CHILD PROTECTION : Our priority agenda

FSCE Strives to empower children of the urban poor through diverse social development
About us

Who We Are

Forum on Sustainable Child Empowerment (FSCE) previously named Forum on Street Children Ethiopia was established at the end of 1989 by a group of social development professionals working in child-focused organizations. The organization was registered in the Ministry of Justice and got License in 1992. The primary concern that led to its establishment accounts for the urgent response needed to the then increasing number of migrant children from different parts of Ethiopia and various corners of Addis Ababa that swarmed the city mainly due to the tragic 1984/85 drought and its subsequent famine in Ethiopia. As they arrive to the city, the major problems these children were facing were abuse, harm, neglect and exploitation.

We first started working in June 1991/92 at cherkose area, to help 300 poor children selected from those who were highly prone to join life on the street to access their rights to health, education, protection and participation.

Our primary agenda was to contribute to then integrated initiatives that were launched at various levels particularly from the government and nongovernment bodies in order to address the multifaceted problems of these vulnerable children.

Thus, we have been able to run various urban child benefiting projects /programs in Addis Ababa as well as in the regions particularly in Amhara and Oromiya.

We, as one of the youngest charitable organizations in Ethiopia, have served urban disadvantaged children and
families for more than 20 years. In 2010 we marked our 20 years successful achievements in promoting and implementing child protection programs in the society.

In our 20 years service in promoting and implementing child protection work, we accumulated such an extensive expertise and experience that has helped evolve the organization into one of the leading local child protection organizations in the country. Working on a wide spectrum of urban disadvantaged children’s issues, we have enjoyed successful track record of success stories. Evident over the years were the extensive joint effort that have basically empowered children of the urban poor through diverse social development program works. The joint effort encompasses active involvement of such key stakeholders as various government bodies, non-government bodies, Community Based Organizations, communities, children, and donor partners.

Currently, we offer a continuum of child focused development works throughout the seven area program office sites we have been able to establish in Addis Ababa, Diredewa, Amhara and Oromiya. In other words, we design strategies to create opportunities that empower children, families and communities including stakeholders in order to create and strengthen sustainable child protection structures in communities.

Following the new Civil Society Organizations (SCO) legislation issued in 2009, we have redefined our vision and mission statements while writing our fifth strategic plan (2010-2014) document.
Our Vision: to Strive for sustainable protection, growth and development of vulnerable children

Our Mission: to see the wellbeing and protection needs of children fulfilled.

Our Organizational values

The values mainly subsumes the following attributes: Participation: Commitment to gender equality and justice, Transparency: Accountability: Teamwork: Working for the best interest of the child: Providing transformational quality service: Partnership: Sustainability and Empowerment

Our Core Program Components

The core program components through which the mission of FSCE will come to be realized are categorized into the following three major child protection focus areas.
Our Core Program Components

I. Promotion

1.1. Targets: All children with emphasis on the most vulnerable, children living in poverty and whose parents have very low levels of education.

1.2. Strategies:

- Livelihood promotion
- Non formal Education access and tutorial support
- Life skill and vocational education

II. Prevention

2.1. Targets: Sexually abused, trafficked, neglected and children in contact with the law; parents at risk for or engaged in abusive or neglectful behaviors

2.2. Strategies

- Establishing Community based multi-stakeholder child protection systems
- Establishing Community based correction systems
- Promotion of child to child support system
- Promoting counter child trafficking initiatives
- Community capacity building through community conversation and community dialogue, Awareness raising
- PH and HIV/AIDS prevention works
- Support for children with out parental care
III. Recovery and Reintegration Program

3.1 Targets: children in difficult circumstances and grave exploitation such as children in the worst form of child labor exploitation, street children and Sexually Abused and Exploited Children.

3.2. Strategies:

- Providing physiological and psychological recovery and social reintegration services
- Providing vocational training and income generating activities and support to reintegrate them with society

IV. Child Resource Development and Capacity Building Program

4.1. Targets: FSCE, Government, Child Focused NGOs, CBOs etc

4.2. Strategies:

- Building the capacity of child oriented CBOs, NGOs and concerned GOs
- Conducting relevant research in child focused issues and topics
- Publication, documentation and dissemination of child problems related relevant materials
I. Where we work

1.1 Where we work in Ethiopia: Our area program office sites

Program Implementation in the already defined intervention areas that pertain to child protection is carried out in seven area program sites namely in Addis Ababa, Diredewa as well as in a couple of regions (Amhara and Oromiya). The sites encompass as further illustrated in fig. 1 Addis Ababa Area Program Office or as it was previously named Coordinating Office for Child Protection Units ((CCPU) established in 1997 G.C), Addis Ketema Area Program Office (established in 1996), Akaki Kality Area Program Office (established in 2008) in Addis Ababa and Diredewa area program office (established in 1994) in Diredewa and Adama Area Program Office (established in 1997) in Oromiya and Bahirdar Area Program Office (established in 2002) and Dessie Area Program Office (established in 1998) in Amhara. All area
program offices are committed to address mainly various problems urban disadvantaged children could face and in the process we incorporate adults as key stakeholders to work for the benefit of the child.

*All in Gregorian calendar (G.C).

II. What We Do

2.1 We Support Children be protected from abuse, harm and exploitations

Many of the children who are from the poorest of the poor families are exposed to various problems of abuse and exploitation while living in their families and communities. There are many factors that may lead to protection problems. They are mostly attributed to such
factors as lacking access to formal schools, poor income large family size, lack of awareness on child protection issues, traditional customs and practices. These factors do hamper children’s growth and development. So; it needs a strategic intervention that opts for a concerted effort and a comprehensive response from all pertinent stakeholders. For example, in this regard, having children in contact with the law as one indicator in focus, we’ve taken the initiative to have established a community based multi stakeholders child protection system in multiple woredas particularly in Addis Ababa Area program offices of some target kifle ketemas (Addis ketema, Kolfe, Arada ETC) as well as in regions to sustainably protect the child and help him/her harmoniously with the their respective target community.

Recently unlike dealing with such particular child protection indicator per time we’re trying to adopt a fresh approach to address the problems of child protection in a compressive manner.

Hence the approach has gone for forming multi stakeholders Community led Child protection council in selected target woredas where the problems are rampant .The approach intrinsically includes the 12 child protection indicators among the 13( where one is agreed as irrelevant to target communities context ) as identified by UNICEF report card 2009 Progress towards the Millennium Development Goal in focus. In regards to empowering disadvantaged children and families, we are committed to do such major project interventions to bring a meaningful change in the lives of target children in particular:
2.2 We Influence Communities’ Opinions and Practices towards Children through Public Awareness rising

We tend to need frequent reminders through different channels if we are to change community’s behavior and keep child protection considerations at the forefront of communities’ agenda. Communities and families often have poor and traditional way of handling children’s issues. This often may have a detrimental effect on the growth and development of the child. Thus, equipping families and communities with appropriate information and skill has been an important step towards empowering children and families in the process of child protection endeavor. The common channels we use to sensitize communities may include community dialogue, trainings and consultative workshops and ICE/BCC materials to influence communities’ attitude and practice towards contributing to the safe growth and development of the child. Community dialogue as a case in point has been endorsed as a cost effective and efficient strategy to bring
members of a particular community to come together to discuss their shared agenda in regards to the child’s problem in protection, and find ways of overcoming it as well with technical and financial support of FSCE.

Therefore, we plan and execute many awareness raising and capacity building trainings and workshops that reach multitudes of people working for children and with children. This has brought many impacts on the communities and families we work for change and other collaborative agencies who in one way or another have a role in child protection matters. As a result of the awareness raising schemes in various program components a lot of people’s attitude have been affected only to get fresh motivation to render volunteering service. These people may include individuals, mekari shamageles, youth clubs, mothers peer, iddirs union as in Adama, Dessie, Bahirdar etc to mention a few. Most of the volunteers have long begun to use their local expertise and the skill they acquire from trainings to challenge the situation on the ground for the betterment of the child. As the common Amharic saying goes ‘Yebaru serdo be hageru bere’ Perhaps its English equivalence may go (Applying Local solution for a local problem).

Subsequently, a lot of children have practically benefited from various child protection program components in all area program sites. The major ones we run as programs are stated here:
2.3 We Create Access to Non Formal Basic Education and Promote Livelihood promotion.

In the Prevention program component, we run IGA and Non Formal Alternative Education for the parents and children who are from the poorest of the poor families respectively.

Many children can often be out of school due to various reasons. This is mainly due to such main factors but not limited to: Some parents or guardians can not afford sending their children to school as they prefer their children going for petty trading for earning supplementary income to assist their families. Or else in this regard, some children are orphans and they have to work part of their day to sustain their life. Others keep children at home to assist them in household routines. Still others, though they can afford sending their children to school, lack the that education pays much on the future lives of children or over the members of families.
In cognizant of this social and economic crisis, we have long been able to launch an integrated program through our branch area program offices that targeted children from the poorest of the poor families (parents, guardians and Children as well). In order to address their protection problem. Scores of guardians and parents of target children and child headed families are made to involve in income generating activities program through providing a revolving fund an amount of birr 1,000.00 (one thousand) along with regular trainings on basic business skill to cause them start up decent business of their own. Many have now proved to emerge as successful business mothers that allowed them to feed and clothe their children on top of the money they have been able to save to pay off their debt. In effect, this has certainly proved in most of the area program office sites to have increased the rate of school children retention in the non formal school scheme. As keen intent to expand their business and of course withstand the rise in cost of goods, some successful parents have begun to demand a raised amount of revolving fund.

Therefore, many children are now getting access to the *Non Formal Education Program* from cycle one to cycle three before they are promoted to formal schools usually in government schools. A tutorial support program is another program that benefited particularly children who need additional support as supplementary course to assist them to improve their educational performance.

### 2.4 We Empower Orphan Vulnerable Children

One of the social problems that severely hit Ethiopia in the recent years had been the HIV and AIDS pandemic which among others children are the most affected. Nevertheless, statistics show that the epidemic is now
almost declining considerably through a nationwide joint effort made by the government and the public effort.

Various studies done on the effects of HIV/AIDS show that the effect of the epidemic has been multifaceted. One of the detrimental effect is the fact that scores of children were obliged to be orphans and they must live as child headed families or under the custody of their relatives usually elderly foster parents. Sadly, some children live under single parent while others may have lost both parents. Many of these children and families live precariously under a very difficult situation deprived of their education and falling short of supplies for their daily subsistence to say the least. To contribute to curb the problem FSCE has incorporated OVC support into its protective program components across its area program offices to protect numerous children from becoming more vulnerable or to the worst would join life on the street as a desperate coping mechanism.

The support has multiple advantages for the children. It encompasses education, health care and financial support as a revolving fund to start up a small business. In effect, it has helped keep some of the vulnerable families stay together for children’s safe growth under a volunteer stewardship or foster families.

The revolving fund has given many child headed families and children with single parent or under a foster care get monthly stipend of birr 80 of which 20 goes to the child’s personal saving account to subsist their basic expenses at their disposal.
2.5 We Work for Correction of Children in the Justice System

A young offender is a child between the age of 9-15 according article 52 of the criminal code of Ethiopia who has committed a crime and has been placed in the care of a Young Offenders’ Institution (YOI), in the only remand home, in Ethiopian context or diverted to community based correction centers through a court’s verdict. Targets in this program are children who are first time offenders or who exhibit anti social behavior in the community and as a result of which are likely to drop out of school or join life on the street. To discourage the offender’s undesirable behavior and instill good values, we have established multipurpose child friendly centers. Different support services like life skill trainings, recreational activities, counseling and peer to peer education are given in the centers where targets could be empowered and rehabilitated. They as well are acquainted with life skill and vocational skill trainings at the centers.

As part of promoting peer to peer mentoring, where the centers exist, we also help train young volunteers from the community to raise target children’s awareness and help improve their undesirable behavioral patterns through modeling.

While in such situation, a custodial sentence will be the last resort if other means like that of the community based joint correction process has not prevented the child from committing a more serious offence.

To undergo the correction process, we’ve established community based multipurpose child friendly centers in some woredas like Arada and Kolfe sub cities in Addis Ababa Area program Office, Adama area program office and Akaki kaliti area program office to mention a few
where young people can get help and information and counseling on how to keep themselves away from anti social behaviors, unwanted pregnancy, and vulnerability to some other grave child protection indicators that may coerce them to discontinue their education.

Also admitted at the centers are some of at risk children prone to different forms of abuse who are deprived of their basic needs or are at greater risk of becoming victims of sexual abuse, or who may drop out of school program.

2.6 We Network the Regional End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purposes (ECPAT) program.

End Child prostitution, child pornography and Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purpose (ECPAT) is a Global Network of organizations and individuals working together for elimination of child prostitution, child pornography and Trafficking of children for sexual purposes. The ECPAT Eastern Africa Region comprises four member organizations of the ECPAT Global network operating in Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda and Ethiopia; namely End Child Prostitution in Kenya (ECPIK) hosted by ANPPCAN Regional office in Kenya, ECPAT Tanzania hosted by Kiota Women’s Health and Development (KIWOHEDE), ECPAT Uganda hosted by Uganda Child Rights NGO Network (UCRNN) and ECPAT Ethiopia hosted by Forum on Sustainable Child Empowerment (FSCE) respectively. The program was initiated by members with the objective of catalyzing a stronger network in the region that could contribute to
a meaningful intervention against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC) leading to better Protection of children in the East African Region.

The overall goal of the program in Ethiopia is to enhance protection of children from commercial sexual exploitation, child pornography and trafficking of children for sexual purposes in general by embarking on influencing and adoption of laws, policies and code of conducts, initiate dialogues for actions and sensitizing relevant strata of the public (government structures, the private sector and grass root communities) about the issue. In general the national program is working towards bringing about stronger and more focused efforts to carry out various integrated national activities in favor of protecting children from sexual exploitation in Ethiopia under the Eastern Africa region ECPAT network umbrella.

We are also active members of other network initiatives like the Basic education network (BEN) and CCRDA.

2.7 We Rehabilitate and Reintegrate Sexually abused and Exploited children into their Families and Communities

We reunite victims of various abuses and exploitation with their families and their communities. The major targets are children in worst forms of child labor in particular; child survival sex work after rescue process by providing empowering support services such as provision of reproductive health education, food, shelter, life skill trainings and vocational skill training like that of hair dressing and food preparation skill etc. Essential elements of rehabilitation process such as medical assessment, health care services, psychological counseling and
legal aid are also given in collaboration with pertinent stakeholders like health centers, offices of women and Children’s affairs, Mahiberawi ferdebet and the woreda administration office in the respective areas.

Hence, we adopt the ILO model of rehabilitation of victim children for children in worst forms of child labor; children in sexual exploitation. The model presupposes basically three major phases of the rehabilitation process identification, withdrawal and reintegration where each phase has its own distinct protocol of implementation. So far many children have been rescued from their worst situation and become rehabilitated and have continued to live a decent life.

2.8 We Create Access to Information and Knowledge on Child Protection Issues for our Corporate Stakeholders

Limitedness in access to information and knowledge on matters that affect urban children’s safe growth and development, especially those who are in difficult circumstances have been a prevailing problem for long. In addition, child focused project interventions are not research driven in most cases and are very often lack adequate backup of research finding. The two factors have rather made project evaluation difficult to measure progress and change in our major strategic intervention programs.

In order to address this and other related problems in access to information, we established and strengthened a child resource center at the premise of the head office at Abware. In there, we are striving to make our contribution to fill the gap in information and knowledge
about child protection by availing a wide range of child resource materials under different categories. Available here is a wide selection of resources, including various research outcomes, surveys and projects evaluations and publications of best practices on child protection works.

In addition, to promote networking and strengthen our resource database of our center, we collect child protection materials through donation from like minded organizations like Save the Children Norway, Save the Children Sweden to mention a few. The center has an organized resource collections data base for easy access of information for everyday users. To this line, borrowing books and other materials is amongst the services we offer.

Hence, the child resource development center is open 5 days a week every week for all interested visitors. Come and explore the wide range of resources on child protection issues available, you will be fascinated by your encounter.
III. General Information

3.1 Organization and Human Resource

We have currently 212 staff members altogether working under various positions.

Members of the general assembly and an executive committee administers FSCE. At the head office, a management team led by the executive director and assisted by the program director, the Finance Manager and the Human Resource and Material Management Manager heads the secretariat. The program director leads and administers the day to day operations of the organization being assisted by the program coordinators. Where as, at our seven area program office sites as located in Addis Ababa, Diredewa and in the regions, overall program implementation is headed by respective area program office managers.

3.2 Finance

FSCE relies on external and internal resources to finance its program implementation activities. We are very much indebted to the continued support our donor partners do keep providing over the years. It really helped us bring a meaningful difference in the lives of many urban disadvantaged children.
You want to get involved?

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Realize your stake in the strive for child protection