



The DRC: Using the CPMS to ensure high quality child protection programming

“I used to get a lot of trouble at school, and I was mixed up with a bad crowd. That’s what led me to join an armed group. Ever since my release, when the local NGO started supporting me, I’ve been on the straight and narrow. I got good marks and eventually passed my high school diploma with merit. Now I’m a teacher myself. I teach 4th grade at Matenga Primary School and I earn more than 100.000fc (\$100 USD). I’ve already built a brick oven, and my plan is to build a house for my parents. I can say for sure that if I hadn’t been supported, I’d be in the street like so many other kids round here – out of work and education and up to all kinds of mischief.” EW, Suima.

“They gave me five sacks of rice and all the kit to set myself up: a basin, scales, paperwork... Today, I’ve built up a capital of 10 sacks. I pay for my little brother’s schooling, I’ve got my own field to farm and I just earned 60.000fc (\$60 USD) by selling the maize I grew. I still have manioc and I expect them to bring in double. I’ve always supported my family (...) sometimes I buy them food. I manage to pay my own way in terms of clothing, soap, toiletries and shoes (...) I don’t need to ask my parents for handouts or resort to crime.” MM, Suima.

War Child Holland co-leads the Child Protection Working Group in South Kivu, Democratic Republic of Congo, together with UNICEF.

Marie-Louise Ruhamy Masawa, Project Supervisor, explains some of the child protection issues in the DRC context and how the CPMS have improved programming:

“We’ve been using the CPMS since they became available in French in 2013. The first thing you should understand is the size of South Kivu province and the scale of the child protection issues we face.”

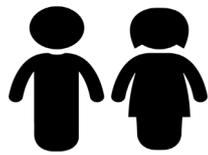
South Kivu is a large province – over 65,000 km², bordering Rwanda, Tanzania and Burundi. It has a population of nearly 6 million.

Armed conflict, violence and population movement continue to dominate the humanitarian context across the DRC. In 2016, more than 1.5 million people were displaced. Permanent insecurity in some areas, including the destruction and looting of schools and hospitals has impacted children’s ability to access basic goods and services. Child protection is a major concern, with high numbers of children still active in armed groups (at least 3,240 confirmed, UNICEF), and cases of sexual and gender-based violence are reported on a daily basis (UNICEF).





Democratic Republic of Congo



**47% population
aged 0-14 years
(34+ million
children)**



**1.5 million people
displaced**



**3,240+ children
currently active in
armed groups**

Using the CPMS to improve coordina- tion

“The South Kivu Child Protection Working Group is very active – we have a lot to do! Members are primarily small, local NGOs. We meet once a month. Coordination is challenging, both between child protection groups and other humanitarian actors. The CPMS are really helping us to improve our work. Before 2013, I admit that coordination was poor. The best we managed was to identify others working on child protection in the same zone, but we really didn’t communicate or collaborate well at all. Now, thanks to the CPMS, we undertake a systematic mapping of providers and services available in each community. This saves time and avoids duplication of efforts. For example, unaccompanied children fostered by WarChild-supported families, are automatically referred to the ICRC. Children who attend Child Friendly Spaces are assessed and those in need of psychosocial support are referred to a local NGO responsible for providing those services.

Transcultural Psychosocial Organization (TPO) is an NGO providing a range of support services to women and children in South Kivu, DRC. They are members of the South Kivu Child Protection Working Group and work closely with WarChild Holland and UNICEF.

Many children in our communities are, or have been, associated with armed forces or armed groups

“We use the CPMS on a daily basis to structure our programming”, says Jean, Project Manager at TPO DRC. “There are many children in our communities who are, or have been, associated with armed forces or armed groups. We advocate for the release for associated children, and we provide a range of support services for formerly associated children: psychosocial support, economic recovery and education. Over the past two years, our programmes have supported 1109 children, 638 of whom were formerly associated. All this takes place in close collaboration with local communities, and villagers are much more aware of the dangers of child recruitment.”

“Case management has been vastly improved by using the CPMS”, says Marie-Louise. “Before 2013, organizations belonging to the South Kivu Child Protection Working Group didn’t have a shared system, if they had any system at all! In practice, this meant that we ended up searching for the details of a service-user only a few months after an intervention and they no longer existed in the system.



CPMS improve case management

Now, following the CPMS, all child protection actors in the province use the same registration forms and collect the same information about each child they see.”

“Since our CPMS training, we’ve set up a proper case management system at TPO,” adds Jean. “Now child protection actors systematically identify and document children of concern, referring them to the correct services. This enabled us to support an unaccompanied girl who was spotted selling drinks by the side of the road. A group of travelling musicians were forcing her to beg for them. After identification, we referred the girl to a shelter, where she was given counselling and supported by a social worker responsible for economic recovery programmes.

Shortly afterwards, she was reunited with her family. She chose to study an apprenticeship in dressmaking and TPO supported her studies for 9 months. She was provided with all the equipment -- a sewing machine and materials, as well as a guarantee for the rent on her workshop and room. As it is now, this girl is in high demand! She actually has too much work! Everyone in our community wants her to make their clothes. She used some of the money she earned from her dress making business to buy a few hens and now she has around 15. She has also taken on a mentoring role for other vulnerable children in the community. She’s really a role model.”

Using the CPMS to provide structure and ensure predictable, high quality response

“As for community-based mechanisms, they are crucial to our work”, confirms Marie-Louise. It simply wouldn’t be possible to meet the needs of the children in our communities without engaging local actors. Again, the CPMS have enabled us to structure our efforts – to reinvigorate community actors with training and support.

Child Friendly Spaces have been a feature of our programming in South Kivu since long before the CPMS. But before we used the CPMS, they functioned as a standalone activity. We’ve used Standard 17 to transform child friendly spaces and now they address a wider range of protection issues -- awareness raising and interventions in case of physical or sexual abuse, for example, to link children in need of support with community-based mechanisms, and also to link child protection actors with education – considering where and how abuse takes place, and who must respond.

The CPMS have been an important tool for us as we work to mainstream child protection in other areas of humanitarian work. In refugee camps, I see a real need to include child protection considerations in WASH, education, psychosocial support and even economic recovery programmes.

Child protection workers in the DRC continue to face great challenges. The CPMS won’t fix all our problems, but they do give us a clear map for quality programming – one that can be contextualized for our specific situation.

The CPMS Working Group would like to thank War Child Holland and the Transcultural Psychosocial Organization for their support in developing this case study.