



Save the Children
救助兒童會

**ENSURE RIGHTS AND PROTECTION OF
CHILD SURVIVORS OF VIOLENCE
THROUGH STRENGTHENING
PROFESIONAL SOCIAL SERVICES**

**Save the Children International, China Country Program
March 2022**

Project Background

In recent years, the whole society and the government are attaching great importance and more attention to child protection issues. With national legislation and policies developed and strengthened, child protection system especially the judicial system has been improving greatly. For instance, the newly revised Minors' Protection Law effective from June 1st 2021, regulates the responsibilities of each duty-bearer including family, school, government, judicial department and the social sector. Meanwhile, from the practice perspective, the best practice of the One-stop Centre (OSC) for child survivors of sexual abuse, has already been replicated from individual pilots to all prefectural-level cities in the whole country¹ as of 2021. But challenges remain in ensuring that the OSCs are well functioning and properly serving the target children.

The OSCs are aiming at improving quality of evidence-collection through forensic interviews of child survivors of sexual abuse, to enable effective punishment of perpetrators and more importantly, provide comprehensive protection services to these children to meet their diversified needs for a better recovery and long-term development - the basic rights of every child. Unfortunately, the services including case management, legal aid, psychological support and family education service, are still at the preliminary phase of development. The capacity of service delivery and quality of services obstruct the function of most Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) in this county, including in the project site of Save the Children (SC).

The underdeveloped social services to children and their families in most middle and western cities in China like Kunming are resulted from the following reasons: 1) No systemic and comprehensive trainings are provided to service providers, despite availability of many trainings delivered by different organisations including social work organisations. 2) In some professional areas, no special teams are dedicated to children, who are in need of psychological and legal aid, for instance. 3) Advanced social workers who can handle cases involving serious violence at OSCs are in severe short supply, given the high needs. Even though SC has trained a few social workers on case management in one district of Kunming, the turnover of any individual staff could have a direct influence on the service delivery. 4) There is a lack of policies to effectively promote the services, including policies on government service-purchasing and industry development.

Save the Children is the pioneer and leading organisation working on children's judicial protection in China. We worked for twenty years in this area for children in contact with the laws including children as offenders, victims and in needs of family care². Our pilot experience contributed to the development of legislation including the newly revised Minors' Protection Law. Supreme People's Procuratorate recognized SC's contributions to its New Era plan and its White paper. The One-Stop Centre project for child survivors of sexual abuse, which SC has piloted from 2017, has now been replicated by the procuratorate authorities to 14 cities/districts in whole Kunming City as of 2021.

¹ Supreme People's Procuratorate, *Supreme People's Procuratorate's Opinions on Strengthening the Prosecution of Cases Involving Minors in the New Era*.

² Save the Children has piloted judicial diversion for children in conflict with the law with innovative approach of Appropriate Adult Scheme from 2002. The best practice of this project was observed in national legislation (revision) of Criminal Procedure law in 2012. Our pilots contribute to the revision of the Minor's Protection Law and Juvenile Delinquency Prevention Law in 2021.

Although big progress is made in the number of OSCs established for child survivors and that judicial departments starts to develop cooperation with other relevant government departments and social sectors, large gaps exist in fully achieving the functions of these OSCs on serving all child victims of all forms of serious violence³. Save the Children will further strengthen the operation of OSCs in our 2022-2024 project⁴, focusing on improving the operation standards and covering more target groups – not only survivors of sexual abuse but also survivors of other forms of serious violence.

In this project phase, we will continue delivering trainings and plans to build a resource centre to strengthen the capacity of the professionals concerned. In 3 years' time, 6 trainings on case management will be delivered for social workers, 3 trainings for legal aid lawyers, and another 2 trainings for psychologic service providers. Nevertheless, a limited number of trainings on certain specific topics cannot be systematic, far from being sufficient in building the professional skills and techniques required for serving children, not to mention other challenges hindering the development of professional social service workforce.

To enable the OSCs perform their full functions of effectively serving most vulnerable children and be capable of providing services in scale for target children in whole Kunming City, we hope to raise funding to further develop the capacity of key professionals of social services and build the workforce of all professional expertise needed. We intend to empower local CSOs for which key service professionals work, to help them mobilize resources and develop their respective resource centre; and organize systemic capacity building initiatives and strengthen their evidence-based advocacy for policy change. We expect the social service experts of each professional area nurtured in this project could become resource persons for the whole province in its development of social services for child victims of all forms of violence, and that the model of service strengthening would be replicated in other locations.

Project Goal & Strategy

Project Goal:

Capable workforce of social service NGOs and private sectors are formed for children who experienced violence.

Project Strategy:

- To support local NGOs in developing their respective technical resource centres for children who experienced violence;
- To consolidate systemic and competency-based trainings for service providers of social work, legal aid, psychological support and family education etc.;
- To engage with universities in research and enhance evidence-based advocacy for policy change on child protection;
- To build linkage/coordination between justice, other government departments and social sectors on the provision of professional services to target children and their families;

³ Mainly include case of sexual abuse, serious domestic violence against children and school bully

⁴ Using funding from SC HK to pilot in two project sites in Kunming City

- To explore online information-sharing and service delivery in resource centres to potentially benefit the whole province.

Target Group and Location

This project will be located in Kunming City, Yunnan Province.

Target groups include mainly the key professionals who provide services to children, justice departments linking the services between service providers and children/families, and government departments who purchase public services or have responsibilities over the administration of NGOs and social services:

- Social workers;
- legal aid lawyers;
- Psychological and family education service providers;
- Professors and lecturers;
- University students;
- Police officers, prosecutors and court judges;
- Government officials.

Project Outcomes and Key Activities

Outcome 1. Capacity of key social service professionals for children is improved

Activities:

- 1.1 Needs assessment on professionals of each key expertise area who provide services for children and solution-oriented design of workforce building
- 1.2 Develop a competency framework and training module for professionals of social work and legal aid
- 1.3 Provide systematic trainings for these professionals, including the training of trainer
- 1.4 Cascade trainings for relevant professionals in Kunming City

Outcome 2. Resource centres are established to function as technical hub to professionals

Activities:

- 2.1 Support in selecting leading social service providers and develop them into technical resource centres endorsed by judicial departments
- 2.2 Foster technical expert groups who can provide direct services and technical consultation
- 2.3 Produce working procedures and service standards for service professionals of each key expertise area
- 2.4 Produce service supervision and quality check for these professionals

Outcome 3. Effective interaction and cooperation between justice department and social service sectors are forged to ensure service delivery to target children

Activities:

- 2.1 Conduct research on child protection issues and services for children
- 2.2 Use the research and experience from SC's pilots to advocate for better policy-making on child protection, including policies on service purchase and delivery
- 2.3 Organize/facilitate interactions and dialogues to promote cooperation between service provider CSOs, and the judiciary and government authorities who link the services or manage the sector
- 2.4 Establish inter-organisation network and operating mechanism on service referrals and enhance cooperation through resource mapping and coordination mechanism among stakeholders

Project Partners

- NGOs: Social work organisations for children and psychological service providers
- Private sectors: Law firms
- GNGOs: Women's Federation and Youth League who have functions in management and industry promotion
- Universities: expected to be involved in research and advocacy
- Government and justice system: link or provide the services to children/families

Project Duration

Duration: 2022–2024