



**Report on**

**2<sup>ND</sup> ARAB MENA REGION RESEARCH NETWORK WORKSHOP  
FOR CHILDREN UNDER DIFFICULT CIRCUMSTANCES**

On the themes of  
Violence against Children  
and  
Safety of Children "on roads, at home, at school"

2 & 3 August 2004  
Amman - Jordan

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## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

We wish to express our appreciation to Childwatch International (CWI) and the Norwegian Center for International Cooperation in Higher Education (NOVA) for their support, cooperation and encouragement.

The workshop was organized with The Center for Development in Primary Health Care(CDPHC)-Palestine and The Information and Research Centre at King Hussein Foundation (IRCKHF)-Jordan.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The establishment of the Arab MENA Research Network for Children Under Difficult Circumstances was initiated by the researchers' belief to promote and strengthen research among the MENA Arab region and ensure the rights of children under difficult circumstances, such as children affected by violence, working children, refugee children, disabled children, children deprived of family care (street children and orphans), and juvenile delinquents.

In the first workshop, members and participants in the Network, thought it was necessary as a Network to partner with Academics, Researchers, NGOs, research centres, and the child as a key-partner and use research as their basis to build the capacities of the institutions working with and for children whether through enhancing partnerships and relations, improving services provided to children, or increasing funding opportunities for institutions.

Two workshops took place for this Network: the first was held in Amman, Jordan, in October 2003 on the theme "Child Labor" and funded by OAK Foundation (Geneva); with the commended efforts of Bayti Foundation in Morocco during which IRC was elected the focal point for the Network and also the electronic website which is one of the major outputs for this network. The second workshop also took place in Amman, Jordan, in August 2004 on the theme "Violence against Children" and "Safety of Children (at home, on roads and at schools)", and was funded by Childwatch International and The Norwegian Center for International Cooperation in Higher Education (NOVA)-Norway; with the commended efforts of Child Development in Primary Health Institute and the participation of the network partners from the Arab MENA region and Norway working on children protection issues.

During the first workshop, participants reflected upon their experiences in tackling issues of "Child Labor" and the challenges they faced; challenges arising out of lack of statistics, studies, and databases in their respective countries. The need to build institutional capacities; minimize dangerous working conditions; promote and deepen awareness and integrate international and Arab agreements into respective countries' laws and regulations was underlined. Furthermore, emphasis was placed on the importance of stimulating governments' into carrying out their responsibilities in the provision of support and training.

During the second workshop, members of the Network from: Morocco, Egypt, Lebanon, Palestine, Sudan, and Jordan, along with delegates of research institutes from Norway participated in a two-day workshop where they shared experiences and discussed critical issues that children are facing in the member countries; particular attention was given to the need for policy makers to take a more substantial role in adopting policy measures to tackle these issues. Furthermore participants discussed the need to take up a joint research project with the MENA Network partners on one of the two above-mentioned themes, however, discussion is still in progress.

The Network shall be working in partnership with Childwatch International and NOVA from Norway (Funders), Bayti Establishment (NGO in Morocco), Chapin Hall Center for Children at the University of Chicago, Dartington Social Research Center (UK), [Center for Development in Primary Health Care/AIQuds](#) University, and Hope Village in Egypt which will be the organizer for the third workshop, plus other regional and local organizations.

## CONTRIBUTORS TO THE ENRICHMENT OF THE WORKSHOP COMPONENTS, MATERIAL AND SUBSTANCE

The following partners attended the 2<sup>nd</sup> Arab MENA Child Research Network Workshop, and contributed to the substantial information in this report:

### International Delegates of CHILDWATCH INTERNATIONAL, NOVA and NOSEB (Key Institutions of Childwatch International)

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**Report on 2<sup>nd</sup> Arab MENA Region Research Network Workshop for Children Under Difficult Circumstances**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

This report documents the proceedings and recommendations of the second workshop for the Arab MENA Region Child Research Network that was held in Amman on 2-3 August 2004, and highlights the progress of the network, the workshop objectives and structure, the main outcomes of workgroup discussions, and workshop recommendations.

### **WORKSHOP OBJECTIVES:**

The workshop was set to attain the following main objectives:

- Renew commitment and support for the established Arab MENA Child Research Network.
- Share knowledge, experiences and ideas among participants on child research related themes (Violence and safety)
- Develop joint research initiatives among the members of the network.
- Promote link with regional and international child research and development institutions (Childwatch International, NOVA, NOSEB, Dartington Social Research Center, Chapin Hall Center, and others as previously mentioned).
- Provide an overview of Childwatch work including the criteria for recruiting new key institution.
- Acquaint participants with the themes and objectives of the 2005 Oslo conference.
- Develop needs and priorities of research issues related to violence against children and child safety.
- Develop a follow up plan and recommendations for activating the Arab research network including fund raising strategies.

### **WORKSHOP STRUCTURE**

#### **Workshop Focus**

The workshop consisted of a set of invited presentations and a group-work breakout session.

Topics of interest listed in the workshop invitation included, but were not limited to:

- Violence against Children ( 0-18 years old)
- Safety of Children "on Roads, at Home, at School".

The two themes were selected by the Network partners for the following reasons:

- The significance of the suggested two themes for many Arab countries;
- The increase in the percentage of child casualties and deaths in the MENA region in light of the proposed two themes;
- The lack of research studies and statistics on the proposed two themes.

#### **Planned Outcomes and Benefits**

The planned outcome of the workshop included the following:

- Obtain feedback on the MENA Research Network Profile and website;
- Present position papers;
- Propose a joint research project for the network;
- Set network research priorities;
- Suggest new potential member institutions for the Network;
- Set a follow-up-plan and fund-raising strategy;
- Elect a new theme and host for next year's workshop for the Arab MENA Child research network;
- Suggest Network members interested to become key institutions of Childwatch International;
- Potential participants for the 2005 Oslo conference<sup>1</sup>;
- Record workshop proceedings in a Workshop Report.

For more details please refer to the workshop agenda (appendix A)

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<sup>1</sup> A conference that will be held in Oslo in 2005 and organized by the Norwegian researchers of the University of Oslo (UiO), the Norwegian Social Research (NOVA) and the Childwatch International Research Network (CWI) to see modern childhood and youth in a global perspective( see <http://childhoods2005.uio.no/> )

**Sequence:**

The workshop consisted of invited presentations and a workgroup breakout session.

**Position Papers:**

Most presentations were based on position papers scheduled in the first and second days of the workshop to report on the progress on the recommendations of the first Network workshop and the steps taken to activate the Network. Furthermore, participating institutions from the Arab member countries, Norway, and Jordan presented papers on Childhood Research highlighting the themes of "Violence against Children" and "Safety of Children".

**Workgroup Session:**

The Workgroup Session took place on day (2) and continued for two hours, to select a new joint research project for the children of member countries. The participants were divided into two working groups where a *moderator* and *scribe* led and recorded the meetings respectively. The groups brain stormed to define the priorities for the joint research topics among the member countries, and define the needs and challenges.

Following the breakout session, each workgroup moderator presented a summary of the workgroup's outcomes, here are some of the salient points raised during the session:

**Joint Critical Issues among MENA Region Countries:**

Workgroups (1)	Workgroup (2)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• False parental practices and ignorance.</li> <li>• School Violence and accidents.</li> <li>• Domestic violence</li> <li>• Poverty                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Emotional abuse;</li> <li>– False parental practices;</li> <li>– Education;</li> <li>– Policies and strategies.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>Major Issues:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Capacity Building of Staff / Workers dealing with Violence against children in general</li> <li>▪ Compiling information and data from NGOs for the purpose of knowledge and development to help in training, further research and dissemination.</li> </ul> <p><b>Other research ideas:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Factors contributing to violence in the Arab Countries.</li> <li>▪ HIV/AIDS and Children</li> <li>▪ Beliefs, attitudes and values towards child abuse.</li> <li>▪ Comprehensive tools, measures and methodologies.</li> </ul>

**Expected Challenges:**

Workgroup (1)	Workgroup (2)
<p><b>To conduct joint research Projects, we need:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocacy;</li> <li>• Identify the best practice approach;</li> <li>• Capacity Building / training;</li> <li>• Identify the Indicators;</li> <li>• Set Clear Objectives;</li> <li>• Partnerships;</li> <li>• Clear Assumptions;</li> <li>• Budget.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Choosing a common issue and defining the issue per country.</li> <li>▪ Commitment (the Network Members)</li> <li>▪ Transforming the findings into proper interventions.</li> <li>▪ Advocacy for policy makers.</li> <li>▪ Research skills</li> <li>▪ Fundraising</li> </ul>

**Closing Session:**

Participants were urged to set up a follow-up action plan. Mrs. Yaghi, IRC Executive Director discussed funding opportunities for the network and explained the need to choose a new host and theme for the third workshop. Dr. Badri from Egypt welcomed the idea of hosting the third Arab MENA Child Research Network to be held next year in Egypt.

The participants presented their impressions & evaluation on the workshop before the workshop came to an end.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The following recommendations were gathered from the suggestions and perceptions of the participants during the workshop which mainly emphasize on the importance of working together for activating and empowering the role of the network.

### **Recommendation 1: Conducting a Joint Research Project**

Workshop participants agreed on the necessity of conducting joint research projects that will tackle common issues; putting in the limelight the achievements and importance of The Network.

**Recommendation 2: The Research Project should address an important problem within the member countries, set strategy and capacity building needs and tools for measurement and implementation.** There is a need to set priorities for research in member countries and to include research components and training to service providers when designing the implementation tools for the research, bearing in mind prevention of the problem as well as remedial measures.

**Recommendation 3: Childhood Research should be driven by children's needs and research goals.** Promising a comprehensive multi-dimensional study for the children where the problem is researched from different perspectives.

### **Recommendation 4: Emphasize on the importance of information dissemination through the web and electronic telecommunication**

Continued dialogue and communication is essential for strengthening the ties amongst member institutions. The Networks' Website shall contribute greatly towards this; thus, the host should adopt measures that ensure a speedy completion.

**Recommendation 5: Mapping on-going research and actions in the Arab world** as part of sharing experiences and following-up on the up-to-date achievements of each member's relevant country pertaining to child research and policies, participants agreed to provide updates that will be shared on the Website.

### **Recommendation 6: Conducting Capacity Building Sessions for Member institutions**

Capacity building was a highlighted need during the discussions of the two workshops. With much respected experts partnering in this net, the participants unanimously suggested to organize capacity building workshops among the member institutions, benefiting from the knowledge of experienced partners.

### **Recommendation 7: A Criteria has been set for the selection of new members to the network**

New members should be research-oriented institutions, basing their programs and policies upon research.

### **Recommendation 8: Establish a taskforce to carry out these recommendations**

The taskforce shall be accountable to an Advisory Panel, and shall work with a steering committee to help raise funds and carry out the necessary arrangements for sustaining the network. A coordinator should be hired in order to coordinate between all parties involved.

### **Recommendation 9: Look for Funding Opportunities to ensure sustainability**

Investments in human, software, and hardware resources will be required over time. To realize the full potential of such investments, we need to maintain sustainability for the network. Thus, a long-term support for this network will be required.

**Recommendation 10: Participants were urged to set up a follow-up action plan, and to choose a new host and theme for the third workshop.** Dr. Badri from Egypt gracefully welcomed the idea for hosting the third Arab MENA Child Research Network to be held next year in Egypt.

**APPENDICES**  
**Appendix (A)**

**Information and Research Center  
 (IRC) AT King Hussein  
 Foundation (KHF)**

**Al-Quds University  
 Center for Development in Primary  
 Health Care (CDPHC)**

In Cooperation and Support from Childwatch International  
 Workshop No. (2)  
 on MENA Region Arab Research Network  
 for "Children under Difficult Circumstances".  
 (Violence against Children, Safety of Children "on Roads, at Home, at School")

**Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> – Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> August, 2004  
 at Days Inn Hotel,  
 La Luna Ball Room "Section A"  
 Amman - Jordan  
Workshop Agenda**

<b>Time and Day</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Day (1): Monday 2/8/2004</b>	
08:30 - 09:00 a.m.	<b>Registration.</b>
09:00 - 09:15 a.m.	<b>Opening Ceremony:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National Anthem.</li> <li>• T.V Spot ( Child Rights Anecdote)</li> <li>• Welcoming Note:</li> <li>• Mrs. Hayat Malhas Yaghi - Executive Director, IRC / KHF, Jordan.</li> </ul>
09:15 - 09:45 a.m.	<b>Managerial Session:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Managerial arrangements:</li> <li>• Ms.Nimet Shukri, Administrative Assistant, IRC / KHF, Jordan.</li> <li>• Naming the workshop facilitator.</li> <li>• Demonstration of work methodology and program (facilitator).</li> <li>• Questions &amp; inquiries.</li> </ul>
<b>Day (1) Session (1)</b>	<b>General Session</b>  <b>CHAIR OF THE SESSION: DR MOHAMMAD SHAHEEN – ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF PUBLIC HEALTH, DIRECTOR / CENTER FOR DEVELOPMENT IN PRIMARY HEALTH CARE, ALQUDS UNIVERSITY - PALESTINE</b>
09:45 - 10:15 a.m.	<b>Introducing participants and workshop objectives.</b> Dr Mohammad Shaheen, Director-Center for Development in Primary Health Care, AlQuds University - Palestine
10:15 - 10:30 a.m.	<b>Vision of Child Watch International and Oslo International Conference 2005.</b> Dr. Randi Waerdahl, Managing Director, Childwatch Int.
10:30 - 10:45 a.m.	<b>Presentation of The First Workshop "Child Labor" Report:</b> Ms. Hadeel Abu-Shama - Researcher, IRC / KHF.
10:45 - 11:00 a.m.	<b>Steps achieved for activating the network:</b> Mr. Ayed Tayyem - IT Officer-in-Charge, IRC / KHF.

<b>Time and Day</b>	<b>Description</b>
11:00 - 11:15 a.m.	<b>Announcement of the Outcomes for the First Survey on Child Labor in Jordan:</b> Mr. Kamal Saleh - Department of Statistics (DOS), Jordan.
11:15 - 11:30 a.m.	<b>Open discussion.</b>
11:30 - 11:40 a.m.	<b>Coffee Break.</b>
<b>Day (1) Session (2)</b>	<b>Childhood Research: Priorities, Opportunities, Challenges: <u>Presentation of the participating countries experiences</u></b> Chair of the Session: Prof. Abdel Baset Mirghani, Childhood Research Center - Al-Fanar Institution, Sudan.
11:40 – 12:10 p.m.	<b>Children wellbeing – the political economy of children</b> Dr. Jens Qvortrup, Norwegian Group.
12:10 – 01:15 p.m.	<b>Palestine: 15 mnts:</b> Prof. Zeyad Abdeen – Childhood Safety. <b>Lebanon: 15 mnts:</b> Mr. Fadi Yaraq, Executive Director, Rene Moawad Foundation , A Study on " The National Experience for Children and Youth in Difficult Circumstances in Lebanon (Qudmos)". <b>Morocco: 15 mnts:</b> Dr. Najat Mjid, General Director, Bayti Foundation " Violence against Children – Bayti's Experience". <b>Sudan: 15 mnts:</b> Prof. Abdel Baset Mirghani, Childhood Research Center - Al-Fanar Institution " The Psychology of Sanguine Conflicts and their Impact on Social Coexistence".
01:15 - 02:00 p.m.	<b>Open Discussion</b>
02:00 - 03:00 p.m.	<b>Lunch</b>
<b>Day (1) Session (3)</b>	Chair of the Session: Dr. Muntaha Gharaybeh, Dean of Nursing School, Aal-Albayt University, Member of Research Committee, IRC/KHF.
03:00 - 04:00 p.m.	<b>Jordan: 15 mnts:</b> Ms. Lara Hussein, The National Council for Family Affairs, "A Study on Disadvantaged Children in Jordan". <b>Jordan: 15 mnts:</b> Colonel Fadel Hmoud, Family Protection Unit, Public Security Department" A Study on Children Abuse, Prevention and Therapy". <b>Jordan: 15 mnts:</b> Mrs. Lubna Qadomi, Jordan River Foundation, " A Study on Child abuse, The Reality and Challenges". <b>Jordan: 15 mnts:</b> Huda Hammori and Wafa Amayre, Researchers , IRC/KHF, "A Study on Children Conditions in Greater Amman".
04:00 - 04:15 p.m.	<b>Open Discussion</b>
04:15 - 04:30 p.m.	<b>Coffee Break</b>
<b>Day (1) Session (4)</b>	Chair of the Session: Prof. Zeyad Abdeen, Palestine
04:30 - 5:40 p.m.	<b>Palestine: 15 mnts:</b> Prof. Kholud Al Dajani, "A Study on Children Accidents. <b>Egypt: 15 mnts:</b> Dr. Abla Al-Badri, General Director of Hope Village, "A Field Study on Street Girls/ Causes & Results" <b>Norway: 20 mnts:</b> Dr. Mona Sandbaek, "Child Research – NOVA Experience"

<b>Time and Day</b>	<b>Description</b>
05:40 - 06:00 p.m.	<b>Open Discussion</b>
<b>Day (2) Tuesday 3/8/2004</b>	
<b>Session (1)</b>	<b>Introduction on “Violence against Children” and “Safety of Children on Roads, at Home, at School”, Facts and Figures.</b> Chair of Session: Mr. Fadi Yaraq, Executive Director, Rene Moawad Foundation, Lebanon.
09:00 - 10:00 a.m.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• T.V Spots on violence against children and Safety of children at schools.</li> <li>• Presentation of "Cases of Violence against Children" presented by Dr. Mo'men Al Hadidi, Head of National Center of Forensic Medicine, Jordan.</li> <li>• Presentation of "Children Accidents in Jordan", presented by Mr. Zuhair Abdel-Karim, Lt. Col, Director of Studies and Development in Jordan Directory of Civil Defense.</li> <li>• Overview on Violence against Children, Safety of Children "on Roads, at Home, at School", Facts and Figures, presented by Majd Hammad and Maysa Qurashi, Researchers , IRC/KHF.</li> </ul>
10:00 - 10:45 a.m.	<b>NOVA &amp; Childwatch International perspective(s) on violence against children and child safety, and facilitating joint research ideas for the network.</b> Dr. Anne Solberg – NOVA
10:45 - 11:00 a.m.	<b>Open Discussion.</b>
11:00 - 11:30 a.m.	<b>Coffee Break.</b>
<b>Day (2) Session (2)</b>	<b>Discussion of Joint Research Projects /Group work</b> Chair of the Session: Dr Mohammad Shaheen – Associate Professor of Public Health, Director / Center for Development in Primary Health Care, AlQuds University - Palestine
11:30 - 01:00 p.m.	<b>Group Work:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion of Joint Research Projects on Violence against Children, Safety of Children.</li> <li>• Discussion of Priorities and the Role of Network</li> </ul>
01:00 - 01:30 p.m.	<b>Presentation of group work</b>
01:30 - 02:30 p.m.	<b>Lunch</b>
<b>Day (2) Session (3)</b> 02:30 - 03:30 p.m.	<b>General Session:</b> Chair of the Session: Dr. Abla Al-Badri, General Director, Hope Village, Egypt. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suggesting a follow-up action plan.</li> <li>• Finalizing workshop outputs.</li> </ul>
<b>Day (2) Session (4)-Final</b> 03:30 - 04:30 p.m.	<b>Final Session:</b> Chair of the Session: Dr. Najat Mjid General Director, Bayti Foundation, Morocco. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussing funding opportunities for the network.</li> <li>• Choosing a new host for the third workshop &amp; proposing a new theme for it.</li> <li>• Time and date for the third workshop.</li> </ul>
	<b>Closing Ceremony.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Impressions &amp; evaluation of participants on the workshop.</li> <li>• Declaring the closing of the workshop.</li> </ul>