

Why we have this programme?

Moved by a growing body of knowledge on the devastating impact of child sexual abuse and sexual exploitation on children worldwide, trustees of the Oak Foundation instituted a grant-making programme in 1998 to support children who had survived or were at high risk of sexual abuse and sexual exploitation.

What change for children do we seek?

To improve the environment for children so that they can grow safely and securely free from sexual abuse, sexual exploitation and related trafficking.

Where does the programme fund?

Eastern Africa: Ethiopia, Uganda, Tanzania and regional programmes
Eastern Europe: Bulgarie, Latvia and regional programmes
Switzerland: Principally the French-speaking region

NGOs from a limited number of other countries of the world, developing innovative projects and incorporating the principles of this programme, may be supported. These are selected by the programme.

INGOs and other global civil society actors with proven knowledge and expertise will be supported to work in areas where national NGOs are not able to work, or where their programmes bring added value.

What are the programme's five-year priorities?

Strategic directions were set for the period 2006-2010 which confirmed Oak support in priority countries for a range of **prevention, protection, recovery and advocacy** programmes, as well as support to global or regional civil society actors. It also confirmed the need to promote learning with and through its partners.

A. Strategic funding priorities

1. To provide all children in families and communities with a range of prevention and recovery services to reduce sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children. Where possible, actions by civil society should combine with government services to provide integrated and multi-disciplinary systems of protection (jigsaw of services).
2. To provide children that may be separated from their communities, for example in emergency settings, in institutional care, in labour situations, (especially domestic work), with services to address sexual abuse and sexual exploitation.
3. To place the issues of sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children on the political agenda of the priority countries and regions. Relevant international advocacy initiatives may also be supported.

4. To develop expertise and knowledge for community and professional actors leading to formal and informal child protection mechanisms and systems. This includes access to specialist knowledge about sexual abuse and exploitation.

5. Particularly innovative local partners may be supported to expand their work to train others, to replicate project components or to form alliances for greater outreach and impact.

B. Learning & action

The strategic directions exercise highlighted a need to support learning to improve programming and to enhance advocacy impact. As a result, the programme may commission briefing papers and publications:

- 1) to extract learning from its own portfolio to make available to the field
- 2) as a pre-requisite for new action
- 3) to research areas not yet addressed by others

A special initiative to seek evidence for a number of areas in current programming to protect children has been launched. This "learning agenda" has been developed through extensive consultations with partners and will seek to understand :

1. the role resilience-based approaches play in improving programmes on sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children
2. what motivates negative actors in the chain of sexual abuse/exploitation
3. how community protection mechanisms protect children
4. what makes children vulnerable to sexual abuse, sexual exploitation and trafficking

The programme will also encourage learning within organisations with which it works.

What types of programmes will be funded?

As examples only, Oak funding has been used for programmes in sensitisation and education, work with the media, work in community child protection, telephone helplines, internet sex abuse awareness, campaigning and advocacy, access to education and non-formal education, training programmes for community workers and for professionals, peer-to-peer work, recovery and reintegration programmes for survivors of abuse and exploitation, action-research. The programme also supports organisational development and improved planning & evaluation processes within partners.

Professional capacity at national and local level needs to be strengthened hence programmes to train and mentor groups of professionals that have a special role in protecting children – social workers, pediatricians, nurses, policemen, lawyers, journalists – are also supported.

The programme recognises that some situations make children especially vulnerable to sexual abuse and sexual exploitation, for example when they are marginalised in child care institutions, in emergency settings, in exploitative child labour settings, such as domestic

work, in cyberspace, children with disabilities. Oak will identify promising new international or local initiatives in these fields to support new action.

The areas of the learning agenda (above) also influence the types of projects and project components that the programme seeks to fund in this period.

Important principles for the child abuse programme

Partners funded by Oak:

- listen to children and involve them where appropriate in their work
- implement the UN Convention on the rights of the child
- build upon the strengths and potential of children, families and communities
- are concerned for the safety of children while in their care
- work with duty-bearers, through advocacy and/or capacity-building
- are concerned for the “whole child” and do not reduce the child to his/her abuse or exploitation
- are ready to learn from their experience

Is working together at local level important for Oak?

Yes, integrated multi-level responses to child protection with trained professionals and caring communities are one of the best ways to ensure protection for children. Oak has identified within its priority countries areas where joint action of a number of players around children and families could be supported. Discussions are underway to support such integrated work at local level and to distil learning from these initiatives.

And at regional and international level?

Yes, the programme will seek opportunities to strengthen coordinated regional and international policy and practice in areas of relevance to the mandate. To this end, it will support groups of agencies that come together to improve programming and public policy.

Does the programme publish papers, publications?

Within the overall framework of learning confirmed by the strategic directions, the programme may commission briefing papers and publications to advance programming and policy.

Strategic Intent of the child abuse programme

“By 2010, Oak’s child abuse programme will seek to serve as a hub of a network of NGOs, donors and other stakeholders that will advance knowledge and innovation in preventing child sexual abuse and exploitation and assisting victims in their recovery.”



What does the programme do?
