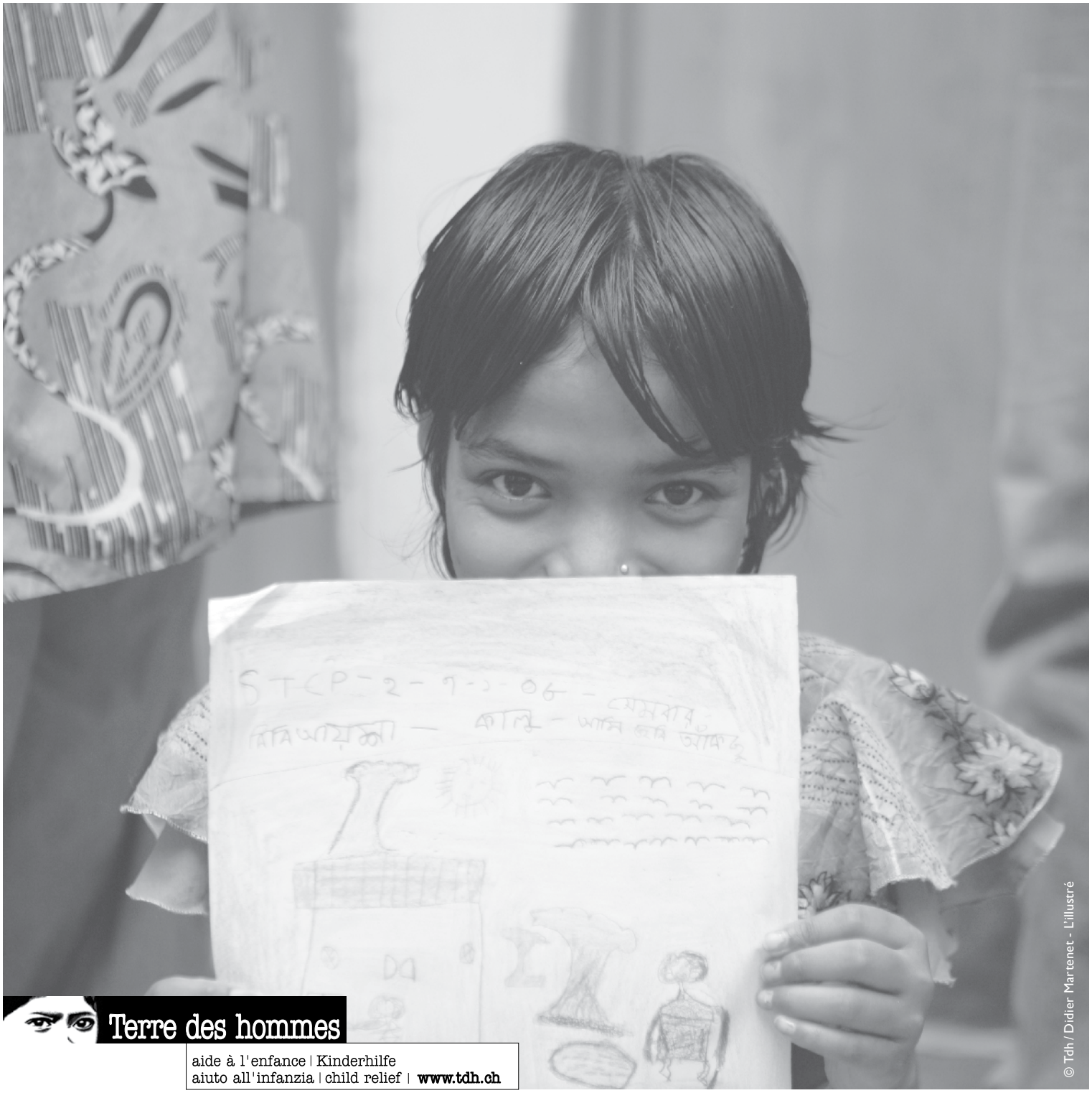

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Enhancing child protection systems

Thematic policy. Terre des hommes – child relief

Founded in 1960, Terre des hommes helps to build a better future for disadvantaged children and their communities, with an innovative approach and practical, sustainable solutions. Active in more than 30 countries, Tdh develops and implements field projects to allow a better daily life for over 1.4 million children and their close relatives, particularly in the domains of health care and protection. This engagement is financed by individual and institutional support, of which 85% flows directly into the programs of Tdh.

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Executive summary

In the second part of the 2000s, several agencies and organizations specialized in development and child protection focused their attention on the existence and the strengthening of «child protection systems» (CPS). These actors reaffirmed the importance of addressing the protection needs of the most vulnerable groups. However, according to them, protection of child rights should not be limited only to actions aimed at specific groups. It is necessary to guarantee, globally and structurally, the existence and the quality of the services aimed at protecting the rights and the well-being of all children on the scale of a given territory. The main idea is to optimize resource management, to increase the number of children benefiting from their rights, to provide them with better opportunities, to avoid all discrimination and to support the commitment and collaboration of all the actors concerned on the scale of a state or of a territorial entity.

From this perspective, the Terre des hommes Foundation (Tdh) has decided to develop this thematic policy centered on enhancement of CPS. The aim is to help its staff in addressing the existing demands in their working environment and in mastering the rationale behind and the model of action of this new thematic. The work on enhancement of CPS is still under construction and this policy is a milestone in a process. It will most certainly require readjusting based on further progress. The document aims to leverage Tdh's commitment to this new topic and to support its action at strategic and operational levels. It opens up new perspectives and relays questionings, in order to promote forward thinking, innovation, and the creation of new knowledge and know-how.

First of all, this document intends to explain what a child protection system is and for what reasons Tdh seeks to "think system" and work to the enhancement of child protection systems (section 1). It then describes Tdh's model of action on enhancement of CPS, and introduces the main actions to be taken in this perspective, depending on various contexts (section 2). A methodological framework and practical information will illustrate the concrete ways of intervening in this field (section 3). A description of the actions which compose the base matrix to apply for CPS strengthening can be found in the appendix. This description is completed by a few examples of Tdh's current projects in various locations around the world.

This thematic policy represents a reference document for Tdh, alongside the Charter of the Foundation, the strategic orientation plan of geographic zones, and other documents about thematic policy (protection and health). It should also be linked to methodological documents such as Project Cycle Management and the "ways of working".

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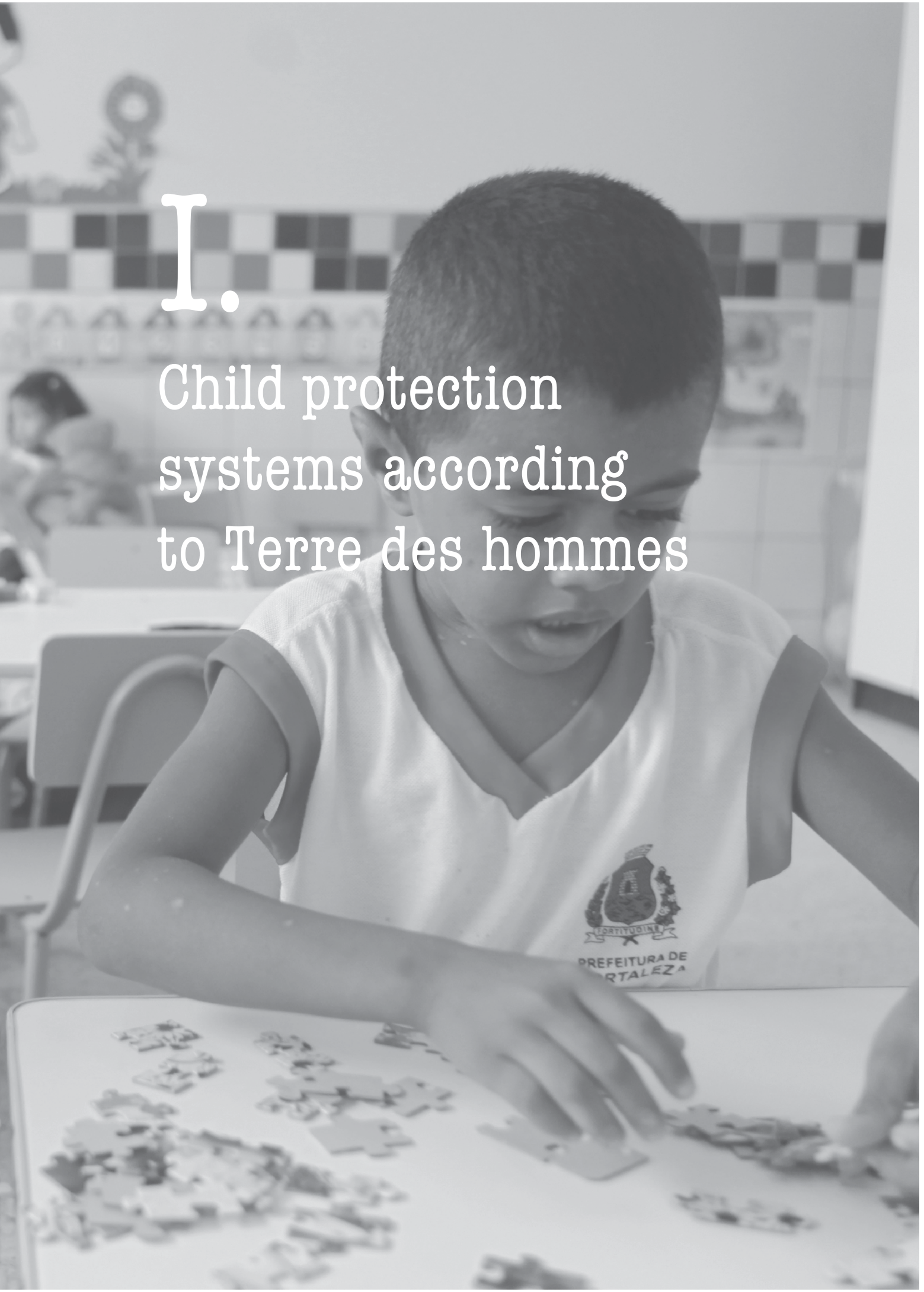


I.

Child protection systems according to Terre des hommes

1. Definition of a child protection system (CPS)

Section I offers Tdh's definition of child protection systems (CPS) and provides elements in order to compare it with other organisations' definitions. A detailed presentation of the system through its constituent elements (actors, fundamental processes and synergies) can enable to understand its utility, to comprehend how it works, to picture its processes and to envision Tdh's supporting role towards CPS.

Towards the end of the 2000s, reflections and discussions started at national and international level concerning the implementation of an integrated and holistic approach to child protection. This approach looks at all the categories of children on a given territory, seeking to address the issues with which they might be faced. It aims to ensure that the rights of all these children are respected and that they are granted equal access to basic services. Under the political and administrative responsibility of the State, it embraces a wide variety of actors, services, capacities, policies, and laws. These elements are considered as making up an interrelated whole: a "system" whose purpose is to ensure that all children, whatever the circumstances and wherever they may be, are granted a fundamental protection of their rights and well-being.

The notion of "child protection system" is given through a variety of definitions depending on the agencies, the organizations or the entities whose task or mission is child protection. **In July 2009, in Lausanne, as part of a workshop on reflection on, and conceptualization of child protection systems, Tdh gathered some thirty delegates, project managers, heads of programs and resource persons, from various countries of intervention. This workshop enabled agreement on a definition which is now the reference for the Foundation. It converges in many ways with other existing definitions, but it also claims a certain originality which is important to comprehend.**

Definition of CPS according to Terre des hommes

A child protection system is 'a coherent set of actions and actors, in which the child is the starting point and which aims to guarantee the rights and well being of the child by constructing synergies within and between protective environments'

Key words: coherent set of actions and actors / child starting point / guarantee of the rights and well-being of children / synergies / protective environments.

The child at the heart of the system, supported by this system and active within the system

At the heart of Tdh's definition lies a central idea: **the child, as person under 18 years of age who has rights and needs, is the reason to be and the starting point of any child protection system (CPS)**. He or she must be the one to benefit most from it, all the work undertaken and the resources invested in the CPS must result in the improvement of each child's situation, including of the most vulnerable ones. Thus, put at the center of the system, Tdh recognises the child as an actor of his own protection and that of others.

For a global protection of the rights of children through CPS

Tdh's definition of CPS is different from some other agencies' current approaches in conception of child protection and the rights it means. **For Tdh, the mission of CPS is not solely to protect children from abuse, neglect, violence and exploitation. In Tdh view, the system must embrace the rights of children as a whole.** In Tdh's vision, as recognized by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, all the rights are interrelated. Hence, the right to be protected from abuse and exploitation is not considered to be an isolated right. In practice the respect of this right frequently depends on the implementation of other rights. This broad concept of child protection corresponds to a holistic, integrated, and intersectorial approach to CPS. This approach also intends to correct two persistent biases:

- the setting up of barriers between thematic projects / specialized services;
- the reduction of a child's problems/needs as only through the thematic via which it is detected.

Interlocking and intersection of sub-systems within the CPS and at its borders.

A CPS consists of **thematic sub-systems** such as the protection of children from abuse, violence, exploitation/trafficking, the social protection of children, juvenile justice, etc. It also intersects other global systems such as the educational system, the justice system or the health system. These systems and the CPS have several fields of activity in common; fields relating to children and fundamental rights: the right to education, to health, to justice… The synergies between CPS and these various systems are hence essential for child protection.

On the scale of the state and the nation, any CPS is an interlocking of systems corresponding to **territorial zonings** (at international, national, regional, local levels). Therefore, when speaking about CPS, the reference will be in the plural to highlight the multiplicity of systems existing worldwide. The use of the plural also enables to indicate that, in a given country, there exist local or regional CPS, and that some regional CPS may link national CPS in cross-border geographical zones which group several neighboring countries.

Global framework for protection and protective environment in continuum.

All CPS have the mission to implement a global framework for protection of children, everywhere they live. This framework is meant to cover and connect all the environments in which these children live or through which they transit during their life and their development. It is determined by values, standards (social, legal, institutional) and practices (professional, social and cultural, individual and collective) which define the area of child protection.

Plurality of key actors within a protection system

Depending on the environments, several actors have the responsibility of taking care of children, of guaranteeing their well-being and of protecting their rights.

- their parents and the members of their family (nuclear, extended…);
- persons and groups belonging to various "communities" (more broadly, any adult or formal or informal entity which can come into connection with a child in a given environment);
- many institutions (governmental and non-governmental, public or private) and their staff, covering specialized fields of child protection (social well-being, health, education, security, justice, etc.) and making up spaces where children are present (schools; hospitals; cultural, sports and recreational centers; social protection centers; police stations; prisons, etc.).

Formal and informal parts of CPS

In almost all states, CPS consists of laws, policies, programs and set-ups of operational and institutional character at the national, regional and local level. They enable the organization and carrying out, under the state's leadership and authority, of actions and interventions which protect children. These are mostly:

- actions setting up the necessary conditions for the implementation of children's rights,
- actions promoting children's rights and well-being,
- preventive actions against risks and violations of children's rights,
- assistance to children who are victims of violations of their rights, mainly situations of abuse, neglect, violence and exploitation.

The formal aspect of the CPS is fundamental. It organizes roles, relations, resources and activities which are essential to the protection of children's rights. Nevertheless, this formal aspect is too often thought to be the CPS in its entirety, leading to a marginalization of responsibilities, relations and informal actions.

Through this assimilation, the non-institutional actors of protection (children, communities, social actors) **are often reduced to minor roles**. At best, they are perceived as supporting forces which relay/support the actions of the institutions. At worst, they represent a target which needs to be educated or repressed for their bad practices (risks that they expose the children to wrongdoings that they are accused of committing or being accomplice to,…).

This reductive position looks mainly on institutional frameworks, formal activities, professionalized services and state resources. It does not encourage a real participation of social and community actors and does not stem enough from their reality, resources or abilities. On the contrary, Tdh sees all CPS as the interconnection of two equally important parts (one formal and the other informal). **Through this approach, social participation and the interconnection between institutional and internal practices are two key elements of analysis and action**. From this perspective, wherever the child is and whatever his or her surroundings are, the building up of a protective environment **depends much on establishing compatibility and synergies between the formal and informal spheres of the global child protection system.**

Examples of other common definitions of CPS

UNICEF

Child protection systems comprise the set of laws, policies, regulations and services needed across all social sectors — especially social welfare, education, health, security and justice — to support prevention and response to protection related risks[2].

SAVE THE CHILDREN

Essential components of such a system include: laws and policies; a meaningful coordination across government departments and between sectors at different levels; knowledge and data on child protection issues and good practices ; minimum standards and oversight; preventive and responsive services ; a skilled child protection workforce; adequate funding; children's voices and participation; and an aware and supportive public[3].

UNHCR

The "systems" approach comprises a coordinated and inter-related set of legislation and policies, services and capacities needed across a range of sectors at national, local and community level to strengthen the protective environment around all children. Furthermore, it requires the implementation of all necessary processes and procedures that are necessary to generating a real assistance when it comes to protecting a child[4].

2. Processes and synergies

According to Tdh's vision, CPS are complex and dynamic sociological systems not set in motion solely by the States. Their description can not be reduced to an inventory of laws, policies, institutions, structures, services or operational settings. To understand how these CPS are created and how they develop, it is necessary to understand their underlying processes and synergies. These processes determine the capacities of adaptation and development of the CPS[5].

Processes

Concerning the operation of a CPS, Tdh identifies four fundamental processes in which all the actors, formal and informal, play a part:

1) **the management of the knowledge** related to children's needs and issues, to the situation of their rights and to their protection (concepts, methods, mechanisms,…);
2) **the establishment and monitoring of policies, laws and standards** used as reference frameworks and tools for child protection actions;
3) **the expansion of the offer of protection,** meaning the implementation of policies/laws and the development of social and professional services and practices ensuring a concrete child protection;
4) **social participation,** notably the involvement of the children, families, communities and actors of civil society.

These processes are distinguished through the operations that set them in motion and by their effects. Nonetheless, in theory and practice, these processes and the actors are significantly interdependent. Hence, the management of knowledge fuels the 3 other processes. The expansion of the offer of protection is based on the creation of reference tools (statute laws, policies, standards) and their implementation. In exchange, it stimulates the monitoring and readjusting of the said frame. As to social participation, its aim is to intervene in the other processes so as to enable the informal actors to develop their contribution and to have influence on the strategic orientations, decision taking and the implementation of protective actions.

Synergies

The dynamics of these processes are based on numerous synergies. These can be classified in 3 categories:

- **Synergies between intervention levels** (international, national, regional, local, community, family, individual)
- **Synergies between the areas of activity** included in the CPS or associated with its operation (health, education, social assistance, security, justice, work, culture, leisure,…)
- **Synergies between the actors** (state institutions and civil society organizations, international agencies and organizations, communities, families, children)

A fourth type of synergy is defined by the **synergies between fundamental processes**. They promote the management of resources and ensure the system's general consistency/coherence.

Detailed presentation of the four fundamental constituent processes of a CPS according to Tdh

Knowledge management

The aim of the process is to provide the system and its actors with knowledge drawn from study or practice in order to strengthen their child protection capacities. The actors of the system, including the children, are both the starting point and the recipients of this knowledge. This pertains to the issues affecting children, the situation of their rights and the means of their protection.

This process consists of several practices supporting the creation of knowledge, the organization of common knowledge and its exploitation by the actors of the system. It is a question of creating, transmitting and gaining from this knowledge to improve the quality of the interventions and to increase performance. The management of this knowledge on the system's global scale aims to avoid ignoring any knowledge.

These operations involve a wide variety of fields such as data collection, documentation, research, capitalization on experience, training, education, validation of vocational skills, innovation, social marketing, communication, diffusion…Institutional and professional knowledge, as well as the knowledge of the children, families and communities, play a significant role in understanding reality and the actors' rationale. It is also necessary in identifying the most appropriate/efficient manner of assisting children, protecting them and supporting their development.

This knowledge needs to be highlighted, created, listed and developed in an ongoing growth process. Its management must provide a global overview of its state, its application and… its limits. It is notably a question of avoiding duplication, retention and fragmentation of knowledge, of guaranteeing everyone access to it, and of checking/supporting its effective use.

Creation and monitoring of laws and policies

On the scale of a state and its politico-administrative divisions, the organization of child protection rests on the creation of a strong normative, legal and political framework. This framework must be developed in accordance with international human rights and children's rights. It must also reflect the norms, the ideas/beliefs, and the issues that are crucial for the actors/forces producing this framework (at national, local or intermediate level). The applicability of legal and institutional norms widely depends on their legitimacy and their compatibility with the existing social norms. Equally, It is possible to successfully pursue changes of social norms on condition that the action rests upon a deep understanding of the said norms, that opportunities for change are provided to the concerned population, and that the process is created step by step, working closely with these populations and their representatives.

The laws and policies relate to a wide variety of fields. Legal sources can hence relate to the Constitution, the Civil Code, the Penal Code, the Family Code, the Children's Code, etc. Many governmental sectors are subject to public policies that determine strategies, programs and settings applying to children and to the protection of their rights.

The establishment of this reference framework is mainly achieved at state authority level (Government, Parliament, Ministries, Agencies…) and extends to the level of the institutions and structures created by the laws and policies. Standards, rules and procedures are developed at that level, thus adapting the global framework to specific local or institutional contexts.

The monitoring of the application of these laws/norms and of the implementation of these policies/strategies/programs completes the process, sometimes leading to readjustments or to the review of the existing components. This monitoring enables to check the level of application and implementation of these components, to measure their results and to examine the applicability, effectiveness, efficiency, the necessary conditions and the level of appropriateness in relation to the problems encountered by the children and the accountable actors.

Expansion of the offer of protection

The implementation of the laws and policies must enable to materialize the CPS's virtual framework. These processes are vital. They require the involvement of several categories of actors and lead to the creation/development of services (public/private) and practices constituting the offer of protection provided by the system.
These services must be available to all children, starting with the most vulnerable ones. They are multi-sectoral services whose inter-connections and cross-collaboration enable to unite protective nets covering the areas where the children live and fulfilling their fundamental needs. Most of these services are local and address the needs of the majority. They are the base on which more specialized services can develop, addressing specific types of vulnerability.
The ongoing growth in capacities of these protection services is necessary, leading to the expansion of their territorial and sectoral coverage and to the increase in the number of services made available and persons benefiting from them. In this regard, the improvement of quality and of results achieved are to be considered as fundamental goals. The adjustment and innovation required can be the result of institutional changes (structure of the service provider, resources, setting), changes in their functioning (procedures, methodologies, equipment, mechanisms) or in their production (actions, activities, deliveries). This process is enabled through the capacity building of the staff in charge of the service delivery (professional practices) as well as through the endorsement of positive attitudes and behavior by the populations that use such services and protect the children outside the institutional framework (families, communities). The development of the protection offer requires also support in indentifying good practices and communicating around them.
The so-called 'endogenous' (community) practices are also part of the protection offer. They refer to practices and mechanisms which date before or are external to the State, its laws and policies. Such endogenous protection continues to exist even without the support of the State. However, the capacity building programs of the institutional actors might become efficient and useful also in supporting the endogenous protection, if the approach is decided together by all actors concerned. The juxtaposition of endogenous and institutional practices should be avoided as it hinders synergies and complementarities in resources and actions.

Social participation

The participation of the children, families, communities and actors of civil society (associations, firms, unions, social networks, media…) is- together with the active commitment of the State and the public authorities,- one of the key drivers of each and every CPS. This level of participation depends as much on the voluntary involvement of these actors as on the recognition, by the State and the formal actors, of the role they play in the three other processes.
The complex action consisting in promoting, supporting and strengthening social participation in the area of child protection is a cross-disciplinary and fundamental process. Its importance is sometimes ignored due to interventionist and technocratic conceptions of development. The limits and difficulties are then addressed only by the formal part and actors of the CPS. The situations results from a centralized and top-down approach to changes and improvements as well as a lack of trust in other actors' competences, capacities, and practices in the area of protection. The opposite approach calls on governmental actors, institutions, and professionals to make the choice of maximizing each actor's contribution to the reinforcement of the children's protective environment. This means encouraging dialog, empowerment, bottom-up change, support of community initiatives, the interconnection of endogenous/institutional practices, input from citizens, and the strengthening of civil society.

3. Reasons to act from a "systems" perspective according to Tdh

Tdh sees 6 essential reasons for taking steps towards the strengthening of CPS:

1) Grant access to basic and quality services to a majority of children

On a given territory, an effective CPS can guarantee a majority of children satisfactory access to basic services corresponding to minimum standards of well-being and protection. The improvement of these services (access and quality) contributes in a preventive manner in reducing the general level of vulnerability of all categories of children, notably thanks to:

- an improved access to services of immediate assistance,
- improved quality and capacity of the various services,
- a better inter-connection between institutional services and endogenous practices.

The strengthening of the CPS must be accompanied by a specific assistance to the children, families, and communities for them to understand how to mobilize, actively and appropriately, the offer of protection provided by the CPS (empowerment).

The strengthening of children's resilience in the face of hardship also contributes to reducing their vulnerability. This strengthening goes hand in hand with the systems approach. According to Tdh, it addresses the philosophy of child protection, centered on the child and his or her relationship to the environment.

2) Guarantee the geographical continuity in the children's protective environments

When a child changes environments (family, school, street, leisure center, health center, sports, vocational training, etc.) or leaves his or her usual setting to go to other locations, the protection level must be ensured and his or her rights and identity must be protected. A general and homogenous CPS covers these different places/settings, enables their integration in common frameworks, eases the flow of information and keeps up constant concern about the rights and well-being of children **wherever they may be**.

3) Ensure case management which encompasses the child as a whole

Children in need of protection should be quickly and correctly identified according to the real problems they are faced with. The solutions applied to their situation must be appropriate and relevant. A functional CPS improves detection capacities and avoids the excessive focus of the service providers on a limited number of issues and ready-made solutions. All needs can be covered; there is no airtight barrier separating issues. A holistic approach enables to search for solutions case by case, taking a variety of causes and consequences into account. This reduces the risk of labeling children and fitting them into standardized cases, equipped with quasi-immutable sets of services. The freedom of action is given back to the practitioners and to the children and those close to them.

4) To be part of a field of intervention legitimated at national and international levels

For a non-governmental and international organization such as Tdh, taking action in, and on behalf of a child protection system means adhering to the principles of a collective and coordinated action in the framework of the existing States and communities. This action means providing support to the other actors instead of "acting in the place of". Know-how and specific resources able to make a difference are thereby put to good use.

Tdh acts where it can make a difference in the framework of global and collective programs defined at international level by the main agencies concerned. The Foundation recognizes the need to cooperate with a wide range of partners, be they public or private partners, governmental or non-governmental, foreign or domestic, institutional or community. This cooperation must become effective as soon as the problems to address are detected, and the solutions to apply are designed. It is to stay effective during the building up and management of the intervention projects, and is maintained throughout the activities of assessment of interventions, of capitalizing on the experience, and of planning further actions.

5) Promote coordinated and coherent management of existing resources

A functional CPS provides capacities for the coordination and alignment of protective actions which are much greater than the simple adding up of unrelated programs, projects and resources. It requires adequate management of the resources to be applied in the various processes and synergies it consists of. The practical details of administrative and political organization (mechanisms of representation and decision-taking mechanisms, competences and resources allocation, decentralization, etc.) as well as the economic level of development play a significant role. Nevertheless, mechanisms or simple management methods can also make a difference and have an impact on resource allocation, for instance by avoiding overlapping and redundancy or by ensuring a wider range of services without using increased resources.

6) Guarantee the durability of the undertaken protective actions

The systems approach enables that the durability of the protective action undertaken is ensured on the field on behalf of a given population. Indeed, it integrates these actions into global and stable mechanisms, held up by many actors linked to different fields of activity and operating at various intervention levels (effects of scale). In the framework of this systems approach, the actors do not act in an isolated manner and mobilize resources which are managed at levels higher than the local or community scale. The dependence of their actions on Tdh's leadership or resources is, by definition, limited, hence reducing the risk of them disappearing after the departure of Tdh. To ensure durable endorsement of the identified solutions, the systems approach must be **done both from the top** (strengthening of the formal part of the CPS) **and from the bottom** (strengthening of the informal part).

4. The added value of Tdh's commitment towards CPS

4.1. Capitalizing on its track record, its experience and its knowledge of the field and actors

Tdh's action on CPS is of higher added value when it is developed in countries or zones in which the Foundation has already implemented other projects (or several cycles of a same project):

- knowledge of the field is essential as gaps, limits, and obstacles which could curb the CPS performance need to be accurately and suitably identified.
- credibility with other actors is a prime asset (recognition of expertise, effectiveness, integrity, commitment, etc.).

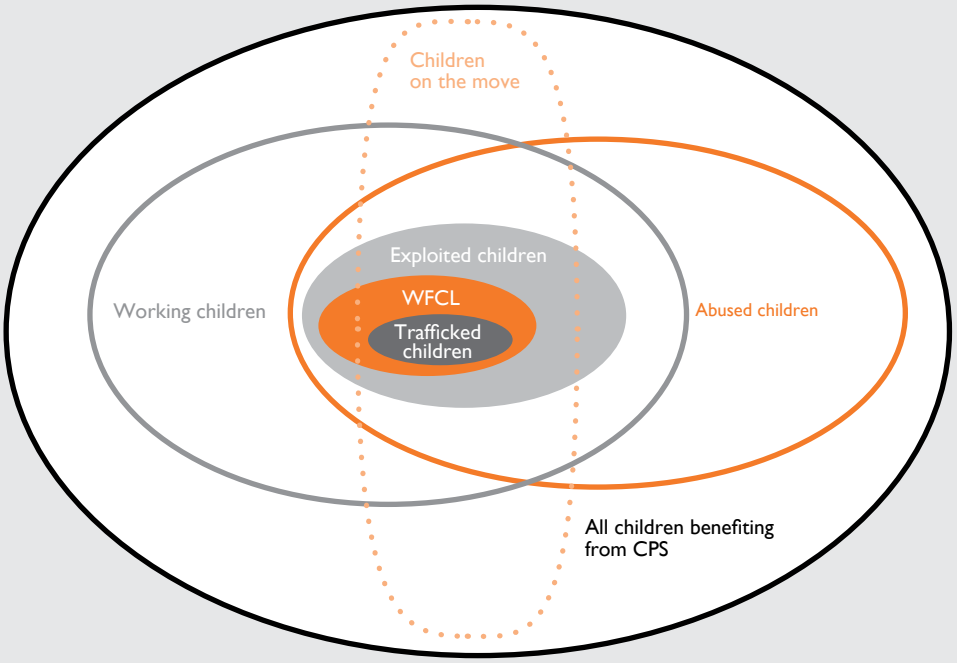
It is necessary to be underpinned by collaboration, partnerships, and mechanisms implemented within the framework of previous projects; projects based on the "systems" approach require long preparation and great coordination with a plurality of actors at different levels and in different sectors of intervention.

4.2. Giving value to thematic approaches by integrating them into a systemic vision

Up to now, Tdh has given priority to approaches focused on specific protection issues (child trafficking, children in conflict with the law, street children…) which enabled to assist thousands of children and to increase Tdh's knowledge and know-how. However, limits were sometimes reached in terms of effectiveness and efficiency; a fragmented approach has the risk of addressing only one specific problem whereas the child is confronted with a variety of interrelated problems.

The systemic approach intends to go beyond these limits, nonetheless maintaining approaches focused on a specific target group. Tdh notably promotes an inter-sectoral and integrated approach, linking the sectors of protection, health, and of water-sanitation. The integrated approach aims to implement missing links at various levels of the CPS. Tdh teams can also develop global responses by forging alliances with actors in complementary fields of specialization.

Figure No.2: Representation of certain target groups presenting interrelated issues



WFCL= Worst Forms of Child Labor
CPS = Child Protection Systems

Notes section I

[1] *Concerning the concept of protective environment, see Trish Hiddleston, Securing a Protective Environment for Children, Conference in Khartoum, 2-3 February 2009, ISESCO and UNICEF*

[2] *Child Protection Strategy, UNICEF, 2008*

[3] *Fact Sheet on National Child Protection System in Swaziland, SAVE THE CHILDREN, 2010*

[4] *Protecting Children of Concern through a Systems Approach, UNHCR, 2010*

[5] *The term process can be defined as "a set of phenomena, designed as active and organized in time" or as "an orderly series of operations leading to a result" (Le Petit Robert 1, Dictionnaire de la langue française, updated and enlarged edition, 2004)*

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II.

Terre des hommes' interventions

1. The intervention logic of projects on enhancing CPS

Section II presents the overall logic of Tdh work on enhancement of CPS. It also puts forward a single model of action outlining the central intervention issue, its causes, and the actions to be undertaken to deal with this issue. Various intervention contexts are to be considered in order to apply this model. A specific section is set aside for long-term intervention contexts, humanitarian emergency, and post-emergency situations.

The fact that Tdh has chosen to open up a new thematic of intervention targeting CPS leads to the appearance of a new type of project: projects on enhancement of CPS. **They have their own rationale and a specific intervention framework**.

It is necessary to immediately state that a project on enhancement of CPS can:

- either **replace a previous project addressing a specific issue**;
- or **take over** by extending and expanding an existing action on behalf of the same target groups, henceforth based on a systemic approach.
- or **be undertaken alongside one or many projects addressing a specific issue**, with the intention to take complementary and interactive action, in order to create favorable conditions for the success of thematic projects [6].

1.1 Purpose and aims

Purpose

The purpose of a CPS is **to ensure satisfactory coverage of the needs of all children living within a given territory, the highest possible enjoyment of all their rights, and a high level of protection of these rights** through the actions of the actors who bear that responsibility (individuals, collectives, institutions).

Tdh Objective

Tdh aims to contribute, in partnership with other actors, to the increase and **improvement of the capacities, the operation, and the performances of a national protection system or of one/several regional or local systems**. This means developing the strengths of the CPS and reducing its weaknesses on a given scale in order to increase the level of protection, to reduce the level of vulnerability, and to satisfy the needs of a broad majority of children (including the most vulnerable ones) in various environments.

1.2 Global strategic logic

Several strategic options can be combined, namely:

- strengthening one or several of the 4 constituent processes of the system.
- strengthening the coherence between these processes and their underlying synergies
- strengthening the global governance of the system (central State, decentralized structures, relations between State and civil society at national or local level…)
- strengthening the CPS's capacity to adapt to different issues and to carry out readjustments according to contexts.

These choices rest upon a **situation analysis** enabling Tdh's teams to:

- increase their knowledge and understanding of the issues facing the children, of their needs and their level of vulnerability, without focusing on a specific group of vulnerable children and by putting emphasis on the links between these problems, of the needs or contexts that the thematic approach had a tendency to overlook up to now;
- identify and locate the most significant weaknesses, limits, lacks, contradictions, or malfunctions of the protection system to be strengthened;
- determine a range of priority concerns and interventions for Tdh (complementary to, or creating synergies with, those of others);
- identify the necessary resources to be mobilized

as well as Tdh's own competences (human, material, financial) and the opportunities to take advantage of or give value to;
- understand the effects of scale enabling to link local actions to the dynamics strengthening CPS at the national level;
- understand which levers need to be pulled so as to maximize the effectiveness, efficiency, and durability of the actions undertaken in Tdh's project;
- identify which cooperation/partnerships/alliances need to be set up at various intervention levels;
- identify the obstacles, difficulties, and risks standing in the way of Tdh's action.

1.3 Procedure for strengthening CPS

For Tdh, the starting point of this procedure consists of **two components:**

- Tdh's **Project Cycle Management (PCM) Handbook;**
- an adequate strategy, including a method adapted to the issues and challenges of this type of project. This strategy works at **3 complementary levels**: institutional, operational and at the level of resources.

1.3.1 Institutional strategy

a) The work on CPS requires the development of a **global approach**: a comprehensive view able to encompass all intervention levels, activity sectors, key actors, and fundamental processes which make up the CPS at the scale of a given country.

b) Once this global approach has been implemented, and depending on the diagnosis made on the state of the system, focus needs to be put on **a priority level of intervention, one or several key sectors, certain elements and actors which need to be strengthened in preference to others**.

c) The support given to State structures and the advocacy on their behalf are fundamental in the case of CPS project. This priority relation does not however exclude the establishment of close relations of exchange, support and collaboration with community actors, groups and movements of children, and actors of civil society (associations, NGOs, media, unions, private sector…).

d) Owing to Tdh's institutional characteristics, its technical competences and its track record in the countries of intervention, **local action** (small and medium-sized cities, districts in large cities) is recommended, but action needs to be undertaken at various levels (local, central and intermediate levels).

e) Networking and **strategic alliances** are another fundamental element of this institutional strategy. Tdh has the possibility of integrating inter-agency networks, Clusters, work groups,… and can build up partnerships with ministries, NGOs and associations, training centers for practitioners, United Nations agencies (UNICEF, UNHCR), international organizations (Save the Children), firms or municipalities (non-exhaustive list). This work is necessary to increase the legitimacy and critical mass of the interventions. It enables to generate multiplier effects thanks to a wide range of synergies and complementary resources. It must be developed in a coherent and coordinated manner:

- at the national level by the delegation (delegates and executives),
- in the zones of intervention by the project teams,
- at the international and regional levels by the geographical zone (heads of programs) and the resource persons (e.g. regional advisors on protection and/or health).

f) Alliances with the media and the academic world can support mobilization and joint work around common concepts and positions. It is a question of creating the buzz by adopting **specific communication strategies** aimed at practitioners, politicians, populations, the private sector, social actors…

g) One of the rules to follow in order to federate the actors consists in putting the key actors in the spotlight, and not Tdh **(resist the temptation to do self promotion).**

h) One can not refer to institutional strategy without highlighting the key role of the geographical zone and of the resource persons (region and headquarters). They vouch for both the global approach of the **thematic policy** and for the **institutional memory/continuity** at headquarters, region and delegation levels. The strengthening of CPS is a long-term work, committing Tdh on several project cycles. **The strategic line must be developed from the field (delegations, project teams) while being sustainable through the strategic plan of the geographical zone.**

1.3.2 Operational strategy

The strengthening of a CPS spans several **cycles** and a number of **steps** need to be completed.

a) The starting contract (1st cycle/3 years) consists in **providing a majority of children with basic protection addressing widespread problems**. It is a question of guaranteeing a minimum level of well-being (level to be determined with the populations concerned and the key actors of the system).

b) The action must then make its way towards the structural components to be strengthened, even if at that moment it is more difficult to directly link Tdh's work and the children's situation. This work is essential to ensure the quality and durability of the components strengthened during the 1st cycle. It is sometimes even necessary to start this work as early as in the 1st cycle owing to the significant consequences that these causes can have on the services, the practices, the actors, and the children's situation.

c) The local/community approach encourages the taking into account of the informal part of the CPS, the development of local services, the work with the children/families, and support to social participation. Starting at the bottom of the system (without cutting oneself off from what is happening elsewhere and at the higher level), Tdh sets the bases of its action and concretely strengthens links, synergies, and essential mechanisms necessary to the building up of an adequate, comprehensive, and functional national CPS. A strong local presence also gives the possibility of piloting new methods and settings suited to the real conditions on the field. Tdh can hence share the knowledge and models it has acquired through its experience.

d) The project's **operational planning** must fully take into account the conditions on the field and the inertia/opportunities deriving from the intervention setting. The time and resources needed to achieve the expected level of protection must be correctly evaluated and checked regularly.

e) Tdh must be able to provide **action oriented** information, so as to support its approach and provide the other actors with data, analyses, and knowledge useful to their own actions in support of the CPS.

f) Monitoring activities need to play a significant role to ensure the frequent re-checking of:

- diagnoses made on the parts of the CPS to be strengthened;
- actions to measure the effects of Tdh's and other key actors' intervention (where did we start? Where are we now?).

The project must have the capacity to analyze and **readjust its operations and strategies** quickly.

1.3.3 Resources strategy

Financial resources

a) The institutional financial donors and certain Foundations will, in the near future, make a strong commitment to the support of CPS development. For the time being, the setting up of this type of project is still faced with limited funding sources.

b) Two strategies **for finding funds** seem to be advised:

- **pooling resources within an alliance or a multilateral partnership (joint project);** this option provides the advantage of giving the possibility of pooling financial, material, and human resources taking advantage of both the capacities/competences held by the various partner organizations and institutions and the zones/levels/sectors where they are located.
- **make use of the funding opportunities available through sectoral and localized projects;** it is easier to grasp the donors' interest in relation to predefined issues and specific target groups; it is then a question of giving value to the strengthening of the CPS in a given space by presenting it as an effective mean (prevention, reintegration) of increasing the level of protection of a core group of beneficiaries affected by a specific problem (e.g. trafficking, exploitation); other groups of vulnerable children living with the first beneficiaries (in the same families, schools, communities, recreational centers, training centers, etc.); this holistic approach enable to increase the communities' satisfaction (no discrimination between the children) and the efficiency of the project's actions (investment/number of beneficiaries/quality of services ratio); this option is especially suited to the launch of a first intervention cycle and to the transition from a project centered on a target group to a project on enhancement of CPS .

Human resources

a) The strengthening of a CPS presupposes the creation of an interdisciplinary team, able to spread out in a coordinated manner at various intervention levels and to develop synergies between activity sectors. A special place will be reserved for social workers, health workers, jurists, psychologists, and to professionals specialized in social and political science (management of change in attitudes, behaviors, policies, laws, standards, rules …).

b) Investing in the recruitment and training of competent and qualified personnel is of prime importance in order to provide the partners/children/communities with quality technical input and to manage the complexity of the process.

c) It is advised to implement a type of personnel management putting emphasis on communication, dialog, solidarity, team spirit, collective thinking, training, and open-mindedness towards the other actors (institutional and community).

2. Intervention contexts

These contexts can be apprehended from different perspectives, notably:

- the CPS level of development, related to the economic and sociopolitical situations
- depending on the emergency, post-emergency, or long-term level of Tdh's intervention project.

2.1 Three levels of development

The situations found on the field can combine aspects of the following various types:

- **CPS at embryonic stage, or little developed** (weak State control or commitment; structural gaps in resources, actors, sectors…; a legal framework which is insufficient or incompatible with international standards; etc.)
- **developed yet dysfunctional CPS** (presence of a structured legal and political framework and of services/resources devoted to child protection, but lack of effective mechanisms for information, management, implementation, monitoring-evaluation, etc.)
- **functional and sturdy CPS, yet incomplete and perfectible** (CPS revealing, for instance, disparities between regions, gender or socio-cultural discriminations, corrupt security forces, legislation unsuitable to certain principles or facts, a lack of structures addressing emerging problems such as drug abuse, sexual exploitation, etc.).

Economic and sociopolitical contextual factors are to be considered:

- the way in which the State is organized (unitary/federal, centralized/decentralized…);
- occasional political crises and/or chronic political instability;
- armed conflicts and/or separatism;
- humanitarian crises caused by political crises or natural disasters;
- crises or structural economic problems affecting the resources of the State, local governments, families and communities;
- social conflicts or community tensions in the intervention settings…

2.2 Classification of interventions by project type and duration:

- long-term intervention project;
- humanitarian emergency project;
- post-emergency project.

Long-term intervention project

The logic behind the intervention is that of development. It is designed as the succession of thematic projects or cycles of a single project. Tdh is deeply anchored in the country or zone of intervention. Tdh draws support from its knowledge of the field and from the special relationships forged by the delegation with State bodies, governmental authorities (at all levels), the actors of civil society, the communities, the families, the children…

These contexts are favorable to the implementation of projects on enhancement of CPS, on condition that the Tdh teams and the partners grasp its importance, relevance and feasibility. A sine qua non condition to planning such a project is that public authorities or certain key actors of the system issue a request, or an agreement, for Tdh to work in partnership with them.

> Examples: Albania, Brazil (Fortalezza), Burkina Faso, Mozambique, Romania…

Humanitarian emergency project.
These emergency projects address occasional or recurring crises. Their duration does not usually exceed 24 months. The aim of these interventions is to bring help to populations dramatically affected by natural disasters or violent conflicts.
The priority is remove the children form the source of harm and threats that endanger their health, their safety, their integrity… and to guarantee them access to their basic rights.
Development prospects are not the objective of this type of project. This type of project is however concerned with the durability of the actions and with ensuring the children's future after the emergency phase. The concern of strengthening the existing CPS, even if it is secondary, is not entirely left aside. It may be deemed necessary or useful to restore or support services, structures, capacities, and actors that are directly engaged in the protection of the children affected or threatened by the humanitarian crisis.
> Examples: Georgia, Haiti

Post-emergency project
When chaos rules even after the humanitarian crisis, the intervention by Tdh emergency cell **can be extended**. This type of situation arises mainly during the reconstruction phase of settings destroyed by a natural disaster or armed conflict (or when the target population is composed of displaced persons or refugees whose settlement takes time).

Tdh's major concerns are not only those of the immediate effects of the crisis on children's rights and well-being, but also **the conditions of their survival and development in their new environment**. Tdh may deem necessary to strengthen CPS at national or local level (in the displaced persons' or refugees' camps) through direct actions and/or support to governmental and non-governmental partners. Tdh also develops advocacy actions and capacity building interventions.
> Example: Sudan since 2008

Two other strategic options can also be envisaged in post-emergency situations, with a view to disaster reduction risk:

- **consolidating the results achieved** during the emergency phase as the organization might anticipate similar or other crisis in the future; Tdh then opts for the strengthening of the existing CPS so that the majority of children can benefit, when needed, from basic services able to cope with the potential crisis/disaster;
- identifying a country (or a zone) just recovering from yet another crisis and which remains exposed to new risks; in such a case, the Foundation decides to **anticipate the futures crises** and to contribute to the rebuilding/strengthening of the existing CPS so that the humanitarian crisis, should it arise again, could be better managed and affect the most vulnerable children less.

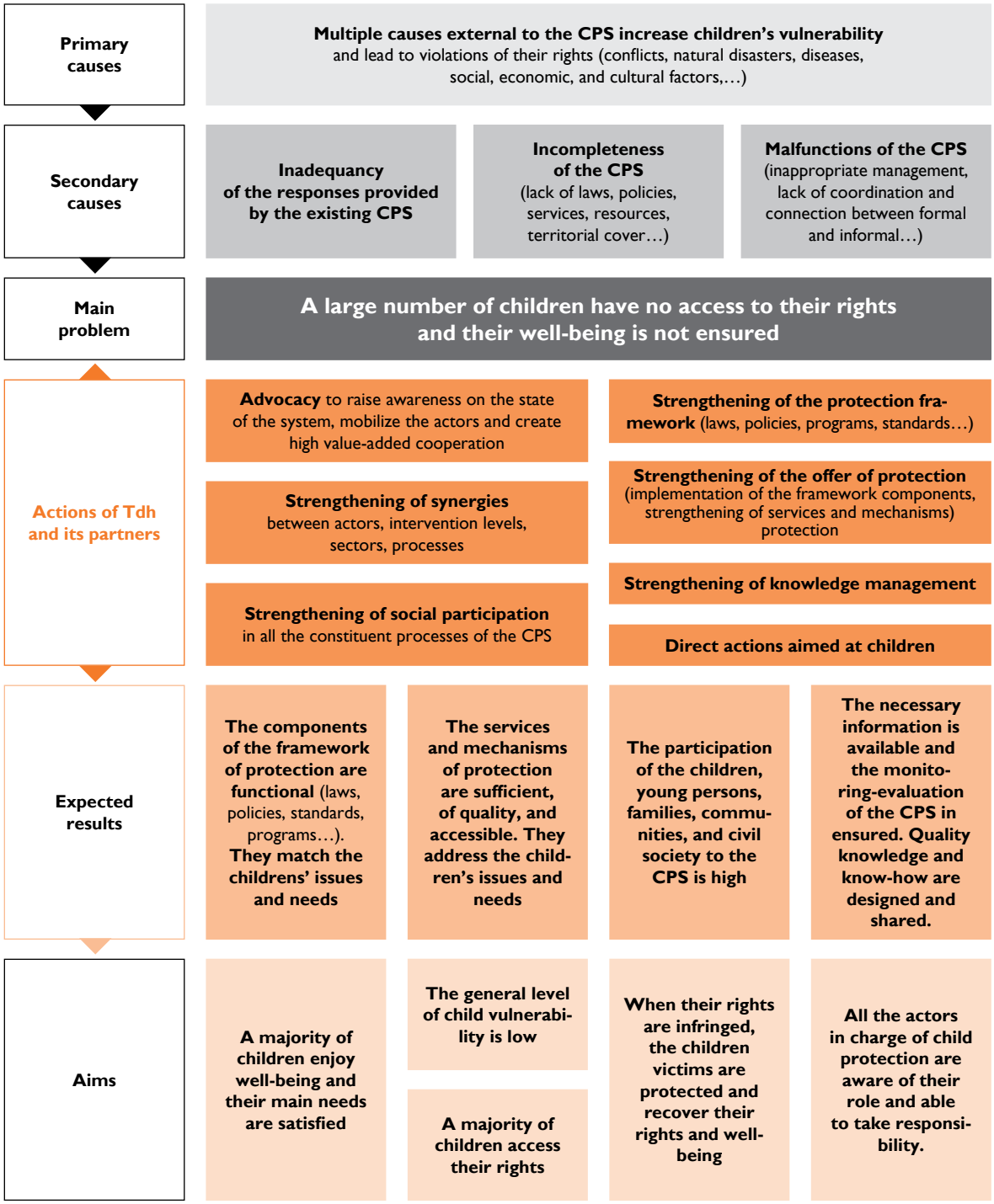
> Examples (for both options):
Nepal, Haiti, Lebanon, Gaza

3. Model of Action

The shortcomings of the CPS on which Tdh intends to act can be described through (at least) **the following:**

- **the system's inadequacy** in relation to certain issues and needs of the children (crucial issues and needs are not dealt with or are dealt with ineffectively or inappropriately; the system is not able to prevent serious risks, to provide satisfactory assistance to the victims, and to ensure the well-being of the majority);
- **the incompleteness of the system** (large parts of the system are missing with regard to laws, policies, services, mechanisms, capacities, competences…; the coverage of the areas and setting where the children live and move is insufficient);
- **the malfunctions inherent in the system** (weaknesses in management of knowledge, structures, services and resources, planning and coordination of strategies and operations, interconnection between formal and informal mechanisms…).

Figure No.2:
Reference action model for the strengthening of a CPS



Notes section II

[6] *The connections between this new type of project and thematic projects will be clarified in point 1.4 of this chapter.*

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III.

Practical strengthening of CPS

1. Preparation and organization of a project on CPS

Section III provides practical information on the steps and activities to be undertaken by Tdh teams with a view to preparing, organizing, and leading their action successfully. The strategic orientations and interventions which are proposed in the model of action are made explicit. Advice is given to the teams regarding the questions to be considered before carrying out intervention (appendix) and regarding the tools to be used in implementing the key activities.

1.1 The careful analysis of the child rights situation and the development of CPS form the starting points of any CPS

project at national or territorial level. This should not be carried out in an isolated manner but be part of a collective and global approach involving the governmental institutions, representatives of the communities and of the main agencies, domestic or international, which support the development of the systems approach to child protection.

1.2 The strategic planning of Tdh's project

must be based on information and reflection drawn from the situation analysis. It must enable to determine the **entry points** (targeted at the beginning of the project) and **the impact points** (to be achieved at the end of the project). These various entry points need to be linked together for a global strategy to be designed. It is indispensable that this global strategy be coherent and in line with the global strategy for the strengthening of the national protection system adopted by the State, with the support of the main agencies, and technical and financial partners.

The project's **expected results** can refer to various mechanisms, as for example:

- the production and enforcement of, and compliance with, laws, rules, procedures, standards…;
- the cooperation between services, sectors, structures, entities…;
- the interconnection of the formal and informal parts of the protection system;
- the management of the budgets allocated to services or policies;
- the training of practitioners and the improvement of service quality;
- the strengthening of the services' capacities and of their availability;
- the empowerment of the children, families, or communities;
- the participation of key actors in advocacy actions, or in bringing changes in social norms;
- the management of information technology in key structures/services;
- the implementation of safety nets in given settings; etc.

Examples of good results achieved by various projects

Albania: **Design and implementation, on the scale of several cities in the country, of a model of child protection networks involving, with the agreement and support of the State, the social services of municipalities, schools, residential centers for vulnerable children, NGOs, and local communities (CPSN).** Due to project's advocacy towards the State, the model is today recognized in national law and there is an agreement by the State to develop the model in various regions. Other partners have also engaged vis a vis the State to develop it in accordance with the legislation adopted.

Brazil: **Development of a Code of Ethics on Tourism to fight sexual exploitation of children (partnership with the federal government), and of guidelines for State plans for the prevention of child labor (partnership with the ILO).** Not only did this advocacy ultimately lead to providing the CPS with new tools, but also to advancing the systems approach in the ways of seeing things and working in Brazil. These legal and technical tools were designed through the initiative of, or with the active collaboration of, a national NGO supported by Tdh (Curumins NGO, privileged partner).

Burkina Faso: **Creation and co-organization of the CPWG** (Child Protection Working Group), a national platform which brings together the Ministry of Social Welfare, UNICEF, Save The Children, and key NGOs in order to coordinate and give momentum to the development of the institutional system for child protection (establishing local protection networks, providing services with equipments and training of social workers, reduction of the perception gap between institutional and community actors concerning children's needs and issues…)

Sudan/Darfur: **Setting up, on the scale of several displaced persons camps, child protection practitioner networks, watch and emergency units, child protection standards, and a common case management model.** Not only did these tools, roles, and structures strengthen the CPS existing at camp level, they also aim to improve the quality and impact of the protection of the children in the neighboring communities. Tdh has also led two anthropological type surveys which enabled to identify in which ways the mechanisms of community participation could be strengthened and how to strengthen the ties between generations, and between local and displaced populations.

1.2.1 The implementation of the project rests upon a good use of the available resources and on Tdh's ability to lead and/or support various key actors (government structures, national NGOs, communities, children groups or movements...). The main difficulty lies with the orchestration of several actions unfolding simultaneously in various locations, at various intervention levels, and in cooperation/partnership with various kinds of actors: central State (ministries, departments), international agencies, decentralized structures, local governments, local authorities, national NGOs, local associations, formal and informal community actors, families, children, and adolescents.

The activities to be carried out are numerous and of various types, i.e. action directly aimed at the beneficiaries, support to key actors, advocacy, and coordination. These activities do not characterize the systems approach: they also occur within the thematic projects. However, the essence of a CPS project is to bring together and connect a wide range of such activities with a view to consolidating the operation of a CPS.

Examples of activities:

- training to strengthen competences of social workers or to support the establishment of child protection units (decentralized level);
- various support, through partnerships, to the educational field (avoid dropping out of school, support to school psychologists, movement, games and sport activities in schools);
- opening of recreational centers in order to encourage the children's resilience and to identify concerns of child protection, considered then through "case management";
- community work in order to strengthen the children's protective environment through the community's active contribution;
- advocacy towards the authorities or technical assistance in order to improve the laws and regulations in force within the country;
- support to the coordination and participation of networks of child protection actors (NGOs and associations) in order to influence policies and practices;
- participation in information campaigns and communication and dialog actions in order to rally and influence public opinion, aiming at changing perceptions and/or practices;
- investment in situation analysis, action oriented research, and summary of good practices, which are an indispensable base for the development of a common and integrated approach to the issues/needs of children in a given space and setting.

1.2.2 The monitoring-evaluation of this type of project shows fundamental similarity with the monitoring-evaluation of projects based on a thematic approach. It however differs from it on an essential point: the need to systematically reposition the current processes and the results of Tdh's project compared to the global momentum and actions undertaken by the State aiming at improving the CPS at national level. Indeed, Tdh's project only makes sense as a contribution to this general project at the State level, either by piloting it, or by implementing according to the plan agreed at the State level.
One of the current challenges is the need to make the transition from monitoring tools measuring the evolution of a specific target group (thematic approach) to tools measuring:

- the evolution of the situation of all the children in a given territory;
- the evolution of the capacities, mechanisms, and performances of the CPS in itself, in its separate parts or as a whole.

2. Implementation of a project on enhancement of CPS

A strategy on enhancement of CPS is part of a holistic approach. In Tdh's vision, it involves 7 main orientations (refer to schema 2, 'model of action', p 23). As the advocacy and direct actions are quite similar to the actions undertaken in the framework of a thematic approach, the uniqueness of a CPS project resides mainly in the 4 following axes of work[7]:

- **Strengthening of the protection framework** (laws, policies, programs, standards)
- **Strengthening of the offer of protection** (mechanisms, services, and practices)
- **Strengthening of social participation**
- **Strengthening of knowledge management**

The actions enabling the implementation of these 4 axes of work make up a matrix (see figure No. 3). Tdh is neither obliged to develop all these actions, nor to commit to all the proposed lines of work. However, the higher the number of actions, the more their combined effects can have a significant impact.

Figure No.3: Matrix of CPS strengthening actions

AXIS 1: Strengthening of the protection framework	AXIS 2: Strengthening of the offer of protection	AXIS 3: Strengthening of social participation	AXIS 4: Strengthening of knowledge management
Participation to the design and monitoring of laws and policies	Establishment of quality direct services	Empowerment of the children and adolescents, of girls and boys	Design, experimentation, and sharing of concepts, tools, and experience
Mobilization and influence from the top and from the bottom	Support to the implementation of laws and policies	Empowerment of the populations in charge of children (relationship, solidarity)	Contribution to research and action research
Contribution to the strengthening of monitoring/control and accountability mechanisms	Strengthening of the competences and capacities of the formal and informal actors	Support to community actors and initiatives	Monitoring of the situation of the children and the beneficiary groups
	Strengthening of multi-actor networks	Information, dialog, and social mobilization	Mapping, monitoring and assessment of existing systems

IMPORTANT!

This thematic policy proposes a strategic division into 4 axes of work without requiring that a CPS project design its logical framework by faithfully following this division. Each axis provides a wide enough field of intervention allowing for the identification, when planning the project, of more detailed objectives and more specific axes of work. It is however advised to self- project into the future and develop reflection according to these 4 general axes of intervention.

AXIS 1: Strengthening of the protection framework

Strengthening the protection framework (or the base) of a CPS implies, for Tdh, direct involvement or support to other actors, leading to the establishment and adoption of framework components:

- **normative** (legal, institutional and social norms)
- **political** (national strategies, public policies)
- **institutional** (mechanisms, structures, programs, action plans, projects)

1	2	3
Mobilization and influence from the top and from the bottom	**Participation (be it direct or indirect) to the design and monitoring of laws and policies**	**Contribution to the strengthening of monitoring/control and accountability mechanisms**

Description of actions

1

The aim of this action is to mobilize and influence the "top" actors (the ones who design and implement framework components) and the "bottom" actors (the ones whose existence is regulated by these components but who do not directly participate in their design).

Mobilization from the bottom implies information and raising awareness of issues requiring a strengthening of the protection framework. Tdh assists the bottom actors in making themselves heard and supports their causes and initiatives.

Mobilization from the top implies getting the representatives, technicians and decision-takers moving. It takes place in the framework of civil society to which Tdh belongs. When a situation causes a problem, Tdh joins other actors in order to make their voices heard or supports them in their own advocacy. This action consists in arousing, stimulating, promoting, and supporting the commitment of informal actors in the designing of laws, standards, policies, programs… which concern them.

It is also a question of influencing formal actors, notably members of parliament and governmental authorities, for laws/strategies/mechanisms… to be adopted. This action takes place at local, regional, or national level.

2

This action consists in acting directly or indirectly during the course of the design of a law, a policy, a national strategy, etc.

Tdh can take part in the discussions of specialized commissions or as technical facilitator in certain phases of the process.

More often, Tdh supports partner organizations (notably via training or through support-advise) and does not intervene directly.

3

It consists in contributing to the implementation and the operation of monitoring/control settings concerning the implementation of laws, standards, and policies. This monitoring generates data and statistics which can be useful in strengthening or revising (readjustment) the framework.

Tdh sees to it that the children's voice is heard and that the mechanisms ensuring accountability of public authority and service providers versus the populations concerned (children, families, communities) are strengthened.

Examples of activities

1

- Support to community groups, groups of children and groups of adolescents involved in the consultation process and the process of drawing up public strategies and policies
- Mobilization of non governmental agencies or of civil society spokespersons
- Awareness raising and lobbying campaigns
- Drafting of position papers

2

- Advocacy and networking to amend legislation or public policies
- Participation in work groups in charge of developing laws, public policies or regulations

3

- Participation in the drafting of **civil society reports**, or those of specialized agencies, dealing with the situation of children in a given country, the implementation of the CRC, the monitoring of policies or programs, the implementation of international standards and national laws.
- Participation in **National** (or decentralized) monitoring and coordination **units** of protection actions.
- Technical assistance and training provided to governmental agencies in charge of the monitoring and implementation of laws.

Available tools

- Guidelines for social or community mobilization
- Campaigns led by Tdh (e.g. fight against child trafficking and begging in Albania; fight for the eradication of child labor and against sexual exploitation in Brazil; plan against dropping out of school in Colombia…)
- Articles and books on positioning and recommendations
- Advocacy tools
- Information, communication, dialog and social marketing tools
- Child protection policy (CPP)
- Studies of accountability vis-à-vis the beneficiaries of Tdh's projects (Guinea, Togo)
- Decency scale/Burkina Faso (assessing the of migrant girls working as domestic)

AXIS 2: Extending the offer of protection

Strengthening the offer of protection means, for Tdh, direct involvement or support to other actors in the implementation of laws and policies. It also means developing a concrete set of mechanisms, services and practices preventing risks and providing help to vulnerable children, children in difficult situations or to those who are victims of severe violations of their rights.

1	2	3	4
establishment of quality direct services	**Support to the implementation of laws and policies**	**Strengthening of the competences and capacities of the formal and informal actors**	**Strengthening of multi-actor networks**

Description of actions

1	2	3	4
In certain contexts, notably in the case of a serious lapse of the CPS or on the request of local or national authorities, Tdh proposes direct services to vulnerable children, at risk or victims (prevention, assistance to the victims)	The action consists in giving support to the formal actors in charge: • of the implementation of the laws and legal norms, • of the implementation of policies, programs, and key mechanisms. It also means assisting communities in processes of transition or strengthening of their social norms in order to ensure their compliance with the legal framework of the protection.	The action consists in increasing the capacities and improving the competences of the actors playing a key role in the child protection (institutions, communities, families, children). It includes services as well as endogenous protection practices.	of the aim is to promote and strengthen networking: 1) among formal actors, 2) among informal actors, 3) between informal and formal actors. The action can take place at local and community level, at regional or State level, and at international level.

Examples of activities

1	2	3	4
• Identification of the victims	• Training of magistrates, social workers, and security forces.	• Training of social workers	• Training social workers belonging to various sectors and institutions in case management, referral, and networking.
• Establishment, management, and handing over of shelters/centers to the relevant authorities.	• Circulation of information on the existing laws and protection programs	• Support to the establishment of child protection units	• Assisting in the establishment and operation of task forces, work groups, coalitions, cooperation frameworks, platforms, etc.
• Management of individual cases (victims)	• Assistance to community leaders and families	• various support, through partnerships, to the educational field (avoid dropping out of school, support to school psychologists, movement games and sport activities in schools)	
• Psychosocial assistance (children, families)	• Technical assistance to social services and local governments, also in the framework of decentralization	• Opening of recreational centers (promote the resilience of affected children and the detection of cases)	
• Financial support		• Community work	
• Legal assistance			
• Placement in apprenticeships and help to start up professionally			
• Alternative temporary education			

Available tools

- Thematic policy documents (Tdh)
- Case management manuals (Case Management System)
- Psychosocial training manual (Tdh)
- "Movement, Games, and Sports" manual (Tdh)
- Training tools for judges, police officers, the media, school psychologists, teachers, health officers, various State services…
- Information, communication, dialog and social marketing tools
- Coaching and accompaniment tools
- Community intervention tools
- Child protection in schools manual
- lessons learnt on advocacy coalitions (BKTF coalition against child trafficking in Albania, Regional platform for the protection of children on the move in Western Africa…)

AXIS 3: Strengthening of social participation

The strengthening of social participation must bring about:

- better **knowledge and understanding** of the issues affecting children's rights and of the protection capacities in the informal part of the CPS;
- an increased **legitimacy** of the laws and policies impacting children;
- an improved **adequacy, accessibility, and accountability** of protection services
- an increased **mobilization** of the communities and their leaders in the processes of **change** concerning norms, behaviors, and attitudes when it comes to children.

1	2	3	4
Empowerment of children and adolescents, of girls and boys	**Empowerment of the populations in charge of children (relationship, solidarity)**	**Support to community actors and initiatives**	**Information, dialog, and social mobilization**

Description of actions

1	2	3	4
The actions consist in helping children and adolescents recognize themselves as real actors, able to thing for themselves, to get involved in various processes, to access their rights, to make their voices heard, and to take the right decisions concerning their life, their future, and the protection of their rights.	The aim is to increase the capacity to act for all actors in charge of children (be they their own children or not) but who don't participate enough in the building up and functioning of the existing CPS.	This consists in giving technical, material and/or financial assistance to initiatives taken by children, families or communities and considered by Tdh to be helpful to the protection and development of children. The actors' cognitive, organizational, and operational capacities are strengthened.	The action consists in providing a broad public (or key actors from the communities or civil society) with information, dialog areas, and means of mobilization enabling them to participate more actively in the operation and future of the CPS.

Examples of activities

1	2	3	4
• Psychosocial assistance tools	• Discussion groups among parents, fathers, mothers	• Support to local/community integration networks	• Information and awareness-raising campaigns
• Information	• Community dialog groups	• Support to educational/ recreational activities	• Proximity listening and dialog sessions
• Involvement in awareness raising/information activities, social marketing	• Positive education activities	• Support to IGAs	• Support to local radio stations
• Co-organization and support to activities initiated by children	• Support to the creation of women's groups and community associations	• Support to cultural initiatives	• Support to community associations
		• Support to traditional forms of solidarity	• Forums de discussion
		• Support to actions of detection and referral of vulnerable children	• Appui à l'élaboration de plans locaux de développement

Available tools

- Psychosocial training manual (Tdh)
- Psychosocial assistance tools
- "Children for Children" tools
- MAPA (Nicaragua) and MGS tools
- Child participation manual (Save the Children, Lebanon)
- The hero book (REPSSI)
- "Building my own life"
- Guides for leading discussion groups or assisting groups of young persons
- Community therapy or community leading tools
- Assistance guides for associations (Songes)
- Guide of the Child Rights Monitoring Committee Village (Tdh Sri Lanka)
- Orchestration of theater and radio activities
- Local development plans

AXIS 4: Strengthening knowledge management

The aim of this strategy is to feed the other constituent processes of the CPS and to **help all the actors in collaborating and exchanging in order to create a relevant protection** framework and an adequate offer of protection. Tdh's profile encourages it to focus its actions and resources on the **production of knowledge drawn from practice and experience**.

The production of data during Tdh's projects leads to sharing specific information with other actors in the system. Tdh can also act in partnership to collect data on target groups or aspects of the development or operation of the system **(mapping and evaluation of services, studies on accountability on behalf of the beneficiaries, socio-demographic study of the beneficiaries…)**

1	2	3	4
Design, experimentation and sharing of concepts, tools, and experience	**Contribution to research and action research**	**Monitoring of the situation of the children and the beneficiary groups**	**Mapping, monitoring and assessment of existing systems**

Description of actions

1

This consists in giving value to Tdh capacity to initiate or design theoretical and practical notions based on experience and useful to the action.

It also consists in experimenting ways of piloting strategies in the field, and then to capitalize on these experiences in order to make them available to all the actors concerned.

2

Research is indispensable to the development of CPS but is not one of Tdh's fields of expertise.

Tdh can however collaborate with researchers and invest part of its resources in joint research projects and notably in action oriented research projects.

3

This action consists in gathering information enabling to follow the development of children's situation in a given area, and to measure the needs yet to be satisfied as well as the effects generated by the existing CPS.

4

This consists in gathering and sharing, via Tdh's projects or specific activities carried out with partners, information on the structure, the operation, and the performances of the CPS in which Tdh is active. This information should help in following the development of the CPS and to direct the improvement ofstrategies.

Examples of activities

1	2	3	4
• Design and introduction of operational concepts in the actors' language and in other ways of thinking and operating (CPSN, PEP, DAPE) • Transmiting and giving value to these concepts in multi-actor networks	• Regional and interagency projects for research into the mobility of children in Western Africa	• Data and reports generated at project level • Studies of accountability vis-à-vis the beneficiaries (Guinea, Togo)	• General analysis of the CPS in the city of Fortalezza, Brazil (Tdh resource persons)

Available tools

- Infocenter (Tdh)
- Liaison bulletin, newsletter
- Web sites
- Manuals of good practices
- Capitalization reports
- Case analyses
- Individual or collective book about positions and recommendations
- Participatory research methods
- Action research methods
- PMC manual (capitalization of experience)
- Databases and database software
- Listening and diagnosis manuals
- Situation analyses
- CPS planning, management, and evaluation tools (UNICEF, UNHCR) [8]

Notes section III

[7] *Specific attention must be paid to* ***strengthening cross-disciplinary synergies****.*

[8] *In order to gain deeper understanding and technical expertise of the systems approach and of CPS strengthening actions, we recommend that the reader refer to the following reference book prepared by the Training Resources Group organization on behalf of the inter-agency work group on CPS in Sub-Saharan Africa: Policy & Programming Resource Guide for Child Protection Systems Strengthening in Sub-Sahara Africa, UNICEF, Save the Children International, World Vision International and Plan International, Dakar, 2011 (http://www.unicef.org/wcaro/overview_6415.html)*

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Appendix

Question guide concerning the four strategic lines of work aimed at the strengthening of a CPS (see section 3)

Axis I / Strengthening of the protection framework

Concerning the existing legal and political bodies and their adequacy and compatibility

- What are the international laws to which the country has adhered? What are the national laws concerning children? What are the laws relating to social assistance?
- What public policies exist concerning the protection of children's rights? What national programs stem from these policies?
- Do these laws/policies give a clear description of the rules, actors, and resources to be used, as well as the procedures for implementation and monitoring?
- Are certain essential issues concerning children not (satisfactorily) addressed by laws/policies?
- Do the public policies, laws, and social standards converge/diverge? Are there contradictions between the laws/policies and the regulations, standards, and procedures drawn up at the level of certain structures and institutions? Have these laws/policies been able to avoid the redundancy of roles/responsibilities between actors and at various levels?

Concerning the actors engaged in the production of the laws, policies, and standards

- What are the areas and initiatives of protection of children's rights?
- Which actors are able to influence the establishment of laws/policies and are engaged in defending positions which are in line with (or opposite to) Tdh's positions?
- Is Tdh strongly involved in child rights protection, and close to the most committed actors? Does Tdh already have experience of being engaged in the drafting of laws, the elaboration of policies or (legal, social, institutional) standards?

In the communities where the project wishes to intervene in order to strengthen the CPS

- Has any action been undertaken in order to identify and discuss the existing social standards?
- Are the legal processes which intend to change social standards and behaviors based on an adequate analysis of these standards, and are the institutions concerned aware of the challenges this represents? Do they propose opportunities and alternatives which can support effective changes?
- Does the majority of the members of these communities support the legal processes aimed at transforming their social standards and their attitudes/behavior?
- Are the communities aware of their rights and responsibilities regarding the laws and institutions/actors in charge of implementing them?

Axis 2 / Extending the offer of protection

Concerning the implementation of laws and policies

- Are there specific budgets allocated for the implementation of public policies and laws?
- Do you know who intervenes in the country/zone of intervention when an institution or an individual who has abused, exploited, or mistreated a child refuses to comply with a court order?

Concerning protection services

- Are the majority of services provided by national/local state structures, international organizations, national/local NGOs, or community actors?
- In your zone of intervention, which services do or do not exist among the following fields: providing food and shelter, safety, health, education, personal development, legal and administrative assistance, access to income generating activities…? Is the geographic coverage of these services satisfactory? In the continuum of care, what are the main malfunctions and the missing links?
- Do most services seem adequate, accountable, and functional? Are they accessible (physically, financially, in terms of taking in charge and informing the beneficiaries and users)?
- Are there children who are excluded and who do not have access to the basic services from which the majority of other children benefit? Are there many in such a situation? Are they in a category of their own? What are the reasons behind this situation/discrimination?
- Are the services homogenous or are there big differences according to their location, or to the fact that they are public/private, or according to their fields of activity? How can this situation be explained?

Concerning the actors and the social/endogenous practices of child protection

- Who are the actors (and mainly the leaders) involved in, or who could be involved in, child protection at the level of certain communities? What types of support could they benefit from?
- What are the practices and endogenous mechanisms on which Tdh could work on at the level of certain communities? Based on which experiences can Tdh support this community work?
- How are institutional and endogenous practices connected at the level of a given area? Which improvements could be made and what approach should be used so as to engage the concerned actors in a common process of building relationships, dialog, joint-understanding, and collaboration?

Concerning the mechanisms and procedures related to decentralization

- In your zone of intervention, have child protection services already been allocated fixed funds by the central government? According to what procedures was this carried out? Was the allocated amount suitable and was it transferred in time?
- Is it possible for the local authorities to request from the central government resources to be invested in child protection? Are the local authorities familiar with this procedure? Do they consider it to be effective and transparent?
- At local level, do civil society and community representatives have their say concerning the budgets allocated to child protection or to other social services?

Concerning the points of entry which can facilitate the strengthening of the offer of protection

Is it more relevant, in a given intervention context, to take as the starting point for the strengthening of the offer of child protection:

- specific actors who will benefit from suitable support (practitioners, local or governmental authorities, NGOs, families, communities, children…);
- certain mechanisms, services or practices which are seen as crucial;
- a combination of both approaches?
- Which activities for the strengthening of the offer of child protection have been carried out previously by Tdh or other actors at the level of a given zone of intervention?

Axis 3 / Strengthening of social participation

Concerning the actors and the forms of participation

- Which forms of community participation can strengthen the participation of the members of the community in child protection?
- Which community organizations can strengthen/weaken the participation of certain actors in child protection actions? (name those organizations)
- Are there, in the zone of intervention, community protection networks connecting external structures, endogenous structures, and mixed structures (created by exogenous elements coming on top of endogenous structures)? If yes, how do these networks and various structures collaborate? What do they bring to the local CPS?
- Which specific groups (boys, girls, young persons, women, men, ethnic minorities…) are excluded from/present among the collective actors participating in actions related to child protection (community organizations, children's and young persons' movements, associations, etc.)? What can be done in order to increase this presence and to encourage the participation of discriminated actors?
- Which organizations (formal and informal) play an active role in the promotion of social participation? In the promotion of certain specific actors (women, young persons…)?

Concerning the effects of social participation on the CPS

- In the existing CPS, which specific lacks, difficulties or weakness could be discussed and resolved by way of strengthening social participation, and how could this process be launched and achieved?
- Which resources and synergies connecting local, regional, and national does Tdh have to take into account if it engages in support to social participation?

Concerning Tdh's capacities

- What time, budget, competences, and tools are available to Tdh in order to get involved in support to social participation?

Axis 4 / Strengthening of knowledge management

Concerning the needs of the system regarding new knowledge

- What information and knowledge do the actors of the CPS lack in order to improve the system's performances and to increase its capacities?
- Do the actors of the CPS have sufficient information and is it of satisfactory quality? Does this information objectively reflect the views of the populations concerned?
- Do some sources of information enable the understanding of governmental priorities?
- Do some sources of information enable the understanding of social and traditional norms? In the society and the community, are the differences between traditions, customs, laws, and modern norms openly discussed on a regular basis by the populations concerned?
- Which social, professional, and institutional practices should be the object of a reflection/change based on evidence?

Concerning the creation of knowledge

- Is there a system for the collection of standard data?
- Is there consensus on the definitions and indicators among the actors of the system?
- Is the gathering of data about violence to children and the violation of their rights entrusted to a competent and independent structure? Have the people responsible for collecting, treating, and analyzing this data been trained for this?
- What is the frequency of collection of data concerning the beneficiaries, and what tools are used to carry it out?

Concerning giving value to the knowledge and using it

- Is attention paid to the protection of the personal data related to children and their families? Has it been made sure that no personal data is collected, other than that which is strictly necessary to achieve a legitimate objective?
- Does the collected data feed the policies and interventions?
- Are the academic and research institutions closely, and on a regular basis, involved in knowledge management relating to child protection? Are they involved in the reflection process and in the elaboration of solutions?
- Is the dialog among researchers, communities, operational actors, governmental institutions, and donors frank, open, and constructive or are there latent or unresolved conflicts between these actors?

Concerning Tdh's capacities and added value

- What time, budget, competences, and tools are available to Tdh in order to get involved in support to knowledge management?
- What would be the added value of a contribution of Tdh to the production or co-production of certain data and of certain types of knowledge?

IMPRESSUM

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