

TOWARD A WORLD FREE FROM VIOLENCE

GLOBAL SURVEY ON VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN



**Safe and child-sensitive counselling, complaint
and reporting mechanisms**

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Context

- Globally, progress on the establishment of safe and child-sensitive mechanisms has been slow.
- They are a core component of a modern, well-functioning child protection system.
- 2012 Report by the SRSG on Violence Against Children and the Special Rapporteur on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography.
- Report provides roadmap for the creation and strengthening of safe and child-sensitive counselling, complaint and reporting mechanisms.



Themes

- Legal and policy framework.
- Capacity building.
- Accessibility and participation of children.
- Oversight and complaints-handling.



Legal and policy framework

- International standards provide framework.
- Legislation must delineate role of different agencies and professionals.
- Should be rights-based, with a particular emphasis on the meaningful participation of children.
- It can be unhelpful to include too much detail in legislation; guidance for different sectors important to supplement legislation.
- Effective cooperation between professionals and agencies must be priority.



Capacity building

- Specialised training for those directly responsible for investigating abuse and interviewing child victims.
- Other professionals need guidance on signs of abuse and how to handle reports in an ethical manner.
- Must involve initial and ongoing professional training, which should be grounded in children's rights principles.



Accessibility and participation

- If you're wondering how to make service accessible to children, ask them.
- Children should be centrally involved.
- Tap children's creativity.
- Reporting and complaints mechanisms must be proactive in undertaking outreach activities.
- Civil society organisations are very important allies in this endeavour.
- Helplines play a central role.



Oversight and complaints-handling

- Child victims of abuse should be able to access an independent complaints mechanism if they are unhappy with the services they have received.
- Independent human rights institutions for children can provide remedies in individual cases, as well as identifying systemic difficulties and bottlenecks in child protection services
- Can help build culture of respect for children's rights in organisations under investigation over time.
- Need to ensure their independence, full investigatory mandate and adequate resources.



Further information

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