



JLI EVAC HUB

**Eliminating Violence
Against children**

Focus of Scoping study

- Unique contributions of faith communities – in relation to preventing and responding to violence against children
- Roles and contributions that faith actors make to the formal and informal child protection systems
- Faith actors also perpetuate violence through direct abuse, justification using religious teachings or respond with silence to the violence

Scoping study: Three phases

1. Literature review: completed in September, shared internal, draft form (40 pages)
2. Case studies submitted and reviewed
3. Semi-structured interviews with 10-12 key informants (currently underway)

Final report to be done by Christmas



Methodology for Lit Review

- Literature review of sources from last two decades (280 abstracts and 133 reviewed and analysed)
- Covering children up to the age of 18
- All geographic locations
- Included grey literature, UN reports/evaluations, work of INGOs and national NGOs
- Looked at many forms of violence – e.g. school based, family based and religious institutions
- Excluded FGM, child marriage and GBV (HUB on GBV)

Limitations

- Most literature in English
- More from Global North than from the South
- Grey literature is predominantly from UN and INGO groups

Most of literature either indicates that a) partnering with religious communities is essential to addressing violence against children and promoting systems to enhance the protective environment for children or b) ignores faith contributions entirely

Faith groups continue to be at the forefront

- Providing community support
- Providing direct services in health and education
- Key actors in humanitarian context
- But much of the work is not formalized and contributions at grassroots level working to protect children from violence and support to those who have been abused often undocumented.
- Body of literature is emerging that does capture the evidence of the broad work of faith groups.

Themes arising from lit review

1. Preventing Violence and Providing Survivor Care
2. Divergent Contributions related to varying interpretations of religious teaching and the subsequent types of faith actor engagement
3. Strengthening Child Protection Systems
4. Perpetuating of Violence against Children



Faith Action to Prevent Violence and Providing Survivor Care

- Mobilisation and Education – Training and Workshops are most common forms
- Guides and Toolkits
- Advocacy – Conferences, Forums – Joint Statements and Action Plans
- Localised Advocacy – News Media and International Reports
- National and Regional Religious Network Actions
- Prevention through Service Provision
- Survivor Support – psychosocial support and continuum of care
- Use of traditional healing approaches for children affected by violence

Little on formal/informal child protection systems

- Targeted actions for specific vulnerable populations
- Preventing Youth Violence and Promoting Conflict Resolution
- Fighting Child Labour and Supporting Recovery of Street Working Children
- Supporting Orphans and At Risk Children
- Strengthening Child Protection Systems through working with formal actors (law enforcement, schools, social work departments etc.)

Perpetuation of VAC

- Child sexual abuse by faith leaders
- Cover up and justification by religious communities using sacred texts or traditions
- Forced child labour, child sacrifice
- Literature shows sexual violence in the Catholic Church – extensive focus given to the topic in the United States.
- Also abuse in a wide array of religions – Amish, Assembly of God, Baptist, Evangelical, Hasidic, Jewish, Lutheran, Mennonites, Methodist, Mormon and many more.

Also examined

Killing and Abandonment of Children with Disabilities

Faith based Child Abuse in Response to Alleged Spirit Possession

Child Labour and Deprivation in Religious Institutions

Varying Religious Interpretations and Faith Actor Responses

Diverse Interpretations and Practices Regarding Corporal Punishment

Faith Communities Actions to End Corporal Punishment

Next steps.....



- Complete scoping study
- Develop ideas for how to take some of the gaps forward through further studies
- Engagement with practitioners
- Advocacy and policy engagement