

Fighting Violence to Ensure Education for All

A collaborative approach to reach MDG2 and MDG3 in Nairobi & Kwale, Kenya

In March, the Ministry of Development Aid of the government of the Netherlands approved the project application **Fighting Violence to Ensure Education for All**, which had been submitted by a consortium of seven child-centered organisations (Plan Netherlands, ICDI, DCI, CHI, Plan Kenya, Childline Kenya and IREWOC) under the Schokland programme.

The project aims to drastically reduce all forms of violence against children in 3 coastal districts of Kenya (Kwale, Kinango and Msambweni) and in the poor neighbourhoods of the capital Nairobi.

Many children suffer from physical, psychological and sexual violence, and such violence often interferes with their education, leading either to dropout or poor performance. According to the findings of Paulo Pinheiro, the special rapporteur for the UN on violence against children (<http://www.violencestudy.org/r25>), violence is one of the main reasons why children do not attend school.

During the project, which will actively involve government departments and community structures, various traditional and novel modes of intervention will be applied.



The project partners had a kick-off meeting from 14 to 17 April in Kwale district. It was attended by representatives from the 7 project organisations, under the dynamic guidance of Yvonne Heselmans of Plan Netherlands and Samuel Musyoki, program manager of Plan Kenya. Kristoffel Lieten attended on behalf of IREWOC.

The meeting helped to clarify the issues at stake and to create a common understanding of each others' role. It is a complex challenge that touches all levels of society and needs the cooperation of a wide range of institutions and approaches. The intensive work of adjusting and integrating the program led to the agreement on a realistic and time-bound program.



The partners spent considerable time on discussing the meaning of partnership and what, in this specific co-operation, partnership should and should not mean.

It was decided that the partnership will be guided by the following principles:

- The partnership is based on an agreement of goals and vision at the start of the project; the agreement has been recorded in the project proposal and was reconfirmed at the kick-off meeting in Kwale, April 2009.
- The partnership is based on the general principles of accountability, respect, equality, participation and fairness, which implies that the partners shall contribute according to their means and shall participate in the decision-making process on an equal footing.
- The individual partners will be answerable to the other partners in cases of failure to implement their part of the agreement and remedies shall be found collectively.
- The partners commit themselves to work together on the basis of complimentary and reciprocal stimulation and thus contribute to institutional learning. Involvement in the project means signing up to the agreed responsibilities within the time frame, without subcontracting. The goal of the partnership is to create synergy but also to institutional learning, to the benefit of the partners and to the benefit of the children in Kenya.

Earlier, IREWOC conducted research on the status of education (http://www.childlabour.net/docs/Kenya_education_final.pdf). In this project, IREWOC will provide benchmark and impact information throughout the project time-span.



The research work will have 3 components:

- benchmark population study at the start
- stakeholder sensitisation study midstream
- impact study at the end

The first benchmark study, covering 1000 households will start in August 2009 and will be ready as a report in January 2010.

Then a participatory situational assessment will start in which school children will be involved in order to produce a report on violence and child protection through the eyes of the child.

A mid-stream assessment, focussing on some of the initiatives and assessing their strength and weakness will be undertaken in the second half of 2010, after a training course for local resources.

A final survey, covering 1000 households will round off the project in December 2011 and will provide rich information on the changes which in the meantime will have taken place.