

Childwatch International Research Network (CWI)

Project number: 125263 / NORGLOBAL

Attachment to progress report

Reporting period: October 1st 2009 to September 30th 2010

1. Project activities and administration

2. List of Key Institutions (members of the network)

1.PROJECT ACTIVITIES

The report shows how the members of our network have engaged in collaborative research and different kinds of networking, globally as well as regionally. The collaboration and networking has reached far beyond those directly connected to CWI. A wide range of organizations have been invited to take part in activities initiated by CWI members. At the same time, representatives from CWI have been invited to take part in projects and discussions initiated by a number of agencies and organizations central in the efforts to improve children's rights and well being. All these achievements are the result of the academic activity and quality of the work undertaken by the CWI Key Institutions.

Thematic groups

Child Friendly Cities

During this reporting period, the research collaboration on Child Friendly Cities (CFC) continued under the leadership of a CWI Key Institution, the Children's Environments Research Group in New York, and the UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre in Florence. The purpose of the collaboration is to improve the quality of the CFC international initiative through the development of assessment and monitoring tools. A consultation workshop was held in Rome in November 2009, and the report from the piloting of the monitoring tools in the Philippines was issued in late 2009.

Currently, the monitoring tools are being implemented by municipalities in 11 countries in partnership with local research institutes and UNICEF. A report on these experiences is planned for the last quarter of 2010. In addition to the funding from CWI, the project has received co-funding from UNICEF Innocenti and the Bernard van Leer Foundation.

Please see:

www.childwatch.uio.no/projects/thematic-groups/childfriendlycitiesandcommunities

www.unicef-irc.org/article.php?id_article=136 www.childfriendlycities.org

Children and the Law

This thematic group was established to explore how children's rights are respected in law across different countries. It consists of members from Australia, the Czech Republic, India, Israel and New Zealand. During 2009, information was gathered from interested CWI Key Institutions on the way children participate in private family law proceedings in their state/country. The findings from this survey were written up in a research report published in November 2009. The results were also presented at the Children's Rights at a Cross-Roads Conference in Addis Ababa in December 2009, and at the Interdisciplinary Colloquium on Current Legal Studies: Law and Childhood Studies in London in July 2010.

Please see:

www.childwatch.uio.no/projects/thematic-groups/children-law

Rural Childhood

The primary goal of the Rural Childhoods Group is to organize a research project that allows a cross-national comparison of rural childhoods specifically related to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. The group consists of members from CWI Key Institutions in Australia, China, New Zealand, Norway, Scotland and the USA, as well as of researchers from the University of the Freestate in South Africa.

The group met in Addis Ababa in 2009 during the Children's Rights at a Cross-Roads Conference, and is exploring options for the publication of a book or special journal issue on the topic.

Building Capacity for Ethical Research with Children and Young People

This is a new thematic focus for CWI, and the project was granted financial support by CWI for the first time during the reporting period. The main participants are the Centre for Children & Young People (CCYP, Australia), the Centre for Research on Children and Families (CRCF, New Zealand), the Social Justice and Social Change Research Centre (SJSC, Australia) and the Centre for Rural Childhood (Scotland).

The first activity, currently being undertaken, is a scoping of current ethical issues in child research, ethics guidelines and resources within CWI Key Institutions, followed by a Thematic Group meeting. During the reporting period, a draft questionnaire has been developed, in consultation with researchers from Key Institutions in the Majority World, and once finalized this will be circulated among the CWI Key Institutions shortly.

Bridging the Gap

The Bridging Research, Policy and Practice thematic group is examining the problem of conducting, producing and disseminating research in ways that maximize its ability to have an impact on policy and practice affecting the well-being of children and youth. The group consists of researchers from Key Institutions in USA, Ireland, South Africa, India, Brazil and Israel, as well as researchers from three additional institutions in the UK (Dartington Social Research Unit, Queen's University Belfast and Stirling University).

The group held a roundtable session at the Child Rights at a Crossroads Conference, Addis Ababa, December 2009, and planning for a book on the subject is underway.

Colombia: Protecting Early Childhood from Violence

The CPECV project, led by IICRD and CINDE, seeks to contribute to the strengthening of preventive and protective child protection (CP) mechanisms and systems for young children in Colombian communities heavily impacted by violence. These are especially necessary to address the multiple manifestations of violence, especially gun violence, that affect Colombian children during early childhood due to Colombia's history of armed conflict and related violence. CPECV aims to strengthen the response capacity of families and communities, with their active participation. The project also plays an important role in the strengthening of monitoring and evaluation of Colombia's obligation to children's rights at international (CRC) as well as national levels: both in the Constitution of the Republic Act 1098 and in the Code of Children and Adolescents.

The ultimate goal of this project is to provide information from these processes to inform policy at national and departmental/municipal levels - to strengthen Child Protection Systems at community level - and to share these lessons at international level.

It has been financed for the first three years by Canadian CIDA, CINDE and other Colombian institutions.

Regional Networks

Allocation of resources to the CWI regional networks is prioritized among the network activities. This has proven to increase the number of partners, many of them co-organizing and co-funding activities core to the CWI mandate and strategy.

Asia Pacific

During the last few years, the regional network in the Asia and Pacific region has carried out a cross-cultural research project into children's participation, focusing on the understandings and implementation of such participation in five different countries: Australia, China, India, Sri Lanka and Thailand. The research findings were published in late 2009 in a book titled "Children's Participation? Learning from Children and Adults in the Asia-Pacific Region" edited by Jan Mason, Natalie Bolzan and Anil Kumar (for more details, please refer to the list of publications in this report. For ordering the book, please go to www.onglobalisation.com/books/bookstore).

The Asia Pacific Study Group is now continuing their work focusing on the project "Exploring child to child violence and its socio-cultural contexts in some countries in the Asia Pacific region through diverse research methods". It will build on the rights framework, knowledge, research strategies and findings in the earlier project. The planned outcome in 2010 is a draft article/book chapter based on an international literature review.

Please see:

http://www.childwatch.uio.no/projects/regional-networks/asia/

Central and Eastern Europe

The Central and Eastern Europe regional network has identified the care of children in institutionalized settings as one of the most important topics for vulnerable groups of children in the CEE region. A regional seminar on the topic, titled "Children in Care", was organized in the Czech Republic in September 2010 in Department of Social Work, Charles University in Prague. Participants represented institutions in the Czech Republic, Croatia, Slovakia, USA, Great Britain and Norway. Main organizer was PhDr. Hana Pazlarová representing Faculty of Philosophy and Arts at Charles University in Prague.

Further follow-up will include the identification of research priorities in the Children in Care area and publication of the outcomes from the above mentioned meeting.

Middle East and Northern Africa (MENA)

The MENA regional network works to strengthen child research in the region through the sharing of research and methodologies, and institutional capacity building.

In November 2009, MENA organized a workshop hosted by the Information and Research Centre in Amman. Focusing on child research methodologies and conceptual frameworks, the workshop gathered 22 young researchers from Lebanon, Oman, Syria, Yemen, UAE/Dubai, Palestine and Jordan.

The network is now preparing for the Roundtable Conference and Training "Peer to Peer Methodology/Research Ethics/ Child Friendly Schools" scheduled for November 2010.

Latin America and the Caribbean

The Latin American and Caribbean regional network collaborates on issues concerning children growing up in contexts of poverty, marginalization and violence. The network consists of the Key Institutions in the Latin American and Caribbean region: Brazil, Costa Rica, Colombia, Jamaica, Mexico, Venezuela, Uruguay and Chile.

In October 2009, the Regional Network's fifth international conference was organized in Buenos Aires at the Universidad Lomas de Zamora. The quality of life of children and young people was the focus of the event. The launch of a book presenting the results from the conference is under preparation.

The network is now preparing for their Sixth International Conference and Annual Regional Meeting. The conference is titled "Excluded Children and Youth of Latin America and the Caribbean: Outcomes and Challenges of the New Millennium" and will take place in Mexico in November 2010.

Sub-Saharan Africa

The regional network in Sub-Saharan Africa met in Addis Ababa in December 2009 to discuss future priorities for their work. The following priorities were identified for 2010:

- Capacity Building Workshop
- Peer Mentorship Workshop
- Training of Trainers Workshop

The network is now in the process of preparing for a capacity building workshop on "Designing participatory, rights-based research with children in Africa" scheduled for November 2010 in Addis Ababa.

Other Network Activities

Developing New Initiatives

At their annual meeting in April 2010, the CWI Board initiated the process of developing a new strategy for CWI's thematic foci. As a result, resources were allocated to establish a conceptual basis for new initiatives in the following areas:

- Violence
- Participation and Governance
- Protective Environment

In each of these three areas, a core group has been formed to develop concept papers for future initiatives. The concept papers elaborate on how the future work should be focused in order to include the following perspectives: Policy Relevance; Participatory and Ethical Approaches; Gender; Poverty; From Early years to Adolescence; and Capacity Building of Young Researchers

At the time of writing this report, the concept papers are in their final phase of development.

Training of Young Researchers

The Latin American and Caribbean regional network, under the leadership of the International Center for Education and Human Development (CINDE) in Colombia, has previously carried out a one-year training program for young researchers (evaluation available on the CWI website).

During this reporting period, work has been undertaken to complete the materials and prepare a group of multipliers which will enable CWI's Latin American member institutions to carry out the

Young Researchers Training Programme in their own contexts. This work has been fully funded by CINDE.

Please see:

http://www.childwatch.uio.no/projects/training/latam-training.html

"Children's Rights at a Cross-Roads Conference"

The main CWI activity carried out during this reporting period has been the organizing of the conference "Children's Rights at a Cross-Roads" that took place in Addis Ababa, November 30th – December 2nd 2009. This was an event where policy makers, development agencies, NGOs, academics and young people engaged in reflection and dialogue for a better and more relevant knowledge base for future child rights strategies. The conference gathered close to 300 participants from all over the world.

The key conference organizers were Childwatch International, the African Child Policy Forum and the UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre, and the co-organizers were the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, the Comparative Research Programme on Poverty, and the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACERWC).

In addition to the main organizers, the following agencies generously provided the necessary financial resources: the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, UNICEF, the Oak Foundation, GTZ, the Overseas Development Institute and The Norwegian Ministry of Children and Equality.

The conference was organized as an arena for reflection and dialogue across professions and disciplines. Policy makers, civil servants, researchers, young people and practitioners were invited to present their experiences and ideas and to analyze and discuss the role of research in the development of policies and practices that safeguard children's rights.

The following issues of particular relevance to CWI's work were examined in Panel Discussions or in Thematic Round Tables:

- Migration and Dislocation
- Poverty and Inequality
- Social Welfare Services
- Education and Early Childhood
- Governance and Participation
- Research as a basis for Monitoring and Reporting Systems
- Participatory Child Research
- CRC as a Framework for Research, Policy and Practice

The Proceedings Report, the Call for Action and select presentations made at the Conference are available at CWI's web-page and the Conference web-page.

Please see:

http://www.childwatch.uio.no/projects/global-conferences/un-child-rights-convention-anniversary-conference-2009/index.html

http://www.africanchildinfo.net/conference/

Communication

The CWI web site continues to be of crucial importance for communication within the CWI network. The site is used for gathering and disseminating information about network activities and events, and about international child research with a rights perspective. The website has increased the visibility of our network and its Key Institutions and gained interest for the network from our partners as well as external stakeholders.

Please see:

http://www.childwatch.uio.no/

Norwegian network for child research, policy and practice

CWI's secretariat continues to serve as coordinator of the Norwegian network for child research, policy and practice in collaboration with the Norwegian Research Council. The Norwegian network gathers experts and key stakeholders (government, bureaucracy, NGO, private sector, practitioners and researchers) for discussions on current child related policy and research issues. It has its own web site and a mailing list with more than 200 members.

During this reporting period, CWI has been involved in the planning of two major events to take place in Norway:

- The EFA Forum scheduled for November 18th 2010 (main organizer Norad)
- A seminar on ethical research with children, with a focus on research with children in a global world, co-organized by CWI and The National Committee for Research Ethics in the Social Sciences and the Humanities. The seminar is scheduled for March 18th 2011.

Please see:

http://www.global.no/barn

International networking

CWI representatives have attended several events and held meetings on behalf of the network:

March 25th to 27th 2009, St Anne's College, Oxford United Kingdom. "**Young Lives international conference**" gathered together 150 participants for discussion and debate on the causes and consequences of childhood poverty, food for thought and new insights. Irene Rizzini og Sheila Green represented CWI at the conference.

November 3rd to 5th 2009, the University of Western Sydney: The conference "Counting Children In! Child Indicators: Research, Theory, Policy and Practice". Organized by The International Society for Child Indicators (ISCI) and the Social Justice and Social Change Research Centre, University of Western Sydney. A meeting on the Wikichild web was held in conjunction with the conference. Ferran Casas (Coordinator of the Catalan Interdisciplinary Research Network on Children's Rights and Children's Quality of Life -XCIII) represented CWI at the conference and in meetings on continued networking on child indicators.

December 7th and 8th 2009, Rome: "Review Of The Unicef Research Function, Unicef Innocenti Partner Consultation". Jon-Kristian Johnsen (CWI Director) represented CWI in these discussions.

April 21st 2010, New York: **Networking meeting with UNICEF** (separate meetings with the departments for Policy and Practice, Child Participation and Child Protection) and with **The UN Special Representative on Violence against Children** to explore possible areas of cooperation. The meeting was held in conjunction with the CWI Board meeting.

April 21st 2010, New York: **Networking meeting with Human Rights Watch** to explore possible areas of cooperation. The meeting was held in conjunction with the CWI Board meeting and three representatives from the Board attended the meeting.

June 14th and 15th 2010, Pennsylvania State University, USA: Planning meeting for continued **cooperation on research on child poverty** following the CWI conference in Addis Ababa. CWI was represented by Usha Nayar (Tata Institute of Social Sciences, India).

September 2nd and 3rd 2010, Dublin: Several meetings related to **International Society for Child Indicators (ISCI):** 1)ISCI Board of Directors meeting, 2)Child Well-Being Roundtable Discussion, 3)Child Well-Being International Symposium, and 4)International experts meeting to design and test a questionnaire for 8 to 12-year-old as a base to implement an international system of subjective indicators of child-well-being. Ferran Casas represented CWI at the meetings.

Key Institutions Assembly

Representatives of the Key Institutions normally meet every three years at the Key Institutions Assembly to discuss issues connected to network activities and to develop strategies to pursue the application of research to policy and practice and mutual capacity building through collaboration.

The 2009 CWI Key Institutions Assembly took place in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 3 - 4 December 2009. It was organized in conjunction with the global child research conference, Children's Rights at a Cross-Roads. It was a fruitful meeting between researchers from around the globe, supporting continued collaboration in the years to come. 40 representatives from the network's Key Institutions joined the meeting.

Please see:

http://www.childwatch.uio.no/events/key-institution-assembly/addis-2009/ki-assembly-2009.html

Board and Executive Committee

The CWI Board is responsible for implementing the strategies, policies and priorities set by the Key Institutions Assembly. A new 10-person Board was appointed by the Key Institutions Assembly in December 2009. For a presentation of the new Board, please see:

http://www.childwatch.uio.no/about/organisation/board/

In April 2010, the Board held its first meeting in New York. New strategic thematic priorities were set, and resources were distributed to the CWI regional and thematic networks. Additionally, a Round-Table was held, titled "Childwatch Board meets New York children's rights researchers". Childwatch's new President, Professor Robbie Gilligan, was also elected at this meeting.

The Executive Committee, consisting of three representatives from the Board, has held regular teleconferences during the period under review.

Secretariat

The Secretariat, hosted by the University of Oslo, initiates and promotes new networking activities and assists in the organizing of study groups, regional networking, international meetings and conferences in accordance with the Board's direction.

The University of Oslo has taken on the staff of the Secretariat as university staff, given that external funding is available. The Secretariat is based at the Blindern Campus, and has two full-time employees. In 2010, the position of Project Coordinator was vacant for 6 months, but has recently been filled. The secretariat's capacity has therefore been somewhat reduced during this reporting period.

External review of CWI

In 2010, an external review of CWI and three other Norwegian research entities was commissioned by Norad and the Norwegian Research Council (NFR). The review, titled *The Role of Networks in Development Research*, was carried out during the first half of 2010 as part of an assessment by the funders regarding potential future support of the entities in the light of new program priorities for Norwegian development aid. Members of the team were Professor Göran Hydén, University of Florida, Gainesville and Dr Anne Sörensen, Danish Development Research Network, Copenhagen.

Quoting from the final report, the evaluation of CWI was as follows:

"Childwatch is an important international venture that straddles quite well the lines between research, policy and practice. Its activities are adequately recorded in existing reports. They show that it is living up to the objectives set for its support by Norad. The regional and thematic networks are important driving forces of the research. We believe that the consortium in general and the Secretariat in particular have done a good job using the research activities as catalyst for sharing information among member institutions. Dissemination outside the consortium has been more sporadic and typically carried out on special assignments such as attending UN conferences to voice the views of the research community. In this regard, the network functions, especially the convener function which could enable the network to go beyond its own members, remain underdeveloped and underutilized. For instance, Barneforum, while a proper initiative to strengthen communications among Norwegian stakeholders, has not been particularly active and has operated in the shadow of Childwatch's international research activities. We believe, therefore, that Childwatch should continue to be considered for funding but as a network only if it develops a plan for how to strengthen the various network functions internationally and in Norway, including a communications strategy."

Publications supported by CWI

Reports

Castro Guevara, M.C., Galang Mayor, A.M.F., and Racelis, M., (2009): Philippine Pilot Study of the Child Friendly Community Participatory Assessment Tools. Quezon City, Philippines

Newell, S., Graham, A., & Fitzgerald, R. (2009, November). Results of an International Survey Regarding Children's Participation in Decision-Making Following Parental Separation (Report to the Childwatch International Research Network's Children and the Law Thematic Study Group). Australia: Centre for Children and Young People, Southern Cross University.

Roldán, O. (ed.) (2009): Niñez y Juventud Latinomericanas: Experiencias de Relacionamiento y Acción Colectivas. Medellín, CINDE.

Books

Jan Mason, Natalie Bolzan and Anil Kumar (ed.) (2009): "Children's Participation? Learning from Children and Adults in the Asia-Pacific Region". ISBN 978 1 86335 688 6

Shung King, M., September, R., Okatcha, F.M. and Cardoso, C. (2009) Child Research in Africa, Dakar, CODESRIA. ISBN 9782869782624

Caroline Harper, Nicola Jones and Carlotta Tincati (2010): Opportunities and challenges in promoting policy- and practice-relevant knowledge on child rights. ISBN: 978 1 90728827 2

Conference Presentations

Taylor, N.J. (2010). Child-inclusive models of practice in family law proceedings. Paper presented at the Interdisciplinary Colloquium on Current Legal Studies: Law and Childhood Studies, 5/6 July, Faculty of Laws, University College London.

2.LIST OF KEY INSTITUTIONS

AFRIKA

Child and Youth Research and Training Programme

University of the Western Cape

Head: Rose September

Private Bag x17
Bellville 7535
South Africa

tel: +27 21 959 2602 fax: +27 21 959 2606

e-mail: rseptember@uwc.ac.za

Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA)

Director: Ebrima Sall

Childwatch contact: Carlos Cardoso Avenue Cheikh Anta Diop X Canal IV

P.B 3304 Dakar Senegal

tel: +221 825 98 22 fax: +221 824 12 89

e-mail: codesria@codesria.sn

www.codesria.org

Department of Educational Psychology

Kenyatta University,

Contact: Frederick Moses Okatcha/Jacinta

Kwena

P.O. Box 43844 Nairobi, Kenya tel: 254-2-810 901

fax: 254-2-811 242

http://www.ku.ac.ke/schools/education/index

.php/programmes/19.html

The Children's Institute

Director: Shirley Pendlebury University of Cape Town 46 Sawkins Rd Rondebosch 770 South Africa

Tel: +27 21 689 5404 Fax: +27 21 689 8330 e-mail: ci@rmh.uct.ac.za http://www.ci.org.za

ASIA

Centre for Child Development

Director: Lau Sing

Hong Kong Baptist University

Waterloo Road Kowloon Tong Hong Kong

People's Republic of China

tel: +852 3411 7249
fax: +852 2337 8902
e-mail: ccd@hkbu.edu.hk
http://www.hkbu.edu.hk/~ccd/

Child Research Net

c/o Benesse Corporation 16F Jinbocho Mitsui Building 1-105 Kanda Jinbocho, Chiyoda ku

Tokyo 101-8685 Japan
Tel: +81-3-3295-0293
Fax: +81-3-5577-8420
Email: crninfo@crn.or.jp
http://www.childresearch.net

China Youth and Children Research Center

Deputy director: Sun Yunxiao Childwatch contact: Laura Ying 25 Xisnahuan North Road

Beijing 100089 P.R. of China Tel.: +86 10 6841 4611/ +86 6847 1289

Fax: +86 6847 1289

e-mail: cyjrcgjs@public.bta.net.cn

National Institute for Child & Family Development

Mahidol University

Director: Sairudee Vorakitphokatorn 999 Buddhamonthol 4 Road, Salaya

Nakhonpathom 73170

Thailand

tel: +66 2 441 0602 8 fax: +66 2 441 0167

e-mail: directcf@mahidol.ac.th

www.cf.mahidol.ac.th/

Tata Institute of Social Sciences

Director: Dr. S. Parasuraman

P.O. Box 8313 Deonar

Mumbai 400088

India

tel: 91-22-556 3290 fax: 91-22-556 2912

e-mail: sparasuraman [at] tiss [dot] edu

www.tiss.edu

The National Education Research and Evaluation Centre

Director: Dr. M. Karunanithy

Faculty of Education
University of Colombo

Colombo 3 Sri Lanka

Tel:+94 11 2505804

e-mail: mknithy@gmail.com

http://www.cmb.ac.lk/academic/edu/nerec/in

dex.htm

EUROPE

Catalan Interdisciplinary Network on Children's Rights and Children's Quality of Life Co-ordinator: Ferran Casas

Research Institute on Quality of Life

University of Girona Pl. S. Domènec, 9 17071-Girona

Spain

tel: 34-972-418980 fax: 34-972-418345

e-mail: ferran.casas@ udg.es and

irqv@zeus.udg.es
www.udg.es/irqv/xciii/

Centre for Family Research

Director: Susan Golombok

Faculty of Social and Political Sciences

University of Cambridge

Free School Lane Cambridge CB2 3RF

UK

tel: 44-1223-33 45 10 fax: 44-1223-33 05 74 e-mail: mpmr@cam.ac.uk

http://www.ppsis.cam.ac.uk/CFR/

Centre for Research on the Child and Family

The School of Social Work and Psychosocial

Sciences

Director: Dr. Margaret O'Brien

Elizabeth Fry Building University of East Anglia

Norwich NR4 7TJ

England

Tel: +44 1603 592086 Fax: +44 1603 593552

e-mail: M.O-brien@uea.ac.uk web: www.uea.ac.uk/swk

Childhood and Youth Programme

European Centre for Social Welfare

Policy and Research

Contact: Renate Kraenzl-Nagl (currently not at

the Vienna Centre)
Berggasse 17
A-1090 Vienna

Austria

tel: 43-1-319 4505 - 0 fax: 43-1-319 4505 - 19

e-mail: childhood@euro.centre.org www.euro.centre.org/ec_pa5.htm

Children's Research Centre

Director: Sheila Greene

Trinity College Dublin, 2 Ireland

tel: +353 - 1 - 608 2901 fax: +353 - 1 - 608 2347 e-mail: ccentre@tcd.ie

http://www.tcd.ie/childrensresearchcentre

Children's Rights Centre

Department of Social Welfare Studies Ghent

University

main contact: Kathy Vlieghe

Dunantlaan 2 9000

Ghent Belgium

tel: + 32 9 264 62 85 fax: + 32 9 264 64 93

email: ckr [at] UGent.be

website:

www.centrumkinderrechten.ugent.be

Department of Social Work

Faculty of Philosophy and Arts

Contact person: PhDr. Hana Pazlarová, Ph.D.

Charles University Prague 5, 150 00 Czech Republic

tel.: +420 251 080 421 fax.: +420 251 620 613 http://socp.ff.cuni.cz/

hana.pazlarova [at] ff.cuni.cz

Faculty of Health and Social Studies

University of South Bohemia Centre of Children's Rights

Contact: Mgr. Jana Stejskalova, Ph.D.

Jirovcova 24/1347, 384 01 Ceske Budejovice Czech Republic

tel.: +420 389 037 821 fax.: +420 389 037 829

umluva [at] zsf.jcu.cz

Institute for Labour and Family Research

Director: Repková Kvetoslava

Župné nám. č. 5-6 812 41 Bratislava

Slovakia

e-mail: sspr@sspr.gov.sk; admin@sspr.gov.sk

tel: 02-59330 201 fax: 02-59330 250

http://www.sspr.gov.sk/

Institute of Child Care Research

Director: Geraldine MacDonald

Childwatch contact person: Helga Sneddon

Queen's University 5a Lennoxvale Belfast, BT9 5BN Northern Ireland

Tel: (+44) 0 28 90975401 Fax: (+44) 0 28 90687416 e-mail: iccr@qub.ac.uk

http://www.qub.ac.uk/research-centres/InstituteofChildCareResearch/

NOSEB

Norwegian Centre for Child Research

Director: Anne Trine Kjørholt

NTNU

N-7491 Trondheim

Norway

tel: +47 73 59 62 40 fax: +47 73 59 62 39

e-mail: noseb@svt.ntnu.no www.svt.ntnu.no/noseb

NOVA

Norwegian Social Research Director: Magnus Rindal

Childwatch contact: Elisabeth Backe-Hansen

(ebh@nova.no)

P.O.Box 3223, Elisenberg

0208 Oslo Norway

Tel: +47 22 54 12 00

Fax: +47 22 54 12 01 e-mail: nova@nova.no

www.nova.no

Programme on International Rights of the

University of London

Director: Geraldine Van Bueren

Faculty of Law

Queen Mary and Westfield College

Mile End Road London E1 4NS United Kingdom

tel: +44 (0) 20 7882 5139

e-mail: G.VanBueren@qmw.ac.uk.

www.laws.qmw.ac.uk/pirch/mmundi.htm

UHI Centre for Rural Childhood

Director: Professor Rebecca M. M. Wallace

Perth College UHI, Goodlyburn Building, Crieff Road, Perth, PH1 2NX, Scotland, UK T: 01738 877506

e-mail: rebecca.wallace [@] perth.uhi.ac.uk

www.perth.ac.uk/ruralchildhood

UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre

Acting Director: Dr. David Parker

Piazza S.S. Annunziata,12

50122 Florence

Italy

tel: 39 55 20330 fax: 39 55 244 817

e-mail: florence@unicef.org

www.unicef-icdc.org

LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

Caribbean Child Development Centre

Director: Julie Meeks-Gardner School of Continuing Studies University of the West Indies Box 141, Mona Kingston 7

Jamaica

tel: +876-927-1618 / +876 935 8353 4

fax: +876-977-7433

e-mail: ccdc@cwjamaica.com

http://uwi.edu/opencampus/ccdc/default.asp

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CEANIM

Centro de Estudios y Atención del Niño y la Mujer (Centre for Research and Services for

Children and Women)

Director: María Angélica Kotliarenco Azerman

Nueva de Bueras 180

Santiago Chile

Tel: +562 6330514/+562 6326110

Fax: +562 6383040

e-mail: makconsultora@yahoo.com www.resiliencia.cl/ceanim.htm

CENDIF

Centro de Investigaciones para la Infancia y la Familia (Centre for Child and Family Research)

Director: Gloria López Universidad Metropolitana

Apartado 76.819 Caracas 1070-A

Venezuela

tel: 58-2-241 68 69, 241 4833

fax: 58-2-241 6869

e-mail: teminu@gmail.com

www.unimet.edu.ve/html2/investigacion/cen

dif/index.html

Centro de Documentación Sobre Infancia

(Children's documentation centre)
Coordinator: Norma Alicia Del Río Lugo
Universidad Atónoma Metropolitana

Prol. Canal de Miramontes 3855 Edif. C 20 piso

Ex Hacienda de San Juan de Dios

Tlalpan

México 14387, D.F.

México

Tel: +52 55 56736088 Fax: +52 55 56736088 www.uam.mx/cdi/

Fundación PANIAMOR

Director: Milena Grillo 376-2150 Moravia

San José Costa Rica

tel: +506 234 2993 fax: 506 234 2956

e-mail: info@paniamor.or.cr

www.paniamor.or.cr

Instituto Interamericano del Niño

Director: María de los Dolores Aguilar Marmolejo

Avenida 8 de Octubre 2904 Casilla de Correo 16212 11600 Montevideo

Uruguay

tel: 598-2-4872150 fax: 598-2-4873242 E-mail: iin [at] iinoea.org www.iin.oea.org

International Center for Education and Human Development (CINDE)

Director: Marta Arango Nimnicht Edificio Las Tres Carabelas El Laguito

P.O.Box: 20378 Cartagena Colombia

tel: +57 5 6655100 fax: +57 5 6650319

e-mail: cindecolombia@cinde.org.co,

www.cinde.org.co

International Center for Research and Policy on Childhood (CIESPI)

Director: Irene Rizzini

Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio de

Janeiro

Departamento de Serviço Social

R. Marquês de São Vicente, 225 Cardeal Leme,

9o. andar.

Gávea - 22453-900 - Rio de Janeiro

Brazil

tel: +21 3114-1290 and 3114-1291

fax: +21 3114-1292

e-mail: ciespi@ciespi.org.br

www.ciespi.org.br

NORTH AFRICA AND THE MIDDLE EAST

Center for Children and Youth

Director: Jack Habib JDC-Brookdale Institute Joint Hill, Givat Ram

P.O.B. 13087 Jerusalem 91130

Israel

tel: 972-2-6557445 fax: 972-2-5635851 e-mail: brook @jdc.org.il

http://brookdale-en.pionet.com/default.asp

Child Research Unit

Director: Mohammad Shaheen

Al Quds University

P.O.Box 4006, Al Bireh – West Bank

Palestinian Authority Area

Tel: +02 298 1526 Fax: +02 295 2767

e-mail: mshaheen2009@googlemail.com

Information and Research Center (IRC)

King Hussein Foundation

Director: Nermeen Murad

P.O.Box 941096 Amman 11194

Jordan

Tel: +962 6 5605844 Fax: +962 6 5606686

e-mail: intdes@irckhf.org.jo

www.irckhf.org.jo

NORTH AMERICA

Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago

Director: Matthew Stagner

(Childwatch contact: Rob Chaskin

rjc3@uchicago.edu) University of Chicago 1313 East 60th Street

Chicago Illinois 60637

USA

Tel: +1 773/753 5900 Fax: +1 773 753 5940 mstagner@chapinhall.org www.chapinhall.org

Family Life Development Center

Cornell University

Director: John Eckenrode College of Human Ecology

G-20 MVR Hall

Ithaca, New York 14853-4401

USA

tel: 1-607-255 7794 fax: 1-607-255 8562

e-mail: jje1@cornell.edu and

sfh3@cornell.edu

http://www.human.cornell.edu/che/fldc/inde

x.cfm

Institute for Child Rights and Development

Director: Philip Cook
Center for Global Studies
University of Victoria
P.O.Box 1700, Victoria
British Columbia

Canada V8W 2Y2
Tel: +1 250 472-4762
Fax: +1 250 472-4830
Email: iicrd@uvic.ca

www.uvic.ca/icrd

Institute on Family & Neighborhood Life

Clemson University
Director: Gary Melton

158 Poole Agricultural Center Clemson, SC 29634-0132

USA

tel: +1-864-656-6271 fax: +1-864-656-6281

e-mail: gmelton@clemson.edu

virtual.clemson.edu/groups/ifnl/index.htm

The Children's Environments Research Group

Director: Roger Hart

The Graduate Center of the City University of

New York

365 Fifth Avenue New York, NY 10016

USA

tel: 1-212-642 2970 fax: 1-212-642 2971 e-mail: cerg@gc.cuny.edu http://www.cerg1.org

The Consultative Group on Early Childhood Care and Development (CGECCD)

Director: Louise Zimanyi

School of Early Childhood Education

350 Victoria Street

Toronto, Ontario, M5B 2K3

Canada

Tel: (416) 979-5000 ext. 7034

Fax: (416) 979-5239

e-mail: info@ecdgroup.com

www.ecdgroup.com

THE PACIFIC REGION

Centre for Children and Young People

Director: Anne Graham

Southern Cross University Centre

P.O.Box 157, Lismore

NSW 2480 Australia

Tel: +61 2 66 203605 Fax: +61 2 66221833 e-mail: ccyp@scu.edu.au

The Social Justice and Social Change Research Center

Childwatch contact: Jan Mason University of Western Sydney

Bankstown Campus Locked Bag 1797 Penrith South DC NSW 1797

Australia

Tel: +61 2 9772 6482 Fax: +61 2 9772 6450

e-mail: Jan.Mason@uws.edu.au

www.uws.edu.au/sjsc

Centre for Research on Children and Families

Childwatch contact: Dr Nicola Taylor

University of Otago

PO Box 56, Dunedin 9054

New Zealand

Tel: +64 3 479 5038 Fax: +64 3 479 5039

E-mail: nicola.taylor [at] otago.ac.nz

Url: www.otago.ac.nz/crcf/