



# U.S. Government Evidence Summit on Protecting Children Outside of Family Care

Recommendations for  
“What systems / strategies are most  
effective in identifying and enumerating  
children outside of family care (COFC)?”

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Pavilion II, Ronald Reagan Building

U.S. Agency for International Development, Washington, DC

# Focal Question #1 is a logical starting point for this Evidence Summit

*What systems / strategies are most effective in identifying and enumerating children outside of family care (COFC)?*

The question encompasses three different tasks:

1. How to estimate the number(s) of children and their characteristics?
2. How to identify specific children for assistance?
3. How to maintain contact with such children so the assistance can be sustained—and can be assessed?

# Suggested Structure of Recommendations

Policy

Practice

Research

- Other Focal Question groups may be able to fit into this structure, but we will not
- Our recommendations are primarily for US Government agencies, and a mix of practice and research

# Five Meta-Recommendations

1. Thoroughly document and assess these methodologies
2. Document actual practices
3. Close the gap between actual practices and what could be done
4. Better integrate the identification and enumeration of children in different categories of COFC
5. Support innovative projects that will advance the methodologies

# Recommendation 1

Thoroughly document and assess these methodologies

*Going beyond the follow-up documentation after the Evidence Summit, work with the CP-MERG to undertake an even more complete review and assessment of the reliability, validity, and scope of the methods when applied to different categories of COFC*

# CP-MERG

- Child Protection Monitoring and Evaluation Reference Group, officially formed in mid 2010
- UNICEF and Save the Children are currently co-chairs, USAID has two core positions
- Collaboration with the CP-MERG will help the development and dissemination of standard definitions, questions, and procedures to enable better cross-cultural comparisons
- Collaboration will also strengthen the CP-MERG as a collaborative mechanism for reference, problem solving, and joint work

## Recommendation 2

### Document actual practices

- Identify perhaps 20 illustrative projects for COFC in the PL109-95 database of projects
- Select a range of categories of COFC, settings, agencies
- What procedures are actually being used?
- What is the evidence of success of shortcomings?

# Document actual practices

## Expectations:

- Many USG programs and projects, especially those that originate in-country, use identification mechanisms that are driven by convenience rather than evidence.
- The documentation of identification mechanisms is sparse
- There is currently little sharing of practical experience across agencies or across NGOs.

## Recommendation 3

Close the gap between  
actual practices and what could be done

Establish mechanisms to improve actual practices:

- *Training and workshops, capacity building*
- *Technical review and revision of project designs*
- *Backup technical assistance when problems occur*

## Recommendation 4

Better integrate the identification and enumeration of children in different categories of COFC

Core principles behind PL 109-95:

- Children with one kind of vulnerability or deprivation are usually disadvantaged in several identifiable ways
- Impact and effectiveness will be greater if programs are coordinated

## Recommendation 5

Support innovative projects that will advance the methodologies

- In specific settings, existing data and cultural factors may permit innovations
- Technology, e.g. hand-held devices and database software, may open up new opportunities

# Review

1. Thoroughly document and assess these methodologies
2. Document actual practices
3. Close the gap between actual practices and what could be done
4. Better integrate the identification and enumeration of children in different categories of COFC
5. Support innovative projects that will advance the methodologies

# Discussion

- What have we missed?
  - Change of emphasis?
- More specific recommendations?
- Other questions or comments?