EVALUATION OF GHANA'S CHILD PROTECTION SYSTEM STRENGTHENING INITIATIVES AT THE DISTRICT LEVEL: FINAL REPORT

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Canada

Evaluation of Ghana's Child Protection System Strengthening at District Level

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Executive Summary

Background

After the launch of the Child and Family Welfare Policy (CFWP) in 2015 and the Justice for Children Policy (J4CP) in 2016, the Government of Ghana in collaboration with UNICEF embarked on a workforce strengthening (WFS) initiative in 20 pilot districts. The Initiative aims to strengthen the capacity of the Social Welfare Actors (SWA) to implement the policies, with a focus on the CFWP, using an innovative problem-driven iterative adaptation approach. During 2017 the SWA and allied actors from the pilot districts attended a series of workshops at district, regional and national level to better understand the Policy and reflect on new actions to address identified local child protection problems. Building on district-level learning, guidelines were developed to offer a framework of reference for continued implementation of the CFWP.

Evaluation objectives and methodology

Oxford Policy Management (OPM), under the leadership of a Technical Working Group (TWG) representing various government departments, was contracted by UNICEF Ghana to undertake an evaluation of this Initiative. The objective of the evaluation is to document and assess the capacity of the child protection system—in particular the practices of the SWA—has changed to enable the provision of quality services to children and families with support of the Initiative.

The evaluation covers the period from January 2017, when the Initiative started the sensitisation workshops at district-level, until September 2018 by when the guidelines had been finalised and disseminated to a select number of district representatives. The primary intended users of this evaluation are the Child Protection Unit of UNICEF Ghana and the Government of Ghana, in particular the TWG that supervises the Initiative. The evidence generated through the evaluation is meant to inform scale up beyond the 20 pilot districts as well as document emerging practices.

The evaluation used a qualitative case study approach. Five districts among the 20 pilot districts were purposefully selected to seek an in-depth understanding of whether, how and why change occurred. The case study districts are: Shama, Asokore Mampong, Upper Denkyira West, Lambussie-Karni and Talensi. The findings of this report are based on three research rounds using individual and group interviews with district and national stakeholders, comprehensive document review and observation at some of the Initiative's workshops. To capture the system perspective of child and family welfare, as recognised in the CFWP, the evaluation engaged with multiple perspectives and paid attention to the interrelationships within the child protection system.

Main findings and conclusions

1.   Relevance of the Initiative

The WFS initiative is well aligned with the CFWP in terms of objectives, approach and target population emphasising, among others, collaboration among different SWAs, a greater involvement of informal SWA in CFW issues, and a capacity strengthening approach that relies on local problem-solving that is fit for context. However, the capacity strengthening objectives of the Initiative only partially address the workforce's capacity needs to implement the Policy. Additional skills are required for successful implementation of the Policy, such as facilitation and communication skills, documentation and reporting skills, and more technical skills in terms of planning and case management. The Initiative was not sufficiently embedded in the broader CFW system from the outset, although this improved throughout the course of the Initiative by creating linkages with district planning processes and performance frameworks.

The Initiative was able to engage a wide range of relevant, local stakeholders—including formal, informal and allied actors—through a meaningful participatory process, but involvement became inconsistent and some actors were missing or underrepresented; among others, district administration leadership, the Ghana Health Service and Domestic Violence and Victims Support Unit (DOVVSU).

In line with the CFWP, the Initiative facilitated local actors to use their discretion to experiment and try out new practices, and come up with localised solutions. However, there is only limited documentation of what experimentation took place, which is a challenge for mutual learning and accountability. Local experimentation was constrained by limited available resources. Support and involvement of the district administration leadership was inconsistent. Despite the challenges, SWA embedded actions planned under the Initiative in existing practice and ideas for action evolved towards cultivating the space for change.

The new guidelines generated through the Initiative are consistent with the CFWP. They were developed following a participatory reflection, stock-taking and validation process and reflect district-level experiences and lessons. However, given the constraints in terms of experimentation and documentation, the guidelines could not draw on a wide evidence base of newly tried-out solutions to address CFW issues.

The guidelines promote ongoing learning and are therefore not conceived as a final product capturing all local learning. Overall, the guidelines are perceived useful among the few actors who are familiar with them. However, due to minimal dissemination at district level, the guidelines have yet to play a role in the diffusion of new practices across the pilot districts. In addition, although the guidelines mostly align with stakeholder expectations, some actors would have expected the related content to be more prescriptive, particularly regarding case management.

2.   Effectiveness of the Initiative

The Initiative has been effective in building awareness and knowledge about the core tenets of the CFWP, and, to a lesser extent of the J4CP, as its focus was mainly on the former, although it is likely that other initiatives and processes in the districts may have contributed to an increase in knowledge. There is still room for further capacity building, though, particularly among informal actors. Beyond gaining better knowledge about the two policies, the Initiative also influenced actors' ability to address CFW concerns, primarily by changing their attitudes and mindsets, especially with regards to accepting CFW as a common challenge, acknowledging the need for collaboration, and buying into key tenets of the Policy, such as the involvement of family and community structures in child and family welfare. Actors themselves perceived that their ability to address CFW concerns improved as the CFWP served as a common reference point in a context where approaches to handle cases are informed by individual experience and knowledge.

Some formal actors perceive themselves better able to make decisions and differentiate between child protection cases because of a better understanding of other actors' roles and responsibilities. However, the evaluation team did not find consistent evidence of changes in decision making in everyday formal SWAs practices, especially in terms of problem identification, definition, and in the assessment process. Informal actors wield a lot of decision-making power in districts, and while it is clear that traditional authorities are respected, the evaluation team observed limited changes in local decision-making practices (informal actors demonstrated hesitation in adopting different attitudes towards case management, in particular referral of criminal cases). Nonetheless, the workshops and the general environment of the WFS process had the merit of encouraging collective decision-making (e.g., including during the participatory selection of activities at the workshops).

Beyond change in knowledge, attitudes and perceived abilities, the primary change related to child protection workforce practices occurred in the area of prevention, through a reinforcement of sensitisation activities about child and family welfare issues. Evidence of any significant change in practices other than sensitisation as a prevention approach is limited. Changes in case management procedures and reporting were limited.

Consistently across all districts, there seems to have been not only an increase in awareness and understanding of the importance of collaboration between formal actors, but also a clearer understanding of the roles and responsibilities of different actors as a result of the Initiative. The Initiative has been an effective starting point for emerging collaboration among SWAs at district level, although this remains mainly informal, individual-dependent and limited to those participants that actively participated in the Initiative. The Initiative has also facilitated direct interaction and engagement between the formal and informal actors, with an increased recognition of the role of informal actors in child and family welfare. Informal actors appreciate that the CFWP recognises the role of community structures in both prevention and response to child and family welfare issues. However, preferences remain among informal actors to deal with cases on their own even when formal processes are mandated.

The Initiative has had limited influence on SWAs' capacity to document and evidence their practices. SWAs have not systematically documented either the activities undertaken as part of the Initiative or their related outcomes. When documentation is available, it relates to work done by the formal SWAs. Although formal SWAs seem to have been motivated to better document their activities (e.g. through the development of stories pertaining to the changes they experienced in the course of their work), routine documentation at the district level is mostly in the form of quarterly reports and remains largely programmatic, with little to no monitoring on CFW indicators included in the Medium-Term Development Plans (MTDP). Case management is not documented in detail across all districts: cases are primarily reported at the aggregate level and case files are not properly documented with very few having a case or care plan.

Factors that enabled change were mainly related to the willingness of SWAs to learn and adapt their attitudes, as well as to the existence of other interventions that offered SWAs platforms to put into practice what they had learned in the Initiative. Factors that constrained change were, in large part, related to SWAs' limited capacities to deliver on CFW activities and plans. Additionally, limited support from District Assemblies further constrained SWAs' ability to trigger change in practices.

3. Sustainability of the Initiative

A supportive authorising environment is an important factor for change in practice to take place as well for it to be sustained. At district level, the District Chief Executive (DCE) and District Coordinating Director (DCD) represent the ultimate district administration authority. While the Initiative made efforts to involve these district administration authorities their support for the Initiative was not sufficiently institutionalised. In those districts where district leadership was relatively more involved, it depended on personal initiatives and relationships rather than institutional engagement. Also, engaged leadership of the Department of Social Welfare and Community Development, inclusively involving all departmental staff in the Initiative, positively influenced sustainability.

Sustained change in collaboration, coordination, learning, adaptation and other practices promoted by the Initiative is influenced by SWA's access to resources and complementary CFW skills, such as planning, facilitation and reporting skills. While the guidelines highlight their importance, it was beyond the Initiative's scope to make more concrete provisions how to access such resources and skills. Despite the difficulties of advocating for resources, SWAs have continued to express commitment to CFW, ensuring implementation and gaining support. However, this is again the result of individual motivation triggered primarily by participation in the Initiative rather institutionalised support, which puts at risk the sustainability of this commitment to CFW. The inclusion of CFW in the District MTDPs and UNICEF's upcoming district support for child protection interventions will start to address this.

The replication of the initiative is meant to occur through the dissemination of the guidelines. However, replication of the guidelines is yet to be effective. As envisioned, the guidelines offer limited prescription of practices, which, on the one hand, makes them flexible for contextualisation to other districts. On the other hand, there is a risk that the guidelines are misinterpreted or misapplied without sufficient accompanying sensitisation about the principles and boundaries of roles promoted by the CFWP since, even with intense sensitisation during the pilot, these boundaries were not fully understood, particularly with regards to the roles of the informal actors.

Recommendations

The evaluation provides a number of strategic recommendations (SR) and operational recommendations (OR). All recommendations are directed to UNICEF Ghana, which will report on their progress. However, the Government of Ghana needs to be the primary agent taking ownership of the recommendations with UNICEF's support.

Strategic recommendations

UNICEF Ghana should:

SR1: Advocate for and support the further development, implementation and monitoring of strategies to institutionalise support and accountability among district administration leadership for changes promoted in the guidelines. The incorporation of CFW in the DCD performance agreement and the MTDP are examples of such strategies already being implemented. Progress on CFW indicators and activities included in the DCD performance agreements and MTDPs need to be monitored and periodically reported to the District Assembly and to mandated regional/national Departments. The use and effectiveness of such strategies need to be periodically evaluated. In addition, a more structured process needs to be included in the guidelines how the district administration leadership is engaged in and periodically informed about the progress of implementing the guidelines at district level, in particular with regards to: new ways of working on CFW issues, access to resources, ongoing innovation and adaptation, and learning, documentation and monitoring.

SR2: Promote coordination and collaboration among SWAs on CFW through existing and institutionalised district coordination platforms, such as meetings of the District Assembly, the Social Services Sub-committee of the MMDA and heads of MMDA Departments. Such platforms need to allow for a wide variety of SWAs to be engaged (and give voice to children and families), particularly during planning processes. The initiative has been effective in encouraging increased collaboration and coordination among various SWAs. However, it has been mostly informal. A degree of informality is contextually appropriate given limited resources and still emerging collaboration. However, the institutionalisation of this interaction needs to be further encouraged to better embed coordination in district governance systems and avoid it being dependent on specific persons.

SR3: Promote capacity strengthening among SWAs in the area of monitoring, reporting and information management. The documentation process of the Initiative was weak. Information management and reporting processes at the districts' Social Welfare and Community Development (SW/CD) Department are deficient. Currently SW/CD reporting is not aligned with the CFW indicators and activities in the MTDPs. This affects learning, accountability, effective case management and sustainable operations in case of transfer of personnel. Therefore, there is need for capacity strengthening in the area of monitoring, reporting and information management. Linkages with monitoring and reporting as part of the MTDP and other results frameworks such as the District Performance Assessment Tool (DPAT) need to be pursued. However, given limited resource environment this requires monitoring, reporting and information management practices that are fit for context. Therefore, an experiential capacity strengthening approach is advisable. Furthermore, any new monitoring,

documentation and reporting requirements should not disincentivise learning in pursuit of performance indicators since it would contradict the guidelines. This requires a fine balance that again needs to be fit for context.

Operational recommendations

UNICEF Ghana should:

OR1: Advocate for and support the further dissemination of the guidelines in a way that:

- Ensures all intended users are reached, both formal and informal actors;

- The district administration leadership and the head of the SW/CD Department are actively involved in the targeting of the dissemination, motivate why specific actors are targeted in light of their involvement in CFW in the district, and account for dissemination implementation; this needs to be done in consultation with SWAs and allied actors involved in CFW in the district;

- Provides clear guidance to users how the guidelines are meant to be used;

- Is accompanied by a framework that monitors their use, facilitates learning and accountability about their use, and enables their periodic adaptation based on the learning;

- Aligns the timing of the dissemination with the timing of the provision of other child and family welfare support to the districts, which would offer resources to district SWA to implement the guidelines;

- Emphasises sensitisation and further clarification about roles, responsibilities and required practices of formal and informal actors when confronted with CFW cases of a criminal nature;

- Ensures ongoing dissemination and is linked to capacity building frameworks and approaches, such as the training manual for social development personnel or academic courses on social work.

OR2: Support strengthening the skills of SWAs required to implement the CFWP, as highlighted in the guidelines and this evaluation. Change in practice though the initiative was constrained by existing skills. These skills relate to technical CFW practice skills such as case management but also skills for SWAs to be able to operate effectively in the wider CFW system, such as planning, budgeting, documentation and reporting skills, and 'soft' skills that facilitate learning and collaboration. Some initiatives are already rolled out to build such skills (e.g. case management training). Workforce capacity strengthening in the area of planning and information management are also needed with priority. It is important that such skill building is aligned with the guidelines, for example, seeking a collaborative approach across SWAs and building in some form of experiential learning.

OR3: Promote that districts receive support that helps facilitate and document innovation and adaptability on an ongoing basis as promoted by the guidelines. Moving away from the previous approaches to child protection and shifting to child and family welfare will take time, as highlighted in the guidelines. The guidelines promote that this change process happens through innovation, learning and adaptation on an ongoing basis. Such approach is challenging as demonstrated during the pilot phase. If this ongoing experiential learning process is meant to be sustained and replicated, capacity and support needs to be provided to help facilitate and document the process.

List of abbreviations

AMMA	Asokore Mampong Municipal Assembly
CBO	Community Based Organisation
CDO	Community Development Officer
CFW	Child and Family Welfare
CFWP	Child and Family Welfare Policy
CHRAJ	Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice
CP	Child Protection
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DCD	District Coordinating Director
DCE	District Chief Executive
DEQ	Detailed evaluation question
DMTDP	District Medium-Term Development Plan
DFP	District Focal Person
DOVVSU	Domestic Violence and Victim Support Unit
DPO	District Planning Officer
FBO	Faith-Based Organisation
GACA	Ghanaians Against Child Abuse
GES	Ghana Education Service
GHS	Ghana Health Service
GoG	Government of Ghana
ILGS	Institute of Local Government Studies
J4CP	Justice for Children Policy
LEAP	Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation

MLGRD	Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development
MMDA	Municipal, Metropolitan and District Assemblies
MGCSP	Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection
MTDP	Medium-Term Development Plan
NCCE	National Commission on Civic Education
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OHLGS	Office of the Head of Local Government Service
OPM	Oxford Policy Management
SBCC	Social and Behaviour Change Communication
SRP	Sensitisation, Reflection and Planning
SWA	Social Welfare Actors
SW/CD	Social Welfare/Community Development
SWO	Social Welfare Officer
TWG	Technical Working Group
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WFS	Workforce Strengthening

Evaluation of Ghana's Child Protection
System Strengthening at District Level

1. Introduction

In 2015, the Government of Ghana (GoG) launched the Child and Family Welfare Policy (CFWP), and Justice for Children Policy (J4CP) in 2016. Both policies aimed to strengthen Ghana's child protection system.

As part of a process of translating the policies into practice, and in line with the CFWP Objective 4 to build capacities of service providers at sub-national level, the GoG in collaboration with UNICEF Ghana embarked on a workforce strengthening initiative in 20 pilot districts across the country. Oxford Policy Management (OPM), under the leadership of a Technical Working Group (TWG) representing various government departments[1], has been contracted by UNICEF Ghana to undertake a formative evaluation of this initiative.

The workforce strengthening (WFS) initiative aims to strengthen the capacity of the Social Welfare Actors (SWA) in the pilot districts using an innovative problem-driven iterative adaptation approach. During 2017 the SWA and allied actors from the pilot districts went through a process of sensitization, problem identification, experimentation, reflection and adaptation, so as to allow them to address local child protection concerns in a more contextually adapted and

relevant manner and in alignment with the new policies (in reality, more focus was placed on the implementation of the CFWP than of the J4CP). District actors attended a series of workshops at district, regional and national level facilitated by the Institute of Local Government Studies (ILGS) with support of Child Frontiers (an international consulting company) to better understand the policies and reflect on new actions to address identified local child protection problems. Building on the lessons learned at the district-level, guidelines have been developed to offer a framework of reference not only for continued CFWP implementation in the pilot districts but also for future policy implementation in other districts.

The objective of the evaluation is to document and assess whether and how the capacity of the child protection system—in particular, the practices of the SWA—has changed to enable quality services to children and families with support of the workforce strengthening initiative. In line with the focus of the Initiative, the evaluation focuses on practices covered by the CFWP. The evaluation covers the period from January 2017 when the Initiative started the sensitisation workshops at

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1   The Technical Working Group includes the Departments of Community Development and Local Government Services (Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development), the Departments of Social Welfare and Children (Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection) and the Ministry of Chieftaincy and Traditional Affairs.

district-level until September 2018 by when the guidelines had been finalised and disseminated to a select number of district representatives. It is worth mentioning that the adaptive nature of the initiative makes it difficult to anticipate some of its specific results in a precise fashion. Outcomes have been emergent as a function of context and local experimentation. Therefore, given the nature of the Initiative and the formative purpose of the evaluation, the evaluation methodology mainly rests on a qualitative case study approach, conducted in five purposefully selected districts among the 20 pilot districts involved in the initiative. The objective was to seek an in-depth understanding of whether, how and why change occurred, including among whom and under what circumstances.

The primary intended users of this evaluation are the Child Protection Unit of UNICEF Ghana and the Government of Ghana, in particular the TWG that supervises the Initiative. The evidence generated through the evaluation is meant to inform intervention design and scale up beyond the 20 pilot districts as well as document emerging practices. Interim findings were already presented during a national stock-taking workshop in November 2018 to inform the intervention design. The current report aims to inform scale up of workforce capacity strengthening beyond the pilot districts.

Given the specific features of the Initiative being evaluated and consistent with the evaluation methodology, the evaluation team organised data collection in such a way to progressively uncover emerging change, deepen knowledge about context and expand the range of stakeholder perspectives consulted so as to give meaning to the possible changes and assess interactions. Therefore, the evaluation has been based on three rounds of primary data collection complemented with document review of secondary data. A first round of observational research of the Initiative's initial sensitization,

planning and reflection workshops, which was complemented with comprehensive document review and national key informant interviews (KIIs), allowed for: (i) an extensive situational analysis of the cases; (ii) an overview of the state of child protection workforce at start of the initiative; and (iii) a better understanding of the way the Initiative was rolled out, including its context and the different actors involved. The findings were reported in a Situational Report in August 2017 (see OPM, 2017a).[2] A second (interim) round of research made it possible to examine the extent to which the process of experimentation, reflection and adaption promoted by the Initiative had been 'diffused' among the expected beneficiaries: this entailed the assessment of stakeholders' perceptions about the process and immediate changes associated with the Initiative, as implemented thus far. This led to a greater appreciation, within the evaluation team, of both the context and actors featured in the different cases. The findings were disseminated at the national stock-taking workshop and in an Interim Report in respectively November and December 2017 and allowed for dissemination of interim findings (see OPM, 2017b).[3] The final round of primary research deepened the understanding about changes in practice, collaboration and interlinkages of the different social welfare actors, examining the extent to which the expected results of the intervention have been further adopted. It expanded the range of perspectives and stakeholders consulted, including the view of community members.

This report provides a cross-case synthesis of findings related to the evaluation questions defined by the evaluation team in collaboration with UNICEF Ghana and the TWG during the evaluation inception phase. It addresses all the evaluation questions, although some were already addressed in previous reports (for the sake of exhaustiveness, the main findings

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2   The findings of this situational analysis were included in a Situational Report, submitted in August 2017.

3   The findings of the interim round of research were included an Interim Report, submitted in November 2017.

corresponding to such questions are repeated in this report).

This report is structured as follows. The next chapter provides a more detailed overview of the object of the evaluation, that is, the WFS initiative; and, highlights some contextual factors that may have influence on the initiative. In Chapter 3, the evaluation methodology is presented with a focus on the final data collection round.[4] Chapter 4 presents the findings to address the evaluation questions according to the prioritised evaluation criteria. Within this chapter findings are synthesised through bolded statements at paragraph level and addressing the evaluation questions in summary boxes at the start of different sections. Chapter 5 ends the report with conclusions, recommendations and lessons learned.

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4   Methodological details of the other data collection rounds are presented in the respective interim reports.

Evaluation of Ghana's Child Protection
System Strengthening at District Level

2. Workforce strengthening initiative

2.1 Description of the object of the evaluation

Objectives

The workforce strengthening (WFS) initiative aimed to strengthen the capacity of the Social Welfare Actors (SWAs) to prevent and address child protection concerns in 20 pilot districts using an innovative problem-driven iterative adaptation approach. As such, it was meant to contribute to effective and adaptable implementation of the CFWP and, to lesser extent, of the J4CP.

Target population

The SWAs targeted by the Initiative are actors at district and community level actively involved in addressing and preventing negative child and family issues; in particular, Social Welfare Officers, Community Development Officers, Chiefs, Queen Mothers, 'Social Workers' from civil society organizations (ILGS and Child Frontiers, 2017a).

Implementing partners

The Initiative was implemented by the Institute of Local Government Studies (ILGS) with technical support of Child Frontiers (CF). It was governed by a Technical Working Group (TWG) comprising the national Departments of Community Development, Social Welfare and Children, the Office of the Head of Local Government Service (OHLGS), the National House of Chiefs, UNICEF and ILGS.[5] UNICEF funded the Initiative.

Interventions

During 2017 the SWAs and other allied actors from the pilot districts went through a process of sensitisation, problem identification, experimentation, reflection and adaptation to search for solutions to child protection concerns that are fit for context and put the policies into practice; with a focus on the CFWP (less so on the J4CP). District actors attended a series of workshops (one 'sensitisation, reflection and planning' (SRP) workshop and three follow-up reflection workshops[6]) facilitated by ILGS with support of CF to better understand the policies and reflect on new actions to address identified local child protection problems. Based on problem identification, SWAs and other allied actors sought to jointly and iteratively try out new solutions, reflect on them and document evidence of workable solutions.

Lessons learned at the district were further discussed and reflected on at regional workshops; a national stock-taking workshop was also organised during the second half of 2017, which formed

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5   The TWG was chaired by the Department of Community Development.
6   Initially four to five district-level follow-up reflection workshops were planned.

the basis for the development of new guidelines for implementing the CFWP in Ghana. The guidelines are meant to act as a non-prescriptive reference for child and family welfare actors to continue identifying innovative and locally conceived solutions for operationalising the policies and more effectively provide quality prevention and responsive services for children and their families that are fit for the Ghanaian context. A first draft of the guidelines was discussed at the national stock-taking workshop in November 2017, and subsequently refined during the first quarter of 2018.

The guideline development process was followed by a training process. Initially ILGS and CF were meant to organise 5 training of trainers (ToT) on the new guidelines, facilitate district level trainings by the trained personnel, monitor guideline implementation and facilitate further reflection. The scope of the guideline training was reduced to additional validation and reflection workshops on the guidelines and how to implement them, and two five-day ToT workshops.[7][8]Trained district actors are then meant to transmit the training further among SWAs in their district.[9]

Box 1 presents a summary of the key activities implemented by the Initiative for each one of the different implementation phases.

Box 1 Overview of key intervention activities

Preparation and design
» ILGS conducted reconnaissance visits to the 20 pilot districts in June 2016
» ILGS and Child Frontiers submit approach paper in January 2017

District-level sensitisation, experimentation and reflection
» 2-day **sensitisation, reflection and planning (SRP) workshops** were organised in all regional capitals for Regional Child and Family Welfare Actors and in each of the 20 pilot districts between March and May 2017, attended by wide variety of SWAs and other allied actors; covering sensitisation on the Policies, reflection on roles and problems in achieving policy objectives, and development of activity plans to address problems.
» Three f**ollow-up reflection workshops** were facilitated in each of the 20 pilot districts between March and September 2017 (staggered rollout) during which SWAs and other allied actors reflected and learned from activities tried out as part of district activity plans. Between workshops actors were meant to jointly implement activities and new solutions for problems identified.[10]

Learning consolidation and guideline preparation and validation
» Regional and national workshops were organised during October and November 2017 to consolidate and present the district learnings, and discuss draft guidelines that were based on the learnings.
» The guidelines were revised and finalised during December 2017 and the first half of 2018. In April 2018 a national guideline validation workshop was organised.

Guideline training
» 5-day Training of Trainers (ToT) on guidelines, prevention and case management organised in May 2018 for Northern and Southern districts.

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7   122 formal and informal actors were trained during two workshops in May 2018 covering the Southern and Northern pilot districts respectively (3 participants per district among the 20 pilot districts). The ToT did not only cover the guidelines but also training on case management and prevention. The trained actors received a training manual to support further transmission

8   The contract with ILGS and CF was changed, and CF did not take an active part in the training.

9   As part of the WFS initiative no additional resources are provided to support district-level dissemination of the guidelines. However, UNICEF launched an invitation for Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs) to submit intervention proposals for funding of interventions to improve the protection of children in July 2017. As part of this programme MMDAs could access funding for further dissemination of the guidelines. The programme covers 70 MMDAs, among which the 20 pilot districts.

10 The interim research for this evaluation (OPM, 2017) indicated that a wide range of relevant, local stakeholders were engaged through workshops, particularly the initial sensitisation, reflection and planning workshop, but that stakeholder involvement became inconsistent. There was also limited documentation of what experimentation took place. Local experimentation was constrained by limited available resources.

Intervention logic

Figure 1 presents the intervention logic of the Initiative. Given that the intervention approach emphasises a process of change that is shaped by context-driven, iterative adaptation, the expected change is not predetermined and may vary from district to district.

Figure 1 Workforce strengthening intervention logic

The WFS initiative seeks to contribute to the CFWP Objective 4 ("Formal and informal institutions and service providers have strengthened their capacity to ensure quality services for children and their families in rural and urban areas"), which could then be regarded as its final outcome. This ultimately is meant to contribute (at impact level) to strengthening a child protection system that better protects children—through prevention and response—against all forms of violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation.

The Initiative aims to contribute to its final outcome by bringing about changes at the level of social welfare actors' behaviours and practices. The changes that are expected to be produced as a result of this Initiative can be grouped in four main intermediate outcome areas:

- Improved SWAs' practice to address child protection issues;

- Strengthened collaboration and coordination between different SWAs at district level;

- Stronger linkages between formal and informal SWAs;

- Greater leadership and involvement of community actors in child protection and welfare issues.

Social welfare actors' changes in behaviour and practice are underpinned by a set of immediate outcomes (SWAs greater awareness and knowledge, skills, documentation practice and use of the new guidelines) and facilitated by the use of the PDIA approach of experimentation, reflection and adaptation. It is important to note that an effective experimentation and reflection

process requires social welfare actors to move beyond a 'closed loop' experimentation and reflection cycle and actually adapt their practice-based learnings.

The Initiative, as presented in the intervention logic above does not take place in isolation but will enfold within the broader child and family welfare system. Therefore, different factors related to different elements of the child and family welfare system, such as resources or social norms, tend to influence not only the Initiative implementation but also the extent to which the intervention process will lead to changes in workforce practice and ultimately result in improved service delivery to children and families.

Geographical scope of the Initiative

The 20 pilot districts comprised two metropolis, six municipalities and twelve districts.[11] The districts were equally distributed across 10 regions in Ghana. The process of selecting the targeted districts was conducted by the TWG and all ten Regional Coordinating Directors (RCDs) with support from UNICEF, based on criteria such as geographic location, cultural characteristics, child protection indicators, poverty/vulnerability indicators, presence/absence of social protection interventions, and CFW management capacity.

2.2 Context of the Initiative

The Initiative did not take place in isolation. Contextual factors and other interventions influence how CFW issues are addressed and services are provided. This section presents a concise overview of the context in which the Initiative has been implemented.

Decentralisation of social welfare and community development functions

The Government of Ghana (GoG) has been going through a process of decentralisation over the past decades. This has led to the decentralisation of certain sectors and functions to the Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs), among which the Departments of Social Welfare and Community Development, which at district-level have been merged into one department.[12]

The integration of these two units in practice varies from district to district.[13] As the integral parts of one only Department, they report to the District Assembly. However, they also (separately) maintain a reporting line to their respective Departments at regional level, which have not been merged.[14] The two units have traditionally been staffed by Social Welfare Officers (SWOs) and Community Development Officers (CDOs) with different roles, professional backgrounds, and reporting lines. A new Social Development civil service class has recently been created but is not yet adopted in all districts.

Medium-term development planning

As part of the decentralisation process, MMDAs are mandated to periodically prepare district development plans addressing local development needs in a manner prescribed by the National Development Planning Commission (NDPC). In early 2018, the NPDC published guidelines for the preparation of the 2018-2021 Medium-Term Development Plan (MTDP). The planning guidelines included instructions for the inclusion of social protection in MTDP, with a focus on child protection. The mainstreaming of child protection into the MTDP was further emphasised during several technical support

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11 Metropolis: Cape Coast and Tamale. Municipalities: Asokore Mampong, Sefwi Wiawso, Ketu South, Ga West, Lower Manya Krobo and Wa. Districts: Ningo Prampram, Talensi, Pusiga, Lambussie-Karni, Amansie West, Nkoranza North, Kwahu Afram Plains, Mamprugu Moagduri, Upper Denkyira West, Shama, Asutifi North, and Krachi East.

12 The Local Governance Act 936, 2016, recognises community development and social welfare as decentralised public service sectors, and established the Department of Social Welfare and Community Development as a Department of the District Assembly.

13 It is a legal requirement that the two units are integrated in one Department, but operational integration varies in practice.

14 Although, according to a national government TWG member, legally the two units are to submit one departmental report through the Head of Department to the District Chief Executive through the District Coordinating Director.

workshops, which were held in June 2018 to help regional and district officers with the finalisation of their plans.[15] In addition, child and welfare indicators were introduced among the Key Performance Indicators featured in the 2018 Local Government Service performance contract signed between the District Chief Executive and the District Coordinating Director, who embodied the political and administrative leadership in the district.[16]

Other CFW interventions

The CFW initiative has not been the only intervention implemented in the pilot districts. Other child protection initiatives have been implemented in the same areas: such interventions can add value or become risks to the successful implementation of the Initiative. On the one hand, they can complement the Initiative by providing its stakeholders with platforms for collaboration and opportunities for experimenting new ways of working in line with the CFWP. On the other hand, they can draw SWA attention away from the Initiative, or may misalign with Initiative's approach.

Below is a short description of the main interventions rolled out in the area of CFW during the implementation of the Initiative:

- To engender behaviour and social change related to child protection among community members, a training manual and community engagement toolkit was developed by UNICEF, Government and NGO partners. The toolkit was called the Social and Behaviour Change Communication (SBCC) toolkit. Community facilitators from government agencies and NGOs have been trained since 2015. Subsequently, UNICEF-funded community engagement by using the toolkit in 56 districts, among others all 20 pilot districts. These activities were implemented by the Departments of Social Welfare and Community Development (SW/CD) at district level in collaboration with other government agencies and/or NGOs.

- In November 2017, the Department of Community Development of the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development (MLGRD), the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MGCSP) and other partners, with support from UNICEF, launched the Ghanaians Against Child Abuse (GACA) campaign. Social and traditional media were used to create awareness on child abuse across Ghana. In addition, mobile theatres were conducted in communities, among others in the pilot districts.[17]

- In 2018, the Department of Social Welfare of the MGCSP, with support from UNICEF and USAID, published new Case Management Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for Children in Need of Care and Protection. Training on case management was integrated in the ToT of the guidelines in May 2018. More in-depth dissemination on the SOPs started in the three Northern regions in October 2018 and direct assistance/funding has been provided to five Southern MMDAs to support case management work.[18]

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15   These were organised by the NDPC with support of UNICEF, GIZ and USAID.

16   The following indicators are included in the Key Performance Area (KPA) of Social Services: 1) At least 60% of child protection cases managed effectively by the end of the year; 2) 80% of approved Gender Based Violence interventions implemented and reported on by the end of the year; and, 3) 80% of community mobilization and education programmes of annual action plans executed by the end of the year. Each indicator received a weight of 20% within the Social Services KPA, which has a weight of 20% in the overall performance rating.

17   Update on Ghanaians Against Child Abuse (GACA) Campaign, Office of the Second Lady – Her Excellency Samira Bawumia, 13th September 2018

18   The five MMDAs are Kumasi Metropolitan Assembly, Ga West, Accra Metro, Adenta and Agona West; none of which are included as case study districts in this evaluation.

Evaluation of Ghana's Child Protection
System Strengthening at District Level

3. Methodology

3.1 Evaluation questions

The **main objective** of this evaluation is to document and assess whether and how the capacity of the child protection system—in particular, the practices of the child protection workforce—has changed to enable quality services to children and families with support of the workforce strengthening initiative.

In line with this objective, the **evaluation questions,** presented in Table 2, were formulated during the evaluation inception phase, covering three of the OECD/DAC criteria, namely: relevance, effectiveness and sustainability.[19] The table presents the evaluation questions, indicating the data collection rounds each question was a subject of. The analysis on questions already addressed in the Situational and Interim Reports has been complemented in the final report with data collected in the last round.[20]

The evaluation matrix, which offers a guiding framework for answering the evaluation questions, is provided in Annex A. It is worth mentioning that the matrix has been slightly reorganised and updated compared to the version included in the inception report, due to the additional insights about the intervention and context that emerged during the early stage of the data collection. The criteria outlined in the evaluation matrix were used as the basis for a deeper exploration of the evaluation questions rather than as stringent performance-related rubrics used to make summative judgments. Given the bottom-up, iterative and adaptive nature of the Initiative, it was difficult to pin down how change will look like in advance. Nonetheless, the criteria guided what the evaluation looked at to answer the questions.

3.2 Evaluation approach

The evaluation has used a qualitative case study approach combined with a systems perspective.[21] A range of mainly qualitative data collection methods are used to understand how and why change happens. The approach was chosen because of the complex and experimental nature of the intervention that required building an in-depth understanding of how the Initiative and its

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19   The evaluation prioritises the criteria of effectiveness over impact because impact on children and families was considered out of scope for this evaluation. Also, the innovative, pilot nature of the initiative warrants to, first of all, examine its contribution to emerging changes rather than invest in establishing rigorous causal attribution between such change and an intervention process that is still under development. Finally, our evaluation does not focus on efficiency or the fidelity of the implementation of the intervention as it was decided that assessing the implementation of the intervention process is not the focus of this evaluation.

20   The focus of the first round of data collection sought to provide understanding of the starting situation within each district, in order to collect contextual information that could strengthen the evidence base to assess change in the future. Thus, the situational report only answered DEQ 1.1.

21   See Yin (2014); Beach and Pederson (2016); and Williams and Hummelbrunner (2010).

outcomes were emerging. A systems perspective meant engaging with different perspectives and looking at the interrelationships within the child protection system.

Qualitative case study approach

The evaluation is based on a multiple case study approach, whereby the case is defined as the "process of strengthening the capacity of social welfare actors and their practices" and the unit of analysis is a district. Five case study districts were purposefully selected among the twenty pilot districts involved in the Initiative. The districts were selected based on mainly the following criteria: geographical spread, rural/urban diversity, year of district creation and variation in the capacity of the SW/CD Department as core formal SWA.[22] The selected case study districts are: Asokore Mampong, Shama, Upper Denkyira West, Talensi and Lambussie-Karni (see Figure 2). Table 1 presents characteristics of the case study districts.

Figure 2 Location of the five case study districts

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22   Staff numbers of the SW/CD Department, gathered by ILGS during reconnaissance visits in mid-2016, were used as a proxy for the Department's capacity in a district.

Table 1 Summary description of case study districts

	Asokore Mampong	Shama	Upper Denkyira West	Talensi	Lambussie-Karni
Region	Ashanti	Western	Central	Upper East	Upper West
Urban/rural	Urban	Urban	Rural	Rural	Rural
Year of district creation	2012	2008	2008	2012	2007
Population[a]	304,815	81,966	60,054	81,194	51,654
Poverty headcount[b]	3.3	21.7	3.3	56.5	73
Number SW/CD staff[c]	8 CDOs 5 SWOs	4 CDOs 1 SWO	3 CDOs No SWO	13 CDOs 2 SWOs	3 CDOs 1 SWO

[a] Ghana Statistical Service (2014).

[b] Ghana Statistical Service (2015).

[c] Situation in October 2018 (not including National Service Personnel), based on interview with District Focal Person (DFP).

Table 2 Evaluation questions

Key evaluation questions (KEQs)	Detailed evaluation questions (DEQs)	Addressed in Situational Report[a]	Addressed in Interim Report[b]	Addressed in Final Report[c]
Relevance				
KEQ 1: How well are the activities and outputs of the intervention process consistent with the Policies' objectives and strategies?	DEQ 1.1: How consistent is the intervention approach with the objectives and operational plan of the CFWP?	●	●	●
	DEQ 1.2: How consistent are the new guidelines developed through the WFS initiative with the CFWP?			●
KEQ 2: How well is the WFS initiative grounded in the reality and needs of the SWAs and communities?	DEQ 2.1: To what extent, and in what ways, does the WFS intervention approach build on local strengths and solutions for better supporting children?		●	●
	DEQ 2.2: How useful are the new guidelines for the SWAs, particularly in terms of promoting local problem solving?			●
Effectiveness				
KEQ 3: To what extent and how has the CFWP been translated into practice?	DEQ 3.1: How have the practices to address child protection concerns among SWAs changed at district level and how has the intervention process contributed to this?		●	●
	DEQ 3.2: How has collaboration and coordination between different stakeholders at district level changed and how has the intervention process contributed to such changes?		●	●
	DEQ 3.3: How have linkages between the formal and informal sectors, in terms of prevention and response to child protection issues, changed and how has the intervention process contributed to such changes?		●	●
	DEQ 3.4: How have the changes in SWA practice, collaboration, coordination and linkages affected children and their families?			●

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KEQ 4: To what extent has the capacity of the child protection (CP) workforce been strengthened and how has the intervention process contributed to this strengthening and empowerment of the CP workforce?

DEQ 4.1: To what extent have the skills of SWAs changed, how has their awareness and knowledge of the policies improved and how has the intervention process contributed to these changes?

DEQ 4.2: How has the capacity of the SWAs to influence decision making about practice changed and how has the intervention process contributed to these changes?

KEQ 5: To what extent and how has evidence generation capacity of the child protection system been strengthened at local level applicable for nation-wide application? How has the intervention process contributed to this?

KEQ 6: What factors are supporting or constraining changes to take place at district level?

Sustainability

KEQ 7: To what extent are the intended and unintended effects of implementing the intervention process likely to continue beyond the end of the intervention process?

DEQ 7.1: What factors are likely to affect (favour or constrain) the sustainability of results of the intervention process and to what extent do they imply a risk to the sustainability of the results?

DEQ 7.2: To what extent is the intervention process suitable for replication and or adaptation beyond the 20 pilot districts?

ᵃ First round of data collection informed the analysis of DEQ 1.1 in the situational report.

ᵇ First and second rounds of data collection informed the analysis of marked questions in the interim report.

ᶜ All rounds of data collection informed the analysis of marked questions in the final report.

At the level of each district, the evaluation relied on multiple data sources, which have increased the validity of the evidence gathered as well as of the picture gained on the experience of each district. Additionally, relying on multiple data sources has enabled the evaluation to understand not only the changes experienced by individual SWA, but also the interrelationships that exist between SWA who operate within a diverse array of child protection systems and the Initiative interacted with other factors, such as social norms and other interventions (e.g. the rollout of the SBCC toolkit).

Systems perspective to evaluating child protection interventions

A systems approach to child protection acknowledges that problems faced by children require multi-sectorial response, as they often have multiple and interconnected root causes. This approach views the child protection system as a group of interacting, interrelated and interdependent components that, when properly coordinated, work to strengthen the protective environment around each child and its family (Olofsson et al., 2010). The CFWP, in the context of Ghana, takes on this systems perspective recognising the role of various elements in child protection, including policies, social norms, and SWAs' capacities.[23] Therefore, applying a "systems lens" to this evaluation involved engaging with multiple perspectives, looking at the interrelationships within the child protection system. Finally, in using a systems approach, the evaluation team recognised the symbiotic relationship existing among context and the process and outcomes of the WFS initiative.

Gender

A gender perspective and gender analysis were not part of the evaluation's Terms of Reference, nor did UNICEF or the TWG members prioritise it during the evaluation inception. Consequently, by design no gender specific evaluation questions and data collection methods were foreseen. Nonetheless, during data collection we ensured that both women and men to be represented as respondents and therefore the perspectives of men and women were considered. To the extent possible, we interviewed both male and female traditional authorities, male and female SWOs/CDOs and allied actors representing both sexes.

3.3 Data collection methods

The evaluation used a mix of qualitative data collection methods. Data was collected in each of the five case-study districts as well as at national level. Table 3 offers a summary on the use of data collection methods across respondent groups and data collection rounds. A description of respondent groups is summarised in Box 2.

Selection of respondents and data collection methods

A sample of respondents was mostly purposively selected among the actor groups presented in Table 3. At the district level, priority was given to the selection of respondents who had frequently participated in the Initiative's activities: this meant to ensure informed responses about the diffusion of this process and any emerging changes. Additionally, during the third round of data collection, actors who had not or little participated in the Initiative were interviewed (e.g. health staff, District Assembly staff): this was meant to enable a better understanding of the linkages existing among actors within the broader CFW system. Furthermore, a certain number of individuals that participated in the guidelines validation workshop and Training of Trainers (ToT) session, funded as part of the Initiative, were interviewed to complement the responses to the different evaluation questions

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23   According to the CFWP, in the context of Ghana, the effective protection of children depends on various components:(1) appropriate policies, legislation and regulations; (2) well-defined structures and functions, and adequate capacities; (3) supportive social norms; (4) effective promotion, prevention and response actions; (5) high quality evidence and data for decision-making; and (6) efficient fiscal management and sufficient resource allocation. Greater levels of coordination between community mechanisms and the wider system of care (including health, education, justice and social services) leads to greater numbers of positive outcomes for children and families (UNICEF, 2012).

on the guidelines' relevance (DEQ 2.2). At the community level, CFW service clients were defined as parents or caregivers who had accessed a CFW service or participated in programming that had been encouraged by the WFS initiative.[24] An overview of respondents interviewed during the third round of data collection is presented in Annex B, including information on their degree of participation in the Initiative.[25] Table 3 includes between brackets the number of actors interviewed per round.

Respondents were as much possible selected based on participation lists in the Initiative to allow for independent selection. The District Focal Persons of the Initiative were consulted during the selection and also informed the selection if no other information was available. In such cases, to mitigate potential selection bias respondents were selected guided by selection criteria set by the evaluation team. Furthermore, by collecting data among different stakeholders data could be triangulated.

Table 3 Summary of Data Collection Methods (number of interviewed/participating actors across districts mentioned between brackets)

Level	Actor	Round 1	Round 2	Round 3
National	Technical Working Group members	Key informant interview[26] (8)		Key informant interview (6)
District	Core formal SWAs		Group Interview (25)	Workshop (24)
	Core Informal SWAs		Key informant interview (11)	Key informant interview (11)
	Allied SWAs		Key informant interview (10)	Key informant interview (20)
	District Focal Person		Key informant interview (5)	Key informant interview (6)
	District Assembly staff			Key informant interview (6)
Commu-nity	Community leaders			Group Interview (10)
	CFW service clients			In-depth interviews (13)

A range of methods and tools was used during data collection:

- Key informant interviews (KIIs) or group interviews with respondents who had an informed perspective or experience with aspects of the WFS initiative process at either national or district level.[27] KIIs and group interviews at district level were facilitated with the aid of a hypothetical case scenario in both the second and third rounds of data collection (See Annex D).

- A policy knowledge interview, for which the evaluation team randomly selected one core formal

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24   However, in practice, this was generally not achieved given the limited implementation of activities and services arising from the WFS initiative.

25   While the exact degree of participation of respondents could not be determined because of the incompleteness of the attendance lists, 76% of the respondents attended the SRP workshop; 92% attended at least one follow-up meeting, and 73% attended at least two follow-up meetings, and X% attended the ToT on the guidelines.

26   During Round 1 additional key information interviews were conducted with civil society stakeholders beyond the TWG.

27   The group interviews took the form of an approximately 1.5 hours semi-structured interview with two to three representatives of the targeted group.
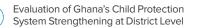
SWA and one core informal SWA who had attended the SRP workshop or, if no such person was available, had attended a follow-up meeting. The purpose of this interview was to assess respondents' knowledge of the two policies, the CFWP and the J4CP.[28] To assess the level of knowledge the evaluation team used an evaluative rubric.[29]

- A workshop with core formal SWAs (during round 3) consisting of a) an actor network mapping; b) an outcome harvesting exercise; and c) a group discussion on the guidelines and sustainability of the changes brought about by the WFS initiative.[30]

- Group interviews with community leaders and in-depth interviews with CFW service clients at community level to gain the community-level and caregivers' perspectives on their experiences in accessing child protection: this also allowed comparing often diverging community-level perspectives on the impact of the WFS initiative on children and families.

Box 2 Overview of national, district and community-level respondent groups interviewed

- **Technical Working Group (TWG) members:** The TWG is the forum of national government representatives tasked with leading the workforce strengthening reform efforts. Members of the TWG include: the Office of the Head of Local Government Service (OHLGS), the Department of Social Welfare, the Department of Community Development, the National House of Chiefs, UNICEF and ILGS/Child Frontiers.

- **Core formal SWAs:** Social Welfare Officers (SWO) and Community Development Officers (CDO) who are part of the District or Municipal Department of Social Welfare and Community Development (SW/CD);

- **Core informal social welfare actors:** traditional and religious leaders, such as Chiefs, Queen Mothers, Imams or Pastors (or their representatives). Community leaders elected to the District Assembly were also included in this group, although they form a bridge to the formal sector.

- **Allied actors:** actors who engage in child protection issues but for whom child protection is not their primary mandate such as representatives of education or police services. NGO/FBO representatives were also included.

- **District Focal Point (DFP) of the WFS initiative:** this person is a SWO or CDO. (S)he was included in the interview with the core formal actors, but a separate interview was conducted in his/her capacity as DFP in order to collect data about his/her role in the Initiative and data on child protection processes and structures in the district.

- **District Assembly Staff:** Staff interviewed included the District Coordinating Director (DCD), District Planning Officer (DPO) and/or the Budget Officer. The DCD, DPO and Budget Officer are all civil servants at the district level.

- **Community leaders:** elders, opinion leaders, chiefs and/or religious leaders of communities selected within each of the districts visited. Communities were selected with the assistance of DFPs and other SW/CD staff. Community leaders in these specific communities were likely not initiative participants.

- **CFW service clients:** service clients were chosen with the assistance of SW/CD staff. They were parents and caregivers who had come into contact with a CFW service (which could include a community sensitisation event, or direct assistance on a CFW issue).

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28 The discussions centred on actor's knowledge of the background and development of the CFWP, its key concepts, beliefs, values and practices, and strategies. Given the limited emphasis of the WFS initiative on the J4CP, the discussion around knowledge on this Policy focused on the Policy's objectives and key outcomes.

29 An evaluative rubric sets out criteria and standards for evaluating different levels of performance (see Better Evaluation). For the evaluative rubric used and each respondent's assessment, see the interim report and related case study appendices.

30 The actor network mapping aimed to explore the degree of interaction between formal SWAs and district-level informal and allied actors, interrogating whether and how these interactions had changed since the implementation of the WFS initiative. The outcome harvesting exercise sought to encourage SWOs/CDOs to reflect on and identify observable changes in "behaviour" (covering practices, relationships, interactions, procedures) that have been influenced by the initiative.

Besides primary data collection, the evaluation team conducted direct observation at the SRP workshops held between April and May 2017 as well as the national stock-taking workshop. In addition, the analysis of secondary data strengthened the findings and conclusions by also building on the body of evidence that had emerged during the intervention.

The secondary data included core formal SWA quarterly and annual activity reports, case management data, District Medium-Term Development Plans, District Composite Budgets, the WFS district activity plans, ILGS reconnaissance visit reports, ILGS workshop documentation, and a variety of documents related to the CFW system and Policy.

Data collection implementation and data processing

The OPM team worked with a local research partner, Participatory Development Associates (PDA), to conduct data collection in all five districts. All data collection rounds started with a formal introduction of the research to the chief executives of the District Assemblies.[31]

During Round 3, training was provided to four researchers over a period of three days, from October 18th to October 20th. Data collection then took place from October 21st to October 28th, and included a two-day data collection in Shama, which served as a pilot district and was completed by the core team of researchers together, prior to data collection in the remaining four districts.[32] For a detailed overview of the fieldwork plan for Round 3, please see Annex C. For detail on the second round of data collection, please see the Interim Report.

Data was recorded in all rounds of data collection. While in Round 2, interviews were transcribed verbatim, this was not possible in Round 3 due to time constraints. Instead, detailed notes were taken by a researcher during each interview conducted.

With regards to ethics, respondents were explained the purpose of the study and the implications of their participation. Consent was sought before starting and recording the interview, and to maintain confidentiality, the names and any identification of respondents was eliminated from the analysis and synthesis report. Additionally, given that specific child protection issues may arise during community visits, especially during discussions with CFW service clients, a safeguarding protocol was designed and trained on.[33]

3.4 Analysis and Validation

Data analysis during Round 3 started in the field through daily debriefs which happened at the end each day of fieldwork. After fieldwork, desk-based analysis began, drawing on secondary documentation (including the situational report, district level reports, ILGS documentation) and detailed interview notes. An analysis matrix based on the evaluation framework was created and multi-level (i.e. national, district and community), cross-case and multi-sectorial analysis was completed by OPM consultants and validated by the core PDA researchers. A one-day analysis workshop was held on October 31st, and preliminary findings were synthesised and presented at a validation workshop on November 1st. Further analysis was completed following and guided by the validation workshop, and this analysis forms the basis of the final report.

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31   An introduction letter was submitted by the Chief Director of the Office of the Head of Local Government Service (OHLGS) prior to the start of fieldwork.

32   Data collection in Shama was completed by 4 core PDA researchers and 4 OPM consultants. Although Shama served as a "pilot" district in which to test instruments, it was not a traditional pilot site as all data collected in Shama was quality assured and included in the third round of analysis. Following data collection in Shama, four teams, composed of 1 core PDA researcher, 1 OPM consultant, and 2 PDA notetakers each, completed data collection in Asokore Mampong, Upper Denkyira West, Talensi and Lambussie-Karni, over a period of three to five days.

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33   This protocol consisted of reporting the child protection issue to the SW/CD Department in the district, as well as to UNICEF, in order to devise an appropriate response at the community level. No child protection issues were reported in any of the districts.

3.5   Quality assurance

Quality assurance was sought throughout the evaluation process. The evaluation design was agreed and discussed with UNICEF and the TWG members. The evaluation matrix included in Annex A transparently guided the data to be collected. Sampling was conducted to involve different perspectives and experiences.

Data collection tools were reviewed by different evaluation team members, piloted and adjusted when needed. The evaluation team worked with experienced qualitative researchers recruited by PDA, considering required language skills and gender. Training was provided to the research teams during several days. During field research the teams reflected on their research activities during daily debriefs and discussed initial findings. Interview notes were reviewed by senior researchers. Data and findings were discussed and interpreted in group to avoid individual researcher bias.

The evaluation reports were reviewed by the evaluation team leader and an internal quality reviewer. The reports were further reviewed by the members of the TWG and feedback has been addressed.

3.6   Ethics

The evaluation adhered to ethical standards and code of conducts for evaluators and field teams. Evaluation utility was considered throughout the evaluation process by involving TWG members during the design, presenting interim findings during a national stock-taking working, and validating and discussing initial findings from the final data collection round with national and district stakeholders.

The evaluation team exercised independent assessments from the Initiative's funders or implementing partners. No conflict of interest was present. Research teams were trained to demonstrate respect, avoid harm and ensure confidentiality and privacy during data collection.

Consent was sought before each interview or workshop. District authorities were personally engaged and formally informed about data collection in their districts. The evaluation team and UNICEF agreed on protocols in advance of fieldwork in case safeguarding issues would come up.

The evaluation team submitted the evaluation design and draft data collection tools to OPM's Ethical Review Committee, which approved the evaluation activities.

3.7   Limitations

Data collection and analysis for this evaluation has faced the following limitations:

- The research teams only had two days to collect data in each one of the districts included in the sample. Although diverse stakeholders were interviewed, this limited the number of stakeholders that could be interviewed and secondary data that could be collected.

- Some stakeholders interviewed during the second round of data collection had been transferred to other districts, which limited the evaluation team ability to draw on institutional memory from SWAs who had been present since the beginning of the WFS initiative.

- District Coordinating Directors were not available for interviews in all districts, and there was variation in the type of data gathered among District Assembly staff (for instance, where a Budget Officer could not be interviewed, it was difficult to confirm the budget data gathered from interviews with the SW/CD Department and secondary sources).

- Some interviews had to be conducted under time pressure which has affected the comprehensiveness of the data collected.

- Other child protection interventions have been taking place at the same time of the WFP initiative, in particular the rollout of the SBCC toolkit. This makes it challenging to attribute change to the WFP initiative. Respondents have forcefully argued for the contribution of the Initiative to changes in knowledge, attitudes and collaborations. However, changes in workforce practice (e.g. sensitisation practice) and collaboration may be influenced by other interventions as well.

- The evaluation team did not have access to part of the district-level documentation that was produced as part of the Initiative, focusing on the experimentation and reflection process (i.e. planned activities, activities actually implemented, what worked and did not work, learnings). This has limited triangulation of data sources and the comprehensiveness of the district-level data on changes influenced by the Initiative.

- Access to routine district-level documentation, reports and data (focusing, for instance, on case documentation) was challenging. Actors in most districts did not have progress reports on initiative activities in either hard or electronic copy. District-level reports were not consistently available for all quarters or years.

- In line with the evaluation Terms of Reference the evaluation design did not include gender analysis. Therefore, no gender specific data collection and analysis took place. Therefore, this is not a gender responsive evaluation according to the standards of United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG).[34]

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34 UNEG (2014) Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluations.

4. Evaluation findings

4.1 Relevance of the Initiative

4.1.1. Consistency with the Policy's objectives and strategies

Summary answers to evaluation questions

KEQ 1: How well are the activities and outputs of the intervention process consistent with the Policies' objectives and strategies?

DEQ 1.1: How consistent is the intervention approach with the objectives and operational plan of the CFWP?

The WFS initiative is well aligned with the objectives and operational plan of the CFWP. Document review and key informant interviews with members of the Technical Working Group indicate that the Initiative's objectives, approach and target population are consistent with the CFWP and its operational plan.

The capacity strengthening objectives of the Initiative only partially address the workforce's capacity needs to translate the Policy into practice. Interviews and the new guidelines indicate that additional skills are required for successful implementation of the Policy, such as facilitation and communication skills, documentation and reporting skills, and more technical skills in terms of planning and case management.

The Initiative was not sufficiently embedded in the broader CFW system from the outset, although this improved throughout the course of the Initiative by creating linkages with district planning processes and performance frameworks. Furthermore, district administration leadership needed more strategic targeting to create an authorising environment for change to happen and to well embed the Initiative in the decentralised governance structures. The approach also requires a scope and timeline that allows for sufficient follow-up with realistic expectations about how fast change can take place.

DEQ 1.2: How consistent are the new guidelines developed through the workforce strengthening initiative with the CFWP?

Overall, the new guidelines are consistent with the CFWP. Document review and interviews with TWG members indicate that there is alignment around the principles and practices, particularly the importance of engagement and coordination at all levels and with all actors.

The guidelines are not a stand-alone tool but need to be used within a broader reform process and linked to the wider CFW system. How such linkages are best created is less well specified and subject of different visions on the non-prescriptive nature of the guidelines.

4.1.1.1 Consistency of the intervention approach with the objectives and operational plan of the CFWP

This question was addressed at the start of the evaluation in the Situational Report (OPM, 2017a) based on document review and national stakeholder interviews with members of TWG conducted in April 2017. New insights have been added based on interviews with the same stakeholders conducted in October 2018 after the implementation of the Initiative.

Consistency of objectives

The objectives and the expected changes of the Initiative, as reported in the Initiative's implementation document, do well reflect the objectives, strategies and actions included in the CFWP policy document and operational plan. The Initiative aligns with Objective 4 of the CFWP that aims to build the capacity of institutions and service providers. Beyond Objective 4, the Initiative also contributes to the CFWP's Objective 1 about strengthening community structures by targeting informal SWAs, building their capacity, creating awareness and developing guidelines. In addition, the expected changes mentioned in the Initiative's implementation document well reflect intended changes implicit in the CFWP; for example, strengthening the role of Chiefs and Queen Mothers and supporting the complementarity of formal and informal SWAs.

Interviewed TWG members confirm that the Initiative remains aligned with the objectives of the Policy. In April 2017 interviewed TWG members did not observe inconsistencies between the Initiative and the objectives of the Policy. They highlighted two key objectives of the Initiative: (1) to increase SWAs understanding about the Policy and its concepts, and (2) to bring about change on how the SWAs work. Both align with Objective 4 of the CFWP. After the implementation of the Initiative, interviewed TWG members reconfirmed this alignment. However, two interviewees pointed out the need to also secure alignment with other relevant

policy frameworks, in particular alignment with decentralisation policy.[35]

The capacity strengthening objectives of the Initiative only partially address the workforce's capacity needs to translate the Policy into practice. During the initial interviews TWG members acknowledged that the scope of the capacity strengthening objectives of the Initiative would not be able to cover all the workforce's capacity needs required to put the Policy into practice. A wide range of skills are needed, such as facilitation skills, community engagement skills, resource mobilisation, networking, record keeping and social work competencies. This has been confirmed by the learnings from the Initiative as presented in the new guidelines, which lists a number of additional skills required for successful implementation of the Policy.[36] The initial evaluation findings also signalled that the existing capacity level and skills could constrain the change that could be expected through the Initiative. The evaluation findings indeed indicate that relatively little experimentation and change happened in areas where the SWA's ability for change was limited because of capacity and skill constraints, such as change in case management or documentation practice (see below).

Consistency of approach

The approach presented in the Initiative's implementation document is well aligned with the principles and strategies included in the CFWP and its operational plan. The Initiative used a Problem-driven, Iterative Adaption (PDIA) approach, which is well aligned with the Policy in terms of: relying on local problem solving instead of importing best practices; establishing guidelines and practices that fit the context; and, providing local agents discretion and flexibility

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35 For example, an interviewee pointed out that the new guidelines need to be checked for consistency with the upcoming legislative instruments of the 2016 Local Governance Act.

36 The guidelines list the following skills: facilitation skills, communication skills, need assessment skills, documentation skills, planning skills, information communication technology (ICT) skills, conflict resolution skills, community mobilisation skills, report writing skills and adaptability to working with different groups.

to try different solutions. In addition, the Initiative emphasised documentation to support learning and to provide evidence about changes taking place in the districts. This is in line with the Policy's strategy to improve the evidence base of the impact of expected reforms. Finally, the planning and reflection events targeted multiple actors, both formal and informal, which is consistent with the Policy's strategy to strengthen the collaboration between formal and informal actors.

The interviews with TWG members confirm the appropriateness of the approach to translate the policy into practice but indicate that the Initiative was not sufficiently embedded in the broader CFW system from the outset, although this improved throughout the course of the Initiative. During the initial interviews TWG members considered the bottom-up, experiential learning approach as generally appropriate and promoting elements of the Policy, but some cautioned that locally-developed solutions needed to be linked to national standards. The interviewed TWG members in October 2018 reconfirmed the appropriateness of the approach in terms of promoting collaboration across the CFW workforce (formal and informal) and encouraging learning and adaptation to local context. However, linkages and coordination with other components of the CFW system were insufficient from the outset but improved later during the Initiative, in particular:

- The Initiative was insufficiently embedded in the wider CFW system reform process and insufficiently coordinated from the outset with other CFW supporting interventions. Interviewees provided examples, such as insufficient national coordination with the SBCC toolkit rollout,[37] need for better alignment with decentralisation and its planning processes and need for alignment with broader workforce capacity strengthening systems. These lessons

learned were identified during the second half of the Initiative, and with the support from UNICEF CFW was better embedded in the decentralised Medium-Term Planning process and in the national training/human resource frameworks for local government staff.[38]

- The Initiative was initially not well linked to performance frameworks that could incentivise, monitor and account for actions and result. This is currently being done with UNICEF's support by integrating CFW in district-level performance frameworks and the incorporation of the guidelines in the training/human resource frameworks for local government staff.[39] However, the need for accountability needs to be balanced with the learning and experimentation approach promoted by the Initiative, guidelines and Policy. It is important that the performance frameworks do not stifle SWAs to try out new things and learn from failures.

The scope and timeline of the Initiative did not allow for sufficient follow-up. The Initiative's approach of planning, experimenting, reflecting and adapting in a collaborative way, plus documenting the reflection, is hard and requires facilitation. The evaluation findings indicate that while the facilitation was highly appreciated by the participants, experimentation did not happen consistently, and documentation was not as expected. One interviewee indicated that the scope of 20 pilot districts was too large to allow for sufficient in-depth follow-up and consistent documentation. Two interviewees also pointed out that learning and capacity strengthening takes time. The timeframe of the district-level experimentation and learning process may not

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37 However, as will be discussed in subsequent chapters, at local level SWAs were able to piggy back on the SBCC toolkit to collaborate with different actors as part of the Initiative.

38 The National Development Planning Commission (NDPC) incorporated the requirement to include child protection in the MTDP in their guidelines for the preparation of the 2018-2021 MTDP at regional and local level. The Human Resource Department of Local Government Services is incorporating the guidelines into training manual for social development personnel.

39 Child protection indicators have been integrated in the Local Government Service performance contract between Metropolitan/Municipal/District Chief Executives and Metropolitan/Municipal/District Coordinating Directors for 2018. UNICEF also prepared a result-based funding mechanism for CFW interventions at district level.

have been sufficient for change to take place, although in accordance to the PDIA methodology the time boundaries of experimentation and iterations should be tight to establish the foundation of an action-oriented approach and build momentum.[40] In sum, the approach requires a scope and timeline that allows for sufficient follow-up with realistic expectations about how fast change can take place.

Consistency of target population

The Social Welfare Actors referenced in the Initiative's implementation document are well aligned with the target population of the relevant strategies implied in the CFWP policy document. The Initiative's implementation document indicates that it focuses on the capacity development of social welfare actors and their practice at district level. The CFWP implicitly refers to target groups throughout the document, which in general align well with how the SWAs are defined in the Initiative because: the Initiative includes both formal and informal actors, as emphasised by the Policy; a wider range of 'allied' sectors are invited to the SRP workshops, which aligns with the Policy's strategies to strengthen linkages across sectors and programmes; and, the Initiative engages regional stakeholders periodically, which aligns with the Policy's objective to coordinate child and family welfare at all levels.

The involvement of formal and informal actors is considered key, but district administration leadership needed more strategic targeting. The interviews with the TWG confirmed the importance of engaging both formal and informal actors in the Initiative and strengthen their collaboration as promoted by the Policy. Some interviewees recognised the underrepresentation of important actors, such as the District Coordination Directors and the Ghana Health Service. Particularly the former have proven to be key to create an authorising environment for change to happen and embed the Initiative in the decentralised governance system. However, while the Initiative recognised the importance of involving actors with authority for change to take place, the district administration leadership was not explicitly stated as a target group nor was a strategy formulated how to ensure ongoing engagement of the district administration leadership.[41]

4.1.1.2 Consistency of the new guidelines with the CFWP

A comparative review of the guidelines and the CFWP indicates that both documents are generally well aligned. As summarised in Box 3, the guidelines comprehensively address or reference the principles, beliefs, values and objectives included in the CFWP. The guidelines propose workforce practices in line with the CFWP, such as, an emphasis on prevention and early intervention, providing greater flexibility and discretion to SWOs to find solutions, and providing services through child and family-centered case management. Key processes promoted by the Policy are also giving more guidance, such as, the collaboration between formal and informal actors, engagement with community structures, and cross-sector interaction with other allied actors. The guidelines further promote the PDIA approach, which is well aligned with the Policy (see above), and address some of the conditions required to operationalise this approach, i.e. having the ability (resources and skills) and the authorising environment for change to take place. However, the guidelines offer little guidance on how the use of the PDIA approach will be facilitated in practice. Also, the guidelines offer less specific guidance on how to create linkages with some important elements of the wider CFW system (such as planning and budgeting processes and social protection interventions) and how to empower children and their families.

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40   Center for International Development (2018).

41   The Initiative's approach document 'Policy2Practice' (ILGS and CF, 2017a) refers to evidence suggesting that change takes place when leaders are involved in all stages of the process. It does not include any specific approach or strategy how to ensure ongoing engagement of the district administration leadership. It did include elections as a risk that could affect project participants. As a mitigation strategy it relied in the TWG to coordinate briefings with new actors.

Interviewed TWG members confirm the consistency of the new guidelines with the CFWP while also recognising that the guidelines need to be linked to the wider CFW system. Interviewed members of the TWG generally agree that the guidelines are consistent with the Policy, although not all interviewed members were knowledgeable about the guidelines. Those among the respondents who are most knowledgeable on the guidelines emphasised strong consistency in terms of promoting the involvement of and collaboration among a broad group of actors in addressing CFW and in terms of strengthening and clarifying the role of informal actors. There is also a recognition that the guidelines are not a stand-alone tool but need to be used within a broader reform process and linked to the wider CFW system. However, the interviews indicate that there is no consensus about how to create such linkages. On the one hand, standards and good practice related to processes such as case management, planning, budgeting or monitoring, for which broader practice frameworks exist, can be referenced in the guidelines, although it is argued to affect the non-prescriptive nature of the guidelines.[42] On the other hand, a longer experimentation and learning process may allow such linkages to the wider system to emerge bottom-up, but this requires time and may lead to situations of misalignment with broader institutionalised frameworks. Some other arguments speak in favour of incorporating some references to broader frameworks. First, the district-level interviews suggest that some actors want the guidelines to be prescriptive on some issues, particularly case management (see below). Second, the PDIA approach does not preclude existing practice or external best practice to form the starting point of learning and local adaptation.[43]

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42   For example, a standard model of stages of case management was incorporated in the guidelines during the guideline review process.

43   Center for International Development (2018).

Box 3 Alignment of the guidelines with CFWP principles, beliefs, values and objectives

Principles, beliefs and values of the CFWP
- » The principles, beliefs and values of CFWP are repeated and interpreted in the guidelines.
- » They form the basis for the formulation of guiding parameters for CFW interventions.

Objective 1: To design CFW programmes and activities to more effectively prevent and protect children from all forms of violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation
- » The roles of and engagement with community structures are amply covered in the guidelines.
- » The guidelines include a chapter (chapter 5) on new ways of working on CFW issues, including practices and decision-making approaches for identifying underlying problems, engaging community, focusing on prevention, and case management. It provides guidance in needed skills and case management model.
- » Social protection schemes are identified as available resource, although limited guidance is provided on good practices to create linkages with social protection interventions
- » The guidelines stress that the child is to be maintained within the family as much as possible.

Objective 2: To ensure effective coordination of the Child and Family Welfare System at all levels
- » The guidelines dedicate a chapter (chapter 3) to the roles and complementarity of different CFW actors, promoting, among others, the institutionalisation of collaboration between informal and formal actors, improved linkages and referrals, and more sharing and learning for innovation.
- » Cross-sector coordination is promoted in the guidelines.
- » The guidelines refer to the need for monitoring policy implementation at regional and district-level, as well as the role informal actors can play in this. Chapter 8 focuses on documenting change and provides examples of monitoring frameworks. It also references linkages to national planning processes.

Objective 3: To empower children and their families to better understand abusive situations and make choices to prevent and respond to situations of risk
- » The guidelines promote children as active agents of change.
- » Empowerment of children and their families are presented as a principle rather than "guidance on how to" in the guidelines, although the facilitation and communication skills promoted for SWAs will be important for empowering children and families, as participation is key for empowerment.

Objective 4: To build capacity of institutions and service providers to ensure quality of services for children and families in urban and rural areas
- » The new ways of working, the guidance on ongoing innovation and learning, and the promotion of specific skills needed to implement the Policy and support capacity building of service providers.
- » The guidelines promote changes in government institutions and suggest new ways of collaboration between SWOs and CDOs and with allied actors.

Objective 5: To reform existing laws and policies to conform with the Child and Family Welfare System
- » The underlying assumption for the guidelines is that they reflect the CFWP and represent reform.
- » The Justice for Children Policy is integrated and linked throughout the guidelines as the two policies are intricately linked in principle and practice.

Objective 6: To ensure provision of adequate human, technical and financial resources required for the functioning of the Child and Family Welfare System at all levels
- » The guidelines include a chapter (chapter 6) on identifying and mobilising locally available resources.

The guidelines acknowledge the need for planning skills, orientating planning and finance officers about the Policy and the role that community-based actors can play in planning. There is little guidance on how to link SWAs into planning and budgeting processes.

4.1.2 Grounding in the reality and needs of the SWAs and communities

Summary answers to evaluation questions

KEQ 2: How well is the workforce strengthening initiative grounded in the reality and needs of the SWAs and communities?

DEQ 2.1: To what extent, and in what ways, does the workforce strengthening intervention approach build on local strengths and solutions for better supporting children?	The Initiative was able to engage a wide range of relevant, local stakeholders—including formal, informal and allied actors—through a meaningful participatory process, but involvement became inconsistent and some actors were missing or underrepresented; among others, the Ghana Health Service, Domestic Violence and Victim Support Unit (DOVVSU) and district administration leadership.
	In line with the CFWP, the Initiative facilitated local actors to use their discretion to experiment and come up with localised solutions to context-specific problems. However, there is limited documentation of what experimentation took place. Local experimentation was constrained by limited available resources. Support and involvement of the district administration leadership was inconsistent. Despite the challenges, actions were embedded in existing practice and ideas for action evolved towards cultivating the space for change.
	The guidelines, developed following a participatory reflection, stock-taking and validation process, reflect district-level experiences and lessons. However, given the constraints in terms of experimentation and documentation, the guidelines could not draw on a wide evidence base of newly tried-out solutions to address CFW issues. The guidelines promote ongoing learning and are therefore not conceived as a final product capturing all local learning.
DEQ 2.2: How useful are the new guidelines for the SWAs, particularly in terms of promoting local problem solving?	Overall, the guidelines are perceived useful among the few actors who are familiar with them. However, due to minimal dissemination at district level, the guidelines have yet to play a role in the diffusion of new practices across the pilot districts. In addition, although the guidelines mostly align with stakeholder expectations, some actors would have expected the related content to be more prescriptive, particularly regarding case management.
	The close alignment of the guidelines with the CFWP and their participatory development process support their potential usefulness. They achieve their objective and stakeholder expectation of clarifying roles, responsibilities and actions of the key stakeholders in the child and family welfare system. Their usefulness will be enhanced by making them accessible to both literate and less literate actors, accompanying them with implementation support and linking them with the wider CFW system.

4.1.2.1 Building on local strengths and solutions

This question was addressed in the evaluation interim report (OPM, 2017b). New insights have been added where needed based on the final round of district-level research, document review and national KIIs, particularly regarding the incorporation of local learning in the guidelines.

The WFS initiative aims to strengthen the capacity of the district workforce to implement the CFWP by building on local strengths and generating local solutions that are fit for context. The engagement of multiple agents (both those with authority and those without it) in all stages of this process is

considered essential to its success.[44] To evaluate whether, and in what ways, the Initiative builds on local strengths and solutions we examine the participation of local stakeholders in the Initiative and the process of experimentation and reflection that is meant to generate local solutions. We also assess to what extent local learning is reflected in the guidelines.

Participation of local stakeholders in planning, experimentation and reflection process

As discussed in Chapter 2, the Initiative planned for an iterative, participatory process of sensitisation, planning and reflection organised around a series of facilitated district-level workshops alternated by periods of local experimentation-based activity plans. This district-level process was followed by moments of regional and national lesson learning and stock taking.

A wide variety of relevant, local stakeholders were engaged in the Initiative, although some actors were missing or underrepresented. The Initiative was able to engage different stakeholder groups: both local formal and informal SWAs as well as a wide range of local allied actors. Most of the district SW/CD staff was involved,[45] although the involvement of SWOs was relatively lower compared to CDOs.[46] In terms of informal SWAs, representatives of Chiefs, Queen Mothers and religious leaders participated. Active participation of informal actors was limited to a few per district that, once engaged, took up roles of champions of CFW in their communities (see below). Allied actors formed the largest and most diverse participant group, although some key

actors were missing or underrepresented.[47] The Ghana Education Service (GES) and National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE) were commonly well represented, while the Ghana Health Service was mostly absent despite their important role assigned in the CFWP. Some important actors, such as representatives of Domestic Violence and Victim Support Unit (DOVVSU) and Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ), were underrepresented, which is related to the fact that these institutions do not have a permanent presence in the case study districts.[48]

The participation of actors representing district administration leadership and authorities varied but was overall limited. District Assemblymen participated in all case study districts, but their numbers were generally low or their participation was limited to a few workshops. Nonetheless, the district case study research indicates that in several districts assembly members formed a bridge between the formal sectors and the communities in the prevention and response to CFW issues. Only in three case study districts, Lambussie-Karni, Talensi and Shama, did the District Chief Executive (DCE) or District Coordinating Director (DCD) attend any of the district workshops; and only in Lambussie-Karni did one of them attend multiple times. Interviewed actors considered their limited involvement as a problem because of their critical role in resource allocation for the implementation of the Initiative and the policies. Their involvement is also key to mainstreaming CFW issues into the District Medium-Term Development Plans. The involvement of DCEs, DCDs and planning officers was affected by new appointments and transfers during the intervention period (after the

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44 ILGS and Child Frontiers (2017) Putting Child and Family Welfare Policy and Justice for Children Policies into Practice, approach document.

45 Except in Talensi, where less than half of the SW\CD staff attended the workshops. Given the large SW\CD team (16 permanent SW/CD staff) ILGS had requested for a limited number to attend (based on conversation with the DFP during Stocktaking workshop, November 2017).

46 This does not just refer to a lower number of SWOs attending the workshop (which could be explained by the lower number of SWOs compared to CDOs in the district SW/CD Departments). The SWO attendance rate was on average lower than CDO attendance rate in three out of four districts that had both cadres.

47 In Shama, media and professional associations (e.g. Tailors and Dressmaker Association) were also involved, particularly during the SRP workshop.

48 DOVVSU and CHRAJ attended several of the workshops in Asokore Mampong, given the Municipality's proximity to Kumasi Metropolis, which has DOVVSU and CHRAJ offices. DOVVSU also attended one workshop in Shama. The Ghana Police Service participated in several workshops in Lambussie-Karni. The Police Services were not represented in Talensi, and only attended one workshop in Upper Denkyira West. Besides in Asokore Mampong, CHRAJ was not involved in other districts.

elections at the end of 2016). At the end of the learning process, DCDs or their representatives did attend the national stock-taking workshop in November 2017, which offered an opportunity of further sensitisation and reflection about the implementation of the CFWP. While district administration leadership attended the national stock-taking workshop, national leadership, such as ministers, did not attend as planned, which again indicates the challenges the Initiative has faced to mobilise leadership support.

Participation was considered meaningful with active involvement of all present. In general, interviewed participants were enthusiastic about the district workshops and their importance; considered them interactive and well-facilitated; and providing useful information for their work. They appreciated the opportunity to speak freely and openly and to contribute equally and meaningfully. Similarly, the national stock-taking workshop offered opportunity for active participation, open discussion and joint reflection on local experiences and challenges.

A limited number of stakeholders participated consistently throughout the follow-up reflection workshops. Stakeholder participation in the initial sensitisation, reflection and planning workshop, was considerably higher compared to the follow-up workshops. While it was foreseen that a smaller number of stakeholders would continue to be involved in the experimentation and reflection process, in most districts only few actors participated in all workshops. In Lambussie-Karni, Shama and Upper Denkyira West, only five or six people attended all workshops, while in Asokore Mampong eleven.[49] Representatives of stakeholder groups also changed. This added to an inconsistent engagement in the process of building local capabilities through experimentation and reflection. Stakeholder involvement was affected by a number of factors. First, respondents across the case study districts did perceive compensation for time

and expenses incurred for the workshops as insufficient: that affected continued stakeholder mobilisation and motivation. Second, no extra resources were available for participation in activities planned under the Initiative (see below), which constrained involvement of participants who could not well integrate those activities in their routine activities, such as informal actors. Third, people's limited availability formed another constraint to participation because of conflicting activities. Fourth, in some instances gate keeping of programmes among SW/CD staff resulted in a selected number of staff participating.

Experimenting and finding local solutions

In line with the CFWP, the Initiative facilitated local actors to use their discretion to try new actions and come up with localised solutions based on local experience. Following the initial sensitisation, reflection and planning workshop, actors were meant to experiment, reflect and adapt in groups using activity plans as a strategy for action. Collective learning and workable solutions were to be recorded and documented.

There is only limited documentation of what experimentation took place. While the activity plans were instrumental in reflecting about locally appropriate actions to address prioritised problems, there is only limited documentation about what actions took place. As part of the reflection workshop the achievement of planned actions was not systematically recorded.

Local experimentation was constrained by limited available resources. The interviews with participants during the second and final research round indicate that planned actions were not implemented or not implemented consistently. This seems to have affected iterative adaptation and therefore learning. Lack of resources was perceived as the main barrier to implementation, which was associated with the insufficient involvement of district leadership.

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49   We do not have the attendance lists of all workshops in Talensi, so cannot calculate this indicator.

Despite the challenges, actions were embedded in existing practice and ideas for action evolved towards cultivating the space for change. Participants in some districts managed to deal with the resource constraints as they aligned experimentation with their existing practice. For example, in Lambussie-Karni formal SWAs incorporated sensitisation on CFWP in their routine community work. However, this was not feasible for all stakeholders, which added to lower participation of certain groups of stakeholders. An interviewed allied actor in Lambussie-Karni commented: **"My experience is that what we planned was not always all carried out. With the exception of SWO and CDOs, who already engage in some of the planned activities as part of their normal work, other actors like those from GHS, GES, NCCE, faith-based organisations, were challenged with fuel to go out and do sensitisations because there was no funding"** (OPM, September 2017). When actions were carried out, they were often focused on sensitisation about the CFWP and child and family welfare issues in general because this could be relatively easily integrated in existing practice and aligned well with the CFWP's emphasis on prevention. Activity plans did evolve and, in several districts, participants started to formulate actions to expand their ability and the local authorising environment that would enable them to further experiment.

Experimentation was carried out by a limited number of stakeholders. As discussed before, participation in the follow-up reflection workshop was inconsistent and some actors participated more than others. This was also reflected in the experimentation process. While during the initial sensitisation, reflection and planning workshop four or five teams were formed that would experiment, this number was generally reduced to two because participants dropped out of the process. While interviewed participants were still highly appreciative of the strongly participatory nature of the process, the process became less diverse in terms of actors involved. The

experimentation was carried by those actors who could relatively easily integrate the activities in their routine activities, which generally excluded informal SWAs, although they were involved in implementing sensitisation activities in the communities. Furthermore, several district actors during the final research round indicated that they mostly tried out new ways of working in isolation within their own work setting rather than in a team with different actors. Resources were generally not available to facilitate such joint experimentation.

Lesson learned and new ways of working were, although it is unclear to what extent they reflect newly tried-out solutions to the identified problems. In general, it appears that, at follow-up workshops, together with ILGS, reflection on new issues, lessons learned and possible solutions took place and activity plans were revised.[50] For example, institutional and programmatic actions that had worked or had the potential to work, were reviewed during the third follow-up workshop. However, documentation is lacking to corroborate what actions formed effective solutions to the previously identified problems. Furthermore, it is also unclear to what extent lessons are the result of newly tried-out actions or rather stem from regular activities. For example, actors interviewed in Shama considered actions taken to represent little adjustment to business as usual. This, however, does not mean that the identified lessons are not useful and valuable, but their transformative capacity for system reform is not established.

Local learning reflected in the guidelines

The local learning was meant to feed into the development of the guidelines. It has been difficult to corroborate whether the guidelines reflect the local learning because at district level awareness about the guidelines was still limited as dissemination had yet to take place.

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50   Since we only received documentation from the third follow-up workshop, we cannot well corroborate what exactly happened during each workshop.

The development of the guidelines followed a participatory reflection, stock-taking and validation process. The guidelines were drafted by ILGS and Child Frontiers following the district and regional reflection workshops and feedback from the national stock-taking workshop. The guidelines were also discussed in the TWG and validated during workshops with district stakeholder participation in early 2018. Therefore, opportunities at different levels and moments were created for reflections and learning from multiple stakeholders to feed into the guidelines.

The guidelines reflect district-level experiences and lessons but could not draw on a wide evidence base of newly tried-out solutions. As discussed above, local experimentation was constrained, and documentation limited. Activities that were undertaken were focused on sensitisation and on new ways of collaborating as part of existing practices rather than experimenting with new activities for which resources were often not available. The implementing partners argue that the guidelines are based on the learning from the pilot districts and that internal lesson distillation and documents generated by ILGS informed their development. The evaluation team has only been partially able to confirm lessons referenced in the guidelines specific to the case study districts and the Initiative's contribution is not always clear.[51] Hence, while the guidelines seem to be based on the experiences and lessons shared from the districts, the scope of evidence-based newly tried-out solutions to draw from for the development of the guidelines has likely been limited.

The guidelines promote ongoing learning and are therefore not conceived as a final product capturing all local learning. The guidelines stress that the policy implementation requires ongoing innovation and adaptation. One chapter

is dedicated to explaining the PDIA approach and encourages ongoing learning. Therefore, the guidelines are not meant to be an endpoint of local learning and by design will not reflect all local learning.

4.1.2.2 Usefulness of the new guidelines for the SWAs

Given that the scope of the guideline dissemination was substantially reduced compared to the initial plans and only took place in May 2018 at regional level, little dissemination of the guidelines took place at district level by the time of the final data collection round and therefore awareness about the guidelines among district-level stakeholders was limited. The usefulness of the guidelines cannot consequently be assessed based on actual use, and data on perceived usefulness are also limited. Therefore, this section assesses the usefulness of the guidelines, firstly, based on potential use given the content and development of the guidelines; and reviews conditions to potential usefulness. Second, the section discusses the initial rollout of, perceptions and expectations about the guidelines among district stakeholders.

Potential usefulness of the guidelines

The content and development process of the guidelines supports their potential usefulness. As discussed above, the guidelines are well aligned with the CFWP and have been developed in a participatory way reflecting district-level lessons and experiences about how to address CFW issues. A key objective of the guidelines was to clarify roles, responsibilities and actions of the key stakeholders operating within the child and family welfare system, particularly at district level. This objective is achieved as the guidelines recognise the roles of the actors at different levels, outline what needs to change in these roles and how actors can interact and complement each other's roles in terms of understanding the local problems, generating solutions, joint decision making, resource mobilisation and reporting. The guidelines also present limitations to roles

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51   The guidelines include five references to the experiences or lessons from the case study districts. We found one reference in the documentation received that alludes to the respective change in practice covered by the referenced experience or lesson. Three of these changes could partially be validated based on the final district research.

and responsibilities. Furthermore, the guidelines are not prescriptive and leave room for local adaptation. All this speaks in favour of the potential usefulness of the guidelines.

The usefulness of the guidelines will be enhanced by making them accessible to both literate and less literate actors, accompanying them with implementation support, solidifying an authorising environment for their implementation and linking them with the wider CFW system. Interviews with national and district stakeholder provided suggestions how to enhance the potential usefulness of the guidelines:

- The guidelines in their current format are accessible to actors with the literacy skills to read and comprehend the guideline document. This makes them more accessible to formal rather than informal actors. To make them useful for actors with lower literacy levels they will need to be disseminated in a format that is understandable to all.

- The implementation of the guidelines can be confronted with the same resource constraints as during the piloting of the Initiative, which will limit the scope of implementation. Also, the guidelines encourage ongoing learning and adaptation without foreseeing the facilitation and analytical support provided during the Initiative. Therefore, in order to enable comprehensive implementation of the guidelines, sufficient support and resources need to be put in place. With this goal in mind, the GoG with UNICEF support, has launched an Expression of Interest for the implementation of child protection interventions by MMDAs. However, how the process of ongoing learning and adaptation will continue to be facilitated, is less defined.

- As discussed above, the guidelines are best integrated into the broader CFW system. To this end they are being incorporated in the training manual for social development personnel. There are also plans for them to be integrated in the academic curricula of social work and community development courses. One interviewed TWG member also suggested to mainstream practices promoted in the guidelines in other sectors such as health and education.

Rollout and expectations about the guidelines at district level

There has been only limited dissemination of the guidelines at district level and no further dissemination plans exist in the case study districts. The guidelines were disseminated in May 2018 during a 5-day Training of Trainers workshop. Three representatives per pilot district were invited, with a focus on formal actors to avoid literacy barriers. From the five case study districts three representatives participated, except Lambussie-Karni from which only two people attended. The majority were staff of the SW/CD Department (8 out of 14). The remaining were allied actors and one representative of a Chief (in Talensi).[52] By October 2018, only in Talensi and Lambussie-Karni had any form of follow-up district-level dissemination been organised. In the latter the SW/CD departmental participants had provided an in-house briefing among colleagues, while in the former a training on the guidelines among CD unit staff had been organised. In the other districts no dissemination activities had been planned yet. The reasons for the limited follow-up dissemination were transfer of personnel,[53] tensions and reluctance to share information among actors, and lack of understanding how to further rollout the guidelines.

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52 The allied actors were: a girl child education officer, a CSO representative, a district planning officer, an assembly member, and a NGO representative.

53 In Asokore Mampong and Upper Denkyira West two out of three trainees had been transferred out of the district.

The awareness about the guidelines was generally limited and often referred to interchangeably with the CFWP. Few of interviewed actors at district level were aware of the existence or content of the guidelines. Even SWO/CDOs in some districts had no knowledge of the guidelines and had not received a copy. Respondents who were aware of the guidelines referenced the guidelines and the CFWP interchangeably, which, on the one hand, confirms their close alignment, while, on the other hand, suggests that more attention need to be paid during dissemination in demonstrating the operational added value of the guidelines. Talensi as a district stands out because not only has follow-up training happened, but further training is also planned, the DFP briefed other actors such as the Chair of the Assembly and the trained NGO reported using them in their sensitisation activities. This is the result of individual action. No accountability or monitoring mechanism is in place to ensure that the guidelines are further disseminated.

The guidelines are perceived as useful and mostly align with stakeholders' expectations. However, some actors have an expectation for more prescriptive guidance on case management. The few interviewed actors that were knowledgeable about the guidelines generally perceived the guidelines as useful; reasons mentioned are that the guidelines provide ideas and a framework to implement the Policy, are contextually relevant, and clarify roles of SWAs as well as that of families and children. Actors who were not knowledgeable about the guidelines were asked about what they expected from guidelines to support implementation of the CFWP. The expectation most cited was for the guidelines recognise and define the roles of different actors and encourage involvement and collaboration among actors. This is in line with the content of the guidelines. Interestingly, several actors (both formal and informal) expected some form of prescription, particularly in terms of case management procedures, which goes against the non-prescriptive nature of the guidelines (but may eventually be provided through the introduction of a case management model). Relatedly, an interviewed national TWG member agreed that the guidelines need to be accompanied by standard operating procedures. Finally, two other expectations are that a) the guidelines should outline operational processes such as how to monitor them and how to continue training on them, and b) they should be backed by and aligned with national law and legislative instruments.

4.2 Effectiveness – from Policy to Practice

Summary answers to evaluation questions

KEQ 3: To what extent and how has the CFWP been translated into practice?

DEQ 3.1: How have practices to address child protection issues among SWAs changed at district level and how has the intervention process contributed to this?	The primary change related to practice has been an increased focus on prevention mainly through a reinforcement of sensitisation activities about child and family welfare issues. The availability of other child welfare support services remains very limited, although some formal actors have become more proactive in the identification and creation of linkages of cases with support services.
	Changes in case management procedures and reporting were constrained by a low ability for change, bound by limited staff capacity, resources and case management skills, However, new ways of responding to cases are emerging in terms of how cases are identified, how cases are dealt with in a more collaborative manner, and the recognition of more informal community-level case resolution, which comes with the risk of informal resolution of criminal cases.
	CFW has received increased attention in district planning processes, although translation into action remains uncertain due to restricted release of funds, which however can be managed through personal and institutional engagement with the district leadership.
DEQ 3.2 : How has collaboration and coordination between different stakeholders at district level changed and how has the intervention process contributed to such changes?	Overall, collaboration and coordination between formal actors has increased. This appears to be the area where there has been more change in terms of effectiveness of the Initiative. Formal actors who participated in the Initiative have a clearer understanding of each other's' roles and have a greater acceptance of the need to collaborate when addressing CFW issues. While this not always resulted in change in practice, collaboration and coordination between formal actors improved, particularly in the area of sensitisation but also in case management and planning to some extent, depending on opportunities and ability for collaboration. The Initiative also strengthened collaboration between SWOs and CDOs in some districts but was not able to overcome tensions within the Department of SW/CD in other districts. The increased collaboration and coordination remains mainly informal, individual-dependent and limited to those participants that actively participated in the Initiative, although there are some examples of linkages created with more formal coordinating structures.

DEQ 3.3: How have linkages between the formal and informal sectors in terms of prevention and response to child protection issues changed and how has the intervention process contributed to such changes?	The Initiative contributed to a greater awareness and recognition of the role of informal actors in CFW. However, more sensitisation among informal actors is needed to expand reach among more informal actors and address remaining preferences among informal actors to deal with cases on their own even when formal processes are mandated.
	The Initiative also contributed to increased operational collaboration between formal and informal actors in CFW activities, particularly during sensitisation about CFW at community level. Informal actors also got more involved in case management because of the improved contacts among actors who participated in the Initiative and the increased recognition of the mediating role of informal actors in CFW cases as outlined in the CFWP. However, formal actors seem more inclined to involve informal actors in case management or let them handle cases, than the other way around.
	The increased interaction between the formal and informal actors take place as and when needed. It is informal and not institutionalised.
DEQ 3.4: How has the changes in SWA practice, collaboration and coordination and linkages affected children and their families?	An important change at the community level has been sensitisation on CFW issues, and changes in attitudes and perceptions by parents, caregivers and community leaders. Sensitisation activities are viewed positively at the community level, given the general perception that an increased knowledge and understanding of CFW issues has contributed to some positive changes in behaviour by community members. Indeed, in general, formal actors viewed sensitisation activities as having a significant impact on the lives of children, and perceived the Initiative to have been an important contributor to their sensitisation efforts
	Community members' knowledge of other CFW support services remains limited, especially in relation to case management. However, there is some evidence of early identification and increased collaboration that can be attributed to the Initiative. There is evidence of the Initiative's direct impact on children, through cases that have been better supported given the improved collaboration and increased awareness of SWAs on CFW issues. However, access to services or appropriate support is in fact not systematised at the community level, and it seems largely accidental rather than universal.

4.2.1 Changes in SWA practice

SWAs increasingly focused on prevention mainly through a reinforcement of sensitisation activities. Respondents across the case study districts agreed that the Initiative had contributed to a prioritisation of CFW messages in community sensitisation activities, often more jointly implemented by a range of actors rather than in isolation; a collaboration that was facilitated through the Initiative's workshops. CFW messages are not just prioritised by core CFW actors like CDO/SWOs during their sensitisation activities but are also mainstreamed into activities of allied actors that have participated in the Initiative, such as NCCE. The increased emphasis on CFW sensitisation is also reflected in the 2018 or 2019 action plans of the Departments of SW/CD in some case study districts, although actual implementation of these action plans is generally constrained by available funding.[54] This community-

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54   The Talensi Department of SW/CD has a 2018-2021 Action Plan that almost exclusively focuses on CFW sensitisation and capacity building. The 2019 Annual Action Plan of the Lambussie Department of SW/CD allocated ca. 40% of its budget to CFW sensitisation, consultation and community-level system strengthening. In Shama, the Department of SW/CD had planned to expand CFW sensitisation among traditional authorities in 2018.

level CFW sensitisation has been enabled by the already existing rollout of the SBCC toolkit in the districts. SWAs used this as a platform to reinforce CFW sensitisation messages. Informal and allied actors that had participated in the workshops also used other platforms to step up CFW sensitisation, such as places of worship, general community durbars, radio programmes, schools, existing trainings or District Assembly meetings. Furthermore, interviewed actors in several districts highlighted the development and introduction of by-laws as a way to prevent specific child protection issues, such as children gambling, children being out at night or child labour (see Box 4).[55]

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Box 4 Use of by-laws to address child protection issues

Traditional authorities and community leaders in several case study districts, developed and/or introduced by-laws to address child protection issues. In Shama, according to the District Focal Point a by-law was created in Fawumanye community for children to stop playing on jackpot gambling machines **(tintinto)** after sensitisation activities in the community. The operator of the gambling machine subsequently removed the machine. In Talensi, the Paramount Chief introduced a by-law banning children being out late at night to improve school attendance. In Lambussie-Karni, interviewed informal actors indicated that traditional authorities drafted a community by-law to sanction parents who neglect their children, but the by-law is awaiting approval by the District Assembly. In Upper Denkyira West, the Department of SW/CD together with an assembly member who participated in the Initiative have advocated to incorporate CFW in new district-level by-laws under development.

While the evaluation has mostly not been able to validate the endorsement of the by-laws in the respective communities, respondents generally perceive the by-laws to have been effective tools to address community issues. The by-laws mentioned are currently endorsed in specific communities under the authority of a traditional leader. They are not or not yet enacted by the District Assembly, which made one interviewed traditional leader question their enforcing power.

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Availability of other child welfare support services remains very limited, **although some formal actors have become more proactive in the identification and creation of linkages of cases with support services.** SWAs and community members generally perceive formal child welfare support services, beyond sensitisation, as inadequate with little change over the lifetime of the Initiative.[56] Support is provided by a limited number of NGOs or community members themselves, mostly limited to specific communities or cases (i.e. not universally available). Interviewed community members are not always aware which government department is supposed to provide such services. The Initiative did not alter SWAs' capacity to provide such services (which it was not designed to achieve). Within the case study districts, the evaluation team also has found no evidence that actors actively experimented in new ways of increasing the access to child support services, likely because the space of change in this area was constrained by available resources and this required more institutionalised collaboration which the Initiative did not elicit.[57] Nonetheless, interviewed actors pointed to SWAs becoming more proactive in the identification of children at risk (for example, assembly members who participated in the Initiative), and increased effort to link such cases to available welfare support, such as the Disability Fund.[58] Furthermore, some interviewed actors felt the Initiative had empowered and given them the

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55 Interviewed formal and informal actors generally used the term 'by-law' when discussing community regulations, although by-laws officially refer to regulations developed and gazetted by MMDAs.

56 Such child welfare support services cover material support in case of vulnerability, temporary shelter or alternative care. Only in Lambussie-Karni had formal foster carers (2) been recently registered following a national campaign.

57 Interviewed actors that could provide support services, such as NGOs, indicated that their activities were directed by their own action plans. Experimentation in new ways of accessing support services would have to fit in such action plans, unless new ways of action planning are tried out. However, this requires more institutional engagement among actors and skills in planning process. While the Initiative promoted group planning it generally did not elicit collaborative planning at institutional level.

58 For example, in Talensi after sensitisation on the CFWP in the District Assembly an assembly member assisted access to the District Disability Funds for some children with disability. Similarly, in Lambussie-Karni the Department of SW/CD was able to link children with disability to the District Disability

knowledge to improve their services, such as the interviewed police officers taking more time to investigate cases.

Changes in case management procedures and reporting were constrained by a low ability for change, although new ways of responding to cases are emerging with associated risks. The evaluation team found little evidence that case management procedures changed in the interviewed SW/CD Departments. Case management followed basic steps with little standard registration, no systematic case planning or comprehensive, well-organised documentation, nor consistent follow-up.[59] Interviewed actors confirmed that little had changed in this process, bound by limited staff capacity, resources and case management skills, and therefore limited space for change.[60] The number of registered cases varies across districts but remained overall limited (see Table 4). Maintenance cases continue to be the dominant type of case formally addressed by most of the interviewed SW/CD Department.[61] Nonetheless, the interviews indicate that new ways of responding to cases are emerging:

- First, as referenced above, formal and informal actors across the case study districts are perceived to be more able to identify cases of children in need of support or protection due to sensitisation or involvement in the Initiative. In Shama and Lambussie-Karni interviewed SW/CD staff also confirm that more cases are brought to their attention, particularly maintenance cases, due to increased awareness of SW/CD case services. However, as Table 4 indicates formal registration of child abuse cases at the SW/CD Department remains rare because, reportedly, such cases are still dealt with informally, remain unidentified or are reported only to the police.

- Second, more actors are reported to be involved in dealing with the cases or their approach to dealing with cases has changed (see Section 5.2). While formal procedures remain the same, cases are seen to be dealt with more in a spirit of collaboration, sharing of information and in-depth inquiry into the concerns of the case. An increased spirit of collaboration is, for example, demonstrated through discussions in Shama about the establishment of a SW/CD desk at the police station (although not yet executed yet due to capacity constraints). In Upper Denkyira West, according to case registry of the SW/CD Department, informal actors were substantially more involved in cases in 2018 compared to 2017.[62]

- Third, informal case resolution or case resolution through informal actors is being further promoted (see Section 5.3). In both Asokore Mampong and Talensi, SWO/CDOs highlighted that, as a result of the Initiative, they have started using alternative informal approaches to resolving children's issues through engagement with the family. For example, in Talensi SWOs now propose fathers to directly pay maintenance allowances to mothers rather than through the Department. In Lambussie-Karni and

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Fund after sensitisation activities in two communities. In Shama, the Department of SW/CD was able to successfully link a baby of a deceased mother involved in a custody dispute to the National Health Insurance Scheme, although the interviewed SWO did not consider the Initiative as having made a difference since this was regular practice.

59 Registration generally happens in a hand-written ledger. Information is not consistently recorded and not all cases are registered. Case files do not consistently exist. No standard case or care plans are created, although actions to be taken are sometimes documented. Besides initial screening and a hearing of the involved parties, we did not see any documentation of comprehensive assessment. Case coordination is mostly informal.

60 The SW/CD Departments had the following staff with a SWO background: 1 in Shama, 0 in Upper Denkyira West, 2 in Asokore Mampong, 2 in Talensi and 0 in Lambussie-Karni. None of the staff interviewed during the case review had received any case management training. In Talensi, a staff member was recently trained on case management with UNICEF support but a CDO was sent for training rather than a SWO.

61 Only in Upper Denkyira West were maintenance cases not dominant. Traditional civil cases such as maintenance, custody and paternity were generally not registered in the case registry. According to the interview SW/CD staff this is because such cases are mostly informally settled. However, it could also be that such cases were recorded separately, and the records were not accessible anymore because the Head of Department transferred.

62 According to the case registry in 2017 informal actors were involved in 1 out of 11 cases, while in the first three quarters of 2018 they had been involved in 5 out of 8 cases.

Shama, an assembly member and a religious leader respectively settled some cases amicably with the police after improved contacts through the Initiative. The strengthened role of informal resolution resonates well with interviewed informal actors and aligns with existing practice of settling cases within the community and through traditional authorities. This empowerment of informal case resolution has some risks. In Lambussie-Karni, chiefs are reportedly invited to case hearings and sent copies of case letters, which entails risk of sharing confidential information. In several districts, traditional authorities, despite having participated in the Initiative, kept promoting informal resolution of criminal child abuse cases (see below). Hence, the guidelines on the limitations of what issues informal actors are allowed to address need to be further reinforced.

Table 4 Number of cases registered during Quarters 1-3 2018, per district

Asokore Mampong	Lambussie-Karni	Shama	Talensi	Upper Denkyira West
Total number of registered cases: 9 ■ Maintenance: 5 ■ Family dispute: 1 ■ Custody: 1 ■ Paternity: 1 ■ Arbitration on child visit: 1	Total number of registered cases: 13 ■ Maintenance: 8 ■ Maintenance/custody: 1 ■ Custody: 1 ■ Paternity: 1 ■ Teen pregnancy: 1	Total number of registered cases: 26 ■ Maintenance: 15 ■ Family welfare: 7 ■ Custody: 3 ■ Paternity: 1	Total number of registered cases: 2 ■ Maintenance: 1 ■ Custody: 1	Total number of registered cases: 8 ■ Child labour: 2 ■ Defilement: 1 ■ Teen pregnancy: 1 ■ Sexual violence: 1 ■ Gambling: 1 ■ Child marriage: 1 ■ Harmful practices: 1

CFW has received increased attention in district planning processes. However, translation into action remains uncertain due to restricted release of funds, which, however, can be managed through personal and institutional engagement with the district leadership. In four case study districts CFW issues have been incorporated in the 2018-2021 MTDP, while in the remaining district it is reportedly incorporated in annual action plans.[63] Stakeholders considered this a change from the past. The fact that the NDPC emphasised CFW in their planning guidelines influenced this, but the Initiative also contributed. In Talensi, for example, the participation of the District Planning Officer in the Initiative made him more aware about his role in CFW and consequently reported incorporating CFW issues in the District plans. In

Upper Denkyira West, the SW/CD Department indicated that following the workshops they made a conscious effort to include CFW activities in the MTDP. A review of district annual action plans demonstrates that CFW issues are also incorporated in planned activities, although CFW strategies outlined in the MTDP do not necessarily align with action plans.[64] DFPs from two case study districts, however, caution that this increased focus on CFW in district plans may not translate in actual implementation because the release of funding is still prioritised towards traditional 'visible' projects and day-to-day planning remains mainly responsive to funding opportunities. A DFP in another district is more optimistic that CFW-sensitive plans and indicators will drive actual action because of the DCD's commitment to CFW, the fact that the DFP has intentionally build a personal relationship

63 In the MTDPs of Shama and Upper Denkyira West CFW is included as a focus area. In the Talensi MTDP CFW is not a specific thematic area but CFW activities are programmed throughout the plan. We have not received access to the Asokore Mampong and Lambussie-Karni MTDPs. The DFP and DCD in Lambussie-Karni confirmed CFW is incorporated, while in Asokore Mampong CFW was initially not included but is added to the annual action plans.

64 For example, the Shama 2018-2021 MTDP includes the development of a CP management information system as a strategy, although the annual action plans do not translate this into concrete activities. The Talensi 2018-2021 Action Plan for the SW/CD Department strongly emphasises capacity building on the CFWP, while this is not reflected in the MTDP.

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with the DCD, and the DFP's use of the quarterly meetings with departmental heads to mainstream CFW issues. Furthermore, CFW planning seems not only to have changed under the impulse of the SW/CD Department and Central Department of the Assembly, but also through collaboration with other actors. For example, in Shama several actors that participated in the Initiative, jointly submitted a plan for additional CFW community sensitisation to the Assembly, and in Talensi an NGO that attended the workshops contributed to the CFW planning as part of the MTDP. Also, in Talensi, the Presiding Member of the Assembly because of his involvement in the Initiative is giving more follow up on CFW plans.

4.2.2 Changes in collaboration and coordination

Consistently across all districts, formal actors who participated in the Initiative have a clearer understanding of each other's' roles and have a greater acceptance of the need to collaborate when addressing CFW issues. The Initiative, by creating a regular, participatory platform that brought actors together and share their experiences, has been effective in having participants get to know each other better, more easily reach out to each other and build relationships. Formal actors who participated in the Initiative across the case study districts, highlighted such increased understanding and change in how they relate to each other. For example, in several case study districts, stakeholder directories were created through the Initiative to facilitate more easy communication.[65] One DFP expressed it as followed: ***"The importance of the directory is to know the contact details of all actors, what they do, and how to contact them regarding specific issues. Like issues related to the police I call and receive assistance but previously they might demand some money or something but once they are part of the team they process it without any expense***". The interviews also indicated an

attitude shift towards greater acceptance of the need to collaborate even if actual collaboration is yet to take hold. For example, in both Shama and Upper Denkyira West proposals have been discussed between the SW/CD Department and the Police to improve case referral between both services by creating a DOVVSU desk at the police station or assigning a liaison SW/CD staff to the police station, although in both instances it is yet to materialise. SW/CD staff in another district pointed out that ***"we do not strongly collaborate with the Girl Child Education Officer, which we should be, but we do not know why we are not able to collaborate"***, which indicates that the attitude shift engendered by the Initiative is not always sufficient to bring about actual change. Nonetheless, overall, references were made across the districts, to "not going it alone" when addressing CFW issues.

Collaboration and coordination between formal actors improved, particularly in the area of sensitisation but also in case management and planning to some extent. As the aforementioned example of the setting up 'CFW desks' at the police station illustrates, proposals for increased collaboration do not necessarily or immediately turn into actual reform in practice. Nonetheless, they do point to increased coordination among formal actors to try out new ways of working. The areas of actual operational collaboration varied as a function of opportunities and ability for collaboration. Given that community sensitisation forms a traditional part of the operations of formal actors (e.g. CDOs, NCCE, NGOs) and the SBCC toolkit rollout offered an opportune platform for collaboration, Initiative participants strengthened their collaboration in this area through joint activity planning promoted by the Initiative. Sensitisation on CFW also increased at the level of the District Assembly, particularly when assembly members participated in the Initiative. For example, in Talensi the Presiding Member of the District Assembly who participated in Initiative has started mobilising other assembly members to support CFW. In Lambussie-Karni, interviewed

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65   The directories include contact details of CFW actors and relevant services.

actors from the Central Department observed that "***Assemblymen now talk about child protection at the Assembly meetings and report of reduced child marriage as a result of their work with the [SW/CD] Department.***" Collaboration between formal actors also improved in the areas of case management and planning but change has been more modest due to limitations in terms staff capacity, skills, resources, engagement of district leadership and, regarding case management, the fact that many cases are likely still preferably resolved at community level (see below). For example, in Asokore Mampong several formal actors (SW/CD, DOVVSU, NGO) started referring cases to each other since their interaction through the Initiative but it remains limited to few cases. This is likely because the interaction is still nascent and limited, cases that require referrals (such as abuse cases) may not be reported, and documentation practices are inadequate to systematically refer cases. Regarding planning, in several districts the evaluation team found examples of more joint planning. For example, in Talensi an NGO that participated in the Initiative got involved in drawing up the CFW action plan that was submitted to the District Assembly for inclusion in the MTDP. Also, in Shama several actors that participated in the Initiative jointly submitted a plan for additional CFW community sensitisation to the District Assembly. While the plan was accepted, it has yet to be implemented due to resource constraints.

The Initiative strengthened collaboration between SWOs and CDOs in some districts but was not able to overcome tensions in other districts. While in all case study districts SW and CD are merged in one Department, only in Upper Denkyira West do they operate as one unit, although in Lambussie-Karni and Shama they are moving towards this model.[66] These also represent the smaller Departments with no or few staff with a social work background. The Initiative

has contributed to a strengthened collaboration within the Department in some districts. For example, in Lambussie-Karni the SW/CD staff are jointly planning and collaborating on community activities, which according to the DFP has been supported by the capacity building offered through the Initiative.[67] In both Lambussie-Karni and Shama, SWOs have started inviting CDOs to case hearings. Similarly, in Asokore Mampong, the Initiative stimulated the creation of a joint SW-CD case panel for collaborative case resolution, but it was dissolved because of emerging internal conflict.[68] In Talensi the units still mainly work separately and, similarly, emerging collaboration has stalled due to new tension within the Department. In general, the case study research indicates that specific people in leadership positions have played an important role in cementing closer interaction, and transfers in such positions have negatively affected it.

The increased collaboration and coordination remain mainly informal, individual-dependent and limited to those participants that actively participated in the Initiative, although there are some examples of linkages created with more formal coordinating structures. By design, the Initiative has promoted collaboration and coordination in a bottom-up, non-prescriptive manner without intentionally setting up new structures, except the district and national Whatsapp platforms for sharing CFW experiences, which is, however, only used in two of the five case study districts. The evaluation team has found no evidence that the Initiative has contributed to the creation of new formal CFW coordinating structures or enabled the functioning of existing ones. The increased collaboration has been mostly informal and limited mainly to a restricted number of actors who consistently participated in the Initiative. This makes the still nascent collaboration and coordination dependent on specific individuals and liable to their possible

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66 Only in Upper Denkyira West has the Departmental name changed to Department of Social Development. The Department does not have any staff with a social work background, which may have influenced the Department working as one unit, which comes down to the traditional CD unit.

67 The close collaboration in Lambussie-Karni has also been referenced in the guidelines and was confirmed during the research.

68 The joint case panel was showcased at the national stocktaking workshop.

transfers. The Initiative has been limited in its capacity to establish and institutionalise linkages with a wider group of relevant formal CFW actors or with already established coordinating bodies (e.g. the social services sub-committee of the District Assembly).[69] Nonetheless, there are some promising examples of more institutionalised coordination or linkages being made to existing systems. For example, in Lambussie-Karni the head of SW/CD uses the quarterly meetings with heads of departments of the District Assembly to put CFW more forcefully on the district agenda. In Talensi, because the Presiding Member of the District Assembly has been actively involved in the Initiative, uses the District Assembly meeting as a platform to advocate for CFW. The driving factors for such examples seem to be the active involvement of people in leaderships positions that are empowered to use existing coordinating platforms.

4.2.3 Changes in linkages between formal and informal sectors

Linking the formal and informal sectors within the child and family welfare system is an important part of the CFWP and a key objective of the Initiative. The Initiative aimed for greater leadership and direct involvement of informal actors in CFW issues, institutionalisation of collaboration and complementarity between Chiefs, Queen Mothers and community representatives and district services, and increased awareness among SWAs about CFW issue dealt with by communities and services.

The Initiative contributed to a greater awareness and recognition of the role of informal actors in CFW. At the beginning of the Initiative, there were both perceived and real

differences of opinions and differing levels of conflict between the formal and informal actors around child protection issues across the districts. Some ascribed this to little interaction prior to the Initiative and others to the conflict to traditional approaches versus formal approaches to solving child protection concerns. Interviewed formal and informal actors alike across the districts acknowledged that the Initiative has offered opportunities for informal actors to become more aware about the CFWP, their role and the need to collaborate with the formal sector. Furthermore, there is a stronger recognition of the role traditional authorities play in addressing CFW issues and the value of a family-based approach with a mediating role of informal actors compared to a legalistic approach with direct involvement of the police. This has also translated in greater leadership of informal actors, both traditional as well as religious leaders, in CFW issues as demonstrated by them promoting CFW-related bylaws in several districts following community sensitisation and themselves conducting follow-up sensitisation in their communities and among other informal actors.

...but more sensitisation among informal actors is needed to expand reach and address remaining preferences among informal actors to deal with cases on their own even when formal processes are mandated. The evaluation also points to some limitations in this change of awareness and attitudes. First, the Initiative reached a limited number of informal actors. Only a few Chiefs, Queen Mothers or religious leaders (or their representatives) per district participated consistently in the workshops and activities of the Initiative. This is, nonetheless, a strong starting point for relationship and trust building based on which interaction can spread with a broader group of informal actors.[70] Second, while the formal actors generally gained a stronger

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69 For example, in Talensi and Asokore Mampong the SW unit was less engaged than the CD unit, which reflects itself in the weaker collaboration between the two units. The Initiative has not systematically been able to change this despite effort by some individuals. The Ghana Health Service participated little in the Initiative and interaction with this actor, despite its relevance for CFW, did not change. The chair of the Social Services Sub-Committee attended the workshop in some districts (e.g. Lambussie-Karni and Shama) but interviewed actors did not make any references that this committee was differently used as a platform to coordinate CFW as a result of the Initiative.

70 The active participation of informal actors in the Initiative was generally limited to a few actors. In Shama, in recognition of the restricted reach among traditional authorities the SW/CD Department in collaboration with other participants of the initiative have submitted a proposal to the District Assembly to sensitise traditional authorities in another 20 communities.

appreciation of the role of informal actors in addressing CFW issues, interviewed community leaders in several districts had a relatively low appreciation or awareness of the CFW support provided by formal actors; and interviewed traditional authorities in several districts, although being more aware of the need to involve formal actors in certain cases, still prefer handling cases at community level without involving formal actors unless they cannot resolve it themselves. For example, the informal actors interviewed in one district and who had been intensely involved in the initiative, indicated that they would deal with defilement cases themselves without reporting it to the police.[71] In another district, informal actors commented that "*We hardly refer cases, but we rather take from them [formal actors]. The community members trust that at the family level or traditional authority level issues including child related issues are best solved than taking the case to the formal actors. Hence, most cases are rather withdrawn from formal actors to be settled by the informal actors.*" (OPM, October 2018)

Besides increasing awareness and recognition of informal actors' roles, the Initiative also contributed to increased operational collaboration between formal and informal actors in CFW activities. Across the case study districts, interviewed actors referenced higher interaction with informal actors during community sensitisation, acknowledging the important role they play in community entry and mobilisation. The Initiative facilitated the communication and planning of these activities. As mentioned above, informal actors also increasingly led on sensitisation on CFW themselves. For example, in Talensi religious leaders representing different religions carried out joint sensitisations on CFW in each other's place of worship after interaction through the Initiative. Assembly members often played an additional bridging role between formal

actors and the communities. Informal actors also got more involved in case management because of the improved contacts among actors who participated in the Initiative and the increased recognition of the mediating role of informal actors in CFW cases as outlined in the CFWP. For example, in Shama an interviewed informal actor highlighted his improved relationship with the police, which allowed him to help settle a case of youth kept at the police station through informal mediation rather than legal means. In Upper Denkyira West the 2018 case register show an increased involvement of informal actors in case identification and resolution. In Lambussie-Karni, the SW/CD Department started sending informing traditional authorities when invitation letters for case hearings are served. However, formal actors seem more inclined to involve informal actors in case management or let them handle cases, than the other way around. As mentioned above, in several districts interviewed informal actors confirm that cases are generally settled at community level, which also the limited number of cases registered at the SW/CD Department point to. Managing cases at the community level without the involvement of the formal sector is, in some ways, and outcome of increased prevention. However, the interviews indicate that also criminal cases do not necessarily find their way into the formal system. Assembly members seem again to fulfill a bridge function between informal and formal sectors. Across districts, examples are available of assembly members who participated in the Initiative bringing cases to the attention of the SW/CD Department.

Interactions between informal and formal actors are not institutionalised. The increased interaction between the formal and informal actors take place as and when needed to coordinate community sensitisation or discuss a case. According to an informal actor in Lambussie-Karni "*these informal discussions have built a tight bond among actors and has facilitated children welfare*" (OPM, October 2018). However, as mentioned before they are

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71 The interviewed informal actors were asked how they would handle a hypothetical case of a girl defiled by a teacher. As reasons for handling the case themselves and not reporting to the case to the police they provided social norms ("It's their duty to handle such cases") and the risk of depriving the community of rare access to teachers.

person-dependent, potentially not inclusive and do not allow to transparently document and monitor how CFW issues are addressed. In several case study districts community-level child protection or child rights structures have been set up but formal actors generally were not aware to what extent they were functioning. Resources are generally too limited for systematic follow-up. Only in Lambussie-Karni did interviewed informal actors confirm following the Whatsapp group created by the Initiative. In other districts the Whatsapp group was not active or did informal actors not have access to this medium.

4.2.4 Effects for children and their families

It is difficult to ascertain the degree of attribution of the Initiative on changes experienced at the level of families and children. As noted in Subsection 4.2.1, although action plans were produced in every district, financial constraints prevented their implementation. Thus, the contribution of the Initiative to changes at the community level has been limited.

An important change at the community level has been **sensitisation on CFW issues, and changes in attitudes and perceptions by parents, caregivers and community leaders**. Sub-section 5.1 highlights that the Initiative was successful in encouraging sensitisation around CFW issues by a variety of actors. Community members and leaders noted that these sensitisation activities were important in encouraging them to change how they speak to and approach their children. For instance, a mother in Asokore Mampong said she no longer shouts at her children or hits them when they need to be disciplined – she has learned that this is counterproductive and now favours speaking with them as a better tool. In Talensi, parents consider CFW in their care practices, and have gained an understanding of the impact of labour on children. Thus, in this district, interviewed community members pointed to a perceived reduction in truancy, as parents valued taking children to school more

than they had done before. Likewise, in Shama, the approach to teenage pregnancy seems to be changing amongst some community members. While before cases of teenage pregnancy led to forced marriages, there is now a recognition of addressing CFW in the best interest of the child, which in this case is her health and education. In Lambussie-Karni, respondents noted that women used to hide child abuse cases but now bring these cases to the chief, following sensitisation activities. Additionally, as detailed in Box 3, by-laws around CFW have been introduced in some of the districts visited, which reportedly had some concrete impact for children such as the withdrawal of gambling machines in a community in Shama. However, the contribution of the Initiative is difficult to ascertain and only indirect because of the importance of existing sensitisation plans and the determining role of the traditional authorities in bring about the by-laws. Regardless, sensitisation activities are viewed positively at the community level, given the general perception that an increased knowledge and understanding of CFW issues has contributed to some positive changes in behaviour by community members. Indeed, in general, formal actors viewed sensitisation activities as having a significant impact on the lives of children and perceived the Initiative to have been an important contributor to their sensitisation efforts.[72]

Community members' knowledge of other CFW support services remains limited, especially in relation to case management. **However, there is some evidence of early identification and increased collaboration that can be attributed to the Initiative.** In general, community members and leaders were unable to identify concrete examples of available CFW services in their community – beyond their role organising sensitisation activities, community members did

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72 During the outcome harvesting exercise in the third round of data collection, formal SWAs who spoke of sensitisation activities, consistently ranked the importance of this initiative to the lives of children as a 4, and applied the same scoring to the contribution of the WFS initiative to their motivation to deliver sensitisation activities.

not know the support formal SWAs could offer them. There is evidence of the Initiative's direct impact on children, through cases that have been better supported given the improved collaboration and increased awareness of SWAs on CFW issues. However, access to services or appropriate support is in fact not systematised at the community level, and it seems largely accidental rather than universal. In other words, community members are most likely to receive assistance if they come into contact with actors who have been sensitised or have access to the network of SWAs. For instance, in Lambussie-Karni, a parent was able to get assistance for her child, who had a disability, given that a pastor was in her community and visited her home. The pastor then contacted the Department of SW/CD, which set in motion a series of actions to get the child enrolled in the Disability Fund. In this example, the collaboration between the pastor, the Department of SW/CD, and the Assembly, were perceived to have been influenced by the Initiative. Further, in Talensi, an assembly member who had been sensitised on the CFWP submitted applications for the enrolment of five children in the Disability Fund. He attributed this focus on children to his exposure to the Policy.

4.3 Effectiveness – capacity strengthening

Summary answers to evaluation questions

KEQ 4: To what extent has the capacity of the CP workforce been strengthened and how has the intervention process contributed to this strengthening and empowerment of CP workforce?

DEQ 4.1: To what extent have the skills of SWAs changed, how has their awareness and knowledge of the policies improved and how has the intervention process contributed to these changes?	The WFP initiative contributed to an improvement in knowledge about the CFWP among actors who participated in the Initiative, although there is still room for further capacity building particularly among informal actors. It is likely that other initiatives and processes in the districts contributed to this increase in knowledge as well. Knowledge of the J4CP has similarly improved.
	Beyond gaining better knowledge about the two policies, the Initiative also influenced actor's ability to address CFW concerns primarily by changing their attitudes and mindsets, especially with regards to accepting CFW as a common challenge, acknowledging the need for collaboration, and buying into key tenets of the Policy such as the involvement of family and community structures in child protection. However, we have limited evidence to show that changes in attitude and mindsets are reflected in actors every day practice in many domains. Nonetheless, actors themselves perceived that their ability to address CFW concerns improved due their increased confidence and a better understanding of options available to address CFW concerns.
DEQ 4.2: How has the capacity of the SWAs to influence decision making about practice changed and how has the intervention process contributed to these changes?	Some formal actors perceive themselves better able to make decisions and differentiate between cases because of a better understanding of other actors' roles and responsibilities. However, the evaluation team did not find consistent evidence of changes in decision making in every day practice of formal SWAs in terms of problem identification, definition, and in the assessment process. Informal actors wield a lot of decision-making power in districts, and while it is clear that they are respected, the evaluation team observed limited change in their decision-making practices (informal actors demonstrated hesitation in adopting different attitudes towards case management, in particular the referral of criminal cases). With regards to child participation in decision making processes, SWAs acknowledged the importance of involving children in decision-making processes, although this is not common across actors and districts and evidence of actual practice is thin.

4.3.1 SWA's knowledge of the Policies

This question was addressed in the evaluation interim report (OPM, 2017b), informed both by the KIIs with SWAs, as well as the knowledge test conducted with formal and informal actors. SWA's knowledge of the policies was not the focus of the last round of data collection. However, findings from the third round corroborate those outlined in the interim report, presented below.

There was limited knowledge about the policies at the start of the Initiative. The reconnaissance study undertaken by ILGS in June 2016 found that across all the five sampled districts, actors had limited knowledge about the CFWP. Although formal SWAs and some NGO actors were generally aware of the Policy, their knowledge was mostly confined to an understanding of the broad purpose of the Policy (i.e. to guide actors work in the child protection sector) rather than an understanding of its core principles, objectives, and implications for actors' roles and responsibilities. However, specifically in Upper Denkyira West, some community leaders had heard about the Policy through CDOs in their sensitisation activities. It appears that assembly members' knowledge was particularly low, perhaps because child protection issues are not part of their direct mandate. Prior knowledge of the CFWP was higher in Shama, Talensi, and Upper Denkyira where in addition to knowledge about the Policy's existence, actors noted the role of the Policy in building positive child protection practices, particularly the role of the extended family system. This knowledge came from an earlier process of validating the Policy. The knowledge of the J4CP was similarly limited. In general, actors were more aware of the CFWP than the J4CP.

The limited knowledge of actors was again noted during observations at all five SRP workshops. For example, in Talensi, only seven out of 24 workshop participants had ever heard about the CFWP. However, by the end of the SRP workshops, participants seem to have gained some knowledge which was demonstrated by references to key elements of the Policy when asked to recall this in the ensuing discussions.

As discussed in the interim report (OPM, 2017b), in order to assess to what extent district actors had gained knowledge of the CFWP and J4CP, one core formal and one informal actor were invited to a policy knowledge interview during the second round of data collection. Different dimensions (background, concepts, guiding beliefs and values and objectives) of CFWP were discussed with the interviewees as well as the objectives of the J4CP.

Evidence from these interviews shows an increased knowledge and understanding of the Policy, particularly with respect to the background, concepts and strategies, with attributions made to the Initiative. With the exception of the core formal SWA (a CDO) in Shama, all interviewed formal actors demonstrated good to very good understanding of both policies. In particular, they demonstrated good understanding of the reasons why the CFWP was developed and its key concepts. For example, the four formal actors were consistently able to explain the concept of the child in line with the definitions set out in the Policy while at the same time highlighting the socio- cultural definition of childhood in the Ghanaian context. In contrast to actors in the other districts, in Shama, the core formal actor displayed poor to adequate knowledge of the CFWP despite having attended all workshops. This might be attributed to her involvement in organising logistics which may have prevented her full participation.

Although the evidence from our observational research shows that workshops had a limited focus on the J4CP, **the majority of core actors demonstrated a good knowledge of the objectives of the J4CP although to a lesser extent compared to the CFWP**, stating its role in enhancing access to justice for children and their families, and in ensuring speedy and fair outcomes.

In contrast to formal actors, the majority of informal actors demonstrated an adequate knowledge of the CFWP, with the exception of Shama where the informal actor displayed a good to very good knowledge. His performance is probably attributable to the fact that he is among the very few informal actors who attended all workshops. The consistent participation of informal actors in the workshops has been poor with only three out of the 44 informal actors attending all workshops. In general, all actors could identify some of the main reasons why the Policy had been created. They could also identify some main principles. However, it was more difficult for them to offer adequate definitions of key concepts, as explained in the Policy, or to identify strategies and objectives of the CFWP.

In general, the majority of formal actors indicated that their increased knowledge of the policies was due to their exposure during the SRP and follow-up workshops. Nonetheless, other initiatives and processes in the districts have contributed as well. Some actors in Lambussie-Karni and Asokore Mampong also pointed to the media. One formal actor in Talensi attributed her knowledge to the training on the SBCC toolkit rather than the SRP workshop.
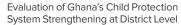
During the group discussions, many actors corroborated the above evidence of increased knowledge. Many actors made reference to the key concepts and principles in the Policy while discussing Charity's case. The most consistently referenced principles across all districts were the involvement of children in decision making, ensuring the best interest of the child, and involvement of community and family-based structures.

While the evidence indicates that the Initiative contributed to an improvement in knowledge about the Policy, there is still some room for further capacity building particularly among informal actors. This is evidenced by relatively lower understanding of the policies among informal actors compared to formal actors during the knowledge interviews. It is also demonstrated by the discussions that interviewed actors had over key concepts such as the best interest of the child during the review of the Charity case. For example, it was not always well understood how the concept of best interest of the child was to be aligned with legal requirement of reporting perpetrators to the formal actors.

4.3.2 SWA's ability to address CP concerns

Beyond gaining better knowledge about the two policies through the Initiative, it appears that the Initiative also influenced actors' ability to address CP concerns primarily by changing their attitudes and mindsets. For example, actors mentioned how the SRP workshop helped to sensitise them on children's issues and consequently increased their concern for children even where child protection may not be a direct and institutionalised mandate, as is the case for allied and informal actors. We also found evidence of changes in the way respondents referenced and bought into the importance of the key tenets of the Policy such as collaboration, childhood, child participation and involvement of family and community structures. This was apparent in the discussions around the hypothetical scenarios of Charity and Aku, where principles such as "the best interest of the child" guided the hypothetical approaches some actors would take. In most cases it appears that changes in mindset were reinforced by the fact that the key principles of the Policy are contextually relevant and resonated with actors.

Although there is limited evidence to show that changes in attitude and mindsets are reflected in actors' every day practice (see above), actors themselves perceived that their ability to address CFW concerns improved due to their increased confidence and a better understanding of options available to address CFW concerns. In Shama, for example, formal SWAs mentioned increased confidence in undertaking community sensitisation activities

because there was a reference point (i.e. the Policy) from which to draw some key messages. The increased confidence among actors also seems to come from the fact that CFWP served as a common reference point for all actors in a context where approaches to handle cases are informed by individual experience and knowledge. Interviewed actors also perceived themselves better equipped to address CFW concerns because they better understand different options available to them. In Lambussie-Karni, for instance, assembly members have started reporting cases of child marriage to the Department of SW/CD. Although it was indicated that they participate in case management sessions, this could not be confirmed as a change already taking place in the handling of cases. In Shama, a formal actor recognised that institutionalising children in orphanages should be a last resort, and now attempt to find suitable families in the community that can take care of the children, if their birth parents or legal caregivers are not found – this is done following a formalised process for child placement. Further, in Talensi, several allied and informal SWAs who participated in the Initiative have started offering counselling services to community members in child protection cases. During Round 2 of data collection, one actor in Upper Denkyira West noted: *Now I can say that, when these issues [come up], I have enough [knowledge] to address them. I can even serve as a facilitator in the community to educate people"* (OPM, September 2017).

On the collaboration front, actors consistently mentioned that, while in the past they would address issues alone even if they did not know how to handle them, they could now rely on the knowledge and expertise of other actors. This change emerged as the workshop, follow up activities and experimentation process built trust and clarified actors' responsibilities, such that actors could now easily approach each other (see above). Indeed, based on discussions with national-level stakeholders, one of the main objectives of the Initiative was to encourage actors to complement each other's work through collaboration. In Talensi, for instance, an allied actor has been active in seeking advice from the Department of SW/CD when addressing child protection issues, particularly *"when the cases are beyond [their] capabilities"* (OPM, October 2018). In Upper Denkyira West, an allied actor's approach to Aku's hypothetical case would have been to refer the case to the police or DOVVSU, as he learned they would be better placed to address a case of that nature. Collaboration also extended to the domain of sensitisation, with SWAs working with and relying on each other for the delivery of sensitisation activities.

4.3.3 SWA's decision-making capacity

Some formal actors perceive themselves to be better able to make decisions and differentiate between cases. Across all five districts, some actors *perceived* changes in their decision-making abilities**,** particularly when it referred to criminal cases. An allied actor in Lambussie-Karni explained that while he would have tried to resolve Aku's case himself, he would now involve various actors, including the Department of SW/CD, as well as education actors and the police. The same change in attitude applies to interviewed allied actors in Talensi, who recognised they would need to rely on the skills and experience of each other to offer Aku a positive resolution to her case. In Shama, one allied actor interviewed perceived there to be an increased ability to make decisions and differentiate easily between cases and issues that were in his jurisdiction, and to make decisions about referrals to other actors where needed because he now had a better understanding of other actors' roles and responsibilities. For instance, during the second round of data collection, an actor in Shama mentioned how he felt much more equipped to deal with cases because of their exposure to the concept of alternative dispute resolution as another means of resolving some cases beyond the more formal approach, which is slower because of the bureaucratic processes involved.

However, there was no evidence to show that this approach had been used in practice.

Despite these changes in SWAs' perceptions of their own abilities, the evaluation team did not find consistent evidence of changes in decision making in everyday practice of formal actors. While formal SWAs in Asokore Mampong had expanded the case management panel to include both SWOs and CDOs, this panel was dissolved over the last year. Thus, the panel is now only composed of SWOs, reverting the decision-making involvement of CDOs to what it was prior to the rollout of the Initiative. As explained earlier, the panel was dissolved due to internal conflicts between both units. In Lambussie-Karni, assembly members and chiefs sometimes participate in the deliberations on cases reported to the Department of SW/CD. In one instance, a police officer who brought in a case to the attention of the Department, was invited to sit on deliberations. Additionally, in Lambussie-Karni, an informal actor commented that he now feels he is more involved in cases that are within the jurisdiction of the Department of SW/CD, as SWOs consult him on ways to handle child protection issues, such as neglect, abuse and school dropouts.

Informal actors wield authority in the communities and use their authority to address CFW concerns. Given the emphasis on linkages between formal and informal actors, it is also imperative to look at the decision-making abilities of informal actors. Across all five districts, traditional actors wield a lot of support. Traditional leaders are using their community authority to address CFW concerns. For example, in Shama, the enactment of bylaws initiated by traditional leaders to avert gambling among children, was given as an example of collective problem identification, problem solving and decision making. In general, while formal and informal actors have gained a stronger appreciation of each other's' role and responsibilities (see above), the evaluation team did not find evidence

that decision-making in child protection practices among informal actors has changed as a result of the Initiative.

Indeed, **there has been resistance of informal actors to refer cases to the formal sector, emphasising that cases are better resolved within the community, even when they are of criminal nature.** In Upper Denkyira West, informal actors were adamant about the need to keep cases away from the formal system. One actor commented that although Social Welfare and DOVVSU exist, *"child abuse cases are settled independently at home"* (OPM, October 2018). He continued explaining that introducing punitive measures will *"ruin"* the ability of informal actors to resolve issues in a way that does not further disadvantage the community. As mentioned earlier, this was said in the context of Aku's case, where punishing the teacher would mean having one less teacher in a community that is likely already deprived of education staff. Other informal actors concurred, further noting that a referral of a criminal case could be seen as a failure to address child protection problems in their communities, undermining their authority as *"kings, chiefs or Imams"*. In Talensi, informal actors similarly expressed concern about making referrals. Here, their explanation was that community members trust child protection issues to be solved best by traditional authorities as opposed to formal actors. Hence, most cases were said to be withdrawn from the formal system to be addressed by informal actors. Lastly, in Lambussie-Karni, informal actors were of mixed opinions on their role in decision-making on criminal cases. When discussing Aku's case, both informal actors and community leaders were hesitant to involve other actors and preferred to resolve the case at the community level. However, the informal actors, having attended the Initiative, suggested they would still refer the case to the police. Community leaders, on the other hand, said they would solve the case on their own despite not having the skills necessary to address it.

Some evidence exists of changes in attitudes of SWAs with respect to the involvement of children in decision making processes, however there is no evidence that children are involved in decision making in practice. In the majority of the discussions on the hypothetical case of Charity, during the second round of data collection, many actors mentioned the importance of involving the child in the decision-making processes. For instance, an allied actor in Upper Denkyira West commented *"You see, gone are the days we just leave the children behind imposing the decision on them. Now you have to bring them and bring in their ideas...these are some of the things we have come to realise with this workshop...now we are bringing children on board"* (OPM, September 2017). However, in Asokore Mampong, the group discussions about the Charity case suggest that the CFWP's strategy to empower children and young people as agents of change has yet to firmly take hold. An interviewed allied actor from the justice sector, when asked whether Charity would be at all consulted on whether she would like the young man to be prosecuted, adamantly replied: *"No, no, no, Charity is under age, her decisions [on that issue] do not count"* (OPM, September 2017). During the last round of data collection, there was consistently no mention of involvement of Aku in the decision-making process of her case. This may be the case given that the hypothetical scenario was criminal in nature, which led the conversation to focus mostly on the issue of who would be responsible for addressing the case and who it should be referred to.

4.4 Effectiveness – generation and use of evidence

Summary answers to evaluation questions

KEQ 5: To what extent and how has evidence generation of the child protection system been strengthened at local level applicable for nation-wide application? How has the intervention process contributed to this?

The Initiative has had limited influence on SWAs' capacity to document and evidence their practices. SWAs have not systematically documented either the activities undertaken as part of the Initiative or their related outcomes. When documentation is available, it relates to work done by the formal SWAs. Although formal SWAs seem to have been motivated to better document their activities (e.g. through the development of stories pertaining to the changes they experienced in the course of their work), routine documentation at the district level is mostly in the form of quarterly reports and remains largely programmatic, with little to no monitoring on CFW indicators included in the Medium-Term Development Plan. Case management is not documented in detail across all districts: cases are primarily reported at the aggregate level and case files are not properly documented with very few having a case or care plan.

These questions were addressed in the evaluation interim report (OPM, 2017b). New insights have been added where needed based on the final round of district-level research, document review and national KIIs.

4.4.1 Documenting the district learning process

In line with the PDIA methodology, the Initiative promoted district-level documentation of workable solutions, failed attempts, and successes, as part of the learning process.

The documentation provided across the five districts was insufficient to confirm the extent to which activities had been implemented, and to understand the processes of reflection and adaptation that the SWAs had undergone, motivated by the Initiative.

Although activity plans and some pictorial evidence were provided by formal SWAs, systematic documentation of activities and their outcomes is missing. Only one progress report about activities undertaken as part of the Initiative was received by the evaluation

team, from the formal SWA group in Asokore Mampong. This report detailed the sensitisation activities conducted following the SRP workshop, the dates, topics discussed and attendees. In addition to reports, photos of sensitisation events were common. It was often difficult to determine whether the photos were for events related to the Initiative or other programmes, such as the SBCC toolkit. Some actors mentioned having submitted other documentation to either the ILGS or their DFP. No other documentation was made available, neither from formal SWAs nor informal or allied actors.

Documentation and reporting were largely programmatic with little to no monitoring on CFW indicators included in the Medium-Term Development Plan. One of the reasons for this may be that activities related to the WFS initiative were reported as part of the department's regular processes. In this way, documentation and reporting are activity-based. For example, in Lambussie-Karni, the DFP commented: "*when we carry out activities we put it in our quarterly reports. We don't have a separate report for the CFWP, we put it in the quarterly report*" (OPM, September 2017). Further, because the implementation of activities was constrained and did not consistently take place documentation of activities was also limited. With regards to CFW indicators, it is important to note that these are new. However, there was little evidence of consistent efforts made at the district level by 1) departments, to document and report on these indicators; and 2) District Assemblies, to hold departments accountable on these indicators.

Challenges with documentation were raised in every district visited, although the departmental staff were generally motivated to improve documentation. For instance, in Upper Denkyira West, it was noted that informal actors particularly struggle to report on activities, either because of language difficulties or because they cannot read and write. In Asokore Mamong and Talensi, formal actors confirmed experiencing challenges with documentation due to lack of

access to computers, printers, USBs and working phones. These challenges may have affected the quality and frequency with which reports under the Initiative were formally produced, especially given the context of resource constraint. However, in Shama and Lambussie-Karni, formal actors suggested they were in the process of implementing new methods of documentation. In Shama, a SWO explained that the reports from the office now include pictures. However, this could not be confirmed at the time of the third round of data collection in October 2018. In Lambussie-Karni, formal actors had produced "stories of change" and used these as a way to document the effects that their activities and community interventions had had on children.

The documentation from the follow-up reflection workshops does not provide an evidence base of what actions worked to address identified problems. ILGS provided the evaluation team documentation in the form of summaries of the first and second reflection workshops, and a detailed report of the third reflection workshop. This documentation identifies key problems, changes taking place in the districts, reflections about actions undertaken and lessons learned, and a review of linkages to other relevant interventions in the district. While these documents indicate that valuable reflection has taken place, it does not provide a systematic and evidenced presentation of the actions that led to solutions to address problems identified in activity plans. Further, it is unclear why certain adjustments were made to activity plans, primarily in relation to problem definition, which initially focused on broad child protection problems at the SRP workshop and became more narrowly targeted at operational challenges in subsequent reflection workshops, as per ILGS documents.

Further, although there is some evidence of reflection, there is no indication that reporting and documentation of reflection were perceived by SWAs to be important as a means to facilitate learning or an essential part of a problem-driven iterative adaptation approach.

4.4.2 Sharing of documentation

No evidence of systematic documentation sharing at district level was found. The value of documentation is in its use. Sharing of documented evidence as part of the Initiative is meant to support the learning process within and across districts. Given that activities have not been well systematised, sharing of documentation within the district does not seem to have taken place. Additionally, in a few instances, transfers affected access to documentation, as formal staff transferred had taken with them district and initiative documentation. During district-level interviews and at the validation workshop, it was raised that this was a common problem, primarily caused by the fact that staff do not have access to office computers and have to use their own personal computers to work. In this way, documentation systems are largely individualised and dependent on personal capabilities and access to adequate resources. Further, although SWAs suggested during the second round of data collection that some sharing of learnings had taken place through a WhatsApp platform, the evaluation team found no evidence that this platform was in use during the last round of data collection. SWAs indicated that the platform had been a positive idea, but it had not been helpful and SWAs were not engaged.

The district-level documentation on the Initiative was meant to support regional and national level learning and the development of national guidelines. The guidelines provide examples of ideas or practices that could help to achieve the objectives of the Policy. In this way, the guidelines offer a platform for documentation. However, the evaluation team has found little evidence of how the sharing of learnings, through the regional and national stock-taking workshops, as well as the guidelines, have enabled cross-district learning.

The Initiative does not seem to have influenced the process of documentation at the district level. Although collaboration was, in general, enhanced, as discussed earlier in this report, sharing of case management information and documentation within districts was not common. The research team found little evidence of sharing of information even between formal actors. In Talensi, SWOs attributed this to the confidential nature of their work. The only case where the research team found evidence of information on case management being shared was in Upper Denkyira West. Here, the head of the Department relied on Social Welfare Officers from Upper Denkyira East in order to respond to specific cases because as community development officer he did not always have the technical capacity to fulfil the role of Social Welfare Officer without the guidance from his colleagues in Upper Denkyira East. The evaluation team also did not find any evidence of sharing of documentation between informal and formal actors. There was no documentation of the activities of informal actors, perhaps because of their limited literacy skills. Although some informal actors are able to read and write, their documentation of child protection issues seems not to be mandated and institutionalised.

4.4.3 Evidence generation during work practice

In all districts, there was evidence that formal SWAs had some practice of documentation. Formal SWA activities are documented in quarterly reports which feed into an annual report that is then submitted to the separate department heads and planning director at regional level. Despite the merger, where the Department has both Community Development and Social Welfare staff, two separate reports are produced for submission to their respective departments at regional level.

The access of the research team to the quarterly reports varied from district to district, yet in all districts these were not available for a consistent number of quarters in any given year. The inconsistency is perhaps linked to the inadequate resources to generate and store information within the districts. This was particularly raised as a challenge in Asokore

Mampong, Talensi and Upper Denkyira West. Additionally, in Lambussie-Karni, Asokore Mampong and Shama, the evaluation team observed that formal SWAs keep a "movement book" which details the day-to-day activities that occur outside the office. The documentation provided was entirely descriptive in nature, focusing on activities rather than results, with limited attention towards reflecting on what activities and approaches worked or not, or any lessons learned. In Talensi and Upper Denkyira West, for example, quarterly reports provide information on staff attitudes and strengths, cases reported, and meetings attended. In general, district-level documentation seems to fulfil an accountability purpose rather than providing opportunities for reflection and learning. For example, in Lambussie-Karni, a formal SWA described the quarterly reports as a formality, in which the relevant person at the Assembly signs and passes the report on to the next level up. The reports form the basis on which a unit and staff performance is assessed.

With regards to case management, cases were mostly documented at an aggregated level. There was no evidence that case documentation was used as evidence for planning purposes, or that statistics were captured from the tracking of incidents brought to the attention of the Department of SW/CD. Departments keep case registry files with varying degrees of detail. These files generally include descriptions of cases and the decisions made on each case. There were no standardised forms and, while record books logged incidents, case logs were not always organised chronologically. Additionally, there was no evidence of Departments producing care or case plans as part of their decision-making on cases. However, this seems to be the case given that care and case plans have not yet been an adopted practice in case management.

4.5   Effectiveness – influencing factors

Summary answers to evaluation questions
KEQ 6: What factors are supporting or constraining changes to take place at district level?

Factors that enabled change were mainly related to the willingness of SWAs to learn and adapt their attitudes, and the existence of other interventions that offered SWAs platforms to put into practice what they had learned in the Initiative. The main external intervention that contributed to this was the rollout of the SBCC toolkit.

Factors that constrained change were, in large part, related to SWAs' limited capacities to deliver on CFW activities and plans. In the case of formal SWAs, capacity was influenced by the variable sizes of teams, the limited number of SWOs, and transfers of staff to other districts. In the case of formal and informal SWAs, the issue of funding was consistently proposed as a hindrance to experimentation and implementation of activity plans. The absence of consistent sources of funding was also perceived to limit collaboration. Additionally, limited support from District Assemblies influenced SWAs' ability to trigger change in practices – this again was mediated by transfers of DCDs and DPOs, especially in cases where they were supportive and knowledgeable of CFW issues in a district or had established strong relationships with formal SWAs.

The evidence suggests that several external factors are likely to mediate and influence expected changes. According to PDIA theory,[73] these factors have been categorised below based on three major areas of influence: ability, authority and acceptance.

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73   Center for International Development (2018) PDIA toolkit, a DIY Approach to Solving Complex Problems. Harvard University. https://bsc.cid.harvard.edu/PDIAtoolkit

4.5.1 Acceptance Factors

All actors interviewed showed a willingness to learn and participate in the Initiative. Across all five districts, actors commented on the interactive and well-facilitated nature of the workshops, and the ways in which the information provided had challenged them to change their attitudes towards child protection issues. Indeed, participants were enthusiastic about the workshops and their importance, and in several instances, actors suggested more regular sessions would be beneficial. Various actors also mentioned having attended the workshops despite challenges with time and having many other responsibilities, motivated by their commitment to child protection. The acceptance of the Initiative and the policies was evident in all interviews, in particular when discussing the fictitious case of Charity and Aku during the second and third rounds of data collection. In response to these cases, actors tended to cite principles of the CFWP, which signals acceptance of the policy, at least in theory. As reflected in Subsection 6.1, SWAs' change in attitudes and mindsets enabled change, as SWAs were more attentive to CP issues in their communities, and more willing to adapt their own behaviour and practices to ensure CFW concerns were addressed. For instance, in Upper Denkyira West, a chief who had attended the Initiative decided to cancel a fee for any case related to CFW that was brought to him. In Asokore Mampong, Assembly Members created initiatives within their communities to remain in contact with children and ensure children felt comfortable coming to them if they were facing abuse.

However, in practice, it was evident that accepting new ways of responding to child protection was challenging, in particular for informal SWAs. When discussing the Aku case, which involved the sexual assault of a student by a teacher, informal actors suggested they may choose to resolve the case within the community. This highlights a conflict between the expectations of SWAs and the understanding of the CFWP principles. In the case of Aku, SWAs would be expected to refer the case to the formal sector as it is a criminal offence. However, the CFWP' emphasis on a) finding local solutions, and b) addressing child protection issues in ways that are in accordance with tradition, would be cited as justification for prioritising community needs and addressing the case within the community. For instance, one informal actor, who had been an active participant in the Initiative, raised that he may choose to solve that case himself rather than referring it to DOVVSU or the police, as the community could not afford to lose a teacher. During community visits, none of the community leaders interviewed suggested they would contact the Department of SW/CD or the police in a case like Aku's. This is understandable as the community leaders interviewed did not participate in the Initiative. However, some were members of communities that had been sensitised, either through the SBCC toolkit or through a sensitisation activity motivated by the WFS initiative. This resistance to resolving issues in ways that depart from tradition signals that changes in attitudes take time.

4.5.2 Ability Factors

Four factors were consistently identified as influencing change.

First, **resource constraints have restricted the space for change in practices.** Lack of reliable funding limited the ability of SWAs to implement activity plans and collaborate. Again, there seemed to have been a difference in expectations between WFS initiative implementers and SWAs at the district level. A national-level respondent commented that the Initiative was meant to encourage SWAs to work differently rather than to work more. In other words, the activity plans would not add to the regular work SWAs had. On the other hand, by encouraging SWAs to collaborate with each other, they could work and provide CFW services more efficiently. From the perspective of SWAs, however, the activity plans implied additional work, particularly given

that "experimenting" often entailed implementing new activities they did not already have the funds for. In fact, formal SWAs often highlighted the difficulty of securing Assembly funding for activities within their traditional scope of work, making it even more challenging to attain financial support for new programming.

In this context of resource constraints, **already existing platforms for sensitisation eased the implementation of sensitisation activities related to the WFS initiative**. As discussed in Sub-section 5.1, the SBCC toolkit enabled the implementation of sensitisation activities in SWAs' activity plans, offering a platform to reinforce CFW messages. Moreover, informal and allied actors who participated in the Initiative used other platforms to sensitise their communities and other SWAs. Although activities related to service provision or more comprehensive CFW programming were difficult to fund and implement, where SWAs found opportunities to "piggy-back" CFW messaging onto work they were already doing, they took them.

Third, **small teams and limited capacities negatively affected the ability of formal SWAs to experiment with new ways of working and translate the CFWP into practice.** Table 5 presents an overview of the number of staff per unit and district at the beginning of 2018 and at the time of the third round of fieldwork, noting transfers and additions to teams. As the data shows, with the exception of Asokore Mampong and Talensi, Department of SW/CD teams tend to be small. Common to all districts, however, is the very limited social welfare capacity, with Upper Denkyira West not having a single SWO. While in all districts the number of CDOs is larger than the number of SWOs, in the case of Talensi, the disparity is most obvious. CDOs across the districts explained that the involvement of SWOs in implementation of the Initiative was limited, as they did not have sufficient time. SWOs would note that, if they joined CDOs in community sensitisation, they would 1) still have to finish case management work after the sensitisation is

concluded; and 2) would deprive the department of an active SWO who could attend to the needs of community members. This is a significant concern in districts where there is only one SWO, and where having that single SWO participate in community sensitisation would mean not having any staff member qualified to deal with a case while the SWO is away. National-level respondents acknowledged that disproportionate staffing has caused conflicts and inefficiencies between both units, as CDOs are unable to perform many social welfare roles, either due to training or to legal requirements.[74] Further, as noted in Sub-section 5.1, SWOs have limited to non-existent training in case management, which has constrained their ability to implement the principles of the CFWP by adapting their processes.

Related to team capacities is the issue of **transfers of formal SWAs who acted as champions of the Initiative, as this was perceived to limit progress on the adoption of the CFWP** in the districts visited. The Initiative and application of learnings from the Initiative relied on champions, who could encourage the adoption of new ways of thinking and working on CFW in their Departments. Their transfers not only 1) jeopardised new ways of working, but, 2) in districts where not all formal actors participated actively in the Initiative, it meant that knowledge was lost as there was no systematic information management to ensure that institutional memory was retained in the office despite the transfer. Additionally, transfers affected collaboration. As noted in Sub-section 5.2, collaboration between SWAs is not institutionalised and is largely dependent on SWA's personalities and their individual Initiative – this is particularly true in the context of resource constraints, which presents more disincentives than incentives for active and continuous collaboration. Transfers therefore became an additional barrier to the solidification of collaborations and linkages between the formal, allied and informal sectors.

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74 In a national-level interview, it was explained that SWOs are legally required to have that designation in order to perform certain roles, such as taking a case to court, providing social welfare services in hospitals, and coordinating payments.

Table 5 Department of SW/CD Team Capacities, by Unit and District

		Asokore Mampong	Lambussie	Shama	Talensi	Upper Denkyira West
Community Development	**Staff Active 1 Jan 2018**	10	5	3	14	4
	Transfers[a]	2	2	0	2	1
	New Staff	0	0	1	1	0
	Staff Active 1 Nov 2018	8	3	4	13	3
Social Welfare	**Staff Active 1 Jan 2018**	6	1	2	2	0
	Transfers[a]	2	0	1	1	0
	New Staff	1	0	0	1	0
	Staff Active 1 Nov 2018	5	1	1	2	0
Other[b]	**Staff Active 1 Jan 2018**	6	1	2	1	1
	Transfers[a]	6	0	2	1	1
	New Staff	2	1	2	2	0
	Staff Active 1 Nov 2018	2	2	2	2	0

[a] Transfer of staff since 1 Jan 2018

[b] Includes National Service Personnel and support staff

4.5.3 Authority Factors

The main factor influencing the authorising environment is support from District Assemblies. This is supported by budgetary commitments to the Department of SW/CD, which in 2018 represented between 2.1 to 5.6 percent of the total budget in the districts visited, as indicated in Table 6. Both district and national-level respondents suggested that prioritisation of child and family welfare remains low given that this is a "soft" issue. It was explained that District Assemblies are more interested in tangible and visible works that can support re-election. These works tend to be related to infrastructure, even in the context of child protection. For instance, when discussing a District Assembly's commitment to CFW, the respondent, who was a staff member of the Assembly, highlighted the building of schools. This type of tangible commitment to child protection is reflected in Medium-Term

Development Plans, where proposed activities often focus on financially supporting students or on immunisation.[75]

Commitment from District Assemblies is further mediated by the transfers of DCDs and DPOs. DCDs and DCEs were invited to participate in the Initiative. However, in most cases they sent assistants to the workshops instead of attending themselves. This was raised as an issue by formal actors, as the budgetary and planning decision-makers were not being sensitised on the CFWP, making it more difficult to leverage their support for child protection activities. This led ILGS to organise a two-day workshop in July 2017 with DCDs, DCEs and DPOs. However, later that month many DCDs were transferred. Although these transfers are positive in that they offer an

75 See MTDP 2018-2021 for Shama, Talensi and Upper Denkyira West. MTDPs for Asokore Mampong and Lambussie were not available at the time of report-writing.

opportunity for knowledge and support for the CFWP to reach districts beyond the pilots, they cause a setback in the districts where staff are being transferred from. In two cases, Department of SW/CD staff commented that they had to start re-engaging DCDs and DPOs new to their district. While they had positive relationships with previous DCDs and DPOs, in particular those who had been sensitised on the CFWP, they now had to make renewed efforts at building collaboration.

Table 6 Budgeted Expenditure in 2018 (in GHc)[76]

District	District Total	Department of SW/CD[a]	Department Budget as Percentage of District Total
Asokore Mampong	Unavailable	Unavailable	N/A
Lambussie-Karni	5,741,539	280,465	2.1
Shama	12,897,115	269,277	4.9
Talensi	6,284,286	354,451	5.6
Upper Denkyira West	6,560,470	278,813	4.2
[a] The SW/CD Departmental budget in the District Composite Budget includes compensation of employees and capital expenditures.			

Source: Own calculations based on District Composite Budgets.

Finally, **the involvement and buy-in from traditional authorities seems to be a determinant of the reach of the activities conducted.** As noted in Subsection 6.1, the Initiative contributed to a greater awareness and recognition of the role of informal actors in CFW. In all districts, actors explained the importance of informal leaders to even conduct activities in the communities, and the Initiative facilitated linkages that were in general weak between formal and informal actors. Actors commented that permission from traditional leaders was always sought, and that having them participate in the workshops was necessary in order to change attitudes at the community level. However, formal actors in Shama, Asokore Mampong and Lambussie-Karni explained that respect for traditional authorities in some communities was declining, which has affected the ability of community leaders to mobilise members to participate in sensitization activities.

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76   These data were extracted from the Composite Budgets for each of the districts. The Composite Budget for Asokore Mampong for 2018 was unavailable at the time of report-writing.

4.6   Sustainability

Summary answers to evaluation questions

KEQ 7: To what extent are the intended and unintended effects of implementing the intervention process likely to continue beyond the end of the intervention process?

DEQ 7.1: What factors are likely to affect (favour or constrain) the sustainability of results of the intervention process and to what extent do they imply a risk to the sustainability of the results?

The main influencing factor with regarding to authorising environment is the institutionalisation of support from District Assembly political and civil servant staff. In those districts where district administration authorities were relatively more engaged in the Initiative, this relied primarily on personal initiative and relationships rather than institutional engagement. This poses a risk to sustainability if District Assembly staff who have bought into the CFWP leave to other districts, putting pressure on formal actors to rebuild support. Institutionalisation of Assembly support has mainly come through the inclusion of CFW in planning and performance frameworks, however. At the level of the Department of SW/CD, the authorising environment is also influenced by departmental leadership and internal unit dynamics.

SWAs' ability to support the sustainability is influenced by access to resources and complementary CFW skills. Other factors that have hindered the ability of SWAs to sustain changes are their inability to meet and communicate regularly, and the transfers of SWAs who have been trained by the Initiative. Nevertheless, SWAs continued to express commitment to CFW, the Initiative, and changes brought by the Initiative.

DEQ 7.2: To what extent is the intervention process suitable for replication and or adaptation beyond the 20 pilot districts?

The replication of the Initiative is meant to occur through the dissemination of the guidelines. However, replication of the guidelines is yet to be effective. As envisioned, the guidelines offer limited prescription of practices, which, on the one hand, makes them flexible for contextualisation to other districts. On the other hand, there is a risk that the guidelines are misinterpreted or misapplied without sufficient accompanying sensitisation about the principles and boundaries of roles promoted by the CFWP since, even with intense sensitisation during the pilot, these boundaries were not fully understood, particularly with regards to the roles of the informal actors.

Guidelines are meant to be disseminated within pilot districts and to other districts through the Training of Trainers and in the training manual of the Department of SW/CD. With regards to informal actors, replication of the CFWP is happening through local diffusion, and not based on the guidelines but rather the initial sensitisation during the rollout of the Initiative.

The replicability of the ongoing experiential learning approach without supporting facilitation and documentation skills is questionable. The guidelines promote (but not prescribe) the PDIA approach to encourage ongoing experiential learning as well as continuous documentation of such learning. However, for this approach to be effective, it requires facilitation.

4.6.1 Factors affecting sustainability of results

Factors that affect the sustainability of existing changes can be categorized in terms of: a) the authorising environment; b) SWAs' ability; and c) SWAs' willingness to sustain results.
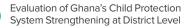
Authorising environment

The Initiative was insufficiently owned by the district administration leadership and its support was insufficiently institutionalised. As discussed above, despite efforts to engage the district leadership, DCDs, DCEs, assembly members and Heads of different Assembly Departments did not consistently and strategically participate in the Initiative.[77] This has affected the local ownership of the Initiative. Nonetheless, in various districts DCDs and DPOs were occasionally involved and some assembly members became advocates of CFW. In both Talensi and Asokore Mampong, for instance, assembly members who had attended the Initiative openly advocated for funds on CFW activities. This depended on personal initiative and relationships rather than institutional engagement. While building leadership support through such informal, individualised relationships is in line with the experimental and bottom-up nature of the Initiative, it carries a risk to sustainability, as individuals transfer, carrying with them the knowledge and support for CFW issues. No framework was put in place for participating SWAs to periodically report and account on the progress and results of the Initiative to the district leadership.[78] The national TWG also did not demonstrate the required leadership to incentivise and mobilise the consistent support of the district leadership.

The inclusion of CFW within Assembly planning and performance frameworks nevertheless has provided a more institutionalised form of support for CFW issues and activities. As discussed in Subsection 2.2, the inclusion in 2018 of CFW indicators in the DCD performance assessment and in the MTDPs has been a way to encourage district leadership support in a more institutionalised form. Formal SWAs have differences in opinion in terms of how significant the inclusion of CFW in these frameworks will be in improving district support in light of budget constraints (see Subsection 5.1). However, national-level stakeholders have expressed support, noting that they will allow SWAs to receive District Assembly funding and support, and will mainstream the incorporation of CFW issues into district plans that go beyond the Department of SW/CD, making CFW activities institutionalised in Health and Education plans. In this way, these indicators can support the continuation of changes (in attitudes, behaviours and practices) triggered by the Initiative, as they make Assembly support more systemic.

At the level of the Department of SW/CD, the authorising environment is influenced by departmental leadership and internal unit dynamics. The Initiative seems to have both a) acted as a catalyst for cooperation between SW and CD units; and b) created some conflict between units given that the programme was rolled out by the Department of Community Development, yet the heads of some Departments at the district level were SWOs.[79] Where dynamics between unit teams were not cohesive and where the leadership had not been engaged by the Initiative from the beginning or did not inclusively involve all staff, it seemed more difficult to sustain changes with respect to the collaboration between both units. On the other hand, there was some evidence that positive dynamics were an important factor to not only enable collaboration but also ensure collaboration remained beyond the life of the Initiative.

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77   Only in one district, Lambussie-Karni, did the evaluation team find evidence that heads of other Departments were engaged through their quarterly meetings.

78   The national stock-taking workshop offered an opportunity to report on results and lessons learned, but this was at national level and after district-level implementation.

79   The organization of the programme typically went to the CD unit heads, given that the Ministry of Community Development was rolling the initiative out at the national level. However, this made some department heads feel undermined as the District Focal Points for the initiative were CD unit heads.

SWAs' ability and willingness

SWAs' ability to sustain changes in practice is influenced by resources and complementary skills available. The Initiative provided a good opportunity for actors to learn about the CFWP and try out new ways of working. Where resources and complementary skills are available and leadership support is further cultivated this is likely to result in sustained changes in practice. For example in the area of prevention, more CFW-focused community sensitisation has been planned and by-laws are in place or awaiting further approval. Access to resources, however, remains uncertain, although the inclusion of CFW in MTDPs and UNICEF's upcoming district support for CP interventions will start to address this. Linkages across formal actors to tap into each other resources are also just emerging and will need more active engagement (e.g. in each other's planning processes) to move beyond one-off events. This requires formal SWAs to have sufficient skills in planning and information management to effectively plan and account for activities and results. Also, for the learning promoted by the Initiative to continue facilitation skills need to be in place, a role that ILGS has played during the pilot period. While the ToT on the guidelines includes a session on promoting innovation and adaptability this is unlikely to be sufficient for stimulating sustained experiential learning. Other required skill areas have been discussed above, and some actions have already been taken to rollout complementary training (e.g. in case management). Finally, while the knowledge of the CFWP was assessed to be good in September 2017 among those actors who participated in the Initiative, various actors raised during the third research round in October 2018 that having "refreshers" or re-training on the issues discussed – particularly during the SRP workshop – would be useful to sustain new practices.

Inability to consistently meet and communicate affects sustained collaboration. Interviewed SWAs pointed out that they have not been able to meet consistently, which has affected their ability to sustain the changes in collaboration that were triggered by the participation in the workshops. While the WhatsApp group at the district level was set up to maintain communication between SWAs, it is not actively used and has therefore not offered an opportunity to sustain collaboration. It is also relatively less accessible to informal actors due to language, mobile phone access and connectivity problems.

There is a perception that the transfers of SWAs who participated in the Initiative have affected the continuation of change. It was consistently raised that transfers hinder sustainability, as actors who has started CFW initiative, or built relationships with other actors, were no longer available to ensure continuation. The impact of this factor is further exacerbated by the gaps in documentation and information management of programmatic activities and plans, as detailed under Section 7. Without proper documentation of lessons learned during the Initiative, and institutionalisation of these new attitudes through plans and activities, it is difficult to ensure continuation of change. For example, in Upper Denkyira West the transfer of the DFP affected the further dissemination of the guidelines, which the remaining staff did not know how to access.

Despite these limiting factors, SWAs expressed commitment to CFW, the Initiative, and the changes that the Initiative had encouraged. As discussed above, the Initiative has been effective in shifting mindsets and attitudes regarding CFW and how to address issues jointly. This is, for instance, also demonstrated in formal SWAs earmarking part of their own salaries to support CFW activities.[80] This signals that SWAs will look for ways (even if these are not the most appropriate for them) to ensure CFW actions continue, despite lack of funding or

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80   This was the case in Asokore Mampong.

time. However, to bring about transformational change in practice this commitment to CFW needs to expand beyond the limited group of SWAs involved in the Initiative. They need to be enabled to diffuse their learnings and enthusiasm for CFW as promoted in the CFWP.

4.6.2 Replicability of the intervention

There is a general understanding that the replication of the Initiative is meant to occur through the dissemination of the guidelines. The Initiative process itself, as implemented in the pilot districts, is not planned to be replicated in every district, given resources required and since it was meant to create the initial foundation of learning to base the guidelines on. Replication is planned to occur through the dissemination of the guidelines. The guidelines are perceived to be sufficiently flexible to allow for ongoing experimentation, lesson-learning and finding local solutions while other districts adopt the CFWP, as well as offer sufficient prescription, according to some national stakeholders, on how to deal with cases, which was raised as a need by several SWAs across the five districts. In this way, the form of the guidelines makes them suitable for replicability in other districts.

Replication through the guidelines is yet to be effective. There is a risk that the guidelines will be partially or misapplied to the local context. At the moment, the dissemination strategy of the guidelines envisioned by national stakeholders is through 1) Training of Trainers (ToT), and 2) the incorporation of the guidelines in the training manual of the social development staff managed by the Office of Local Government Services. A ToT already took place using the final draft of the guidelines. However, as detailed before, trained SWAs have to a large extent not trained fellow staff in their districts. From the perspective of trained SWAs, there are two difficulties with offering training. First, they need further guidance (a "blueprint") on who to train

and how. Second, trained SWAs mentioned that funding would be necessary to reach all key SWAs in the districts. The Initiative was not able to reach SWAs in remote areas, nor was it fully accessible to informal actors, primarily given language capacity. Furthermore, during the pilot process change in practice was accompanied by ongoing sensitisation and facilitated reflection about principles and values of the CFWP, which guided the non-prescriptive emergence of new practices. Even then the boundaries of roles and responsibilities, particularly among informal actors, were not fully accepted. In this vein, an interviewed national stakeholder voiced concern on districts interpreting the guidelines in ways that are not in accordance with the principles of the CFWP. Thus, for effective replication the dissemination of the guidelines needs a clear strategy of how to reach all intended users accompanied by sufficient sensitisation on the CFWP.

Replication of the CFWP is also happening through local diffusion. The case study districts offer examples of the CFWP spreading beyond the SWAs that participated in the Initiative. For example, in Talensi the Presiding Member of the Assembly has sensitised assembly members on the CFWP. In Upper Denkyira West, CFW is being incorporated in the upcoming district by-laws. However, such local diffusion is still sporadic, nascent and needs follow-up and leadership support to institutionalise. At the moment this is not based on the guidelines but on initial sensitisation during the pilot.

The replicability of the ongoing experiential learning approach without supporting facilitation and documentation skills is questionable. The guidelines promote (but not prescribe) the PDIA approach to encourage ongoing experiential learning as well as continuous documentation of such learning. The PDIA approach has been effective to generate reflection about the implementation of the

CFWP, strengthen relationships and inculcate new mindsets. It was an essential part of the sensitisation process. To be effectively applied it needs facilitation. Interviewed SWAs were strongly appreciative of ILGS's facilitation skills to create a participatory learning and reflection environment. The follow-up reflection workshops created an operational platform for people to meet. However, even with the facilitation support actual experimentation and documentation was deficient. Therefore, it is questionable that ongoing experiential learning approach and accompanying documentation process will be replicated without supporting facilitation and documentation skills.

Evaluation of Ghana's Child Protection
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5. Conclusions and recommendations

5.1 Conclusions

Relevance of the Initiative

- The Initiative and the produced guidelines are well aligned with the objectives and approach envisioned in the CFWP, particularly in terms of stimulating collaboration between social welfare actors, strengthening the role of the informal sector, and allowing social welfare actors at local level greater flexibility and discretion to find solutions to CFW issues that are suitable for the local context. The Initiative's approach of combining sensitisation about the Policy and facilitating adaptive learning in practice is strongly consistent with the CFWP's aim to encourage a dynamic dialogue for change among actors based on the principles and values of the Policy.

- The Initiative initially targeted a wide range of social welfare actors, which is well aligned with the Policy's aim to strengthen interaction and complementarity among actors across the CFW system. However, it was not able to consistently involve all relevant local actors. The selection of actors that were consistently involved influenced the scope of the collaboration, the linkages created and the areas of experimentation with new ways of working. The limited group of well-engaged and diverse actors have offered a good starting point for further outreach.

- While the non-prescriptive approach of the Initiative allows, in principle, local actors to try out new ways of working in any practice area relevant to the local context, in practice this was constrained by existing individual and organisational capacities and the institutional environment. The Initiative was not set up from the outset to mobilise additional support or coordinate institutional linkages to the wider CFW system to address such constraints, although linkages were created later on in the project, particularly with the medium-term development planning process.

- Given Ghana's decentralisation system the district administration leadership plays an important role in mobilising support and promoting stakeholder participation in the Initiative. The Initiative recognised the importance of involving actors with authority and made efforts to engage the district leadership occasionally, in particularly the DCDs. However, despite this recognition and efforts it has not been able maintain their ongoing engagement due to transfers among the district leadership and the support of district leadership being insufficiently institutionalised.

- The guidelines were developed following a participatory reflection, stock-taking and validation process involving local actors, which strengthens their relevance for local use. However, given the constraints in terms of experimentation and documentation, the guidelines could not draw on a wide evidence base of newly tried-out solutions to address CFW issues. The guidelines therefore reflect valuable ideas and local experiences of addressing CFW issues rather than tested solutions of what works or does not work. They are perceived as useful by district and national actors, although awareness and knowledge about the guidelines is still limited. Their relevance for the diffusion of new practices requires that they be disseminated and their usefulness enhanced by linking them with the wider CFW system.

Effectiveness of the Initiative

- The Initiative has been effective in building awareness and knowledge about the core tenets of the CFWP, and, to a lesser extent, of the J4CP, as its focus was mainly on the former. Awareness and knowledge about the CFWP are greater among formal than informal actors. The initiative participants have been able to make use of existing platforms and interventions to spread the CFWP core messages. The awareness about the guidelines developed from the process, however, is mainly limited to a few actors invited to validation or training events, and often referred to interchangeably with the CFWP.

- The Initiative also influenced actors' ability to address CFW concerns primarily by changing their attitudes and mindsets. Changes in mindset were reinforced by the fact that the key principles of the Policy are contextually relevant and resonated with actors. It increased SWAs confidence and their understanding of options available to address CFW concerns. The CFWP has served as a common reference point for

actors in a context where approaches to handle cases are informed by individual experience and knowledge.

- Social welfare actors who participated in the Initiative have a clearer understanding of each other's roles and accept the need to collaborate when addressing CFW issues. The Initiative not only contributed to this through sensitisation but also offered a platform to build and strengthen relationships in practice through a participatory experiential learning approach. As a result, formal actors perceive themselves as being better equipped to make decisions when resolving CFW issues, tapping into different actors' expertise and understanding their role.

- The Initiative contributed to a greater awareness and recognition of the role of informal actors in CFW. Informal actors appreciate that the Policy acknowledges and reinforces the role of community structures in prevention and response to CFW concerns. However, preferences remain among informal actors to deal with cases on their own even when formal processes are mandated because it confirms their authority, is seen as responding to the needs and harmony of their communities, and is a reaction to relatively low appreciation or awareness among community leaders of the CFW support provided by formal actors.

- The Initiative has been an effective starting point for emerging collaboration among SWAs at district level, particularly in terms of joint sensitisation about CFW because this was the area that actors had most ability to collaborate through already planned interventions and existing platforms. Collaboration between formal actors also improved in the areas of case management and planning but change has been more modest due to limitations in terms staff capacity, skills, resources, engagement of district leadership and, regarding case management, the fact that many cases are

likely still preferably resolved at community level. The increased collaboration and coordination remain mainly informal, individual-dependent and limited to those participants that actively participated in the Initiative.

- The Initiative has had a modest effect on actors' practises, i.e. the actions and steps they take and focus on to prevent and respond to CFW issues. The primary change has been an increased focus on prevention mainly through a reinforcement of sensitisation activities about child and family welfare issues. Informal actors demonstrated leadership in this area. Changes in case management procedures and reporting were constrained by a low ability for change, as explained above. CFW has received increased attention in district planning processes mainly due to national guidance on the integration of CFW in the Medium-Term DevelopmentPplans. Nonetheless, the Initiative contributed to putting more emphasis on CFW in district planning through increased interaction between SWA, DCDs, DPOs and assembly members and joint planning activities facilitated by the Initiative. In general though, the availability of child welfare support services at community level remains very limited and little experimentation happened in this regard through the Initiative because of limited resources.

- The Initiative has had limited influence on SWAs' capacity to document and evidence their practices. SWAs have not systematically documented either the activities undertaken as part of the Initiative or their outcomes. There is no evidence that the intervention process had an influence on the sharing of documentation. Although formal SWAs seem to have been motivated to better document their activities (through the development of stories pertaining to the changes they experienced in the course of their work), documentation remains largely programmatic, with little to no monitoring on CFW indicators included in the MTDP. The evaluation team have also not found any indication that case management documentation may have changed – case files were often incomplete, and no care or case plans were provided in any district.

- Factors that enabled change were mainly related to the willingness of SWAs to learn and adapt their attitudes, and the existence of other interventions that offered SWAs platforms to put into practice what they had learned in the Initiative. Factors that constrained change were, in large part, related to SWAs' limited capacities to deliver on CFW activities and plans. In the case of formal SWAs, capacity was influenced by the variable sizes of teams, the limited number of SWOs, and transfers. In the case of all SWAs, the issue of funding was consistently proposed as a hindrance to experimentation and implementation of activity plans. Additionally, limited support from District Assemblies further constrained SWAs' ability to trigger change in practices – this again was mediated by transfers of DCDs and DPOs, especially in cases where they were supportive and knowledgeable of CFW issues in a district, or had established strong relationships with formal SWAs.

Sustainability of the Initiative

- While the Initiative made efforts to involve the district administration authorities their support for the Initiative was not sufficiently institutionalised. No framework was put in place for participating SWAs to periodically report and account on the progress and results of the Initiative to the district leadership. In those districts where district leadership was relatively more involved, it depended on personal initiatives and relationships rather than institutional engagement. This poses a risk to the sustainability of changes, especially in situations where District Assembly staff are transferred. At the end of the pilot phase

institutionalisation strengthened through the inclusion of CFW within Assembly planning and performance frameworks.

- Departmental leadership and internal unit dynamics have also mediated the sustainability of changes. Again, the main contributor to risk is the absence of institutionalisation of some aspects of the Initiative. In this case, this is particularly related to stronger collaboration between SWOs and CDOs. When engaged and inclusive leadership was present, collaboration and the sustainability of results were enabled. However, even in these cases, the fact that collaboration was not institutionalised could put it at risk in the future.

- Sustained change in collaboration, coordination, learning, adaptation and other practices promoted by the Initiative is influenced by SWA's access to resources and complementary CFW skills, such as planning, facilitation and reporting skills. While the guidelines highlight their importance, it was beyond the Initiative's scope to make more concrete provisions how to access such resources and skills. The inclusion of CFW in MTDPs and UNICEF's upcoming district support for CP interventions will start to address this.

- The replication of the Initiative is meant to occur through the dissemination of the guidelines within pilot districts and to other districts through a Training of Trainers and in the training manual of the Department of SW/CD. However, replication of the guidelines is yet to be effective. As envisioned, the guidelines offer limited prescription of practices, which, on the one hand, makes them flexible for contextualisation to other districts. On the other hand, there is a risk that the guidelines are misinterpreted or misapplied without sufficient accompanying sensitisation about the principles and boundaries of roles promoted by the CFWP since, even with intense sensitisation during

the pilot, these boundaries were not fully understood, particularly with regards to the roles of the informal actors.

5.2 Recommendations

The evaluation provides a number of strategic recommendations (SR) and operational recommendations (OR). All recommendations are directed to UNICEF Ghana that will report on their progress. However, the Government of Ghana needs to be the primary agent taking ownership of the recommendations with UNICEF's support.

Strategic recommendations

UNICEF Ghana should:

SR1: Advocate for and support the further development, implementation and monitoring of strategies to institutionalise support and accountability among district administration leadership for changes promoted in the guidelines. The incorporation of CFW in the DCD performance agreement and the MTDP are examples of such strategies already being implemented. Progress on CFW indicators and activities included in the DCD performance agreements and MTDPs need to be monitored and periodically reported to the District Assembly and to mandated regional/national Departments. The use and effectiveness of such strategies need to be periodically evaluated. In addition, a more structured process needs to be included in the guidelines how the district administration leadership is engaged in and periodically informed about the progress of implementing the guidelines at district level, in particular with regards to: new ways of working on CFW issues, access to resources, ongoing innovation and adaptation, and learning, documentation and monitoring.

SR2: Promote coordination and collaboration among SWAs on CFW through existing and institutionalised district coordination platforms, such as meetings of the District Assembly, the Social Services Sub-committee of the

MMDA and heads of MMDA Departments. Such platforms need to allow for a wide variety of SWAs to be engaged (and give voice to children and families), particularly during planning processes.[81] The initiative has been effective in encouraging increased collaboration and coordination among various SWAs. However, it has been mostly informal. A degree of informality is contextually appropriate given limited resources and still emerging collaboration. However, the institutionalisation of this interaction needs to be further encouraged to better embed coordination in district governance systems and avoid it being dependent on specific persons.

SR3: Promote capacity strengthening among SWAs in the area of monitoring, reporting and information management. The documentation process of the Initiative was weak. Information management and reporting processes at the SW/CD Department are deficient. Currently SW/CD reporting is not aligned with the CFW indicators and activities in the MTDPs. This affects learning, accountability, effective case management and sustainable operations in case of transfer of personnel. Therefore, there is need for capacity strengthening in the area of monitoring, reporting and information management. Linkages with monitoring and reporting as part of the MTDP and other results frameworks such as the District Performance Assessment Tool need to be pursued. However, given limited resource environment this requires monitoring, reporting and information management practices that are fit for context. Therefore, an experiential capacity strengthening approach is advisable. Furthermore, any new monitoring, documentation and reporting requirements

should not disincentivise learning in pursuit of performance indicators since it would contradict the guidelines. This requires a fine balance that again needs to be fit for context.

Operational recommendations

UNICEF Ghana should:

OR1: Advocate for and support the further dissemination of the guidelines in a way that:

- Ensures all intended users are reached, both formal and informal actors;

- The district administration leadership and the head of the SW/CD Department are actively involved in the targeting of the dissemination, motivate why specific actors are targeted in light of their involvement in CFW in the district, and account for dissemination implementation; this needs to be done in consultation with SWAs and allied actors involved in CFW in the district;

- Provides clear guidance to users how the guidelines are meant to be used;

- Is accompanied by a framework that monitors their use, facilitates learning and accountability about their use, and enables their periodic adaptation based on the learning;

- Aligns the timing of the dissemination with the timing of the provision of other child and family welfare support to the districts, which would offer resources to district SWA to implement the guidelines;

- Emphasises sensitisation and further clarification about roles, responsibilities and required practices of formal and informal actors when confronted with CFW cases of a criminal nature;

- Ensures ongoing dissemination and is linked to capacity building frameworks and approaches, such as the training manual for social development personnel or academic courses on social work.

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81   The Local Governance Act 2016 enables stakeholder participation in District Assembly processes, and foresees modalities and platforms for such participation. It even requires District Assemblies to promote effective participation of marginalised groups in public and political life. Furthermore, the CFWP implementation plan foresees the convention of annual child protection sector evaluation meetings and the creation of platforms for regular interactions with CSOs and government at all levels.

OR2: Support strengthening the skills of SWAs required to implement the CFWP, as highlighted in the guidelines and this evaluation. Change in practice though the initiative was constrained by existing skills. These skills relate to technical CFW practice skills such as case management but also skills for SWAs to be able to operate effectively in the wider CFW system, such as planning, budgeting, documentation and reporting skills, and 'soft' skills that facilitate learning and collaboration. Some initiatives are already rolled out to build such skills (e.g. case management training). Workforce capacity strengthening in the area of planning and information management are also needed with priority. It is important that such skill building is aligned with the guidelines, for example, seeking a collaborative approach across SWAs and building in some form of experiential learning.

OR3: Promote that districts receive support that helps facilitate and document innovation and adaptability on an ongoing basis as promoted by the guidelines. Moving away from the previous approaches to child protection and shifting to child and family welfare will take time, as highlighted in the guidelines. The guidelines promote that this change process happens through innovation, learning and adaptation on an ongoing basis. Such approach is challenging as demonstrated during the pilot phase. If this ongoing experiential learning process is meant to be sustained and replicated, capacity and support needs to be provided to help facilitate and document the process.

5.3 Lessons learned

Lessons of potential wider relevance for the design and implementation of similar workforce strengthening projects are the following:

- Documentation of collective learning was recognised as critical in the Initiative's approach paper (ILGS and Child Frontiers, 2017a). However, the scale of the Initiative, covering 20 pilot districts, was too large to facilitate an adequate documentation process give the resources available. This is a challenge for both learning and accountability as part of the experimentation process. From a learning perspective, it makes it difficult to assess what worked or not; and subsequently draw lessons for follow-up action. From an accountability perspective, it can create difficulties to cultivate support for the Initiative. Authorisers will be more willing to support the Initiative if there is evidence of concrete progress being made. Also, team motivation is more likely to be maintained when the results from concrete actions can be made visible.

- The incorporation of CFW in the MTDPs is an effective way to put CFW on the agenda of the District Assembly in an institutionalised way. However, this increased focus on CFW in district plans does not necessarily result into actual change due to funding constraints and prioritisation of release of funding towards traditional 'visible' projects. The planning process needs to be accompanied by ongoing engagement of the district administration leadership about CFW to cultivate the space for change.

- The Initiative was able to engage a wide range of relevant, local stakeholders—including formal, informal and allied actors—through a meaningful participatory process, although involvement became inconsistent and some actors were missing or underrepresented. The engagement of multiple agents throughout the sensitisation, experimentation and reflection process is critical to its outcomes. Collaboration, relationships and mutual understanding of each other's roles are most strongly forged among those who participate. The learnings and solutions are also influenced by the scope of work of those who participate.

- The guidelines are not a stand-alone tool but need to be used within a broader reform process and linked to the wider CFW system. How such linkages are best created is subject of different visions on the non-prescriptive nature of the Initiative and the guidelines. The Initiative was faced with a tension between creating the space for experimentation and flexibility at the local level to come up with contextualised new ways of working and taking into account existing standards, frameworks and good practices. This tension needs to be considered in the design phase of a project.

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Annex A
Evaluation matrix

Evaluation Questions	Criteria to answer the questions	Source of evidence	Timing
Relevance			
KEQ 1: How well are the activities and outputs of the intervention process consistent with the Policies' objectives and strategies?			
DEQ 1.1: How consistent is the intervention approach with the objectives and operational plan of the CFWP?	• **Consistency of objectives:** The objectives and expected change of the WFS initiative are consistent with the CFWP's objectives and strategy. • **Consistency of approach**: The policy to practice process promoted by the WFS initiative (e.g. using a problem driven iterative adaption approach, giving local agents discretion to try different solutions) is consistent with the CFWP's envisioned reform process. • **Consistency of target population**: The social welfare actors targeted by the WFS initiative are consistent with the actors targeted by the CFWP.	**Desk review** of CFWP documents, operational plan and finalised workforce strengthening initiative documents to assess congruence and alignment between the two **Key Informant interviews** with UNICEF, TWG and ILGS/CF.	April 2017 October 2018
DEQ 1.2: How consistent are the new guidelines developed through the intervention process with the CFWP?	• **Consistency in terms of roles and responsibilities**: The guidelines are consistent with the roles and responsibilities of government and non-governmental organisations expressed in the CFWP. • **Consistency in terms of workforce practice**: The guidelines propose workforce practices in line with the CFWP (such as, emphasis on prevention and early intervention, on family/community-based care) • **Consistency in terms of CP processes**: The guidelines provide guidance on how the workforce should operate, by	**Desk review** of CFWP docs and finalised guidelines to assess congruence and alignment between the two **Key Informant Interviews** with UNICEF, TWG members, ILGS/CF and other key stakeholders[3]	October 2018

Evaluation Questions	Criteria to answer the questions	Source of evidence	Timing
	» identifying how formal and informal actors can work together; » Identifying possible mechanisms of coordination between stakeholders at the different levels; » emphasising the importance of engaging community structures in child protection cases; » favouring collaboration with other sectors such as social protection; » encouraging SWAs to engage with families and children to understand abusive situations; » consulting the views of children in decision making.		

KEQ 2: How well is the intervention process grounded in the reality and needs of the SWAs and communities?

Evaluation Questions	Criteria to answer the questions	Source of evidence	Timing
DEQ 2.1: To what extent, and in what ways, does the intervention approach build on local strengths and solutions for better supporting children?	• **Strong and continued participation** of key local stakeholders in the planning and reflection process. • Local stakeholders plan and find possible **solutions for their context.** • The **guidelines reflect the local learning.**	**Observation** at SRP workshops + National stock-taking workshop **Desk review** of meeting/workshop attendance lists **Key Informant Interviews (KIIs)** with ILGS/CF, UNICEF and TWG members **Group Interviews/workshop** with SWAs **KIIs** with allied actors **Desk review** of district activity plans, documentation of activities and documentation of reflection workshops **Desk review** of finalised guidelines	**Observation**: March-April 2017 + November 2017 **Attendance review**: March-December 2017 **Group interviews/ workshop/KIIs with SWAs and KIIs with allied actors**: Sept 2017 and October 2018 **KIIs with TWG members**: October 2018 **Desk review** of activity plans and documentation: October 2017 **Desk review of guidelines**: October 2018.

Evaluation Questions	Criteria to answer the questions	Source of evidence	Timing
DEQ 2.2: How useful are the new guidelines for the SWAs, particularly in terms of promoting local problem solving?	• The guidelines sufficiently clarify **roles and responsibilities** of different SWAs (who does what, how do different actors interact). • The guidelines **provide local actors discretion** to try different solutions, innovate, learn (incl. make and deal with mistakes) and **adapt to local context.** • The SWAs **use** the guidelines and perceive them as **useful** to support and guide their work in terms of their day-to-day practice and interrelating with other actors and services. • SWAs have been (and perceive being) actively and equally **involved in development of the guidelines.**	**Desk review** of finalised guidelines **Group Interviews** with SWAs and **KIIs** with allied actors **KIIs** with UNICEF, TWG members, ILGS/CF and other key stakeholders **Observation** at National stock-taking workshop	**Desk review** of finalised guidelines and participation lists: October 2018 **Workshop/KIIs with SWAs and KIIs with allied actors:** June 2018 **KIIs with TWG members:** June 2018 **Observation** at national stock taking workshop: Nov 2017
Effectiveness			
KEQ 3: To what extent and how has the CFWP been translated into practice?			
DEQ 3.1: How have practices to address child protection issues among SWAs changed at district level and how has the intervention process contributed to this?	• **Focus on promotion, prevention and early intervention**: SWAs increasingly focus their practice on promotion, prevention and early intervention to strengthen families. • **Focus on community-based alternative care:** Family/community-based solutions are increasingly favoured over placement of children in residential settings. • **Child and family-centred response:** SWAs increasingly practice case management that promotes the well-being and recovery of children within the family and community network. • **Stronger child participation:** SWAs increasingly empower children and youth as agents of change. • **Practice according to activity plans, emerging solutions and guidelines:** SWA's practice and decision making along the continuum of care reflect activity plans, learnings from experimentation and the new guidelines.	**Observation** at sensitisation and reflection workshops **Group Interviews/workshop/KIIs** with SWAs to identify changes in practices and to ascertain how the intervention has contributed to these changes **KIIs** with allied actors to ascertain their perception of changes in SWA practices **Desk review** of district activity plans **Desk review** of secondary data, such as SWCD progress reports, LEAP data, monitoring data....	**Observation**: March-April 2017 **Group interviews/workshop/KII with SWAs and KIIs allied actors**: September 2017 and October 2018 **Desk review of activity plans:** October 2017 **Desk review of other documents:** continuous **FGDs:** October 2018

Evaluation Questions	Criteria to answer the questions	Source of evidence	Timing
DEQ 3.2: How has collaboration and coordination between different stakeholders at district level changed and how has the intervention process contributed to such changes?	• **Understanding each other's' roles & responsibilities**: Formal SWAs and formal allied sectors better understand each other's roles & responsibilities and how to work together. • **More functional coordination mechanisms:** Existing and new mechanisms for coordination among formal social welfare actors and allied sectors are operating more effectively. • **More collaboration on core CP management functions**: Formal actors increasingly collaborate and coordinate in terms of CP planning, information management, monitoring and resource allocation. • **More collaboration on case management**: Formal actors increasingly collaborate and coordinate in response to CP cases. • **More collaboration on prevention and early intervention:** Formal actors increasingly collaborate and coordinate on prevention and early intervention.	**Observation** at SRP workshop **Group Interviews/workshop/KIIs** with SWAs to identify changes in collaboration and coordination and to ascertain how the intervention has contributed to these changes **Review** of secondary data, such as SW\CD progress reports, data from DCPC/CCPCs/SSSCLEAP data, etc	**Observation**: March-April 2017 **Group interviews/workshop/KIIs with SWAs and KIIs with allied actors:** September 2017 and October 2018 **Desk review of other documents:** continuous
DEQ 3.3: How have linkages between the formal and informal sectors in terms of prevention and response to child protection issues changed and how has the intervention process contributed to such changes?	• **Understanding and appreciation of each other's' roles & responsibilities:** Formal and informal SWAs better understand and appreciate each other's roles & responsibilities and how to work together. • **More institutionalised collaboration:** Existing and new mechanisms for collaboration between formal and informal social welfare actors are operating more effectively. • **Integration of formal and informal processes:** Formal and informal SWAs better integrate how they address CP concerns.	**Observation** at sensitisation workshops and reflection workshop **Group Interviews/workshop/KIIs with SWAs** to identify changes in linkages to ascertain how the intervention has contributed to these changes **KIIs with allied actors** to ascertain their perception of changes in SWA linkage with informal actors **KIIs and in-depth interviews** with communities and families to corroborate evidence of changes in formal and informal actors working together **Desk review** of secondary data, such as SWCD progress reports, data from DCPC/CCPCs, etc.	**Observation**: March-April 2017 **Group interviews/workshop/KIIs with SWAs and KIIs with allied actors:** September 2017 and October 2018 **Desk review of other documents:** continuous **KIIs and in-depth interview at community level:** October 2018

Evaluation Questions	Criteria to answer the questions	Source of evidence	Timing
DEQ 3.4: How has the changes in SWA practice, collaboration and coordination and linkages affected children and their families?	• **Changes in understanding.** Families have a changed understanding of the CP actors and services. • **Changes in attitudes and perceptions:** Families have changed attitudes and perception towards access and quality of CP services. • **Changes in practice:** Families and children have changed practices regarding addressing CP issues.	**KIIs and in-depth interviews** with communities and caregivers to discuss their perception of changes in SWA practice/collaboration and of changes in their own CP understanding/attitudes/practices **Interviews** with SWAs and allied actors	October 2018
KEQ 4: To what extent has the capacity of the CP workforce been strengthened and how has the intervention process contributed to this strengthening and empowerment of CP workforce?			
DEQ 4.1: To what extent have the skills of SWAs changed, how has their awareness and knowledge of the policies improved and how has the intervention process contributed to these changes?	• **Good knowledge about the policies:** SWAs have a good knowledge of key elements of the CFWP and some elements of J4CP. • **Attitude and mindset:** SWAs have changed their attitude in line with the Policy. • **Perceived SWA ability:** SWAs perceive themselves being more able to address CP in line with the Policy. • **Ability to plan, experiment and reflect:** SWAs demonstrate that they are able to plan, experiment, reflect and adapt to improve their practice and collaboration.	**Observation** at sensitisation and reflection workshops **Knowledge interview** with SWAs based on knowledge rubric **Group Interviews/workshop/KIIs** with SWAs and **KIIs** with allied actors **Desk Review** of district activity plans and district note taking	**Observation**: March-April 2017 **Group interviews/workshop/KIIs with SWAs and KIIs with allied actors:** September 2017 and October 2018 **Desk review of other documents:** continuous
DEQ 4.2: How has the capacity of the SWAs to influence decision making about practice changed and how has the intervention process contributed to these changes?	• **SWA participation in decision making:** different SWAs jointly participate in decision making to address child protection concerns. • **Child participation in decision making:** children participate in decision making processes about child protection concerns	**Observation** at SRP and stock-taking workshops **Group Interviews/workshop/KIIs** with SWAs and **KIIs** with allied actors **KIIs and in-depth interviews** with communities and families	**Observation**: March-April 2017 **Group interviews/workshop/KIIs with SWAs and KIIs with allied actors:** September 2017 and October 2018 **KIIs and in-depth interview at community level:** October 2018

Evaluation Questions	Criteria to answer the questions	Source of evidence	Timing
KEQ 5: To what extent and how has evidence generation of the child protection system been strengthened at local level applicable for nation-wide application? How has the intervention process contributed to this?	• **SWA documentation practices:** SWAs document their experimentation and learning as part of the initiative and use it to adapt planning, practice and decision making at district level. • **Sharing of documentation:** the documentation generated at district and national level is shared and used at national level • **Changes in SWA documentation work practice:** SWAs change the way they document cases and/or how they share information with other actors.	**Group Interviews** with SWAs **KIIs** with TWG, UNICEF, ILGS about their perceptions of evidence availability and usefulness **Desk review of secondary data,** including district note taking and documentation, documentation, ILGS documentation, meeting participation lists **Observation** at SRP workshops and National Stock-taking workshop	**Group interviews with SWAs and KIIs with allied actors:** September 2017 **Observation at national stock-taking workshop:** November 2017 **Desk review:** September-October 2017 **KIIs with TWG members:** October 2018
KEQ 6: What factors are supporting or constraining changes to take place at district level?	• **'Ability' factors:** factors related to SWAs' ability to experiment and bring about change. • **'Authority' factors:** factors related to support needed to experiment and bring about change • **'Acceptance' factors:** factors related to acceptance of need for change and the implications of change among those affected by change	**Desk review** of ILGS documentation, presentations at and meeting notes of TWG, SWA participation lists, district reports and other secondary literature **Group Interviews/workshop/KIIs** with SWAs and **KIIs w**ith allied actors **KIIs** with TWG, UNICEF, ILGS **Observation** at Stock-taking workshop	**Group interviews/ workshop and KIIs at district level:** September 2017, October 2018 **KIIs with TWG members:** October 2018 **Observation:** November 2017

Sustainability

KEQ 7: To what extent are the intended and unintended effects of implementing the intervention process likely to continue beyond the end of the intervention process?

Evaluation Questions	Criteria to answer the questions	Source of evidence	Timing
DEQ 7.1: What factors are likely to affect (favour or constrain) the sustainability of results of the intervention process and to what extent do they imply a risk to the sustainability of the results?	• **Supportive authorising environment:** national and local authorities continue to support the initiative • **Ability to sustain:** SWAs and allied actors have the ability to sustain the results of the initiative • **Willingness to sustain:** SWAs and allied actors are willing to sustain the results of the initiative	**KIIs/workshop** with SWAs and allied actors about the factors which affects the sustainability of results of the intervention process and potential risks that might constrain results **Key informant interviews** with TWG, UNICEF, ILGS to understand the factors that affects the sustainability of results of the intervention process and potential risks that might constrain results	October 2018

Evaluation Questions	Criteria to answer the questions	Source of evidence	Timing
DEQ 7.2: To what extent is the intervention process suitable for replication and or adaptation beyond the 20 pilot districts?	• **Usefulness of the guidelines:** the guidelines are considered to offer a useful framework for policy implementation beyond the 20 pilot districts • **Effectiveness and generalisability of intervention process:** the intervention process is considered an effective way to build the capacity of the workforce to implement the Policy, and the learnings of the 20 pilot districts are transferable to other districts	**Key informant interviews** with TWG, UNICEF, ILGS to understand the possibility of replication beyond 20 districts	October 2018

Annex B
Stakeholders interviewed during final data collection round

B.1   Asokore Mampong

Method	Respondents	Sex	Participation in initiative
Workshop with core formal SWA	• 5 CDOs • 2 SWOs	5 females, 2 males	4 respondents attended the SRP workshop; 3 respondents attended all follow-up meetings; 3 respondents attended two follow-up meetings.
Interview with informal SWA	• 1 Imam • 1 Church elder	2 males	Both respondents attended the SRP workshop; 1 attended 3all follow-up meetings, the other one follow-up meeting.
Individual KIIs with allied actors	• 1 representative of DOVVSU • 1 representative of a CBO • 1 representative from CHRAJ • 1 representative from GHS • 1 representative from Girl-Child coordinator	4 female, 1 male	Both respondents attended the SRP workshop; one attended all follow-up meetings, the other attended 2 follow-up meetings.
Individual KIIs with District Assembly civil servants	• 1 District Planning Officer	1 male	Respondent had not participated in the initiative
Individual KII with District Focal Person	• DFP, Head of CD unit; former Acting DFP (now transferred)	2 female	Both respondents attended the SRP workshop; one attended all follow-up meetings, the other attended 2 follow-up meetings.
Interview with community leaders	• 1 Imam	1 male	Did not participate in the initiative
Interview with community members	• 2 caregivers	2 female	Did not participate in the initiative

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B.2 Shama

Method	Respondents	Sex	Participation in initiative
Workshop with core formal SWA	• 3 CDOs • 1 SWOs	3 female, 1 male	4 respondents attended the SRP workshop; 3 respondents attended all follow-up meetings; 3 respondents attended two follow-up meetings.
Interview with informal SWA	• 1 Imam	1 male	Both respondents attended the SRP workshop; 1 attended 3all follow-up meetings, the other one follow-up meeting.
Individual KIIs with allied actors	• 1 representative from education • 1 representative from a CBO • 1 representative from GHS • 1 representative from the police • 1 community champion	2 female, 3 male	Both respondents attended the SRP workshop; one attended all follow-up meetings, the other attended 2 follow-up meetings.
Individual KIIs with District Assembly civil servants	• 1 District Planning Officer	1 male	Respondent had not participated in the initiative
Individual KII with District Focal Person	• DFP, Head of CD unit	1 male	Respondent attended the SRP workshop; one attended all follow-up meetings, the other attended 2 follow-up meetings.
Interview with community leaders	• 1 Imam	1 male	Did not participate in the initiative
Interview with community members	• 3 caregivers	2 female, 1 male	Did not participate in the initiative

B.3 Upper Denkyira West

Method	Respondents	Sex	Participation in initiative
Workshop with core formal SWA	• 2 CDOs	2 males	2 respondents attended the SRP workshop; 2 respondents attended all follow-up meetings; 2 respondents attended two follow-up meetings.
Interview with informal SWA	• 1 Chief • 1 Imam • 1 Queen Mother	2 males, 1 female	All respondents attended the SRP workshop; 1 attended 3all follow-up meetings, the other one follow-up meeting.
Individual KIIs with allied actors	• 1 representative of an NGO • 1 representative of District Assembly (Assembly Member) • 1 representative of education	2 female, 1 male	Both respondents attended the SRP workshop; one attended all follow-up meetings, the other attended 2 follow-up meetings.
Individual KIIs with District Assembly civil servants	• 1 District Planning Officer • 1 District Coordinating Director	2 male	Respondents had not participated in the initiative

Individual KII with District Focal Person	• DFP, Head of CD unit	1 male	Both respondents attended the SRP workshop; one attended all follow-up meetings, the other attended 2 follow-up meetings.
Interview with community leaders	• 1 Elder • 1 Chief linguist • 1 Clan head	3 male	Did not participate in the initiative
Interview with community members	• 4 caregivers	2 female, 2 male	Did not participate in the initiative

B.4 Lambussie-Karni

Method	Respondents	Sex	Participation in initiative
Workshop with core formal SWA	• 5 CDOs • 2 SWOs	5 females, 2 males	4 respondents attended the SRP workshop; 3 respondents attended all follow-up meetings; 3 respondents attended two follow-up meetings.
Interview with informal SWA	• 1 Chief • 1 Queen Mother • 1 Religious leader	2 males, 1 female	All respondents attended the SRP workshop; 1 attended 3all follow-up meetings, the other one follow-up meeting.
Individual KIIs with allied actors	• 1 representative from the police • 1 representative from NCCE • 1 representative from District Assembly (Assembly Member)	4 female, 1 male	Both respondents attended the SRP workshop; one attended all follow-up meetings, the other attended 2 follow-up meetings.
Individual KIIs with District Assembly civil servants	• 1 District Coordinating Director	1 male	Respondent had not participated in the initiative
Individual KII with District Focal Person	• DFP, Head of CD unit	1 male	Respondent attended the SRP workshop; one attended all follow-up meetings, the other attended 2 follow-up meetings.
Interview with community leaders	• 1 Imam	1 male	Did not participate in the initiative
Interview with community members	• 2 caregivers	2 female	Did not participate in the initiative

B.5 Talensi

Method	Respondents	Sex	Participation in initiative
Workshop with core formal SWA	• 3 CDOs • 1 SWOs	1 female, 3 male	4 respondents attended the SRP workshop; 3 respondents attended all follow-up meetings; 3 respondents attended two follow-up meetings.
Interview with informal SWA	• 1 Imam • 1 Pastor	2 males	Both respondents attended the SRP workshop; 1 attended 3all follow-up meetings, the other one follow-up meeting.
Individual KIIs with allied actors	• 2 representatives of NGOs • 1 Presiding Member • 1 Gender Desk Officer	2 female, 2 male	Both respondents attended the SRP workshop; one attended all follow-up meetings, the other attended 2 follow-up meetings.
Individual KIIs with District Assembly civil servants	• 1 District Planning Officer	1 male	Respondent had not participated in the initiative
Individual KII with District Focal Person	• DFP, Head of CD unit	2 female	Both respondents attended the SRP workshop; one attended all follow-up meetings, the other attended 2 follow-up meetings.
Interview with community leaders	• 1 Acting Chief • 1 Deputy Chief • 2 Opinion Leaders	4 male	Did not participate in the initiative
Interview with community members	• 2 caregivers	2 female	Did not participate in the initiative

Annex C
Fieldwork schedule of the final data collection round

Field Team Training: 18 – 20 October 2018	
Days	**Key Activities**
Day 1	• Team introductions • Refresher of Workforce Strengthening Initiative • Introduction to the research methodology • Review of experiences and principles in undertaking qualitative research
Day 2	• Introduction to instruments, tools and field schedules • Introduction to CDO/SWO workshop tool and allied actor and District Focal Point interview guides • Role play on CDO/SWO workshop tool, allied actor and District Focal Point interview guides and feedback
Day 3	• Introduction to informal actor, community leaders and community members interview guides • Role play on informal actor, community leaders and community members interview guides • Review of fieldwork implementation and management of equipment and outputs • Finalisation of coordination plans, logistics and communications

Fieldwork Asokore Mampong: 24 – 26 October 2018	
Days	**Key Activities**
Day 1	• Introduction of research team to District Focal Point • Interview with DFP and Head of Department of SW/CD • Interview with DCD • Interview with allied actor • Interview with informal actor • Document review • Debrief on Day 1
Day 2	• Community visit [interview with community leaders and interview with community members] • Case management interview • Workshop with formal actors • Interview with allied actor • Debrief on Day 2
Day 3	• Travel day

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Fieldwork Lambussie-Karni: 24 – 28 October 2018	
Days	**Key Activities**
Day 1	• Travel day
Day 2	• Introduction of research team to District Focal Point • Interview with District Focal Point and Head of Department of SW/CD • Interview with DCD • Interviews with allied actor • Interview with informal actors • Workshop with formal actors • Debrief on Day 2
Day 3	• Community visit [interview with community leaders and interview with community members] • Case management interview • Document review • Interview with allied actor • Debrief on Day 3
Day 4	• Travel day
Day 5	• Travel day

Fieldwork Shama: 21 – 23 October 2018	
Days	**Key Activities**
Day 1	• Travel day • Practice • Organization of material for start of fieldwork
Day 2	• Introduction of research team to District Focal Point • Interview with DFP and Head of Department of SW/CD • Interview with DCD • Interview with allied actor • Interview with informal actor • Workshop with formal actors • Document review • Debrief on Day 2
Day 3	• Community visit [interview with community leaders and interview with community members] • Case management interview • Interview with allied actor • Debrief on Day 3 • Travel day

Fieldwork Talensi: 24 – 28 October 2018	
Days	**Key Activities**
Day 1	• Travel day
Day 2	• Introduction of research team to District Focal Point • Interview with District Focal Point and Head of Department of SW/CD • Interview with DCD • Interviews with allied actor • Interview with informal actors • Workshop with formal actors • Debrief on Day 2
Day 3	• Community visit [interview with community leaders and interview with community members] • Case management interview • Document review • Interview with allied actor • Debrief on Day 3
Day 4	• Travel day
Day 5	• Travel day

Fieldwork Upper Denkyira West: 24 – 26 October 2018	
Days	**Key Activities**
Day 1	• Introduction of research team to District Focal Point • Interview with DFP and Head of Department of SW/CD • Interview with DCD • Interview with allied actor • Interview with informal actor • Document review • Debrief on Day 1
Day 2	• Community visit [interview with community leaders and interview with community members] • Case management interview • Workshop with formal actors • Interview with allied actor • Debrief on Day 2
Day 3	• Travel day

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Annex D
Hypothetical Case Study Scenarios

Charity Case – Second Round of Data Collection

Charity is a 14-year-old girl. She attends St Roses Primary and Junior High School. Despite her age, she is in Primary 6. Charity is doing well in school, she was top of her class last term. Her parents divorced when she was 9. Charity lives with her maternal grandmother, age 70. Her grandmother does not have a regular means of income to support herself or the Charity. She depends on a local NGO and neighbours to provide some food. Her grandmother is also a beneficiary of the LEAP programme but this is not a regular source of income as payments are always late.

Charity's mother died two years ago after a short illness. After Charity's mother death, she was taken to live her father in the nearby remote village. Her father had two younger children with new wife. The father cope with an additional mouth to feed and left Charity with her maternal grandmother, who lives in another town. There is little to no communication between the father, daughter, and grandmother.

Charity's teacher is concerned about her because of the poor condition of her clothes ("she wears tattered clothes") and she was not paying her schools fees. Of late, she has been falling asleep in class. When questioned by her teacher, Charity revealed that she hawks pure water before school, and works as a head porter ('Galamsay') in a nearby mine. Her teacher was especially concerned since Charity was doing very well in school and he saw a lot of potential in her. But she suspects Charity is being severely neglected.

A member of the community recently saw Charity leaving the house of a young man who had just moved into the community. It has now emerged that Charity has been sleeping with the man who is 20, order to get money for food and school fees. Her grandmother doesn't know about it and doesn't ask her where she has been when she doesn't come home for days at the time.

Over the past week, Charity has been feeling unwell. Her grandmother has just discovered that Charity is pregnant.

Aku Case – Third Round of Data Collection

Aku is a 16-year-old girl. She is in SHS 3. She is a WAEC candidate this year. Aku has always dreamt of being a doctor. One day, Aku's teacher asks her to stay after class so that he can give her extra math lessons to help with her dream of becoming a doctor. He says that by giving extra lessons that Aku will go far in life. He says that because Aku is so smart, he is willing to do this for free. Aku is very happy about this extra attention. After a month the extra classes are going very well, and she is excelling very nicely in school. Then one day the teacher tells her that he would like her to do him a favour for all the help he has given to her. He says that they have become very close and he really likes her. He tells Aku that she needs to sleep with him otherwise he will stop teaching her and he will fail her in math. She will never be able to go to university or get a scholarship if she fails math. Aku knows this is wrong so she refuses. However, the teacher forces her to sleep with him.

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