

INTERNATIONAL CONSULTATION OF CHILD HELPLINES

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STOCKHOLM, SWEDEN

RESILIENCE: CHILDREN AND CHILD HELPLINES IN TIMES OF CRISIS

LEARNING REPORT

OCTOBER 2022



Day one sessions

Thematic Plenary Session #1 Resilience: Children & Young People's Mental Health



In 2020, mental health and violence continued to be the two main reasons for contact reported by our Child Helpline Members globally. Over half of all counselling contacts were related to one of these two topics, clearly showing that it is our members who are at the forefront of addressing the global mental health crisis that children and young people are confronting.

The IC 2022 will focus on the resilience of children and young people, especially with regard to their mental health during the Covid-19 pandemic (social distancing, school closures and other fundamental changes in society), and during extreme crises such as the Russo-Ukrainian War (the devastation and the massive displacement of children and young people as a result); how can child helplines further strengthen children's resilience, and provide them with support to improve their situation in society?

This session will feature panel discussion among child helplines and other organisations.

This session will also be recorded and made available online.

Objectives:

1. To hear about the experiences of children and young people on the topic of mental health.
2. To showcase data relating to children and young people's mental health.
3. To hear from child helplines and other organisations who have best practices to support children and young people struggling with mental health issues.
4. To provide a space for delegates to pose questions to the panel.

Moderator:

- Stephen Blight, Senior Advisor for Child Protection, UNICEF HQ

Speakers:

- Klas Bergling, President, Tim Bergling Foundation
- Alisa Simon, Executive Vice President, Chief Youth & Innovation Officer, Kids Help Phone
- Dumisile Nala, National Executive Officer, Childline South Africa
- Jalal Khader, Sawa's Child Helpline Director, SAWA Palestine
- Kelly Thorpe, Head of Community Services, Papyrus, UK



Day one sessions

Learnings captured by moderator, Stephen Blight, Senior Advisor for Child Protection, UNICEF HQ.

What were your key learning outcomes?

“I had the pleasure to moderate the first thematic session, focusing on Child Helplines role in addressing children and young people’s mental health.

This subject is of critical importance. In reviewing the data and analysis in the Child Helpline International report, “The Voices of Children and Young People around the World”, a consistent pattern is emerging: in all regions last year, mental health was amongst the top three reasons that children reach out to helplines. Indeed, the WHO estimates that more than 13 percent of adolescents aged 10-19 live with a diagnosed mental disorder. That’s over 165 million kids.

But mental health exists on a continuum that can include periods of well-being and periods of distress. Most of these periods of distress will never evolve into a diagnosed mental disorder.

Yet many children and young people regularly report experiencing psychosocial distress that may disrupt their lives, their health, and their prospects for the future.

Such distress can end in suicide – as Klas Bergling, the President of the Tim Bergling Foundation reminded us. His son committed suicide in 2018 after suffering a long battle with mental health issues. A foundation in his name was set up to tackle mental health awareness and suicide prevention in order to help prevent other families from experiencing similar events.

In this context, child helplines provide a critical front-line service when children are experiencing distress. To better support our frontline staff and the services that they deliver, UNICEF and WHO have developed EQUIP, a new platform to increase quality of psychological support. UNICEF is standing by to support helplines that wish to adopt its training and assessment tool.

The panelists provided some great examples of how helplines have strengthened their response to the mental health struggles of children and young people.

- Alisa Simon from Kids Help Phone (Canada) talked about the fundamental and radical innovations undertaken by her service to respond to millions more contacts, the vast majority about mental health, using their Step Model.
- Dumisile Nala, from Childline South Africa shared a similar experience of sharp increases of contacts related to mental health, and explained how Childline South Africa is responding.
- Jalal Khader, from SAWA Child Helpline Palestine, shared insights on how the service remained operational and managed increased contacts to the child helplines at times of crisis, and during the pandemic. He showed how Mental Health and Psychosocial Support has been integrated into the messaging that SAWA Palestine shares with the population.
- Kelly Thorpe from Papyrus, UK elaborated on the interventions developed to respond to increased rates of suicide and suicidal ideation in young people, with a focus on boys and young men. She also shared key learnings for the pandemic and post-pandemic era.”

Were there any recommendations and follow up?

N/A

What key tools and resources did you or will you find helpful?

N/A



Day one sessions

Workshop 1) Impact and Quality



This workshop will break down our new Core Quality Standards methodology, as well as deep dive into how child helplines approach impact measurement through presentation of research conducted by Child Helpline International in 2021.

Objectives:

1. To increase understanding of how child helplines approach impact measurement through presentation of new research.
2. To present and breakdown our Core Quality Standards Framework (CQS) Framework methodology.
3. To present what has been done so far and the following steps.
4. To respond to any questions related to the CQS framework.

Moderators:

- Ronja Ulvfot, Regional Manager Europe, Child Helpline International
- Angharad Wells, Project Coordinator, Child Helpline International
- Lorleen Farrugia, Research Consultant, Child Helpline International

Speakers:

- Group discussion.



Day one sessions

IMPACT

What were your key discussion points?

- Presented findings from 2021 impact assessment research, which looked at child helplines' approach to assessing user satisfaction and the impact of their services. What some helplines consider as impact can be considered as 'customer satisfaction'.
- Question posed included: Should we also look at the impact that we have on the child protection system, for example, via advocacy? How do we collectively measure this impact as a network? Regarding the legitimacy of childrens' perception of positive impact or not, should we also look at impact beyond what the child tells us? Behavioural change can be viewed as impact, but how can we measure behavioural change through one-off counselling contacts? Could we look at change in attitude as a predictor of behavioural change? Do we need a global, joint definition of what impact means for child helplines?
- We need to take funding into account. Have to be cautious when make recommendations surrounding impact as helplines don't always have funding and resources to do this kind of work. Current funding models often don't include this either.
- Digitalisation of contact management can help streamline data collection on certain indicators.
- The effective altruism model can be applied to ensure that the good that child helplines are doing is done in the most effective way with the resources available. Impact assessment is one way to show that the child helplines' interventions have brought about specific changes in the children's lives. If we can show this, it will increase the chances of investment in order to do this kind of research.
- Child helplines can partner with universities and / or research institutes in their country who could contribute resources (human, financial or otherwise) for impact assessment. Apart from having students (e.g. social work students) interning as counsellors, students in other disciplines (e.g. sociology students) can intern as researchers in impact assessment.
- Impact assessment can start from child helpline data. In Palestine, contacts are asked to rate the conversation between 1 and 5 stars. In the end they have a report with the number of stars they were assigned. They also track repeat callers and when children call specifically to thank the helpline.

Were there any recommendations and follow up?

- Developing a toolkit for impact assessment.
- Exploring how technological tools utilised by child helplines can be used for impact assessment.
- Identifying a working definition of impact that can be applicable to child helplines' impact assessment.
- Child helplines could build more partnerships with universities, and CHI could support with trainings.

What key tools and resources did you or will you find helpful?

- Impact research from different countries will be collected.

QUALITY

What were your key discussion points?

- Presented the revised CQS framework, the piloting of the self-assessment tool and the way forward for CQS assessment for the CHI members. Participants mentioned that the presentation was very useful to clarify the CQS framework.
- Questions posed included: How many child helplines are working with key performance indicators (KPI)? Who and why are certain performance indicators set on child helpline level? Should KPIs be set for individual counsellors and volunteers to ensure quality from individual up to organisational level?
- Concerns expressed about having the same expectations for volunteers as for paid staff – is it feasible? What about for low-income child helplines? On the other hand, why should volunteers not be held to the same standard as paid staff, to ensure the quality of the child helpline?

Were there any recommendations and follow up?

N/A

What key tools and resources did you or will you find helpful?

- The Core Quality Standards for Child Helpline Framework (available to members).
- [Child Helpline International's eLearning platform](#) – Core Quality Standards information.



Day one sessions

Workshop 2) Promotion of children's rights and well-being: Evidence-based advocacy



This workshop will focus on global/regional/national evidence-based advocacy and campaigning.

We will both look back (previous campaigns and successes) and look forward (potential topics for future global CHI campaigns).

Child helplines can share their past evidence-based advocacy experiences (how they have successfully leveraged child helpline data to run advocacy activities) with the network and partners.

Objectives:

1. To share good practices about evidence-based advocacy on national and regional level from members and partners.
2. To discuss potential advocacy and campaign topics for 2023 CHI global campaigns.

Moderator:

- Jeroo Billimoria, Founder, Child Helpline International

Speakers:

- Roline de Wilde, Director, De Kindertelefoon
- Thomas Muller, Deputy Executive Director, ECPAT
- Rute Caldeira (PhD.), Senior Strategic Advisor, Ignite Philanthropy
- Martha Sunda, Senior Management Team Leader, Childline Kenya



Day one sessions

What were your key learning outcomes?

- Data and evidence can identify gaps that require policy change or targeted prevention or response activities
- Strong evidence leads to strong arguments for policy change which are more difficult to ignore or disregard
- Data and evidence can highlight crucial issues that would have gone unnoticed if following only beliefs or instinct

Were there any recommendations and follow up?

N/A

What key tools and resources did you or will you find helpful?

- [Disrupting harm country reports](#): Kenya, Uganda, Thailand, Tanzania, Ethiopia, Philippines, Viet Nam, Namibia, Indonesia, Malaysia and Cambodia.
- [Disrupting harm media kits](#).
- [Out of the Shadows Index](#).



Day one sessions

Thematic Plenary Session #2 Resilience: The role of child helplines during times of crisis



The IC 2022 will also look at the resilience of our Child Helpline Members, who have shown tremendous fortitude in the face of global lockdowns, crises such as the Russo-Ukrainian War and other conflicts, and the significant impacts on how child protection services have been able to operate as a result of these events.

This session will also be recorded and made available online.

Objectives:

1. To hear about the experiences of child helplines who have persevered through times of crisis.
2. To hear from child helplines and other organisations who have best practices in remaining operational to their best of their abilities during times of crisis.
3. To provide a space for delegates to pose questions to the panel.

Moderators:

- Jeroo Billimoria, Founder, Child Helpline International
- Najat Maalla M'jid, Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children, United Nations

Speakers:

- Alona Kryvuliak, Coordinator, La Strada
- Florence Nkhuwa, CEO, Lifeline/Childline Zambia
- Tony Fitzgerald, Virtual Services Manager, Kids Helpline, Yourtown, Australia
- Joyce Mutiso, Deputy Coordinator, Child Protection Area of Responsibility



Day one sessions

Learnings captured by moderator, Najat Maalla M'jid, Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children, United Nations.

What were your key learning outcomes?

“Child helplines are a key component of being safe, especially in times of crisis, when children find themselves in even more vulnerable situations, and when child protection systems are often disrupted. For example, violence prevention and response services were severely disrupted during COVID-19 pandemic, leaving children at increased risk of violence, exploitation, and abuse. This is just one example of how critical the role of child helplines is in times of crisis.

We also saw the resilience of these services in response to COVID-19 and in the ongoing humanitarian crisis (conflicts, climate crisis, weather related disasters, forced displacement ...) and most inspiring, the resilience of children themselves, who were instrumental in connecting their peers with protection systems - including child helplines – and who came up with ways of providing their peers with mental health support.

The better we understand the role of child helplines have in times of crisis, the more we can ensure their effectiveness in protecting children. Child helplines in times of crisis are life-saving and a crucial pillar of child protection in times of crisis, including early detection, guidance, counselling, psycho-social support ,

Child helplines need to be institutionalized and well-staffed, and seen as a key service of child protection system, duly connected to various agencies and sectors , such as justice, law enforcement, health, education, psycho-social support, social protection

Speakers

- Alona Kryvuliak – from La Strada, Ukraine , who spoke about activities of the National Toll-Free Hot Line for Children and Youth during the war in Ukraine
- Florence Nkhuwa – from Lifeline/Childline in Zambia., who shared reflections on role of Lifeline/Childline Zambia in the changing child protection landscape in Zambia
- Tony Fitzgerald – from Kids Helpline, in Australia, who highlighted how they maintained services through a series of national manmade and natural crises.
- Ilya Smirnoff from Childline Thailand who shared an update on how the service has remained strong and come through political, climate-based challenges and the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Joyce Mutiso, from the Child Protection Area of Responsibility , who gave expert insights in how various agencies can and should work together in times of crisis to ensure that child helplines are at the centre of children’s services during and in the aftermath of crisis.”

Were there any recommendations and follow up?

N/A

What key tools and resources did you or will you find helpful?

N/A



Day two sessions

Workshop 1) Staff wellbeing



The past couple of years has seen child helplines having to overcome enormous pressures in the face of the COVID19 pandemic, conflict, forced displacement, drought, political instability and other crises. During these difficult times, child helpline staff have had to cope with unique challenges; remaining operational, working from home and responding to increased numbers of calls including those relating to violence against children and mental health, to name a few.

Child helplines couldn't do their work without their amazing staff and protecting the health and wellbeing of counsellors, managers, supervisors and volunteers is central to ensuring quality services.

This session hopes to provide a space for all child helpline staff to reflect on the challenges faced during these crises, specifically on the impact to staff wellbeing. It hopes that child helpline members will find value in sharing common experiences, as well as identifying good practices and solutions for ensuring staff wellbeing is promoted and protected both now and during future crises.

Objectives:

1. Provide a space to reflect on staff wellbeing challenges during COVID-19 and other recent crises.
2. To foster stronger connections between members, through sharing of experiences.
3. To exchange best practices surrounding promotion and protection of child helpline staff's wellbeing.

Moderators:

- Angharad Wells, Project Coordinator, Child Helpline International
- Laura Holliday, Learning Coordinator, Child Helpline International

Speakers:

- Group discussion.



Day two sessions

What were your key learning outcomes?

What staff wellbeing challenges did you face?

- Staff wellbeing is an ongoing topic of concern for child helplines, which has only heightened in the face of Covid-19 and other crises.
- Many counsellors working remotely during Covid-19 and made it harder to support staff.
- Stress and difficulties and dealing with own concerns surrounding Covid-19 (or other crisis) themselves, looking after family, worrying about the situation whilst having to support contacts who are concerned about the same things.
- Demand for services dramatically increased for many child helplines, often at very short notice. This placed extra stress and demand on counsellors.

Organisational Level Solutions

- Biggest learning for many during difficult periods was to prioritise care and support for own staff. Many child helplines mentioned this way key to ensuring their services continued.
- Creating an open culture of talking about personal wellbeing and mental health is very important.
- Key themes discussed:
 1. Staff benefits: Offering staff benefits such as additions to health insurance, or even simply bringing candy to the office can be a good support to staff wellbeing.
 2. Psychological support: Many child helplines offer different methods of debriefing and relieving the stress of the day – some child helplines have in-house psychological support, while others have independent external psychological support. Some child helplines mentioned having buddy or peer-to-peer support systems.
 3. Supervision: Some child helplines mentioned that supervisors often provide remote support for counsellors responding to contacts via chat. The supervisor can also see the chat and can offer direct advice. Informal ‘check-in’ moments throughout the day, both in group setting and individually as well as in-person and online.
 4. Working hours: Some, if not all, child helplines have very strict policies on (maximum) number of hours worked. Some child helplines allow night-shift staff to work from home for their own comfort. Encouraging staff to use annual leave when they have had a particularly busy or stressful period.
 5. Training and recruitment: Recruitment is a key moment to ‘screen’ the suitability of a candidate for the position of a counselor. Some child helplines focus on resilience of the counsellor – Are they well-versed in self-care? Are they able to cope with higher-risk cases and are they equipped to face potential wellbeing challenges? This can be assessed through group interviews and case studies. Participating child helplines used different methods when recruiting staff – some outsourced this to objectively determine suitability, while others preferred to do so in-house. It’s important to consider the delicate balance between burnout and performance. Burnout does not reflect performance. One child helpline mentioned offering training in areas outside of the role itself. For example funding training in soft skills, hobbies or fun activities.
 6. Other: Ensuring the office has a relaxed, comfortable break-out space for staff to un-wind.

Individual Level Solutions

- Encourage staff to develop a self-care routine and to prioritise their own wellbeing.
- For many staff, the impacts to wellbeing are now only being realised. During Covid-19 many were simply in ‘survival’ mode where as now there is time to process what happened. Organisations should recognise that and continue to discuss the impacts even now.

Were there any recommendations and follow up?

One child helpline member highlighted value of using Kris’ case study and the accompanying questions during staff training sessions.

What key tools and resources did you or will you find helpful?

N/A



Day two sessions

Workshop 2) Accessibility and Inclusive Practice of Child Helplines



In this inclusive practice workshop, participants will build practical knowledge on how child helplines can increase accessibility of their services to reach minority groups who are more difficult to reach or support using regular approaches.

The presenting members will showcase their expertise through practical examples and experiences of targeting and developing their services for minority populations in their professional and national context, followed by an interactive reflection and discussion exercise.

Objectives:

1. To gain knowledge from members and partners with experience in inclusive practice.
2. To explore obstacles to increasing accessibility.
3. To explore opportunities around increasing accessibility.

Moderator:

- Ronja Ulvfot, Regional Manager Europe, Child Helpline International

Speakers:

- Michele Giordiano, Senior Vice President of Digital Crisis Services, The Trevor Project
- Alisa Simon, Executive Vice President, Chief Youth & Innovation Officer, Kids Help Phone
- Stefanos Alevizos, Psychologist, The Smile of the Child



Day two sessions

What were your key learning outcomes?

- It is essential for child helplines to gain insight into what populations of youth are most at risk of negative outcomes. The following populations can be at greater risk of negative outcomes than the rest of the population: children in migration, children with disabilities, children in poverty, LGBTQ children and youth, children in rural areas, indigenous children and youth, young children or girls. These groups can be referred to as equity-deserving populations (Kids Help Phone).
- Child helplines should analyse if these children and young people reach out to your child helpline in the numbers that you would expect, given their needs and population size. Child helplines around the world see lower numbers of contacts from children from equity-deserving populations like children in migration, indigenous populations, children with disabilities.
- Child helplines must engage with the relevant equity-deserving communities to understand the reasons why these children do not reach out. It can be anything from not having access to a phone, not speaking the language, not comfortable speaking on the phone, not feeling understood by counsellors or being ashamed of their problems – it will be unique to the specific group your child helpline is trying to reach.
- Each equity-deserving population requires a targeted approach to make child helpline services accessible to them. The communities that you are seeking to develop support services for must be in the lead of strategizing, planning, implementing and evaluating the services. This should always be at the forefront of any intervention – the people you are trying to serve have expertise around the support they need, and how.
- ‘Accessibility’ will mean very different things depending on which context your child helpline operates in – it can mean anything from have access to a phone or the internet or providing services in different language to adjusting counselling approach to the specific needs of the child or young person. We need to ensure we speak of accessibility broadly to include all potential barriers for accessing support.
- The approach to counselling/information should be considered for different groups – are there different approaches that work better for certain groups or certain issues? For example: Empathetic Language for LGBTQ and counselling around suicide and mental health (See PPT, The Trevor Project). Important to look at distinctions between different groups and issues, and take different evidence-based approaches to providing support – involve the community. For example, you should engage members of the relevant equity-deserving community as counsellors, advisors, evaluators etc.
- Proper action plans with concrete deliverables, regular monitoring and measurable indicators is essential to look at the impact of different projects and to see if the actions taken are making a difference.
- Actions for equity-deserving populations can done on different levels, at different levels of care (Example: The Kids Help Phone Stepped Care Model – see PPT) – Health promotion; Educational Information; Self-Directed Tools; Tools for Social Relationships; Moderated Peer Support; Volunteer Support; Professional Counselling; Multi-Session Support.
- Partnerships with the government, industry partners (in particular), and children’s rights partners are essential to support and advocate for equity-deserving populations.

Were there any recommendations and follow up?

Child helplines can use the following questions to reflect on their own services:

- What populations of youth are most at risk of negative outcomes in your country?
- Do these young people reach out to your helpline in the numbers you would expect, given the need and their population size?
- What do you think is the reason they do not reach out?
- What have you done to try to connect with youth from these populations?
- How could you better understand why these youth do not reach out?
- What could you try to do to increase the number of underserved youth connecting with your helpline services?

What key tools and resources did you or will you find helpful?

N/A



Day three sessions

Global Update Plenary



In this short plenary session, Child Helpline International will share global updates on the following areas of work:

- Core Quality Standards
- Data collection and data collection tool
- Programmes and projects including: Ukraine crisis response, CHIQUAL, LLESA and Empowering to Protect
- #Youth
- Learning and Knowledge
- eLearning
- Membership overview and updates
- HR

Objectives:

1. To share global updates from Child Helpline International.

Moderator:

- Patrick, Executive Director, Child Helpline International

Speakers:

- Child Helpline International staff



Day three sessions

What were your key learning outcomes?

- Based on feedback from some members/partners and new Chair, the format for this session was well received.
- The session also served as a good intro before the Regional Spaces started.

Were there any recommendations and follow up?

- Something to consider for next time is to add 10 minutes for Q&A (it was now pushed into the Regional Spaces).

What key tools and resources did you or will you find helpful?

N/A



Day three sessions

Workshop 1) The future of the #Youth at Child Helpline International



The origins of Child Helpline International's Youth Advisory Council, also known as #Youth, dates back to the 2008 IC in Jordan, where the first #youth representatives attended. It was then at the 2012 IC in Durban that participants agreed that a stronger focus on child participation was important for the membership. In 2014, the #Youth was born in order to increase youth participation and strengthen youth voices within the Child Helpline International and its network. The #Youth have been involved in various projects and have played different roles since 2014, including: 2 co-chairs sitting on the Supervisory Board as silent observers, conducting a research project on youth participation practices among the network, social media takeovers, Regional and International Consultations, thematic reports contribution, eLearning development, organisational strategy contribution, speakers at online meetings, events and campaigns.

In this IC session, we will reflect on the past and present purpose of the #Youth, and will also brainstorm new ideas for the future of the #Youth in various forms.

Objectives:

1. To better understand the role of #Youth from 2014-2022;
2. To discuss the needs of the members when it comes to youth participation; and,
3. To brainstorm the role and composition of the #Youth from 2023 onwards.

Moderator:

- Cathryn Anila, #Youth co-Chair, Child Helpline International

Speakers:

- Luuk Tuinier, #Youth member, Child Helpline International



Day three sessions

What were your key learning outcomes?

- Children and Youth participation is key for child helplines and need to be better addressed.
- #Youth strategies and #Youth activities need to be shared with members.
- There are still some questions around the best way to organise youth participation. An organisation based on region and global is more efficient.
- Learning from child helplines #Youth participation experiences are vital and necessary.
- Children and young people to be more implicated into all advocacy actions and voices their concerns.

Were there any recommendations and follow up?

- Introduce children and youth participation as one of the core pillar in the next MASP.
- Reorganise the #Youth as follow:
 1. Each child helpline is called to designate one youth
 2. Youth members from each region to be organised at the regional level as a group (select their chair, etc..)
 3. All regional members meet to form the global young advisory group (one or two per region) and select their bureau.
- Organise a learning exchange with Smile of the child and other child helplines to learn from their experiences.

What key tools and resources did you or will you find helpful?

N/A



Day three sessions

Workshop 2) Technology



In this session we discuss the use of technology solutions in the network.

We provide an opportunity for willing child helplines to present their success stories in terms of tech innovations. Focusing on the work conducted by the working group on Technological innovations, we present the results from the network survey on tech solutions; we discuss and identify key topics of interest for future peer-to-peer knowledge exchange sessions.

Objectives:

1. To showcase successful implementation of technological innovations by child helplines
2. To discuss the results of the network survey on the use of technological solutions by child helplines
3. To identify key topics of interest in terms of technological solutions
4. To discuss challenges and opportunities with current technological solutions

Moderator:

- Andrea Pereira, Head of Data and Research, Child Helpline International

Speakers:

- Andrea Pereira, Head of Data and Research, Child Helpline International
- Michael Marwa, Director of Tanzania National Child Helpline (C-Sema) & Anna Juusela, CEO of We Encourage & Valtteri Tuppurainen, Director of Strategic Partnerships
- Deepak Tewari, CEO, Privately SA
- Dr. Maryam Ibrahim Al Malki – Qatar AMAN Protection and Rehabilitation Centre – MENA Deputy Regional Representative
- Jim Fruchterman, Founder/CEO, Tech Matters
- Khaled Mahmud, ICT Manager, ICT Innovation, UNICEF



Day three sessions

What were your key learning outcomes?

- Multiple examples of usages of technological solutions for child helplines were presented
- AI can support the work of counsellors and facilitate the delivery of counselling and referral services (example of AINO, C-Sema Tanzania)
- AI can be used safely and confidentially to prevent invasion of privacy and potentially harmful behavior to empower children to be able to protect themselves (example of Privately SA)
- Technology can be used to increase access to child helplines and response by child helplines' counsellor, increasing the number of children counselled and the quality of counselling (example of Aselo)
- Technology can support the work of counsellors from case registration, case management, quality analysis, referrals, reporting and dashboard (example of Open Child Help Line system)

Were there any recommendations and follow up?

- Interested child helplines are welcome to reach out to any of the presenters to learn more about the technology presented
- Continue to promote Aselo in the network
- Organise a webinar presenting Privately to the whole network in more detail. Privately SA is open to making the technology available as a pilot to all interested child helplines

What key tools and resources did you or will you find helpful?

[Privately SA.](#)

[Aselo.](#)



Day three sessions

Workshop 3) Children & Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing



Research shows that boys and young men are less likely than girls and women to seek mental health help for depression, substance addiction, and stressful life events, including anxiety and trauma. This is reflected in the data surrounding child helpline contacts, with girls accounting for 42.1% of all counselling contacts whilst boys only accounting for 33.4%.

This session will explore in more depth, why there is such a discrepancy between male and female contacts to child helplines, the mental health vulnerabilities boys and young men face, the barriers in reaching out for help and how child helplines can best support them.

Objectives:

1. Identify a set of core issues relating to boys/young men's mental health;
2. Exchange practices, experiences, theory and thoughts on how to support boys mental health and encourage them to reach out to child helpline services
3. Document and define ideas, good practices and discussions as a basis for upcoming capacity-building initiatives.

Moderator:

- Angharad Wells, Project Coordinator, Child Helpline International
- Laura Holliday, Learning Coordinator, Child Helpline International

Speakers:

- Karolina Jackson, Counselor, Bris



Day three sessions

What were your key learning outcomes?

Key learning outcomes

- Most child helplines present experienced far greater contacts from girls than boys. However, research shows that generally boys are less likely to reach out to mental health services in general and when detected, mental health condition is generally more severe. Boys overrepresented in contacts for suicide, violence and crime-related contacts.
- Discrepancy in contacts between boys and girls included reasons such as dominant norms of masculinity, societal attitudes, boys not encouraged to be attentive to their own needs and mental health, feelings of anger and hostility more accepted than vulnerability and sadness and to ask for or to seek help is seen as risk of losing personal status.

Promotion of service and campaigning

- It's important to target boys (and indeed children in general) in online environments where they are present, for example, TikTok, Telegram and online gaming communities. Many child helplines mentioned they are finding success with targeting gaming communities and platforms.
- Awareness-raising campaigns have helped tackle the stigma that surrounds boys' mental health. Engaging with male role models (influencers and celebrities) has worked well for some child helplines.
- Coordination among referral networks is critical when trying to dispel typical toxic masculine stereotypes.
- Many child helplines faced difficulty in sustaining male contacts after an awareness-raising campaign. There is a need to tackle wider societal approaches and stigmas surrounding male mental health.

Counselling Techniques and Approaches

- Boys tend to prefer reaching out over chat or messaging channels than via call.
- Using a strength-based approach can be helpful for many boys. A number of child helplines mentioned they have since looked back through chatlogs of contacts with boys to analyse methodology and what counselling techniques work best. For example, some child helplines mentioned that boys generally respond better to direct questions as opposed to open-ended ones.
- Boys often call on behalf of others – or talk about this issue in reference to others - whereas girls call for themselves and are more likely to frame it from their perspective. Boys are often solution-driven, whereas girls require more space to discuss feelings. This can mean they tend to search for self-help guides or find their answers online rather than reach out to child helplines. This could be part of the reason why global data shows fewer calls from boys than girls. It is therefore important that child helplines have strong resource/self-help pages on their website where it is clearly outlined what the child can expect from the child helpline.
- Feedback surveys are valuable in analysing how the child perceived the counselor and their support.
- There can sometimes be a disconnect between local authorities and child helplines' approaches to managing certain cases and it is important to streamline and work together on certain issues. It was mentioned also that child helplines can learn from local authorities who are 'getting it right'.

Staff Representation and Training

- It is important to have a diverse team. Boys don't often ask to speak with a male counsellor, whereas girls often ask to speak with a female counsellor.

Were there any recommendations and follow up?

It would be interesting to look into how many boys versus girls make use of child helplines' self-help tools on their websites. Did they receive all the information they needed, and therefore they did not feel a need to contact a child helpline?

What key tools and resources did you or will you find helpful?

[Childline UK's "We All Feel It" campaign.](#)



Day three sessions

Regional Space 1) Africa



These sessions are an opportunity for members to come together in their regional groups, and to discuss aims and ambitions, projects and plans, advocacy initiatives and other activities that can be taken forward following the IC 2022.

The agenda is guided by each Regional Representative and Deputy Regional Representative in consultation with their regions.

Objectives:

1. Updates on regional programs
2. Initiating regional initiatives
3. Planning the regional consultations
4. Learning on Fund Raising
5. Preliminary Items for Regional Consultations – 2023

Moderator:

- Florence Chileshe-Nkhuwa, Regional Representative Africa
- Michael Marwa, Deputy Regional Representative Africa
- Richard Ombono, Director of Programmes, Child Helpline International

Speakers:

- Group discussion



Day three sessions

What were your key learning outcomes?

Updates on regional programmes: The implementation of the programs across Africa and the East and Southern Africa in particular needs increased intervention, piloting and testing from members to ensure that the programs remain relevant, effective and sustainable. The communication on the implementation of programmes should be presented in a short and concise manner in monthly digests to enable all members to remain updated on the programmes.

Initiating regional and joint activities: The implementation of regional programs aside, there is a need for joint regional initiatives which tackle common challenges across the regions and often across borders. Challenges like child marriage, FGM and VAC are instances that need to consider larger cross regional initiatives. The Africa region will be looking toward starting initiatives that cut across regions and themes accordingly.

Planning for regional consultations: The planning for the regional consultation for Africa in 2023 has started and will be held in Botswana in 2023.

Learning on Fund Raising: A cross regional learning on planning and fund raising including for participation to the IC was initiated. Starting with the learned experience from Childline Helpline Zambia, experience exchanges will be organized for the members to share practical knowledge and experience on fund raising.

Were there any recommendations and follow up?

Preliminary Items for Regional Consultations – 2023:

- Regional initiatives on Child Marriage, FCM and VAC
- Data and optimization of data for evidence-based advocacy
- Experience exchange on fund raising

What key tools and resources did you or will you find helpful?

N/A



Day three sessions

Regional Space 2) Americas & The Caribbean



These sessions are an opportunity for members to come together in their regional groups, and to discuss aims and ambitions, projects and plans, advocacy initiatives and other activities that can be taken forward following the IC 2022.

The agenda is guided by each Regional Representative and Deputy Regional Representative in consultation with their regions.

Objectives:

1. To briefly share regional updates.
2. Forward planning: regional advocacy needs and planning.
3. Forward thinking: regional learning needs and planning.

Moderator:

- Errol Zebeda, Regional Representative Americas & The Caribbean
- Diego Riveros, Deputy Regional Representative Americas & The Caribbean
- Andrea Pereira, Head of Data and Research, Child Helpline International

Speakers:

- Group discussion



Day three sessions

What were your key learning outcomes?

The Chair of this session was Errol Zebeda, the Regional Representative for the Americas & the Caribbean, who joined remotely from Aruba.

Presentations were made by the representatives from Chile and Aruba:

1. CHILE

- Chile focused on some innovative fund-raising strategies and has explored the idea of having two levels within its membership. One level of members would have free access to its resources and the other would have to pay a charge for access.
- Additionally, there was a second presentation that provided excellent resource tips on how to deal with suicide because of its prevalence among youth. There was emphasis on how to engage team members within the helpline to address each case as its own because though it may be “suicide” that is being dealt with, each case is different. The presenter used the phrase “You can’t swim in the same river twice.”

2. ARUBA

- Aruba emphasized its dynamic relationship with its volunteers. They invest heavily in volunteer training which enhances the ability of the volunteers to work effectively on the helpline but also provides support for these volunteers in their individual lives. Teachers, for example, have indicated that their improved understanding of issues that affect children and young people that they get through the helpline training, allows them to approach issues that are presented in the classroom with more capacity to handle them. An example was shared of an all expenses paid villa weekend for team members. Aruba spoke of high levels of volunteer retention – for instance 8 – 10 years.
- Aruba spoke of expanding its services to neighbouring territories of St. Eustatius and Saba with an intention to broaden its accessibility to additional neighbours.
- Aruba has secured funding from some “unusual” partners such as the country’s airports authority and the national power company. They have also developed a knowledge based centre and are leveraging this innovation to get funding.

Outside of the main presentations there were useful interventions from the participants. The NGO in Trinidad & Tobago that operates the child helpline in that country, for instance, has managed to secure funding on an annual basis for the past ten (10) years from the Government of Trinidad & Tobago. They also mentioned that as a source of raising funds they share data with some persons who request for a cost.

Were there any recommendations and follow up?

N/A

What key tools and resources did you or will you find helpful?

N/A



Day three sessions

Regional Space 3) Asia-Pacific



These sessions are an opportunity for members to come together in their regional groups, and to discuss aims and ambitions, projects and plans, advocacy initiatives and other activities that can be taken forward following the IC 2022.

The agenda is guided by each Regional Representative and Deputy Regional Representative in consultation with their regions.

Objectives:

1. To briefly share regional updates.
2. Forward planning: regional advocacy needs and planning.
3. Forward thinking: regional learning needs and planning.

Moderator:

- Madhav Pradhan, Regional Representative Asia-Pacific
- Richard Ombono, Director of Programmes, Child Helpline International

Speakers:

- Group discussion



Day three sessions

What were your key discussion points?

- Tony Fitzgerald will take on role of Interim Deputy Regional Representative for Asia Pacific until the next Regional Consultation.
- Discussion surrounding importance of advocacy with Government, and CHI's role in facilitating and advocating for the establishment of new helplines. UNICEF should also continue to play a large role within this and work alongside CHI to spotlight child helplines at the country level. It was also highlighted the CHI should take a more proactive role in approaching UNICEF in countries without a child helpline. Some members mentioned idea to include policy forum or space to invite Government Representatives to future International Consultations/Regional Consultations (or other similar forum). This would also provide opportunity for Governments to see the value of child helplines, to witness other Governments funding child helplines and understand importance of data, quality and role of child helplines in the child protection system.
- Members highlighted previous value of in-person peer-to-peer knowledge exchange programs whereby 'more experienced' child helplines pair with a 'less experienced' helpline. Some questions were raised about whether CHI should play a role in bringing back such learning opportunities.
- Members highlighted desire to have a space for the region to connect and exchange knowledge. South Asia Initiative to End Violence Against Children (SAIEVAC) platform was mentioned as one option. It was suggested to explore others existing regional bodies and initiatives.
- Members highlighted importance of having a Regional Manager for Asia Pacific in post and have asked CHI to outline urgent actions to be taken by the Regional Manager. Members will explore the possibility of funding a secondment from one of the child helplines (Australia, Nepal or Thailand) or through fundraising.
- Member updates:
- Bangladesh: Started 2010. Due to Covid, staff are working remotely, which presents challenges with call routing. Many contacts relate to mental health.
- Philippines: Changes in ABS-CBN network meant that the helpline lost some key staff but did not close. Receiving funding from UNICEF. Programmatic focus has been on Child Protection and Mental Health. Project MIND – Free psychosocial counselling through a hotline, for which they have partnered with another organisation to provide psychological services for free (normally very expensive and inaccessible) and training school leaders in mental health. Next year, they are launching a new campaign focussed on child protection, and community-based psychosocial support.
- Malaysia: Childline 15999 is now operated under the Ministry of Welfare. Childline Foundation has now launched a new child helpline called Buddy bear. (Not yet a CHI member).
- Tajikistan: Working to increase capacity of local authorities. Focus of work includes child prisoners and victims of torture. Advocacy – report to UN on Child Rights.
- Uzbekistan: Announced the creation of a new child helpline alongside the Ministry of Public Education. Likely to be an NGO but funded by the Government.
- Kazakhstan: Operational for 15 years, and has a staff of 12 professional psychologists. It offers WhatsApp, chat and phone. January riots saw increase in demand and there is ongoing stress amongst young people about situation in the region. Currently undertaking a lot of outreach via schools, outreach centres and social media. Advertising campaign against domestic violence.
- Nepal: Good partnership with the Government and Ministry for Women, Children and Elderly. UNICEF is supporting with scale-up.
- Thailand: Covid meant a 45% loss of income and the child helpline had to access emergency funding reserves. Despite increase in contacts, no additional funding was achieved and were unable to meet demand. Walk-in centres were as impacted by Government curfew. Back on track this year and discussing how to prevent difficulties happening again if another crisis were to happen in the future.

Were there any recommendations and follow up?

- A ToR for the Regional Manager for Asia Pacific has been drafted and shared with members in the region for feedback. CHI to continue to pursue funding opportunities for Regional Manager position.
- CHI to look into platforms where members in the region can communicate and exchange knowledge.

What key tools and resources did you or will you find helpful?

N/A



Day three sessions

Regional Space 4) Europe



These sessions are an opportunity for members to come together in their regional groups, and to discuss aims and ambitions, projects and plans, advocacy initiatives and other activities that can be taken forward following the IC 2022.

The agenda is guided by each Regional Representative and Deputy Regional Representative in consultation with their regions.

Objectives:

1. To briefly share regional updates.
2. Forward planning: regional advocacy needs and planning.
3. Forward thinking: regional learning needs and planning.

Moderator:

- Magnus Jägerskog, Regional Representative Europe
- Piji Protosaltis, Deputy Regional Representative Europe
- Ronja Ulvfot, Regional Manager Europe, Child Helpline International

Speakers:

- Group discussion



Day three sessions

What were your key learning outcomes?

- **Funding:** Child helplines in Europe have increasing concern regarding funding and the effects of the economic crisis. There are risks regarding the sustainability of child helplines, including some that operate 116 111, in particular since the workload of many child helplines has increased during and after the pandemic. There are concerns related to the possible decrease in government funding due to the economic crisis. Child helplines want a specific fund set up by the European Commission for operating 116 111, and are exploring further partnerships with private donors (companies and individuals). Private fundraising and diversification of funding streams will be key, as well as focus on effective methodologies for measuring impact.
- **Ukraine:** The situation for our member in Ukraine, La Strada, continues to be difficult. Counsellors are operating from home and outside of the country, and there are concerns about long-term funding for next year. Huge concerns about the safety and mental health of children in Ukraine. Other child helplines see a trend of decline in mental health among Ukrainian children now that some time has passed. Child helpline network to provide any help they can through resources, skills etc. Example: Børns Vilkår did a public fundraising campaign for Ukraine, which was donated to CHI to support La Strada.
- **Text-based counselling:** There has been a trend shift in mode of contact towards text-based counselling for children and young people in Europe, which is more time consuming to respond to. Questions posed if the quality of the counselling is affected. Text-based counselling appears to have benefits around accessibility – for some children, and some issues, it is easier to ask for help through text. Questions posed what the similarities and differences are in counselling approach between voice-based and text-based counselling – network to collect all available information and research on the topic, and explore possibilities for further research.
- **Volunteer management:** Many, if not most, child helplines work with volunteers in some capacity. The structure differs between different child helplines, and so does training programs, management and work evaluation approaches. Best practices across the network has not been explored – network to collect relevant information and research, and explore possibilities for further research.
- **116 111 issues:** Roaming issues related 116 111 has become a large issue in the face of the Ukraine crisis. Many Ukrainian children keep their SIM cards when displaced in other countries, and 116 111 often does not work in these cases. This has been an issue for some time, but the issue has now become more urgent. More information and joint advocacy is needed.
- **Awareness-raising campaigns:** Plans by CHI to coordinate two campaigns to raise awareness of child helplines and the work of child helplines – one for Ukrainian children and relevant stakeholders (2022), and one related to the 116 111 number for child helplines operating this number (2023).
- **Counselling and impact:** Discussion if there is a need for change in approach by child helplines to increase impact on children's safeguarding and wellbeing. Should we work more with the system around the child, including caregivers to enhance the wellbeing of the caregiver to also enhance the wellbeing of the child. The impact may be limited if we only work with the child. Some members already work with this more systemic approach.

Were there any recommendations and follow up?

- All members who provide services targeted to Ukrainian children have been asked to share this information with La Strada Ukraine, and members are encouraged to consider any support in terms of resources, partnerships or skills they can provide.
- Collect research, evidence and good practices available for text-based counselling/chat.
- Conduct research to map volunteers, skilled volunteers and non-volunteers' approach to find good practices around training, management and evaluation etc.
- Celebration/advocacy campaign on 116 111 will be conducted in 2023 (16 years of 116 111).
- Separate awareness-raising campaign of child helpline services for Ukrainian children to be conducted.

What key tools and resources did you or will you find helpful?

N/A



Day three sessions

Regional Space 5) Middle East and Northern Africa



These sessions are an opportunity for members to come together in their regional groups, and to discuss aims and ambitions, projects and plans, advocacy initiatives and other activities that can be taken forward following the IC 2022.

The agenda is guided by each Regional Representative and Deputy Regional Representative in consultation with their regions.

Objectives:

1. To briefly share regional updates.
2. Forward planning: regional advocacy needs and planning.
3. Forward thinking: regional learning needs and planning.

Moderator:

- Ohaila Shomar, Regional Representative Middle East and Northern Africa
- Maryam Al Malki, Deputy Regional Representative Middle East and Northern Africa
- Helen Mason, Director of Operations, Child Helpline International

Speakers:

- Group discussion



Day three sessions

What were your key learning outcomes?

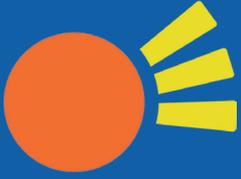
- UAE: a lot of work underway to strengthen the child helpline in Sharjah, especially in referral mechanisms and data collection. And there is an initiative to start a federalized service across the United Arab Emirates.
- Algeria: Nada shared updates on its campaigning efforts.
- Updates from CHI:
- ◊ Partnership with Zain. Together with members in Bahrain, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Sudan, Child Helpline International is renewing its MoU with Zain, objectives are focused on technology, capacity building, and scaling up child helplines.
- ◊ Search for funding for a Regional Manager for the MENA region, based in the region, perhaps with funding from the Qatari child helpline.
- ◊ Efforts should also be directed to countries with fragile child protection systems such as Lebanon, Tunisia, and Iraq, together with UNICEF.

Were there any recommendations and follow up?

- Reignite the MENA child helplines communication channels. There is an existing WhatsApp group, new colleagues are encouraged to join!
- Continue the search for a new MENA Regional Manager to drive regional needs and ambitions.
- Continue lobbying with UNICEF MENARO to secure a regional strategy.

What key tools and resources did you or will you find helpful?

- The focus on technology at the IC had been helpful, and insight into the software developed by SAWA Palestine.



BRIS



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