Promoting synergies between child protection and social protection in Nigeria

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Abbreviations

ABA	American Bar Association
ADDS	Akoko-Edo Diocesan Development Services
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ANPPCAN	African Network for the Protection against Prevention of all Forms of Child Abuse
AOON	Association of Orphan and Vulnerable Children Organisation in Nigeria
ART	Antiretroviral Therapy
AWEG	African Women's Empowerment Guild
CBO	Community-Based Organisation
CCT	Conditional Cash Transfer
CGCI	Child Growth Concern Initiative
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
COD	Centre for Organisational Development
COPE	In Care of Nigeria's Poor
COSUDOW	Committee for the Support of the Dignity of Women
CRARN	Child's Rights and Rehabilitation Network
CRiB	Child Rights Brigade International
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DAI	Direct Action Initiatives
DFID	UK Department for International Development
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EVA	Education as a Vaccine against AIDS
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FGM/C	Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting
FHI	Family Health International
FMEL&P	Federal Ministry of Employment, Labour and Productivity
FMWA&SD	Federal Ministry of Women's Affairs and Social Development
FOS	Federal Office of Statistics
FOTD	Friends of the Disabled
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GHAIN	Global HIV/AIDS Initiative Nigeria
GPI	Girls Power Initiative
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HUFFPED	Humanity Family Foundation for Peace & Development
IDI	In-depth Interview
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INGO	International NGO
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IPEC	International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (ILO)
IRIN	Integrated Regional Information Networks
KII	Key Informant Interview
KIND	Kudirat Initiative for Democracy
LEAP	Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty (Ghana)
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MediaCon	Media Concern Initiative
MWA&SD	State Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development
NACA	National Agency for the Control of AIDS
NACATIP	National Coalition against Trafficking in Persons
NACTAL	Network of NGOs against Child Trafficking, Labour and Abuse
NACWYCA	Centre for Women, Youth and Community Action
NAPEP	National Poverty Eradication Programme
NAPTIP	National Agency for the Prohibition of Traffic in Persons
NBS	National Bureau of Statistics
NBSCPN	National Baseline Survey on Child Protection in Nigeria

NCLS	Nigerian Child Labour Survey
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NHRC	National Human Rights Commission
NNPC	Nigerian National Planning Commission
NPECL	National Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour
NSITF	National Social Insurance Trust Fund
NURTW	Nigerian Union of Road Transport Workers
ODI	Overseas Development Institute
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OVC	Orphans and Vulnerable Children
PAA	Poverty Alleviation Agency
PATWA	Programme of Action to combat Trafficking in West Africa (SAP-FL)
PPP	Purchasing Power Parity
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
RIDA	Rural Infrastructure Development Association
TYECE	Teens and Youths Educational and Capacity Enhancement
SAP-FL	Special Action Programme to combat Forced Labour (ILO)
SAVI	State Accountability and Voice Initiative
SEYP	Society for the Empowerment of Young Persons
SSN	Stepping Stones Nigeria
STCP	Sustainable Tree Crops Programme (ILO-IPEC)
Triple F	Food, Fuel and Financial
UBE	Universal Basic Education
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNCRC	UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
UNDP	UN Development Programme
UNGASS	UN General Assembly Special Session
UNICEF	UN Children's Fund
UNICRI	UN Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute
UNODC	UN Office on Drugs and Crime
US	United States
USAID	US Agency for International Development
WACAP	West Africa Cocoa Agriculture Project (ILO-IPEC)
WAPA	Lagos State Ministry of Women's Affairs and Poverty Alleviation
WARDC	Women Advocates Research and Documentation Centre
WHO	World Health Organization
WOCON	Women's Consortium of Nigeria
WOTCLEF	Women Trafficking and Child Labour Eradication Foundation

Executive summary

Overview

Building social protection to reduce risks related to developmental and life-cycle vulnerabilities is crucial, particularly in developing country contexts. This is increasingly reflected in the focus on child health, education and nutrition in social transfer programmes globally and in the child-sensitive focus of many of the Millennium Development Goals. Social protection strategies and policy frameworks have, however, to a great extent neglected children's vulnerability to violence, exploitation, abuse and neglect. In Nigeria, where child protection issues are a key concern, important gaps exist in relation to national policy on social assistance provision for vulnerable children: although child protection is one of four key pillars of the national social protection strategy, the strategy is poorly resourced and implemented. Accordingly this report is informed by a transformative social protection conceptual framework which aims to identify policy and programming gaps and offer recommendations on how the country can implement its national development and social protection strategies to be more responsive to children's protection vulnerabilities.

Drawing on secondary literature along with primary qualitative data collected from four state-level sites (Adamawa, Benue, Edo and Lagos) the report focuses on linkages between child protection and social protection services regarding three key child protection deficits: child trafficking; harmful forms of child labour; and child domestic abuse. These three issues were selected on account of the international evidence base documenting linkages between social protection initiatives and these child protection deprivations.

Child protection vulnerabilities

In order to map out policy and programming challenges and opportunities it is first critical to understand the patterning of child protection vulnerabilities. Nigerian children are highly vulnerable to income poverty but also to a wide variety of other economic and social factors. These include urbanisation and migration; health shocks; environmental degradation; domestic violence and family fragmentation; broader societal violence and conflict; social exclusion and discrimination; harmful traditional practices based on cultural values; and orphanhood and loss of family, for a variety of reasons.

Child trafficking

Child trafficking occurs largely within national boundaries, although there is also significant trafficking to southern Europe. Poverty is the single largest factor behind child trafficking, but HIV, religious and traditional socio-cultural customs and unequal gender relations are also important determinants. Girls are trafficked primarily into domestic service, street trading and commercial sexual exploitation. Boys tend to be trafficked into street vending, agriculture, mining, petty crime and the drug trade. Of the primary research sites, Edo state is suffering the worst with one in three families estimated to have experienced some form of trafficking. Fosterage is a significant issue in the state, one that primarily disadvantages girls. The stark poverty present in Benue means that this state also experiences high levels of fosterage, with its consequent risks of trafficking. Lagos is more of a destination for than a source of foster children.

Harmful forms of child labour

There are an estimated 15 million working children in Nigeria, most of them in the informal or semi-formal sectors. Economic necessity drives much of this with children often forced into long hours and dangerous situations that are not developmentally appropriate. In particular, children on the streets are more exposed to accidents, violence, sexual exploitation, trafficking and HIV infection. Domestic workers, almost all of them girls, work long hours, are denied their educational rights and often their freedom of speech and are very vulnerable to physical and sexual violence, as they are invisible to the larger community and wholly dependent on a single family. In fact, girls are more likely than boys to be involved in child labour, and they

work longer hours and receive less pay – when they are paid at all. Orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) and children from poor, rural, northern Nigeria are also significantly more likely to work: OVC often have nobody to care for them, and are consequently also more likely to be engaged in the worst forms of child labour.

Child domestic abuse

Widely accepted as a way of instilling discipline, child domestic abuse is often regarded as part of the socialisation process and children are unable to speak out, given their subordinate position in the home. Abuse can be physical, physiological or psychological, and can result from economic hardship and/or the breakdown of the traditional larger interdependent family unit. Girls are increasingly vulnerable to sexual abuse, especially those who are fostered out to more affluent urban relatives or are victims of early marriage which denies girls access to education, is detrimental to their mental and physical development and deprives them of control over their reproductive health. Children with disabilities may also suffer emotional and educational neglect within the home as well as other forms of psychological abuse. Finally, children suspected of witchcraft, especially in the South-South, may be beaten, ejected from their home and left to fend for themselves.

Existing policy and programming responses to child protection vulnerabilities

Although the Nigerian federal government has passed a comprehensive Child Rights Act (2003), not only has it been ignored by a number of state governments, but overall financial and human resourcing has been very limited, hampering the Act's effectiveness. Along with often poor enforcement and insufficient documentation on the extent of and trends in violations of children's protection rights, this means that the principle of 'the child's best interest' is often not embedded in institutions throughout government and society. These deficits are in turn reflected in the country's social protection systems and programmes as we discuss further below.

Governmental responses

Overall at the governmental level there have been a number of efforts at improving social equity measures related to child protection, but much weaker follow up in terms of programme coverage, human resourcing and financial support to tackle child protection vulnerabilities. The Nigerian government passed the Trafficking in Persons (Prohibition) Law Enforcement and Administration Act in 2003, leading to significant progress in the fight against trafficking, especially in terms of prosecution and awareness raising. The National Agency for the Prohibition of Traffic in Persons (NAPTIP) works in partnership with UN agencies and other government institutions at both federal and state levels to carry out these tasks. However, enforcement, awareness and prosecution all remain a challenge.

In terms of efforts to combat child labour, the Nigerian Federal Ministry of Employment, Labour and Productivity coordinates efforts to combat child labour through its Inspectorate Department, which includes the Child Labour Unit. This includes training, awareness raising and inspections in high-risk areas, such as agriculture and mining. However, inspection has largely been ineffective, primarily because efforts have been unable to reach local level, and because inspection is often limited to the formal business sector, where the level of child labour is relatively low. In addition, the current labour law specifies merely that children should not be engaged in work activities that are 'illegal or immoral' – particularly hazardous work forms have not been added to this list of prohibited employment. Meanwhile, although education is free in Nigeria, other costs associated with it often prove prohibitive for poor families, meaning children are still forced to work, either to attend school or to support the family full-time.

While high-level policy indicates a commitment to preventing child domestic abuse, enforcement and public awareness leaves much to be desired. Small-scale efforts have however been initiated: the police and other law enforcement agencies now have units to deal exclusively with violence against children and the Federal Ministry of Women's Affairs and Social Development (FMWA&SD) operates a number of shelters for female victims of abuse,

offering them counselling, basic medical care and access to legal assistance. Federal and state governments also work through the media, local communities and churches and mosques to sensitise parents on their responsibilities regarding their children. In addition, FMWA&SD works with the police, trying to shift the perception that domestic abuse is a private affair and to instil an understanding that legal action, not 'thicker doors,' is urgently needed.

NGO and international agency responses

Given the significant limitations of governmental responses to child protection vulnerabilities, NGO and international agency efforts are important to consider. A number of national and international NGOs (INGOs) are engaged in the fight against trafficking in Nigeria. Public enlightenment campaigns are the most common prevention activity. Some NGOs also conduct interventions to rescue and repatriate trafficked victim, while UN agencies foster bilateral and multilateral agreements/partnerships between the Nigerian government and other national governments. Despite good overall relationships, coordination remains an issue, resulting in duplication and fragmentation, which can also end up with trafficking activities merely being displaced from one area to another.

In the case of child labour, a number of partnerships between government and NGOs have aimed at reducing the employment of children. The majority of these build on the relationship between trafficking, sex work and labour, through similar interventions. International agencies, particularly the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), have been very involved in fighting child labour in Nigeria, in partnership with government and national NGOs including work in rescuing children, running shelters, providing vocational training and mobilising communities.

Involvement of NGOs and INGOs to combat domestic child abuse is arguably more limited. National NGOs' efforts include generating public sensitivity and supporting the rehabilitation of abused children, with local NGOs more visible in the fight against child abuse than national NGOs. NGOs and INGOs are also working to end child marriage, through sensitisation campaigns, which seem to be having some success. Other INGO programming that exists is dedicated largely to capacity building for organisations that are on the ground in the community, and to awareness raising, including around the Child Rights Act.

Child protection and social protection linkages

As highlighted above, existing responses to child protection vulnerabilities address only a small fraction of the significant need for support documented in the country. More strategic and comprehensive action is urgently needed, especially if Nigeria is to achieve the child-focused Millennium Development Goals. One potential avenue for addressing these major gaps relates to the important –at least conceptual -- overlaps between child protection and social protection systems and services. If these were to be actively promoted in practice international good practice suggests that significant synergies could be realised, especially in the context of pronounced resource-constraints which social sector agencies in Nigeria face.

And indeed, at the policy level these linkages have been recognised to an extent in a number of key policy and strategy documents including the 2004 Social Protection Strategy, the 2003-7 National Economic Empowerment Strategy (NEEDS) and the 2010-2013 Vision 2020. However, as a result of social protection's limited policy traction at both federal and state levels, programmatic links are much weaker. Only in the case of donor-run conditional cash transfer programmes (CCTs) and NGO-run school subsidy/fee waiver programmes for OVCs were clear synergies found, but even here coverage was very limited suggesting that going to scale will require a much clearer strategy and stronger political commitment and resourcing if synergies between the two systems are to become a reality.

Conclusions and policy implications

Given the extreme weakness of child protection services in Nigeria, and the fact that social protection is only marginally, if at all, on the policy agenda, building a child-sensitive social protection system that addresses both the economic and social risks facing children will

undoubtedly be a long and challenging process – especially given the broader governance concerns in the country. In order to better address the key social and economic drivers of child violence, exploitation, abuse and neglect, efforts need to be concentrated in at least five broad areas:

1 Strengthening awareness of and enforcement of protection-related legislative and policy frameworks;
2 Supporting more effective inter-agency and inter-sectoral institutional arrangements, including state-specific tailored capacity-building initiatives for the effective planning, financing, delivery, coordination and monitoring and evaluation of programmes;
3 Strengthening information systems and knowledge sharing, in order to improve the evidence base on child protection vulnerabilities, underlying drivers and the impact of formal and informal responses;
4 Investing in awareness raising, preventative activities and response services to address child protection vulnerabilities, in partnership with public service providers (schools, health facilities, police, etc.), the justice system, civil society actors (including traditional and religious leaders) and the private sector; and
5 Promoting synergies between what are generally small-scale child protection initiatives with broader social protection and poverty reduction programmes (including cash transfers, social health insurance, school fee waivers and public works schemes), in order both to enhance the reach of child protection interventions and to tackle more effectively the multi-dimensionality of child protection vulnerabilities.

1 Introduction

Building social protection to reduce risks related to developmental and life-cycle vulnerabilities is crucial, particularly in developing country contexts (see Box 1) and is now increasingly recognised in mainstream development circles. One area that has been relatively neglected, however, in social protection strategies and policy frameworks is the need to address children's vulnerability to the risks of violence, exploitation, abuse and neglect. Children themselves indicate that these problems are among the most serious that they face. Physically small, emotionally vulnerable and socially silenced, children, especially younger children, have very few options for protecting themselves.

Box 1: Characteristics of childhood vulnerability

- **Multi-dimensionality,** related to risks to four broad clusters of rights enshrined in the **UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC):** survival (including health, nutrition, water and sanitation), development (education and psychosocial development), protection (from abuse, exploitation, violence and neglect) and participation (in decisions that affect children's lives).
- **Changes over the course of childhood,** in terms of vulnerabilities and coping capacities (e.g. young infants have much lower capacity than teenagers to cope with shocks without adult care and support).
- **Relational nature:** given the dependence of children on the care, support and protection of adults, especially in the earlier stages of childhood, their individual vulnerabilities are often compounded by the deprivations, vulnerabilities and risks experienced by their caregivers (owing to their economic position, level of education, gender, ethnicity, spatial location or other factors).
- **Voicelessness:** although marginalised groups often lack voice and opportunities for participation in society, voicelessness in childhood has a particular quality, owing to legal and cultural systems that reinforce their marginalisation.

Source: Jones and Sumner (2007).

Child protection issues are a key concern in Nigeria. According to the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF Nigeria, 2006), 15 million children under the age of 14 are working across the country to support their families. Working often long hours in semi-formal and informal businesses, they are frequently exposed to dangerous and unhealthy environments for little pay. Child labour interferes with children's schooling and their physical and psychosocial health, and feeds Nigeria's trafficking problems, as many child labourers are controlled by highly profitable syndicates (NAPTIP KII). Early marriage is also prevalent in the country. A quarter of all girls are married as adolescents, with negative implications for their human capital development as well as their intra-household bargaining power and access to resources (Aronowitz, 2006; Dottridge, 2002; National Population Council, 2009; Okojie, 2003). Coupled with customary laws that fail to protect the rights of women and girls, and cultural practices such as fosterage, Nigeria's girls are particularly vulnerable to child protection deficits (Aronowitz, 2006; Dottridge, 2002; Okojie, 2003). Accusations of child witchcraft are also common, and may result in abandonment and death (Cimpric, 2010).[1]

This report is part of a project that aims to support the government of Nigeria in realising its overarching development strategy (The Vision 20:2020) and the draft bill National Social Security Policy for Inclusiveness, Solidarity and Sustainable Peace and Prosperity. In particular, it aims to address gaps identified in national policy on social assistance provision for vulnerable children, and to provide policy-oriented research-based evidence to inform an implementation plan for these national strategies.

[1] Witchcraft is deeply rooted in traditional belief in Nigeria, especially in the South-South (Akpan and Oluwabamide, 2010). Suspected children can be beaten, ejected from their homes and left to fend for themselves.

1.1 Study methodology

The study focuses on three key dimensions of child protection deficits: child labour, violence against children within the home environment and child trafficking. These three issues were selected for both pragmatic reasons (to make the scope of the study feasible within the resource constraints of the project funding and timeline) and on account of the international evidence base on child protection and social protection system linkages. A number of social protection initiatives have sought to address child labour and child trafficking (for instance as part of cash transfer conditionalities in Ghana and parts of Latin America) while in the case of domestic abuse there have been efforts to tackle this through transformative social protection mechanisms (for example, legislation addressing family violence) and complementary programme linkages (for instance, linkages between Peru's Juntos cash transfer programme and NGO family violence awareness raising initiatives (Vargas, 2010).

The research methodology included a comprehensive review of the secondary literature, both published and unpublished, on these three dimensions of child protection deficits; key informant interviews (KIIs) in Nigeria with stakeholders at the national and state levels (including relevant government, donor, INGO and NGO, civil society and academic actors); and primary data collection involving focus groups with children and young people in selected sites at the state level. Where relevant, we also draw on findings from the Triple F (food, fuel and financial) crisis complementary study that the Overseas Development Institute (ODI) carried out.

The primary research instruments (see Appendix 2) sought to address the following research questions:

1 What are the patterns and underlying drivers of child protection vulnerabilities, especially harmful forms of child labour, trafficking and child abuse, within the home environment?
2 To what extent are existing child protection services part of social protection programmes, including cash transfer programmes, orphan and foster care allowances and basic pensions? Is the wider social protection system responsive to child protection needs?
3 What institutional, political and financial systems/procedures/resources need to be put in place to strengthen child protection services in relation to the social protection framework? Which governmental and non-governmental actors are best placed to help overcome any barriers, and in what roles would they be most effective?

We selected four states – Adamawa, Benue, Edo and Lagos – based on prevalence of specific child protection vulnerabilities, general state poverty profiles and also susceptibility to shocks and stresses, and geographical spread across the northern and southern regions (two in the north and two in the south) to maximise synergies with the ODI/UNICEF Impacts of the Triple F Crisis project. A summary of these findings is presented in the main text and more detail can be found in Appendices 5 and 6.

Table 1: Site selection

State	General poverty profile	Child protection issues
Adamawa	Adamawa, in the North East zone, was selected for its high poverty rate	Adamawa has a high HIV/AIDS rate and child trafficking is a serious child protection deficit
Benue	Benue, in the North Central zone, was selected for its high levels of social vulnerability, its position as the nation's food basket and its declining trade opportunities	Benue has a disproportionately high HIV/AIDS rate, which has left many children especially vulnerable to child protection deficits.
Edo	Edo, in the South South zone was selected to represent the landlocked centre region of Nigeria; although income poverty rates are not reportedly as high as other states, social vulnerability such as child trafficking and labour are significant	Edo is one of the hubs for child trafficking and has significant problems with child labour.

State	General poverty profile	Child protection issues
Lagos	Lagos, in the South West zone, was selected because of its position as the economic centre of Nigeria and its urban density	Child labour is a key issue in Lagos, as it is the largest city in Nigeria and a key destination for internal migration.

1.2 Report structure

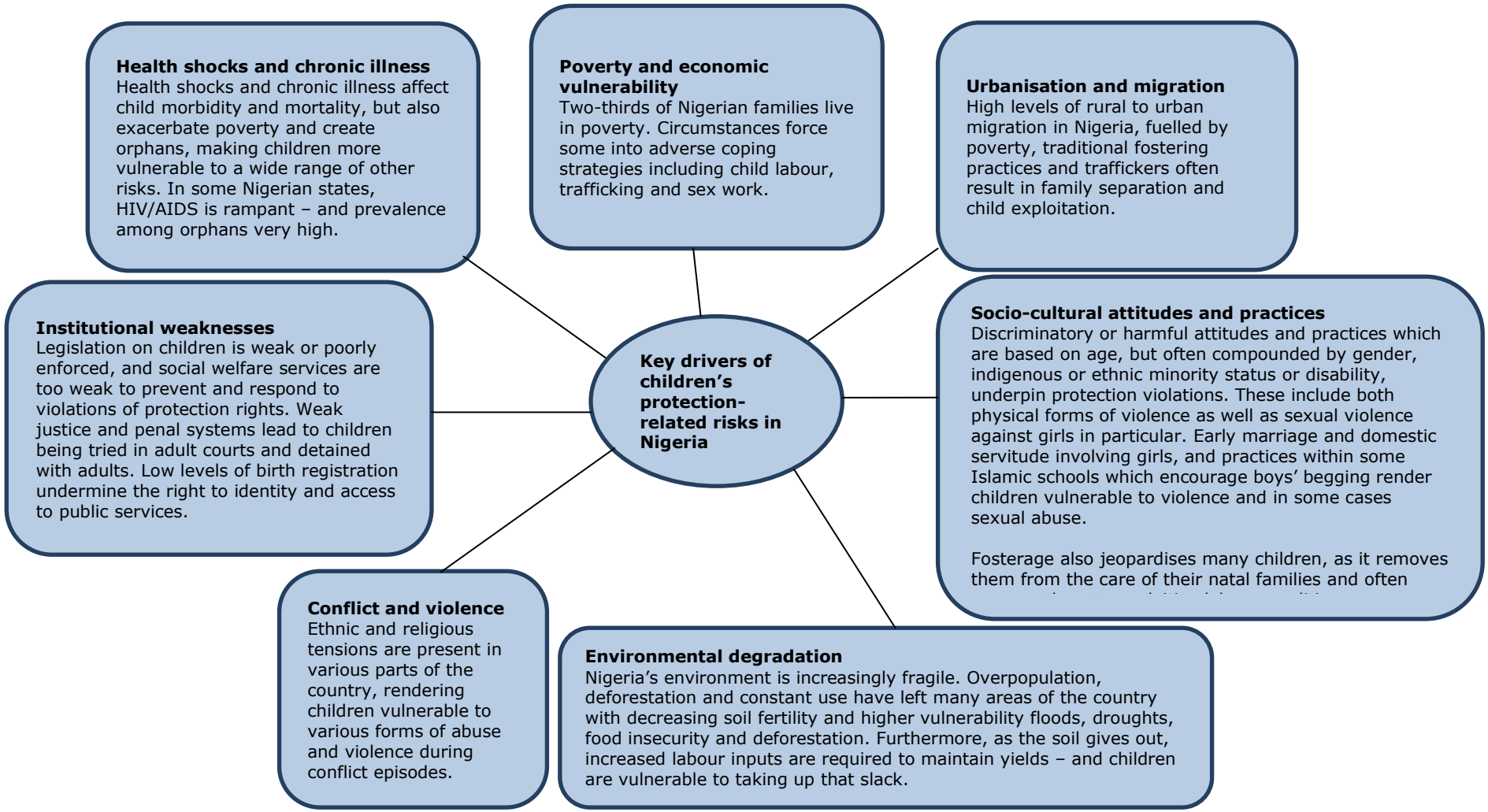
The report is organised as follows. Section 2 presents our conceptual framework. Section 3 discusses the patterning and underlying drivers of the three main child protection deficits under consideration in the report in order to understand the environment to which social protection programming needs to respond, while Section 4 reviews the strengths and weaknesses of existing governmental, NGO and donor responses. Section 5 concludes, providing key policy recommendations for development actors in general, and UNICEF specifically, as to how to maximise the synergies between social protection and child protection systems and programmes. Considerably more detail can be found in the appendices at the end of the report, including state-level findings from our primary research.

2 Conceptual framework

This report uses a conceptual framework that emphasises both the social and the economic drivers of protection-related risks and vulnerabilities (see Figure 1) to which a social protection system needs to respond.[2] Poverty is clearly key – both directly and indirectly – to the risks that children face. However, a wide variety of other economic and social factors also drive children's vulnerability. These include urbanisation and migration; health shocks; environmental shocks; domestic violence and family fragmentation; broader societal violence and conflict; and social exclusion and discrimination (see Figure 1 below). Harmful traditional practices based on cultural values, such as early marriage, which is widespread in the northern regions of Nigeria, also put children in harm's way (Eze-Anaba, 2006 Sossou and Yogtiba, 2009). Orphanhood and loss of family, owing to HIV/AIDS, migration and trafficking or separation during armed conflict, put children at particularly high risk, as they most often lead to them living outside of a caring family environment. Many of these lone children end up on the streets, in institutions or in exploitative 'foster' households, where their best interests are rarely considered, much less prioritised (UN, 2005; KII 13). However, while orphans and vulnerable children (OVC) are often the face of child exploitation, it is important to note that other child protection concerns, such as child labour, commercial sexual exploitation and trafficking, are closely intertwined with household poverty. In a region that suffers from widespread and deep deprivation, even children living in intact families are extremely vulnerable.

[2]The conceptual framework draws on UNICEF and ODI (2009).

Figure 1: Key drivers of Nigerian children's protection-related risks and vulnerabilities



In order to better understand the potential for social protection strategies and programmes to contribute to tackling child protection deficits, our conceptual framework also draws on a transformative model of social protection, with particular attention to age and gender dimensions. We take as our starting point Devereux and Sabates-Wheeler's (2004) transformative social protection framework, which goes beyond protective safety nets and encompasses protective, preventative, promotive and transformative social protection measures (see Box 2). The transformative perspective sheds light on power imbalances in society that encourage, create and sustain vulnerabilities – extending social protection to arenas such as equity (see UNICEF, 2010b), empowerment (see Holmes and Jones, 2010) and economic, social and cultural rights (see Figure 2), rather than confining its scope to targeted income and consumption transfers (Devereux and Sabates-Wheeler, 2004). This is particularly important in the context of this study, where we are interested in children's rights to protection from abuse and violence, and in turn the impact that violations of these may have on their rights to survival and development (see also Appendix 3).

In practice, this approach may be reflected in the core design of social protection interventions and/or in linkages with complementary programmes and services. This may include sensitisation and awareness-raising campaigns to transform public attitudes and behaviour, along with efforts to change the regulatory and legal framework to protect marginalised groups from discrimination and abuse.

Box 2: Transformative social protection approach

Operationally, a transformative social protection framework refers to social protection as the set of all initiatives, both formal and informal, that provide:

Social assistance to extremely poor individuals and households. This typically involves regular, predictable transfers (cash or in kind, including fee waivers and subsidies) from governments and non-governmental entities to individuals or households, with the aim of reducing poverty and vulnerability, increasing access to basic services and promoting asset accumulation.

Targeted social services to marginalised groups that need special care or would otherwise be denied access to basic services based on particular social (rather than economic) characteristics and subsidised services and goods.

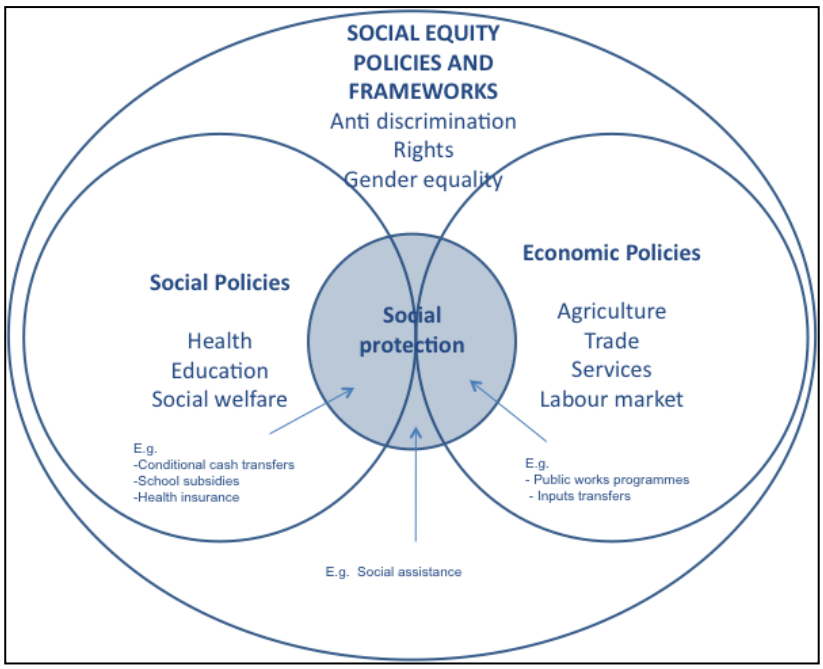
Social insurance to protect people against the risks and consequences of livelihood, health and other shocks. Social insurance supports access to services in times of need, and typically takes the form of subsidised risk-pooling mechanisms, with potential contribution payment exemptions for the poor.

Social equity measures to protect people against social risks such as discrimination or abuse. These can include anti-discrimination legislation (in terms of access to property, credit, assets, services) as well as affirmative action measures to attempt to redress past patterns of discrimination.

These social protection instruments are used to address the vulnerabilities of the population in general, but can also be adapted to address the specific risks faced by children either through the core social protection design and/or through strategic linkages with complementary services and programmes.

Source: Devereux and Sabates-Wheeler (2004).

Figure 2: Social protection and social equity



Source: Holmes and Jones (2010).

3 Patterns and drivers of child protection vulnerabilities in Nigeria: child trafficking, harmful forms of child labour, and domestic abuse

To situate our analysis of existing and potential linkages between child protection and social protection strategies and services in Nigeria, this section reviews patterns and underlying drivers of child trafficking, harmful forms of child labour and child domestic abuse at national and state levels. It is important to point out that while poverty and economic vulnerability are a key driver of all child protection deficits, socio-cultural attitudes and practices and health shocks also play a key role as highlighted in Box 3.

Box 3: Key drivers of child protection deficits in Nigeria

Even though Nigeria has one of Africa's largest economies, poverty and inequality are widespread and increasing, in both rural and urban areas. Nearly two-thirds of the population lives on less than $1.25 per day (purchasing power parity (PPP) 2008) and the country has a Gini coefficient value of 0.49[3] (UNDP, 2009). As the median age in Nigeria is only 17.1 years (UNDP, 2010), and over 17% of the population is under the age of six (National Population Council, 2009), this deepening and spreading poverty has tremendous impacts on children's protection needs.

Poverty threatens the survival of many Nigerian children. The under-five mortality rate is 171 per 1,000, ranging from 87 per 1,000 for the wealthiest families to 219 for the poorest (National Population Council, 2009). Malnutrition is a significant concern: 27% of Nigerian under fives (between 2003 and 2008) are considered moderately/severely underweight, 14% to be suffering from moderate/severe wasting and 41% to be suffering from moderate/severe stunting (UNICEF, 2010a). Lack of access to clean drinking water is another significant survival issue for Nigerian children. Less than 60% of households report access to any type of improved water source (National Population Council, 2009). Less than one-third have access to good sanitation (ibid).

Persistent poverty forces many children into the labour market: 15 million Nigerian children under 14 are working to support their families and pay their school fees (UNICEF Nigeria, 2006). This work is almost always in the informal labour market and agriculture, hawking goods on the street or harvesting crops, for approximately 20 hours each week (Okpukpara and Odurukwe, 2006). Nearly two-thirds of these young workers report that their long hours cause them to miss at least one day of school each week (ibid). These children are often exposed to dangerous conditions: accidents are common and they are at constant risk of violence and sexual assault.

While most working children are also enrolled in school, a great many are not. The net attendance ratio for primary school in Nigeria is quite low, at 62.1 (National Population Council, 2009). For secondary school, it is even lower, at only 49.1. There is significant variation across the country. For example, in urban areas, the primary net attendance ratio is 74.1; in rural areas it is only 57. The South-East has the nation's best primary school enrolment ratio, at 82.8; the North-West, on the other hand, has only 43.7.

However, poverty and economic vulnerability alone are insufficient to account for the patterning of child protection deficits. Nigeria's children are also put at risk by a range of socio-cultural attitudes and behaviours. Early marriage, for example, is very common: according to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Gender, Institutions and Development Database (2009), 28% of girls between the ages of 15 and 19 are married, divorced or widowed. This rate, as noted by UNICEF (2010a) is higher in rural areas than in urban areas: 52% versus 27%, respectively. Early marriage is bound up with adolescent pregnancy, which is associated with higher mortality rates for both young mothers and their infants. It also typically interrupts maternal education, which has a plethora of other protection-related ramifications for children. Overall, nearly one-quarter of Nigerian teens have already begun childbearing, with the North-West reporting vastly higher rates than the South-East (45% versus 8%) (National Population Council, 2009). Poor girls are much more likely to begin their families as adolescents; nearly 46% of young women in the poorest quintile become pregnant before the age of 20, versus only 20.7% of those in the middle quintile and 4.9% of those in the highest quintile.

[3] Where 0 represents complete equality and 1 represents complete inequality.

While poverty is a significant driver of early marriage, also vital is the fact that Nigerian girls are simply not valued in the same way as their brothers. Their education is seen as less important, their labour as more valuable and their futures as less worthy of investment. In addition to pushing them into early marriage, these cultural beliefs also push them into the labour market. Girls in Nigeria begin paid labour a full year before their brothers: the average age at which girls began working for pay, as reported in the Nigerian Child Labour Survey (NCLS), was just 10.5 years (Okpukpara and Odurukwe, 2006).

The cultural practice of fosterage also disadvantages many girls. Parents often send their daughters to live with better-off, urban kin to obtain education and useful occupational skills. However, the girls are often instead 'subjected to very hard, long, and gruesome labour […] [and] often poorly fed, mistreated' (Odukoya, 2009). These girls, who are also often forced into street hawking to supplement the family income, are vulnerable to abuse and rape, not just on the streets but also in the households where they live.

3.1 Child trafficking

Nigeria is a source, transit and destination for trafficked children. According to the National Agency for the Prohibition of Traffic in Persons (NAPTIP), almost every state in Nigeria has a variant of child trafficking, from the custom of fostering girls who end up as domestic servants to Islamic schools that encourage boys' begging (Agbu, 2008). The literature identifies a wide range of factors as contributing to this phenomenon. While poverty is overwhelmingly the single largest factor behind child trafficking, gender, HIV and religious customs are also important determinants.

Data on child trafficking are extremely difficult to come by. Government data provide limited snapshots of the problem. For example, NAPTIP reports that, from February 2008 to February 2009, 387 child victims received care at its seven shelters (US State Department, 2009). Accordingly, the literature refers largely to UNICEF and International Labour Organization (ILO) figures of 200,000-300,000 children trafficked annually across West and Central Africa (Dottridge, 2002; Adepoju, 2005; UNODC, 2009). While the majority of trafficking of children occurs within national boundaries, some children are taken to the wider region, Europe and the Middle East (US State Department, 2009). According to repatriation data, nearly half of the victims of external trafficking are children, with a female to male ratio of 7:3 (UNICEF Nigeria, 2007a).

Trafficking and poverty and economic vulnerability

Deep and widespread poverty is at the heart of Nigeria's trafficking issues (Dottridge, 2002). In an environment with few economic options, traffickers manipulate children and parents, proffering promises of a better future. Parents who see few options for their children are more likely to turn them over to strangers, and children with stars in their eyes and nothing in their bellies are more likely to go quite willingly. The ILO International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) (2001, in Truong and Angeles, 2005) identifies the imbalance between rural and urban wealth levels as key. Deprivation in rural areas tends to be more severe, in terms of incomes, access to services and food intake. Both parents and children see cities as a potential panacea.

The literature is clear that child fosterage, which is closely linked to poverty, facilitates child trafficking (Agbu, 2008; Aronowitz, 2006; Carling, 2006; de Haas, 2006). Although the idea is that the child assists in household chores in exchange for better care and prospects of a better future, many foster parents do not follow through on promises of education, instead choosing to use the child as an unpaid servant or street hawker (Mlbakogu, 2004; Olagbegi et al., 2006). It is not uncommon for girls as young as seven to be brought from the northern regions to places like Lagos and Ibadan as domestic servants, street workers and beggars (Olagbegi et al., 2006), where they are more vulnerable to the risk of trafficking.

Another poverty-related driver is the 'glamour' attached to urban, and particularly European, life. Some analysts argue that Nigerians who make it to Europe are considered 'highly successful'. The flow of wealth from Italy has left a clear mark on many Nigerian communities and produced favourable conditions for sex trafficking (Carchedi et al, 2003; Smits, 2001; The Advocacy Project, 2001). Urban living is also highly seductive to some children, who may

actively seek out traffickers, angling for a gateway to Lagos (Olagbegi et al., 2006). The Committee for the Support of the Dignity of Women (COSUDOW) estimates half of all trafficking in Nigeria occurs with the consent of the family, who, however, rarely understand the reality of what they have chosen (Danish Immigration Service, 2008).

Trafficking and high prevalence of HIV/AIDS

The high rate of HIV/AIDS in Nigeria increases the risk of child trafficking. According to the United Nations General Assembly Special Session (UNGASS) report, Nigeria has the second-largest number of HIV-infected people in Africa (USAID, 2010b). The national prevalence rate is 3.6%, with some states reporting infection rates over 10% (ibid). HIV has a number of devastating impacts on children, ranging from neglect to death. In 2007, an estimated 220,000 Nigerian children were HIV positive (ibid). Antiretroviral therapy (ART) remains comparatively uncommon, with less than one-quarter of all pregnant women in 2010 taking medication to prevent mother-to-child-transmission.[4] Even HIV-negative children are jeopardised by the epidemic. Over 1,200,000 Nigerian children had been orphaned by AIDS by 2007 (USAID, 2010b). Often forced to support themselves, these children are less likely to be in school, more likely to be engaged in labour and/or taking care of siblings, and far more vulnerable to exploitation and trafficking. Children forced to care for a sick family member are also at risk, as they can be stigmatised and pressured to leave a village (Human Rights Watch, 2003). Social safety nets for OVC are thinly legislated and very poorly enforced.

Trafficking and gender

There are distinct gender patterns in child trafficking in Nigeria. Girls are trafficked primarily into domestic service, street trading and commercial sexual exploitation. Boys, on the other hand, are trafficked into street vending, agriculture, mining, petty crime and the drug trade (Aronowitz, 2006).

Girls are more vulnerable to trafficking (Aronowitz, 2006). According to a study by the Nigerian NGO Girls Power Initiative (GPI) (in Aronowitz, 2006), reasons for this include a demand for their sexual services; their greater willingness to sacrifice themselves for their families; and the 'glamour' of peer stories. Dottridge (2002) furthers this argument by noting that girls are often recruited by adult women to assist them in the household or to help them sell food and other products on the streets. Their employment provides economic status to their employers.

A further reason that girls are more vulnerable to trafficking is that they often have less value for their families. In Nigeria, girls marry not just *into* other families, but also *out* of their own. Many parents thus view girls as a weaker investment opportunity, valuing their male children more highly (Dottridge, 2002; Okojie, 2003). This lower status makes girls particularly vulnerable to trafficking, as it relieves their natal family of the burden of their care (Agbu, 2003).

Girls' unique reproductive capacities may make them even more valuable to traffickers. In early June 2011, over 30 adolescent girls were rescued from a Nigerian 'baby factory where they had been held hostage (BBC, 2011). The girls, aged 15-17, were imprisoned and forced to sell their babies. Sold for up to $6,400, the babies were used for witchcraft rituals and sold for illegal adoption (ibid). Ironically, male babies are prized and fetch higher prices.

Girls are further disadvantaged by national and international trafficking priorities. De Haas (2006) highlights that Nigerian migration policies, as well as international funding priorities, focus on preventing trafficking of women and children to other African states and Western Europe. Singling out sexual exploitation of women and girls may be too narrow, diverting attention from the larger issue of labour trafficking, typically within Nigerian boundaries (Dottridge, 2004).

Trafficking and migration patterns

According to Nigeria's poverty reduction strategy paper (PRSP), migration is associated strongly with trafficking, forced labour and prostitution (NNPC, 2004). The International

[4] http://www.avert.org/aids-.

Organization for Migration (IOM, 2005) argues that the line between child migration for work and child trafficking has become blurred. De Haas (2006) points out that awareness-raising campaigns often appear like anti-migration adverts. To support this claim, he cites an interview with a 'youth': '*They simply say "East, west, home is best." But this is the wrong message. You won't stop people from going. You should instead inform people how to migrate legally so as to create a balanced opinion. Migration is not really a bad thing.'* Restricting mobility rights – and employment rights – causes marginal groups to lead illegal lives, increasing their vulnerability to trafficking and forced labour (Elabor-Idemudia, 2003).

The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Protocol on the Free Movement of Peoples, designed to facilitate the free movement of people and goods, has been abused, and traffickers have taken advantage of the opportunities it presents to them (see Section 6 for more). Many children and adolescents consent to migration, but often find themselves in bonded servitude. One ILO study reveals that children in rural areas are often recruited by urban-based employment agencies – only to find out they have been deceived (Ehindero et al., 2006).

Several reports focus on corruption as a driver of trafficking. Corrupt activities and/or non-action by law enforcement officers, customs and immigration officials and the banking sector make trafficking easier (Agby et al., 2002; Harnischfeger, 2003; in Carling, 2006).

3.2 Child labour

The 2000-2001 NCLS figure of 15 million working children in Nigeria, while dated, comes from the most recent comprehensive exploration of the country's working children (Okpukpara and Odurukwe, 2006). Whether they spend their days on farms, their afternoons hawking goods or their weekends conducting buses, child workers are often forced into long hours and dangerous situations that are not developmentally appropriate.

Child labour represents a serious threat to the development and rights of today's Nigerian children – and those of tomorrow (UNICEF Nigeria, 2006). The key consequence is its detrimental impact on education and its ties to intergenerational poverty. Out of 42.1 million Nigerian children eligible for primary education, only 22.3 million are in school; for secondary schools, the situation is worse: out of 33.9 million eligible adolescents only 6.4 million are in school (Adeoye, 2007; Olatunji, 2006; in Okafor, 2010). Economic necessity drives much of this (Okafor, 2010). Millions more children attempt to combine school and work, often to pay school fees. This combination rarely succeeds, however. Research has identified 20 hours per week as the tipping point beyond which work precludes educational success (Fallon and Zafiris, 1998; Nelson, 2000).

Nationwide, Nigerian children are very close to that tipping point. Children between 5 and 9 average nearly 18 hours per week of work, largely unpaid domestic chores (Okpukpara and Odurukwe, 2006). Children between 10 and 14 average just over 20 hours per week (ibid). Akpan and Oluwabamide (2010) find that child street hawkers work such long days that they find it difficult to attend class regularly. While they largely work in the afternoons after school, one-quarter of all working children report that their work causes them to miss one day of school each week (Okpukpara and Odurukwe, 2006). Another quarter report that they missed four days a week (ibid).

Defining child labour

One of the difficulties in addressing child labour relates to the fact that different countries and ultures have divergent beliefs about what forms of work constitute child labour. Important factors are the child's age, the hours and type of work performed and the specific conditions under which the child labours (Kuti, 2006; Okafor and Bode-Okunade, 2003).[5] The Federal

[5] Echoing this, Amma et al. (2000)'s study of working children in Tanzania classifies cooking, weeding, harvesting, fetching water and firewood and minding younger children as child work, not child labour. These tasks are vital to the functioning of the household and all children must learn to do them to prepare them for their adult lives. Togunde and

Ministry of Women's Affairs and Social Development (FMWA&SD, 2008) explains that child labour is culturally acceptable in most communities; it draws a distinction between child work, which is seen as a necessary part of growing up, and child labour, which is considered excessive and detrimental. UNICEF Nigeria (2006), however, notes that making this distinction is becoming more difficult. In traditional cultures, children work beside their parents to learn the skills they will need for adulthood. This helps the family and helps the child. The transition to a cash economy is forcing children to contribute through wage labour, helping the family, but putting the child at increasing disadvantage.

Types of child labour and associated risks

While Nigerian children can be found working in a wide range of sectors and industries, most child labour is either informal or semi-formal (UNICEF Nigeria, 2006). In rural areas, children most commonly work in agriculture, usually on family farms. They are responsible for planting, weeding and harvesting crops, as well as tending livestock. Rural children also work in cottage industries on tasks as diverse as carpentry, weaving and hairdressing. In urban areas, children work as vendors, shoe shiners, car washers, scavengers and beggars (ILO, 2005; Okafor, 2010). Urban children are also very likely to work as domestic servants; while these young workers are largely invisible, the conditions under which they labour are often among the most hazardous. According to Federal Office of Statistics (FOS) data, most working children report starting work between the ages of 5 and 9; country averages for unpaid work and paid work are 7.9 and 11 years, respectively (Okpukpara and Odurukwe, 2006).

Street hawking is common in cities; Okafor (2010) claims it is the most common form of child labour in the country. Children sell cold drinks, fruit and apparel to supplement their family income. It is not a safe activity for children (Akpan and Oluwabamide, 2010; Okafor, 2010; UNICEF Nigeria, 2006). Working on and around busy roads exposes children to accidents, which can be fatal. Children on the streets are also more vulnerable to violence, sexual exploitation, trafficking and HIV infection (Akpan and Oluwabamide, 2010; Taiwo, 2010, in Okafor, 2010).

Nigerian children can also be found working in other dangerous settings. There has also been a recent surge in the number of children working as bus conductors in cities. Young conductors, who may work 12-hour days on weekends, are exposed to exploitation by their bosses and to aggressive behaviour by passengers (Okafor, 2010). Moreover, Taiwo (2010, in Okafor, 2010) highlights that bus conducting can lead to further exploitation in motor parks, where children may engage in petty theft or activities that expose them to HIV/AIDS.

Domestic servitude can also be extremely hazardous. These workers, almost all girls, work long hours on physically demanding tasks (Okafor, 2009). They are denied their educational rights and often even their freedom of speech. They are also very vulnerable to physical and sexual violence, as they are invisible to the larger community and wholly dependent on a single family. UNICEF Nigeria (2006) reports that over half of young domestic workers in Lagos have a peer who has been molested (2006).

Poverty and child labour

Poverty is the root of child labour. As Nigeria's poverty has spread and deepened over the past several decades, so has child labour. The end of the oil boom of the late 1970s – and the ensuing rapid rise in poverty of the 1980s and 1990s – saw the national poverty rate rise from 27.2% in 1980 to 65.6% in 1996 (FOS, 1999). This nearly 150% increase, coupled with Nigeria's explosive population growth and rapid urban migration, has left many families desperate for new ways to generate income (Okafor, 2010). While the poverty incidence has dropped somewhat, to 55% in 2004 (World Bank data), Nigeria remains a desperately poor country. Basu (1998, in Okpukpara and Odurukwe, 2006) finds that children's wages can contribute up to one-third of household income; child labour is therefore an important way out of poverty for some families.

Carter (2006) differentiate between exploitative child labour and that which is beneficial to either the household or the child.

Research on working children indicates that children engaged in harmful forms of labour are disproportionately likely to have come from poor families struggling with repeated shocks, such as drought, illness or death (Boas and Huser, 2006, in UN, 2005). One study found that more than four in five working children cited economic need as the reason they worked, often to support their education (Aliyu, 2006). In a study of child street hawkers in southern Nigeria, most were poor and many were orphans (Akpan and Oluwabamide, 2010). One interviewee explained that, even though his father was employed as a security guard at a government office complex and his mother worked as a farmer and petty trader, their incomes were not sufficient to meet the basic needs of their family, leaving them little choice but to send their children to work too. Okafor's (2009) young domestic servants reported similar economic drivers.

NCLS data provide another way to see this relationship. Nearly one-third of core-poor children combine work and school (Okpukpara and Odurukwe, 2006). Slightly less than 30% of moderately poor or non-poor children attempt to work while they are in school. Seen another way, 80% of non-poor children have the luxury of 'just' attending to their schooling; fewer than 20% of core-poor children enjoy this same luxury.

Family characteristics and child labour

A variety of family characteristics, closely associated with poverty, also drive child labour. For example, children from larger families are more likely to be employed than children from smaller families (Grootaert, 1998). There are varying explanations for this relationship. It is possible, for example, that families have more children because they are poor and need the labour; it is also possible that the higher resource demands of larger families are more likely to require child support (Fetuga et al., 2005; Okpukpara and Odurukwe, 2006).

Parental age is also related to familial poverty – and child labour. However, the relationship is clearly complex and difficult to separate out. Assaad et al. (2000) argue that younger parents are more likely to be poor than older parents; they find it more difficult to pay school fees and are more likely to send their children to work. On the other hand, Okpukpara and Odurukwe (2006) find that children with older parents are the most likely to be employed. They suggest that this is because older parents find it more difficult to find jobs – thus requiring that their children work.

Parental education is also a key determinant of child labour. According to Elijah and Okoruwa (nd) empirical evidence suggests that parental education may be an even more important predictor than poverty. While parents who are poor are also likely to be poorly educated, and parents who are poorly educated are more likely to be poor, educated parents – regardless of income – are more likely to place a value on education and insist their children focus on learning rather than income generation (Okpukpara and Odurukwe, 2006). The NCLS found that maternal education is a more powerful driver of this effect than paternal education (ibid). Educated mothers are more able to make an income sufficient to preclude the necessity of child labour.

The same study also found that parental occupation is a key driver of child labour (Okpukpara and Odurukwe, 2006). This is largely mediated through residence location, as farmers typically live in more rural areas, which suffer from broader and deeper poverty than urban environments. Furthermore, children in cities are more able to combine work with school; children of farmers are less likely to be enrolled at all, as they are needed on their parents' farms (Gockowski and Oduwole, 2001). Furthermore, non-farmers typically have some education and are more likely to recognise its benefits for their children (Okpukpara and Odurukwe, 2006).

Gender discrimination and child labour

As we have seen, girls are more likely than boys to be involved in child labour (Okpukpara and Odurukwe, 2006). Furthermore, they work longer hours and receive less pay – when they are paid at all (ibid; Fetuga et al., 2005). They are significantly less likely than their brothers to complete their educations, or to even begin them (Okpukpara and Odurukwe, 2006). They are more likely to work exclusively, and more likely to combine school with work, perhaps to

support their brothers' educations (ibid). These statistical facts reflect traditional gender biases in Nigerian culture: girls are typically prepared for household management and small-scale trading designed to supplement the family income (ibid; Fetuga et al., 2005; Irhiam, 2009).

NCLS data support these figures. Girls begin work, on average, a year sooner than boys, at 10.5. This has a plethora of negative consequences for girls. Not only is their long-term education more interrupted, but evidence suggests that the earlier children start working, the less money they make (Okpukpara and Odurukwe, 2006). Furthermore, the average weekly contribution by child workers to the family income of N1783 hides significant gender variation (ibid). Boys' weekly earnings are very nearly twice those of girls' – N2028 compared with N1274 (ibid). Despite this, girls contribute more to the family income. Boys, because they do not always turn over their income to their parents, contribute less than 15%. Girls, considered more tractable and obedient, contribute a full 20% (ibid., Fetuga et al., 2005).

In addition, the NCLS reports that the mere presence of a mother in the household reduces the likelihood of children's employment – regardless of the family's poverty status (Okpukpara and Odurukwe, 2006). However, as could be expected, children living in female-headed households, because of the typical depth of household poverty, are more likely than their peers to be out of school and in the workforce entirely (ibid.; Cartwright and Patrinos, 1999).

OVC-specific deprivations and child labour

The Nigerian HIV epidemic has had significant impacts on child labour. OVC are very likely not only to work but also to be engaged in the worst forms of child labour, as they often have no adults looking out for their best interests and are more desperate than most of their peers. FMWA&SD (2008b) highlights that 62.3% of OVC have had to work for food and clothes and to pay school fees. The NCLS found nearly 20,000 Nigerian households headed by children under the age of 14 (Okpukpara and Odurukwe, 2006). This phenomenon was largely urban, driven by children who had migrated to cities when their parents died and when they were left to fend for themselves (ibid). The majority of these children drop out of school entirely, as their survival depends on a full-time income (Ebigbo, 2003).

Regional and socio-cultural variations in child labour

Children in northern Nigeria are significantly more likely to work – and for longer hours – than are children in southern Nigeria (Okpukpara and Odurukwe, 2006). Southern children are correspondingly more likely to attend school than northern children, full-time enrolment being 72% and 58%, respectively (ibid). There are a variety of explanations for these differences. Northern states are more rural and the prevalence of subsistence agriculture requires more labour support from children (ibid). They are poorer than southern states, and parents have fewer options to increase the family income. Overall, the NCLS found that rural children contribute a substantially larger share to the household than urban children. Over 15% of family income in rural areas comes from children's wages; in urban areas, this figure is less than 10% (ibid). Lack of enforcement capacity in rural areas also makes it difficult to stamp out child labour (Elijah and Okoruwa, nd).

However, there is also reason to suspect that culture and religion play a role in these differences (Okpukpara and Odurukwe, 2006). 'Western' education began in the delta region, making its greater penetration in southern states logical. Northern states, on the other hand, are more likely to practice Muslim education. Children enrolled in Islamic schools spend part of their day engaged in religious study, but they also work to support the school. Fetuga et al. (2005) find that Muslim children are more likely to work than Christian children and that northern Muslim families are more likely to practice *purdah*, wife seclusion, which may place a larger economic burden on the shoulders of children. Muslims in the south do not practise *purdah*. Another potential link between Islam and child labour may be family size: Muslim families are typically larger (ibid).

3.3 Child abuse

Child abuse and exploitation within the sphere of the home is a serious problem in Nigeria. Abuse can take various forms, including physical, sexual and psychological. It is rooted in Nigerian cultural traditions and gender discriminations, and has been compounded by recent waves of urbanisation, population growth and poverty (Aderinto, 2010).

Physical and physiological abuse

Physical violence and corporal punishment within the household are widely accepted as a way of instilling discipline in a child (Aihie, 2009; UN, 2005, in UNICEF and ODI, 2009). It is even regarded as part of the socialisation process in the home, and children are unaware that is reprehensible (UN, 2005). Family relationships and household structures in West and Central Africa are hierarchical: elder children are permitted to beat younger siblings and the father can mete out physical punishment on all. The situation is particularly intense because children are prohibited to speak out on the subject, given their subordinate position.

Legal measures to protect children from forms of physical abuse are unclear and ambiguous. The Criminal and Penal Codes state that punishment of a child must not result in the infliction of a wound or grievous harm. Both codes also state that the age, physical and mental condition of the child must be taken into account when considering whether a 'correction' is justified (FMWA&SD, 2009).

Abuse can also be physiological. According to the World Health Organization (WHO) (in UN, 2005), psychological violence relates to,

> *'not ensuring a suitable and positive environment, and committing acts which are harmful to the emotional health and development of the child. These acts include the fact of limiting a child's movements, denigration, mocking the child, threats of intimidation, discrimination, rejection and other non-physical forms of hostile treatment.'*

Physiological abuse can emerge from urbanisation and economic hardship. The UN (2005) notes that these factors can put pressure on the traditional larger interdependent family unit and cause it to break down. Young adolescents can face aggression from their parents as a result of their inability to contribute to household expenses. Physiological abuse can also be attributed to the hierarchal framework within the home, where the relationship between parent and child is based on fear. In many cases, it is difficult for a child to disobey his or her parents, and this is a source of frustration and psychological distress for them. Gender prejudices and practices such as early marriage (discussed below) also constitute physiological abuse.

The physiological consequences of abuse, whether physical, physiological or sexual, are more difficult to identify, as they can be immediate or latent and last for years (UN, 2005). Victims can display emotional wounds like low self-esteem, a long-lasting lack of confidence in people and depression (Aihie, 2009). Moreover, risky behaviour and substance abuse during adulthood can be attributed to childhood abuse (ibid).

Sexual abuse

In many West African societies, it is very difficult for victims to disclose cases of abuse. Families are often reluctant to seek professional help, and the culture of silence and shame hampers prospects of treatment (Sossou and Yogtiba, 2009).[6] According to the WHO (2004, in UN, 2005),

> *'sexual abuse of children is a silent and pressing health situation. It goes unnoticed, is under-notified and poorly dealt with. It is surrounded by a culture of silence and*

[6] For example, Amnesty International (2005) interviewed a 15-year-old girl in 2004 in Lagos, who explained how she had been raped by a male friend of her father who was lodging in their house. The victim blamed herself for the rape and did not want to press charges against the offender. She was forced to leave her home when her father found out about the rape and that she had become pregnant. She was taken in by a shelter in Lagos that offered her support raising her child and managed to reintegrate her into formal education.

opprobrium, particularly when it is committed in the refuge of the home by someone that the child knows and trusts.'

According to Sossou and Yogtiba (2009), West African countries lack resources and child welfare programmes, and are unable to provide adequate support and services to victims of sexual abuse. Furthermore, in some cases a compensation payment from the perpetrator to the victim's family serves as punishment, and the offence is not reported to the police.

Aderinto (2010) argues that rapid urbanisation and longer-term gender biases have increased the vulnerability of girls to sexual abuse. He suggests that, in the current urban environment, girls are more likely to find themselves residing in overcrowded homes, where they are at risk of physical, sexual or psychological abuse. He also stresses that certain misconceptions increase the risk of girls to sexual abuse and HIV/AIDS. For example, a belief exists that having sex with a virgin girl can cure or protect a man from HIV/AIDS. Moreover, many people believe it is difficult to infect young girls. Aderinto also highlights a strong link between sexual abuse of girls during their childhood and the likelihood of high risk-taking sexual behaviour during adulthood.

HIV/AIDS and OVC and child abuse

The pressures associated with HIV/AIDS can have a negative impact on the family structure and result in high psychological distress for children (UN, 2005). According to the UN (2005), 'children made vulnerable by HIV/Aids include: (i) orphans, (ii) children with a sick parent (iii) children living in poor households looking after orphans, and (v) children who are themselves HIV positive.' These children are often stigmatised by society and excluded from their community, education and health care. Furthermore, they often live in poor conditions and have to fend for themselves. As we have seen, lack of protection and services for OVC means they are vulnerable to economic and sexual exploitation and can be forced to resort to prostitution or crime.

According to the UN (2005), even when orphaned children are not rejected by the community or relatives, they are more likely to be vulnerable to abuse than other children. A survey conducted in 2008 found that OVC feel worse-off in the household compared with non-OVC (FMWA&SD, 2008b). Children infected with AIDS who are being cared for by extended family are sometimes accused of bringing shame on the family name and are treated as burdens. They are also rebuked for being regularly unwell and eating differently than the rest of the family (UN, 2005). It is thought that these discriminations arise as a result of limited understanding of HIV/AIDS in West and Central African society (ibid).

Early marriage

Early marriage is common across Nigeria and West Africa (UN, 2005). According to FMWA&SD (2008a), it features most in a context of poverty. Parents view the process as a possible way out of poverty for the child and the rest of the family. Non-awareness of children's rights and other factors such as cultural and religious traditions also plays a part (ibid).

The practice is especially common in rural areas and the Islamic northern states (Eze-Anaba, 2003; Sossou and Yogtiba, 2009). Data show that one-third of women in the North-West were married as adolescents, compared with less than one-eighth of women in the North-East and North Central regions (FMWA&SA, 2008a). Southern women are particularly unlikely to be married as teens, with the South-West reporting rates as low as 5% (ibid). It is commonplace in northern Nigeria for a family to remove a girl child from school and engage her in tasks to prepare for marriage and caring for a family, such as smallholder farming and household chores (Eze-Anaba, 2003). As a long-established traditional practice, most parents and communities do not consider this a problem. According to Sossou and Yogtiba (2009), 'it is alleged that girls regard early marriage as a way to improve their economic status and gain social recognition' and to escape their family and domestic responsibilities.

As a result of being pulled out of school, many girls grow up illiterate and feel intimidated by the Nigerian legal system, which demands the use and understanding of correct English. This paves the way for a future of marginalisation and vulnerability (Eze-Anaba, 2003). The

Committee on the Rights of the Child (2004) highlights the dangers of early marriage, noting that, as well as denying girls access to education, it is detrimental to their mental and physical development and deprives them of control over their reproductive health. Giving birth at a young age can also cause vesico-vaginal fistula. This is particularly prevalent in the north, where early marriage is more common.

Child fosterage and domestic labour

Many commentators emphasise that child fostering can lead to abuse and exploitation. Traditionally, families sent children to more affluent relatives, where they would assist with household chores in return for education and other forms of support. However, recent trends have seen the manipulation of the practice, and in many cases children end up working as domestic servants in deplorable circumstances. Child domestic servants are often deprived of education and see their basic food and health needs neglected (Eze-Anaba, 2006; Okafor, 2010). Many are overworked and deprived of adequate education, social activities and emotional support and care. In some cases, they are vulnerable to physical and sexual abuse (Okafor, 2010). Poverty is often identified as the main push factor, and the increasing entry of women into the labour market as the pull factor (Kuti, 2006; Okafor and Amayo, 2006; Tade, 2010). Children may be taken on by relatives or other families, to take care of the house and ensure the needs of the entire family are met. This can involve fetching water, preparing meals and cleaning (Oloko, 2004).

It is also common for children to be born or raised in a household where they are expected to undertake similar tasks for no pay. This is considered an essential aspect of growing up, whereby children learn life skills and the value of work. The demanding nature of the tasks they undertake can be exhausting and adversely affect their performance in school. Moreover, it can hamper their social and personal development (Okafor, 2010).

The nature and characteristics of child domestic labour were a central factor in a National Baseline Survey on Child Protection in Nigeria (NBSCPN), which focused on the exploitation of children and youth and issues affecting their rights (FMWA&SD, 2009).[7] The survey defined child domestic helpers as those under the age of 18 engaged in domestic work within the household. It revealed that the South-East and South-South had the most cases of domestic helpers, and that these were mostly female (NBSCPN, 2008, in FMWA&SD, 2009).

The work domestic helpers undertake often involves activities an adult would find overbearing (Ebigbo, 2003). For example, they not only help with raising young children and do household chores like cooking and cleaning, but also are put in charge of electronic generators and engage in many other dangerous tasks. There have been cases of burns, electric shocks and other injuries to domestic helpers as a result of the hazardous nature of their work (ibid). They also work extremely long hours and are underfed, and may have to tolerate sexual abuse at the hands of their male employers in return for rewards (ibid). This can also enrage the wife and leave the domestic helper to suffer her aggression, and also can result in pregnancy (ibid). In cases of physical abuse, the police are often reluctant to get involved in what they consider a family matter.

Children with disabilities and child abuse

Children with disabilities in Nigerian society are at risk of emotional and educational neglect as well as other forms of psychological abuse. West African cultural tradition attributes disability to the sins of the individual or family members. As a result, families with disabled children are frequently discriminated against and stigmatised (Ebigbo, 2003). To escape this shame, some families ostracise children with disabilities, and some even kill them (ibid; Sossou and Yogtiba, 2009). In most cases, children are hidden from public view. As a result, many of them are denied access to proper care and education and deprived of emotional and physiological support. In other cases, parents or guardians drop them off on street corners to beg for money (Sossou and Yogtiba, 2009). In the event that disabled children do attend school, many drop out as a result of ridicule and discrimination by fellow pupils and school staff (ibid).

[7] Completion of the survey was a key priority in the implementation of a Cooperation Agreement between UNICEF and the University of Lagos on the establishment of a UNCRC Chair in the Department of Public Law (FMWA&SD, 2009).

4 Mapping of existing social protection responses and child protection linkages

As per the study's transformative social protection conceptual framework, this section considers not only the design of social protection interventions and linkages with complementary child protection-related programmes and services, but also sensitisation and awareness-raising initiatives to transform popular attitudes and behaviour, including efforts to change the regulatory and legal framework to protect children from discrimination and abuse. It begins by reviewing the responses per the three child protection deficits under consideration, including regulatory and legal measures in line with the study's transformative social protection framework. Given the limited coverage of government initiatives it also considers NGO and donor responses to child protection violations. Then in sub-section 4.5 the report provides a brief overview of existing social protection initiatives and discusses the extent to which they have taken into account child protection violations, while sub-section 4.6 focuses on informal responses and coping mechanisms.

4.1 Child protection policy

Nigerian child protection policy is rooted in the Child Rights Act, which President Chief Olusegun Obasanjo signed into law in 2003 (UNICEF Nigeria, 2007b). This defines all persons under the age of 18 years as children, outlining specific protections and prohibitions necessary to meet the mandate of providing all care necessary for child survival, well-being and development (see Box 4). The Act has been passed on a state level by 24 out of 36 Nigerian states (Defence for Children International, 2010). It covers child trafficking, child labour and child abuse, at the highest levels. A plethora of other policies and programmes, at national and international levels, supplement this framework and provide tools for implementation.

However, while the passage of the Child Rights Act is a milestone for Nigeria's children and represents the country's commitment to the UNCRC, implementation is weak. Overall, key informant interviews highlighted that child protection is not prioritised in Nigeria. Government agencies charged with these objectives are among the most marginalised. There are very few professional personnel, such as social workers, particularly at local levels. Enforcement is very nearly non-existent, and preventative awareness-raising campaigns are sporadic and under-funded (UNICEF and ODI, 2009). Coordination is low, programming fragmented, planning spotty, data limited and budgets inadequate and vulnerable. Reliance on international agencies for funding and implementation is very high, with local Nigerian NGOs occasionally serving as intermediaries. This situation exacerbates fragmentation and makes sustained programming difficult.

Box 4: Basic provisions of the Nigerian Child Rights Act

- Freedom from discrimination on the grounds of belonging to a particular community or ethnic group, place of origin, sex, religion, the circumstances of birth, disability, deprivation or political opinion. It is stated categorically that the dignity of the child shall be respected at all times.
- No Nigerian child shall be subjected to physical, mental or emotional injury, abuse or neglect, maltreatment, torture, inhuman or degrading punishment or attacks on his/her honour or reputation.
- Every Nigerian child is entitled to rest, leisure and enjoyment of the best attainable state of physical, mental and spiritual health.
- Every government in Nigeria shall strive to reduce infant mortality; provide medical and health care, adequate nutrition and safe drinking water and a hygienic and sanitised environments; combat disease and malnutrition; and support and mobilise through local and community resources the development of primary health care for children.
- Children in need of special protection measures (mentally or physically challenged children or street children) are protected in a manner that enables them to achieve their fullest possible social integration and moral development.

- Expectant and nursing mothers shall be catered for, and every parent or guardian with legal custody of a child under two shall ensure its immunisation against diseases or face judicial penalties.
- Betrothal and marriage of children are prohibited.
- Causing tattoos or marks and FGM/C are punishable offences, as is the exposure of children to pornographic materials; trafficking of children; their use of narcotic drugs; the use of children in any criminal activities; abduction and unlawful removal or transfer from lawful custody; and employment of children as domestic help outside their own home or family environment.
- Child abduction and forced exploitative labour (which is not of a light nature) or in an industrial undertaking are also stated to be offences.
- Buying, selling, hiring or otherwise dealing in children for the purpose of begging, hawking or prostitution or for unlawful immoral purposes are made punishable by long terms of imprisonment.

Source: UNICEF Nigeria (2007b).

4.2 Existing responses to child trafficking

Government policies, laws and programmes aimed at addressing child trafficking

The 2009 US State Department Trafficking in Persons Report recognises that the Nigerian government has made progress in dealing with child trafficking. Convictions are increasing, victims are receiving better assistance, funding is improving and public awareness is increasing. Nevertheless, important challenges remain. Here, we discuss the key policy and legislative and programmatic entry points that have emerged over the past two decades, as well as identifying areas where progress is still needed.

Anti-trafficking legislation

The absence of specific, national-level anti-trafficking legislation was long the major obstacle in the fight against child trafficking in Nigeria. Nigeria has two codes of criminal law: the Criminal Code governing southern states and the Penal Code governing the states of northern Nigeria. Various offences come under the codes – concerning deprivation of liberty, slave dealing, defilement and prostitution – which could be used to prosecute cases of trafficking in minors and young women for sexual exploitation (Agbu, 2008; Okojie, 2003). However, the codes contain loopholes that traffickers exploited, often totally avoiding prosecution and punishment (Okojie, 2003).

Since the Trafficking in Persons (Prohibition) Law Enforcement and Administration Act was passed in 2003, there has been significant progress in the fight against trafficking, especially in terms of prosecution and awareness raising. The act provides a strong legal framework to combat human trafficking. With its passage, Nigeria became the first country in Africa to domesticate the UN Convention on Transnational Organised Crime and its Supplementary Protocol (Agbu, 2008; Sesay and Olayode, 2008).

NAPTIP was created as a result of the 2003 Anti-Trafficking Law. It is focused primarily on investigation and prosecution of perpetrators. It promotes collaboration with more experienced organisations, such as UNICEF, the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and ILO (Save the Children Italy, nd). According to Agbu (2008), NAPTIP's activities also include rehabilitating victims, collaborating with other national and international bodies and creating public awareness of trafficking. It is divided into the Investigation Unit, the Legal Unit, the Public Enlightenment Unit and the Counselling and Rehabilitation Unit. Funding sources include the Nigerian government, UNICEF, UNODC/the UN Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI), ILO, IOM, the US Agency for International Development (USAID), the American Bar Association Africa (ABA-Africa), the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), the Italian NGO TAMPEP Onlus and Terre des Hommes, as well as the governments of Italy, France, Norway and the Netherlands (Danish Immigration Service, 2008).

NAPTIP does not stand alone in the fight against child trafficking. It is only one of three different police units specialising in anti-trafficking: there is also a focused unit within the police force, which coordinates its efforts with NAPTIP, and a special immigration unit, which

concentrates on intercepting victims and traffickers at the Nigerian border (UNODC, 2009). At the state level, there are anti-child trafficking committees in 26 states. Kaduna, Osun, Zamfara, Gombe, Jigawa, Bauchi, Plateau, Ekiti, Enugu and Nasarawa states have yet to establish committees (Danish Immigration Service, 2006). FMWA&SD runs an Anti-Child Trafficking Campaign in Akwa Ibom state. In Edo, a Skills Acquisition Centre has been established in the state capital, where victims receive vocational training (Aronowitz, 2006).

Despite progress, prosecution and awareness remain a challenge. According to a key informant from the Women Trafficking and Child Labour Eradication Foundation (WOTCLEF), many Nigerians either do not know or refuse to accept that trafficking is a crime. Since 2003, only 12 traffickers have been prosecuted. Moreover, combating the European organised-crime networks that are the major drivers of sex trafficking will require levels of coordination that are still lacking (IRIN Nigeria, 2007). In August 2008, Nigeria adopted a new National Plan of Action on Trafficking in Persons; in November 2008, it adopted a National Policy on Protection and Assistance to Trafficked Persons. However, neither the National Plan nor the National Policy has been implemented yet (US State Department, 2009).

UNCRC and the 2003 Child Rights Act

As mentioned above, Nigeria has ratified the UNCRC and implements it through the Child Rights Act. However, the law was passed at federal level, and is effective only if state assemblies also enact it. As thus far only 24 of Nigeria's 36 states have passed the act, its effectiveness has been seriously hampered (Defence for Children International, 2010; Olagbegi et al., 2006). The public is gradually being made aware of the act and the punishments it entails, especially with respect to child labour, child trafficking and the sexual exploitation of children (Adepoju, 2005).

Box 5: Specific penalties for trafficking-related offences mandated by the Child Rights Act

- Section 27 – abduction, removal and transfer from lawful custody (10-20 years' imprisonment);
- Section 28 – prohibition of forced or exploitative child labour (5 years' imprisonment or fine of N50,000-250,000 ($380-$1,897)
- Section 29 – application of the provisions relating to young person in Sections 59-62 of the Labour Act 1971 to children (vi) Section 30 – prohibition of buying, selling, hiring or otherwise dealing in children for the purpose of hawking or begging for alms or prostitution (10 years imprisonment)
- Section 31 – unlawful sexual intercourse with a child (life imprisonment)
- Section 32 – forms of sexual abuse and exploitation (14 imprisonment)
- Section 33 – other forms of exploitation prejudicial to the welfare of a child (fine of N500,000 ($3,794 or 5 years' imprisonment or both)
- Section 34 – prohibition of recruitment of children into the armed forces (no punishment prescribed)

Source: Aronowitz (2006).

However, a review of the most recent government reports on UNCRC implementation to the Committee on the Rights of the Child indicates that post-legislation awareness-raising activities and preventative services have not received adequate attention and resources from governments, with INGOs or UNICEF leading many campaigns and activities.

The Committee on the Rights of the Child has also expressed concern that governments are not ensuring that the principle of 'the child's best interest' is imbedded in institutions throughout society, and that they have not established a comprehensive database to document the extent of and trends in violations of children's protection rights (UNICEF and ODI, 2009).

Complementary international and regional child and human rights instruments

A variety of international and regional instruments speak to child trafficking as well. The most relevant are listed below, in Boxes 6 and 7. These super-national legal instruments have

provided Nigeria with the knowledge to identify and protect children's rights – and prevent trafficking. Implementation remains a problem, however (Aronowitz, 2006).

Box 6: International instruments that address child trafficking, labour and exploitation

- The UN Convention on the Abolition of Slavery (1956) – succession in 1951
- The UNCRC (1989) – ratified in 1990
- ILO Convention No.182 (Worst Forms of Child Labour) (1999) – ratified 2002
- UN Protocol to Prevent and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (2000) – signed and ratified 2002

Source: Irhiam (2009).

The ECOWAS Plan of Action serves as the main network of collaboration for West African countries. It calls for all countries to ratify and implement international instruments of ECOWAS and the UN that strengthen laws against human trafficking and protect trafficked persons, especially women and children (Olagbegi et al., 2006). Nigeria cooperates with the efforts of ECOWAS; it has also forged bilateral agreements with Benin and Niger and immigration-related agreements with European countries (Save the Children Italy, nd).

Box 7: Regional instruments that address child trafficking, labour and exploitation

- African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights and its Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa (1986)
- African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (1999)
- African Common Position on Children (2000)
- Declaration on the Fight Against Trafficking in Persons (2001)

Source: Irhiam (2009).

However, implementation of the plan has been hampered by the low level of commitment of some countries, lack of clear data and poor capacity to arrest and prosecute traffickers. Furthermore, inter-governmental coordination and collaboration have been poor, reflecting the failure of governments to grasp the trans-border nature of trafficking. Although important conventions exist at the regional level, such as the ECOWAS Convention on Extradition and the Convention on Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters, not all ECOWAS members have signed and ratified these (Sesay and Olayode, 2008). In addition, there is no practical framework for law enforcement and criminal justice agencies to collaborate and share information across West Africa. Ratifying the Convention of Mutual Assistance could improve this. Poor coordination among agencies and ministries can also undermine efforts to combat trafficking. Not only does this reduce effectiveness, but also it can result in duplication and waste valuable human and financial recourses (ibid).

Moreover, at present there is no significant programme for the reintegration of internally or internationally trafficked children. The policy for foreign children trafficked *to* Nigeria is to deport them to their country of origin as quickly as possible. Although evidence suggests that trafficked children face reintegration difficulties, little consideration is given to children's circumstances in their home country or to the trauma they may have suffered as a result of being trafficked.

There are, however, regional and international success stories. In 2000, the Nigerian government signed a cooperation agreement with Italy to combat human trafficking, specifically in women and children. This was supported by the UN and introduced by UNICRI. It involves sharing information as well as calling for Italy to provide training for Nigerian law enforcement (Anti-Slavery International, 2003). There have been several other instances of subsequent regional cooperation. For example, in 2003 Nigeria and Benin sought to work on the prevention of child trafficking and on returning victims to their home countries. Also in 2003, Nigeria collaborated with Niger and Chad to eradicate cross-border crime, including child

trafficking. That same year, police chiefs from Benin, Ghana, Nigeria and Togo met to discuss building collaborative approaches to dealing with cross-border crimes. In 2004, officials from Benin, Nigeria and Togo, as well as UN representatives, met Nigeria, to discuss cooperation in combating human trafficking in West Africa (Irhiam, 2009).

NGO responses to child trafficking

In addition to the government initiatives outlined above, a number of national NGOs are engaged in the fight against trafficking in Nigeria. Public enlightenment campaigns are the most common prevention activity. Some NGOs also conduct small interventions to rescue and repatriate trafficked victims, although this is usually in conjunction with international partners such as ILO-IPEC, UNICEF and Terre des Hommes. Interventions are usually based on educational or vocational training and incentives for parents not to re-traffic their children (Save the Children Italy, nd). See Box 8 for the most prominent interventions.

Box 8: Key national NGOs and NGO networks involved in anti-trafficking activities

The **Women Trafficking and Child Labour Eradication Foundation** (WOTCLEF) was founded in 1999 by Chief (Mrs.) Amina Titi Atiku Abubakar, wife of the vice-president of Nigeria. The organisation submitted a Private Bill to the National Assembly, which led to the enactment of the Anti-Trafficking Law and the setting up of NAPTIP. WOTCLEF has been at the forefront of advocacy aimed at educating the Nigerian public, especially vulnerable groups, about the extent of child trafficking and the need to check its continued rise. It has established volunteer clubs in each state (of which 23 have been realised) and visited schools, markets, local leaders and hair salons to inform people of the dangers of trafficking. In addition, a WOTCLEF-sponsored TV programme has played for a number of years (Agbu, 2003; de Haas, 2006). WOTCLEF works with NAPTIP both to assist victims of trafficking and to formulate new policy (Danish Immigration Service, 2008).

The **Women's Consortium of Nigeria** (WOCON) conducts sensitisation programmes in rural communities where women and children are recruited and in the cities where they are received. In source communities, WOCON's programmes involve educating on the realities of trafficking and the adverse effects it has on poverty alleviation. Communities are encouraged to fight trafficking, and in some case sanctions are in place for those who give up women or children (Olateru-Olagbegi, 2004; Truong and Angeles, 2005).

The **African Women's Empowerment Guild** (AWEG) works to provide women with opportunities to prevent them falling victim to trafficking. This can include adult literacy classes, teaching adolescents self-discipline and informing young people of the dangers associated with trafficking. Much of AWEG's work is based on the premise that trafficking in women and girls is for sexual exploitation. It primarily targets victims repatriated from Italy, but also works with returnees from other areas (Truong and Angeles, 2005).

Girls Power Initiative (GPI) works with the Ministry of Education and other NGOs and also lobbies the government to include education in sexuality in school curricular. The work of GPI has been adopted by IOM to be used when training teachers in Edo state. GPI also conducts research, operates a Gender Development Institute and seeks to find out why girls are more vulnerable to trafficking than boys (Truong and Angeles, 2005). As well as educating girls on human rights and sexuality, GPI provides support in cases of rape, sexual abuse and trafficking. It also collaborates with clinics and firms and refers victims requiring clinical and legal services (Danish Immigration Service, 2008).

The **Committee for the Support of the Dignity of Women** (COSUDOW) is based in Benin City and works to prevent trafficking, protect and rehabilitate victims and prosecute traffickers. Its activities include educating families and young people about the dangers of trafficking and sexual exploitation; providing victims with employable and self-support skills; addressing social issues that affect women and children; and collaborating with government and NGOs involved in counter-trafficking programmes. COSUDOW is held in high regard by IOM Chief of Mission Tommaso de Cataldo, who puts it alongside NAPTIP as the two key institutions in Nigeria fighting trafficking. According to de Cataldo, the organisation has had a strong presence in Nigeria for a number of years, and, as a religious organisation, gains the confidence of victims (Danish Immigration Service, 2008).

The **Network of Non-Governmental Organisations against Child Trafficking, Labour and Abuse** (NACTAL) is an alliance of Nigerian NGOs fighting child trafficking. The network is supported by UNICEF and comprises 32 civil society organisations (CSOs), including WOTCLEF and COSUDOW. One of the primary objectives is to act as a referral platform for victims of trafficking to access support. Each political zone has a focal CSO, and WOTCLEF in Abuja serves as the national Secretariat. Idia

Renaissance in Benin City is the focal point in the South-South, WOCON in Ebony state for the South-East, Human Development Initiative in Lagos for the Southwest and the Centre for Women, Youth and Community Action (NACWYCA) in Nassarawa for the North Central (Danish Immigration Service, 2008; Olagbegi et al., 2006).

There is also a more general anti-trafficking network, the **National Coalition against Trafficking in Persons** (NACATIP), which comprises 24 agencies and is coordinated by WOCON. It is especially active in Edo state, where it undertakes awareness campaigns, victim support programmes, social services, skills training, legal advice, counselling and support to potential victims (Danish Immigration Service, 2008; Olujuwon, 2008).

According to Aronowitz (2006), data provided by NGOs in Nigeria indicate that they have a good working relationship with NAPTIP and the government ministries providing social services, such as the Ministry of Education and FMWA&SD. Nigerian and regional NGOs also appear to enjoy a good working relationship, especially when it comes to facilitating the protection, return and reintegration of trafficking victims (ibid). Finally, Nigerian NGOs work closely with international organisations, such as ILO, IOM, UNICEF and UNODC, and INGOs, such as CARE, Terre des Hommes, Anti-Slavery International and Plan International.

Despite these positive working relationships, coordination remains an issue. This results in duplication and fragmentation, which reduces the overall cost-effectiveness of anti-trafficking programming. Moreover, in some cases, weak coordination may result in displacing trafficking activities from one area of Nigeria to another, as traffickers merely devise new routes and networks to avoid 'dangerous' regions (IOM, 2006; UNODC, 2006; in Irhiam, 2009).

International agency responses to child trafficking

International organisations and INGOs are also active in the fight against child trafficking in Nigeria. They work closely with the government and local NGOs to raise public awareness and repatriate and reintegrate victims. UN agencies, such as UNICEF, ILO, IOM and UNODC, also have the scope to foster and support bilateral and multilateral agreements/partnerships between the Nigerian government and other national governments, which is crucial to addressing cross-border trafficking. Moreover, they play a key in implementation. In the absence of an established programme to reintegrate trafficking victims, NAPTIP and local NGOs provide assistance, often in conjunction with international partners. For example, NAPTIP, Terre des Hommes and FEBEN, a local community organisation, work to repatriate trafficked children subject to labour exploitation in quarries in the western states of Nigeria. Other examples include the work of WOTCLEF in Ondo state and UNICEF, which between February 2004 and December 2006 rescued nearly 800 children (Save the Children Italy, nd).

Other anti-trafficking initiatives led by international organisations include a multilateral programme in Benin City, implemented by UNODC and UNICRI and funded by Italy (€800,000) to stem the flow of women and children from Nigeria to Italy. The project supports rehabilitation and reintegration by providing microcredit schemes to help victims acquire skills and set up small businesses. It has also established a National Monitoring Centre in Abuja. Managed by NAPTIP, the aim of this is to create a databank of cases and victims and to foster information exchanges; the second phase was financed in 2006 (€1.9m) (Danish Immigration Service, 2008).

ILO-IPEC is a key initiative addressing child trafficking. It has developed teacher training courses on the dangers of child trafficking and has worked, with Nigerian NGOs, to remove and reintegrate children involved in the worst kinds of labour (Irhiam, 2009). A large proportion of these children have been trafficked. The programme has also targeted the economic empowerment of parents and relatives of trafficked children; it provides formal education and skill acquisition, as well as income generation and support (Olagbegi et al., 2006). Finally, the ILO's Special Action Programme to combat Forced Labour (SAP-FL) has implemented a Programme of Action to combat Trafficking in West Africa (PATWA). This aims to address the structures of demand and supply that drive trafficking and forced labour in West Africa. In doing so, it works with the government's Ministry of Labour, unions and employers (de Haas, 2006).

UNICEF, with the support of the US. State Department Bureau for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement, offered one-time funding of an Anti-Child Trafficking Network in Nigeria. This project ran from October 2003 to September 2005 (Aronowitz, 2006). Furthermore, from 2002 to 2004, UNICEF ran a Model Youth Resource Learning Centre with the objective of decreasing child trafficking, youth violence and youth HIV/AIDS infection in Edo and Delta states (Irhiam, 2009).

In addition, UNICEF and ILO have participated in inter-ministerial national committees to combat child trafficking through the development and implementation of national policies on child trafficking. Currently operating in Benin, Gabon, Mali, Nigeria and Togo, they provide some safeguard against duplication of efforts and can maximise the strengths of the relevant institutions in each country. This gives the two agencies high-level official fora in which to discuss and coordinate activities (UNICEF, 2002). Despite great potential, however, there is little evidence regarding the impact of this project.

IOM and NAPTIP, with support from CIDA, provided technical assistance for the development of the Health Chapter of the National Policy on Protection and Assistance to Trafficked Persons in Nigeria. This was approved by the Nigerian government in 2008. The Health Chapter provides basic guidelines for providing access to health care services for victims of trafficking. This policy aims to protect and support trafficked persons by empowering them and supporting their reintegration through rehabilitation programmes (Irhiam, 2009). The organisation also maintains shelters in Edo state and Lagos (Aronowitz 2006). It is not clear to what extent IOM programmes focus on children; women are clearly a programming target, however.

4.3 Existing services and responses to child labour

Government responses aimed at addressing harmful forms of child labour

Child labour is clearly tightly bound to trafficking and, as such, many of the policies and programmes discussed above apply here as well. ILO Convention No.182, for example, is the signatory convention for addressing both abuses. With its 2000 subscription, the Nigerian government also signed a memorandum of understanding, in which it promised ILO to set up a national programme to eliminate the worst forms of child labour.[8] In 2002, after the government ratified ILO Convention No. 138, the Minimum Age Convention, and ILO Convention No. 182, it worked with ILO to establish the National Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (NPECL). This undertook capacity building in the Child Labour Unit of the Federal Ministry of Employment, Labour and Productivity (FMEL&P), worked with trade unions to raise awareness of child labour issues and built a database to track former child workers (IPEC, 2005). Unfortunately, evaluations in 2005 found NPECL funding constraints had hampered all elements of its programming (ibid).

The Child Rights Act is also vital to addressing child labour in Nigeria. Sections 28 and 29 prohibit exploitative labour and reinforce relevant sections of the Labour Act. The Labour Act sets a minimum age of 12 years for employment and apprenticeships, not including light agricultural or domestic work performed for the family. It prohibits those under the age of 12 from carrying any load that could inhibit physical development; those under the age of 15 from industrial work and maritime employment; and those under the age of 16 from working underground, on machines, at night, more than four consecutive hours or more than eight hours a day. The act also outlines conditions for the employment of children younger than 14: the mandate includes 'a daily wage, on a day-to-day basis,' and a child worker must return 'each night to the place of residence of his parents or his legal guardian' (ILO, 2005). Finally, the act prohibits employment of any child under the age of 18 in activities that that are dangerous or immoral. It is important to note that the law does not apply to domestic service, which means many exploited child labourers have no legal protection (ILO-IPEC, 2000, in Elijah and Okoruwa, nd). Furthermore, although FMWA&SD (2008a) states that large, formal sector organisations generally abide by these regulations and tend not to employ children

[8] The Initiative was funded by the US Department of Labour and managed by the FOS (Elijah and Okoruwa, nd).

below the age of 15, children are highly segregated in the informal sector, which has fewer compunctions about labour violations.

FMEL&P coordinates all efforts to combat child labour through its Inspectorate Department, which includes the Child Labour Unit. It works with other national-level ministries and agencies as well as those at state and local levels. The ministry has trained approximately 120 labour inspection officers on child labour laws and has an additional 80 officers to perform inspections in high-risk areas such as agriculture and mining and in the informal sector (US Department of Labour, nd). However, according to the US State Department (2006), Child Labour Unit inspectors have been largely ineffective at combating child labour, primarily because they have been unable to reach all state and local levels. Several different studies have highlighted that child labour inspection is limited to the formal business sector, where the level of child labour is relatively low (Elijah and Okoruwa, nd; FMWA&SD, 2008a; ILO, 2005; US Department of Labour, nd). ILO (2005) also emphasises that the number of inspectors is too low to have a significant impact.

One important mechanism for addressing these concerns is public awareness: fewer inspectors can do more monitoring if the population at large understands child labour laws and is willing to report violations. FMWA&SD (2009) notes that the government has a variety of campaigns designed to raise Nigerian awareness about children's rights and labour laws. The Committee on the Rights of the Child (2010) also lauds these campaigns.

National educational policy also plays a role in combating child labour. The 2003 passage of the Universal Basic Education (UBE) Policy, which made education both free and compulsory for all children up to junior secondary level, was to be an important government strategy in the fight against child labour. It was hoped it would prevent children from having to work in order to pay school fees. However other costs associated with education often prove prohibitive for poor families, meaning children are still forced to work in order to attend school. Over time, many drop out altogether. Aliyu (2006) highlights that, in Zaria, as in many other Nigerian cities, secondary schools run morning and afternoon shifts, a strategy that enables adolescents to theoretically combine school and work. This is not a panacea, however. In one study, one-third of these working students admitted to having failed a school year (ibid).

The UBE Policy has also failed to address children's, and parents', concerns about relevance: some question whether schooling is a wise investment in their children's futures (Elijah and Okoruwa, nd). Furthermore, Togunde and Carter (2006) find that many working urban children see their work, rather than their schooling, as preparation for future careers and occupations. They suggest that vocational education programming may keep more adolescents in school and out of the labour force. Finally, while the UBE Policy calls for penalties for the parents of perpetual truants who are found on the streets, to date this has never been enforced (Olagbegi et al., 2006).

The Committee on the Rights of the Child's (2010) evaluation of government efforts to tackle child labour recognises areas of progress but remains seriously concerned at the very high number of children engaged in the worst forms of child labour, such as mining and heavy agricultural work. A key step, but one not yet undertaken by the government, would involve legislation denoting what specific forms of child labour children under the age of 18 should never undertake. Current law specifies merely that children should not be engaged in work activities that are 'illegal or immoral'; particularly hazardous work forms should be added to this list of prohibited employment. The Committee also expressed concern that street children were increasingly being penalised under criminal law for 'status offences' such as vagrancy, truancy or 'wandering.'

NGO responses to child labour

There have been a number of partnerships between government and NGOs aimed at reducing the employment of children (Boas and Huser, 2006, in UNICEF and ODI, 2009). The majority of these build on the relationship between trafficking or sex work and labour. A variety of national and local NGOs, many them listed in Box 8 above, work to rescue children engaged in hazardous forms of labour, repatriate them to their communities and get the education,

training and support they need to stay out of the labour market. These groups also work to teach parents and children how to recognise the dishonesty and false promises that pull children into these dangerous situations. Finally, ongoing campaigns, broadly implemented by many child-focused NGOs, teach children and their parents about broader child rights – including the right to the education that precludes full-time employment. It is unclear how successful NGOs are in this attempt.

Box 9: NGO Initiatives to Tackle Child Labour

WOCON and Women Advocates Research and Documentation Centre (WARDC) were commissioned by ILO's PATWA to undertake a baseline study on human trafficking for the purposes of child labour (Olagbegi et al., 2006). However, an evaluation the following year found the study was poorly designed and implemented and overall impacts on the knowledge base were limited (ILO, 2006).

WOTCLEF runs an awareness-raising programme with the Nigerian Union of Road Transport Workers (NURTW) to combat the use of boys as bus conductors in Nigerian cities. Signs on buses inform drivers and passengers that child conducting is illegal. Given the recent rise in the number of underage conductors, however, it can be assumed that the programme is having limited success.

International agency responses to child labour

International agencies, particularly ILO and UNICEF, have been very involved in fighting child labour in Nigeria. ILO has worked primarily in conjunction with the national government, as noted above. However, it also established Direct Action Initiatives (DAI), which partnered with national-level NGOs, to provide a structure for rescuing children from the worst forms of child labour, including trafficking, and facilitating their reintegration into society. The programme provided education for families of child workers, as well as financial support that enabled them to expand their economic opportunities (Olagbegi et al., 2006). When DAI was evaluated, it was found that several of its features were very important (ILO-IPEC, 2005). Shelters for child workers, for example, reduced recidivism; children who had a safe place to live, access to schooling and no economic need to be on the streets were much less likely to place themselves back into dangerous situations. The type of schooling offered to these children was also found to be important: vocational programming was preferred over regular schooling. Finally, traditional power structures were found to be key; communities mobilised by local leaders were more likely to be engaged in reducing child labour and to see positive outcomes.

Box 10: Child labour and the cocoa sector

In 2000, the media reported that children across West Africa, including Nigeria, were being trafficked and forced to work, under abusive conditions, in the cocoa sector. In Ondo state alone, over a thousand children were found to be labouring to produce cocoa. Regionally, 60% of all young workers were under the age of 14. In Nigeria, nearly one-third of the children were recruited by intermediaries, suggesting trafficking.

The ILO-IPEC West Africa Cocoa Agriculture Project (WACAP) grew out of attempts to end these practices. This programme, which ended in 2006, included capacity building and awareness raising, child labour monitoring and mechanisms for removing children from harmful forms of labour. According to the US Department of Labour (nd), it removed over 1,000 children from dangerous working situations.

The Sustainable Tree Crops Programme (STCP) has taken up where WACAP left off. This is an ongoing public–private partnership that is working to raise the standard of living for families in cocoa- and nut-producing communities, reducing their need for child labour. By introducing green technologies that enable families to boost their yields from 20% to 50%, more families have been able to send their children to school.

Source: Salaam-Blyther et al. (2005).

UNICEF Nigeria has a variety of longstanding programmes and projects that address child labour (UNICEF Nigeria, 2006). It is unclear from its literature, however, how many of these are still in effect. In 2003, UNICEF was instrumental in the passage of the Child Rights Act; it has also worked to support state-level passage. It has facilitated a National Baseline Survey, in conjunction with government and ILO, which will quantify child sexual exploitation and military participation. UNICEF also works with the FOS to develop child protection indicators and

assessment tools that help monitor child labour. Furthermore, it partners with the University of Lagos to compile research on child protection issues, including child labour. UNICEF also supports the Nigerian chapter of African Network for the Protection against Prevention of all Forms of Child Abuse (ANPPCAN).

4.4 Existing services and responses to child abuse

Government policies, laws and programmes addressing child abuse

As with trafficking and child labour, child abuse in Nigeria is the focus of a wide range of policies. The Child Rights Act is again the key piece of legislation. This prohibits all physical and mental abuse of children, specifically including early marriage and abuse within the home (FMWA&SD, 2008a). The Nigerian government further signalled its commitment to ending child abuse with its 2005 ratification of the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa. Article 6 sets the minimum age for marriage at 18, making child marriage illegal (Eze-Anaba, 2006). The government also adopted, in 2005, a national action plan to monitor compliance with international human rights obligations. Within this framework, a human rights commissioner was appointed as special rapporteur on the rights of children. The mandate for this position was to monitor and assemble data on child rights abuse (FMWA&SD, 2008a).

While high-level policy indicates a commitment to preventing child abuse, national laws, which are the most common vehicle for enforcement, again leave quite a bit to be desired. As Box 11 shows, it is evident that, under current laws, women and children are extremely vulnerable to male-perpetrated violence. In light of this, Eze-Anaba (2006) calls for a total overhaul of the Nigerian legal system, which he claims should instead be restructured around a victim-friendly human rights approach.

Box 11: Failures of the legal code in Nigeria

- Under Section 55 of the Penal Code, a man is entitled to correct an erring child, pupil, servant or wife, as long as this does not inflict grievous hurt on the person.
- Under the Criminal Code, sexual abuse of children between the ages of 13 and 16 is known as defilement and is not as serious as rape.
- In some states, sexual abuse of a girl child between the ages of 11 and 13 is merely a misdemeanour or indecent treatment, with a punishment of two years' imprisonment.
- In many cases of sexual assault, the law requires corroboration in addition to the victim's testimony. In particular, Section 221 of the Criminal Code requires corroboration before a conviction for defilement of a girl under the age of 16 can be sustained.

Source: Eze-Anaba (2006).

There are some signs of legal progress, though few of genuine victory. In 2008, the Federal Ministry of Justice completed a draft of the Elimination of Violence in Society Bill 2006. This is aligned with Nigeria's international obligations and seeks to prevent acts of violence directed towards women and the girl child. There is as yet no evidence that the bill has been signed into law, however (FMWA&SD, 2008a).

The Nigerian Police Force and other law enforcement agencies have established units to deal exclusively with violence against children (FMWA&SD, 2008a). Furthermore, FMWA&SD operates shelters for female victims of abuse, and offers them counselling, basic medical care and access to legal assistance (ibid).

Additionally, some states have created legislation that prohibits the violation of women's/girls rights. For example, Cross Rivers state outlawed both child marriage and FGM/C (FMWA&SD, 2008a). Early marriage has been prohibited in Kebbi state, through the Prohibition of Early Marriages Act; and withdrawing girls from school has been forbidden in Kano state, through the Retention in School and Against Withdrawal of Girls from School Act (Eze-Anaba, 2006).

In 2008, the newly elected governor of Akwa Ibom state passed legislation that stipulated jail terms for anyone levying accusations of witchcraft against a child. Given the widespread belief in witchcraft, however, it is unclear whether the legislation will have a significant impact (Akpan and Oluwabamide, 2010).

Awareness-raising and social mobilisation campaigns

Awareness-raising campaigns have been more successful than changing legal codes. Federal and state governments work through the media, local communities and religious institutions (churches and mosques) to sensitise parents about their responsibilities regarding their children (FMWA&SD, 2009). Workshops and conferences are run across all levels of government to emphasise the Child Rights Act and the African Union Charter on the Welfare of the Child. These events also stress the negative aspects of child abandonment and other practices that are harmful to children (ibid).

Between 2004 and 2007, the government launched several campaigns to sensitise the public to children's rights and child abuse. These include the creation of public fora, such as the Nigerian Children's Parliament, as well as new public 'holidays,' such as Children's Day and the Day of the African Child. In 2005, FMWA&SD ran a sensitisation campaign for the media, educating the press, who educate the public, about the abuse of women and girls. In 2008, it began working with the police, trying to shift the perception that domestic abuse is a private affair. It also educates officers about the types of abuse females face and works to teach them that legal action, not 'thicker doors,' is called for (FMWA&SD, 2008a; 2009).

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), established in 1995 to protect and enforce human rights in general, is very active in the fight against child abuse. In 2009, it organised several events to sensitise the public to human rights issues. Among these were a two-day training for the Plateau state child rights implementation committee members; a two-day training for police and child welfare officers on the need for gender-sensitive child-friendly spaces; and a two-day training of volunteers on *pro bono* services for vulnerable children in 10 UNICEF centres (NHRC, 2009).

NGO response to child abuse

There is a serious lack of evidence on the efforts of NGOs to combat exploitation and violence against children in the household. It is unclear whether this reflects a lack of actual programming or merely a lack of evidence. Despite this, FMWA&SD (2008a) emphasises the 'immense contribution' of NGOs, community-based organisations (CBOs), media organisations and other concerned groups to the fight against child abuse. Their efforts include generating public sensitivity to the issue and supporting the rehabilitation of abused children. As can be seen in Box 12 below, the little evidence available implies that local NGOs are more visible in the fight against child abuse than are national NGOs; this makes sense, given the 'private' nature of the problem.

Box 12: NGOS working on child abuse issues in Nigeria

Girl Child Concerns

From its base in Kaduna, this group works to ensure Islamic children from northern Nigeria have the opportunity to complete secondary education. It does this by offering 'scholarships, mentorships and leadership development programmes.' It also runs a Legislative Education Campaign, which advocates for the reform of the education system.

Media Concern Initiative (MediaCon)

Based in Lagos, MediaCon works in the area of child sexual abuse, in prevention and in providing a crisis response to victims by operating 24-hour help-lines. It offers support to victims and their families, which involves access for the victim to medical, legal and psychological assistance. Furthermore, MediaCon runs capacity building with key stakeholders, such as parents, children, social workers, the media, law enforcement officials and the judiciary. It has also opened a resource centre, which provides information on sexual abuse prevention and responses to interested stakeholders.

Friends of the Disabled (FOTD)

The organisation is based in Lagos and focuses on providing educational opportunities to disabled children. It works to eradicate societal prejudices against people with disabilities and promotes the employment of disable children by local businesses.

Kudirat Initiative for Democracy (KIND)

Through its Junior Kudra Programme, which is currently operating in three Lagos secondary schools, this aims to equip girls with the necessary skills and knowledge to participate across all levels of Nigerian society.

Education as a Vaccine against AIDS (EVA)

In its early stages EVA focused exclusively on HIV/AIDS education, but more recently it has expanded its activities to include an education programme, which provides scholarships for vulnerable children, and an enterprise programme, which provides trainings.

Child Growth Concern Initiative (CGCI)

Kehinde Adeniyi Akinyemi (in Adeniyi, 2010), President of CGCI, asserts that many of the children that end up as street workers and child labourers have been abandoned by parents or have run away from an abusive home. He also suggests that abuse is more common in single parent homes, and states that 95% of children in remand homes are from broken homes. Other reasons include poverty, which forces children out onto the streets in search of money to support their basic survival and needs, and overpopulation in Nigerian cities, where it is not uncommon for five or six to sleep in a room together. CGCI seeks to identify and rescue abandoned children, and acts as a temporary care home and adoption agency for unwanted children. It works with the government to ensure there are alternatives to parents who would usually abandon unwanted children. CGCI also runs enlightenment programmes to sensitise Nigerian society to child abuse.

Source: FMWA&SD (2008a).

NGOs and INGOs are also working to end child marriage, which, as has been mentioned, is most prevalent in the northern regions of Nigeria. Sensitisation campaigns are common and seem to be having some success, as there has been a 10-15% increase in girls' enrolment in primary school and a drop in the rate of school withdrawal across the north (FMWA&SD, 2008a).

International organisation responses to child abuse

There is also limited evidence on international engagement in the fight against child abuse in Nigeria. Programming that exists is dedicated largely to capacity building for organisations that are on the ground in the community, and to and awareness raising.

In 2009, UNICEF supported the NHRC in its bid to educate attorneys general on the Child Rights Act – and its implementation – in their respective states (NHRC, 2009). UNICEF also collaborated with the South-South NHCR office and the River state Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development (MWA&SD) to run a training programme for law enforcement and judicial officers in Calabar and Owerri. The programme focused on raising awareness among participants with regard to the Child Rights Act, and informing officers of the roles they are expected to play in its implementation.

Furthermore, UNICEF, the NHCR and the Child Rights Brigade International (CRiB) run a series of assessment centres in 18 pilot states to measure the level of implementation of the Child Rights Act (NHCR, 2009). The programme will also present the most 'child-friendly governor' with an award as an incentive for governors to excel in child rights programmes. The result of the competition was pending at the time of writing.

INGOs are also involved in ending early marriage and keeping girl children in school. Kano state's CCT is internationally funded (by the World Bank and DFID) and conditional on girls' enrolment in school. While there are grave concerns that COPE does not adequately enforce conditionality on a national level, Kano's programme is targeted to specific state needs and is judged to be effective. The World Bank and DFID have expressed an interest taking this model to other states.

To combat instances where children are accused of witchcraft, the Child's Rights and Rehabilitation Network (CRARN), in association with Stepping Stones Nigeria (SSN), runs a shelter in Eket local government area of Akwa-Ibom state (FMWA&SD, 2009). At the time of writing, the shelter was caring for 133 children (ibid).

4.5 Linkages between social protection initiatives and child protection violations

Conceptually as discussed in Section 2, overlaps between child protection and social protection systems and services are significant. UNICEF's 2008 Child Protection Strategy notes that 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 [...] At the level of prevention, their aim includes supporting and strengthening families to reduce social exclusion, and to lower the risk of separation, violence and exploitation.'*

Such linkages need to be promoted if maximum synergies are to be realised, especially in contexts of pronounced resource-constraints as is the case in Nigeria. At the policy level in Nigeria these linkages have been recognised to an extent in a number of key policy and strategy documents:

- 2004 Social Protection Strategy - which in its lifecycle approach identifies the promotion of education for all and addressing child labour and early marriages through scholarships/ return to school incentives and school feeding programmes for the 6-14 age group; and addressing early marriage and violence among other problems for the 15-24 age group (Olanrewaju et al., 2004)
- 2003-7 National Economic Empowerment Strategy (NEEDS) – which has a section dedicated to safety nets and reducing a wide range of economic and social risks and vulnerabilities across the lifecycle as well as a sub-section dealing specifically with child protection issues. In the latter, the document highlights the role of Child Rights Implementation Committees at the federal, state and local government levels, which are mandated with the enforcement of the 2003 Child Rights Act. In particular these committees should be responsible for protecting children from communal and armed conflict, economic exploitation, sexual exploitation, trafficking, involvement in the drug trade, hazardous forms of work, and other forms of violence.
- 2010-2013 Vision 2020 – this document replaced NEEDS but with a diminished focus on safety nets and social protection for the poor (Holmes et al., 2011) in favour of a stronger emphasis on enhancing supply-side services. It does however call for establishing a data management system for different categories of vulnerable groups (including OVCs) in the formal and informal sectors, social transfers for the poorest, skills training for youth outside school as well as social protection for abused and neglected children and babies who are in need of care and protection through partnerships between government and civil society organisations. However, despite still taking a life-cycle approach to social protection programming the document does not mention the child protection dimensions which are articulated in the NEEDS document.

As a result of limited policy traction at both federal and state levels, at the programme level links are much weaker. Indeed our primary research indicated only very small-scale overlap between social protection and social protection initiatives at the state level. Key areas where one might expect overlap can be found in Table 2 below but in reality there was little evidence of such synergies as the table also details. Only in the case of donor-run CCTs and NGO-run school subsidy/fee waiver programmes for OVCs were clear synergies found, but even here coverage was very limited suggesting that going to scale will require a much clearer strategy and stronger political and resourcing if synergies between the two systems is to become a

reality. International examples where such synergies have been forged – Brazil's Bolsa Familia Programme and Chile's Solidario programme further suggest that strong governance, a previously existing high functioning social welfare system, concrete mechanisms to facilitate inter-sectoral cooperation and political support greatly facilitate synergistic linkages between social protection and child protection systems (Schwartz and Abreu, 2007). In the case of Bolsa Familia linkages include psycho-social support programmes for youth in Campinas State (Program Youth Agent and Program Youth Action) and in the case of Chile Solidario which has a strong emphasis on psycho-social support, preferential access to domestic violence prevention and support services as well as special attention programmes for high-risk children (including those in foster care or the penal system) are a core part of the holistic social protection package (Gobierno de Chile, 2004).

Table 2: Potential and actual linkages between child protection and social protection programmes

Type of social protection	Programme type	Brief programme description	Potential child protection link	Evidence of linkages in Nigeria
Social assistance	In Care of the People (COPE) cash transfer programme	A conditional cash transfer programme which started as a pilot in 2007 and is now in phase 3. Aims to break inter-generational poverty transfer and to reduce the vulnerability of the core poor in society as well as to improve the potential capacity to contribute productively to the nation. Beneficiary households receive a basic income guarantee for one year, a lump-sum Poverty Reduction Accelerator Investment and entrepreneurial and life skills training. Payments are conditional upon enrolment and retention of children in basic education and participation in all free health care programmes. Very small coverage – less than 0.001% of the population.	Conditions involving: • Birth registration • Awareness raising in community educational forums • Non-involvement in harmful forms of child labour • Compulsory educational attendance • Compulsory health attendance at free clinics • Promotion of linkages between complementary services (e.g. remedial services for victims of child protection deficits)	No direct linkages but indirect linkage by helping to prevent families resorting to adverse coping strategies which could result in child protection deficits
Social assistance	Other conditional cash transfer programmes specific to Kano, Bauchi and Katsina states funded by UNICEF, World Bank and DFID.	These pilots (2011-14) are aimed at reducing girls' drop-out rates due to early marriage specifically during transition period from primary to secondary school.	As above	Specific recognition of risk of child protection deficits among girls and aims to prevent this by supporting households to retain girls in school. In Katsina State the design of the programme also focuses on creating linkages with other programmes and institutions through a 'referrals' component where beneficiaries are referred to a specialised

				institution when required.
Social insurance	Community-based health insurance	Aims to protect informal sector and marginalised groups against the burden of high out-of-pocket health expenditures. Will entail a flat contribution rate per community and communities will choose their benefits package which will then be costed. To start April 2011 with eventual coverage of the informal sector.	Cross-referral of children between health and child protection services	No linkages outlined in existing policy documents. Current focus is still on management of the scheme (extent of community control) and financing (see Holmes et al., 2011 for further details).
Health subsidies/fee waivers	Maternal and Child Health Scheme	Part of the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) and started in 2008. Provides free primary health care for children under five and primary and secondary care for pregnant women up to six weeks after childbirth. Not poverty focused but given disproportionate level of child and maternal mortality among the poor it is included here.	Cross-referral of children between health and child protection services; could also promote awareness of linkages between child protection deficits such as early child marriage, child trafficking, hazardous forms of child labour etc. and health deficits at the community level	No linkages outlined in policy documents. No linkages identified in primary research.
School subsidies/ fee waivers	No national school subsidy programme but state, donor and NGO-run programmes, including as part of HIV/AIDS programmes for OVCs	The 2004 National Plan of Action for OVCs identified school scholarships to OVCs to cover fees, books, uniforms, exam registrations, school meals, transport etc. as a priority action and this has guided NGO action in particular since. E.g. Adamawa's Centre for Women and Adolescents Empowerment indirect cash transfer programme which pays school fees for orphans. Such programmes typically have very small coverage – CWAE only has 7 children in its programme currently.	Cross-referral of children to child welfare and health services; awareness raising opportunities among girls about risks of trafficking, early marriage etc.	Small scale programmes in a number of states with such linkages.
Productive transfers, works and sub sidies	National Job Creation Scheme	Announced in Dec 2010, aims to create thousands of new jobs through labour-intensive public works especially in sectors critical to MDGs	Public works labour could be used to support awareness-raising programmes at local levels about child protection deficits; to serve as assistants to social welfare officers in delivering child protection services	No linkages outlined in existing policy documents
Social equity/ transformative social protection measures	Anti-discrimination and affirmative action legislation	Various international rights covenants; national and state-level anti-discrimination legislation	Legislation on intra-family violence, sexual violence and trafficking, child labour, birth registration – all critical to ensuring children's right to protection from violence, abuse and neglect.	Passage of Civil and Political Rights Covenant, Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Covenant; 2003 Child Rights Act; 2007 CEDAW bill failed.

Source: Adapted from Holmes et al., 2011.

4.6 Informal responses and coping mechanisms

Social protection responses need not be formal in nature and indeed informal mechanisms can often be more significant. As recognised in the Nigeria Vision 2020 document, historically social protection and security were taken care of by the family and community systems (see page 212). In the context of growing urbanisation and modernisation these traditional systems and values have weakened in Nigeria, resulting in a social crisis that is only very partially met by government and civil society social protection mechanisms as discussed above. That said, field work undertaken for this project and the companion ODI/UNICEF Triple F study suggests that informal safety nets do still play a role in protecting children from the worst forms of child protection deficits. Informal safety nets in the form of relatives, extended kin networks, faith-based institutions and local community groups, provide some financial and psycho-social support to families suffering from household level shocks (see also Box 13). For instance, in Adamawa, Edo and Lagos states town union, youth and women's community groups and cooperatives (*alajeseku*) were reported to help people deal with adversity by providing loans and offering a much-needed source of social solidarity (Cullen et al., 2011).

Reliance on family members also emerged as a prominent source of financial support with money provided for critical expenses such as health care and education, often in the form of remittances from migrant communities, and assistance provided in securing work for needy relatives (ibid). "*Our tradition ensures all to be united, […]so that the weaker members of the society are catered for by those better endowed*" (ibid). In Edo and Imo respondents also noted that neighbours and friends could in some cases be relied upon for pooling resources (e.g. trading capital and saving funds) and securing public goods such as electricity and water supply, community security and road maintenance etc.

The importance of faith-based organisations should also not be under-estimated. While for the majority of respondents the primary benefit of church attendance was cited as spiritual protection and moral guidance, churches also emerged as significant safety nets in times of need. Respondents in Edo state, for example, reported that their church provides help with school fees for high achievers who come from impoverished households as well as business support (FGD 6). Similarly, in Benue, cash assistance received from FBOs enables some households to cover immediate needs and pay for health care or schooling.

Box 13: Examples of informal coping mechanisms with protective effects on children

In the absence of either a strong government or a vigorous civil society, taking a second job emerged as a common response to economic malaise among respondents from Benue State. Teachers, for example, who make very meagre salaries, are taking on 'after-school' jobs such as courier work. Other families are taking out loans from their extended family, friends and savings clubs. Women are starting small businesses. Several respondents noted that they considered it an achievement that they had been able *'to keep their younger ones in school,'* often at great expense to themselves (IDI5, IDI10). Families are pulling together socially too; young mothers are living with their aunts and grandmothers, who feed them and help them take care of their children.

Edo's citizens also use a variety of informal coping mechanisms. Loans from family and friends were reported to be common (IDI1, IDI2, IDI11, in ODI, 2011). Credit (*ususu*) groups and women's groups also provide short-term loans. Additionally, there are savings groups that encourage families to save small sums regularly to build their own buffers against shocks (IDI1, IDI10, IDI12, in ODI, 2011).

In Lagos, a number of respondents noted that churches were a major source of emotional support. . One girl noted for example that "*churches, especially Redeemed Church, is giving attention to the needs of the OVC; some are taken to orphanage homes and some are adopted*" (FGD-8).

Nevertheless, in many cases such support appears to be incommensurate with needs, especially in the context of the recent financial and food price shocks. "*More households are struggling now to make ends meet*" (FGD 3) in urban Edo and social networks are seen by some to be breaking down in Imo "*because of financial hardships [while] the scale of support is also decreasing*" (FGD 3). ODI primary research findings also suggested that family violence and breakdowns were on the increase in part due to financial difficulties and rising stress levels. Increasing unemployment is affecting not only the ability to pay for basic necessities

but also calling into question traditional gender-age and age-based roles within the family leading to intra-household tensions and conflict (ibid). In turn, women respondents in particular reported suffering from depression, anxiety, and general psychological ill-being, with particular concerns voiced about the increasing challenge of caring adequately for their offspring.

Another rising problem with child protection consequences is increased time poverty stemming from women's greater involvement in paid work to help meet household needs as well as rising fuel costs and more time-consuming fuel collection methods (e.g. firewood collection replacing the use of kerosene). Coupled with women's already heavy domestic burdens, respondents noted that time poverty was leading to diminished quality and quantity of care for children.

It is also critical to point out that while informal coping mechanisms appear to be helping to stave off some of the drivers of child protection deficits in some communities (by providing financial support to cover child education costs and reduce the need for child labour and reliance on other adverse coping mechanisms, including trafficking), there do not appear to be any significant informal approaches to addressing child protection deficits once they have occurred. In other words, while informal mechanisms can play an important preventative role, mechanisms to help redress child protection deficits (including services by faith-based organisations) were not identified during the course of our research. Given the extremely limited coverage of formal mechanisms this is very concerning as it suggests that children in our research sites (and no doubt beyond) are at risk or suffering without options for support and redress.

5 Conclusions and policy implications

Given that, over the past five years, social spending has declined from 9% of the federal budget to only 5%,[9] and in light of the extreme weakness of current child protection services in Nigeria, building a child-sensitive social protection system that addresses both the economic and social risks facing children will undoubtedly be a long and arduous process. This is especially the case given the relative weakness of the social protection agenda and the broader governance challenges in the country.[10] In order to better address the key social and economic drivers of violence, exploitation, abuse and neglect and realise the potential of a transformative social protection approach, policy and programming efforts need to be concentrated in at least five broad areas:

1 Enhancing awareness of and enforcement of protection-related legislative and policy frameworks;
2 Supporting more effective interagency and inter-sectoral institutional arrangements, including capacity-building initiatives for the effective planning, financing, delivery, coordination and monitoring and evaluation of programmes;
3 Strengthening information systems and knowledge sharing, in order to improve the evidence base on child protection vulnerabilities, underlying drivers and the impact of formal and informal responses;
4 Investing in awareness raising, preventative activities and response services to address child protection vulnerabilities, in partnership with public service providers (schools, health facilities, police, etc.), the justice system, civil society actors (including traditional and religious leaders) and the private sector; and
5 Promoting synergies between what are generally small-scale child protection initiatives with broader social protection and poverty reduction programmes, in order both to enhance the reach of child protection interventions and to tackle more effectively the multi-dimensionality of child protection vulnerabilities.

5.1 Enhancing awareness of and enforcement of existing frameworks

Enhancing awareness of and enforcement of existing child protection frameworks is a critical first step in promoting a child-sensitive transformative social protection agenda. A common complaint from respondents involved in child protection work is the mismatch between policy and legal frameworks and actual implementation. The UBE Policy framework, for example, calls for penalties for the parents of chronic truants found on the streets, but there has apparently never been a single prosecution. Similarly, while NAPTIP has made progress in reducing the incidence of child trafficking and has rescued hundreds of children from harmful forms of labour, to date there have been only 12 trafficking prosecutions.

The Child Rights Act is also poorly implemented. Despite codifying at the national level a wide range of protection-related rights for children, the act has yet to be domesticated in one-third of Nigerian states, nearly a decade later. This is attributed to various factors, including very limited funding; a lack of commitment and inadequate understanding of the issues among the bureaucracy and policymakers; a dearth of a critical mass of CSOs working on child rights, especially at the state level, compounded by weak advocacy skills and technical knowledge required to engage in debates; and the absence of leadership by communities themselves to address child protection vulnerabilities (Benue KII12, 13).

[9] According to sources at NSITF.
[10] Corruption is a significant problem. There are allegations that the National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP), for example, misappropriated millions of dollars that had been allocated towards the purchase of tricycles to help encourage entrepreneurship in the poor. One respondent was very blunt: *'There's corruption on a scale that's unbelievable. Talking about budgets can get you killed.'*

In order to address these weaknesses, especially with regard to the three child protection vulnerabilities our analysis has focused on (child labour, child trafficking and child domestic abuse), our research findings suggest the following actions could usefully be undertaken:

- Maintaining and then rebuilding funding dedicated to social needs.
- Domesticating the Child Rights Act in all 36 states of Nigeria, and ensuring it supersedes in practice all common law, customary law and Sharia law when it comes to protecting the rights of children;
- Establishing and utilising a Child Justice Administration, as called for in the act, rather than subjecting children to the criminal justice system;
- Responding to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child's recommendations to update laws prohibiting child labour, specifically laying out those occupations that should always be deemed off-limits to children (such as mining or operating dangerous equipment); to cease criminalising children for 'status offenses' such as truancy and vagrancy; to enforce laws prohibiting child marriage; and to prosecute those who sexually abuse children to the standards (life imprisonment) called for in the Child Rights Act;
- Enforcing the Child Rights Act provisions that outlaw hazardous forms of child labour; at the minimum, this would mean an absolute prohibition of the employment of young children or of school-age children during school hours;
- Funding and implementing the National Plan of Action for OVC; by 2010, the plan called for the provision of basic services, including education, health care, nutrition and protection;
- Using the framework provided by NAPTIP to fully prosecute those involved in child trafficking.
- Strengthening the capacity of the National Population Commission with regard to birth registration.

In all of these areas UNICEF has considerable international expertise and could play a key role in supporting the development of local institutional capacities to strengthen the implementation of these legal mechanisms and systems.

5.2 Enhancing interagency coordination and capacities

Weak capacity and almost totally absent coordination are also consistent concerns regarding child protection-related initiatives at government level. For example, child traffickers in Edo have been able to exploit the state's lack of coordinated anti-trafficking measures by merely moving from the southern regions of the state to its interior. Given that Nigerian democracy is barely a decade old, it is vital to set realistic goals. Child protection vulnerabilities are complex and widespread, and addressing them effectively will require a long-term approach. It is important therefore to identify some relatively quick policy wins and to implement these in tandem with a more incremental strategy with a longer-term time horizon.

Since FMWA&SD has the responsibility for multiple social welfare services, including those related to children, capacity-building support for this ministry is crucial. An essential first step is to carry out capacity assessments, followed by costed plans for capacity development, covering mandates, organisational arrangements, coordination, human resources and financing. It is essential that such assessments are carried out at both federal and state levels, perhaps beginning with a pilot programme so as to better identify what works and why. A good practice example in this regard is UNICEF's support to a capacity assessment of the Ghanaian Department of Social Welfare in 2007, which has now led to capacity-building measures that are being assisted by DFID. While several key informants suggested that budget issues were highly sensitive, owing to widespread issues of corruption in some state contexts, only with properly planned and funded strategies will it be possible to begin to tackle the relative invisibility of child protection vulnerabilities this study has highlighted. Here too, in addition to supporting government agency capacities, donors, INGOs and international agencies could also

usefully support national NGOs to develop and implement budget monitoring tools so as to gradually promote greater accountability and transparency in this area.

Enhancing inter-sectoral coordination is also clearly vital to promote synergies and avoid fragmentation and duplication of activities and the wastage of scarce funds. Various other ministries, such as those related to education, health, justice, labour and youth, and the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) Office, all have a vital role to play in protecting Nigeria's children. Possible reforms identified by our research include:

- Expanding what is meant by 'free and compulsory' under UBE, to ensure that education is indeed totally free, and implementing the enforcement provisions of UBE to ensure that all adult guardians of children, including both biological and foster parents, are held accountable if their wards are absent from school;
- Funding and enforcing the mandates of the Federal Ministry of Youth Development, for instance, including providing older adolescents with job skills and employment opportunities, to reduce urban crime and improve the safety of younger children;
- Educating law enforcement personnel about the rights of children so violations against them are seen in the light of national law rather than private discipline.
- Eliminating inter- and intra-agency role confusion in post-MDG Nigeria. The National Health Insurance Scheme, for example, has moved from a purely regulatory role to become responsible for implementation, blurring previously delineated boundaries.[11]
- Reducing spending duplication in order to maximise the cost-to-benefit ratio.

Given the plethora of players – or potential players – in child protection, there is significant scope for the development of tighter linkages between sectors. Two examples are important here. First, NAPTIP is key in this fight, in cooperation with a variety of other ministries and agencies, including FMWA&SD and FMEL&P, both of which have their own children's agendas. Second, while the MDG Office is not mandated with child protection-related responsibilities *per se*, child protection deficits can play a negative role in terms of hindering the full achievement of the MDGs (e.g. child health, nutritional and educational goals). Moreover, given the key role of the Office of the Senior Special Assistant to the President on MDGs (OSSAP-MDGs) in supporting social protection initiatives including the Debt Relief Funded Social Safety Nets Scheme articulating and supporting (through the Debt Relief Gains Funds) the linkages between child protection, social protection and MDG achievement could be of critical importance leading up to 2015. This said, simultaneous efforts to forge stronger linkages at the state level in particular where the MDG agenda has enjoyed less political traction (Holmes et al., 2011), will be necessary, and also to ensure sustainability after 2015.

FMWA&SD, supported by UNICEF, could usefully foster linkages with key staff here so as to capitalise on the prominent role the MDG Office plays in the eyes of donor (it has *'the power of the purse,'* and is a key player in helping the country realise MDGs 1, 4 and 5).[12] While it is not an implementing agency, it could serve a catalytic role in raising the profile of child protection vulnerabilities and spearheading coordination efforts among its multi-sectoral counterparts.

International agencies, including UNICEF, could also play a useful role in supporting the development of a cross-agency working group to tackle a select number of priority child protection issues, potentially guided by recommendations from the Committee on the Rights of the Child if there is sufficient national buy-in to the latter's legitimacy. It is true that there are conflicting opinions about the role of the government versus (international) funders. Some respondents are of the view that the government should have the final responsibility, as this would potentially enable tighter targeting as well as smoothing funding. Meanwhile, there have been a great many one-off programmes in Nigeria, and local NGOs are often left to close programmes just as they are beginning to show real results. This said, the Nigerian government continues to face considerable governance issues, with legitimate concerns as to

[11] The Ministry of Health and FMWA&SD, for example, have both purchased ambulances, the latter with MDG funding.
[12] Interview with NSITF.

whether it could succeed in this role. *'The government is so weak, it is questionable whether you should put money through them,'* stated one respondent. It appears, therefore, that a multi-pronged approach is needed, but one that aims to streamline actions and related communication as much as possible.

5.3 Strengthening information systems

There are still many unknowns when it comes to child protection in Nigeria, with a significant lack of recent, rigorous data (see Appendix 1). NAPTIP does not have a functional information system on trafficking patterns and volumes, for instance. What data are available do not disaggregate victims by age, making it difficult to identify patterns of child-specific vulnerability. For example, children are not usually victims of sex trafficking to Italy, the major recorded international destination for Nigeria. They are far more likely to be trafficked internally for domestic and agricultural use. Headline counts of rescued sex trafficking victims divert attention, and funding, away from the more prevalent, but less 'sensationalised,' reality of children's experiences.

Understandings of child labour suffer a similar lack of data. The NCLS is nearly a decade old. Particularly in the wake of the recent global economic crisis, there is an urgent need to understand which children are working at which jobs for how many hours – and why – especially given what is generally known about linkages between economic shocks and child-related impacts. Moreover, targeting interventions to patterns that could very well be out of date is not cost-effective.

The evidence gap regarding child abuse is even more pressing. Child abuse in Nigeria is still seen as a private problem. Perpetrators are often family members and victims rarely speak up, owing to fears of stigmatisation and retaliation. As such, there is a near total lack of evidence on abuse in the Nigerian context. However, data could be collected through the national health survey, which includes a range of private questions, potentially with support from WHO, which is rolling out an international survey-based study on domestic violence.

There is also a lack of evidence regarding the impact of existent policy and programming. Immediately following the 2003 passage of the Child Rights Act, there was a flurry of legislative activity. While there is significant information about the content of that activity, there is a nearly complete lack of information as to whether or not those policies and programmes have had an impact. This needs to be addressed urgently, potentially as part of the proposed capacity-strengthening work with FMWA&SD discussed above. The National Population Commission, which is charged with birth registration as mandated by the Child Rights Act, needs similar assistance. Registration remains low and data very unreliable.

Budget information systems also need to be rebuilt and strengthened. Interviews with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) indicate that budget data currently disseminated by the government are largely paper-based and are at aggregate-level only. It is believed that, if detailed budget information were released electronically, it would be easier not only to track spending priorities and impacts but also to reduce misappropriation.

Generation of evidence appears to be regionally unbalanced also. What data there are available, on problems and impacts, is generally more plentiful for the southern states. The northern states have received less coverage overall. However, the success of Kano's carefully tailored CCT programme, for instance, suggests that regional nuancing is key to successful social policy and that researchers would do well to investigate the patterning of child protection vulnerabilities across the country, including in less populous states.

Given UNICEF's growing role as a knowledge generator and knowledge management-oriented organisation supporting domestic organsations to develop the evidence base in the areas outlined above could constitute a key contribution to system strengthening. This will necessarily involve a strategic and medium- to long-term vision and commitment on behalf of UNICEF as such skills are developed and institutionalised gradually.

5.4 Promoting awareness and multi-stakeholder partnerships

Tackling Nigeria's child protection vulnerabilities will also requires concentrated efforts by society as a whole, not just the government, international agencies and NGOs. Weak capacity and small budgets mean that, if children are to be safeguarded, it will take the concerted efforts of parents, grandparents, teachers, health professionals and community and religious leaders. *'It takes a village to raise a child'* has never been truer. As such, it is vitally important that awareness-raising and preventative activities target a broad cross-section of Nigerian citizens.

Teachers and health care providers, given their key roles in children's lives, need to be targeted as key information sources and channels for awareness raising at the community level. They need to know the provisions of the Child Rights Act, as well as the penalties. They also need to know what services and programmes the community provides to help meet child protection goals. When it comes to protecting children, teachers are the first responders. Not only do they know which children have attendance issues, and why, but also they are typically among the first adults to know about other vulnerabilities in children's lives. Raising teachers' awareness of community programmes that could provide children with exam fees or help with an abusive situation at home could reduce school absenteeism as well as meet children's other protection-oriented needs. There is evidence that teachers are already feeding children who come to school hungry; helping teachers serve as links, rather than service providers, could reduce the burden on them and increase the numbers of children served. Health care providers could share this key role. Victims of physical and sexual abuse, for example, could be linked to complementary services, including protective care and HIV testing.

Traditional and religious leaders may be particularly important if they are able to help shift attitudes regarding customary practices. For example, harmful forms of child labour need to be distinguished from child work. As schooling becomes more and more vital to preventing intergenerational poverty, it is critical that what is accepted and acceptable shifts quickly to include less work of any type. Evidence suggests that, in communities where traditional leaders speak out against child labour, people listen (ILO-IPEC, 2005). Traditional leaders could play similarly transformative roles in the fight against fosterage and early marriage.

At the community level, faith-based organisations often have more social capital and accountability than governments. This puts them in a unique place in terms of being able to protect children. On the other hand, religious tradition is implicated in a range of practices that are harmful to children. Islamic schools often require that boys work on the street to earn money for the school. Muslim tradition also plays into the value that parents place on their girl children and the early marriages they arrange for them. In addition, there are instances where faith-based organisations have been accused of corruption that rivals that of the government. If religious organisations could become partners protecting children, however, then they could become powerful players.

Given that informal social protection, built 'around reciprocity, religion, and morality', forms the traditional backbone of 'social services', the overall lack of community awareness of child protection issues is a critical problem (SAVI KII). Many communities do not know about the Child Rights Act. They do not understand children's rights and do not know what services and programmes may be available to ensure children's well-being. One respondent noted that in several communities residents were unable to identify a single government programme that addressed any element of social protection (Edo FGD1-7). Awareness is crucial for other reasons too. In Nigeria, commercial banks are required to donate 1% of their profits to development projects – which they do. However, because awareness of child protection issues and programming is so low, banks repeatedly fund the same large organisations, rather than injecting fresh hope into smaller CBOs.[13] Respondents from both the State Accountability and Voice Initiative (SAVI) and DFID are clear that the closer funding comes to communities the stronger its impact will be, as starting 'low' reduces corruption risks. There is also scope for

[13] Interview with SAVI.

tying together the status of women and girls. While mothers in Nigeria, like mothers in other contexts, skip meals to feed their hungry children in times of need, there seems to be no more general sense of gender solidarity. Media reports of trafficking highlight the role of urban women in the abuse of young girls. There is also substantial anecdotal evidence of women who keep foster daughters as virtual slaves, forcing them to work long hours while their biological daughters are sent to school. There is also evidence that women gain substantial status from being 'in charge' of cadres of young girls working in the streets. This situation calls out for an awareness-raising campaign and the sharing of examples of good practice/success cases through NGO networks, such as WOTCLEF, the Centre for Women and Adolescent Empowerment and GPI. Here too UNICEF could play an important role in supporting such awareness-raising efforts.

5.5 Developing synergies with broader social protection programmes

The concept of social protection is nascent in Nigeria: it is still often understood as poverty reduction rather than risk reduction. Moreover, government funding priorities are not aimed at social protection, much less the protection of children. This is illustrated by the difficulties the World Bank and DFID have experienced in getting some state governments to honour matching fund agreements for social protection initiatives, especially cash transfer programmes.[14] Both agencies pulled out of Benue, for example, owing to inadequate government commitment and action.

Even more embryonic are the links that integrate child protection components into broader social protection systems. However, as these systems are as yet still developing, a valuable opportunity is available to ensure that child protection issues are not compartmentalised into vertical programmes, but rather integrated across the sectors and agencies of importance for the fulfilment of children's rights, including in particular the ministries and local government bodies responsible for health, education, labour, police, justice and social welfare. The importance of strategies to mainstream child protection vulnerabilities into broader social protection and poverty reduction initiatives cannot be underestimated. The sheer scale of child vulnerability is sobering: *'the nation has over 17 million OVC and is able to reach just 7,687 children.'*[15] A key role that international agencies, and especially UNICEF could play, is to make the case that this is an urgent current and future issue demanding high-level political commitment and resources. UNICEF could also support state governments and agencies to tailor such efforts to best address the specific patterning of child protection deficits at the state-level given considerable divergence across the country.

Here, embedding child protection-related objectives within Nigeria's new cash transfer programmes could be of crucial importance. Since the households targeted by cash transfer programmes are usually among the most vulnerable, facing a range of different types of deprivations and risks, there is a strong argument to link cash transfer beneficiaries to other supportive programmes, including, where necessary, preventative and responsive social welfare services. This could involve referral to other programmes, as well as management of individual cases across agencies. A particular emphasis could be placed on promoting linkages with existing social welfare services that address child maintenance payments and alternative care arrangements for neglected or vulnerable children. Such linkages could be facilitated by the development of a single database that could be used for both COPE as well as the other social welfare services. This would reduce duplication and fragmentation, ultimately enabling more families to be better served at a lower cost.

And indeed, given the identification of child protection as one of four strategic directions in Nigeria's National Social Protection Strategy, and ongoing efforts to expand the adoption of the Child Rights Act across all states in the country, there is ample opportunity to learn from good practice examples of child protection–social protection linkages in other contexts. Ghana's Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty (LEAP) cash transfer programme, for instance, has

[14] Interview with NSITF.
[15] Interview with Assistant Director in Charge of OVC Programme, FMWA&SD.

included non-involvement of children in harmful forms of child labour and trafficking as part of its soft conditionalities (see Jones et al., 2009). Peru's *Juntos* CCT has similarly made birth registration a key conditionality of programme participation, thereby improving access of marginalised children to key public services. *Juntos* has also integrated a programme of parental education into programme design, which offers opportunities for programme facilitators to raise awareness among parents of the importance of children's access to education, health and nutrition and the services that may help poor families to do so (see Holmes and Jones, 2011). And as discussed in the report both Chile Solidario and Brazil's Bolsa Familia provide strong models of how psycho-social support programmes for victims of domestic violence and children and youth at risk can be integrated into a social transfer package.

There are also a number of possible entry points to strengthen linkages to child protection issues within existing social protection programmes. Nigeria's NAPEP, signed into law in 2001 and given the mandate of eradicating poverty, could be a key player in the battle to protect Nigeria's children. Programmes such as its Village Economic Development Solutions and Community Economic Sensitisation Scheme could, for example, integrate stronger messages about child labour.

Complementary services, such as health care and education programmes, could also be better targeted to reduce children's vulnerability. One of the primary drivers of child labour – and therefore child trafficking – is the fees associated with schooling. Education in Nigeria needs to be genuinely free. Uniforms, books and exam fees need to be built into UBE. Health care in Nigeria targets pregnant women and young children. While these are admirable targets, there are currently very limited provisions to help poor families obtain access to health care. The new Community-Based Health Insurance Scheme, rolling out in April of 2011, is coupled with the National Health Insurance Safety Fund, which will help some poor families buy care. However, its overall orientation appears to be one of including the poor as an afterthought; they are not the target.

Child protection deficits could also be partially addressed as part of public works schemes. Labour funded by public works programmes could be utilised to support under-staffed government agencies charged with the promotion of child protection and gender equality and help with awareness-raising activities.

Finally, there is scope for integration of child protection concerns even beyond the boundaries of social protection and complementary basic services. Nigeria's problems are diverse and deeply interconnected. The poverty that jeopardises Adamawa's children, for example, is tied to its limited infrastructure, which prevents goods from being marketed. It also prevents rural children from attending secondary school and sick children from reaching the hospital. Similarly, Benue's environmental concerns are causing food yields to drop, thereby increasing local hunger, decreasing local incomes and driving child labour and trafficking.

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Appendix 1: Key evidence gaps, by theme

Key evidence gaps regarding child trafficking

Overall there is a significant lack of timely and rigorous data available on victims, traffickers and trafficking patterns in Nigeria. Although a National Monitoring Centre (NMC) exists within NAPTIP, it is not operational as it lacks usable digital information and training mechanisms. Moreover, while the literature on trafficking is rapidly expanding, studies are not based on quantitative data, which limits understanding (UN.GIFT 2008). Similarly, criminal justice data on trafficking offences is not publicly available in many countries, including Nigeria, making the compilation of accurate statistics unreliable at any level (UN.GIFT 2008 cited in Irhiam, 2009: 97). Due to the lack of accurate statistics, organisations have found it difficult to gauge the multi-dimensionality and magnitude of the issue. Reports of an increase in trafficking could reflect actual increases, or on the other hand, a more focused awareness of the problem (Aronowitz, 2006: 63).

During a presentation on the epidemiology of chid trafficking in Nigeria, Okojie (2009) considered the major factors for the lack of evidence on the subject to be:

1 The criminal and clandestine nature of the problem
2 Victims' reluctance to report their experiences for fear of being deported as illegal immigrants and for many other reasons
3 Given that trafficking involves a complex series of events over an estimated period of time and in different places -- from the home to the border to the workplace, some legal and some illegal--it can be difficult to identify a single case of trafficking.
4 Established work against trafficking is just starting among NGOs and government organisations, and thus there are not yet any established channels of exchange of information on trafficking.

Many studies into child trafficking are also hindered by the reluctance of the victims or parents to talk with researchers. In some cases the problem extends as far as community leaders (Aronowitz, 2006: 41). Trafficked victims can be reluctant to speak about their experiences or even admit to being trafficked because of the stigma attached to sexual exploitation (De Haas, 2006: 12). Tydlum and Brunovskis (2005 cited in Laczko & Gozdziak, 2005) add to this argument when they state that one of the most challenging problems facing researchers is the underground and illegal nature of trafficking. The majority of the people relevant to the study of human trafficking, such as victims, traffickers, or illegal migrants, are part of a hidden population. Victims may refuse to talk because they fear reprisals or prosecution for their status as undocumented migrants.

Critics within Nigeria also raise questions about anti trafficking efforts in European receiving countries. These critics argue that Europe deports all 'illegals' back to Nigeria without identifying the traffickers Officers in Nigeria report a lack of information coming from countries deporting Nigerians (IOM, 2006; UNODC, 2006 cited in Irhiam 2009: 98). . This reinforces the reciprocal relationship between traffickers and their victims; it is not uncommon for trafficked victims to have an oath of silence with their 'madam'. Another key reason for the lack of information on trafficking is that many people remain indifferent to it, and do not see it as a serious crime (Adepoju, 2005: 90).

In an effort to establish a database and a standardised monitoring mechanism for child trafficking in Nigeria, UNICEF has been active in creating reporting matrices (Save the Children Italy). The recording of trafficking cases is disjointed at best; it is often left to NGOs and international organisations or services within individual regions or States. This is the case with the Anti-Human Trafficking and Child Labour Unit of the Nigerian Immigration Service at Kano (Aronowitz, 2006: 63).

In terms of research trends and recommendations, Olagbegi et al (2006) highlight that research on human trafficking is primarily focused in southern Nigeria, in the Sates of Delta, Edo and Cross Rivers. By comparison the north of the country receives little attention. He

asserts that this does not mean trafficking is a problem only experienced by the South, on the contrary, the trade in human beings is as prevalent in the North as it is in other parts of the country. Adepoju (2005) emphasises the need for more research on traditional practices conducive to trafficking. Child placements, child fostering, domestic work and child labour migration all push children to traffickers and weaken the protection of children's rights. Olagbegi et al (2006) highlight the need for further research on the impact of broken homes on the vulnerability of children to trafficking, as interviews with trafficked children reveal that the majority are products of broken homes and/or orphans.

An additional problem--with most of the literature on trafficking in Nigeria—is that it is unclear whether it is discussing child trafficking specifically. For example, children are regularly discussed in the same light as women - as vulnerable persons. This grouping hides valuable patterns. Nigerian children are not typically trafficked for sex work in Italy. They are more commonly trafficked for domestic servitude and street hawking—within Nigerian borders. Furthermore, their trafficking is typically "voluntary" in that either they—or their parents—agree to the situation. Research needs to disentangle women and children and address the varying causality—and solutions.

There is also a lack of information on government and NGO projects that target children specifically. This is most apparent in the case of the IOM. Considering the link between child migration and forced labour/child trafficking, the lack of specificity is surprising. Evaluations and assessments are also lacking. There is copious information on what programmes have been implemented, but little on the finer details or the success of projects. Indeed, the majority of relevant studies were published in the years immediately following the passage of the 2003 Child Rights Act. Broader momentum and interest does not appear to have been fostered subsequently.

Key evidence gaps on child labour

Evidence on child labour in Nigeria is sorely lacking. While the NCLS collected comprehensive data on the subject, that data is now a full decade old. In order to tackle the problem today there is a need for rigorous, statistical data that is disaggregated by age, state, gender, poverty status, etc.. Headcounts of how many children are engaged in what types of work are also clearly vital.

There is also a need for a clear definition of what constitutes child labour. Children have always worked in Nigeria and they are likely to do so for the foreseeable future. Delineating what forms of labour are never acceptable, what forms of labour can be acceptable if undertaken in moderation, and what kinds of labour are just "chores" could be very valuable for anti-labour campaigns. Programmes that simply call for an end to child labour risk alienating the vast majority of the population—who genuinely have little option if they are to provide regular meals to their children.

It would be useful to have more of an insight into how the relevant Nigerian Ministries function, and how they seek to tackle the problem. We know the inspectorate system rarely monitors events outside the formal economy and that NAPTIP only addresses trafficking and the worst forms of child labour. There is a need for the government to address the more moderate, and widespread, aspect of the problem –children who work part-time, voluntarily, in the informal labour market.

There is little evidence of enforcement. It would be useful to know whether this owes to a lack of data or whether it is genuinely because Nigeria's comparatively weak laws are not being enforced.

It is unclear what role the private sector plays in policing itself. While there are few children employed in the formal sector, it is unclear whether the private sector as a whole attempts to reduce child labour.

It is unclear what role UNICEF and the ILO are currently playing in the fight against child labour. The most recent data and evaluations of the ILO and IPEC programmes are from

2005/2006. This is also the case with UNICEF. It would be useful if more up to date evaluations/reports/details of specific projects were widely disseminated.

Key evidence gaps on child abuse

Aderinto highlights several factors that contribute to the lack of evidence and literature on sexual abuse in Nigeria. These include, the tendency of girls to remain silent about abuse; girl children are at the bottom of a dependency cycle, which means abuse can often appear invisible; the fact that abuse is often perpetrated by family members or close neighbours reduces the likelihood of reporting it to the police; and because of the lack of prosecutions against offenders.

Several factors have been identified that discourage child victims of home based abuse from taking legal action. By its very nature, abuse or exploitation means it is hidden from public view. Furthermore, child victims of abuse within the home are often economically dependant on the perpetrator, whether it's a parent, relative or employer. This makes it very difficult for the victim to report the offence to the police. In addition, the large number of cases that go unreported contributes to a lack of information on children suffering from forms abuse, neglect and exploitation within the home (FMWA&SD, 2008: 53).

Evidence and evaluations of government efforts is lacking. Most evidence and commentary on the subject comes from various reports within the FMWA&SD. By and large these reports provide a brief overview of the problem and then outline the measures they have or are going to take to tackle it. In most cases this fails to amount to a sufficient evaluation. Moreover, the objectivity of government reports on their efforts to combat child abuse should be questioned.

Although international organisations and NGOs do concentrate efforts to enlighten the public and law enforcement agencies to child abuse within the home, evidence of Direct Action Initiatives is lacking. This is especially the case with UNICEF. The website clearly states the organisation makes efforts to combat violence against children, but there is no concrete evidence or evaluations of action programmes they undertake to tackle the problem.

Much of the literature on the subject addresses the issue more generally within the framework of child rights – study's that address the issue of violence and exploitation within the home are lacking. Literature providing insight into child abuse and the enabling environment of traditional practices, such as child marriage, are out-dated. Some of the articles may have been written in the late 2000s but cite materials written in the 1980s of earlier. In order to enhance the current understanding of abuse and exploitation of the child within the home there is need for new research into the subject, within the context of the Child Rights Act (2003) and other recent legislation.

Appendix 2: Research instruments

Key questions for key informant interviews at national and state level, and service providers

Harmful forms of child labour (including domestic servants, street hawking, resource extraction, trafficking):

- Scope and depth of vulnerability
- Change over time
- Change over last 2 years
- Key drivers
- Existing legislative frameworks governing working conditions for children
- Enforcement of laws
- Existing policies and programmes
- Examples of good practice (GO and NGO)
- Remaining challenges

Early marriage:

- Scope and depth of vulnerability
- Change over time
- Change over last 2 years
- Key drivers
- Existing legislative frameworks governing working conditions for children
- Enforcement of laws
- Existing policies and programmes
- Examples of good practice (GO and NGO)
- Remaining challenges

Domestic violence (both within families, foster arrangements, and domestic servant employment):

- Scope and depth of vulnerability
- Change over time
- Change over last 2 years
- Key drivers
- Existing legislative frameworks governing working conditions for children
- Enforcement of laws
- Existing policies and programmes
- Examples of good practice (GO and NGO)
- Remaining challenges

Key questions for FGDs

Four focus group discussions in each research site will be undertaken – one with women of mixed age, one with men, one with adolescent girls and one with adolescent boys (aged 13-17 years).

For each of the three main types of child protection deprivations the case studies are focusing on the following questions will be discussed:

1 To what extent is this type of child protection problem a concern in your community?
2 If it is a problem, what do you think contributes to the problem?
3 Have these problems changed in severity over time? If so why?

4 What about in the last two years? If so, what accounts for this change?
5 What types of coping strategies do young people have access to if they are subject to such abuses? From friends? Family? Government programmes? NGO programmes?
6 How effective are these strategies? And/or what are the challenges?
7 In order to address these child protection issues, what do you think the government could do to help protect vulnerable children? What about NGOs?
8 What are the challenges in bringing about lasting change?

Appendix 3: Child protection and social protection in West and Central Africa

Synergies between child protection and social protection include:	
(i)	Social transfer programmes eligibility to be with some element of conditionality on child protection-related behaviours; the inclusion of especially vulnerable children among the target groups for social protection programmes;
(ii)	Social health insurance; developing stronger child-sensitive responsive services.
(iii)	Social welfare services - capacity development for teachers, health and social workers, the police and judges through investing in awareness raising and preventative services to address child protection vulnerabilities, in partnership with public service providers (schools, health facilities, police etc), the justice system, civil society actors (including traditional and religious leaders) and the private sector;
(iv)	Stakeholder involvement – participation of children and young people, strengthening protection-related legislative and policy frameworks, including law enforcement, sensitising and promoting dialogue with private actors for good practices and changing attitudes and behaviour towards child protection; and
(v)	Development of a robust evidence base and accessible knowledge management system - data needs to be collected and shared in a coordinated database about programme beneficiaries and the services individuals are accessing through supporting more effective inter-agency and inter-sectoral institutional arrangements, strengthening information systems and knowledge sharing, and capacity building for the effective planning, financing, delivery, coordination and monitoring and evaluation of programmes.

Literature providing examples of social protection programmes which either directly or indirectly deals with child protection				
Country Name (Developed/Developing)	**Programme Name /Literature**	**Child labour abuses**	**Child trafficking**	**Child domestic abuse**
Ghana (Developing)	The Ghanaian Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty Program (Sources: N. Jones, W. Ahadzie and D. Doh (2009) 'Social Protection and Children: Opportunities and Challenges in Ghana'; N, Jones, (2009) 'Promoting synergies between child protection and social protection: West and Central Africa' and R. Holmes; N. Jones and R. Holmes (2010) 'Tackling child vulnerabilities through social protection: lessons from West and Central Africa' and T. Braunholtz-Speight (2009) 'Strengthening social protection for children: West and Central Africa')	No	Yes (indirectly)	Yes (indirectly)
Burkina Faso(Developing)	Burkina Faso's Plan National d'Action Sociale (PNAS) (Source: R. Holmes, and T. Braunholtz-Speight (2009) 'Strengthening social protection for children: West and Central Africa')	No	No	No
Cape Verde's (Developing)	Cape Verde's Social Protection Strategy (Sources: N, Jones, (2009) 'Promoting synergies between child	No	No	No

Literature providing examples of social protection programmes which either directly or indirectly deals with child protection				
Country Name (Developed/Developing)	**Programme Name /Literature**	**Child labour abuses**	**Child trafficking**	**Child domestic abuse**
	protection and social protection: West and Central Africa' and R. Holmes, and T. Braunholtz-Speight (2009) 'Strengthening social protection for children: West and Central Africa'))			
Mali (Developing)	Mali's Social Development Policy (Source: P. Pereznieto and V. Diallo (2009) 'Social Protection and Children in West and Central Africa: Case Study Mali')	No	No	No
Nigeria (Developing)	Nigeria's In Care of the Poor (COPE) (Source: R. Holmes, and T. Braunholtz-Speight (2009) 'Strengthening social protection for children: West and Central Africa')	No	No	No
Senegal (Developing)	National Plan of Action for Children in Senegal (Source: P. Pereznieto and A. Fall (2009) 'Social Protection and Children in West and Central Africa: Case Study Senegal').	No	No	No
Democratic Republic of Congo (Developing)	National Strategy for the Social Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Source: E. Villar and B. Makosso with R. Holmes, N. Jones and P. Pereznieto (2009) 'Social Protection and Children in West and Central Africa: Case Study Republic of Congo')	No	No	No

Appendix 4: Key informant interviews

Benue

Serial No.	Organisation	Serial No.	Organisation
KII 1 (National)	Coalition for Change	KII 2	Benue MDG Office
KII 3	NAPEP	KII 4	Methodist Women's Association
KII 5	BENSACA	KII 6	Chamber of Commerce
KII 7	Ministry of Women's Affairs	KII 8	Child Department
KII 9	Director of Public Health	KII 10	Ministry of Planning and Development
KII 11	Partners for Development	KII 12	Child Rights Initiative Act
KII 13	First Step		

Edo

Serial No.	Organisation	Serial No.	Organisation
KII 1	International Reproductive Rights Research Action Group (IRRRAG)	KII 2	Girls' Power Initiative (GPI) Nigeria
KII 3	Director of Social Welfare, Ministry of Women's Affairs and Social Development	KII 4	Director of Child Affairs, Ministry of Women's Affairs and Social Development
KII 5	Director of Women's Affairs, Ministry of Women's Affairs and Social Development	KII 6	Executive Director, Poverty Alleviation Agency
KII 7	S.A. to the Governor on Poverty Alleviation, Poverty Alleviation Agency	KII 8	Planning Education Board
KII 9	Willi Johnson Foundation	KII 10	Centre For Res. & Preventive Health Care (CERPHEC)
KII 11	Centre for Organisational Development (COD)	KII 12	Rural Infrastructure and Development Association (RIDA)
KII 13	National Directorate of Employment	KII 14	State Coordinator for NAPTIP
KII 15	State Director of National Population Commission		

Lagos

Serial No.	Organisation	KI	Serial No.	Organisation	KI
KII 1	Action Health Inc.	Omolara Ogunjimi, Programme Officer	KII 2	Adonai Community Empowerment Society	Olusola Adegbesan, Executive Director
KII 3	Agric-Yes[16]	Gbolahan W. Lawal, Programme Coordinator	KII 4	Dept. of Economic Planning	Mrs Oyokomino, Head of Intelligence Unit
KII 5	ESSPIN[17]	Gboyega Ilusanya, State Team Leader	KII 6	Gender and Child Rights Initiative	Chigoziri Ojiaka, Executive Director
KII 7	Microfinance Initiative	Affi Ibanga, Executive Director	KII 8	Ministry of Education	Details not given
KII 9	Ministry of Rural Development	Awolaru E.O. , Director of Community Development	KII 10	Ministry of Women's Affairs	Mrs Joke Orelope-Adefulire, Commissioner
KII 11	Origbonbo Local Government Council Development Area	Honourable Idown Obasa, Chairman	KII 12	Poverty Alleviation Dept.	Folasade O. Ogunnaike, Director
KII 13	Rice 4 Jobs	Dr Rotimi Fashola, Programme Director	KII 14	Sparc	Ben Arikpo, State Team Leader
KII 15	Humanity Family Foundation for Peace & Development (HUFFPED)	Adenigba O. Henry , Service Provider	KII 16	Lagos State Ministry of Women's Affairs and Social Development	A.I. Fadaro. Director Child Development Department

[16] Government run agriculture-based youth empowerment scheme.
[17] Education Sector Support Programme in Nigeria.

Appendix 5: State manifestations of child protection vulnerabilities

Adamawa

State context

Adamawa, the "Land of Beauty", is a large state in the north-western corner of Nigeria and shares a long boundary with Cameroon. This mountainous state is one of the most ethnically diverse; its 3.5 million inhabitants speak over 80 languages. Christianity and Islam are the most popular religions in the state, with the remainder practicing traditional religions.

Adamawa is one of Nigeria's poorest states. In 2008 its GDP per capita was only US$209 (UNDP, 2009). Over 70 percent of its population was poor; nearly 40% were considered "core poor" (ibid.). Households headed by women were over represented in both groups (AWIS, 2008). Demographic pressures are making it difficult to address this poverty. Women in the state average 7 children and economic growth does not match population growth (UNFPA, n.d.). There are other signs of poverty too. For example, only one in four of the state's residents has access to an improved water source and one in five to adequate sanitation. Electricity penetration is only 33% (National Population Council, 2009).

Agriculture is the backbone of Adamawa, which is still three-quarters rural (AWIS, 2008). Farmers in the state grow maize, yams, cassava, millet, and rice for their own consumption. Cotton, coffee, and tea are cultivated for cash. Livestock production is also important in Adamawa. Despite the state's reliance on agriculture, 40% of residents report that they sometimes have a difficult time meeting their food needs (AWIS, 2008). A further 15% often or always have a difficult time obtaining enough to eat (ibid.). A reliance on traditional farming techniques, and limited access to productive inputs, depresses agricultural yields. Furthermore, a lack of infrastructure makes it difficult for farmers to get their crops to market.

The children of Adamawa live precariously. Only 20% are fully vaccinated by 23 months and only one-third have their births registered[18] (National Population Council, 2009). Two in five young children are stunted and one in five suffers from wasting (ibid.). This may be related to the fact that while essentially all of the state's infants are breastfed, very few are exclusively—or even predominantly—breastfed for more than one or two months (ibid.). Furthermore, while the majority of families report using insecticides, less than 15% of children sleep under bed nets (ibid.). Few children complete their schooling.

The net enrolment rate for primary school is only 64% and for secondary school only 34% (ibid.); access to schools, particularly secondary schools, is lower in rural areas, where lack of transportation means that most adolescents live more than 30 minutes from school (AWIS, 2008). Boys often leave school to attend Islamic schools and girls for marriage. Literacy rates for youth are 80% for males and 60% for females, a disturbing gap that none-the-less indicates progress compared to their parents (National Population Council, 2009). Youth knowledge about HIV, on the other hand, is quite low. Only one-quarter of the state's young people report comprehensive knowledge about transmission and prevention (ibid.).

Women shoulder a disproportionate burden in Adamawa. Only one-third are literate and one-quarter of all women under the age of 20 are either pregnant or already have a child (National Population Council, 2008). Only 2% of women use modern methods of birth control and only 11% of infants are born in health facilities (ibid.). Women also have limited input into decision making. Just forty percent of Adamawa's women report that they are allowed to make decisions regarding their own health care—and only one-third of men believe that women ought to have input into the decision on how many children to have (ibid.). The low status of Adamawa's women is reflected in its GDI of .28 and it's GEM of .29 (UNDP, 2009).

[18] Statistical data for Nigeria varies considerably—particularly on a state level.

Governor Nyako's tenure has been plagued with allegations of misappropriation. Human Rights Watch condemned his 2007 election as a farce and he was removed from office by an election tribunal (Shirbon, 2007). In 2008, after he had regained control, the state legislature served him with impeachment papers, accusing him of gross financial mismanagement as well as unfair distribution of government jobs (Molomo, 2008). Concerns have been raised that he is attempting to foist off a "Fulani hegemony" (Balogun, 2010)—inflaming ethnic tensions in the area.

Patterning of child poverty vulnerabilities and underlying drivers

Adamawa's children face a plethora of vulnerabilities—largely driven by the state's desperate poverty. Child labour is prevalent, as families seek to mitigate their economic circumstances in one of the few ways open to them. Other children are forced to work by Almajiri, Koranic schools which are common across the state.

Poverty and economic vulnerability

Adamawa is amongst Nigeria's poorest states. With a GDP of under $210, nearly 70% of the state's citizens live on less than US$1/day (UNDP, 2009). Female-headed households are more likely to be poor than male-headed households, 82.6% versus 70.9% respectively (CWIQ, 2006). In addition to being very deep, Adamawan poverty is very broad. At .33, the state has the second lowest GINI coefficient in Nigeria (UNDP, 2009). "We are all in this together" is quite literally true—only 5% of the state's population is "not poor" (AWIS, 2008).

Desperate families often resort to child labour to make ends meet. It is estimated that 40% of children between the ages of 5 and 15 are engaged in some form of labour (KII16), most commonly farming, fetching water, and street hawking (KII 15). Girls are more likely to work than boys, by a factor of 2:1 (ibid.). While they are on the street they are "often exposed to sexual abuse although they often do not report such issues because of stigma" (KII 17) . While child labour is a perennial issue in Adamawa, there is evidence of recent declines in household "purchasing capacity due to skyrocketing prices" (KII3). This has resulted in ever growing numbers of children working as hawkers and beggars to raise the family income (KII2).

Educational outcomes in Adamawa have long been comparatively weak; nearly 50% of adults have had no formal education (AWIS, 2008). A reliance on children's labour is jeopardizing the educational success of another generation. Net primary enrolment is only 63% and net secondary enrolment is under 35% (National Population Council, 2008). Enrolment is also impacted by school fees (KII 2). Over two-fifths of the state's citizens indicate that they have difficulty paying these fees (AWIS, 2008). Some children are kept out of school entirely and others are forced into the labour market to provide their own school fees. "*I sponsor myself to school …. I am a panel beater apprentice', said one boy in our FGD. Another girl noted that even when children are able to attend school,* "(t)hose who are unable to pay are sent out of class when we write tests," meaning that they are unable to graduate. *Children are well aware of the tension that this work/school duality creates; another boy noted, "I will not have time to concentrate on my studies".*

> "'*You don't even speak about the lack of women and girls' empowerment – people simply don't understand the term" (KII 10).*

Socio-cultural attitudes and practices

There are a variety of traditional attitudes and practices in Adamawa that impact children's protection. According to one respondent, "(t)he root of children's problem here is that parents do not listen to children" (KII 10). Ill children are, for example, denied medical care as parents do not like the way they (the parents) are treated by medical staff (ibid.). Furthermore, girls, who are valued less than their brothers and typically bear the brunt of family labour requirements (KII 15), are pulled out of school and married off young—to ensure that they have no chance to "dishonour" the family through promiscuity (KII 10). It is estimated that nearly half of all girls in Adamawa are married before the age of 18 (KII 16). In addition to interfering with the girls' education, the fertility patterns associated with early marriage are dangerous to both mothers and their babies. Adolescent pregnancy is common in the state,

which has a median age at first birth of 19.4 years (National Population Commission, 2008). In addition to the health consequences brought on by early childbearing, the high dependency ratios fuelled by early and repeated births make it difficult for parents to adequately care for their children. This is complicated by polygamy, which is common in Adamawa; over 15% of households report this arrangement (AWIS, 2008). As polygamous households tend to be even larger, with an even higher dependency ratio, their poverty is often deeper.

Almajiris, which are Koranic schools that are common throughout Adamawa, have been implicated in cases of child labour, abuse, and trafficking. They "deprive children of other life changing opportunities" and expose them to a range of social and economic risks (KIIs 5, 2, 4). In one case, two years ago, over 150 children were rescued from an Adamawan Almajiri. Many showed bruising from beatings and some were chained to the floor (KII 17). While the children were rescued by the police, "the men responsible for this crime [were] acquitted to avoid religious backlash' (KII 4). The school is still operating (KII 17). As some boys are brought to Almajiris from other states and across international borders, they are also "prone to trafficking" (ibid.).

Health shocks

Less than half of Adamawa's citizens have immediate access to a health clinic (AWIS, 2008). Road conditions are poor and clinic travel times can be quite high. Furthermore, despite the fact that health care is putatively free for pregnant women and children under the age of 5, nearly one-third of the state's citizens report that they have difficulty paying health fees (ibid.). One man from our FGDs noted, "(t)he government keeps announcing that they are giving free health care but it is not true." Furthermore, there is evidence that recent increases in local poverty are impacting child survival. One respondent noted that clinics were reporting "increased mortality and morbidity from pregnancy-related issues and preventable disease such as malaria and diarrhoea (KII1)".

Environmental shocks

Over-use has left Adamawa's soils depleted and deforestation has left swaths of the state very vulnerable to flooding (KII 4 and KII 8). Given the technology levels of the state's farmers, these environmental shifts mean that farmers are often not even breaking even. Forced to take out loans to make it through the year, they then must sell their harvests—meaning that their own families go hungry and the "middle-men" grow fat (KII 4).

Urbanisation and migration

Increasing urbanization and migration are also impacting child protection in Adamawa. Our informants identified three main patterns of migration in the state (KII 5). First, young women, often in the company of older women, are migrating to the cities to engage in petty trading. They are vulnerable to economic and sexual exploitation. Second, while Adamawa does not have a significant problem with child trafficking per se, there are reports that some women are "hiring" rural children and taking them to Lagos to beg. Some of the money the child makes is then remitted back to his or her parents. While this practice skirts the edge of "trafficking", it is clearly jeopardizing children's safety. Not only are they on the street exposed to violence and injury, but they have been removed from parental care, which is rarely in their best interest. Finally, young Adamawan men are also migrating to the cities for work. Their remittances are not large enough to support their families and it is likely that their labour is sorely missed on family farms.

Benue

State context

Benue state is located on the eastern boundary of central Nigeria, bordering Cameroon. Home to over 4 million people, three-quarters of whom are subsistence farmers, the state is the nation's eighth-poorest. With an average age of only 17, and a population growth rate of 2.6%, demographic pressures are mounting (BENSEEDS Drafting Committee, 2004). Despite this, interethnic relations are generally quite good. The Tiv are the state's dominant ethnic

group, but there is considerable diversity, which is reflected in Benue's 14 languages.[19] Three-quarters of the state's citizens are Christian; the remainder practise Islam and traditional religions.

Politicians only sing the songs…leaders don't love their subjects. KII4

Tradition is very important in the state. The 23 local government areas are supplemented by two traditional councils, led by chiefs. Marriages, funerals and other rites of passage are important to Benue society, as is Kwagh-Hir – a form of theatre which ties together many of the area's artistic traditions and is a critical venue for imparting traditional morals.

Benue, like most of Nigeria, is desperately and increasingly poor; nearly half of the state's citizens live on less than $1 per day, with rural residents more likely to be poor – and poorer – than urban residents (UNDP, 2009). Just one-third of citizens have access to 'good' sanitation, one-quarter to an improved water source and two-fifths to medical services (National Population Commission, 2009). HIV is rampant; while statistics vary, some studies report that up to 21% of citizens are HIV positive, four times the national average, and the leading reason why nearly half of the country's orphans are located in Benue (Alubo et al., 2002; Hilhorst et al., 2004).

Benue is increasingly environmentally fragile (BENSEEDS Drafting Committee, 2004). Its two seasons, wet and dry, coupled with overexploitation as a result of population pressures, have left the 'breadbasket of the nation' with eroding, depleted soils, a dropping water table and higher vulnerability to floods and droughts. Despite this, the state produces a variety of cash and food crops, which include groundnuts, rice, soya beans and yams. While lack of infrastructure is the largest impediment to increasing agricultural sales, HIV is increasingly devastating the labour pool.

Benue's children bear the brunt of the state's deprivation. Chronic malnutrition, for example, is arresting the bodies of Benue's children. Nearly 40% are stunted and over 10% are wasted (National Population Commission, 2009). Disease also poses a constant threat to child survival. Only one in five toddlers has had all of his or her vaccinations; one in five has had no vaccinations, even for polio (ibid).

Benue's women are also disproportionally disadvantaged. In addition to their heavy agricultural labour, they must spend hours each day gathering water and fuel. They lack decision-making power in the household and also access to credit and cash (National Population Commission, 2009). While nearly 60% of Benue's men control land, only 14% of the state's women can make this claim (Francis, Nweze and Ojowu, 2002). Women's nutritional needs are also forced to take a backseat; tradition dictates that men eat first, even when women are pregnant. Furthermore, because women lack access to transportation, they find it particularly difficult to access medical care, leading to high rates of maternal death (National Population Commission, 2009).

Benue, like the rest of Nigeria, suffers from problems of management and governance (Jones and Kembe, 2002). Lack of capacity, coupled with a severe lack of public confidence, has resulted in poor continuity, coverage gaps and little public ownership. Addressing the state's poverty in this context is extremely challenging.

Patterning of child poverty vulnerabilities and underlying drivers

Existing evidence suggests that poverty, HIV and gender discrimination are the most significant drivers of child protection deficits in Benue. The HIV epidemic has left 40% of Benue's children classified as OVC and, in an already fragile environment, the toll on child well-being has been high (Hilhorst et al., 2004).

Poverty and economic vulnerability

Persistent, deep poverty has a number of devastating impacts on children. One of these is to force children into the labour market. Children as young as five often act as shock absorbers,

[19] www.benuestate.gov.ng/.

taking on income-generating activities as a way to raise their family's standard of living. Child labour is a perennial problem in Benue, and it is not always voluntary. *'Some do this work under threats; some of our parents will tell us that if you don't work you will not eat,'* reported one child (FGD4). Many children spend their weekends working on family farms and many others hawk goods in the streets, even on school days. Most of Benue's working children manage to combine work and school, at least for a while. Many children in fact work *in order to* go to school. While schooling is theoretically both free and compulsory, there is a wide array of other fees associated with it, such as transport, books and uniforms, which often force the poorest children into the labour market (FGD1-7).

Overall, however, only 80% of Benue's primary-aged children are enrolled in school, meaning that a great many are totally deprived of an education (National Population Commission, 2009). The relationship between poverty and child labour is highly cyclical. Poor parents with few other options send their children to work rather than to school. However, educational deprivation merely ensures that yet another generation of children will be locked into the cycle of poverty. Even when children remain enrolled, the quality of their education is impacted. They are more exhausted from their work and their teachers are increasingly on strike, as payment schedules are lagging. Girls are particularly disadvantaged: half of teenage boys are enrolled in secondary school but only about one-third of their female peers (ibid).

Child perspectives on protection vulnerabilities

FGDs with children and young people in Benue state revealed a broad array of child protection vulnerabilities. Some key themes that emerged were as follows:

'Girls experience the greatest burden'

'I have a friend called Eriba, whenever he comes home from work, his father will ask him to give him the money because he is the one taking care of him' (FGD6)

'They beat the girls up and rape them'

'We can no longer access the government school because of strikes' (KII12)

'Some girls sell their body to make money and go to school, others work in hotels, though is not their wish to go and work there but they cannot help it' (FGD5)

Child labour has other hazards too. Children on farms often work hours that are far in excess of what is healthy for growing bodies. Many of their tasks are too strenuous, and accident rates are high. Child hawkers are at near constant threat of injury. Darting in and around cars, washing windows and selling cold drinks, they are very vulnerable to accidents. They are also at risk of violence and sexual attack. Girls are more vulnerable to rape (FGD5, KII2): *'there is a road here, if you pass through it at 7pm and after you will get raped,' said one teenaged girl* (FGD6).

Much of the violence facing Benue's children comes from older adolescents and young adults. Faced with high unemployment rates, no access to the formal labour market and no real sense of a future, there is a growing sense of desperation among older teens. One young man noted, *'even if we see the job, it will not be given to us'* (FGD5). Others agreed that *'the situation worsens every day'* (FGD7). Many of these youths have more access to weapons than they do to jobs, which is increasing the danger to children.

There are other signs that Benue's children are becoming more vulnerable. Prices for food and fuel have skyrocketed. This is making it harder to make ends meet and forcing ever more families to send their children to work. There is anecdotal evidence that increasing numbers of teenage girls are entering sex work, as it is the most profitable line of work available to them. Other children *'previously selling phone cards [are] now engaged in selling pornographic material as it is more financially lucrative'* (KII12, KII2).

Time pressure on Benue's women is also becoming more intense, jeopardising children's well-being. Already overburdened, women are taking on more work, such as petty trading, small-scale farming and prostitution. With less time available for child care, children are at increasing risk, simply because of the amount of time they are left alone. One girl noted, *'children don't*

live happily with their parents, if parents don't go out to work their children will not eat, some parents leave the house as early as 6am and return by 6pm, children don't enjoy parental care' (FGD5). Adult stress levels are high and domestic violence, including child abuse, is becoming more common: *'parents pour out their aggression on children'* (KII6). There is also evidence of increased child abandonment, particularly of infants, as desperate parents run out of options.

Socio-cultural attitudes and practices

A wide variety of socio-cultural attitudes and practices endanger Benue's children. The average woman in the state has six children, and the median age of the first birth is slightly under 20 years (National Population Commission, 2009). These fertility patterns have distinctly negative impacts on children. Infants born to teenage mothers, or to women whose bodies are already stressed from repeated pregnancies, are more likely to be premature, small for gestational age and die before their first birthday. They are also more likely to become maternal orphans, as early, repeated childbearing is dangerous for women.

Children are often perceived as economic assets, which in many cases 'naturalises' their exposure to hazardous activities. Driven by poverty, but also by tradition, children are expected to work long hours at potentially dangerous tasks. While historically these tasks were often undertaken with close adult supervision, it is increasingly common in Benue for children to be sent off on their own, to work in the streets or to mind shops.

Girls are vastly more disadvantaged in this than boys. Considered less valuable than their brothers, as they will grow up and leave the family name and natal home behind, girls are important primarily for their labour. They have more domestic responsibility, from a younger age. They are responsible for many household tasks, from gathering water and sweeping compounds to minding their younger siblings. They are also more likely to hold paid employment than boys, and to do so at younger ages. This time poverty is a major reason that girls are less likely to be enrolled in school – there are simply not enough hours in the day.

Fosterage also disadvantages Benue's girls in particular. Many girls disappear from public view for years, forced to work long hours with little time off and no access to education. As these girls are invisible, they are uniquely vulnerable to physical abuse and sexual violence. Other girls sent into fosterage circumstances find themselves used by their relatives as a way to supplement family income. Forced to work on the streets rather than attend school, many of these girls spend their days in dangerous locations, making money they then have no access to.

Girls in Benue are also vulnerable to early marriage, as we have seen. Married girls have even more domestic responsibility, are subject to early childbearing and rarely attend school, regardless of their age. There is evidence, as families' economic vulnerability increases, that girls are increasingly being forced into marriage against their will.

Risk of overlapping deprivations

The following quotes from child sexual violence survivors in Benue highlight that many children are at risk of suffering from multiple deprivations and underline the importance of targeted basic services to address these vulnerabilities:

'Though I am getting nutritional support from Otabo, I would need financial support to enable me go (to school)' (14-year-old mother)

'I need assistance in terms of vocational skills training or other forms of empowerment from organisations that take care of vulnerable children in order to enable me fend for my baby' (15-year-old mother)

'I need educational support because I still want to go back to school' (17-year-old mother)

Health shocks

Benue state has the highest rate of HIV infection in Nigeria – up to four times the national average (Alubo et al., 2002). This epidemic has a variety of damaging impacts on Benue's children. Infected adults, as they become more ill, are less and less able to work to support

their families. This means children are forced further into the labour market. As adults become less able to care for themselves, children take up care burdens that often become so high they are required to leave school. Even children with non-infected parents can be impacted negatively. As women shoulder the care burden for infected relatives and friends, the quality of care they can provide their children drops.

Parental death is the most devastating impact of the epidemic on children. Nearly half of all Nigerian orphans live in Benue (Hilhorst et al., 2004). A full 15% of the state's children have lost both their parents (National Population Commission, 2009). Another 10% live in a household with a very sick adult – or where an adult has recently died (ibid). AIDS orphans are overwhelmingly vulnerable. They 'drop out of school first, eat last' and are often exploited by the very relatives meant to be caring for them (KII13). Many orphans migrate to urban areas, where they hope to find jobs that will help them live on their own. There, they are highly vulnerable to trafficking and sexual exploitation and have few opportunities to further their education.

Environmental shocks

Benue is increasingly environmentally fragile, and this too is increasing children's vulnerability. Depleted soils require ever-more labour to produce constant yields. This alone calls for more child labour. In the context of the HIV/AIDS epidemic, which is rendering significant numbers of adults unable to farm their land, the call for child labour is even higher.

Urbanisation and migration

There is evidence that urbanisation and migration are breaking down the social structures that have traditionally protected children. There is less support available to parents, and the quality of child care is diminishing as parents increasingly raise their families in cities far from their older relatives.

The line between migration and trafficking is increasingly blurred as economic opportunities become more limited. Benue is a hotspot for child trafficking. Recent media reports told of nearly a hundred children being transported out of the state and sold off to various cartels into agricultural work, domestic servitude and prostitution.[20] Children and parents are increasingly victim to 'pretty stories' of the better life awaiting urban children. Some parents send their children off with near strangers; other children leave on their own. Most find the reality is quite different from the story. One child respondent commented, *'some children migrate to Calabar to go and work, and after working, the contractor ran away with their money, and they were left with no option than to walk back home all the way from Calabar'* (FGD2).

Edo

State context

Edo is a landlocked state of 3.5 million people in southern Nigeria. It has 18 local government areas and is inhabited by a relatively homogenous population (ODI, 2011). Tradition is very important in the state. It is home to the Oba of Benin, the traditional king of the Empire of Benin, which is the nation of the Edo.[21] The current Oba, who was crowned over three decades ago, fulfils not only a ceremonial role but also one of political peacemaker.

Edo's resources are highly concentrated in its urban areas, which, given the fact that three-quarters of the population is engaged in agriculture, has led to high levels of inequality and statistical averages that cloud reality (NBS, nd). On the one hand, only one-third of Edo's citizens are poor, compared with half in the country as a whole, and one in twenty of the state's citizens are 'very poor', compared with one in ten nationally (NBS, 2010). Furthermore, three-fifths of the state's residents have access to an improved water source and three-quarters to electricity.

[20] http://64.182.81.172/webpages/news/national/2011/mar/03/national-03-03-2011-024.htm.
[21] www.edostateportal.com/; www.edostate.gov.ng/about-edo.

However, these statistics hide vast differences between rural and urban areas. Over three-fifths of rural residents self-identify as being poor; fewer than 40% of urban residents believe they live in poverty (NBS, 2010). Furthermore, in 2006, less than one-third of rural residents have access to safe water and good sanitation; nearly all urban residents do (NBS, nd). A respondent from the Ministry of Agriculture noted, *'if you look at it over 80% of Edo state people who dwell in rural areas are primarily engaged in agriculture and yet they are poor. If you ask me, it is difficult to classify agriculture as a viable economic sector.'*.

Outside of agriculture, however, employment opportunities in Edo are limited. Petroleum jobs, for example, are rare, and there is only one functional factory in the state (COD KII). Formal employment is almost exclusively the province of the government, which provides *'over 80% of functional employment in the state'* (KIII5). Even many of these jobs are relatively new, as it was not until 2010 that the state began to address the deficit of public sector jobs in education and health (ODI, 2011).

Those who are shut out of the state's relative financial success often have access to nothing – no income, no services, no infrastructure. The Director of Social Welfare at MWA&SD notes that *'money from economic growth does not translate to anything for the people; you are only able to access health services that you pay for, you are only able to get access to drinking water if you buy water, you are able to access to electricity if you have a generator, so what is the meaning of economic growth when the basic essentials are not there?'* (KII3). Even where there are programmes designed to help, one respondent noted that the poor have no *'accessibility, information, to seek assistance'* (KII4).

Edo's relative advantages are also reflected in women's lives. Nearly three-quarters of women are literate, one-fifth use modern contraceptives and four-fifths have a skilled attendant at childbirth – rates significantly higher than for Nigeria as a whole (National Population Commission, 2009). Women in Edo also have more access to decision making: nearly 70% make their own choices regarding personal health care, for example (ibid). Approximately the same number report being solely in charge of how to spend their cash earnings. Young women in the state are also largely buffered from the burden of early motherhood; less than 3% of the state's young women were pregnant before the age of 20 (ibid). On the other hand, 'trafficking in women from Nigeria is strongly concentrated in the state of Edo' (Carling, 2005).

Edo's children are also relatively well-off. They are, for example, more likely to complete their education than many of their peers. Net secondary enrolment is nearly 60%, far higher than Benue (CWIC, 2006). Throughout the state, all antenatal and delivery care is provided for free, and over half of all children are registered at birth, although urban children are more than twice as likely to be registered as rural children (74% versus 36%) (ibid). Furthermore, vaccination rates are comparatively high, with more than four in ten five-year-old children fully vaccinated (ibid). On the other hand, stunting and wasting are still very significant concerns, with nearly 40% and 10% of young children falling into these categories (National Population Commission, 2009).

Patterning of child poverty vulnerabilities and underlying drivers

Child trafficking, driven by poverty, is the hallmark of Edo's child protection deficits (US Department of State, 2009). NGO experts suggest that one in three of the state's families has experienced trafficking (KII11). Rural children are far more vulnerable to all forms of child labour than urban children, and girls remain particularly disadvantaged.

Poverty and economic vulnerability

While poverty in Edo tends to be neither as broad nor as deep as poverty in much of the rest of Nigeria, financial insecurity still constrains the lives of most of the state's citizens. Poverty is the major driver of child labour in Edo; the state has Nigeria's fifth highest rate of working children (KII4). In addition to performing household tasks, which frees adults for other labour, children in Edo work on farms, fetching cassava or firewood. As kerosene has become more expensive, reliance on children's labour has increased, along with the renewed use of wood as a fuel source (ODI, 2011). Rural children gather fuel for their own families, but also extra to

sell to urban users. Landless rural children also work hard; it is common for them to hire themselves out on rented farms each day *'for several hours to earn money to buy food'* (SEYP FGD). Children in urban areas also work, engaging in petty trading and hawking goods.

> *'Child labour is seen in Edo state as a means of survival' (COD KII)*

The end result is that many children attend school only part time (KII8). Furthermore, older children often drop out of school: *'It is not like they are not interested. The children are interested (in going to school), the parents are interested, but funds are not there to complete education'* (ibid). Even the children who do attend school often go without supplies, such as books and pens; even worse, many *'go to school hungry'* (KII2). Teachers often buy food for students, recognising that hunger is a serious impediment to learning. However, budgets are already strained and teachers have no way to meet the needs of all children.

Recently, there have been more children living on the street in Edo; as food prices have climbed, families have been unable to feed all their children, leaving the older ones to fend for themselves (KII2). *'The price of rice before the crisis was N3,500, but now is up to N12,000'*, noted one respondent (IDI9, in ODI, 2011). The director of a local NGO commented, *'the majority of (street children) are victims of early marriages, handicapped, abused and neglected children of prostitutes or destitute persons or orphaned by HIV/AIDS'* (KII11). Some street children end up in gangs, stealing for survival (KII6). Surrounded by violence, susceptible to injury and abuse and cut off from the education that would enable them a better future, Edo's street children face a myriad of protection deficits.

Socio-cultural attitudes and practices

A variety of socio-cultural attitudes and practices underpin these protection deficits. As one focus group participant emphasised, men in Edo are *'not there for their families'* (SEYP FGD); many keep multiple families, meaning not only that a great many households are effectively headed by women but also that the dependency ratio is quite high. The end result is women and children are more likely to be poor than men (KII10). Furthermore, there has been an increase in domestic violence as men have lost their jobs and their dignity: *'when most men lose their jobs, they just lose it all'* (KII2).

Girls are particularly disadvantaged. They are, for example, less prioritised when it comes to education. *'Girls are often asked to step down for the boys, until the economy improves, as the men […] inherit the name of the family, the properties [and] therefore are far more valued than the girls'* (KII8). Even girls who manage to complete their education do not see their efforts translated into empowerment. In other areas of the country, well-educated girls want to be pharmacists, doctors and engineers. In Edo, on the other hand, marriage is commodified: one respondent noted that *'girls have to be humble, as their husbands will not allow them to work or treat them as equals. (KII 2).*

Trafficking, most commonly of girls, is a very significant issue in Edo, one deeply rooted in the tradition of fosterage. It is driven, according to the State Coordinator for NAPTIP, by a confluence of complicated issues, including large family size, ignorance, poverty and urbanisation (KII14). Many girls are taken by older, wealthier relatives to the city, with promises of care that prove hollow. Others, *'who think they will plant tomatoes on farms*', end up forced into domestic servitude or *'even prostitution'* (KII2). While the majority of children who are trafficked stay within Nigeria, many young women are lured into sex work by the glamour of foreign travel, typically to Europe or the Middle East. *'There is a general belief and perception that the surest means out of poverty and to improve the quality of life for the family is to ensure that at least one member is outside Nigeria'* (KII15). Girls themselves rarely object to sex work, acknowledging it as a way to make an income (KII11). Trafficking infrastructure linking Edo and Europe, Italy in particular, is well developed –jeopardising successive generations of Edo's girls. While the southern part of the state used to be the trafficking hotbed, increasing profitability coupled with successful awareness-raising campaigns have recently led traffickers to change their recruitment methods and focus more on the central regions of the state (KII2).

Health shocks

The increasing incidence of HIV is also jeopardising Edo's children. The National Agency for the Control of AIDS (NACA) reports that incidence in the state jumped from 3.2% to 5% between 2008 and 2010. One result of the surging epidemic is that one in twenty of Edo's children have been orphaned (National Population Commission, 2009). These children have little access to protection of any sort and are vulnerable to all types of abuse and exploitation: *'at risk are orphans who drop out of school and face hunger'* (RIDA FGD).

> *'HIV/AIDS affects women and children most in EDO state' (Director, Disease Control Unit, Edo State Ministry of Health).*

Environmental shocks

Edo also suffers from a variety of environmental issues which are impacting child well-being. Desertification is increasing and, with it, the state's top-soil is washing away in floods. Oil spills are polluting important fishing grounds. Both make it more difficult for families to feed themselves, increasing their reliance on their children's labour (see above).

Urbanisation and migration

Urbanisation and migration are having a variety of impacts on the state's children. For example, one respondent noted that *'young people don't want to live in villages and work the farms anymore'*; they want to move to the city (KII4). This has ramifications for Edo's food security and reliance on child labour, particularly for coming years. Population growth, coupled with declining soil fertility, will call for increased – not decreased – labour inputs, meaning younger children, who have not yet left home, will be particularly needed for farm work.

Urbanisation was identified by the Edo State Coordinator for NAPTIP as a key factor in trafficking. *'Children are taken (trafficked) from rural communities, by their extended family in pretence that they will be adequately taken care off. A promise of better living can be irresistible'* (KII9).

Lagos

State context

Located in central Nigeria, Lagos is a small urban state. Home to Lagos city, the state's population is a matter of some debate, with estimates ranging up to nearly 18 million.[22] Its annual growth rate is 8%, largely because of migration; by 2015, the UN predicts that Lagos city will be the third largest city in the world, behind Tokyo and Mumbai (ibid). This relentless growth has led to it being the most ethnically diverse Nigerian state. Lagos is also the 'nerve centre' of Nigeria; its economic opportunities are far broader than those in other states. It has over 2,000 industries and two of the nation's largest harbours (ibid).

Lagos is a comparatively wealthy state; its gross domestic product (GDP) per capita is among the country's highest, at over $2,500 (compared with $1,100 for the country as a whole) (UNDP, 2009). Furthermore, a full one-third of the state's citizens consider themselves 'non-poor', substantially higher than the national average of 25% (ibid). The Human Poverty Index for the state is 14.5, compared with 32.3 for the country as a whole (ibid). Residents also have better services. Over three-fifths of Lagos's residents have access to an improved water source and nearly all have access to electricity (National Population Commission, 2009). Access to good sanitation lags, however, with only one in four having improved facilities (ibid). In addition, while Lagos's citizens are better-off on average than citizens of most other states, poverty is still endemic. Averages hide the depth of poverty, as the state's Gini coefficient is .64, 15 points higher than that of Nigeria as a whole (UNDP, 2009).

Still, children in Lagos are markedly better-off than their more rural peers. Over 80% are delivered by a skilled attendant and more than half are fully vaccinated by the age of two (National Population Commission, 2009). Only one in five young children is stunted and one in ten wasted – rates half those seen in Adamawa, for example (ibid). Child mortality rates are

[22] http://www.lagosstate.gov.ng/index.php?page=subpage&spid=12&mnu=null.

also significantly lower than the national average – 150/1,000 versus 205 (LASEEDS – 2005-2007). Furthermore, nearly 80% of children attend primary school, and secondary school has a net enrolment rate of over 70% (National Population Commission, 2009).

Women in Lagos state are also better-off than their more rural peers. Over one-quarter report using modern methods of contraception and only 5% have been pregnant before the age of 20 (National Population Commission, 2009). Nearly nine in ten reported receiving prenatal care from a skilled attendant (ibid). Women's educational attainment is also quite high – and closely matches that of men (ibid). Women in Lagos are also more involved in decision-making processes than many other Nigerian women: seven in ten make their own health care decisions and have sole control over how to spend their own cash earnings (ibid). Furthermore, 60% of the State Judiciary is made up of women (UNDP, 2009). The state's Gender Development Measure, at .55, and Gender Empowerment Measure, at .36, reflect this relative advantage; national averages are .43 and .22, respectively (UNDP, 2009).

Patterning of child poverty vulnerabilities and underlying drivers

Child labour and trafficking are significant issues. High poverty, coupled with unprecedented inward migration, have left the state's children very vulnerable to exploitation and abuse.

Poverty and economic vulnerability

Despite Lagos's comparative wealth, over half of its residents still live on less than $1/day (UNDP, 2009). Low income levels are coupled with rapidly rising food costs; one respondent estimated that costs went up by almost 100% in 2009 alone (KII10). Parents often have no recourse other than to send their children to work, making child labour *'very common in Lagos'*, particularly in rural areas (KII1). *'People in rural areas are having 8 children, 9 children, 10 children, and they do not have jobs, so what do they do? They have to give away their children to other people to train them'* (KII2). Lagos's children are engaged in a wide variety of labour. In addition to assisting their parents with household tasks and agricultural duties, they also hawk a variety of goods on the street and tend market stalls. Girls are far more likely to be involved in moneymaking activities than boys: 70% of child labourers are female (KII16)). Many of these girls are working as domestic servants, brought to Lagos by their older relatives (ibid). This form of trafficking, which is *'very enormous'* (KII15), is nearly invisible, as it often stays entirely within the family. It leaves girls vulnerable to beatings and other forms of abuse for *'not working fast enough in their jobs as domestic servants'* (KII6.)

While the majority of Lagos's child labourers are still in school, 20% of primary-age children and 30% of secondary-age children are not enrolled. Poverty is an important driver of this phenomenon. *'Some parents want to send their children to school but they don't have the money. When walking in the street of Lagos you see some students, some children, carrying pure water, gala, it's not supposed to be like that'* (FGD1). Some families need their children's income in order to buy food; other children are responsible for their own school fees. *'If they don't hawk they won't eat, as in they won't have money to go for their studies'* (FGD6).

Socio-cultural attitudes and practices

A variety of cultural beliefs underpin child protection deficits in Lagos. For example, many parents see children as a source of cheap labour. Children's best interests are often not considered. One result of this is that children work longer hours than adults. *'Children are expected to be educated, so they are sent to school, after which they are expected to carry out household chores, complete their homework and tend the shop until they close at night'* (FGD). The disproportionate burden that children in Lagos shoulder is interfering with their development. *'What I observe in my community is that the roles of the adult has been transferred to the children […] you can see most parents leaving their homes early in the morning for their work place. You discover that the older children, maybe 13, 14 or 15 years old, are taking the burden of care in home, taking care of their younger ones when they ought to be being taken care of'* (FGD1).

The increased strain on families is also driving abuse, causing families to break up – with women and children suffering *'social harassment'* and abandonment. (KII6, KII2). A

respondent from Adonai Community Empowerment Society noted that some marital dissolutions are more dangerous for children than others (KII2). When a woman leaves her children with their father, and he takes another wife, the new wife often cares only about her own children and sends the children from the first marriage to work, rather than allowing them to concentrate on their education (ibid).

Girls are particularly disadvantaged. *'The girl child is expected to do most work at home while the male child is treated as a hero'* (FDG1). While Lagos's girls are sent to school with their brothers, and are unlikely to be given out in early marriage, they are left with the most burdensome, time-consuming chores (ibid). Girls are also far more vulnerable to trafficking and sexual abuse than boys (KII1). Prostitution among school girls is not uncommon; they use the money to '*pay fees […] to find a way of living [as] their parents are so poor that they don't want to be like them'* (KII6.). Orphans and domestic servants are particularly vulnerable to physical and sexual abuse, as the following example illustrates.

> *'Recently, we had a young girl who walked into our office, her parents were dead and she was staying with her uncle. Her uncle for some time had been trying to abuse her sexually, but because of his wife he had not had the opportunity. However, yesterday his wife travelled abroad to give birth, and that night the uncle came to her and tried to rape her. She struggled with him and ended up pleading with him, asking him, "uncle why do you want to do this, knowing that I do not have any parents and it is you I look up to as my parents?" Yet, her uncle insisted, saying "if you have a tree you have been taking care of over the years, when the fruits begin to ripen, will you not want to be the first to take of it?"' (KII1).*

Belief in witchcraft also remains strong in Lagos. Children are accused of having evil spirits and doing black magic to make people poor. Some children are beaten publically; others are brought *'to the torch in the name of delivering them'* (KII6). Sick children are, ironically, one of the most vulnerable populations. Children who are frequently ill are assumed to be sent from the spirit world and doomed to an early death, regardless of what their parents do to protect them (Ojikutu, 2008). One Lagos study found that over half of the mothers of recently deceased young children who had frequently been ill believed that their children had been spiritually possessed (ibid). In the face of 'certain' early death, ill children, already the least able to cope with benign neglect, are often its most regular targets.

Health shocks

The HIV/AIDS epidemic has had devastating impacts on Lagos's children. Nearly 5% of the population is HIV positive, leaving thousands of children either orphaned or stigmatised as a result of their parents' status. One respondent said, *'we find it difficult to get health services for our children because of the fees attached to these services and the hostile attitude of health workers to our children when they identify that we their parents are positive'* (FGD9). Furthermore, HIV-positive children die from relatively minor infections, as their caregivers often cannot afford to take them to private hospitals.

Urbanisation and migration

Lagos has very high rates of inward migration, Nigerians from other states flock to Lagos, hoping for jobs that will lead to better lives. *'Everyone wants to come to Lagos in search of better opportunities'* (KII3, KII11, KII6). Migration from Benin and Togo is also quite high. The poorest residents of the state live in overcrowded, dangerous apartments. Children's risk of injury and victimisation is high in these environments, where they are often left to *'scavenge in refuse bins for valuables to sell and make ends meet'* (HUFFPED KII). High rates of migration are also stressing educational and health infrastructure (KII8).

Urbanisation is in turn eroding the communalism on which Nigerian culture has been based: *'Western life is wrongly adopted'* (KII15). Whereas in the past children were more or less 'absorbed' by extended families if parents were unable to care for them, today's vulnerable children often find themselves in the care of foster parents, who do not prioritise their needs, or living on the streets. This leaves them open to exploitation and drives child trafficking.

Appendix 6: State-specific responses

Adamawa state: existing services and response to child protection vulnerabilities

Formal coping mechanisms

Adamawa has not yet domesticated the Child Rights Acts. "One of the grey areas is the age of marriage" (KII 17). Despite high hopes that consensus could be reached, the legislature recently threw out the bill. In the absence of the CRA, our informants report that there are no state-level laws against early marriage, child labour, or domestic violence.

While formal coping mechanisms are few and far between in Adamawa, our respondents were able to identify several measures in the state that were meant to address poverty, if not child protection. For example, when fuel became exorbitantly expensive, stretching family budgets past the breaking point, the government stepped in, removed the "middle-man", and sold fuel directly (KII 3). Additionally, the Farming Skills Acquisition Programme is targeted at the "poorest of the poor". It is helping subsistence farmers raise their yields by teaching them new farming techniques and providing support for inputs. Maize harvests have gone up substantially, from 1-2 tons/hectare to 3-7 tons/hectare. While this is still substantially off the goal of 9.4 tons, the programme has great potential to both reduce hunger and increase cash income, substantially impacting children's lives (KII 7).COPE also has a small presence in Adamawa. Though it serves only 5 families per ward, due to budget constraints, evidence suggests that 80% of recipient families are complying with the conditionalities (KII 13).

Adamawa is working to extend basic services to its children. The Universal Basic Education programme, for example, is making it easier for children to prepare for their futures. Schooling is free for nine years. The state is also working towards health care provision. Pregnant women and pre-school children have access—at least in concept-- to free medical care including childhood immunizations.

Furthermore, ADSUBEB and UNICEF have established a Mother's Council to encourage school attendance and discourage child labour. Though the programme is only one year old, the ADSUBEB representative (KII 6) believes that it is already discouraging street hawking and increasing girls' school enrolment. The state is working to address the latter in other ways too. There are now 40 girls-only schools throughout the state. They are working not only to encourage school retention, but also to discourage early marriage.

NGOs are working to bridge the gaps between need and government services. The Global Fund works with a variety of local organizations, including religious organizations, to provide services "on the ground". Child protection related networks are slowly emerging. "All agencies and NGOs working on issues that affect children in any way link up and collaborate. We hold regular meetings and address issues" (KII17).

There are several skills acquisition programmes—including Spring of Hope, which targets AIDS orphans. These programmes offer families a way out of poverty and make children less vulnerable to forced labour and trafficking. Other organizations, such as CRI, provide care and support to OVCs. Others work to address gender issues. CWAE, for example, is working to stop child marriage. They begin with negotiation and move to legal manoeuvres if necessary. Working with the Adelahu Law Clinic, which offers free legal services to children, CWAE also provides full school scholarships to ensure that adolescent girls have options.

Institutional weaknesses

Social protection is not prioritized in Adamawa. Resources are limited, as the state is extremely poor, and capacity remains low. Changes in the government often result in shifting programmatic priorities, leaving projects either abandoned mid-stream or deliberately dismantled (KII 1). One respondent, for example, noted that infrastructure, rather than human development, is a relatively higher priority for the new government; an educational fee waiver implemented by the previous government was recently scrapped (KII 4).

The lack of linkages between programme design and implementation also results in project failure. For example, the same informant notes that while pregnant women and young children are eligible, under NHIS, for free medical care, supplemental costs and medication unavailability is preventing people from being properly served. "Targets are never met in reality" (ibid.). One FGD participant said, "(t)he government keeps announcing that they are giving free health care but it not true" (adult male). This pattern is repeated in education. As was mentioned, exam fees in "free" schools are still the responsibility of the parents (KII 18). Furthermore, "these schools have no materials and teaching aids, no books. In fact children have to buy chalks for the teacher to use" (male FGD participant).

Lack of quality data hinders setting realistic targets (KII 1)—and those who speak up and "try to change things and challenge the dominant approach often face political victimisation" (KII 8). "Data and statistics that can aid deep understanding of the issues relating to child deprivations and effective planning as well as development of long term programmes are difficult to access" (KII 16). This has led to programming which tends to be reactive, rather than proactive; the scale of interventions is small and the rhythm is cyclical, rather than constant. "The main function we perform is to create awareness. We use different international or national days to create awareness like the Children day, International Day of the African Child" (KII 17).

Informal coping mechanisms

Given their desperate poverty and the few safety nets available to them, residents of Adamawa use a variety of informal coping mechanisms to mitigate their circumstances. The Adamawa State Poverty Profile Assessment reports that agricultural piece work and informal loans are common coping mechanisms (AWIS, 2008). However, reducing food intake is equally common; one-fifth of respondents report eating less to help stretch their meagre budgets. This is echoed in our focus group discussions. One of our informants stated that households have "resorted to the bush to collect wild fruits in order to feed themselves" (KII 3); others reported that some families are able to afford only one meal a day (KII 5,8,13). Other adverse coping mechanisms were also reported by our participants; child labour and distress sale of assets were both mentioned (KII 15).

Benue: existing services and response to child protection vulnerabilities

Formal coping mechanisms

Benue is one of the 24 Nigerian states that have passed the Child Rights Act, which it did in 2008. Its implementation, like all other state-level child protection efforts, is under the control of MWA&SD. Last year, with UNICEF's help, MWA&SD put together a coalition of NGOs to work on child protection. UNICEF implemented training for this group, which remains stuck at the committee phase, as MWA&SD is yet to allocate funding, according to the coordinator of Otabo Caregivers and Support for Orphans: *'We need letters of introduction, a formal swearing-in to enable the coalition to start and function fully.'*

MWA&SD runs a small orphanage, which provides temporary care for children until they can be fostered out. However, the number of children reached is very small. Ultimately, said one respondent, *'most […] government policies are political gimmicks. [The] poor are too poor to even have the energy to ask for help'* (KII11).

Child protection is a relatively new concept in Benue state. It has received only recent and limited attention, and fewer resources. Social protection programming as a whole has been quite limited in the state and, where child protection is prioritised at all, it has been integrated poorly into the broader picture, meaning that useful synergies have not been developed. The resultant policies and programmes stand largely on their own, rather than being embedded in a larger web. They are thus comparatively weak and vulnerable – hardly an ideal way to protect vulnerable children.

Another major institutional weakness is implementation. Even where policy exists, political will and funding are reportedly rare. KIIs also identified a lack of understanding, significant capacity deficits and weak incentive structures as problems undermining the potential of

policymakers and bureaucrats to bring about real change in the area of child protection. This is perhaps reflected in the fact that the World Bank and DFID pulled out of Benue after the state failed to follow through on matching funds for social protection initiatives.

These problems are compounded by a dearth of CSOs working on children's issues. Key informants were of the view that data and technical skills are nearly non-existent and advocacy skills are weak among both secular and faith-based organisations.

NGOs in the state that address child protection issues tend to target OVC. For example, Ohonyeta Caregivers and Otabo Caregivers and Support for Orphans, both implementing agencies for larger INGOs, provide nutritional support, educational fees and vocational education to orphans. They also help dropouts return to school. The Association of Orphan and Vulnerable Children Organisation in Nigeria (AOON) also has a state-level chapter. It too targets OVC, but its programming is almost entirely HIV-related.

First-Steps, which is funded by national and international NGOs, works to protect Benue's youngest children. The programme aims to strengthen access to essential services such as health care, nutritional support and education. Targeting pregnant women and children under the age of eight, it also provides training and grants to parents of young children to help improve their economic situation so their children have a better chance.

Informal coping mechanisms

In the absence of either a strong government or a vigorous civil society, Benue's families and communities are working together to protect as many children as they can. Taking a second job is a common response. Teachers, for example, who make very meagre salaries, are taking on 'after-school' jobs such as courier work. Other families are taking out loans from their extended family, friends and savings clubs. Women are starting small businesses. Several respondents noted that they considered it an achievement that they had been able *'to keep their younger ones in school,'* often at great expense to themselves (IDI5, IDI10). Families are pulling together socially too; young mothers are living with their aunts and grandmothers, who feed them and help them take care of their children. Ultimately, it is communities doing their best to take care of their own, with poverty limiting the ability of people in the poorest communities to help one another, thus highlighting the need for formal social safety nets that protect children and their families.

Edo: existing services and response to child protection vulnerabilities

Formal coping mechanisms

Edo state has a variety of policies and programmes designed to protect children. At the highest level, the Child Rights Act was domesticated in 2007. The state MWA&SD is the key governmental player in terms of child protection. Its Family and Child Care Division, for example, deals with cases of child labour, child marriage and domestic violence. The Social Development Unit works with children in conflict with the law, providing them with safe living arrangements and ensuring they have access to age-appropriate due process. The ministry has also established, with funding from the MDG project, six Skills Acquisitions Centres. These help girls obtain the skills they need in order to support themselves without resorting to sex work. They have so far *'prevented about 3,000 girls from being traded abroad, just from one centre in the state'*, according to one respondent (KII3).

The Poverty Alleviation Agency, which was established in 2010, seeks to address the poverty driving child protection issues. Seeing no results from NAPEP, the state stepped in to address the rampant poverty of its population. *'Before this government, there were no anti-poverty policies in the state'*, commented one respondent (KII 7). There are four main programmes being implemented by the PAA. First is a vocational education scheme for youth. This is attempting to tackle the high unemployment rate that is driving youth unrest and increasing the risks facing children. Infrastructure development is the second. Farmers are unable to transport their crops to markets for sale, given the deplorable road conditions. This impacts food availability in cities and increases rural poverty. Third, the PAA has a social welfare scheme that is providing health care and medication to families who cannot otherwise afford

them. Finally, still under development, is a plan to improve drinking water and other services in rural areas. The agency is also considering subsidising school uniforms.

There are also nascent efforts at coordination. MWA&SD, for example, is working in conjunction with the Ministry of Health and several local NGOs to provide financial assistance to OVC. Similarly, Edo's state-level National Directorate of Employment is working with NAPTIP to provide vocational training to former victims of trafficking. The programme also provides economic assistance in the form of loans: *'we don't just train them to go back to their poverty level',* said the representative from the National Directorate of Employment (KII13).

In terms of NGO initiatives, a variety of programmes focus on child protection deficits. The Society for the Empowerment of Young Persons (SEYP) is the coordinator of the Child Protection Network, which was established in Edo last year by UNICEF. SEYP is a key player in terms of preventing the trafficking of children in the state. Working at the village level, the organisation trains the very poor to be aware of the duplicity of trafficking perpetrators. Furthermore, in close conjunction with NAPTIP, it provides training for former trafficking victims, staving off the poverty which drives re-trafficking. It also has established Child Rights Clubs to educate children about their rights, including protection. Working with Family Health International (FHI)/the Global HIV/AIDS Initiative Nigeria (GHAIN), SEYP is providing anti-retrovirals.

The Girls' Power Initiative (GPI) also has programming targeted at a wide variety of Edo's vulnerable children. For example, it implements a project called International Cooperation in the Fight against Trafficking of Nigerian Minors and Young Women to Italy. This has two major components – an awareness-raising campaign that works in markets and with religious groups and a microcredit scheme that targets young women. The former, according to one respondent, is increasingly *'enabling families to make the right decisions when they are faced with the traffickers'*. The latter has been able to help about a hundred girls (KII2). GPI also has an HIV/AIDS programme, which is supported by FHI and USAID, and a scholarship programme for poor OVC.

A variety of other NGOs are also working actively on child protection issues, especially those pertaining to OVC. The Rural Infrastructure Development Association (RIDA), Teens and Youths Educational and Capacity Enhancement (TYECE), Akoko-Edo Diocesan Development Services (ADDS) and the Willi Jones Foundation work to provide educational support and training for vulnerable children and adolescents, building the skills required to keep young people off the streets. Christian Aid, the Catholic Church, USAID and FHI provide funding for these NGOs.

Institutional weaknesses

> *'Most laws in Edo state are not implemented but exist only on paper' (SEYP KII).*
>
> *'Linkages are very weak and uncoordinated' (SEYP KII)*
>
> *'Government does not exist' (FGD adolescent girls)*

Funding consistently emerges as the key weakness of child protection in Edo. Lack of political will and weak coordination are also significant handicaps. Key informants in the government, NGO representatives and FGD participants largely echo one another's concerns – Edo state is not protecting its children.

While the Director of Social Welfare said that funding has been maintained throughout the financial crisis, he admitted that *'the ministry is only able to support about 5 out of every 100 making requests'* (KII3). The Planning Education Board informant echoed that there were no funds for projects, as did the Director of Women's Affairs (KII8, KII5). Projects are being reduced as budget allocations are increasingly earmarked for infrastructure development rather than social concerns.

NGOs and FGD participants expressed concern about the lack of political will to address child protection deficits. One respondent commented, *'there are no actions that indicate that the*

government is willing to implement or replicate social programmes that will benefit people' (KII2). Even where programmes and policies exist, implementation is almost entirely absent. For example, while the Child Rights Act has been domesticated in Edo, there are no mechanisms to ensure enforcement (SEYP FGD). Furthermore, there is no evidence that the act has impacted children's lives. School enrolment is not up, parents are no more likely to be called out for truancy and child labour is not decreasing (ibid).

NGOs, also labouring under insufficient budgets, are struggling to meet demand. The informant from GPI indicated that many funding organisations had had to review their portfolios in the years since the economic crisis began. Grant sizes have dropped and sustainability has become a challenge. One programme, for example, has been providing food supplements for OVC and working to develop community capacity for self-reliance. As funding has not been renewed beyond the end of this year, however, the NGO has been forced to tell the community that it is on its own. RIDA called on the government to better fund NGOs, allowing civil society to protect children even if the government cannot.

Informal coping mechanisms

Edo's citizens use a variety of informal coping mechanisms. Loans from family and friends are common (IDI1, IDI2, IDI11, in ODI, 2011). Credit (*ususu*) groups and women's groups also provide short-term loans. Additionally, there are savings groups that encourage families to save small sums regularly to build their own buffers against shocks (IDI1, IDI10, IDI12, in ODI, 2011). Churches are a major source of emotional support.

Lagos: existing services and response to child protection vulnerabilities

Formal coping mechanisms

Lagos was the first state to domesticate the Child Rights Bill – in 2007 – and has a variety of programmes and policies designed to address children's needs. For example, it offers free medical care for all pregnant women and children under the age of 12. It also provides nutritional support and medication to OVC (KII1). The state Ministry of Women's Affairs and Poverty Alleviation (WAPA), working with NAPTIP, offers a variety of 'skills-development' programmes for young women who have left school, making them less vulnerable to trafficking and reducing the likelihood that they will be forced to engage in sex-work to make a living (KII1). The programmes are run in local communities, eliminating transportation issues, and are offered to up to 9,000 girls each year. In addition to teaching entrepreneurship and marketable skills such as hairdressing and sewing, the courses cover life skills such as time management and child nutrition (KII10); centres help place girls in internships on graduation. Adolescents in the FGDs overwhelming believed that these programmes were important to society. Lagos also recently held a Children's Parliament, giving children a public, political voice for the first time.

The Child Rights Act mandates that all children, particularly girls, be in school each day from 8am until 2pm. Implementation of this law is fairly successful; habitual truancy is comparatively rare. The Yellow Card programme is working to reduce it even further. When children are repeatedly found on the street during school hours their parents are given a yellow card, which reminds them of their children's rights – including education. '*This has helped to take the children out off the streets […] during school hours'* (KII1, KII2). The Gender and Child Rights Initiative is working for further implementation of the act: it is campaigning to make sure that children are heard in family courts rather than regular adult courts (KII6).

Lagos state also has a variety of programmes that impact children's well-being by reducing poverty. For example, the Agri-Yes scheme is training unemployed young people to farm. It provides them with inputs and support in order to create rural jobs, reduce urban migration and increase food production. It is expected that the programme will provide 5,000 direct jobs and up to 10,000 indirect jobs, and have a substantial impact on the state's tax base. WAPA also runs a microcredit initiative that aims to reduce poverty by providing credit and skills training.

Various NGOs work with the state to protect Lagos's children. Many larger umbrella organisations, implementing through local CBOs, are providing education, food, shelter and health care. Hope World Wide, for example, serves over 20,000 children. Christian Aid, the Association of Orphan and Vulnerable Children and the National Council for Child Rights Advocate serve thousands more. On girl noted, *'Humanity Family Foundation for Peace and Development [HUFFPED] has been helping the orphans and less privileged with clothing, education and training workshops'* (FGD8). The Love Embassy and T.B. Joshua's Assembly, both faith-based local NGOs, provide care for abused children. UNICEF, the Global Fund and WAPA provide funding for child protection across the state.

Institutional weaknesses

In contrast with other states in this study, in Lagos children's needs are prioritised in high-level policy, funding allocations and programme implementation. Corruption in the state is declining and collaboration is increasing across the board. The main weakness in Lagos is funding. Government programmes do not reach enough children. Despite the state's emphasis on an *'aggressive strategy for internally generated revenue'* (KII12), which has buffered it from federal cuts, funding is perpetually stretched thin, particularly for programmes offered by WAPA, which plays *'purely a service delivery role'* and has no way to generate its own funds (ibid). KIIs with both the Ministry of Rural Development and the Origbonbo Local Government Council Development Area concurred that federal budget cuts had impacted the state (KII9, KII11). Significant cuts in donor funding, resulting from the economic crisis, have moreover left NGOs with no ability to take up slack. *'All the funding agencies are complaining that because of the economic crisis there is no funding'* (KII6), noted one respondent. Another commented, *'most […] funders […] are freezing funds'* (KII1).

Informal coping mechanisms

Families, neighbours, and communities pull together to meet the needs of Lagos's children. Parents take on extra work and older children learn useful trades to increase their incomes. Some families are setting up businesses "in front of their house…instead of going to the market"(KII 6). Some neighbours provide care for orphaned children; others donate food and clothing to needy families. Savings and Loans Associations provide access to credit in lean times (KII 15) and faith-based organizations maintain lifelines for those who need them. One girl said, ""churches especially, Redeemed Church is giving attention to the needs of the OVC; some are taken to orphanage homes and some are adopted" (FGD-8).