Childwatch Child Research Ethics Meeting

Minutes of the Meeting held on Monday 25 and Tuesday 26 July 2011
at the Thomas Coram Research Unit Library, Institute of Education, London

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<u>Monday 25 July 2011</u>

Introductions and Welcome
The meeting opened at 9.30am with introductions and a welcome from Professor
Robbie Gilligan, President of the Childwatch International Research Network.
Participants approved the agenda for the two-day meeting and agreed it
addressed all relevant issues.

Background to the Meeting

Nicola Taylor and Anne Graham (Co-chairs of the Childwatch Thematic Group on
Building Capacity for Ethical Research with Children and Young People) presented
a brief overview of the Thematic Group's work to date and the key issues
emerging from the Research Report and International Literature Review.

The key points highlighted in relation to the Thematic Group included the
following:

The Thematic Group was initiated by Childwatch in 2010 to identify the ethical
issues and challenges in undertaking research with and for children and young
people in different majority and minority world contexts. It was convened in
response to discussions and recommendations from the *Children's Rights at a
Cross-roads: A Global Conference on Research and Children's Rights* (30 November
– 2 December 2009) and the Childwatch Key Institutions Assembly (3-4

December 2009) held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. As well, its focus is closely aligned with Childwatch's aims and objectives of promoting children's rights internationally and enhancing research capacity.

The key points highlighted in relation to the Thematic Group's subsequent research related activities included the following:

1. Research Report: A research report[1] was published in April 2011 reporting on the views of 257 researchers from 46 countries. Key areas of interest raised by the respondents included: cross-cultural research, training of researchers, and availability of ethics- and methodology-related resources. The project also highlighted areas of commonality and diversity between researchers based in Majority and Minority countries.

2. Literature Review: In preparation for the London meeting, the Thematic Group prepared an International Literature Review[2] identifying the key ethical issues facing researchers working with children and young people and the evidence base underpinning these.

Anne and Nicola indicated the work completed to date was possible only through the (modest) financial support provided by Childwatch and the productive collaboration between their two Centres in Australia and New Zealand. Anne and Nicola acknowledged the work of their colleagues, Dr Mary Ann Powell, Dr Robyn Fitzgerald and Dr Sallie Newell who assisted with both projects.

Discussion ensued and the following points were noted:

- Historical place of medical ethics.
- Guidelines in the child research ethics field should be a tool for reflecting on one's own research practices.
- Transfer knowledge without imposing knowledge.
- Look at how guidelines operate in relation to research practice.
- The theoretical contribution of child participation will be important.
- Young people as researchers.
- Ethical issues in research with young children e.g. project in the Netherlands for Bernard Van Leer on reducing violence with children aged 0-8 years.
- Relationship between immigrant and local children.
- Relationship between research and practice.
- The bureaucracy of ethical approval.

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[1] Powell, M.A., Graham, A., Taylor, N.J., Newell, S., & Fitzgerald, R. (2011, March). *Building Capacity for Ethical Research with Children and Young People: An International Research Project to Examine the Ethical Issues and Challenges in Undertaking Research with and for Children in Different Majority and Minority World Contexts* (Research Report for the Childwatch International Research Network). Dunedin: University of Otago Centre for Research on Children and Families / Lismore: Centre for Children and Young People.

[2] Powell, M.A. (2011, June). *International Literature Review: Ethical Issues In Research with Children and Young People.* Dunedin: University of Otago Centre for Research on Children and Families / Lismore: Centre for Children and Young People.

- Research as a tool to inhibit or affirm the voice of the child.
- Challenges of North-South relations. How do researchers proceed ethically in the absence of ethical approval frameworks? What are the priorities?
- Researchers are being funded to undertake fieldwork abroad in socio-cultural contexts different to their own. Other researchers are conducting cross-cultural research within their own countries.
- Need to have discussions with researchers doing other types of research with and on children, including biomedical research, demographic surveys, and the use of administrative data.
- Equity issues in research within marginalised contexts such as violence.
- Is there an over-concern about minority versus majority? 'Sometimes our cultural norms are not doing the right thing by children. Are we just accepting what's there'?
- In terms of the literature review, different disciplines need to add their relevant literature. We need to consider what is not currently being addressed in the literature? What kind of value standpoints are being used for ethical research – are these explicit in the literature? What are the implications of the focus, research questions etc. All these issues are ethical in nature.
- Refer to international platforms that are widely accepted and use these as the basis for assessing approaches in either majority or minority world contexts.
- How do we manage the tension between cultural/social norms and the basic human rights of children?
- UNESCO might be able to play a normative role – perhaps in influencing partner organisations, individual NGOs and the consultants they engage.
- Much ethics work has focused on child protection. How can we establish an overall framework for ethical guidance, including the principles and how to apply them?
- Need to explore notions of philosophical ethics and procedural ethics to conduct our research well.
- This is the right time to be focusing on child research ethics. How can we better use the Childwatch International Research Network and resources to improve ethical standards and practices?

Individual Presentations

Each participant provided an overview of their personal / institutional role in child and youth research ethics and details of any significant past, current or proposed activities of relevance to the meeting. Their 'big' questions, interests and concerns around child and youth research ethics in their work/role were also identified.

Gordon Alexander & Bethelhem Moulat

- Refer to paper provided by UNICEF Office of Research: *Contribution to the London Meeting on Child Research Ethics*.

- Universal versus situational ethics a crucial issue. The universal principles should be strong. Don't concede on principles but contextualise re capacities.
- Literature review on protecting children from violence is underway (Innocenti) – how can this group add to this work?
- Values of the CRC (e.g. child participation) – how to make the CRC a reference point in this discussion?
- Who's accountable for the 'quality' of research? Link between methods and ethics.
- Governance issues – variability between capacities for ethical review; some research escapes ethical review. What would we like to see ethical review committees/processes focus on?
- The problems facing children are surfacing in research studies but are not being followed up. No-one is doing anything about them.
- Mandate for research across the whole of UNICEF; will include enhancing ethical guidelines, processes and procedures for commissioned projects.
- Ethics is not just a 'one off' event, but rather it is a process. What are the implications of this for governance since guidelines within institutions will need to take account of this.
- Training – need to develop training models within UNICEF and its partners that enhance the awareness of ethics in child research contexts.
- Need to work more effectively with governments in raising awareness of the issues and how research is operationalised. Link with policy to ensure civil society voices are heard, especially those of children.
- How much responsibility does UNICEF have for the ethics of the research it commissions? Important that in developing the guidelines the 'commissioning research' perspective is taken into account.
- More clarity needed around the tricky issue of trade-offs. The CRC isn't enough. We need tools around participation. Move beyond academia.

Jon-Kristian Johnsen

- There is a political and organisational context to this debate. We need a code of conduct for how academic institutions relate to each other. Imperialism is not legitimate any more!
- Minority World researchers are conducting research in Majority World countries, but are taking the knowledge back to their own country – and sometimes not even making the findings available to the participants who could use them to improve their lives.
- How do we relate on an international basis? How can we link up with UNESCO?

Robbie Gilligan

- People who are silenced in the process is a concern. Researchers from the North currently tend to be more privileged and visible than researchers from the South.

- There are many phases of the research process beyond the actual fieldwork that are important e.g. recruitment. There are many things that researchers don't admit too!
- Good research should involve limitations, but the politics of research can limit this, including the issue of access/gatekeeping. Getting permission to talk with children - the 'rules' dictate who you get to talk to in the end. Implications for the sample e.g. access to children in state care; vulnerable populations – difficult to access so the researcher may end up taking with the motivated and/or articulate.
- Ethical research shouldn't promise too much nor claim too much.
- Gulf between researchers, practitioners and policy makers.
- Important for researchers to challenge the regulatory mechanisms that screen children out. Why are institutions resisting children's participation in research? Linked to children's status – some people are uncertain what value there is in asking children?
- The research community needs to engage other players in the importance of this research.

Geeske Strating & Kitty Jurrius

- Refer to paper by Kitty Jurrius, Adimka Uzozie & Renee Blaisse (2010). *Perspectives of children aged 4-8 as a source of knowledge: Critical reflection on the development of Kids Expert Clubs as a way to generate knowledge on the perspective of children in the age of 4-8*. Amsterdam: Conference Doors of Perception.
- There is a lot of research happening within youthcare organisations, but children don't want to participate in local community projects as they can't see the research findings informing practice. What happens to the research? Children say they have "no faith in their government, community or grown-ups that anything will be done with what we tell you."
- Outcomes and effects of research for children. What are the results in terms of knowledge and policy making as well as for the children themselves? It is unethical not to involve children. Need to get children used to participating in research.
- Need to balance participation rights with protection concerns when considering ethical research.
- Are there particular ethical considerations in researching with very young children? What works best with children 4-8 years old (e.g. drawing)?
- Children sometimes do not want to talk about issues that make them sad – researchers should respect the boundaries that children put up.
- How many 'gates' do we need to go through to allow the child to be involved? Is this ethical?
- Culturally, socially etc some young people have more to say than others.
- Is it worth looking at the early years as an age group for research given that early intervention research can set them on a positive trajectory?

Joseph Tesha

- What is the role of ethics review external/internal to the countries in which the research is taking place? Do the internal committees end up in a position of 'rubber stamping' applications or can they change things?
- Research funders can have too big a role in deciding the research design etc. A lot of external researchers come into Tanzania - one-way traffic! They are not so interested in seeking permission for their research, but rather are focused on its implementation. Sweden and Norway are the largest funders of research in Tanzania.
- Need to know more about the ethical dilemmas that other Committees grapple with and how these are resolved.
- Children in Africa don't know their rights – they need to be told, but not all schools agree with this. A child has no right to challenge a teacher.
- Who is the moral guardian of the children – parents, schools (especially where the children live-in at a school)?
- Parents have to give consent for their child to participate in research up to the age of 18 years.
- Use of incentives in child research. Parents ask "what's in it for me if my child participates?" Should the reward go to the child or to the parent?
- Mechanisms needed to assist the local review processes – policy and procedures.
- Need more training in research ethics and getting research students competent in designing and undertaking research with children.

Marilyn Freeman

- Relationship between research and policy. Evidence that Courts in England/Wales are becoming increasingly receptive to children's views and to research involving children.
- Importance of research influencing policy makers and decision makers – but the research has to be 'good' quality.
- Research must meet ethical obligations so it can best meet the court's expectations and needs. When conducting research with the children of separated parents the consent of one parent to their child's participation is considered enough of a 'legal flak-jacket' but most researchers usually inform and/or seek the consent of the other parent (who may of course be estranged from the child or ex-partner).
- Issue of consent remains a major consideration.
- Confidentiality issues – children reveal things in the research context that may have implications for their safety or for the decisions made about their care by parents or the courts. Need to ensure the child's position within their family is not compromised.
- Guidelines and best practice essential.
- There can be a 'therapeutic' component to the journey you go on with a (child or adult) participant in an interview covering sensitive family issues like separation, relocation, abduction, forced marriage, especially when legal proceedings have been involved. These very close relationship

building elements and competencies need further consideration in the research context.

- Ethics of the way the conversation is framed to ensure the child retains a choice during the interview. We can underestimate children's capacity to 'suss' the researcher out!
- Participation / Protection.

Elizabeth Backe-Hansen

- Has prepared a paper for a Government Committee involving a critical analysis of theoretical approaches for children aged 12-18.
- What is a 'child' in different contexts – gender, age, ability, ethnicity etc.
- What do we gain and what do we lose by using a general definition of 'child' and 'childhood' 0-18 years?
- We need to unpack what we mean by 'participation' in research. It is multi-dimensional; a process rather than a one-off event. Children can participate in many places and in many ways (formal and informal). Participation is relational and has an ethical dimension.
- 'Participation' as a social policy concept; as a means of addressing social exclusion – do we discriminate against some children or groups. Are there barriers – language, cultural, institutional, structural? What does this have to do with ethics? Need for sound methodologies. Age as an ethical concern.
- We need to be critical – how do we define these concepts? Merging of political and professional concerns.
- How do young people themselves think about participating or not participating?
- Interview project with youth throughout Norway – agentic and competent versus youth as dangerous or in need of protection.
- Ask young people about their experience of taking part in research – what would we change based on their responses?
- Feedback of research findings to children and young people essential.

Nermeen Murad

- Comes to the meeting with a different perspective; from a NGO within Jordan (not a university research centre) undertaking research with children. Need to consider who is wanting to make changes based on the research? Impact on policy. The researchers/NGO take responsibility for dissemination so the research findings can effect change. We think a lot about what we are giving back to the children.
- How to plan, undertake and disseminate research? Clarifying what the purpose and intent of the research is?
- Training – don't make the process too difficult. Give the researchers the questions they must ask themselves (methodology, motives etc), rather than the answers. This way researchers will find the answers themselves in terms of their specific contexts.
- Think about how we would introduce ethics to new/emerging researchers - what might be the most effective approach?

- Researchers in Jordan need to go through stringent centralised processes to obtain security clearance to allow the research to be conducted. This can hinder research.
- Feedback to child research participants – need to be aware that feedback in particular projects can sometimes raise concerns for the child about cultural practices that they were previously unaware were problematic.

Janet Boddy

- Refer to *The Research Ethics Guidebook: A Resource for Social Scientists* (www.ethicsguidebook.ac.uk)
- Governance issues / guidelines.
- Research on/with children is being undertaken in several different sectors: public sector, voluntary sector / NGOs, universities, private / for profit sector, service providers etc. How do we manage different these different sectors and disciplinary interests / perspectives on what is 'ethical' research? Studies framed from a childhood studies perspective do consider ethical issues, but other disciplines do not do this as much.
- The Department of Health framework is often applied to research within children's services, but this has a medical ethics orientation and does not translate easily or well to other sectors.
- Lack of recognition of the competence of children for research.
- Tension between protective discourses / children's vulnerability versus participatory discourses – contrast in professionals' perspectives.
- Consent tied to concerns about complaint management rather than protection of children – unpicking rationales and motivation. Not much concern about the duty of care, but rather the focus is on the legal flakjacket.
- Need to consider how to deal with and ultimately reduce complaints.
- Need to be careful that Minority world countries, with their longer histories of ethics, don't impose their approach on Majority world researchers. Consider the issue of directionality.
- Ethics Guidebook (written by Ginny, Priscilla, Janet) – designed as a UK resource and built around ESRC framework, but has general appeal too.
- Better to frame guidelines by asking questions rather than giving answers. Use 'what if …' scenarios. Provide a tool to help people think around the ethical issues.

Anne Trine Kjørholt

- Refer to draft paper provided by Anne Trine - *'Childhood studies' and the ethics of an encounter: Reflections on research with children in different cultural contexts.*
- Need to broaden the focus from only methodology to include critical reflection and discussion on discourses of child participation, rights and citizenship. How do we conceptualise the child and participation concepts? What does it mean to be a human being? What does it mean to be a researcher?

- The rational / competent human being orthodoxy underpins the UNCRC, but that is only part of being a human.
- What is said and unsaid needs to be accounted for. Be aware of what is left unsaid. A broad critical approach is needed.
- Masters programme offered since 2007 – students enrolled from 10 countries to date. Some return to their home countries to undertake fieldwork.
- Blurred boundaries between what it means to be a researcher and what it means to be a human being? You may be a witness to hunger, poverty and violence. Researcher and participant create a relationship / be a friend. Segue into moral ethics rather than research ethics? Can we separate these? Is it ethical to engage in this type of research, to just leave when the research is concluded, to be involved with children when it is not possible to 'fix' the significant problems they face? 'Ethical dilemmas' for researchers. In whose interests is this research being conducted?
- Ethical dimension to the dissemination and communication of results. Copy theses and distribute them to universities in the countries where the research was undertaken.
- Communication of research findings back to the participating children.
- What it means to be a researcher has an ethical dimension. Avoid talking about children as one group; the same applies to researchers.
- Challenge in balancing the nuanced concerns with the pragmatics of getting the research done.
- Security of researchers is an important issue – especially when research is being undertaken in areas of conflict or around gang issues.
- 'International development tourism' – students conduct fieldwork in countries other than their own, but are also tourists in those countries.

Hallvard Fossheim

- Refer to the Guidelines for *Research Ethics in the Social Sciences, Law and the Humanities* (2nd ed.). (2010). Oslo: The National Committee for Research Ethics in the Social Sciences and the Humanities.
- Many of our questions/issues around research with children do have resonance in other areas or research as well and in other population groups.
- Are certain groups approached by too many researchers? Are they being overpromised or oversold on what might be possible? Don't oversell or overstate the impact or benefits of the research.
- Funding – researchers have to make funders believe the research will achieve something.
- Are researchers properly prepared for what to do if something unexpected happens? Consider legal / moral options to possible dilemmas.
- What do researchers do with information they didn't expect?
- Guidelines – do we need specific ones for research with children? The National Committee for Research Ethics in the Social Sciences and the Humanities is starting a revision of their existing guidelines, but are uncertain whether they should be creating a specific set of guidelines for

child research. They already have a separate set governing research with human remains.

- There is a false dichotomy between universal and situated ethics. There is not necessarily a conflict between the universal and the specific. How does the universal or general apply in this particular case or context? All difficult issues will be enmeshed within specific contexts (e.g. justice). Need extra insights in order to apply the rules.
- Guidelines are for self-help use – a tool for reflection. Not about normative ethics but principle based ethics. Principles that reasonable people can agree upon.
- Ethics as a goal or as a means to an end.
- Guidelines need interpretation and translation.
- Researcher training – in order for guidelines to work properly they need to be applied by competent, thinking researchers. We don't want ethics to be reduced to a 'ticking the box' exercise.

Priscilla Alderson

- Refer to draft paper provided by Priscilla: *Young children's human rights: Crossing boundaries, bridging dichotomies (*to be submitted to the special issue of *Sociology* on human rights).
- Martin Hammersley – next book against research ethics.
- What is the opposition to ethics (Priscilla's paper – sociological analysis).
- Children share all the same rights with adults and they have extra special considerations.
- Childhood has closed down over the past 20 years; becoming more and more excluded; looking at children in excluded places (like playgrounds, schools). Politics and economics – children are missing from these domains.
- Children and young people are half the world – need to centre on what their issues are. Childhood studies people are not helping – should be focusing on equality for children, like feminism did for women.
- Daniel Dorling's book entitled *Injustice* worth consulting.
- Mixing up cause and effect regarding children – keeping them in excluded spaces. Our research should be showing them as enthusiastic, agentic, competent. If children are saying 'I'm bored' that says more about the researcher than it does about the child!
- Dignity, equality and justice are the essential values.
- Green / carbon free research ethics need to be considered.
- Inequalities, power imbalances.
- Do we really need new methods when talking with children of different ages?
- We are stuck – same old types of studies are being conducted with children all over the world. Childhood Studies researchers are putting their efforts into research being decided by others and asking questions that don't matter. Need to lift to level of policy and justice.
- Sorting out the debates between the positivists and postmodernist/constructivists.
- Kiddification of research a problem.

- Stop using the language of 'kids'.
- Give voice to children – what we need is adults with ears!
- Research / policy interface - what's the point of doing the research if it doesn't get into the forums where it will make a difference.
- Publish research in different forums.
- Consider getting the users involved in research committees – what transformed medical ethics was having patients on the committees. Include people who have been harmed or wronged.
- Research participants are not benefitted by research. Some people will be harmed by research. Basis of ethics is that the research doesn't do harm.
- Ethics committees are being held hostage by financial considerations to ensure that institutions are not sued by anybody.
- Why haven't we got users - children and young people - at this meeting?
- What are the principles underlying the CRC that could inform ethics? The CRC is much broader that children expressing a view.
- Children trusting researchers. Don't divide children off from adults.
- Children and young people are highly politically active and we could be putting our skills at their service and working more with them if they want us.
- Researchers should not present themselves as children's friends. We are not helping them; they are helping us.
- Institutional ethics as well as individual responsibility.

Summary of Issues Raised

1. Universal / Situated: relationship between universal and situated ethics – unnecessary dichotomy.
2. Focus / Content / Boundaries / Definitions - what is the content of ethics? What are the boundaries? What is available to us already - Helsinki Guidelines?
3. Complexity within, but clarity externally – framing the issues; more holistic approach across all phases of the research process (don't just focus on consent and confidentiality). How do we navigate the complexity/simplicity requirements? (accommodate both) – real life grounded scenarios that are worked examples of how principles and procedures are applied.
4. How do we frame ethics in ways that move beyond the procedural?
5. Real-life grounded research issues and scenarios; integrate practical guidance with higher level issues.
6. Companion document to show how different ethical principles, guidelines and cases play different functions. Case examples would be ideal for training purposes.
7. Translation of guidelines into practice.
8. Training / capacity building - what form might such training take in order to be effective? Could Childwatch develop website to assist with this?
9. What is the purpose of the guidelines – for those commissioning research; for people conducting research; for people reviewing research? What good ethical research should be adhering too. Extra considerations that apply to children.

10. Mapping of resources needed.
11. One page research charter (similar to one on children's health rights).
12. Cartoons / children's drawings to illustrate ethical principles.
13. Research / Policy interface.
14. Principles of justice, equality, respect for all people, dignity, do no harm.
15. Role of relationships in ethical research.
16. How do we assess 'ethical' research for different contexts?
17. How do we manage different disciplinary interests, perspectives on what is 'ethical' research?

The day concluded with agreement that Anne and Nicki would synthesise the discussion from Day One in preparation for further planning on Day Two.

Tuesday 26 July 2011

Participants were reminded that the focus for Day Two centred around two key questions:

1. So what? (is there important further work to be pursued?)
2. Where to from here?

Dr Ginny Morrow was welcomed to the meeting.

Anne and Nicki then provided a 'starting point' synthesis of the key themes / issues that emerged from the first day's discussions. With further input from the group, the following points were identified:

Is it possible/feasible/useful for Childwatch and interested partners to:

1. Develop an ethics 'charter' in the way suggested yesterday? (starting with a statement about believing in the importance of 'good' research) – spirit of the CRC could inform this.
2. Develop ethical guidelines/framework that could 'hold' both universal principles and situated contexts? Process needs to ensure 'buy in' from a range of researchers (and others) in different contexts (include disciplinary interests).
3. Collate, review and disseminate existing international resources (and identify gaps)?
4. Identify cost effective, flexible approaches to training that build capability for ethical research in a range of contexts?
5. Develop a layered/'pathways' approach (inclusive of governance through to training).
6. Clearly identify what is 'new' about what Childwatch can contribute – international/cross cultural emphasis + ethics being relevant beyond academics / researchers – 'raising the game' at multiple levels.
7. Build (and demonstrate) the relationship between 1, 2 and 4.
8. Accommodate disciplinary 'unevenness' in approaches to ethics.

(The above was summarised on a Powerpoint slide for later reference)

<u>Ginny Morrow was invited to make a brief presentation on her work with the Young Lives Project with a view to addressing the relevance of the above issues for her work.</u>
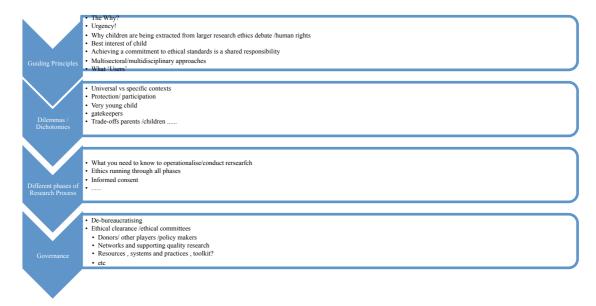
Ginny's key points included:

- The Young Lives Project is being undertaken in 4 countries: Ethiopia, Vietnam, Peru and India.
- Understanding context – dynamic.
- Imposition of Western standards on non-Western situations.
- Learning process – 3 way.
- Context is not just something that happens in developing countries.
- Grey literature on ethics should be included in our literature review.
- Question of compensation very complicated.
- How do researchers give feedback to ethics committees?

Significant discussion then ensued with the following key points being highlighted:

- Childwatch's unique contribution: the cross-cultural and international dimensions. (Nicki)
- Need for a layered approach. (Janet)
- Charter – key points to be aware of; plus something more detailed with clear pathways through the layering.
- Relate to general research ethics and how that has been developed over the years. Research ethics are now an integrated element of research design. The ethics of cross-cultural research is something different. It ahs to be accepted and recognized as an integral part of the research design process. (Jon-K)
- There is a real relationship between points 1, 2 and 4 on the powerpoint slide. (Hallvard)
- Some research is being undertaken even by experienced researchers that does not take proper account of research ethics. Economists / biomedical research / childhood studies – there is an unevenness across research disciplines. (Elisabeth)
- Tension between bureaucracy requirements and promoting/sustaining good practice. Begin with a statement about believing in the importance of good practice and that ethics are important in that. (Janet)
- Need to be building on existing publications. Identify gaps and missing points so these can be filled. (Anne Trine)
- Point 2 on powerpoint slide – the process needs to be consultative. (Kitty)
- If we want something to have an impact on a certain group of people then we need to include them in the process in some way.
- Spirit of the CRC should inform the framework. Expand point 2 to include disciplinary perspectives. (Robbie)
- CRC is important, but is not enough. (Nicki)

Gordon Alexander then spoke to a proposed framework that might assist further discussion and planning:

Guiding Principles
- The Why?
- Urgency!
- Why children are being extracted from larger research ethics debate /human rights
- Best interest of child
- Achieving a commitment to ethical standards is a shared responsibility
- Multisectoral/multidisciplinary approaches
- What 'Users'

Dilemmas / Dichotomies
- Universal vs specific contexts
- Protection/ participation
- Very young child
- gatekeepers
- Trade-offs parents /children ......

Different phases of Research Process
- What you need to know to operationalise/conduct rersearfch
- Ethics running through all phases
- Informed consent
- ......

Governance
- De-bureaucratising
- Ethical clearance /ethical committees
  - Donors/ other players /policy makers
  - Networks and supporting quality research
  - Resources , systems and practices , toolkit?
  - etc

Various points were made, questions raised and suggestions tabled, including:

- What is the mandate for taking all this forward and who will be doing that? (Nermeen)
- Childwatch mission is to stimulate and to inform. The initiative was generated within Childwatch and has now expanded to invite others to this meeting. Bigger mission of developing child research ethics. (Jon-K)
- Promote relevant quality research and facilitate development of the field – to raise the game – good research ethics is an essential part of that. Our challenge is to ensure that all stakeholders in the research process know that research ethics are important. (Robbie)
- Morrow / Alderson publication for Barnados (2004) tried to blow apart the idea that research ethics is just an academic exercise. (Ginny)
- The academic community should be communicating with others. There is an academic and a NGO perspective on research ethics. (Jon-K)
- Childwatch is raising this issue for the field, not just for the Childwatch Network or just for researchers. We need to also engage with the commissioners of research, policymakers etc. (Robbie)
- Include reference to the CRC. (Joseph)
- Reinforce the point about different audiences – provide a resource for the different constituencies. (Janet)
- Need to take account of the situation where a Minority world researcher goes to Africa to conduct research approved in the UK.
- Governance issue. (Gordon)
- Majority / Minority world dichotomy is problematic. (Ginny)
- Review of systems and processes. (Jon-K)
- Academics running MA courses have a lot of experience on research ethics – learning from each other's experiences of how to approach this better.

- Training material – literature review / annotated bibliography of resources already available. (Jon-K)
- A lot of material is already on the website. Need to follow up grey and published literature and pieces of work in languages other than English. Educating ethics committees – may require a different resource. 'End of project' reporting to ethics committees is about to happen at the IOE. (Janet)
- Guidelines on research with children - update existing guidelines by adding in information relevant to child research or write new guidelines specifically on child research? How might the existing guidelines apply to children? (Hallvard)
- Involve children and young people in the development of the draft guidelines (could we have two versions?)
- Interdisciplinary approaches important. (Bethelhem)
- How do we convince gatekeepers that child research is worthwhile? (Elisabeth)
- Possibility of UNICEF / Childwatch joint guidelines being developed. Link with or draw on UNESCO - normative practice / thinking. (Gordon)
- Educating ethics committees – providing feedback after projects – these are the things you should be thinking about if you are thinking about setting up an ethics committee
- Our guiding principle should be that achieving a commitment to ethical standards and practices is a shared responsibility. Shared responsibility of ethical research – not just the responsibility of researchers. (Robbie)
- Aspiration to address everyone. Many different research communities. Have to make them all feel a part of the process. Perhaps include some as co-authors or have some process of communication. (Hallvard)
- Need critical engagement with end-users and researchers on the ground. (Ginny)
- Use this meeting as a way to highlight the progress made to date. (Anne)

Where to From Here?

There was strong consensus that further international work was warranted and a number of suggestions were made in relation to moving the agenda forward:

- Incremental approach important and in tandem with capacity building. Start with number 3 – need to map existing resources. (Janet)
- Need an endpoint too. In 2014 it will be 25 years since the CRC was signed. July 2012 childhood studies conference at the University of Sheffield might provide a good opportunity for a presentation on the research ethics work. (Ginny)
- We need to develop a work plan. (Nicki)
- Literature review as the place to start – UNICEF following up on some of the grey literature to locate resources. Possibility of a survey / questionnaire on what might be happening in different countries. What key questions can we suggest? CRC Committee has never addressed research. Need to have dialogue with them and obtain their views early

on. Gordon/UNICEF meeting with the CRC Committee in September 2011. (Gordon)

- Anne Trine offered to liaise with Gordon re the CRC Committee.
- Reach out to economists and medical researchers – expand the dialogue and obtain their views. Millenium Development Goals – current focus on equity; post-2015 agenda being considered. How do children's issues get on this agenda? (Gordon)
- Have established the research committees in Tanzania – training workshops needed to help them with their tasks. (Joseph)
- Network of events needed – embedded as part of the process of developing the guidelines. (Janet)
- Regional event in sub-Saharan Africa. Identify the forums in Africa where some further dialogue can occur. (Jon-K)
- South-South collaboration really important. EU – child rights toolkit project by UNICEF. Different types of research – operational, implementation, policy, structural research etc. Different communities have different ethical issues involved. (Gordon)
- A draft document would be very helpful to discuss at a local level with several groups of researchers. Discuss with young people at national/regional/local levels too. Then bring feedback to an international conference. (Kitty)
- Latin America young researcher training programme – look to see what they have already developed. Bernard Van Leer Foundation expressed interest in research with young children; Kitty and Geeske will be discussing the meeting outcomes with them on their return home. (Jon-K)
- Donor community is not so interested in the research process. (Ginny)
- We need contemporary case-studies to add to the narrative. Include case studies to exemplify the issues and document the process of working through the issues. (Nermeen)
- Could ask for these as part of a survey. (Janet)
- Experience in the Middle East on undertaking research with children – link in with this too. (Nermeen)
- Strengthen regional responses. (Gordon)
- Strengthen South-South. (Ginny)
- Training event as an information gathering exercise. Move Latin America model of training to other places. Try to identify issues. (Robbie)
- Keep ethics committees in one country in touch with those in other countries. Develop a network so communication could occur when one committee is reviewing an application but expertise from the other country is needed to assist the approval/decision-making process. (Janet)
- Very keen on this and will use contacts generated from this meeting. Will put a link to Childwatch on his website. (Joseph)
- How do we get buy-in from researchers and others? (Nermeen)
- Issue about engagement – differing approaches; organic approaches. (Anne)
- Target certain disciplines and look for individuals / champions who can take the draft document into their disciplines and networks for comment. (Gordon)

- Agrees with Gordon. Must publicise what we have done and achieved. Throw a challenge to others e.g. at conferences, and ask them 'where to from here?' That way we will be able to identify / locate the interested individuals. (Joseph)
- The proposal / work plan needs to indicate where this project has come from. (Anne)
- Highlight the project on the Childwatch and UNICEF websites – include all the documents published to date + the fact of this meeting being held. (Gordon)
- Once guidelines are developed we need to think about their status. Look to see how the medical world promoted their guidelines. (Robbie)
- Some tricky political issues sit within this process. (Anne)
- Status of the charter – we don't have a regulatory context. Potential for misuse – "I've signed up to the research ethics charter so therefore I'm an ethical researcher!" (Janet)
- Consult the UN Global Compact as a model of voluntary agreement to a 'Charter' The Global Compact is essentially a voluntary code of conduct based on ten core principles – Bethelhem will provide a copy of this.
- Happy with voluntary model. Have to be clear about its status. (Janet)
- University of Sheffield 2012 conference – could submit a panel / symposium on child research ethics. Regional-based workshop in Africa is also important. (Ginny)
- Randomised control trials are not necessarily a good model for children. We are looking at doing things differently to create a new model of what is good research for children. (Gordon)
- Write a piece on our understanding of quality in child research to set a context for the child research ethics project. (Robbie)
- Childwatch is well placed to do this – need for some sort of overview group to champion this. (Ginny)
- There is a need for a project that has a timeframe. (Gordon)
- Nicki and Anne agreed to develop a Project Proposal so we are all clear on what is being proposed – this will include information on the background to the project; the timeframes for a programme of work over several years; costings / funding requirements etc. We will send it out to the meeting participants for feedback.
- Childwatch will promote the project on its website. (Jon-K)
- Social media potential on UNICEF website. Gordon will add link to Childwatch website. Repository of child research ethics tools on website. (Gordon)

Action Plan

The following actions were identified:

1. Draft a project proposal / staged workplan and send it out for review and comment (Anne & Nicki)
2. Provide copy of UN Global Compact (Bethelhem)
3. Literature review - add new resources identified at meeting, consider how the review needs to be extended to include grey literature and publications in languages other than English (Nicki and Anne).
4. Review ethics systems, practices and resources internationally (Anne & Nicki to include in project plan).
5. CRC Meeting (Anne Trine and Gordon to liaise).
6. Childwatch to set up Ethics website (Jon-Kristian)
7. Explore the possibility of an international conference to launch guidelines.
8. Convene other workgroups to focus on specific and limited areas of work related to child research ethics (as part of the project plan).

The meeting closed at 3pm with Nicki, Anne and Robbie thanking all participants for their contributions and wishing them well for a safe return home.

Literature Provided at the Meeting or Recommended for Inclusion in Literature Review

Alderson, P. (2011). *Young children's human rights: Crossing boundaries, bridging dichotomies*. Draft paper to be submitted to the special issue of *Sociology* on human rights.

Alderson, P., & Morrow, V. (2011). *The ethics of research with children and young people: A practical handbook*. England: Sage Publications.

Beazley, H., et al. (2009). The right to be properly researched: Research with children in a messy real world. *Children's Geographies, 7*(4), 365-378.

Boyden, J., & Morrow, V. (forthcoming) – chapter on ethics in Springer Handbook on Child wellbeing due late 2013.

Ennew, J., & Plateau, D.P. (2004). *How to research the physical and emotional punishment of children*. Bangkok, Thailand: save the Children.

Guidelines for Research Ethics in the Social Sciences, Law and the Humanities (2nd ed.). (2010). Oslo: The National Committee for Research Ethics in the Social Sciences and the Humanities.

Hart, Jason (Palestine)

Amar Jesani & Tejal Barai Jaitly (Eds.). (2005). *Ethics in health research: A social science perspective*. Mumbai, India: Centre for Studies in Ethics and Rights (CSER; An Institute of Anusandhan Trust).

Jurrius, K., Uzozie, A., & Blaisse, R. (2010). *Perspectives of children aged 4-8 as a source of knowledge: Critical reflection on the development of Kids Expert Clubs as a way to generate knowledge on the perspective of children in the age of 4-8*. Amsterdam: Conference Doors of Perception.

Kjørholt, A.T. (draft). *'Childhood studies' and the ethics of an encounter: Reflections on research with children in different cultural contexts*.

Montgomery, Heather – paper on child prostitution in Thailand in Childhood journal

Morrow, V. (2009, August). *The ethics of social research with children and families in Young lives: Practical experiences* (Working Paper No. 53). Oxford: Young Lives: An International Study of Childhood Poverty.

Powell, M.A. (2011, June). *International Literature Review: Ethical Issues In Research with Children and Young People*. Dunedin: University of Otago Centre for Research on Children and Families / Lismore: Centre for Children and Young People.

Powell, M.A., Graham, A., Taylor, N.J., Newell, S., & Fitzgerald, R. (2011, March). *Building Capacity for Ethical Research with Children and Young People: An International Research Project to Examine the Ethical Issues and Challenges in Undertaking Research with and for Children in Different Majority and Minority World Contexts* (Research Report for the Childwatch International Research Network). Dunedin: University of Otago Centre for Research on Children and Families / Lismore: Centre for Children and Young People.

Research Watch (Innocenti) – specific topics addressed.

Schenk, K., & Williamson, J. (2005). *Ethical approaches to gathering information from children and adolescents in international settings: Guidelines and resources.* Washington DC, USA: Population Council.

Swart-Kruger, Jill (South Africa)

Judith Ennew, Ginny Morrow and Agnes Camacho planned ages ago to write a SEAP (regional) version of the Alderson & Morrow book and had asked the Asia-Pacific Foundation for some funding for a meeting. Ginny could provide us with a copy of the proposal if it is of interest to us. She also suggests we contact Judith Ennew to find out if she has anything planned. judith.ennew@knowingchildren.org

Forthcoming Seminars and Conferences

ESRC seminar series - the final seminar is focusing on the ethics of researching violence with children, Birkbeck College, England, 13 October 2011. http://www.internationalchildhoodstudies.org/

Centre for the Study of Childhood and Youth, University of Sheffield, England - 4th International Conference: *Celebrating Childhood Diversity*, 9 -11 July 2012.

Canada: Ginny Morrow recently met Hon. Landon Pearson, Director, Landon Pearson Resource Centre for the Study of Childhood and Children's Rights. She said she was organising a conference on research ethics and is particularly interested in First Nation people. landon_pearson@carleton.ca