

Section 4: Note to Users

The tools in this section invite managers and other users to reflect critically on their agency's approach to engaging with communities and to consider a more community-led approach.

It also recognizes that many managers will have a host of practical questions about things such as qualities to look for in facilitators, the phases of engaging with communities, and the kinds of benchmarks one can use to tell whether one is on a productive track, among others.

Recognizing that there are no "final" or universal answers to these questions, the tools in this section seek to give illustrative examples that stir the imagination and invite one to think how it might go in a particular context.

Managers also may find it useful to have a more in-depth look at an example of community-led work, together with tools that were used to support it. For this reason, this section includes a case study from Sierra Leone and some of the tools used as part of the community-led work.

It is important to recognize, though, that there is no one-size-fits-all in regard to community-led approaches. The Sierra Leone example and tools are best seen as illustrations and should not be seen as prescriptions for how to do community-led work.

MGM 10: Sample Memorandum of Understanding Between Government Ministries, Non-governmental Organizations and Communities in Kongbora Chiefdom

Note: A formal memorandum of understanding (MoU) may not be necessary in all contexts. In Sierra Leone, the processes of enabling dialogue and achieving agreement among the various partners was useful in itself, and the actual MoU was useful in achieving accountability by the formal system actors. This MoU is for purposes of illustration only. Less formal processes may be useful in other contexts.

Preamble

In August 2012, a one-day meeting of government ministries (MSWGCA, MOHS, MEYS), the FSU, child protection NGOs and representatives from Gondama, Senehun, and Levuma was held to discuss how they could work collaboratively to address the issue of teenage pregnancy, which has been identified as the most serious child protection problem in the three villages.

The meeting was organized by the action facilitator (recruited by the Columbia Group for Children in Adversity), after consultation with traditional leaders in Gondama, Senehun, and Levuma in Kongbora chiefdom and in collaboration with the MSWGCA in Moyamba. The following people/organizations attended the meeting:

- MSWGCA
- MEYS
- DHMT
- FSU
- PLAN
- DCI
- SLRC
- ActionAid
- Restless Development
- DRIM

- Pikin to Pikin
- St. George's Foundation
- Marie Stopes
- Moyamba District Council
- Four representatives from Gondama
- Four representatives from Senehun
- Four representatives from Levuma

At the end of the meeting it was agreed that all the participants, through their respective organizations, would work collaboratively to address the problem of teenage pregnancy in Gondama, Senehun, and Levuma in Kongbora chiefdom through:

- Raising community awareness on the sexual and reproductive health of adolescents and youths
- Strengthening children's life skills
- Increasing access to sexual and reproductive health services

This memorandum of understanding therefore provides the framework by which the MSWGCA, DHMT, MEYS, FSU, Moyamba District Council, and the child protection NGOs listed above will work collaboratively to address the problem of teenage pregnancy in Gondama, Senehun, and Levuma in the Kongbora chiefdom. The MoU will outline the different roles of each of the players and the mechanisms for monitoring and coordination.

Background

In 2011 the Columbia Group for Children in Adversity on behalf of the Inter Agency Action Group for Child Protection carried out an ethnographic research into community-based child protection mechanisms in the Moyamba and Bombali districts in Sierra Leone²². The purpose of the research was to learn about existing functional mechanisms of child protection at the grass-

²² The research was carried out in Kongbora and Upper Banta chiefdoms in Moyamba district, and in Magbaiamba Ndowahun and Libeisyahun chiefdoms in Bombali district.

root level. The research involves three phases; an ethnographic research, an outcome definition phase, and an intervention phase.

The ethnographic phase identified protective factors and preventive mechanisms which included: proper parental care, support from siblings and the extended family, support from natural leaders such as teachers, religious leaders and women's leaders, education, chiefs, and the work of NGOs. Four main risks or harms, among others, to the well-being of children were identified: children out of school, teenage pregnancy, maltreatment of children not living with their biological parents, and heavy work. In addition, the ethnographic phase identified functional networks and pathways of response to child abuse.

In the outcome definition phase, communities identified broad outcomes of wellbeing. The following were identified as the main outcomes of wellbeing:

- Education
- Contribution to household activities
- Obedience
- Respect
- Not involved in “mammy ‘n daddy” business (sex)
- Contribution to family livelihood
- Good character
- Good manners

The action phase focused on working with communities through respectful dialogue to develop interventions that will strengthen linkages between community-based child protection mechanisms and the formal child protection system. A community facilitator recruited through consultation with traditional leaders organized community members into small groups ensuring inclusiveness of all social categories. After a series of consultations within small subgroups, a village-wide and then inter-village consultation (of the three villages where the research is carried out) was conducted. At the end of the consultations, the three villages agreed on an action to address what was considered as the most serious child protection issue. This process happened in the Kongbora chiefdom, which was randomly selected as the intervention chiefdom. The action will be delayed in Upper Banta chiefdom (which will also act as control chiefdom for evaluation of the efficacy of the intervention). Before the development of the intervention, a baseline survey of the wellbeing of children was carried out in both Kongbora and Upper Banta chiefdoms.

Purpose of the memorandum of understanding

The purpose of this memorandum of understanding between the native administration of Kongbora chiefdom represented by their Paramount Chief and the Moyamba District Council, the MSWGCA, DHMT, MEYS, FSU, PLAN, DCI, ActionAid, SLRC, DRIM, Restless Development, Pikin to Pikin, Marie Stopes, and St. George's Foundation is to define the terms of collaboration between the different parties of this MoU in their drive to address the problem of teenage pregnancy in Gondama, Senehun, and Levuma in the Kongbora chiefdom in Moyamba District.

Parties

The parties to this memorandum of understanding shall be the:

1. Gondama, Senehun, and Levuma communities in Kongbora chiefdom in the Moyamba District represented by the Paramount Chief of Kongbora chiefdom
2. Moyamba District Council
3. MSWGCA
4. DHMT Moyamba
5. MEYS Moyamba
6. FSU Moyamba
7. PLAN
8. DCI
9. SLRC
10. ActionAid
11. DRIM
12. Pikin to Pikin
13. St. George's Foundation
14. Marie Stopes
15. Restless Development

Role of different parties in the MoU

Through this memorandum of understanding, Gondama, Senehun, and Levuma communities in Kongbora chiefdom in Moyamba District, and the MSWGCA, MOHS, MEYS and the non-governmental organizations listed above have agreed to work together to address the problem of teenage pregnancy in Gondama, Senehun, and Levuma communities. The parties have agreed to perform the following specific and joint functions:

Specific roles of the village chiefs

1. Raise awareness on MoU and its implementation in their respective villages.
2. Provide accommodation for government/NGO staff that may need to stay overnight in their villages to implement activities in the MoU.
3. Work with the action facilitator to appoint representatives from the village who will participate in radio discussions when required.
4. Ensure that their villages are represented in the district coordination meeting where implementation of the MoU will be discussed.
5. Monitor implementation of the MoU in his/her village.
6. Support the facilitating role of the action facilitator.
7. Chiefs will support pregnant teenage girls through traditional mechanisms—mediation, counseling, and legal assistance (at community level), and will report and refer cases as appropriate to MSWGCA/FSU and NGOs.

Specific roles of MSWGCA/Moyamba District Council

1. Ensure there is social-worker presence in the chiefdom to work with the three villages and support implementation of all activities.
2. Organize coordination meetings of the different parties to the MoU through district child protection committee meetings.
3. Will receive cases of teenage pregnancy and provide/refer victims to appropriate services.

Specific roles of the MOHS

1. Assign staff to facilitate awareness-raising sessions on sexual and reproductive health with adolescents, youths, and parent groups.
2. Facilitate awareness-raising with religious leaders on sexual and reproductive health of adolescents and youths.
3. Manage supply of contraceptives at village level through the PHUs.

4. Provide medical examination and treatment for teenage girls who are pregnant through the PHUs.
5. Will provide psychosocial services for pregnant teenage girls as and when appropriate or refer to other service providers.
6. Will document cases of teenage pregnancy reported to the PHUs.

Specific roles of the MEYS

1. Ensure schools in the three communities provide space and time for age-appropriate sexual and reproductive health education.

Specific role of the FSU

2. Will receive and document all cases of sexual abuse referred to them.
3. Will address all cases of sexual abuse in line with its mandate.
4. Will inform parents/chiefs about the status of cases of child abuse that they are addressing.

Specific roles of NGOs

PLAN

1. Will participate in radio panel discussions on “teenage pregnancy” as and when required.
2. Will provide staff to participate in awareness-raising discussions on sexual and reproductive health and teenage pregnancy issues.
3. Will provide IEC materials on the problems of teenage pregnancy.

Restless Development

1. Will provide peer educators to work with the intervention facilitator to conduct dialogue sessions in Gondama, Senahun and Levuma communities and schools.

DCI

1. Will participate in radio panel discussions on “teenage pregnancy” as and when required
2. Will provide staff to participate in awareness-raising discussions on sexual and reproductive health and teenage pregnancy issues.
3. Will provide IEC materials on the problems of teenage pregnancy.

SLRC

1. Will participate in radio panel discussions on “teenage pregnancy” as and when required.
2. Will provide staff to participate in awareness-raising discussions on sexual and reproductive health and teenage pregnancy issues.
3. Will provide IEC materials on the problems of teenage pregnancy.

ActionAid

1. Will participate in radio panel discussions on “teenage pregnancy” as and when required.
2. Will provide staff to participate in awareness-raising discussions on sexual and reproductive health and teenage pregnancy issues.
3. Will provide IEC materials on the problems of teenage pregnancy.

DRIM

1. Will provide air-time for radio discussions on sexual and reproductive health education.
2. Will provide staff to participate in radio discussions on sexual and reproductive health and teenage pregnancy issues, especially as they relate to the disabled who are most vulnerable to sexual abuse and at increased risk of teenage pregnancy.
3. Will provide appropriate IEC materials for use in schools and communities.

Pikin to Pikin

1. Will participate in radio panel discussions on “teenage pregnancy” as and when required.
2. Will provide staff to participate in awareness-raising discussions on sexual and reproductive health and teenage pregnancy issues.
3. Will provide IEC materials on the problems of teenage pregnancy.
4. Will train children to develop community drama to highlight the issues of teenage pregnancy and sexual and reproductive health.

St. George’s Foundation

1. Will participate in radio panel discussions on “teenage pregnancy” as and when required.
2. Will provide staff to participate in awareness-raising discussions on sexual and reproductive health and teenage pregnancy issues.
3. Will provide IEC materials on the problems of teenage pregnancy.

Marie Stopes

1. Will maintain adequate and regular supply of contraceptives in the three communities.
2. Assign staff to facilitate awareness-raising sessions on sexual and reproductive health with adolescents, youths, and parent groups.
3. Facilitate awareness-raising with religious leaders on sexual and reproductive health of adolescents and youths.

Coordination

The MSWGCA will include the implementation of this MOU as an agenda item in its monthly district meetings. During the meetings the facilitator will report on progress of the implementation of the MOU and any issues related therein. One representative per community will attend the district monthly meeting.

Monitoring of implementation of the MoU

Monitoring of the implementation of the MoU will be done at two levels:

1. At the village level, the action facilitator will develop a monthly action plan in consultation with community members, government, and non-governmental organizations that are party to the implementation of this MoU. The chief or his/her representative will monitor the implementation of the monthly action plan through weekly and monthly reports to be provided by the facilitator and through discussions with community members.
2. At the chiefdom level the chiefdom speaker will have fortnightly meetings with the intervention facilitator to be updated on the implementation of the MoU and will inform the Paramount Chief and other chiefdom authorities appropriately. The chiefdom speaker will conduct at least one visit to each village on a monthly basis to check with community members and get feedback on the implementation.

Review of the MoU

This MoU will be reviewed at the end of the intervention phase of the research on community-based child protection mechanisms. Based on the outcome of the review the parties to the MoU will make recommendations on future directions.

This MoU is agreed upon on this _____ day of the month of October 2012 between the under-mentioned parties and shall come into force on the day of signing by the said parties.

1. _____

The Executive Director, Defense for Children International

2. _____

The Country Director, PLAN International

3. _____

The Director, Pikin to Pikin

4. _____

The Director, St. George's Foundation

5. _____

The Director, Restless Development

6. _____

The Director, Disabled Rights Movement

7. _____

The Director, Pikin to Pikin

8. _____

The Country Director, Action Aid International in Sierra Leone

9. _____

The Country Director, Marie Stopes

10. _____

The Director, Sierra Leone Red Cross Society

11. _____

The Paramount Chief, Kongbora Chiefdom

12. _____

The DMO, Moyamba District

13. _____

The Deputy Director of Education, Moyamba District

14. _____

The Chairman, Moyamba District Council