding the database that are password protected; and that information is passed electronically is also password protected. Several countries reported how the importance of confidentiality has been extended to their work with children – that is, how they communicate with children, and how they report and deal with the information children may give to them.

However, discussions on data protection during field visits highlighted certain concerns in data protection, which agencies recognised themselves need to be addressed. The first of these

concerns was to ensure proper data protection in remote field sites where programme activities may be conducted by agencies (local NGOs/CBOs or government departments and also some INGOs) with limited resources and capacity to ensure complete confidentiality. Lead and partnership agencies should do more regular spot-checks to ensure that all hard copy information pertaining to cases is kept locked. Concern was also raised in Nepal regarding the security of information stored electronically in areas reliant on outside, commercial support for computer problems.

Another key issue that was raised regarded contingency planning for the disposal of information, in both hard and electronic copy; initially once a case has been closed, and then in the event of office closure or rapid evacuation. No country programme reported that it had plans for the security of information in any of these situations, although some did report on how long they kept closed cases. (Two limits were reported: two years and ten years.)

An example from Sudan indicates the importance of such plans. In early 2009, Save the Children UK was asked by the government to stop all their programmes in the north of the country (including operations in Darfur). Within hours of this demand government authorities came to seize computers and other equipment, giving staff barely enough time to secure sensitive information on children that was kept in the database computer and in hard copies. Fortunately, some backup was able to be done before computers were taken and hard copies were destroyed (ripped), preventing sensitive and personal information being taken. Save the Children has learnt a great deal from its experience and feels it is important for other country programmes to do so as well. An important aspect of this is the development of clear procedures for the sudden and rapid evacuation of sensitive information, including database and hard copy case files/information and/or disposal. All country programmes and agencies using the IMS should put these procedures in place regardless of their working relationship with the authorities. Save the Children is now looking into regular remote back-ups, upgrading its computer security systems, and reviewing the period of time it keeps closed files. (Further detailed recommendations can be obtained from the Save the Children member of the IMS Steering Committee.)

Emergency evacuation plans and other security measures are detailed in the data protection protocols (see Annex F). Drawing upon the experience of Save the Children, user-agencies should be required/encouraged to ensure that such plans and measures are properly developed and regularly reviewed. Examples of how electronic and paper data can be managed could be added to the protocols and guidance for the benefit of user-agencies.

Reporting and advocacy

During this evaluation, nearly every country programme reported that one of the most beneficial elements of the IMS is its use for statistical reporting and analysis. When accurate information is regularly inputted into the database, quality statistical information can be gained through the wide range of reports available (see Annex E). Such information can be particularly useful for donor reporting, programme analysis and when securing future programme funding. For example, statistics have been used successfully in DRC and Côte d'Ivoire in correspondence with donors.

However, while most country programmes report that they are able to use statistical information generated by the database for reporting purposes, there is relatively limited feedback from these country programmes on how such information has been successfully used for advocacy purposes, and some countries have even reported that they have had difficulties. For example, the Nepal

programme initially had difficulty knowing how they could analyse information in such a way that it could be used for advocacy purposes. However, a particularly good example can be taken from Sri Lanka as information generated from the database within its use for monitoring and reporting of grave child rights violations has enabled UNICEF and the UN Humanitarian Co-ordinator to successfully advocate with the government's armed forces, as well as with armed groups, to release children from these groups. Another good example is seen in Southern Sudan, where through use of quality information gathered in the standard forms for FTR of separated children, Save the Children and UNICEF have been able to successfully document the extent of abduction and separation of children in Southern Sudan due to inter-tribal fighting and clashes between north and Southern Sudan. This, in turn, has led to successful awareness-raising of the situation of children in the south and advocacy with the government of Southern Sudan.

Future use of the IMS

At country level, there is much anticipation of the new version of the IMS, comprising new forms and new database functions. This new version will enable country programmes to customise the forms and database in such a way as to be more relevant to the situation in that particular country, without lessening the collection of relevant information that is bound by existing minimum standards. It will also enable agencies to more precisely use the tool to assist in the management of and response to other caseloads of vulnerable children.

This being so, it is envisaged that more agencies will be interested in using the IMS, whether for emergency programmes or more development-orientated programmes. So, there is a need for the use of the IMS to be better managed or supervised at a country level by lead agencies or co-ordination bodies (eg, protection clusters). Adoption of the IMS by the protection clusters as a standard tool within emergencies (with an option to use the database according to circumstances and suitability), will ensure better collaboration and co-ordination (which can also include some government departments) and can also help those agencies that are new to or inexperienced in child protection to work at a better standard.

Another key development in the use of the IMS in response to emergencies has been the use of the tool by government departments. This stems from an increased interest by some governments in using the IMS themselves, and from the understanding by some governments that the IMS will be handed over to them once an emergency programme has finished. This is a difficult and contentious issue as there are strong arguments given both for and against governments using the IMS. Significant arguments against governments having access to the IMS include the belief (and experience) that some governments are keen to obtain sensitive information on children and families that will cause significant harm to these children and their families and communities. However, there is an equally strong argument that as it is governments' responsibility to respond to the needs of people during emergencies, where governments have expressed a genuine concern for the needs of children in emergencies and are keen to address those needs themselves they should be enabled to do so. Examples are available of this already happening. In several countries staff from state welfare departments have been trained and have used some of the elements of the tool (eg, the standard forms and the data protection protocols, as they are working alongside colleagues from NGOs in identifying separated and unaccompanied children (as is the case in Southern Sudan and Uganda)). The Steering Committee for the IMS recognises that the issue of the use of the IMS by government departments is a difficult and delicate one that needs further investigation on its own.

A third use of the IMS, which is slowly becoming significant, is in the monitoring and reporting of grave child rights violations (ref. UNSC Resolution 1612 and 1882). As mentioned earlier, the UNICEF country office in Sri Lanka uses the database to record cases of grave violations due to the circumstances and needs of the CAAFAG programme in that country. There has been interest from other UNICEF country offices to use the database for similar purposes. However, it should be noted that the Sri Lanka experience is seen as an exception and the Sri Lanka programme's adaptation of the IMS for MRM purposes was not a deliberate decision of the IMS Steering Committee. Therefore, it is not to be concluded that another function of the IMS is to record cases of grave violations.

Other areas where the IMS could be used more in the future include monitoring and evaluation of child protection programmes and in research across global and regional levels (if information was more readily available.).

4. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CONCLUSION

As stated earlier the IMS was originally set up to encourage a faster and more predictable response to the needs of separated and unaccompanied children in emergencies, and to the needs of children associated with armed conflict as regards tracing, reunification and reintegration. The original aim of the IMS was also to improve and promote better co-ordination between agencies providing these services, with each of these agencies using the same set of forms and a shared database to aid case and programme management. It can be concluded that this original aim has been achieved, but with several provisions. Key achievements and constraints are noted below.

Achievements

- The development of the IMS has meant that agencies have a ready-available tool to use in their programmes for CAAFAG and separated and unaccompanied children within emergencies. The IMS enables agencies to carry out thorough and correct documentation during the early stages of an emergency. Furthermore, when used properly, this tool can be adapted to different contexts through the use of its component parts either individually or collectively.
- Encouraged and facilitated inter-agency co-ordination and collaboration at country level.
- The use of the tool by a number of agencies in more than 16 countries shows that it is considered to be effective in assisting agencies working with separated children in emergencies on a global level.
- The ability to customise the standard forms to the context of the emergency/country and the needs of the children has enabled user-agencies to better document child protection needs and issues, and to use this information in a confidential manner with other relevant agencies.
- The type and quality of information that is requested through the forms promotes comprehensive information on the circumstances of individual children, which can and does help target better assistance for them both individually and collectively.
- The facility to produce reports on a wide range of statistical variances predominantly through the database, and also by spreadsheet (due to the type and quality of information given in the forms), has provided reliable information for reporting.
- Guidance on data protection available through such a global tool has improved the standard of safe-guards agencies use for the sensitive information they are using, which in turn can and does have a positive impact on the protection of vulnerable children.

- If introduced properly the IMS can be deployed promptly and can effectively aid first-phase emergency responses – eg, in Myanmar. It has also been used successfully in response to smaller emergencies in countries where it has already been used, prompting the argument that it can/should be prepositioned in emergency-prone contexts.

Constraints

- While the IMS is generally considered to be successful, there is limited evidence from country-programmes to show this more thoroughly. More documentation on how it is used in different countries and contexts should be made available to the Steering Committee on a regular basis (eg, annually) that can be shared at regional and global levels. This would not only provide a resource of best practice and problem solving, but would help promote the IMS at global regional levels.
- Despite its availability there is still limited understanding of how the IMS can be used most effectively and efficiently. This may be due to a number of factors – for example:
 - lack of a thorough understanding of the context in which agencies want to use the tool, which may mean its use is inappropriate or unnecessary. Agencies may rush into introducing the IMS because they feel they should use it, or because it is a donor requirement (eg, in Chad and Uganda), without fully investigating whether it is appropriate and how it can help their programme;
 - misunderstanding of what the IMS can do and how it can help programmes. For example, there is a common perception that the IMS will “do” case management for agencies. Part of this may be due to a poor understanding and practice of proper case management within a programme, or possibly phrasing used in training, guidance notes and the tool itself (eg, drop-down menu in the database named “case management”).
- Emphasis or concentration on the database has led to some user-agencies understanding the IMS as only being the database, and therefore basing their experiences and success of the IMS on the database, rather than viewing all three elements of the IMS. As a result, the IMS is under-used or mis-used, which can have implications for effective programming and lead to agencies feeling the IMS is more of a burden and imposition than a useful tool.
- Difficulty in successfully promoting the IMS as a necessary tool for CPiE programming at country and HQ levels has had an impact on funding of the actual tool and the necessary staffing and training for it. At a country level, senior management staff, including programme directors, operations managers, child protection team leaders and programme managers, must see and understand the full use and potential benefits of the IMS and have a responsibility that these are fully realised for the benefit of children and the programme. This includes ensuring that staffing and training are adequately resourced, that staff are using the tool properly (with emphasis on proper case management and thorough adherence of data protection protocols), that information collected is used effectively for reporting and advocacy, and that the IMS is included in monitoring and evaluation structures. In order for this to happen the IMS must also be accepted and understood properly at HQ level. While this itself is dependent, in part, on how it is used at country-level (reliance on good information and evidence of best

practice) it should also be aided by promotion as a necessary global tool through agencies such as UNICEF and bodies such as the CPWG and IAWG.

- Short-term funding of the database, staffing, training and development at country-level has led to breaks in vital resourcing, which has had a detrimental knock-on effect on programming and inter-agency co-ordination. (For example, a gap in funding for a particular/individual agency that is part of a network using the IMS could lead to a break in funding of a key resource such as a database officer. In such a case, while forms may be completed by other member agencies of the network, information cannot be inputted into the database, causing delays and inefficiencies in the sharing of such information or reporting.)
- Delayed and incomplete training, and the training of inappropriate staff has been shown to contribute to the ineffective or incorrect use of the IMS at country-level. Examples given in a number of country programmes include:
 - where either the number of places for training has been too restricted or where some staff have been trained on the IMS who do not need to use it, thus preventing staff who need to be trained from being trained;
 - staff who have been trained having difficulty in applying their learning in the training of other staff in such a way that all the tools are used properly;
 - staff who have been trained then leaving the organisation or programme, and no provision being made by the user-agency to retrain replacement staff;
 - a lack of appropriate management staff being trained, which can result in such key staff not understanding the need or usefulness of the tool in CPiE programming; and
 - a lack of training in case management prior to training on the IMS has also led to inadequate understanding/use of the IMS in support of case management.
- The database in its current form is too limited and in many countries does not fit with the needs of the programme or the forms that are used. (The new version should be able to address this constraint to a degree that it can be adapted more easily to the particular context and needs of a particular country programme.)
- Similarly, technical IT problems with the database have been slow to be amended due to the limited availability and resources of the database consultant. This has had a detrimental impact on country programmes. (For example, technical problems with the database in Nepal, which were not resolved until late 2009, resulted in user-agencies being restricted in their use of the database to statistical reporting only, rather than fuller case management and referral.) Again, this problem may in part be alleviated by support given by remote IT services, which have been contracted by the Steering Committee from 2010.⁶
- In-country co-ordination needs to be improved, particularly in acute, rapid-onset emergencies (though it has also been the case in some more long-established emergency settings too). Every member of any inter-agency network using the IMS should ensure that it is sharing the information it has gathered and used with other members as appropriate. Similarly, if one agency's role within such a network is compromised due to

⁶ This remote support will come from an IT support company based in India. Further details can be obtained from the project co-ordinator.

lack of funding or other resources (ie, staff) it should ensure that its responsibilities are passed to other network members who can carry out those duties (either temporarily or permanently).

- There have been some difficulties in ensuring that the IMS is introduced and used promptly and effectively in the first phase of emergencies (in countries where it is not already being used). This has been due to limited capacity of staff, difficulties in co-ordination of the IMS and other competing priorities within emergencies. Despite some examples of prompt setting up (eg, three weeks in Myanmar), most respondents stated setting up of the IMS took too long.

Despite these several constraints, the majority of user-agencies stated that their programming and response to child protection needs in emergencies had improved as a result of using the IMS. Furthermore, positive responses to the majority of the constraints experienced are being acted upon. Examples of this include:

- the development of the new version of the forms and database, which can be adapted more easily to individual contexts;
- the sourcing of an IT company to provide remote assistance with technical IT problems with the database; and
- identification and training of key regional resource persons and the forthcoming discussions of a reference group within the CPWG.

While these are examples of actions being taken by the Steering Committee, user-agencies at country and HQ levels and inter-agency networks at country level must recognise their responsibility to find solutions to the constraints they have experienced in their use of the IMS. The following recommendations on how the above constraints can be remedied and the IMS further developed apply to a range of relevant actors: the IMS Steering Committee; donors; implementing agencies; and child protection co-ordination leads within countries (eg, UNICEF).

RECOMMENDATIONS

Training

1. Training of Trainers (ToT) module to be included in the training provided by the global team so that staff who are trained are better able to pass on this training to other staff.
2. Refresher training modules to be developed and made available at a country level, which can be conducted by in-country or regionally-based staff.
3. Mandatory requirement that senior management attend training on the IMS so that they gain a better understanding of its relevance and necessity for child protection programmes. (This will be particularly needed as country programmes start to use the new version of the IMS, as it is senior management staff who will be specifying the detail of the IMS to fit the type of programme it will be used in.)
4. Ensure programme staff (including database officers) have received good training in case management, either prior to receiving training on the IMS or as part of.

Staffing and support

1. Increase the number of staff supporting the IMS at the global level. Initially this would include staff to support the Project Co-ordinator, who could conduct training and support visits, and periodic support conference calls. It is felt this should be done in conjunction with and in support of the establishment of key resource persons. It should also include strengthening the support capacity of the database consultant position, and should be considered as the support given by the outsourced IT company is reviewed.
2. Push for the establishment of the reference group at a global level that can give additional technical support and guidance on CPIE issues, and on other child protection issues such as child labour, trafficking abuse and GBV, which are addressed by programmes the IMS will be able to assist in its new version.
3. Continue the establishment of key resource persons to provide assistance to the global team in training and support at regional and national levels.
4. Long-term commitment to proper staffing of the IMS at the country level, particularly of database staff if appropriate. This may become easier to manage as the IMS is used to assist programmes addressing the needs of other vulnerable children, and staffing costs can be spread among programmes.
5. Ensure that the database officer (where applicable) is an established child protection staff member with experience and understanding of issues raised and documented.

Data protection

1. Regular review of data protection protocols by all users (including local CBOs and government agencies). This should include all information and correspondence pertaining to any individual child who is part of a programme.
2. Review of case closure procedures to ensure that either electronic or hard copy information is not stored for an inappropriately lengthy period following closure, particularly at field level.
3. Development of thorough guidelines for the sudden and/or rapid evacuation of electronic and hard copy information⁷.

Accountability and co-ordination

1. More promotion of the intranet site to all IMS users (particularly at country level) so that the resources it provides can be used properly.
2. More regular sharing of information and experiences between user agencies at regional and global levels through the fora already established (eg, IMS intranet).
3. Clear documentation of reasons for starting to use the IMS at country level. The purpose of such documentation is to provide proof that a thorough discussion on the need to introduce the tool has been held at country level with key agencies and potential users (including government agencies if appropriate), and would be seen as part of a “gate-keeping” policy promoted to be part of the tool in general. Such documentation would also inform subsequent reviews of the tool at country level as well, and would contribute to sharing of best practice globally among country programmes. (It should be noted that this should be done in such a manner that maintains the confidentiality of any sensitive information, and which is in the best interest of children involved in any programme.)

⁷ Refer to the Save the Children member of the Steering Committee for further information and recommendations from Save the Children Sudan's learning.

4. Periodic review of the purpose and appropriateness of use of the IMS at field level, to be conducted by the lead and participating agencies at country level.
5. Commitment by all users at country level to ensure that information generated by the IMS within any inter-agency collaboration is shared appropriately and in a timely manner so that all agencies can use such information to improve the protection requirements of children in emergencies and other settings.
6. Better documentation of use of the IMS at country level. The purpose of this is to help review the IMS and programme evaluation, at country and global levels, for quality control and for sharing of best practice among user-agencies/country programmes.

Funding

1. Funding of the IMS from other donors should be a priority for all agencies and groups interested or involved with the IMS.
2. Further guidance to be developed on what needs to be included for the IMS in donor proposals (drawing upon successful and unsuccessful experiences of country programmes).
3. Further promotion of the uses and benefits of the IMS to donors (based on experiences from country programmes. This may also include discussions with current donors about why they are prepared to fund the IMS.)

ANNEX A: NOTES ON METHODOLOGY

Using the terms of reference as a guide, a methodology was developed and agreed by the Project Co-ordinator for conducting the evaluation. The evaluation looks at two main parts: the extent to which the original purpose for developing the IMS has been met; and the usefulness of the IMS in the field for addressing and responding to children's needs in emergency and post-emergency situations. Thus, questions were developed to address these two points, to be asked either through questionnaire, phone interview or face-to-face discussion. Respondents included current Steering Committee members, past committee members and other key informants, current project staff, and country programmes currently using the IMS.

Further details include:

- Initial desk review of project proposals and reports, and other key documents such as guidelines for potential users.
- Phone interviews conducted with current Steering Committee members that concentrated on part one of the evaluation (the extent to which the original aim of the IMS had been met).
- Phone interviews conducted with other key informants, including past committee members and project staff, and child protection professionals who have managed or advised on programmes using the IMS in recent years. Again, these interviews concentrated on part one of the evaluation.
- Composition of a 16-question questionnaire, available in English and French, which was sent to 14 agencies in 11 countries where the IMS is currently being used. Of these 14 agencies, 13 responded. A wide range of staff were encouraged to complete the questionnaire, including programme managers, social workers and database officers. Only in a few agencies did this not happen, notably in Kenya and Ethiopia. In most cases the database officer completed the questionnaire on behalf of the organisation. In some other countries the lead agency in that country completed the questionnaire on behalf of other agencies using the IMS. (This was the case in Myanmar.)

While some country programmes were contacted for follow-up of their questionnaire responses, based on the information they provided, very few actually responded sufficiently.

Country visits were conducted in **Nepal and Southern Sudan** to further explore information given in the questionnaires (staff from the lead agencies in both countries had completed the questionnaire before the visit). In both countries, short visits were made by the consultant, to project field locations where the IMS is being used. In Nepal this included a visit to Nepal Gunj, Mid-Western Region, which is one project location where Save the Children use the IMS in the implementation of its CAFAAG programme, in collaboration with UNICEF. In Southern Sudan, a visit was made to Wau, in Western Bar El Gazal, where Save the Children manages a large part of the FTR programme for Southern Sudan, again in collaboration with UNICEF, social workers from the Ministry of Social Welfare and other NGOs such as World Vision. Questions to guide discussions were developed from responses given particularly in the questionnaires returned from Nepal and Southern Sudan, and from other agencies' responses.

Care was taken to ensure that notes made from discussions were not unduly influenced by the particular experiences of an agency or its relationship with other users, which might impact the level of success in the use of the tool.

Copies of the interview questions, questionnaire and field visit terms of reference are available in Annexes C and D.

ANNEX B: LIST OF EVALUATION RESPONDENTS

Questionnaire respondents

Chad: CARE, JRS
Central African Republic (no response)
DRC: Save the Children
Ethiopia: IRC
Kenya: Save the Children
Myanmar: UNICEF
Nepal: Save the Children, UNICEF
South Africa: Save the Children
Southern Sudan: Save the Children
Sri Lanka: Save the Children Sri Lanka, UNICEF
Uganda: Save the Children Uganda

Members of current IMS Steering Committee

Pernille Ironside – UNICEF
Alyson Eynon – Save the Children UK
Laura Boone – IRC

Other key respondents

Jennifer Morgan – IMS Project Co-ordinator
Brown Kanyangi – IMS Project Database Consultant
Marie de la Soudiere – former Director of Child and Youth Protection and Development, IRC
Sarah Uppard – former Head of Child Protection, Save the Children
Severine Chevral – former IMS Project Co-ordinator
Katie Barnett – CPWG Co-ordinator and former Steering Committee member as Emergency Child Protection Advisor for Save the Children UK
Jane Warburton – former Steering Committee member as Director of the Child and Youth Protection and Development Unit, IRC
Tirana Hassan – Child Protection Consultant
Katherine Williamson – Child Protection Consultant
Stephen Hanmer – former Child Protection Technical Advisor, IRC
Nicole Brehnam – former Child Protection Technical Advisor, IRC
Shyamol Choudhury – Child Protection Emergency Response Manager, Save the Children

Field visit respondents

Nepal:

UNICEF: Joanne Doucet – Head of Child Protection, Kathmandu

Radha Garung – Child Protection Officer, CAFAAG Programme,
Kathmandu
Sumit Shah – Child Protection Database Officer
Child Protection Officer, Nepal Ganj zonal office

Save the Children: Pratisha Dewan – Kathmandu
Child Protection Project Officer, Nepal Ganj (project site)
Save the Children Database Officers (previous and current)
CWIN Project Management staff and social workers, (local Save the
Children partner, Nepal Ganj)

World Education: Helen Sherpa – Director, Kathmandu
Sachin Khadka – Database officer, Kathmandu

Southern Sudan:

UNICEF: Silvia Pasti – Head of Child Protection, UNICEF Southern Sudan
Lucia Soleti – Child Protection Specialist, UNICEF, Wau

Save the Children: Frederick Mukholi – Director of Programme Implementation, Juba
Child Protection staff including: Child Rights Officer, Child Participation
Officer, Child Protection Advocacy & Governance Officer, Juba
William Deng – Child Protection Programme Manager
Philip Deng – Child Protection Officer and acting Database Officer, Wau
Project social workers, working out of Ministry of Social Welfare, Wau

ANNEX C: EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE AND INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

EVALUATION OF THE INTER-AGENCY CHILD PROTECTION INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE

Thank you for answering this questionnaire, which is part of the Inter-Agency Child Protection Information Management System Evaluation (IA CP IMS).

The IMS is a tool that is used mainly in emergency and post-emergency child protection programmes. It includes data protection and information-sharing protocols, family tracing and case management forms, coding systems, and the database.

The purpose of the evaluation is to look at how staff and organisations use the IMS, what aspects people have found useful, what aspects have not been as useful and what can be done to improve the tool to help organisations respond better to child protection needs in emergency and post-emergency situations.

This questionnaire is part of an evaluation of this IMS tool. It is not an evaluation of the programmes and organisations using this tool.

This questionnaire is being sent to other organisations that use the IMS. Different people in each of the organisations use the tool, from field-based social workers to programme managers and heads of department. Therefore, it is important that these people are given the opportunity to complete a questionnaire, and give as much information as possible so that we can ensure any changes to the tool will benefit every person who uses it.

The information you give in this questionnaire will be treated confidentially, and will not be shared with colleagues from your own or other organisations. Therefore, it is important that you feel free to give constructive criticism and positive feedback so that we can make the tool better for you.

When you have completed the questionnaire, you should return it to Christine McCormick, Evaluation Consultant at mccormickchristine@ymail.com. Completed copies should be returned to Christine by 19 November.

1. When did your agency start using the IMS?

Why did your agency start using the IMS?

- It would help you/your agency work better
- It would strengthen your case management skills
- It was difficult to manage your caseload of children through a paper-based filing system
- It is a donor requirement
- Any other reason:

What was your expectation of the tool before your agency started to use it?

2. Did your agency go through any procedure to show why it wanted or needed to use the IMS? Were there any requirements your agency had to meet in order to use the IMS?
3. What sort of programme is your agency implementing that requires the IMS?
 - What is the size/scope of programme (eg, number of caseloads)?
 - Is it a pre-emergency, emergency or post-emergency context?
 - Is it a non-emergency context?
 - What is the situation of children you are working with?
 - Is the IMS being used by your organisation alone or by an inter-agency network? If by an inter-agency network, how many other agencies are in this network and how do you collaborate?
4. What type of training on the IMS did staff receive and what staff were trained?
 - What was the content of training – information-sharing protocols, standard coding systems, forms?
 - What staff were trained?
 - Who conducted the training (visit from Jennifer/Severine/Brown, programme manager)?
5. In what ways has the IMS helped your agency respond to children's protection needs in an emergency?

Please give examples

6. Do you think the IMS has been useful or effective in helping your agency respond to child protection needs in emergencies? If yes, how? If not, why?
7. Do you think the IMS supports your agency and the agencies you work with to continue to care for children beyond an initial emergency phase? If so, in what way? If not, how can it do this better?
 - Please give examples
8. What do you think is the primary use and advantage of the tool? (For example – for case management work in the field or for statistical analysis?)
9. Do you feel that the IMS is the best tool to help in case management? Are there other tools you use in collaboration with the IMS (eg, spreadsheets)? How can the IMS help you manage caseloads better?
10. How much do you/your agency use the different parts of the IMS?
 - Standard forms for tracing and case management
 - Data protection and information-sharing protocols
 - Coding systems
 - Database

Please give examples if possible

11. Do you use the different parts of the IMS for any of these reasons?
 - Generating lists of children to help social workers plan their work

- Generating lists of overdue work to help managers keep track of work
- Generating reports and graphs to help strategic planning or advocacy
- For reporting to donors
- Using the “match” function to facilitate tracing
- For identifying and responding to the needs of other groups of vulnerable children
- None of the above

Are there any other purposes you use the IMS for?

12. How does the IMS support confidentiality and security of data for you and your agency? If it does not, how can it be improved?
13. How does the IMS support monitoring and analysis of trends and related advocacy? If it does not, how can it be improved?
14. Do you or your agency receive support in using the IMS from those who introduced it? (For example – regular communication, visits from the Programme Co-ordinator, Programming Consultant, etc.) Do you have any comments about the support you/your agency have received?
15. Has your initial expectation of the IMS been met since you started to use it? If so, how? If not, why?
16. Do you have any other suggestions that could help the future direction, design, structure, implementation and monitoring of the IMS to benefit your response to child protection needs in emergency and post-emergency situations?

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR COMPLETING THIS QUESTIONNAIRE.

PLEASE GIVE YOUR NAME AND POSITION AND RETURN THE PAPER TO CHRISTINE McCORMICK, EVALUATION CONSULTANT – mccormickchristine@ymail.com

DEADLINE FOR COMPLETED QUESTIONNAIRES TO BE RETURNED IS 19 NOVEMBER 2009.

EVALUATION INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

1. How long have you been part of the Steering Committee and what has been your role?

What types of caseloads is the IMS being used to assist?

2. In your understanding, what were the original gaps or needs that the project or IMS was set up to address? (need to differentiate between the two)
3. In your view has the project/IMS successfully addressed these needs/gaps?

- If so, how?
 - If not, why?
4. In your experience have the needs changed? To what extent has the project vision changed?
 5. Can you explain the management structure of the project? How has this evolved in terms of:
 - a. The consortium, the programmatic and IT Steering Committee, the IA SCWG, the CPWG?
 - b. The mechanisms for organisations to participate in the project?
 6. Can you give examples of where the IMS has enabled NGOs to respond to children's protection needs?
 7. What monitoring of the extent to which the IMS is aiding agencies to respond to child protection needs in emergencies does the Steering Committee do? – meeting the needs of the agencies to do this.
 8. Looking to the future, how can the Steering Committee better support NGOs to address changing child protection issues – for example, increasing interest in using the IMS for different caseloads, eg, trafficked and street children?
 9. Bearing in mind recent and current trends and systems within the field of child protection in emergencies (eg, minimum standards in care, cluster systems, training etc), have you had any thoughts?
 10. How can you see/would you like to see the IMS improve the care and protection of children in both emergency and early-recovery situations?
 11. Is there any other learning that can be captured to inform the structure, implementation and monitoring of the project?

EVALUATION INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR OTHER KEY INFORMANTS

Introduction – what the purpose of the evaluation is and why they have been asked to participate

1. How/why were they originally involved in the IMS?
2. What was the original gap or needs identified that the project was set up to address?
3. What was the vision for how the project would address these needs? How has this changed (if at all)? (More theoretical aspects)
4. What is your impression of how the tool is enabling child protection NGOs to respond to the child protection needs in emergency and post-emergency situations? (More practical experiences)

5. Discussion about the management structure for the IMS – to include the roles of the Steering Committees, links to inter-agency working groups and funding.
6. What is their involvement in the IMS now, and what are their thoughts of it in their current work?
7. Within their current position, what are their thoughts on developing more links between the IMS and other CPiE standards and areas of co-ordinations, in order to address child protection needs in a better and quicker manner?
8. Are there any gaps in provision of needs that the IMS could address?

Note: the above questions were not asked verbatim but worded according to the experiences of the informants.

ANNEX D: COPIES OF IA CP IMS FORMS USED

CHILD PROTECTION NETWORK

RAPID REGISTRATION FORM FOR SEPARATED CHILDREN

SECTION 1 - CHILD'S PERSONAL DETAILS

Registration I/D Number

(generated by Database)

Other I/D Number

NOTE: To be specified by the program

What is the child's "Separation" status?

Separated

Unaccompanied

PHOTO

What Sub-Category best describes the circumstances of the child?

NOTE: To be determined by the program

(as many sub categories can be added to the form and into the database)

IDP

CAAFAG

Other

Refugee

Street Children

Is the child willing for their personal details (name, photo, etc) to be made public in support of tracing?

Yes

No

Child's Name	First Name	Middle Name	Last Name

Child's Nickname				Sex	Male	<input type="checkbox"/>	Female	<input type="checkbox"/>

Age given by child	<input type="text"/>	Age estimated by interviewer	<input type="text"/>	Year of Birth			

Birth/ Home Address	Country	Admin Level 1	Admin Level 2
	Admin Level 3	Village/Area/Physical Address	

NOTE: Each Admin level can be adapted to the specific address format of each country

SECTION 2 - FAMILY DETAILS

Child's Father	First Name	Middle Name	Last Name

Child's Mother	First Name	Middle Name	Last Name

Is the father alive?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	Don't Know	<input type="checkbox"/>	Is the mother alive?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	Don't Know	<input type="checkbox"/>

SECTION 3 - HISTORY OF SEPARATION

Date of Separation

Place of Separation	Country	Admin Level 1	Admin Level 2
	Admin Level 3	Village/Area/Physical Address	

NOTE: Each Admin level can be adapted to the specific address format of each country

SECTION 4 - SIBLINGS (Brothers & Sisters)/RELATIVES ACCOMPANYING THE CHILD

Each child will require their own file and should be entered into the Database separately

1st	First Name	Middle Name	Last Name
------------	------------	-------------	-----------

Database I/D Number **Other I/D Number**

Relationship (Sister, Brother, Uncle, Aunt, Grandmother, Grandfather, other)

NOTE: To be determined by the program

2nd

First Name	Middle Name	Last Name
------------	-------------	-----------

Database I/D Number

Other I/D Number

Relationship (Sister, Brother, Uncle, Aunt, Grandmother, Grandfather, other)

NOTE: To be determined by the program

If Additional siblings and relatives are accompanying the child, please complete the above information on an additional page.

SECTION 5 - CURRENT CARE ARRANGEMENTS

What are the child's current care arrangements?

Foster Family

Street

Interim Care Centre

Child Headed Household

Orphanage:

Other

NOTE: To be determined by the program

Name of the current caregiver?

Address where is the child currently living?

Country	Admin Level 1	Admin Level 2
Admin Level 3	Village/Area/Physical Address	

--	--

NOTE: Each Admin level can be adapted to the specific address format of each country

SECTION 6 - WISHES OF THE CHILD (PREFERED GUARDIAN/CAREGIVER(S) FOR TRACING)

Name	First Name	Middle Name	Last Name

Relationship

--

(Father, Mother, Sister, Brother, Uncle, Aunt, Grandmother, Grandfather, other)

Is the child willing for their personal details (name, photo, etc) to be made public in support of tracing?

Yes

No

SECTION 7 - DETAILS OF INTERVIEWER

Name/Sign.		Position	

Agency		Date	
---------------	--	-------------	--

Location of Interview	Country	Admin Level 1	Admin Level 2

Admin Level 3	Village/Area/Physical Address
---------------	-------------------------------

NOTE: Each Admin level can be adapted to the specific address format of each country

Data Entry Fields for the Database are shaded and enclosed within boxes with thicker borders

ANNEX E: A SELECTION OF THE STANDARD REPORTS THAT CAN BE PRODUCED FROM THE CURRENT VERSION OF THE DATABASE.

(A complete list is available from the IMS Steering Committee or Project Coordinator.)

<p>Registration Category/ FTR By month By location By age By nationality By interim care arrangement By agency By social worker By operator By tribe/ ethnicity/caste</p>	<p>By age By month By agency By type of reunification By nationality</p>	<p>By agency By place of mobilization By reason of joining the military By period of mobilization By period of demobilization By type of demobilization By social worker</p>
<p>Follow up in interim care Caseload summary By category and sub-category By location Requiring follow-up By month By agency By social worker</p>	<p>Follow up after reunification Caseload summary By category By agency & month By location Requiring follow-up By month By social worker</p>	<p>Education, training and livelihood Education and training Activities at registration Education and training Activities at follow in interim care Education and training Activities at follow after reunification Community &, livelihood Activities at follow after reunification</p>
<p>Tracing action</p>	<p>Closure Protection concerns General caseload analysis By category By current location By action taken</p>	
<p>Reunification General caseload By category and sub-category By location</p>	<p>CAAFAGs Numbers/age/sex Current location</p>	<p>Transfer and referral</p>
<p>Reports on overdue tasks Number of children for whom tracing is overdue List of children for whom tracing is overdue Number of children for who follow up during interim care is overdue List of children for who follow up during interim care is overdue List of children for who follow up during interim care is overdue by current care arrangement Number of children for who follow up during after reunification is overdue</p>		<p>List of children for who follow up during after reunification is overdue List of children for who follow up during after reunification is overdue by current location</p>
		<p>Reports on best interest determination General Caseload Report by Proposed Support Report by Recommendations Report by Age Group Report of cases going through BID process receiving follow-up visits</p>

ANNEX F: EXAMPLE DATA PROTECTION CHECKLIST

For organisations using the Inter-Agency Child Protection Information Management System

General data protection

- An assessment has been done in-country of the applicable domestic data protection laws and any possible implications for staff and the organisation.
- An assessment has been made of the level of sensitivity of the data being collected and security risks specific to the context, and these have been communicated to all Child Protection Staff, IT staff, Security Managers and Senior Management in country, and to Head Office.
- Data Protection Protocols (adapted from the IA CP IMS template) have been put in place, and an obligation to uphold this document has been written into the contracts of those staff who will come into contact with the data. For example: Data Entry Clerks, Child Protection Officers, IT staff, Child Protection Manager, Senior Management, etc.
- Staff have been asked to identify security risks specific to their context and to explicitly think through the possible implications for children, their families and communities, and for the organisation, were data to get into the wrong hands. All staff in contact with the data have a strong understanding of the sensitive nature of the data, the importance of data confidentiality and security.
- Staff understand that all cases will be allocated a code based upon an agreed standard coding format, and that the code should be used to refer to the case either verbally or on paper, in place of any identifiable information such as name or date of birth.
- Child Protection Managers have provided staff with culturally and contextually appropriate guidelines for obtaining informed consent from children, including guidance on when a child can be judged to have the appropriate level of maturity to be able to give informed consent. Managers are satisfied that Child Protection staff have sufficient knowledge and skills in this area.
- Children and/or their caregivers are giving their informed consent for the agency/agencies to gather and store their data before any information is recorded. Signed paper consent forms are being kept in a locked filing cabinet.
- Child Protection staff are aware that when obtaining informed consent, children may highlight particular information that they do not want shared with certain people, and that this must be recorded and respected.
- Information is not being passed to a third party without the informed consent of children and/or their caregivers.
- Information is being shared with other Child Protection staff members or other agencies within the network strictly on a 'need to know' basis. On the rare occasion that information may need to be shared with a third party (for example, if withholding the information risks were to harm the child or others), staff should consult the Child Protection Manager and let 'the best interests of the child' be the guiding principle.⁸

⁸ "The term 'best interests' broadly describes the wellbeing of a child. Such wellbeing is determined by a variety of individual circumstances, such as the age, the level of maturity of the child, the presence or absence of parents, and the child's environment and experiences. Its interpretation and application must conform with the CRC and other international legal norms, as well as with the guidance provided by the Committee on the Rights of the Child in its

- Written Standard Operating Procedures describing each agency's roles and responsibilities, and a diagram illustrating how information will be passed securely within and between organisations, have been agreed upon. All staff are aware of and have access to these procedures.
- Managers are satisfied through verification that other organisations they may exchange data with have robust data protection protocols in place. These will usually be the same Data Protection Protocols, developed by the Inter-Agency Network at the time of setting up the system.
- Managers make time on a regular basis for carrying out spot checks to make sure that all data protection protocols are being followed.
- Managers update and disseminate data protection protocols as soon as a situation/context changes, which could affect the security of the data – for example, a change in governmental relations, a deteriorating security situation, etc.

Paper file security

- Paper documentation for each child is stored in its own individual file, clearly labelled with the individual I.D. code. Names of children are NOT on the outside of the paper files.
- Paper files are being kept in a secure place, accessible only to responsible individuals specified by the Child Protection Manager. This usually means that they are stored in a lockable filing cabinet, and the keys kept with the Data Entry Clerk. No one else should be given independent access to the paper files without permission.
- Paper files are being transferred by hand between people responsible for the information. This should be the Data Entry Clerk and Child Protection staff designated by the Child Protection Manager. In exceptional circumstances the Child Protection Manager may need to identify a non-Child Protection staff member to be designated for this task. In this circumstance the staff member must be briefed on the Data Protection Protocols and sign these. During transfer, the files should be stored in a sealed box or sealed envelope.
- Managers or the Data Entry Clerk have reviewed paper files to ensure there are no original documents in the files. This is so that destruction of paper files can be done without any hesitation in the event of an emergency evacuation. If any original documents are on file (such as original birth certificates) these should be scanned and then returned to the child.
- Paper files and/or filing cabinet drawers have been marked with a colour-coding system according to the sensitivity of data they contain, and therefore the order of priority in which they should be removed/destroyed in the event of an evacuation. For example, a piece of red tape across the front of a filing cabinet containing particularly sensitive information. This can be useful during an emergency evacuation where the staff member in the position to remove/destroy the data may not be familiar with the particular filing system.
- Rooms containing paper and electronic information are being locked securely when the Data Entry Clerk leaves the room. Data Entry Clerks are aware of the importance of being vigilant as to who is entering the room where they work and for what purpose.

Electronic data security

- Computers have up-to-date anti-virus software to avoid corruption and loss of information.
- Data Entry Clerks are changing their passwords on a regular basis.
- Child Protection staff are aware that information should be transferred by encrypted and password-protected files, whether this is by internet or memory sticks (USB drives). Memory sticks should be passed by hand between people responsible for the information. The people responsible are the Data Entry Clerk and individual Child Protection staff as designated by the Child Protection Manager. In exceptional circumstances the Child Protection Manager may need to identify a non-Child Protection staff member to be designated for this task. In this circumstance the staff member must be briefed on the Data Protection Protocols and must sign these. During transfer files should be encrypted, password protected, and erased immediately after transfer.
- At least two backups are being taken on a weekly basis – one stored in the location of the database, and the second sent for secure storage in a designated off-site location (for example, a UNICEF national office). Staff responsible for the data at the second site must follow the same Data Protection Protocols. The reason for having an off-site back up is that the main database can be destroyed in an emergency evacuation without this meaning the loss of all electronic data. Typically, the on-site back up is an external hard drive that is kept locked in a filing cabinet, and the off-site back up is done through emailing the backend of the database to the designated receiver as an encrypted, password-protected zip file.

Emergency evacuation plan

In the event of an evacuation, management must ensure that the computer(s) where the database is setup, its back-up systems and paper files are moved to a safe location. When moving database assets and paper files is not possible, management should ensure that electronic files are completely erased or the assets are destroyed, and that paper files are shredded or burnt. The off-site electronic back up copy will then become the only source of information on the children.

- A clear evacuation plan has been put in place, which includes a 'Scheme of Delegation' dictating who has responsibility for making decisions regarding removing or destroying data, and who has responsibility for removing and destroying data (who has primary responsibility; who has responsibility if primary person is out of the office; who has responsibility if secondary person is out of the office, etc).
- The evacuation plan for electronic and paper data has been incorporated into the standard evacuation plan for the whole agency by Security Managers/Senior Staff.
- The Country Director, Security Manager, Logistics Manager, IT Manager, Senior Management Team and Child Protection staff are aware of the sensitive nature of data being collected and are able to recite their individual responsibilities detailed in the evacuation plan.
- A briefing on the evacuation plan has been added to the standard induction checklist for relevant staff. Typically, this is Child Protection staff, IT staff, Security Manager, Logistics Manager, Senior Management and Country Director.
- Managers have carried out an 'evacuation drill' to ensure that each individual knows their responsibilities and is able to act quickly in an emergency evacuation. This is particularly pertinent if working in an insecure area.

Lead agencies

Lead agencies in an inter-agency network are responsible for overseeing that all other agencies have appropriate Data Protection Protocols in place, including Evacuation Plans. If an evacuation occurs, lead agencies should coordinate with other agencies in the network to ensure that all agencies are able to evacuate without compromising data security and confidentiality; to the extent possible within the given security constraints. Lead agencies should contact the Steering Committee and/or the Project Co-ordinator as soon as possible to alert them to the evacuation, and seek support as necessary.