

## **WORKSHOP: MEASUREMENT OF INDICATORS FOR CHILDREN IN FORMAL CARE**

*Facilitator: Mrs. Bep van Sloten*

### **I. MEASUREMENT OF INDICATORS FOR CHILDREN IN FORMAL CARE(?)**

1. DO YOU RECOGNIZE THAT DATA COLLECTION IS IMPORTANT AND WHY?

Yes, because if you don't know the data, you can't know the magnitude of the problem. Policymakers work with numbers; this determines the amount of money that can be allocated to the care and it also determines the protective environment for the child(ren).

2. WHO HAS THE MAIN RESPONSIBILITY FOR DATA COLLECTION AND WHO HAS THE SECONDARY RESPONSIBILITY?

The Ministry of Social Affairs, Secondary the Ministry of Justice. Reason: not all cases of neglected or abused children are or will be registered at the Ministry of Justice. Many kids fall through the cracks or their placements are often informal (between families).

3. WHAT ARE THE MAIN OBSTACLES FOR INFORMATION COLLECTION AND HOW CAN WE OVERCOME THESE?

The main obstacles are the lack of resources: human, financial, more specialized institutions and therapeutic care homes, formalized policies, communication. By having trained personnel collect data and also provide the financial resources to employ the personnel and resources they will need to have the data done. Train more persons to collect the data.

4. WHAT CAN INDIVIDUAL ORGANIZATIONS CONTRIBUTE TO THIS PROCESS WHEN IT IS NOT DONE ON NATIONAL LEVEL?

Individual or private organizations can gather and keep the data. They can do this by doing one page questionnaires and surveys. Also, NGO can organize themselves and collectively collect and store data. The NOM (Network of Organizations for Minor, St. Maarten) already exists and had attempted to do this in the past. The organization did not receive the cooperation it had expected from its members.

## **II. MEASUREMENT OF INDICATORS FOR CHILDREN IN FORMAL CARE(3)**

1. DO YOU RECOGNIZE THAT DATA COLLECTION IS IMPORTANT AND WHY?

YES IT IS IMPORTANT BECAUSE:

- Data collection establishes a starting point;
- Helps evaluate progress and effective implementation;
- Assists in obtaining funding and help to define or reduce policy.

2. WHO HAS THE MAIN RESPONSIBILITY FOR DATA COLLECTION AND WHO HAS THE SECONDARY RESPONSIBILITY?

- Government (statistical bureau);
- Stakeholder (residential homes, social agencies, providers).

3. WHAT ARE THE MAIN OBSTACLES FOR INFORMATION COLLECTION AND HOW CAN WE OVERCOME THESE?

- Different indicators, types of info, no uniformity;
- Lack of government policy, enforcement of report process;
- Communication;
- Lack of expertise, awareness, funding.

To overcome these obstacles:

- Networking;
- Training;
- Guidelines, standards;
- Location where to report.

4. WHAT CAN INDIVIDUAL ORGANIZATIONS CONTRIBUTE TO THIS PROCESS WHEN IT IS NOT DONE ON NATIONAL LEVEL?

- Data collection, human resources;
- Standard form, link on regional network.

### **III. MEASUREMENT OF INDICATORS FOR CHILDREN IN FORMAL CARE(4)**

1. DO YOU RECOGNIZE THAT DATA COLLECTION IS IMPORTANT AND WHY?

YES IT IS IMPORTANT BECAUSE:

- It makes your work more professional
- It gives a broader overview of the situation
- It helps develop preventive measures to reduce obstacles
- It helps to collect funds

2. WHO HAS THE MAIN RESPONSIBILITY FOR DATA COLLECTION AND WHO HAS THE SECONDARY RESPONSIBILITY?

- The main responsible are the government and the policy makers.
- The secondary responsible are the organizations, stakeholders and the community in general.

3. WHAT ARE THE MAIN OBSTACLES FOR INFORMATION COLLECTION AND HOW CAN WE OVERCOME THESE?

- Laws and policies are not in place
- There is no protection for foster parents and children
- Lack of communication and corporation amongst the different institutions
- Lack of qualified and motivated manpower

To overcome these obstacles:

- The government has to put laws and policies in place and work out a system to protect the foster family and the child.
- The different institutions have to put all their differences aside and start focus on what is in the child's best interest.
- Start training and motivating people in the area of child care.

4. WHAT CAN INDIVIDUAL ORGANIZATIONS CONTRIBUTE TO THIS PROCESS WHEN IT IS NOT DONE ON NATIONAL LEVEL?

- The individual organizations can collect their own data.
- Be innovative in actions to raise funds.
- Make the general public aware via the media and other publicity (collect signatures)

#### **IV. MEASUREMENT OF INDICATORS FOR CHILDREN IN FORMAL CARE(5)**

Brief report country situation:

*Netherlands Antilles:*

The Netherlands Antilles government has approved a Central registration system for children and youth. The data is still however not forthcoming due to the fact that stakeholders do not submit the data. The government has also approved a National Policy for Youth Care. The draft legislation governing this policy is made available to the islands for consideration taken into account the process the islands are experiencing towards the new Country status. It was also reported that there is no special institution for children in psychiatric care.

*Trinidad and Tobago:*

The professionals in the field have their own registration form. However, there is a lack of a central coordinating point. There are also NGO's who are networking. There is now a new Children Legislation which has standardized the services needed and also requires that all institutions involved in formal care are registered. There are about 49 known children homes and 50 children in Foster Care.

*Guyana:*

Guyana has used the services of UNICEF and has been able to register all homes. There is also a minimum standard law in place. There is proper count of all children in homes with a monitoring system in place. They are in the process of capturing the data for Foster Care. The Government is responsible for placement of the children which is handled also via courts. There are also sanctioned by government. There is a government social worker who is directly in charge of the placements.

#### 1. DO YOU RECOGNIZE THAT DATA COLLECTION IS IMPORTANT AND WHY?

It is important and serves as evidence for the effective establishment of Policy and Programming. It also serves as a guideline for the preparation of the costs of the care. It is also important for funding and helps determine training needed for personnel and the standardization of data.

2. WHO HAS THE MAIN RESPONSIBILITY FOR DATA COLLECTION AND WHO HAS THE SECONDARY RESPONSIBILITY?

Government has the main responsibility if they are charged with national legislation. The secondary responsibility is that of the stakeholder. Other support agencies such as UNICEF can also play an important role. Governments can also use web based systems to manage the data. The stakeholder would have access only for their info.

3. WHAT ARE THE MAIN OBSTACLES FOR INFORMATION COLLECTION AND HOW CAN WE OVERCOME THESE?

There is a lack of trained and discipline to receive the data. It has also been proven it is not culture to document. Case loads are too large causing overworked and overburdened professionals. There is need for a good computerized system which is user friendly.

4. WHAT CAN INDIVIDUAL ORGANIZATIONS CONTRIBUTE TO THIS PROCESS WHEN IT IS NOT DONE ON NATIONAL LEVEL?

Stakeholders can create networks where data is shared amongst each other and this can foster accountability.

## **V. MEASUREMENT OF INDICATORS FOR CHILDREN IN FORMAL CARE(6)**

*Police Juvenile & Vice Department Sint Maarten:*

There is a registration system at the job.

*Division Human and Family Affairs St. Lucia:*

There is a registration system, but it is done manually. There is no information being shared at the moment with other networks. The department is in the process of making it more professional. A foster care division is in the make.

*Social Formation Program Sint Eustatius:*

There is no registration system as yet.

*Department of Educational Research and Policy Innovations Sint Maarten:*

The experience is that there are no registration systems in school on Sint Maarten.

*Court of Guardianship Curacao:*

There is a registration system, but it is not enough. The department is busy putting information in the registry. A 'meldpunt/registration desk' for abused children has just been established.

*Family Guardianship Bonaire:*

There is no type of registry-system. The department is in the process of creating one.

*Child Protection Services Sint Eustatius:*

There is no standard registration system set up by Government. The department improvises and registers in Excel. Still there are cases that are not being registered. Most registration is done manually. The workload is heavy, the department is understaffed and there is not enough time to register.

1. DO YOU RECOGNIZE THAT DATA COLLECTION IS IMPORTANT AND WHY?

Yes; making policies; making prevention plans; ability to measure if we are processing, declining or stagnating; measuring the case load and better organizing the institutions; getting funds.

2. WHO HAS THE MAIN RESPONSIBILITY FOR DATA COLLECTION AND WHO HAS THE SECONDARY RESPONSIBILITY?

NOTE: there is a difference of opinion in the group. A section thinks that the main responsibility lies by the Government and the secondary responsibility by organizations. The other section thinks it is the other way around.

3. WHAT ARE THE MAIN OBSTACLES FOR INFORMATION COLLECTION AND HOW CAN WE OVERCOME THESE?

- No proper view of who the stakeholders are;
- Lack of expertise in research;
- Selfishness of organizations;
- Terms has to be standardized;
- Confidentiality.

4. WHAT CAN INDIVIDUAL ORGANIZATIONS CONTRIBUTE TO THIS PROCESS WHEN IT IS NOT DONE ON NATIONAL LEVEL?

- Individual (organizations) collection of information and recording them for collective use;
- Seeking assistance from for example UNICEF;
- Create an own network between organizations such as 'NOM' in Sint Maarten.

## **VI. MEASUREMENT OF INDICATORS FOR CHILDREN IN FORMAL CARE(8)**

### **1. DO YOU RECOGNIZE THAT DATA COLLECTION IS IMPORTANT AND WHY?**

Data collection is important to obtain the required care for the children and to prove what is needed and also to specify which care is needed. There are different ways of data collection per organization and measurements. There is no standardization of registrations. For example: in Aruba the organizations do it in their own individual way, however the 'AMK' (Advies en meldpunt kindermishandeling / Advise and registration point for child abuse) came with a form of registration for all kinds of child abuse. In Curacao the Court of Guardianship has a central system to collect data; however there is also another non-governmental organization that collects data. In Sint Maarten also the Court of Guardianship that is the organization responsible for investigation recollects data.

### **2. WHO HAS THE MAIN RESPONSIBILITY FOR DATA COLLECTION AND WHO HAS THE SECONDARY RESPONSIBILITY?**

Primary the governmental organization responsible by law is the one responsible for data collection. Secondary all organizations that are directly involved with care of children. UNICEF is a worldwide organization that collects data / information for a map in a region, for example, the Caribbean. They also collaborate with Caricom in order to address the concerns in the region. UNICEF global can make a worldwide analysis to communicate with third committee of general assembly of the united nations.

### **3. WHAT ARE THE MAIN OBSTACLES FOR INFORMATION COLLECTION AND HOW CAN WE OVERCOME THESE?**

The main obstacles for information collection is the standardization of the terms that are used for defining what is, for example child abuse or neglect, lack of monitoring, expertise and research.

### **4. WHAT CAN INDIVIDUAL ORGANIZATIONS CONTRIBUTE TO THIS PROCESS WHEN IT IS NOT DONE ON NATIONAL LEVEL?**

Individual organizations have to work together in collecting information that is useful and also work with protocols and policies. Other obstacles are also the legislation policy towards privacy of personal information, lack of manpower and limited resources.