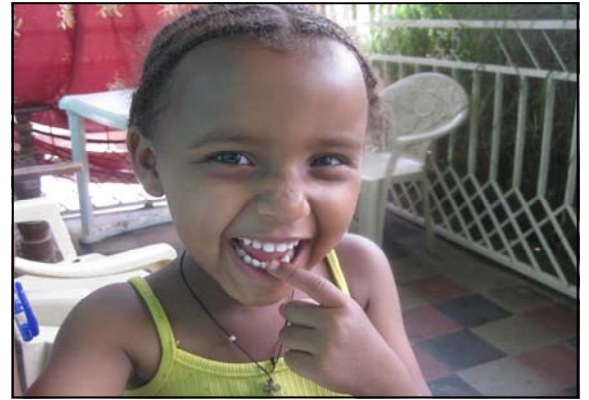**Save the Children Sweden**

Regional Office

for Eastern and Central Africa

A Study on Child Protection
Mechanisms in Ethiopia

Child and Family Support Services
(CAFSS)

May 2010

Executive Summary

1. One of the recommendations of the UN Study on Violence against Children was for all states to develop a multi-faceted and systematic framework to respond to violence against children which is integrated into their national planning processes. In an effort towards achieving this recommendation and recognizing the central role of communities, Save the Children Sweden's regional office for Eastern and Central Africa identified the need to learn more about existing child protection structures and mechanisms within the region. Accordingly, Save the Children has commissioned the undertaking of this study, which has the objective of assessing strengths and gaps in existing child protection systems at community level in selected areas of Ethiopia based on the views of children.

2. Two sites, namely, Addis Ababa city and Woldiya town were selected for the study in Ethiopia. In line with the objectives of the study, the main sources of information were various groups of children. Data was collected in the two sites from a total of 65 children participating in child-friendly workshop methods. The study also involved secondary data collection to obtain background information on national child protection legislative framework, demographic and other information on the sampled communities and current projects of SCS.

3. More than 5.5 million children are categorized as orphans or vulnerable children (OVC) in Ethiopia. These children are vulnerable to a range of forms of abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence. Ethiopia has ratified the major human rights instruments including the UNCRC and the ACRWC, incorporated child rights into the national Constitution, and taken measures to harmonize domestic legislation. However, the GoE has yet to ratify the two optional protocols to the UNCRC, the Palermo Protocol and the Hague Convention on inter-country adoption.
   Findings of the Study

4. Extent and Perception of Child Protection Issues
   a. The children who participated in the study expressed that almost all the major types of violence against children are highly prevalent and practiced both in the urban and rural communities. The common and widespread child protection risks identified by the participating children include: physical punishment, humiliating and degrading treatment, sexual harassment and rape, child labor exploitation, trafficking, female genital mutilation (FGM), early marriage, abduction and robbery. While most of these protection risks are common both in urban and rural communities, the prevalence and magnitude of some of the risks differ between urban and rural communities.

   b. Vulnerability to physical violence and emotional abuse was identified as shared among all girls and boys by respondents across sites and age groups. Child labor exploitation, which has been associated with trafficking by the respondents, affects children brought to urban centers by relatives or doing so on their own. Girls, especially older girls above the age of 13, were

identified as most frequent victims of sexual harassment, rape and sexual exploitation (including abduction and early marriage).

c. Children both in rural and urban areas expressed that most children do not usually tell or report when they face abuse and exploitation. Lack of information on the procedures to report incidents of abuse and exploitation to the authorities and other challenges in accessing the police, Kebele, prosecutor, health services are identified as the major reasons for not reporting. Fear of perpetrators, who may be family members or relatives, as well as social taboos were also identified as barriers to reporting cases of sexual abuse. In the few instances where victim children report incidents of abuse and exploitation, it is to their friends and peers. However, the role of community members in resolving family disputes as well as the importance of children's clubs as channels for information and reporting was mentioned by the respondents.

6. Extent and Perception of Children's Participation

a. The majority of respondents are aware of the existence of school-based, child led groups. Yet, very few out of school child led groups have been identified by the respondents. The reported levels of participation in these structures are similarly skewed towards the school attending children. Barriers to participation in child led groups identified by the respondents include absence of child led groups in their localities, lack of adequate information on child led groups, inability to spend extra time required for participation and factors relating to disability. All children are, however, aware of the benefits of participation in child led groups.

b. Most of the children reported having participated in events and consultations related to the rights of the child and other events. The levels of participation in research on relevant issues were significantly lower. Where children did participate, their roles have mainly been reported with reference to presentation of messages to the public. These have generally taken place through the support of local CSOs/NGOs during the organization of events.

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List of Abbreviations

ACRWC	The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child
ANPPCAN	African Network for the Prevention of and Protection against Child Abuse and Neglect
ANRS	Amhara National Regional State
BOLSA	Bureau of Labor and Social Affairs
CAFSS	Child and Family Support Services
CBCC	Community Based Child Care
CBO	Community Based Organization
CPU	Child Protection Unit
CBCPU	Community Based Child Protection Unit
CSO	Civil Society Organizations
FDRE	Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
HTP	Harmful Traditional Practices
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
IOM	International Office of Migration
MoLSA	Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
MoWA	Ministry of Women Affairs
MOUD	Ministry of Works and Urban Development
NGO	Non-Governmental Organizations
OPRIFS	Organization for Prevention, Protection, Rehabilitation and Integration of Female Street Children
OVC	Orphan and Vulnerable Children
SCS	Save the Children Sweden
UNCRC/CRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
WVE	World Vision Ethiopia

1- Introduction and Methodology

Child protection is one of the most basic concepts in the international child rights framework. Accordingly, recognition of the special needs of the child relating to safeguards, care and protection has been explicitly stated in the preambles and elaborated in the substantive provisions of the UNCRC and ACRWC.[1] Despite these legal recognitions, the findings of the UN Study on violence against children indicate that violence "occurs in every country in the world in a variety of forms and settings and is often deeply rooted in cultural, economic, and social practices"[2]. One of the recommendations of the UN Study is that all states should integrate into their national planning processes, the development of a multi-faceted and systematic framework to respond to violence against children.

In an effort towards achieving this recommendation and recognizing the central role of communities, Save the Children Sweden's regional office for Eastern and Central Africa identified the need to learn more about existing child protection structures and mechanisms within the region. Accordingly, Save the Children planned and commissioned the undertaking of this study, which has the objective of assessing strengths and gaps in existing child protection systems at community level in selected areas of Ethiopia based on the views of children.

1.1. Study Sites

The criteria used for site selection are the need to include: urban and rural sites; areas where SCS works and where SCS has limited presence; sites with and without children's organizations; sites with strategic significance for the study; and sites with some form of contact to access and work with children. Based on these criteria, two sites, namely, Addis Ababa city and Woldyia town were selected for the study in Ethiopia. Addis Ababa, the capital city of Ethiopia, was chosen to represent urban context where SCS is engaged in long term interventions, while Woldyia town in the Amhara regional state was selected to represent rural context where SCS has limited interventions.

Addis Ababa

Addis Ababa is the largest and most populous city in Ethiopia being more than 14 times bigger than that of the second larger city Dire-Dawa (MWUD, 2006)[3]. It contains about 26% of the total urban population. A major challenge in the city is urban poverty and slum proliferation.

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[1] Preamble to the UNCRC referring to the preceding Declaration of the Rights of the Child states "*the child, by reason of his physical and mental immaturity, needs special safeguards and care, including appropriate legal protection, before as well as after birth*" (The comparable paragraph is also included in the preamble to the ACRWC)

[2] World Report on Violence against Children, the United Nations Secretary-General's Study on Violence Against Children, *October 2006, p.6*

[3] Yewoineshet M. Haregewoin, Integrated Housing Development Programs for Urban Poverty Alleviation and Sustainable Urbanization, ENHR International Conference on Sustainable Urban Areas, 2007

Table 1: Age distribution of the city population adapted to focus on children[4].

Age Group	Total	Male	Female
under 1	36,443	18,506	17,937
1 -4	159,489	81,155	78,334
5 – 9	209,532	101,651	107,881
10 – 14	250,769	109,266	141,503
15 – 18	316,564	123,891	192,673
Total Children	*972,797*	*434,469*	*538,328*
Total Population	*2,738,248*	*1,304,518*	*1,433,730*

Since 2003, the Addis Ababa City Administration is structured into ten sub-cities and 100 Kebeles, the lowest level of administration.

Three sub-cities, namely Arada, Addis Ketema and Yeka, have been selected for the current study. Arada is the oldest of all sub cities located in the central part of the capital and has ten administrational Kebeles and the majority of the inhabitants in the sub city live under the poverty line. Its population, which is around 212,000, is highly dense creating overburden on the limited facilities found in the area. Addis Ketema with a population of about 255,092, on the other hand, incorporates the business district including the largest open market in Africa (Merkato) as well as the main bus terminal. The sub-city is mostly occupied by poor households including small traders and daily laborers alongside large shops and other business institutions. Finally, Yeka Sub-City with a total population of 346,484 covers both urban and rural areas noted for low income households.

Woldyia Town/Woreda

North Wollo Administrative Zone is one of the 11 administrative zones in the Amhara National Regional State (ANRS) having coverage of 12,503.31 square km. The Zone is divided into 9 woredas including the capital Woldyia town, which is located 521 kms North East of Addis Ababa. The total population of Woldyia is 46,126 with 23,136 female and 22,990 male residents. The town has an estimated 2,887 petty traders, most of whom are women.[5] Woldyia is both a town and Woreda functioning as the administrative and business center of North Wollo Zone in the ANRS. In Woldyia town, the study covered two Kebeles, namely, Yeju Genet Kebele and Deferge, Kibe, Kalo Kebele.

Yeju Genet Kebele is an administrative and trading locality hosting a number of administrative offices as well as small-scale trading establishments. Most of the residents of the Kebele are civil servants and small traders rather than farmers as is common in other regional/zonal towns. Many women in the Kebele are housewives while a few are engaged in petty trading. Men provide the source of support for many households.

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[4] Population and Census Commission, Population and Housing Census Results: Summary and Statistical Report of the 2007, Addis Ababa, December 2008

[5] Yilma Melkamu, Identifying At Risk Populations and HIV/AIDS Referral Services: Baseline Assessment for Mobile Counseling and Testing Program in the Amhara Region of Ethiopia, Bethesda, MD: Private Sector Program (PSP)-Ethiopia project, Abt Associates Inc. November 2007

The major social problems noted during the data collection are overcrowded housing, HIV/AIDS related health and other problems, lack of opportunities for adult education, and low levels of utilization of the formal justice system. HIV/AIDS is reportedly widespread and accounts for a large number of deaths in the Kebele. There are almost no possibilities for adult education, where adults could get education to increase their knowledge. Though there is a social court in the Kebele, the majority of disputes are solved through arbitration by elders rather than following the formal legal systems.

The total population of Yeju Genet Kebele is 8,720 with children under 15 constituting around 28% of the population. Migration of children is very common in this Kebele with some children entering the Kebele and others leaving it. A major facility with regard to children's protection in the Kebele appears to be the existence of a bus terminal, which attracts children who have run away from their families either in search of jobs within the town or opportunities to go to other places in the country. Until recently, a new arrival could easily be spotted. However, due to the arrival of a lot of persons, this is not the case anymore.

Currently, the traditional family support system is being eroded and weakened. Children who lost their parents are faced with a lot of problems from relatives who are interested to get guardianship due to the property of the family. Children whose families do not own property are usually left without the care of extended family members, as practiced traditionally.

The Kebele social court, which is run by community volunteers, has benefited from short-term training and has been playing key roles with regard to ensuring that the properties of children who are orphaned are protected. The social court is mandated to refer needy children to the orphanage run by the Ethiopian Orthodx Church and located in an adjoining Kebele.

In Yeju Genet Kebele, there is a child friendly court, which deals with children who are victims of abuse and children who are in conflict with the law. There is also a Child Protection Unit (CPU) initiated by NGOs and taken up by the police as part of its structure. The functioning of the CPU has been evaluated and it has been identified as the best across the region.

Deferge Kebele is a rural locality with low income families. Agriculture and petty trade are the main occupations of the population. There is a weekly open market, which serves the surrounding area. Unlike in Yeju Genet, there are few government offices and housing is not a problem. Children from that Kebele are seasonally asked to stay away from school and perform different tasks in the farms of their families.

In both Kebeles and the surrounding communities, disputes are settled by engaging elders rather than going to formal structures such as the police or courts. An exception to this practice appears to be the situation where boys are sexually abused by men or other boys. Although the community largely denies the existence of sexual abuse of boys, however, if the victim is willing to talk about the abuse, such a problem is not likely to be taken up for arbitration by elders and would end up with the formal system of protection, and dealt with swiftly and harshly.

1.2.   Data Sources and Collection Methods

The objective of the study is to assess strengths and gaps in existing child protection systems at community level based on the views of children. As such, the main sources of information were various groups of children who live in two SCS operational areas.

Table 2: Profile of Child Respondents in Addis Ababa and Woldiya

Addis Ababa

Age	Female	Male	Total
>12	7	12	19
<12	9	7	16
	16	*19*	*35*

Woldiya

Age	Female	Male	Total
>12	8	7	15
<12	7	8	15
	15	*15*	*30*

Data was collected through workshops organized in a child-friendly manner and involving a number of specific data collection methods. The children were briefed during the first day about the aims of the workshop and were asked their willingness to participate in the process.

The children's workshops were conducted using different methods designed to maintain the interest and attention of the children during the data collection. The methods included interviews, community mapping, story/poem writing, drawing, questionnaire, drama, story telling, constructing models, debates, group and plenary discussions, worksheets, and visual methods.

In addition, the study also involved a limited secondary data collection to obtain background information on national child protection legislative framework, demographic and other information on the sampled communities and current projects of SCS.

1.3. Limitations of the Study

A limitation faced in the study was the difficulty to get representation of all groups of children in the data collection process in Addis Ababa. For instance, groups of children with disabilities and street children were not included. Children working as domestic workers were not represented in any of the groups.

2. Background Information

2.1. General Information

5.5 million children are categorized as orphans or vulnerable children (OVC), constituting around 6% of the total population of the country or almost 12% of Ethiopia's total child population[6]. Over 83% of these OVC are living in rural settings. The vulnerability of Ethiopian children to abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence has been documented through studies conducted by various

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[6] SCUK, Summary of Legal and Policy Frameworks governing orphans and vulnerable children in Ethiopia, 2009

actors.[7] While taking note of the absence of comprehensive data on the rates of incidence across forms of abuse, especially those associated with HTPs, the second five year report submitted to the UNCRC Committee by the GoE concedes that child abuse and neglect is widespread in the country.[8] The results of existing studies indicate the prevalence of all forms of sexual violence, especially rape, sexual harassment, abduction, child prostitution, trafficking in children for sexual purposes and early marriage, in Ethiopia.[9] This is confirmed by official crime statistics released by federal and state police authorities showing that sexual outrage (child sexual abuse) and rape are the most prevalent offences as well as being on the increase.[10] In 2004/2005 and 2005/2006, 64% and 55% respectively, of the total victims of sexual abuse in Addis Ababa were children between the ages of 11 and 18 years, followed by the 6-10 years age category.[11] Studies also indicate that children have been subject to humiliating physical punishment and psychological abuse at home, in school and in their communities.[12] There are also reports showing increasing incidences of trafficking in children for sexual purposes, child prostitution and forced prostitution in and outside of the country.[13]

Ethiopia ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1992 through Proclamation 10/1992. The Ethiopian government also ratified the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child on the 4th of July 2000 by virtue of Proclamation 283/2000. However, Ethiopia is not yet a party or signatory to other child rights instruments addressing children's vulnerability and protection from abuse, exploitation and neglect, including when they are exposed to live without family care and support. The list of non-ratified instruments includes:

- The two Optional Protocols to CRC on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Pornography, and on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict. Adopted in May 2000 and came into effect in February 2002.

- The UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children supplementing the United Nations Convention against Trans-national Organized Crime (Palermo Protocol). Adopted in 2000 and came into effect in 2003

- The Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Co-operation in respect of Inter-country Adoption. Adopted in May 1993

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[7] The results of one such study are found in: The African Child Policy Forum & Save the Children Sweden , Violence Against Children in Ethiopia, 2006

[8] The Second Five Year Country Report on the Implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, April 2005 , p.33

[9] Government of Ethiopia, Report on Progress in Implementing the World Fit for Children Plan of Action in Ethiopia, Addis Ababa, June 2007, p. 58

[10] Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, National Action Plan on Sexual Abuse and Exploitation of Children (2006 - 2010), December 2005, pp. 9 - 10

[11] JJPO and Save the Children Sweden: Sexual and Physical Abuse and Violence against Children and Youth in Addis Ababa. Survey Report(unpublished)

[12] The African Child Policy Forum & Save the Children Sweden , Violence Against Children in Ethiopia, 2006

[13] See: MoLSA, National Action Plan on Sexual Abuse and Exploitation of Children (2006 - 2010), December 2005; IOM, Assessment of the Magnitude of Trafficking in Women and Children Within and Outside Ethiopia, 2006; and WVE, Trafficking in Children from Chenca, 2006

The 1995 Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia has an in-built mechanism of incorporating international laws, as it has provisions which makes all international agreements ratified by Ethiopia part of the law of the land as well as making international human rights instruments, including the UNCRC and ACRWC, standards for the interpretation of the Constitution in matters related to fundamental human rights. Furthermore, Chapter III of the Constitution enumerating fundamental rights and freedoms provides specifically for the rights of children under article 36. This provision explicitly recognizes several rights of the child namely the rights of the child to life, name and nationality, to know and be cared for by parents or legal guardians, to be protected from labor exploitation and not to be forced to undertake work that may harm his or her education, health and well-being, to be free from harsh or inhuman punishment that may be inflicted on his/her body in schools or child care institutions. Article 36(2) of the Constitution goes beyond recognition of specific child rights and incorporates the principle of the best interest of the child.

Ethiopia has taken some major steps to harmonize its domestic laws with the provisions of the CRC. As discussed above, these efforts started with the federal constitution adopted in 1995, which contains provisions for the domestication of international human rights agreements including the CRC and specifically incorporates some of the rights recognized in the Convention. Measures have also been made to harmonize some specific laws with the standards of international laws including CRC. As part of a comprehensive law reform program, the Ethiopian government has revised a number of key legislations relevant to the realization of child rights. These include the Revised Family Code (2000), the Criminal Code (2005), and the Labor Code (2003). The still on-going development of a criminal justice policy and review of the Criminal Procedure Code are also expected to integrate child protection issues as a core concern.

Ethiopia has yet to have a single comprehensive policy dealing with the rights of children. However, child rights concerns are addressed in the various policy documents on related matters. One among these instruments is the Developmental and Social Welfare Policy (1996) which, among other objectives, aims at implementing international standards relating to the welfare of children. The cultural policy of Ethiopia also addresses the issue of eradicating harmful traditional practices affecting children. Similarly, the National Youth Policy (2004) and the National Education Policy (1994) deal with issues of direct relevance to children's rights. In addition to these policy documents, a set of national action plans relevant to the promotion and protection of rights of children are in existence. These include the National Program of Action for Children and Women (1996 - 2000), the National Plan of Action on Orphans and Vulnerable Children (2004 – 2006), the National Plan of Action for Children (2003 – 2010) and the National Action Plan on Sexual Abuse and Exploitation of Children (2006 - 2010). Other issues on which the development of national action plans is reportedly underway include child labor and Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Systems. Two guidelines developed and published by MoWA recently on alternative care for children deprived of family environment and quality standards for OVC care and support, are also important for the realization of the rights of children to be protected from abuse, neglect exploitation, and violence.

2.2. Current NGO Legislation

In February 2009, the House of Peoples' Representatives adopted Ethiopia's first comprehensive law governing the registration and regulation of non-government organizations. The Proclamation to Provide for the Registration and Regulation of Charities and Societies (CSP) has incorporated a

number of provisions with significant implications for the operation of child rights actors and the adoption of a child rights-based approach in the work of NGOs in Ethiopia. The new law, in defining the nature of 'Charities and Societies' under Article 2, distinguishes between three categories of Charities and Societies: Ethiopian Charities or Societies, Ethiopian Resident Charities or Societies, and Foreign Charities, based on where the organization was established, its source of income, composition of membership, and membership residential status. Ethiopian Charities or Societies are Charities or Societies formed under the laws of Ethiopia, whose members are all Ethiopians, generate income from Ethiopia and are wholly controlled by Ethiopians. These organizations may not receive more than 10% of their resources from foreign sources. Ethiopian Resident Charities or Societies, on the other hand, are Ethiopian charities or societies that receive more than 10% of their resources from foreign sources. Finally, Foreign Charities are Charities formed under the laws of foreign countries, or whose membership or management includes foreigners, or receiving their funds from foreign sources.

Under Article 14 (j-n) of the Proclamation, only Ethiopian Charities and Societies may engage in activities geared towards the advancement of human and democratic rights and the promotion of the rights of disabled and children's rights, among other advocacy and human rights related areas. In addition, article 68 of the Proclamation, which stipulates mandatory registration for all Charities and Societies, requires foreign organizations to obtain a letter of recommendation from the Ethiopian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The regulatory body, the Ethiopian Charities and Societies Agency, is also given extensive discretionary mandates including the power to deny or cancel registration[14].

The implications of the current law for the establishment and operations of child rights organizations are manifold. At the outset, almost all of the child rights actors operating in Ethiopia will find it hard to qualify for registration and operate as 'Ethiopian Charities and Societies' due to reasons related to foreign funding and nationality. To further complicate matters, there are several restrictions relating to domestic funding including limits on the solicitation of money before registration, need for permission from the Agency to conduct public collections, and limits on engagement in income generating activities. These organizations will thus be forced to narrow down their operations in line with the limited availability of local funding, taking focus away from child rights mandates to continue using foreign funding, or even close in the case of foreign organizations having failed to secure the permissions of the Agency. More specific to child rights-based organizations, they could maintain their profile only where they have opted to and been accepted by the Agency as Ethiopian and by limiting their funding to local sources. In light of the current trends in local funding and the role of international and foreign child rights actors in introducing and promoting rights-based approaches, this amounts to a reversal of achievements in the adoption of child rights programming and creation of rights-based organizations.

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[14] For instance, Article 69 allows the Agency to deny registration if, inter alia, (1) the proposed charity or society is "likely to be used for unlawful purposes or for purposes prejudicial to public peace, welfare or good order in Ethiopia"; or (2) the name of the charity or society is in the opinion of the Agency contrary to public morality or illegal. Similarly, Section 7 (Articles 84 – 94) gives the Agency virtually unlimited authority to exercise control over the operations of a charity or society in the absence of any procedural protections for the charity or society or its personnel.

2.3. *Current SCS projects implemented in the two research areas by implemented by ANPPCAN Ethiopia and FSCE*[15]

Project 1 - Promoting Positive Disciplining and Abolishment of PHP is being implemented by the African Network for Prevention and Protection against Child Abuse and Child Neglect (ANPPCAN). ANPPCAN is an indigenous NGO established in 1989 with its vision stated as "to see a society in which children fully enjoy their rights and live free of maltreatment." and its mission being "to strive towards the prevention of child maltreatment and protection of children from abuse, neglect and exploitation through advocacy, dissemination of information on child rights, enhancing public awareness, encouraging child participation and providing psycho-social and related services to child victims and provision of support to children in especially difficult circumstances."

The goal of the project is the prohibition and elimination of Physical and Humiliating Punishments (PHP) of children in Ethiopia by 2012.

The main activities of the ANPPCAN Project may be summarized as follows:

Awareness raising and direct support to children- Raise awareness of children and support them to report cases of Physical and Humiliating Punishments to police stations, ANPPCAN-Ethiopia child helpline, schools and local administrators in Addis Ababa and Amhara Regional State. This will also include providing information to children about their role in reporting child abuses

Public awareness and Strengthening organizations of children to fight against PHP: using the Day of the African Child and the Day of Action against Child Violence to create public awareness on child protection issues. Establishment/strengthening of children's parliaments and in collaboration with government structures and child protection clubs work on raising awareness of children and parents to be involved on issues focusing on PHP. Raising awareness of the public, law enforcement bodies, school communities, community workers, Idir members and local association members, women and youth associations on child protection and banning of PHP in schools, child care institutions and in homes will be done through training and the mass media.

Compile and organize previous studies conducted on laws and policy gaps pertaining to PHP in Ethiopia and creation of a CP system based on studies and experience.

Disseminating the UN study on violence against children in collaboration with the National Committee on Abuse and Exploitation

Capacity building trainings: Support SCS partner organizations, religious leaders, Idirs and traditional association leaders to organize public discussion forums on child protection and PHP. Establish and support task forces to monitor and follow up reporting of child abuse and measures taken.

Time frame, budget and target groups: The ANPPCAN project shall be implemented with a total budget of Birr 2,174,111 over a period of four years. The project run by ANNPPCAN addresses children in urban centres and rural communities. It also addresses the public, adults organized in different social groups such as Idirs and women and youth associations and professionals such as teachers and persons working in different law enforcing agencies.

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[15] Project proposal submitted to SCS

Project 2 – Integrated child protection system in Arada, Kirkos and Nifas Silk Lafto sub cities of Addis Ababa and in Diredwa. The project is being implemented by Forum for Sustainable Child Empowerment (FSCE). FSCE is an indigenous child focused NGO established in 1989 with a vision to see the rights of Ethiopian children respected by the society. Its mission is to work for the respect of children's rights namely street children, sexually abused and exploited children, children who are trafficked for various purposes and children who are in conflict with the law. FSCE has given priority to the improvement of child protection systems in police stations, courts and communities. The goal of the current project is –the establishment of a National Child Protection Systems in Ethiopia by 2012.

The main activities of FSCE's projects are organized around participation of children, research and documentation, capacity building and promotion of networking among different stakeholders. The activities are summarized as follows:

> **Participation of children and the target community**: establishment of children's centers at the head office and project offices as well as a website in order to enhance the participation of children in the planning and implementation of the child protection project.

> Establishment and strengthening of child led groups and providing technical support to the existing child parliaments.

> **Direct Support**: Replicating and strengthening CPU, CBCPU, CBCC, child help line telephone and child friendly court facilities and provide appropriate child protection services such as counseling and other psychosocial support to abused and other disadvantaged children in the project operation areas.

> **Establishment and strengthening of child protection community committees**, and working in collaboration with police, civil and social affair bureaus, courts, etc in project planning, review and implementation processes.

> **Capacity building** of different community based child protection structures and child led initiatives. Enhancing the capacity of duty bearers such as BOLSA, Police/CPU/, women affairs bureaus/departments, Kebele administration, community courts, child friendly courts etc in order to provide child protection services in effective and efficient way.

> **Partnership, Linkage and Networking:** establishment of strong partnership and linkage among the different actors by providing technical support and facilitate the establishment of formal and strong network and referral system among the key actors.

> **Research and documentation**: conducting research on existing gaps in services of disadvantaged children and disseminating the findings to relevant stakeholders to influence them on the protection of disadvantage children.

> **Time frame, budget and target groups** : the duration of the project is four years (2009-2012) addressing children in the targeted Kebeles in Addis Ababa and in Dire Dawa. The total budget for

the project is ETB 15,057,955. (Addis Ababa project birr 6,763,662 and Dire Dawa project is birr 8,294,293).

3. Results and Analysis of Information Gathered

3.1. *Extent & perception of child protection issues*

A variety of individual and group exercises were used in the workshop with participating children to obtain their views on the types of risks faced by children in their communities, the group of children most vulnerable to the identified risks, the main perpetrators in relation to each of the identified risks, and the support available to children who experienced the protection risks and the effectiveness of the support mechanisms. The exercises included the following:

- community mapping in which children identified, through drawings, places in their community where they usually face protection risks

- individual story/poem writing or drawing through which children expressed child protection issues in their communities.

- individual exercises where each child is asked to identify the protection issues that she/he has faced and discuss this with the data collectors, if the child is willing to do so.

- small group discussions where children discussed child protection issues in their communities including the available support in small groups and reported their findings to the plenary.

Children engaged in small group discussion   Presentation of a group discussion

3.1.1. Child Protection Risks

According to the views of the children in the study, almost all the major types of violence against children are highly prevalent and practiced both in the urban and rural communities. The common and widespread child protection risks identified by the participating children include: physical punishment, humiliating and degrading treatment, sexual harassment and rape, child labor exploitation, trafficking, female genital mutilation (FGM), early marriage, abduction and robbery. While most of these protection risks are common both in urban and rural communities, the prevalence and magnitude of some of the risks differs between urban and rural communities.

Table 3 - Child protection risks identified by children as prevalent in their communities

Community and group of children	Urban, children above 12	Urban, children below 12	Rural, children above 12	Rural, children below 12
Common types protection issues faced	Physical violence Insult and name calling Child labour exploitation Sexual harassement Rape Sexual exploitation Trafficking	Physical punishment FGM Rape Child labor exploitation	Sexual abuse Early marriage Discrimination Physical punishment Exposure to bad habits and behavior Verbal harassments, humiliating remarks Putting pressure on children to drop out of school Forced to live insecure (living on street, robbery..) parents' resistance to change	Hard work in the house FGM Physical punishment Other harmful practices Discrimination Migration of children Rape, abduction and early marriage

Based on the information in the above table, physical violence/punishment and rape/sexual abuse are identified as prevalent by children across all age groups and communities, both rural and urban. Child protection risks emanating from traditional practices such as early marriage and abduction are viewed as risks mainly by children living in rural communities.

The issues of sexual/verbal harassment and psychological abuse were raised mainly by children above 12 in both urban and rural sites. However, rape was mentioned by some of the younger children from urban areas, while the same age group within the rural sample raised the protection risk in connection with HTPs, mainly abduction and early marriage. Labor exploitation was identified by both age groups as an urban phenomenon with the rural counterpart mentioning excessive work within the household and farms.

Protection issues facing girls who are put under the 'care' of traditional healers[16], a practice in rural areas, and child domestic workers were not discussed by the children in both groups. After being prompted, the children recognized it as a protection risk, although they did not know the details of the children's lives.

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[16] In an area which is outside the two rural communities and in many other communities, there are practices where girls are given away to traditional religious leaders for varying periods of time to serve in the homes and 'courts' of the healers. These girls may be marked to take this position before they were born, during childhood or at adolescence. This is done through convincing the parents that some misfortune will befall them if they do not give away the girl to the traditional healer since the healer's spirits have landed on the girl and/or the family. The girls, almost all the time, end up being sex partners to the healers.

Community mapping and vulnerable children

3.1.1. Vulnerable Children and Perpetrators

In relation to vulnerability to physical violence, most of the respondents, except some of the children under 12 contacted in Woldiya, reported that all children without distinction are vulnerable to the risk. The dissenting responses identified young girls, small children and children in conflict with the law as more vulnerable to physical violence.

A wide range of perpetrators of physical violence were identified by the children including parents and other family members, relatives, neighbors, teachers, older boys, and unfamiliar persons. This may be indicative of the high levels of recurrence of this form of violence against children within the household, in communities and at school. In relation to school, children in Addis Ababa emphasized the continued practice of corporal punishment despite claims by project staff, teachers, etc., that such practice has minimized; a 13 year old boy stated that *"Our homeroom teacher still comes to our class with a stick."*

Vulnerability to emotional abuse was identified as shared among all girls and boys by respondents across sites and age groups. However, the increased vulnerability of girls, children affected by HIV/AIDS, and orphans was also noted. Respondents contacted in Woldiya were especially concerned about the emotional effects of discrimination associated with disability and HIV/AIDS. The children reflected that giving nicknames to the child with disability based on the nature of the disability is common in their communities.

Community members, including other children, were identified as the perpetrators of emotional abuse. Moreover, older children contacted in Addis Ababa identified teachers as perpetrators indicating the incidence of abuse in the school context. The role of persons engaged in child trafficking was discussed in detail by the group of older children from Woldiya; suggesting an interlink between forms of abuse and exploitation.

Child labor exploitation, which has been associated with trafficking by the respondents, affects children who came to towns on their own or are brought to urban centers by relatives. For some of the younger respondents in Woldiya, the most affected are children from poor families with more dependents and children who escape from early marriage. Older children from the same site also stressed that, in terms of labor exploitation, children working and living in the street, especially the bus terminal, are most vulnerable to labor exploitation. Rural children are also believed to be more at risk of labor exploitation by being asked to herd cattle (mostly boys), and do household chores (mostly girls).

Finally, both groups of respondents in Addis Ababa indicated that while both boys and girls are affected by the problem, girls are more vulnerable to labour exploitation. There was a broad consensus among respondents on the central role of family members and neighbors as the perpetrators of labor exploitation. However, respondents from Woldiya additionally identified

adults and older children living and working in the streets, community members, bus drivers, 'employment' agents, guards of bus terminals and even the police in the same category.

Girls, especially older girls above the age of 13, were identified as the recurrent victims of sexual harassment, rape and sexual exploitation (including abduction and early marriage among the rural group). Girls who are victims of trafficking were also identified as the most vulnerable to sexual exploitation. Though not common, respondents contacted in Woldiya also reported high levels of vulnerability for younger girls. In both sites, children identified boys as victims of rape. A 13 years old boy in Woldyia stated that *"one of the most difficult and horrifying moments of my life was when I saw my friend (a boy) being raped by a man."* In all cases, older boys and adult men are included in the list of perpetrators by the respondents. The Addis Ababa group extended the list of perpetrators of rape to family members. Moreover, the role of persons engaged in trafficking of children including bus drivers and bar owners were noted by older children in both sites.

Early Marriage - A picture drawn by a 13 year boy

FGM and other harmful traditional practices were identified as most recurrent by children under 12 years of age both in Addis Ababa and Woldiya. Both groups also identified very small children, referred to as 'babies' by the respondents, as most vulnerable. The vulnerability of young girls about to get married to FGM was also noted by the respondents in Woldiya. The perpetrators, according to the children, are parents and community elders.

3.1.2. Reporting and Support
Drama on early marriage and FGM

Children both in rural and urban areas expressed that most children do not usually tell or report, especially to authorities, when they are faced with the risk of abuse and exploitation. In the few instances where victim children report incidents of abuse and exploitation, it is to their friends and peers One boy stated *"if I decide to tell some bad experiences, I tell it to my friend. There are some problems that could not be told to anyone".*

The children in both locations lack information on the procedures to report incidents of abuse and exploitation to the authorities and other challenges in accessing the police, Kebele, prosecutor and health services are identified as the major reasons for not reporting. The rural group claimed that they did not feel comfortable in going to the police when there is abuse. Instead they report the information to teachers who would then take the matter to the police, if necessary.

> *The adults in our community know each other very well. Therefore, we don't believe that there is any way that a policeman or a judge takes measures against adults based on our complaints!* A report from a group discussion of the rural older children's group

In Addis Ababa, only less than half of the children in the age group above 12 years stated that they have received information as to where to go and the reporting procedures when they face abuse and exploitation. The rest of the child respondents, all children under the age of 12 and the majority of children above 12 years expressed that they have never received such information and they are not adequately familiar as to the procedures to report cases of abuse and exploitation to the authorities. Although some children in Addis Ababa noted the relatively better treatment of children by the CPU police, in general children said that they do not believe that they will get proper support and treatment if they report to the authorities. The following statements of children capture this feeling.

> *If we lodge a complaint to school administration against a teacher for beating, no measure would be taken against him. The teachers are the ones with the voice."* A 14-year old girl

> *Our parents raised us by threatening us to call a police when we misbehave. Most children developed fear towards the police and they do not report to the police when they face cases of abuse.* A 14 year boy

Fear of the perpetrator is also raised as a factor for not reporting especially where the perpetrator is a family member, close relative or neighbor. Social taboos and shame also play a part as barriers to reporting of cases of sexual abuse.

The rural children reported that they deal with different protection problems by using the following:

- **Migrating/ running away from the place where the abuse has taken place**[17]: going away from the area where they were abused is the main strategy that children reported as a way of dealing with problems relating to abuse and the resulting shame on them and their families.

- **Reconciliation:** the role of community members in resolving family disputes was discussed by the rural children. In cases where there are conflicts between children and their families, such as quarreling or if a child is asked to leave the home after causing

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[17] Children indicated that when children plan to run away they steal money from their families to help them in transportation, etc., and for this reason, they feel embarrassed to return to their families. Those who returned to visit (the street children older group in Woldiya) said that they felt they were not welcome in the homes. One boy said that *" I went to attend the funeral of my grandmother. I had missed my brother and sisters. After the funeral, I kept waiting for my father and stepmother to invite me to stay over, but they did not do so. So I returned to Woldiya."*

serious problems such as repeated fighting: community members, especially neighbors play a supporting role to the child and reconcile the child and the family.

- **Children's groups**: this method was shown by the children, especially those in the age group of 12 years and above, through the dramas that they acted out, as a popular method of protecting themselves against different risks. Children's clubs also serve as channels for information and reporting. In addition, they portrayed that their engagement in groups provides them with better skills of expressing themselves, entertains them and makes them practice their creative skills because they come up with the design of what they want to perform. The children reported also that the groups provide them with opportunities to spend time together with their friends regardless of whether they are boys or girls, even after school hours. The children believe that this is not always supported by the adults around them. A 13 year old girl said "*Our parents and teachers do not always support our engagement in club activities such as practicing and rehearsals, which are usually held after school hours. They feel that our participation in such activities takes away our attention from our studies. Therefore, in our group we have decided to concentrate on our studies and show our parents and teachers that we are serious*".

In general, children feel that the components of the existing formal child protection system, such as the police have not been working effectively for them. They are more likely to use the informal system of protection in their communities, whenever possible. The children participants stated that they want people to in their communities to listen more and take their reports more seriously and without considering 'adult issues'.

3.2. Extent and perception of children's participation

3.2.1. Knowledge and Participation of Children in Child Led Groups

The majority of child respondents across all age groups and communities are aware of the existence of school-based child led groups. The type of school-based child led groups identified by the respondents include: child rights club, student's clubs, civic and ethical education club, know your country club, sport club, language development club, girls club, gender club, and anti-AIDS club. Children above the age of 12 years in Addis Ababa have also identified a few out of school child led groups that exist in their communities. These include: Raeye Ethiopia and Shama (Arada sub-city), Forum Youth Association (Addis Ketema sub-city), Felege Tibib Theatre Club (Yeka sub-city).

The participation of respondent children in child led groups both in Addis Ababa and Woldiya is mainly limited to school based clubs[18]. However, most of the children in Wodiya have reported their participation in school-based clubs, while only small proportion of contacted children in Addis Ababa stated their participation in the clubs. In both sites, girls above the age of 12 have reported more participation in school clubs than the other groups of children.

Table 4 - Participation of children in school-based child led groups (Addis Ababa)

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[18] Children's clubs are recommended as a strategy by the local education offices to encourage the participation of children inschools.

Type of club	Participating Children				
	Boys under 12	Boys over 12	Girls under 12	Girls over 12	Total
Child rights club	2	3	-	2	7
Anti-AIDS club	-	1	1	3	5
Girls Club	-	-	-	1	1
Children participating in no child led group	5	8	9	1	23

Table 5 - Participation of children in school-based child led groups (Woldiya)

Type of club	participating children				
	Boys under 12	Boys over 12	Girls under 12	Girls over 12	Total
CRC club	5	6	6	9	26
Anti-AIDS club	-	-	-	3	3
Know your country	2	-	1	1	4
Civic and ethical education club	3	2	-	-	5
Language club	1	-	1	1	3
Clever students	1		2	1	4
sports club	2	-	-	-	2
Girls club	-	-	2	1	3
Gender equality club	-		2	-	2
Children participating in no child led group	4	3	-	-	7

According to the child respondents, school-based clubs are normally initiated by the school administration. For each of the clubs identified by the school, a coordinating teacher is assigned. A notice is posted inviting students to join the clubs they want. There is usually a limit on the maximum number of members in one club as well as on the maximum number of clubs in which a student can become a member. The information obtained from child respondents on the purpose, types of decisions and extent of engagement in child protection issues of the different school-based clubs is summarized in the following table.

Table 6 – Purpose, decisions regarding child protection issues in child led groups

Type of children's club	Purpose	Types of Decisions[19]	decisions regarding child protection issues
Child rights clubs	Raising awareness of children about their rights; giving advice to children especially those who run away from their families, so that they return to their areas of origin.	Decisions about steps to take in order to prevent abuse and exploitation of children. Sharing information about abused children and following up in collaboration with teachers and other adults.	Reporting early marriage and FGM before they happen. Follow up of children who are usually absent from school because of different reasons related to their protection. Assistance to children who need help in different matters. Educating the public through drama, etc. Working in collaboration with other activities to raise issues of child protection.
Civic and ethical education club	to raise awareness on equality of all person in legal matters. To raise awareness about good behavior such as loyalty, honesty, fairness and transparency For this purpose members need to be trained themselves and train others. Raise awareness about civic duties to different sectors of the population including prisoners Giving advice to students who have conduct problems.	Decisions to help needy children with the money contributed by club members. Identification of and decisions concerning activities of club members.	Educating the public and children through different methods.
Girls' clubs	Assisting children who migrate from the surrounding rural areas, especially girls. Fighting against harmful traditional practices such as early marriage, fgm, etc Preventing abuse	Selection of leaders; Assisting needy children, deciding how to raise funds and who to assist	Educating the public to stop abuse of girls and women and to inform about ways of reporting abuses.
Know your country club	Getting information and visiting historical sites in Ethiopia	Selecting club leaders, Raising funds, decisions about visits.	Educate other students to be interested in historical sites.
Anti-Aids clubs	Supporting those who are affected and infected by HIV	Supporting children whose parents have died or those who	Educating the public about HIV and AIDS

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[19] All clubs are engaged in deciding monthly contributions of members, follow up of attendance of members, deciding club members meeting dates and allocating tasks of members.

	and AIDS.	themselves are living with HIV/AIDS Where possible assisting those who need help.	Educating students about methods of transmission
High achievers' clubs	Encouraging and supporting students who are low achievers Participating in protecting the environment		none
Sports club	organizing sports competitions between different groups and classes		none
Language club	Expanding the use of mini-media services in the school Encouraging different language skills among students (reading, writing, poetry..)		none
Gender equality club	Demonstrating the different strengths of male and females		Awareness raising

The effectiveness of the clubs varies from one club to another. The CRC club is identified as the most effective and has accomplished the following:

- Children go to the club coordinator, who is willing to listen to the information that they bring and is also capable of taking the issue to the formal system such as police, Bureau of Social Affairs, Ministry of Justice, etc. Therefore, the clubs can be instrumental in providing legal protection for some children.

- Because of the activities of the clubs, further incidences of abuses are prevented.

- In some cases, the club members involve their parents in providing solution to the problems of children in their communities.

Children who do not participate in child led groups raised several reasons for their non-participation. Out of school children in Woldiya stated the absence of child led groups in their locality as the main factor for their non-participation. The lack of adequate information on child led groups is also stated as one of the factors. Some children in Addis Ababa also stated that their inability to spend the extra time required to be involved in the activities of clubs prevents them from participation, since they have to support themselves or their families. A child respondent in Woldiya who had lost a leg in an explosion which killed his mother and wounded him, stated *"I do not participate in school clubs because of my disability. The activities of the clubs usually take place on weekends and outside school and I get tired to go to school to participate in the activities due to the difficulty I have in walking."*

A 15 year old child, who lives and works around the bus terminal in Woldiya town said that he feels different when he participates in this meeting. He said *"I wonder to myself, what it would be like to take part in this kind of meeting and attend school everyday. I like it but I know it is only for three days".*

All children in both study sites who do not currently participate in child led groups expressed their keen interest in participating in such groups in the future. Some of the reasons given by children as to why they are interested to participate in child led groups include:

- It gives us a forum to express ourselves
- It would help us to develop our interests and skills
- We can teach communities and make attitudinal changes
- It will help us to get respect from others
- It helps children to change themselves
- It would help children to protect themselves as well as to properly take care of their health and personal hygiene

3.2.2. Children's Participation in Events, Consultations and Researches

A majority of the children who participated in both study sites stated that they have participated in events and consultations related the rights of the child and other events. Some children in Woldiya reported that their participation in the Day of the African Child (event organized in their respective schools in collaboration with ANNPCAN), Day of Protection of Children from Abuse (event organized by MOLSA in the compound of another school), and Day of Nation, Nationality and Peoples (celebrated at the city stadium and organized by the local government). In Addis Ababa, some child respondents expressed their participation in the Day of the African Child (event organized in their respective schools in collaboration with NGOs), and Women's Day/March 8 (event organized in their respective schools in collaboration with NGOs).

The roles of children in these events have mainly been the presentation of drama, write-ups, speeches and jokes. All of these activities of children had educational message related to promotion of children's rights and their protection from violence and harmful traditional practices. Children in Addis Ababa commented that they would have liked being given a greater role in organizing the events.

When it comes to the participation of children in research activities, only 5 children in the Addis Ababa group and 6 children in the Woldiya group, all in the group of above 12 years, reported that they have had previous experiences in participating in research related to children. Moreover, the few children who reported participation in research stated that their participation was limited only to providing information and they did not get any feedback on the outcome of their participation.

The child respondents in both sites identified several factors that limited their participation in events, consultations and researches that concern them. Some of the factors expressed by the children are as follows:

- *The attitude of looking at children as incapable or inferior is one of the reasons for the low participation of children, in particular in research. Some adults do not think that it is necessary or valuable to invite the participation of children.* A 14 year old girl

- *Since most adults do not take my ideas or opinions properly/seriously, I prefer not to participate in matters that affect me.* 12 year old boy

- Some parents think that the participation of their children in events and clubs will affect their education. As a result, they discourage or prohibit children from participating in events and clubs.

3.2.3. Knowledge and Participation of Children in Civil Society Organizations

Children in Addis Ababa identified and listed a number of NGOs that work on child protection issues within their communities. The identified NGOs are:
- **Forum on Street Children:** Works on child protection issues including provision of care and support, correction of children in conflict with the law, access to justice to abused children.
- **ANPPCAN:** Operates child center that promote child participation, educate parents on child rights, provides educational support.
- **Shama:** Undertakes community conversation on children issues through organizing coffee ceremony.
- **OPPRIFS:** Assists trafficked and abused girls through provision of shelter and family reunion services.
- **CCF:** Provides educational and social support and educates on violence against children
- **Beza Lehiwot:** Support street children through provision of educational and legal services.
- **Amrif:** Provides legal services to child victims of rape and trafficking and provides shelter to OVCs.
- **Ananyia:** Operates its own school and provides education and shelter services to street children.
- **Felege Tibib:** Undertakes peer education and conversation
- **Hiwot HIV:** provides care and support

In general, children expressed a positive attitude towards the activities and contribution of the modern civil society organizations in terms of assisting children and addressing child protection issues. Their understanding of the traditional CSOs and their tasks were limited.

A 12 year old boy who has been participating in the community correction program run by Forum on Street Children expressed that *"my participation in the program and the assistance I received have significantly changed my life and behavior. It will save me from a lot of trouble in the future."* On the other hand, most children emphasized that the civil society organizations

should do more to actively engage children in the implementation of their program to effectively address child protection issues.

The role of children in the different events is to communicate messages to other children after having been trained or prepared themselves. Most of the time, it is not possible to carry out their tasks as planned. The children claimed that after having spent a lot of time in preparing plays, and other activities, they may not be allowed to present what they have prepared. On the other hand, sometimes, they are asked to present something in a hurry without adequate preparations, for example, for visitors. This presents a lot of frustrations among the children.

3.3. Extent and Impact of Discrimination against Children

The discussion on discrimination against children started in both sites by asking participating children to discuss in small groups, and identify which children are discriminated against or excluded by other people in their community.

The following table summarizes the responses of the children on the issue.

Table 7: Children's perceptions of protection risks in their communities

Community	Urban (children from AA)	Rural (children from Woldyia)
Children most vulnerable to discrimination and exclusion	Children who live with HIV/AIDS Children with disabilities (children with mental retardation, children affected by leprosy, etc.) Street children Children who are victims of sexual abuse Children who lost parents to AIDS Children from poor families	Those who live with HIV Children with disabilities Children who do not have parents or those whose parents are sick with HIV/AIDS Children who live on the streets Children who work as domestic workers in farms or as housemaids Displaced children Girls who are engaged in commercial sex work. Children who are in conflict with the law.

In Woldiya, the children took different positions and engaged in a debating exercise. One group took the position of justifying why children who are now being discriminated against (CWD and children whose parents died of AIDS) should be discriminated and the other group taking the position of why the children should not be discriminated. The results of the debates were judged by the judges selected from among the participants.

The children also stated that discriminated children are called by different names depending on the alleged causes for their discrimination. The children expressed that these children are discriminated against mainly due to lack of awareness and attitudinal problem among community members. All children emphasized that such discriminations against children based on their physical, health, social or economic status is not proper. When children were asked whether they have ever faced discrimination or exclusion, slightly more than the majority stated that they have faced discrimination in one way or another. The following in depth stories/case of children shows the extent of discrimination against children in the communities covered by the present study.

Case 1

He is a 16 year old boy. He was born in a very remote area in the western part of the country. His mother died when he was 12 years old. After his mother's death, he came to Addis Ababa to live with his grand parents. His mother tongue is Ormiffa and he is not good at the Amharic language which is widely spoken in Addis Ababa. "Because of my language problem, I have been facing discrimination frequently by different people. The boys in my neighborhood do not allow me to play football with them. When I took an exam in school, I asked a teacher a question, but she made a negative remark on my Amharic language ability. My aunt and her husband also live with my

grand parents. Because I came from the country side, the husband always looks down at me. For instance, when I am watching a TV, he asks me why I do watch something which I do not understand.

The discrimination I am facing is seriously affecting my personality. I am experiencing serious lack of self confidence. I am usually not at ease to mix or deal with people. I lost trust in people. I tried to tell my problem to some people including some teachers. However, it did not help me much. I am really confused".

Case 2

She is a 15 years old girl living in Addis Ababa. Her mother lives with HIV/AIDS and her status is known by all people in their neighborhood. I was very close with two girls in our neighborhood called girl A and girl B. They used to come to our home to study or play with me. After some time ago, girl B stopped coming to our home. At first I did not know why she stopped coming to our home and I was repeatedly asking girl A why girl be stopped her friendship with me. One day, girl A told me that girl B stopped coming to our home because her mother prohibited her. When I asked the reason, she told me the reason is the HIV/AIDS status of my mother. I also faced other similar cases. At first, the situation affected me very seriously. I was even contemplating suicide. However, I also have had like Girl A and others who have been very supportive and who do not discriminate me. They helped me a lot to cope with the situation. In addition, there is an NGO called Hiwot HIV Association, which provides me with various services, including counseling and material assistance. This has also helped me a lot to adjust with my situation. Now I am not that much affected by the HIV/AIDS status of my mother.

Case 3

A 15 year old boy lived in a farming Kebele around Woldiya. His father remarried after the boy's mother died. The boy started to fight with a lot of boys in his village, especially on the way to and from school. Everyday, his father received complaints from his neighbors about the behavior of his son. The father tried to discipline his son by using different methods including physical punishment. The boy decided to run away to Woldiya. He does not go to school and he works in the bus terminal.

At the beginning, the boy said that he found it difficult to settle, because the older boys who worked in the terminal did not want to integrate newcomers into their groups. The boys work and sleep in the bus terminal and are subjected to a lot of harassments. He believes that the younger boys, like him, and those who do came from other areas, are discriminated against. He said "*we choose to work around the bus terminal because there are many small jobs that we can get. We don't have to depend only on one kind of job. There are also lots of activities. However, sometimes we are stopped from going in and working in the terminal. We want to work and earn some money; we did not want to steal".* In the future, he plans to save some money to help him take driving lessons and be a bus or truck driver.

4. Conclusion and Recommendations

4.1. Children's workshops: in both locations, the children maintained good relationships and participatory environment while attending the workshops. Activities were changed frequently so that the children do not get bored. Refreshments were provided to the children.

The rate of attendance was also good. Only one boy from the older group in Woldiya got absent from the workshop after attending the first day, because he had to attend to some work during the second day, and rejoined the group on the third day.

The children were interested in the processes and also felt comfortable in expressing their views in the workshop. This was confirmed by their responses. There were no children with speech or hearing impairment in the groups. All the children except for two children from the street, could comfortably write and draw. Those who were not able to write were assisted by other children in their groups.

4.2. Traditional and modern systems: The study showed the importance of using traditional child protection mechanisms to complement the formal structures because children have a better understanding of the system and also use whatever is there at their disposal, for example, going to neighbors to solve disputes in families. Children in rural areas are aware and use the societal protective systems more than the children living in urban settings.

4.3. Awareness of children: although the children who attended the workshops showed a remarkable understanding of the protection issues that affect children, they are not aware of the situation of certain groups of children who are in their communities. For example, the situations of children who are under the 'care' of traditional healers and children who work as domestic workers are not understood clearly by the children, in comparison to their understanding of issues faced by others, such as children with disabilities. The lack of information about domestic workers- is highly surprising because some of the children live closely in the same household or in the same neighborhood with children engaged in domestic labor. Therefore it is important to broaden the perspectives of children in these respects to get understanding of protection to cover all children living in their communities and not only the situation of specific and visible groups of children.

4.4. Differences of opinions: There is a great deal of difference between the opinions expressed[20] by the project staff concerning the effectiveness of the police and Child Protection Units in receiving complaints from children in a friendly manner and supporting children who are at risk. In this respect, there is a marked difference between the urban and rural children. The urban children, also the place where SCS and its partners have a prolonged presence, express more positive opinions about the role of the police and its practical implementation of protecting them. The rural working children in Woldiya, who appear to be most at risk and require police protection, indicated various instances where their complaints were ignored by the police and they had to resort to their own friends to solve problems, with the exception of cases of sexual abuse of boys by older boys and men, where the police tends to act immediately.

This was a demonstration of the capacity of the police, and the urgent need to engage them more and educate them in protecting children.

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[20] Discussions with the project staff were held separately.

4.5. Knowledge Vs practical implementation: the children in the workshops presented a lot of ideas about how children should be protected, who are the most important actors, etc.(Discussions and lessons drawn in connection to the story of the tortoise – Annex 1- was a clear demonstration of the children's knowledge and expectations concerning protection and the responsible persons in their communities). However, this knowledge is not matched by the practical reality they face in their communities. The children expressed that adults in their communities are slow to change and do not take the opinions of children seriously.

4.6. Reporting mechanisms: children do not have adequate knowledge about the procedures to be followed in order to report different risks. Therefore, the reporting mechanisms used by the children depend on the type of risk they faced and the perceived likelihood of acceptance. Serious abuses may not be reported by children if they feel that their reporting will not be accepted or could worsen their own situation and the situation of their families.

The reporting mechanisms used by the children appear to be confusion between traditional values and modern structures. It is therefore crucial to educate children directly on methods of reporting that are practical and acceptable rather than letting the children deduct from the adult centered and adult led practices in communities.

4.7. Children's understanding of gender and power relations: the children in both urban and rural areas have a good understanding of the gender issues and power relations that exist in their communities. The rural children appear to be more knowledgeable about the differences in social structures, such as identifying issues that community elders are effective in dealing with, issues where female teachers and male teachers appear to be more effective in handling, etc.

The rural children expressed more faith in the capacity of people in their immediate surroundings, such as teachers and neighbors while the urban children expressed more faith in the capacity of the police. This appears to be the reflection of the larger community.

4.8. Role of female teachers: the school and teachers are reported as important actors in terms of protection of children – the rural children emphasized the role of female teachers in receiving information from children and mobilizing practical support to children who are reported to have problems. This is an area that could be strengthened in the future in view of enhancing the protection of children at community level.

4.9. Child led groups: children's clubs are important aspects of the school and the school life because it is an intervention required by the Ministry of Education. Although the children play a very important role, the leadership of the clubs is held by teachers and students play a supportive and implementation role rather than leadership.

Clubs serve to highlight the capacities of children in different respects and encourage their participatory and expressive skills. Children who attend clubs are seen in the workshops to express their ideas using complex words and logics in a more coherent manner than those who do not attend clubs. In an educational system which is highly competitive and places a great deal of emphasis on academic achievement, the clubs present opportunities for children to exhibit their potentials in other areas (such as drama, creative writing, etc) that do not get attention in the formal educational system.

Working children who do not attend schools in the rural communities do not have access to child led groups. Future projects may look into the possibility of engaging children who are not attending schools.

The strength of child led groups in the schools is perceived by the children as being dependent on the following:

- the strength and popularity of the teacher who is leading the group; and
- the academic performance of the members of the group.

There are no child led groups for rural children who do not have the opportunity to attend schools, while in Addis, there are child led groups outside the school setup.

4.10. Knowledge about civil society organizations: children have limited knowledge of the functions of civil society organizations. The rural children perceived the role of CSOs being only engaged in adult related issues, This may be because, to a large extent, CSOs maintain their traditional role of solving problems relating to specific events such as funerals, raising funds, etc and they started to diversify their activities to cover other areas only relatively recently. The surprising factor in this respect was that, for example, Idirs (traditional funeral associations) in both urban and rural areas have taken responsibility of supporting children who are orphans in their communities. The Idirs support child headed households found in their communities by ensuring that the children are provided with food, clothing and other items, and ensuring that the children continue with their education. The Idir members sometimes take turns to supervise the daily activities of vulnerable children.

The children do not have knowledge of the changing role of the Idirs and other CSOs possibly because the CSOs do not engage in a lot of media activities. Because the children do not know about the roles of the different CSOs, their capacity to mobilize help individually or in their groups remains limited.

4.11. Communicating ideas: children expressed a great deal of interest to communicate messages to their communities. The mini media services in schools are viewed as important by the children in terms of communicating ideas to students and teachers.

Children expressed that they do not have enough opportunities during events to present what they wrote and rehearsed because of shortage of time during the events. Although they participate in giving information, they rarely had opportunities to get feedback about the research that they contributed to.

How the Tortoise got a Long Life and its Shell[21]

A long, long time ago, all the forest animals lived together in harmony in the mountains and forests near the place where the sky appears to join the mountains. They were happy and played a lot in the forest without any fear from anyone. The mother tortoise, Mrs. Elee, did not have a shell as we know her now. She was also not happy because her body hurt when she traveled in the forest, towards places where there is sunshine. Thorns pricked her back, sometimes, ripe papaya or banana fruits dropped on her back. She took a long time to remove them from her body and continue with her walk. One day Mrs. Elee said to herself, "I am fed up of this problem; I have to go and get advice from the king of all animals, Mr. Lion."

She started going to Mr. Lion's place. As you can imagine, it took her a long time to even leave her village. After a couple of days, she ran across Monkey who was skipping in the tall trees. Monkey said "Greetings, Mrs. Elee, I saw you not far away from here two days ago! Your children told me that you are going to visit the King. What did you need to see him about? Are you ok? Can I help you take the message? " Mrs Elee shook her head, smiled and said "Oh you have a lot of questions my dear! I haven't actually got to the court yet. I'm still on my way." Then she told Monkey her problem. Monkey said "I know the perfect thing for you to do. Ask our King to give you skills to climb from one tree to another….see…like me…". The monkey continued to swing from one tree to the other until she was out of Mrs. Elee's sight. Mrs Elee liked the idea and continued to travel to the King.

After a few more days of traveling, she came across Mr Red Fox, who, when he heard about her problem, told her "Believe me, the best solution for you would be to have fast legs like mine, so that you can run wherever you want to". Mrs Elee thought that maybe this was the best solution of all, so she thanked and left Mr Fox to continue her journey.

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[21] Traditional story translated from a series of children's books 'our stories' by Hirut Tefferi, 2010.

fter a while Mrs. Elee found Mr and Mrs. Joffe[22]. She greeted them and sat under the shade of a big tree. She then told them that she was going to the King to ask to be given four legs to enable her to run quickly. They listened to her carefully and said "You see, your ideas are good. But if you manage to reach the King, why don't you ask him for wings like ours. In fact, we can take you to the King. That way you can see how it feels to be able to fly". They then prepared a strong vine to help them carry Mrs. Elee. Mr. Joffe told Mrs. Elee to hold onto the vine with her mouth. "Then we can carry you up into the sky from each side." Right before

they left Mrs. Joffe warned Mrs. Elee "You must remember not to speak at all while we are flying, otherwise you will fall right out of the sky." Mrs. Elee nodded her head. She remembered the incident with her young cousin, who loved to talk a lot. "When they reached the King, Mr. and Mrs. Joffe let her down near the cave where the King lived. Mrs. Elee was very tired from the journey and she went in slowly. The Lion came out and greeted her. Then he asked "My child, you must have a big problem to come so far away from your place. Can I help you in any way?" Mrs. Elee said "You are

right, Sir, I have a huge problem" and she told the King about all her problems. Mr. Lion then asked her to give him some time to think about the problem. "In the meantime, you can rest in a corner of my cave." Mrs. Elee found a nice warm corner near the door of the King's cave. As she lay down to rest on a pile of soft leaves , she thought to herself, "I am very lucky that the King cares so much about me that he would take his time to consider my problem and give me the right solution to it. Hmm, and he wants to think about me before making a decision!" Just then, she heard a voice right outside the cave. "Hello," said a cheerful voice. "Who is that?" asked Mrs. Elee. "It's me," answered the voice, "Miss Desta, the Sunflower. I stand out here and turn with the Sun to look over our Kingdom. You see, our King has given me this important job, and I am always happy and look everywhere! I tell Mr. Lion everything that is happening. I was the one who told the lion that you were coming".

Mrs. Elee was impressed and I said, "You are so lucky. You are tall and beautiful and you have a very important job." Miss Desta laughed and said "I do enjoy my job. I'm the one who makes sure that everyone in the Kingdom is alright. But I can see that you are tired, Mrs. Elee. You should rest. Goodbye."

Mrs. Elee leaned out of the cave and waved to Miss Desta . "Goodbye!" Then she went back to her bed, closed her eyes and went to sleep.

When Mrs. Elee woke up, saw that Mr. Lion was sitting on his throne. She got up and hurried in front of him. "Sir, have you got an idea as to how to help me?" she asked. The King stretched and said in his deep voice "My dear little Mrs. Elee, I thought about your problems seriously. I know that you are a clever, kind and thoughtful animal. Maybe it would not be a good idea to change you from the kind and thoughtful animal you are. If I gave you the skills to climb a tree like Monkey, you would spend all your time in the trees jumping around instead of spending your time with your family and friends. If you were able to run fast, then you wouldn't stop to help people who need you on the road because you would be going

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[22] These are birds who have a long life themselves, and if a person manages to go between the couple, the person is believed to have long life.

too fast to see them. And if you could fly like the birds you wouldn't be the creature who lives on the ground that God intended you to be. Or I could make you like the sunflower outside my cave, who looks out for everyone in my kingdom." At this, Mrs. Elee shook her head. "The Sunflower is very bright and beautiful and strong but she spends all day on her feet and doesn't move. I want to move but I just need protection from the things that hurt me."

The King nodded his great mane and roared. "You do have a problem with getting hurt all the time, so I have prepared this for you." He smiled and gave her a shell that she put on immediately. It fit very well. She thanked the Lion and started her trip back home.

On the way home, a huge rain started to fall in the forest. The shell didn't help Mrs. Elee travel any faster but she discovered she could shelter in her shell. It was very warm and cozy and dry in there. The rain lasted for days, but Ms. Elee continued to travel while all other animals stayed in the shed of trees and felt very cold and wet. When she got home, Mrs. Elee said to her children, "I'm glad I went to see the King to solve my problem. I thought that the solution to my problem would be to have speed or to be able to climb or to be able to fly, but the King gave me just the right solution.

Since that time, Mrs. Elee and all her descendants have shells and started to live for more than a hundred years, all because Mrs. Elee was brave enough to ask for help with their problems!!

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Lessons learnt from the story of the tortoise (as reported by the children)
- Tortoise traveled a lot to get protection
- do not try to be what you are not
- children need protection
- children require to go to others like the tortoise went to the king of the animals. Therefore children should not struggle on their own to solve their problems, they have to go to their parents, the police and others.

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