



Annual Report 1999

Childwatch is an international network for institutions and individuals involved in research for children with the aim of initiating and coordinating research and information projects on children's living conditions and the implementation of children's rights.

1. Introduction	3
2. Key Institutions	3
2.1. New Key Institutions	4
2.2. Key Institution profiles	5
2.3. Partnership programme	5
3. Advisory Board	6
4. Business Board	6
5. Projects of the Childwatch International	
Research Network	7
5.1. The significance of political and economic transformations in the lives of children	7
5.2. The rights of the child to health and a safe environment	7
5.3. International Network on Children's Health, Environment and Safety (INCHES)	8
5.4. Monitoring Children's Rights	9
5.5. Growing Up in Cities	10
5.6. Use of child research in international organisations	12
5.7. Children and media	13
5.8. Dissemination and impact of child research	13
5.9. Research on children's participation	14
6. Children's House in Cyberspace	14
7. Organisational matters	15
7.1. Funding and support	15
7.2. Human resources	15
7.3. Office space and infrastructural support	15
8. Collaboration with other organisations	15
 ANNEX 1: Childwatch International Key Institutions	 16
ANNEX 2: Members of the Advisory Board, 1999–2001	19
ANNEX 3: Members of the Business Board, 1999–2002	20

1. Introduction

The collaboration in the Childwatch International Research Network was strengthened in 1999 by the initiation of new research projects involving a number of Key Institutions and individual researchers. The Childwatch International Key Institutions and the Secretariat were involved in planning and running several conferences and workshops. This reflects an interest in using and applying research relating to the rights and the living conditions of children. It also confirms the need for international cooperation in disseminating research results to and networking with political and programming settings. The Advisory Board met to review the progress of the activities of the Childwatch International Research Network, and a meeting of Key Institutions was held on 4-6 July at the Children's Issues Centre in Dunedin, New Zealand. A Business Board was established and held its first meeting on 18 October.

2. Key Institutions

The core of the Childwatch International Research Network consists of 29 institutions or organisations worldwide involved with child research (see Annex 1 for a complete list as of 31 December 1999). The Key Institutions are central actors within child research and represent major forces in their countries, regions or thematic networks. An important task of the Advisory Board and the Secretariat is to work with the Key Institutions to serve their information needs and to define research areas of common interest. Bringing together the experience and various areas of expertise of the Key Institutions is an effective way of facilitating inspiration and promoting cooperation.

The Key Institutions conduct research at different levels, on different topics, with various methods and with a variety of target groups. All Key Institutions are inspired by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and interested in engaging in discussion and research on global issues that affect children's lives. Such collaboration within the Childwatch International Research Network enhances the individual institutions' own capacity and research agenda and provides opportunities for playing leading roles in developing child research.

The third *Key Institution meeting*¹ took place at the Children's Issues Centre in Dunedin, New Zealand on 4-6 July 1999. The Children's Issues Centre hosted the meeting, and representatives from 18 Key Institutions participated. The Key Institution meeting was combined with the first meeting of the 1999-2001 Advisory Board, and was also held in connection with the international *Child and Family Policy Conference: Children's Rights. National and International Perspectives*, organised by the Children's Issues Centre. Several representatives from Childwatch International Key Institutions gave presentations at the conference.

At the meeting, the Key Institutions reported on ongoing projects. Dawn Walker (Canadian Institute of Child Health) oriented about the establishment of and recent developments in the *International Network on Children's Health, Environment and Safety (INCHES)*. Irene Rizzini (CESPI) and Gary Melton (Consortium on Children, Families and the Law) reported on the project *The significance of political and economic transformations in the lives of children*. Ferran Casas (Catalan Network of Child Researchers) and Miya Omori (Child Research Net) reported on recent developments in the *Children and media* project. Natalie Kaufman (Consortium on Children, Families and the Law) and Francisco Pilotti (Inter-American Children's Institute) have developed a project outline on *The use of child research in international organisations*. Case studies within the project on *Dissemination and impact of child research* were presented at the Key Institution meeting. For more information about the ongoing

¹ Previous meetings were held in Ranten, Norway on 1-4 September 1994 and in Wild Dunes, South Carolina, USA on 26-28 September 1996.

projects, see section 5. The Key Institution meeting also reviewed the working methods of the Secretariat and made suggestions on the kinds of support that the Key Institutions would like to see from the Secretariat. Another agenda item included a broad discussion of the proposed partnership programme (section 2.3).

Finally, it was agreed that Childwatch International should continue its tradition of seeking to hold Advisory Board meetings and Key Institution meetings in collaboration with Key Institutions and to seek to co-sponsor local events with child researchers and others in conjunction with its own regular meetings. This has been very useful and inspirational on previous occasions, such as San José in 1994, Dakar in 1995, Trondheim in 1997 and Cape Town in 1998. The proposed schedule for future Childwatch International meetings is as follows:

2000	Advisory Board meeting (Europe: Oslo)
2001	Advisory Board meeting (Latin America: Rio de Janeiro)
2002	Combined Advisory Board meeting and Key Institutions meeting (Asia: Mumbai)
2003	Advisory Board meeting (to be decided)
2004	Advisory Board meeting (to be decided)
2005	Combined Advisory Board meeting and Key Institutions meeting (to be decided)

2.1. New Key Institutions

In 1999, three new child research groups joined the Childwatch International Research Network as Key Institutions: the Catalan Network of Child Researchers, Spain (Director: Ferran Casas); Childhood and Youth Policy Research Unit, University of West Sydney, Australia (Director: Jan Mason); and Unit for Research and Education on the Convention on the Rights of the Child (URECRC), University of Victoria, Canada (Director: Philip Cook). After a round of self-evaluation, four Key Institutions chose to define themselves as affiliated members of the network. Centre International de l'Enfance et de la Famille in France ceased to exist, and Centro de Estudios del Menor in Spain left the Network because of a reorientation of its mandate and operations.

The Key Institutions meeting suggested a region-by-region strategy to identify new Key Institutions, with the aim of having recruited 10 new members by the next Key Institution meeting in 2002:

by 2000	find members or potential members in central and eastern Europe and more members from Australia, Latin America and the Middle East and North Africa
by 2001	find members or potential members from Indonesia, the Philippines and the Baltic region
by 2002	find members or potential members from the newly independent states of the former USSR (Belarus, Georgia and Ukraine)

2.2. Key Institution profiles

The *Key Institution profile* is a brief information page that gives a quick overview and describes the main fields of research, the professional disciplines and staff and the network of each Childwatch International Key Institution. The Key Institution profile meets the demands for information about the research institutions and is an important promotional tool in the Childwatch International Research Network. The Key Institution profiles are available on paper and can also be accessed at: <http://www.childwatch.uio.no/profiles/index.html>. Whenever possible, the profile is linked to the home page of the Key Institution and its relevant web information. The web version is continually updated and the paper version reprinted when necessary.

2.3. Partnership programme

Establishing a strategy for capacity-building by bringing the Key Institutions into closer institutional collaboration was one of the main themes of the 1998 Advisory Board meeting in Cape Town. A working group on the partnership programme presented the preliminary thoughts about this emerging strategy at the Key Institutions meeting in Dunedin. An important way of strengthening the links and building institutional support and agenda-setting could be to establish links between two or more Key Institutions, similar to siblings or sister institutions. These partnerships could strengthen capacity-building and knowledge transfer in child research. Institutions are not just paired but also develop structures that result in products, such as a research paper, a workshop or training sessions. Joint research proposals would be a natural outcome of such pairing.

In the spirit of the mission of Childwatch International, the partnership programme aims:

- to encourage and support collaborative research activities among Key Institutions; and
- to encourage and support organisational development, including infrastructure and activities to develop skills among Key Institutions.

A committee consisting of three Advisory Board members supported by the Secretariat will coordinate the programme. Key Institutions are expected to pursue active partnerships to collaborate on research or organisational development activities that mutually benefit the participating institutions. Such partnerships could include South–South, North–North or North–South collaboration. The costs of this programme are to be distributed as follows: Childwatch International will support transport and communication. The host Key Institution will support the lodging and living costs of the visiting team. The participating institution will support personnel costs.

The partnership programme will have a diversity of specific outcomes, including:

- development of stronger Key Institutions with specific reference to the two programme objectives;
- active international, regional and national child research networks;
- collaborative research projects among Key Institutions;
- articles, books and other publications on child research;
- staff development; and
- impact on the practice, policies and legislation that influence children's quality of life.

Key Institutions that intend to participate in the partnership programme are expected to submit an application in early 2000.

3. Advisory Board

As decided at the 1998 Advisory Board meeting in Cape Town, the 1999 Childwatch International Key Institutions meeting was conducted as an expanded Advisory Board meeting. Thus, the Advisory Board met only briefly, for business purposes, before and after the larger meeting. This was the first meeting of the 1999–2001 Advisory Board, and three new members were welcomed: Usha Nayar (Unit for Child and Youth Research, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, India), Mohammad Shaheen (Center for Development in Primary Health Education, Palestine) and Anne B. Smith (Children's Issues Centre, University of Otago, New Zealand). The Advisory Board re-elected Gary Melton as President and Irene Rizzini and Per Egil Mjaavatn as Vice-Presidents.

Issues concerning the Key Institutions were discussed. Since the last Advisory Board meeting, the Secretariat had conducted an inquiry with the Key Institutions with a view to evaluating their participation in Childwatch International. As a result, four institutions were placed temporarily on a list of affiliated institutions. New institutions have also been considered for membership in Childwatch International and contacts developed with potential Key Institutions.

At its meeting, the Advisory Board decided to establish a Business Board (see below). Please see Annex 2 for details about the Advisory Board members.

4. Business Board

The Advisory Board meeting in Dunedin decided to implement Section 4.2 of the Terms of Reference and establish a Business Board. The tasks of the Business Board are to supervise the administrative and financial matters of Childwatch International, and will thus provide important support to the Secretariat. The Business Board will also give donors insight into the activities and achievements of Childwatch International. The Business Board shall have five statutory members:

- two representing the Advisory Board;
- two representing the main donors to Childwatch International; and
- the Director of Childwatch International.

The two main reasons for establishing a Business Board are:

- the need for oversight, supervision and advice on the finances of Childwatch International, to ensure accountability towards donors and the Key Institutions; and
- the need for the Secretariat to have a body to consult in matters related to financial, administrative and personnel issues.

The Business Board met for the first time at the University of Oslo on 18 October 1999. Gary Melton and Per Egil Mjaavatn represented the Advisory Board and Ivar Frønes the University of Oslo (a main donor). Per Miljeteig attended as the Director of Childwatch International. The Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs declined the invitation to be represented on the Business Board, with reference to possible conflicts of interest.

At the meeting, the role of the Business Board in relation to the Advisory Board and the Secretariat was discussed and a division of labour identified. Another issue discussed at the meeting was the relationship between Childwatch International and the University of Oslo. The funding situation was discussed and analysed, with a particular focus on the budget for 2000 and following years.

5. Projects of the Childwatch International Research Network

Childwatch International projects should be based on the comparative advantage of networking and on the common interests in research efforts with a global scope. The following projects were underway or in various stages of completion in 1999:

- The significance of political and economic transformations in the lives of children;
- The rights of the child to health and a safe environment;
- International Network on Children's Health, Environment and Safety (INCHES);
- Monitoring Children's Rights;
- Growing Up in Cities;
- Use of child research in international organisations;
- Children and media;
- Dissemination and impact of child research;
- Research on children's participation.

5.1. The significance of political and economic transformations in the lives of children

The working group in charge of the project (Gary Melton, Natalie Kaufman and Irene Rizzini) is now working on several types of material for publication. This is material that was prepared for or based on the two international workshops held in 1998. A series of articles will be a first step in presenting the debate and work on a research agenda, together with a book with specific contributions from several Childwatch International members.

The following articles are being prepared for a probable special section of *American Psychologist*: Irene Rizzini, together with Natalie Kaufman and Kathy Wilson-McMahan (Consortium of Children, Families and the Law) are writing an overview article dealing with issues related to the impact of global political, economic and social transformations on the lives of children. Other articles contain a) a review of the significance of democracy in child development (Gary Melton); and b) a suggested research agenda (Ross Thompson (Department of Psychology, University of Nebraska at Lincoln) and Gary Melton).

A volume to be published as a book will elaborate further the study group's contributions from the two workshops mentioned above. Natalie Kaufman and Irene Rizzini will be editing the book. The chapters explore the global context of contemporary international relations and current global trends and how they are affecting the everyday lives of children. The contributors also advance the understanding of how conceptualisation of the world and the research into the domains of globalisation have generally excluded children. The book will offer guidelines to enable researchers, policy-makers and other child advocates to increase their attention to how global change is affecting children and what knowledge and interventions would be useful in understanding and developing policies likely to further the well-being of children.

The working group in charge of the project is currently in contact with other Key Institutions that are interested in participating in the project, especially those in countries going through significant transitions.

5.2. The rights of the child to health and a safe environment

A group consisting of representatives from the Canadian Institute of Child Health (Canada), the Programme on International Rights of the Child (UK), the Unit for Research and Education on the Convention on the Rights of the Child (Canada) and the Secretariat had developed an outline for a new project: The rights of the child to health and a safe environment. The objective of the project is to create

a framework that includes guidelines for monitoring and reporting on the Convention on the Rights of the Child, linking children's rights within the human rights context to environmental and health rights through the harmonisation of various monitoring and reporting systems.

The point of departure for the proposed study is the fact that issues relating to environment and the importance of environmental factors to children's health are almost invisible in reporting to the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child. The thesis is that understanding of and consciousness about environmental issues and about how the environment affects children's health has increased. This should be reflected in the reporting, but as there are no requirements for this, the themes seem to be neglected.

Three concurrent studies will provide input for a process of formulating guidelines for good reporting on the rights of the child to health and a safe environment. The guidelines will be implemented, tested and evaluated in a number of countries representing various environmental settings. The three studies are:

- analysing government and nongovernmental reports to the Committee on the Rights of the Child for their content on sustainable development;
- developing protocols for combining current monitoring strategies used in reporting on other human rights and environmental protocols, including Agenda 21, the United Nations Framework Convention on Biological Diversity and others; and
- providing a vision by examining case studies of best practice and programmes in agencies encouraging sustainable development and health promotion, including children's involvement in these processes.

The synthesis of the three studies could be used to develop guidelines for reporting to the Committee on the Rights of the Child and others on the child's right to health and to a safe environment.

5.3. International Network on Children's Health, Environment and Safety (INCHES)

The International Network on Children's Health, Environment and Safety (INCHES) is a global network of people and organisations interested in promoting the protection of children from environmental and safety hazards. INCHES was launched in August 1998 at the International Conference on Children's Health and Environment in Amsterdam. Childwatch International and the Dutch Association of Environmental Medicine were the key partners in establishing INCHES. The mission of INCHES is to promote healthy and supportive environments that protect the fetus and child from environmental and safety hazards. INCHES represents many interests and will speak from the experience and expertise of its members, of science and of the best practices in policies and programmes. Promoting children's health requires protecting them from harmful environmental exposure, including harmful physical, chemical and biological microorganisms and pollutants in water, air, soil and food.

In 1999, the INCHES Coordination Committee met twice: in Rome in March and in London in June. Together with the World Health Organization Regional Office for Europe and the European Environment Agency, INCHES organised a workshop: *Children and Environmental Health: Valuable, Vulnerable and at Risk*, at the Healthy Planet Forum, parallel to the Third Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health in London in June.

A European Chapter of INCHEs was formally launched at the Healthy Planet Forum on 17 June 1999, and an Inter-American Chapter was established on 18 October 1999 in Buenos Aires, Argentina, at a special session at the Inter-Asma Conference.

Partners from all regions will work together in INCHEs to achieve the following aims:

- increasing understanding of and accord on how environmental factors influence child health;
- creating a global clearinghouse of research and information on children's environmental health;
- educating and facilitating information exchange on the best practices and policies in children's environmental health;
- identifying information gaps and stimulating new research; and
- advocating for children's environment and health in the intergovernmental arena.

INCHEs will disseminate information and initiate research on the relationship between environmental factors and children's health. Solid facts and good examples will be made easily available on the Internet as INCHEs develops. Parents, researchers and scientists, children's organisations and children themselves are all potential partners with a stake in INCHEs.

Several Key Institutions have been involved in establishing INCHEs, especially the Canadian Institute of Child Health, the Center for Independent Ecological Programs, Socio-Ecological Union (Russian Federation) and the Norwegian Centre for Child Research. The Childwatch International Secretariat has helped develop the INCHEs web site (<http://www.childwatch.uio.no/inches/inches.html>), where more information can be found. INCHEs has established a Coordination Committee, developed a position paper and is organising work in theme-specific task forces. For more information, see the web site.

5.4. Monitoring Children's Rights

The Childwatch International Monitoring Children's Rights project (previously known as Indicators for Children's Rights) was an international research project to develop monitoring systems as part of the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The project took place from 1994 to 1998 in the Centre for Family Research of the University of Cambridge.

National monitoring systems of practical indicators, based on reliable statistical or other data-gathering methods, are required to ensure the effective implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. These monitoring systems need to be developed as a systematic and integrated part of routine, government data-gathering activities for States Parties to the Convention. In response to a call for indicators by the Committee on the Rights of the Child, Childwatch International designed and carried out a project that developed capacity in developing monitoring systems. The main objective of the project was to contribute to developing strategies for monitoring children's rights at the national and global levels. The first phase of the project was a series of country case studies with local research teams conducted in collaboration with a wide range of partners from government, intergovernmental organisations, nongovernmental organisations and academia. The core of the first phase consisted of five country case studies (Nicaragua, Senegal, Thailand, Vietnam and Zimbabwe), but both phases included activities in many other countries and inspired a variety of research and training activities. Although the project has now officially ended, the Centre for Family Research continues to be the focal point for project follow-up.

The Monitoring Children's Rights project took place in two stages:

- phase one: the Indicators for Children's Rights project (1993–1996); and
- phase two: Consolidation and Extension: Beyond CRC Reporting (1997–1998).

Through a series of demonstration country case studies, which began in 1994, the project developed a universal process for identifying and developing indicators in national contexts, as part of a strategy for developing routine systems for monitoring children's rights. The development of such systems is already advanced in four of the five country case studies (Nicaragua, Senegal, Vietnam and Zimbabwe). In addition, several countries in which case studies did not take place, as well as certain organisations and groups (especially UNICEF), declared an interest in cooperating with the project within the context of regional and global networks. Phase two of the project, from July 1997, was designed to meet the need to consolidate the achievements of phase one, to make it possible to replicate the project in further countries and to train appropriate individuals in the requisite skills.

Global Coordinator Judith Ennew, members of country case study teams, the Director of Childwatch International and members of the Global Advisory Committee have made many presentations at conferences and other scientific gatherings, and there have also been a number of academic publications about, or related to, the project. In addition, Judith Ennew is writing a book to document the experiences and gains of the project entitled *Monitoring children's rights: an anthropological perspective on child statistics* that is expected to be published by Ashgate/Dartmouth in 2000. The central argument consists of a new approach to debates about cultural relativity in the field of human rights. This is based on theories of social anthropology combined with practical, ethnographic experience in working with statistical information about children in a wide range of national settings.

In the course of the project, Childwatch International consulted closely with the Committee on the Rights of the Child, UNICEF and other United Nations agencies, the academic community and relevant international nongovernmental organisations in the fields of child welfare and development assistance focused on children. The project received funding from the European Commission (for phase one) and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Authority (SIDA) for the global coordination of the project (throughout phases one and two). UNICEF Headquarters in New York supported the pilot study in 1994 and part of phase two, and Childwatch International also contributed from its own budget in the initial and final stages of the project. Each of the five country case studies was defined as an autonomous subproject, separately funded by local sponsors. In November 1999, a summary report to SIDA – one of the main donors – was published.

The project has now formally ended. However, the Global Coordinator is working to make material from the project available in print and on the Internet, including the book mentioned above. There is great demand for information about the project, and country case studies are being replicated in several countries. For more information about the project and some of the publications, see the project website on the Internet: <http://www.childwatch.uio.no/cwi/projects/indicators/index.html>.

5.5. Growing Up in Cities

The Growing Up in Cities project is a replication of a 1977 study by urban planner Kevin Lynch as part of UNESCO's "Man and the Biosphere" programme. The aim of both the original project and the current one is to involve children and young people and governments in evaluating and improving local environments. Multiple methods and specific themes have been applied and explored in the process of carrying out the project. The project will document some of the human costs and benefits of economic development by showing how the child's use and perception of the resulting microenvironment affect his or her life and personal development.

Growing Up in Cities is also a project within UNESCO's Management of Social Transformations (MOST) Programme, Social and Human Science Sector, and is led by a group of environmental researchers and urban planners under the auspices of Childwatch International and the Norwegian Centre for Child Research. Louise Chawla (a Fulbright Scholar in 1995 at the Children and Environment programme of the Norwegian Centre for Child Research and now at Whitney Young College, Kentucky State University) developed the plans for replicating the original study. As the coordinator of the global project, she identified research contacts at the original sites and made contact with new sites interested in participating in the project.

Phase one of the Growing Up in Cities project included sites in eight countries:

- Salta and Buenos Aires, Argentina
- Melbourne, Australia
- Bangalore, India
- Warsaw, Poland
- Trondheim, Norway
- Johannesburg, South Africa
- Northampton, United Kingdom
- Oakland, California, USA

In seven of these eight sites, children and youth are now involved in designing and constructing community improvements or influencing urban policy to better accommodate children's needs. Phase two involves more programme sites.

In 1999, several articles were written and projects initiated on several new sites. Louise Chawla wrote two journal articles, for *Michigan Quarterly* and for *Local Environment*, and collaborated with Growing Up in Cities colleagues on two chapters for other books on sites in South Africa and the United States. In 2000, UNESCO Press and Earthscan are publishing the *Creating Better Cities with Children and Youth Manual* (based on the original eight project sites) by David Driskell and the book *Growing Up in an Urbanizing World* edited and co-written by Louise Chawla. Both will be available in September 2000.

Growing Up in Cities projects have been initiated on three new sites in 1999:

- The municipality of Saida, Lebanon, has undertaken a Growing Up in Cities site with the children and youth from the Old City of Saida. Louise Chawla and David Driskell have been active in helping this site get started and progress. They are working with a network of 10 nongovernmental organisations that serve children and their families. Based on the first stage of the Growing Up in Cities research with children, it is planned to carry out a community-based planning process to develop a network of green spaces and play spaces in the Old City. A training course on Growing Up in Cities methods for municipalities encompassing historic cities in Lebanon will be held in September 2000 in Saida.
- A new Growing Up in Cities project was initiated in the Port Moresby area of Papua New Guinea, with cooperation from the UNESCO National Commission for Papua New Guinea and the United States Peace Corps. Karen Malone, the Growing Up in Cities project director in Australia, and her colleague Lindsay Hasluck are assisting an indigenous community in Port Moresby in carrying out a Growing Up in Cities project.

- Following a Growing Up in Cities training course offered in the Netherlands, the city of Göteborg, Sweden, has completed a Growing Up in Cities project.

In 1999, a project representative made a trip to the Russian Federation. In collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme, the Growing Up in Cities team will be helping initiate a new project site in St Petersburg. Increasing numbers of city representatives are showing interest in initiating sites, and requests for assistance from the Growing Up in Cities team have increased recently (requests have come from Morocco and Vietnam, among others). To meet the demands and to spread the ideas and methods of Growing Up in Cities, the new direction involves disseminating methods related to children's participation in urban planning: for example, to "train trainers".

The project is supported by the MOST Programme of UNESCO, in collaboration with numerous other organisations around the world, including Childwatch International. For more information, see http://www.childwatch.uio.no/cwi/GUIC_introduction.html.

5.6. Use of child research in international organisations

The task force of the project consists of Gary Melton, Per Miljeteig and Natalie Kaufman. Francisco Pilotti was on the task force up until 1999. Through a series of discussions with those working with children's programmes in international organisations, the task force intends to determine what research the organisations currently use and what further research these practitioners might find helpful in their planning and programming. A major benefit of the project would be to assist Childwatch International in developing a collaborative research agenda that would be innovative and designed to meet the needs of international organisations. In addition, the project would help the Key Institutions involved in developing strategies they could use to bring their work to the attention of those who could benefit most from it. The intention is to increase the capacity of the Childwatch International Research Network through its members and to conduct collaborative research projects and effectively disseminate the results to the staff of international organisations.

The project will assess whether decision-makers are actually getting and using a significant portion of the results of scholarly research that would be relevant for their work. Although some research has been conducted on how national institutions gather and use information in agenda-setting and decision-making, there is not yet such comprehensive research about international organisations. There are distinct differences between international and national institutions, which would affect the applicability of national studies to international settings. A conclusion might be that the process of gathering information and selecting specific sources for regular consultation might be generalised to some extent. This project will determine how the similarities and differences in structure between national and international organisations affect their use of information.

The purpose of the project is to discover what sources of research on children the staff of international organisations actually know and use in developing their policies and programmes. What research and information do they regularly consult and actually use, and what additional knowledge do they feel would be useful? The findings will help identify what research should be undertaken to respond to the perceived needs of international organisations and to describe how to get the people within international organisations to consider the results of that research.

The task force has developed a framework for a series of meetings at each of two nodes of activity by international organisations related to children: Washington, DC and Geneva, Switzerland. The invited participants would be selected from international organisations based in these cities and the meetings facilitated by the task force. The main objective would be to explore how Childwatch International

institutions could work with the organisations to provide the information they need. The project task force would prepare an article for publication that reflects how people in international organisations learn about and use research on children. They will identify the research that policy-makers believe would be the most useful to their work and present their conclusions about the most effective methods for getting knowledge into the process of making decisions in international organisations.

5.7. Children and media

Ferran Casas of the Catalan Network of Child Researchers (XCIII) has been working with the Child Research Net (CRN) in Tokyo to develop a framework for international collaboration on a study of the interaction between children and media. During the Childwatch International Key Institutions meeting in Dunedin in July 1999, it was agreed that Ferran Casas would coordinate a more quantitative data-collection approach using questionnaires, and Miya Omori (CRN) would coordinate and prepare guidelines for qualitative research using in-depth interviews to children. Quantitative data collection started in Catalonia in 1999, and qualitative data collection is planned to start during spring 2000. The possibility of starting a third methodological approach, using pictures of children and adults who are using new media, was also discussed, and it was agreed that one of the research teams of the XCIII would test such an approach during 1999–2000 and report about the results.

The project is planned to focus on media as a tool for learning and communication between children. Applied proposals are therefore expected from the results.

Besides XCIII and CRN, other Key Institutions have joined the project group in discussions about including their institutions in the project. With this, case studies in Brazil, India, Japan, Norway, Spain and Thailand are envisaged, although the project may include more countries.

At the end of 1999, the XCIII had already collected more than 2000 pairs of questionnaires from children and their parents among five samples from five different cities in Catalonia, and about 25% of the results were already in a database. Analysis of these data is planned to start by March 2000, and some results are expected to be presented at the III Conference of the International Society for Quality of Life Studies in Girona, Spain on 20–22 July 2000.

5.8. Dissemination and impact of child research

The purpose of this project was to produce a programme consisting of presentation of case studies for the 1999 Key Institutions meeting. Ferran Casas, Irene Rizzini, Usha Nayar and Rose September prepared case studies, with Jack Habib as the coordinator.

The intention behind the seminar was to provide an exploratory basis for experience gained by Key Institutions in seeking impact through research. Three case studies were selected from among those suggested by Key Institutions. The key questions that were asked in the preparations and that the case studies were intended to explore are:

- What do we mean by impact?
- What is impact?
- What are the factors that affect and determine impact?

The case studies were presented at the Key Institutions meeting as an example of how to start exploring the advantages and pitfalls of research that is aimed at benefiting children in a collective way.

5.9. Research on children's participation

In 1999, the Advisory Board decided to focus on a new priority area: assessing the effects of children's participation in decision-making on the children themselves, on the institutions that foster participatory processes, on families and on communities.

Gary Melton, as President of the Advisory Board of Childwatch International, and Louise Chawla, as International Coordinator for the Growing Up in Cities project, were asked to lead an initial planning group. They met with Natalie Kaufman and Susan Limber (Consortium on Children, Families and the Law) in December to develop a project outline, including topics for a larger working group, areas of expertise required and preliminary plans for an expert workshop in June 2000.

Children's participation is deeply grounded in the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Several articles stipulate that children have the right to participate at different levels in society. Moreover, the movement for child participation is a critical element in sustaining democracy across the globe and in individual societies and communities, whether in the North or in the South. Further, both Agenda 21 and the Habitat Agenda stress the importance of child and youth participation in environmental decision-making. Participation is also central to contemporary strategies for reducing poverty. The Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development from the World Summit for Social Development notes that women and children are especially vulnerable to deprivation, and governments should therefore make particular efforts to ensure the protection of their rights, including their participation in the planning and implementation of policies that affect them. As the first priority for action to eradicate poverty, the United Nations Development Programme urges governments and civil societies to empower people so that they can participate in decisions that affect their lives and enable them to build their strengths and assets.

There has been very little systematic research that seeks to generalise beyond single settings. Without such a research base, it is impossible to verify when, and how, participation is, in fact, in "the best interests of the child", or to determine which indicators of such programmes are likely to do good in contrast to those that may do harm.

A workshop on the evaluation of children's participation will take place on 26–28 June 2000 at the University of Oslo, in collaboration with UNESCO. The workshop has the following goals:

- to bring together researchers who focus on children's participation in environmental planning and community development (members of the Growing Up in Cities project and its network) with members of the Childwatch International Research Network who are involved in children's participation in other spheres of everyday life, in order to exchange experience and ideas;
- to share reviews of relevant research and critiques of outcome measures; and
- to form networks for multi-site pilot studies.

It is hoped that this event will stimulate further comparative research on an international scale, both within and outside Childwatch International.

6. Children's House in Cyberspace

Children's House in Cyberspace was launched in 1996 in order to use the opportunities the Internet provides for effective information exchange. The idea was to create an electronic meeting-place for those working for and with children at the professional level, whether within research, programming, planning, advocacy, legislation or policy-making. Children's House is managed by a House Committee,

which prepares and decides on the number of entry points or themes in the House. The main entry points are called floors in line with the house metaphor. Members of the House Committee are representatives from Childwatch International Key Institutions and partner organisations. Each organisation is the moderator responsible for a specific theme. Many of the Key Institutions now have their own home pages, and the same is the case with an increasing number of other relevant institutions. Many people have visited Children's House, which has been commended for its overview. The House Committee started a process to review the experience with a view to maximising the opportunities without establishing excessive workloads on the members. It will also review Children's House in light of the relevant material that has appeared on the Internet since it started, in order to make the appropriate adjustments.

7. Organisational matters

7.1. Funding and support

The Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs continued to provide funds for the Secretariat and its activities in 1999, and the Secretariat received substantial support from the Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Oslo.

7.2. Human resources

During 1999, there were several changes in the Secretariat of Childwatch International. Executive Director Per Miljeteig was on leave from January through May to work as a consultant for the World Bank child labour programme. Per Egil Mjaavatn filled in. Research Coordinator Marie Louise Bistrup moved back to Denmark with her family in August at the end of her 3-year contract with Childwatch International. Project Assistant Jan Olav Baarøy left the Secretariat at the end of October when his contract ended to start working for UNICEF in Uganda. Pernille Skotte replaced him in October. Sara Broolin joined the Secretariat in November as a temporary project officer.

7.3. Office space and infrastructural support

Childwatch International continues to have offices at the Blindern Campus of the University of Oslo, as part of the agreement of collaboration between Childwatch International and the University. Through this agreement, the University of Oslo provides substantial infrastructural support to Childwatch International.

8. Collaboration with other organisations

Childwatch International continues to collaborate with UNESCO, UNICEF, WHO, members of the Save the Children Alliance, Child Rights Information Network and others. Several of these organisations are also engaged in maintaining Children's House in Cyberspace, together with some of the Key Institutions.

ANNEX 1

Childwatch International Key Institutions

Canadian Institute of Child Health, Ottawa, Canada

Executive Director: Dawn Walker

Caribbean Center for Child Development, University of West Indies, Kingston, Jamaica

Acting Head: Sian Williams; Director: Janet Brown

Catalan Network of Child Researchers, Girona, Spain

Director: Ferran Casas

Center for Children and Youth, JDC-Brookdale Institute, Jerusalem, Israel

Director: Jack Habib

Center for Independent Ecological Programs, Socio-Ecological Union, Moscow, Russian Federation

Director: Maria Cherkasova

Center for Research on Childhood, Universidade Santa Ursula, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Director: Irene Rizzini

Centre for Child Development, Hong Kong Baptist University, Hong Kong, People's Republic of China

Director: Sing Lau

Centre for Family Research, University of Cambridge, Cambridge, UK

Director: Martin Richards

Centre for the Study of the Child & Society, University of Glasgow, Glasgow, UK

Co-directors: Stewart Asquith & Malcolm Hill

Centro de Investigaciones para la Infancia y la Familia (CENDIF), Universidad Metropolitana, Caracas, Venezuela

Director: María Angélica Sepúlveda

Child Research Net, Tokyo, Japan

Director: Noboru Kobayashi

Childhood Programme, European Centre, Vienna, Austria

Directors: Renate Kränzl-Nagl & Barbara Riepl

Childhood and Youth Policy Research Unit, Department of Social Policy and Human Services, University of West Sydney, Macarthur, Australia

Director: Jan Mason

Children's Environmental Research Group, City University of New York, USA

Co-directors: Roger Hart & Selim Iltus

Children's Issues Centre, University of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand
Director: Anne B. Smith

Consortium on Children, Families and the Law, USA
Director: Gary Melton

Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA), Dakar, Senegal
Executive Secretary: Achille Mbembe

Department of Child Ecology, The National Children's Medical Research Center, Tokyo, Japan
Director: Masako Tanimura

Department of Educational Psychology, Kenyatta University, Nairobi, Kenya
President: Frederick Moses Okatcha

Family Life Development Center, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY, USA
Director: James Garbarino

Fundación Paniamor, San José, Costa Rica
Director: Milena Grillo

Institute for Child and Family Development, University of the Western Cape, Cape Town, South Africa
Acting Director: Andre Travill

Instituto Interamericano del Niño, Montevideo, Uruguay
Director: Rodrigo Quintana Meléndez

National Institute for Child & Family Development, Mahidol University, Bangkok, Thailand
Director: Nittaya J. Kotchabhakdi

Norwegian Centre for Child Research, Trondheim, Norway
Director: Jens Qvortrup

Programme on International Rights of the Child, Faculty of Law, Queen Mary and Westfield College, University of London, London, UK
Director: Geraldine Van Bueren

UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre, Florence, Italy
Director: Mehr Khan

Unit for Child and Youth Research, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai, India
Chief: Usha Nayar

Unit for Research and Education on the Convention on the Rights of the Child (URECRC), School of Child and Youth Care, University of Victoria, Victoria, British Columbia, Canada
Director: Philip Cook

Affiliated institutions:

Australian Institute of Family Studies, Melbourne, Australia

Director: John Shelton

Child Development Centre of China (CDCC), Beijing, People's Republic of China

Director: Niu Xiaomei

Children's Rights Centre, University of Gent, Gent, Belgium

Director: Eugeen Verhellen

Consultative Group on Early Childhood Care and Development, School of Early Childhood

Education, Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Director: Louise Zimanyi

ANNEX 2

Members of the Advisory Board, 1999–2001

Ferran Casas

Catalan Network of Child Researchers
University of Girona
Spain

Jack Habib

Center for Children and Youth
JDC-Brookdale Institute
Israel

Nittaya J. Kotchabhakdi

National Institute for Child & Family Development
Mahidol University
Thailand

Gary Melton (President)

Consortium on Children, Family and the Law
USA

Per Egil Mjaavatn (Vice-President)

Norwegian University of Science and Technology
Norway

Usha Nayar

Unit for Child and Youth Research
Tata Institute of Social Sciences
India

Irene Rizzini (Vice-President)

Center for Research on Childhood (CESPI)
Universidade Santa Ursula
Brazil

Rose September

Institute for Child and Family Development
University of the Western Cape
South Africa

Mohammad Shaheen

Center for Development in Primary Health Education
Palestine

Anne B. Smith

Children's Issues Centre
University of Otago
New Zealand

ANNEX 3

Members of the Business Board, 1999–2002

Ivar Frønes (Chair)

University of Oslo

Gary Melton

President, Advisory Board

Childwatch International Research Network

Per Miljeteig

Director

Childwatch International Research Network

Per Egil Mjaavatn

Vice-President, Advisory Board

Childwatch International Research Network