Network activities 1st half of 2006

The Secretariat and the Board spent parts of January planning this year’s activities, based on the applications received for network activities by our Key Institutions. This newsletter brings information on some of the projects and activities funded this year.

In 2006 Childwatch International will be supporting three projects and initiatives with a main focus on children’s and young people’s participation. The issue received a lot of attention at the network’s Key Institutions Assembly in June last year, particularly in relation to involving children in the research process. The United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child has chosen to focus their General Day of Discussion in September of this year on children’s right to be heard, where Childwatch is considering including a contribution from our study groups. A challenge for the network is how to coordinate these efforts so the different initiatives and groups can build on each other’s knowledge and resources.

The issue of coordination of activities of the different study groups and initiatives is one of the issues on the agenda for the upcoming Childwatch International Board meeting, to be held in Amman, Jordan, from 24 – 25 April. As well as the basic tasks of the Board of going through the accounts, the budget and the annual reports, our ten international members will be making plans for setting up working groups to take forward important tasks of the network, reviewing our membership strategy and discussing the realization of our planned training for junior staff. Our Jordan and Palestinian network partners are setting up a visit to a Palestinian refugee camp in Amman and the Board will be spending some time discussing the living conditions of refugee children in the Middle East during the meeting.

In conjunction with the Board meeting, the Middle East and North Africa regional network is holding a workshop in Amman. Researchers from both the board meeting and the regional workshop are generously being hosted by the Information and Research Centre at the King Hussein Centre in Amman, led by Mrs. Lamia Raei.

Reports and information on follow up will be available on our web site: www.childwatch.uio.no

Regional networks

Childwatch International continues its support of regional networks in 2006. The regional networks play an important role in supporting collaboration, building capacity and developing relevant methodology and theory relevant to local contexts.

The Asia Pacific regional network continued its work on children’s participation last year with a workshop in February. The workshop was held in Bowral, a rural centre out of Sydney, 13th to 15th February of this year. The focus of the meeting was on bringing together the findings of the research conducted in each of the five countries - Australia, China, India, Sri Lanka, Thailand.

To make sense of comparisons of individual country findings, we decided we needed to examine cultural factors as they affected both the research processes and the findings within and across countries. The basis for this examination as well as other dimensions for analysis, were articulated in a framework which was developed from a discussion of the individual country findings. The framework assisted in the achievement of the other major outcome of the meeting - the writing of a draft proposal and of a process for completing a book presenting the group’s findings.

The regional networks in Africa, the MENA region, Latin America and the East and Central Europe will be holding meetings later this year.
CWI NEWSLETTER

Projects supported by Childwatch 2006

A call for proposals was published in the last issue of the CWI Newsletter. By the final deadline mid January 2006, the secretariat had received 21 applications for joint projects, network meetings and other collaborative research related activities. Out of the 21, 16 received support from Childwatch International to go through with their activities in 2006. Due to lack of project resources, most applicants received less than they had applied for. Number of meetings and participants had to be limited in each project, and costs had to be reduced. The board prioritized support to regional networks, continuation of existing study groups and initialization of new study groups on issues strongly supported by the Key Institutions assembly last year, e.g. Bridging the Gap between research, policy and practice, and Rural Childhood.

Calendar of Childwatch events

January
- Steering Committee for African Colloquium on Children in Africa. 2nd planning meeting in Nairobi, Kenya.

February
- 6—8 Workshop on Economic Activities of Children and Youth in West Africa organized by Fafo, Norway (more on page 3)
- 13—15 Asia Pacific Network meeting (see report under Regional Networks on front page)
  (Initiatlizing meeting on Children and Law postponed until later this year.)

April
- 24—25 Childwatch International Board meeting, in Amman, Jordan
- 26—17 Middle East North Africa regional network meeting in Amman, Jordan

June
- Initial meeting of the Rural Childhood study group. Place to be decided.
- 18—23 Consultancy by Irene Rizzini to the China Children and Youth Research Centre

July
- 17 Latin American Regional Network meeting. Mexico City, Mexico.
- 18—19 3rd Childwatch Latin American Network Conference: Childhood and Youth: Dislocations and Changes, Mexico City, Mexico.

August
- Initial meeting of thematic network on Bridging Research, Policy and Practice. Chicago, USA.

September
- East and Central Europe regional network meeting. Prague, Czech Republic. Dates to be decided.
- Steering Committee for African Colloquium on Children in Africa. 2nd planning meeting.

November
- 21—22 Colloquium on Child Research in Sub-Saharan Africa. Dakar, Senegal.
- Meeting of the Study group on Children’s Perceptions of Citizenship and Nation-Building. Dates and place to be decided.
The International Society for Child Indicators ISCI established

Childwatch International has supported international research networking efforts for improving indicators for children’s rights and well-being for several years. One of the efforts supported has resulted in the establishment of the International Society for Child Indicators (ISCI). ISCI was created as a meeting point for researchers involved in the vast work done to improve data collection on children’s well-being. Several new methods to measure children’s and young people’s well being have been elaborated over the last years and this is a place for sharing and improving these tools. The founding meeting of the steering committee was held in Baltimore in November 2005. Childwatch International was represented by Rose September from the University of the Western Cape in South Africa. Jan Mason of the Key Institution at the University of Western Sydney and Ivar Frones, Head of the Childwatch International Business Board are also members of the Steering Committee. A web site has been established, and Childwatch has supported the establishment of a Spanish version of this site in 2006. To read more, please see: www.childindicators.org

Workshop on Economic Activity of Children in West Africa

Childwatch International supported the organizing of a session on Child Trafficking at the Childhoods 2005 Oslo conference last year. The session was run by Anne Hatley of the Norwegian research institute FAFO and included researchers from Europe, Africa and Asia. As a follow-up of this session, Childwatch supported the organizing of a workshop on Economic Activity of Children in West Africa, held in Lillehammer, Norway in February. Representatives from UNICEF and the Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers participated with Norwegian and international researchers as well as NGO representatives in fruitful discussions on methodology and policy development. A report will be made available on www.fao.no/ais/topics/childlabour.htm

Upcoming Child Research Related Events and Publications

Upcoming seminars and conferences

More details available on the Childwatch International news web site:

http://www.childwatch.uio.no/news/conferences/index.html


• “Third Latin American Network Conference: Childhood and Youth—Dislocations and Changes” 17—19 July; Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana, Mexico City. More information available here: http://www.childwatch.uio.no/projects/Regional_Networks/Latin_America.html


Training and research courses

General information on the Network

The Childwatch International Research Network is a global non-profit, nongovernmental network of institutions that collaborate in child research for the purpose of improving children’s well-being around the world. It was founded in 1993 as a response from the research community to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Convention is the basis for the Network’s common agenda.

The Network consists of 45 Key Institutions around the globe. The secretariat is based at the University of Oslo, Norway. The Network is funded by The Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD) through the Norwegian Research Council.

Organizational Matters

Board meeting in Amman—issues for discussion

The Childwatch International Board will meet in Amman, Jordan, 24—25 April 2006. The board members will be discussing important issues regarding future priorities of the network, issues of funding, and internal and external communication. In addition, the board will be discussing a membership strategy, clarifying the direction of the network in regards to inviting more institutions to join the network. Another important issue for the board to discuss is how to include members of the network in decision making. One possible way is to involve more network researchers in working groups related to specific issues of concern.

Our current three year period of core funding from the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD) is in its last year. The Secretariat is preparing a new application, and the board will be discussing priorities for the network for the coming three year period in preparation for such an application. Clear aims and strategies need to be set to guide the future activities of our network.

The Secretariat and Board welcomes all input and suggestions for issues to be discussed at the meeting!

A draft program for the Board meeting 2006 is available on the Childwatch International web site: http://www.childwatch.uio.no/what_is_cwi/ab/Preliminary_Agenda_Amman_2006.pdf

If you wish to include Childwatch related activities in the next CWI Newsletter, please contact Pernille Skotte at the Childwatch International secretariat in Oslo, Norway, either by e-mail: p.s.skotte@childwatch.uio.no, by fax: +47 22 85 50 28 or by phone: +47 22 85 43 50.

Network related publications, meetings and conferences may be posted in the newsletter.