**PROGRESS REPORT FOR USAID**
**SEPTEMBER 2001 - FEBRUARY 2002**

USAID contract No: AOT-A-99-00084-00

**1.1.Program Code**
USAID identity code: AOT-A-99-00084-00
SC (UK) identity code: USAID/2201/2301

**1.2.Location**
Kinshasa Province- Democratic Republic of the Congo

**1.3.Country/Region/Main Office**
SC (UK), DRC Program, Western DRC Office, Kinshasa,
Eastern DRC Office-Goma

**1.4.Date of Signature**
29th September 2000

**1.5.Funding**

| | |
|---|---|
| Total budget | : 1,726,402 |
| USAID contribution to total budget | : 1,210,760 |
| Non-federal contribution | : 515,642 |
| Actual spent | : 718,484 |
| USAID spent | : 483,326 |
| Non-federal spent | : 235,158 |

**1.6.Contacts**
Georgia Rowe, Program Funding Officer, SC London (g.rowe@scfuk.org.uk)
Stephen Blight, Program Director, SC DRC (pdscdrc@jobantech.cd)
Balma Yahaya, Program Manager, SC Western DRC (sckin-pc@jobantech.cd)
AlainLapierre, Programme Manager, SC Eastern DRC
(scfeastdrc@compuserve.com)

**1.7.Project Duration**
The grant AOT-A-00-99-0084-00 has been on-going since 28th February1999 and the current project modifiaction period is 1st March 2001 - 28th February 2002

**1.8.Reporting Period**
Phase 5: 1st September 2001 - 28th February 2002

---

**1.9.Summary**

The programme has undergone a number of significant changes following its evaluation in March 2001.

In line with the general recommendations of the external evaluation, SC undertook a series of organizational capacity assessments of selected partners. These aimed to

both identify priority-strengthening needs and reassess the appropriateness of partner selection. As a result of these steps, SC reduced the number of partners for the implementation of the project from twenty four to eleven. The main reason was to focus on quality rather than quantity: by focusing on a smaller number of partners to ensure better supervision and monitoring of project activities by our project staff and to have project activities with a greater impact on the communities we were assisting through this program.

The programme evaluation highlighted the need to focus more on the quality and capacity of partners rather than the number of partners. This resulted in the formulation of a standard format for the assessment of partner capacity and identification of specific areas for capacity development. This has proved to be a very useful tool, which could be of great value to other programmes working with NGO and CBO partners. Similarly, it would be useful to access the materials for the related capacity building workshops for other SC programmes.

The programme has used a practical and pragmatic approach to promoting improved practice and introducing new ideas to government and partners. In the light of entrenched attitudes and beliefs, e.g. in relation to Juvenile Justice and child witches; this has proved a constructive approach. In addition, the use of a less challenging approach has enabled work in sensitive areas and supported greater collaboration between partners.

It is apparent that the Programme has achieved a reasonably high profile with NGO and government partners. This is particularly evident during national events such as the Day of the African Child and the UN Special Session on Children where SC (UK) is often placed in prominence alongside the Ministries and UNICEF in official activities and media coverage and as principle guests at NGO functions.

Work with community groups is aimed at demonstrating viable models to Government and other NGO partners for the protection of children within communities. Despite a significant lack of funding for salaries and continued revenue funding, partners appear very committed.

Beneficiaries and adults involved in the projects are learning from the inputs and in turn, amending practice as work progresses. For example, initial IGA work focussed on rabbit rearing and Paysannat have started looking at different activities with the next group of child ex-combatants. In addition, there appears to be a 'natural' growth in activities which was generated primarily by beneficiaries, e.g. parents of reunited children meeting as a group with other parents, discussing their experiences and advising parents on child protection and prevention of separation. It may be useful to clearly record the processes of these developments and promote them in other communities.

Internal management: Efforts have been made to reinforce internal management procedures for more efficient programming even though a lot has still be done. Recruitment procedures have been tightened and new staff has been made to go through rigorous recruitment tests before being hired. Four staff members had their employment contracts terminated due to their involvement in fraud with partners.

The departure of both the Project Co-Coordinator (Mahimbo) and the Country Director (Tim Cole) within a few months of each other has had a substantial impact on programme developments. Although stability in senior management was sustained through the Programme Manager's (Balma) presence. Replacement staff therefore needed to be recruited as quickly as possible, however, there does seem to be a significant problem in recruiting Francophone technical and senior management staff.

An expatriate Social Protection Programme Manager is being recruited to replace the Urban Programme Manager and the DDR Programme Manager.

A Support Services Programme Manager has been recruited to provide support to the programme at the national level and we hope this will help standardise procedures across the country.

A team visited the programme from DCOF (Displaced Children and Orphans Fund) to assess programme progress and look at ways forward. We are still awaiting an official assessment report with recommendations and a request for applications (RFA). Initial reports we have received from the assessment team members indicate that it was positive overall. There were recommendations to re-examine issues such as work at national level (advocacy), the need to have more impact at the level of the child, geographical targeting, documenation of experiences and lessons learned across the country.

*Kivus*

SC(UK) in the East of DRC started to focus its attention on the problem facing urban children in North and South-Kivu provinces (Goma and Bukavu towns) in the first half of 2000. An extension of the work which was being carried in Kinshasa and supported from USAID funds was requested to the Donor.

Activities started with a participatory research which involved children and other community members. The aim of the research was to help identify key problems affecting children in poor urban areas and define strategies for appropriate interventions and responses. More than 12 areas were targeted by the research, both in Bukavu and Goma.

The research indicated clearly the magnitude of problems facing poor children living in urban areas and helped identify two slums (Nyamiera in Bukavu and Kyeshero in Goma) where problems were so acute. Therefore, SC decided to focus on the above slums.

With the support of SC(UK), community members have identified priority needs aiming to reduce hazards and risks children are running in targeted communities. These activities include mainly cleansing and sanitation, water provision, informal education and improvement of accessibility in the above areas. Targeted communities through CCPN have been supported in the implementation of some priority activities (hygiene and sanitation, access to informal education, roads/pathways cleansing and rehabilitation, etc.).

**Context**

The most important change that impacts on our work is the ascension to the presidency of the DRC by the young president, Joseph Kabila. He has proved to the international community his commitment to the search for peace through his diplomatic offensive. He has visited major regional and world leaders. On each stop of this tour, he reiterated his willingness for peace by accepting both the deployment of UN Peace Keepers and the facilitator of the Inter-Congolese dialogue, both prerequisites for the implementation of the Lusaka Peace Accords. The President has also met with his Rwandan counterpart. Furthermore, Uganda sent a delegation to Kinshasa to talk to the President. Although new hope has been raised, the conflict is complex and many challenges remain, such as disarmament of non-state troops.

President Kabila signed the optional protocols re Children in Armed Conflict and Children and Sexual Exploitation. This indicates that work to stop recruitment, withdraw children from combat areas and the demobilisation of existing child soldiers, can commence on a wider, and more cost-effective scale. A proposal has been submitted to London for a Programme in this area, and its approval will have a significant bearing on how the DDR work will progress.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) is not yet translated into domestic law, although legislation is generally in line with the CRC, but different laws oppose each other. However, it is felt by the Ministry that implementation is problematic and the punishments for child abuse are not strong enough.

**Inter-Congolese Dialogue:** After about 3 years of fierce fighting between the rebels and the government of Joseph Kabila, the government, the rebels, the unarmed opposition and the Congolese Civil Society have decided to meet and negotiate a peaceful settlement to their differences. They first met in Gaberone, Botswana from 20th the 24th August 2001 and then in Sun City, South Africa in March/April 2002 to try to find a way of ending the war.

The dialogue ended with the establishment of a power sharing agreement between the MLC (Conglose Liberation Movement) and the government of President Joseph Kabila. One of the largest rebel movement, RCD in the east was left out of this agreement making it very fragile. However, negotiations are still ongoing to get them involved.

The deployment of the MONUC (United Nations Observer Mission in the DRC) has entered its 3rd phase with increased numbers of troops being deployed in areas such as Kindu and Maniema. This is a positive development, as it will open up areas, which were hitherto inaccessible to humanitarian aid workers.

Government awareness of current thinking to social protection seems comparatively high, e.g. awareness of World Bank approaches, and it was possible to discuss social protection investment across government ministries, albeit only in theory. The

Government have extremely limited resources and personnel, working conditions are appalling but there is a commitment to work with partners. Recently, there has been an increasing openness on the part of Government to work with INGO partners and through the UNGASS_process; there has been a substantial development in the relationship between the programme and Government.

The government of the DRC has expressed an interest in demobilising child soldiers since the end of the "war of liberation" in 1997. In December 1999 an International Forum on Child Soldiers was held in Kinshasa but it was not until June 2000 that a Presidential decree (*Decret-Loi N° 066)* was signed announcing the demobilisation of children amongst other vulnerable groups (including military widows and orphans, aged combatants, combatants with disabilities and the chronically ill). However, little was done to implement the law. For six months, government coordination was confused, as there was no agreement between the Ministries of Human Rights and Defence on who should lead. Finally, on 13 January 2001, the Ministry of Human Rights released a ministerial announcement ('arrêté ministériel'), which put in place an inter-ministerial coordination structure, to be called BUNADER (*Bureau Nationale de la Démobilisation et la Réinsertion*). Currently, BUNADER is functioning under the joint supervision of the Ministries of Human Rights and Defence, and since February 2001 has been engaged in preparatory work for the demobilisation of the vulnerable groups with limited support from UNICEF, ILO/World Bank, MONUC.

The DRC government made a great deal of progress in May and June 2001 with regards to the demobilisation of child soldiers. During a visit on May 24, 2001 with the UN Secretary General's Special Representative for Children in Armed Conflict, President Kabila pledged to ratify the Option Protocol to the CRC regarding children in armed conflict. In fact, both Optional Protocols were ratified the following week. Later in June, the government of the DRC also ratified the ILO Convention 182. On June 14 2001, the President officially launched the national sensitisation campaign for civil society and the military authorities regarding the demobilisation and reintegration of vulnerable groups, of which child soldiers are included. His public pronouncement specified the commitment to three *measures conservatoires:* immediately stop recruiting children under the age of 18 years; stop sending child combatants to the front lines; and disengage children from purely military activities. Subsequently, the Minister of Human Rights and the Minister Delegate of Defence officially opened a planning workshop in mid-July for international, national and local actors to participate in the development of the intermediary plan for the first phase of the demobilisation. The result of the weeklong workshop is an interim plan (6-month) for the initial demobilisation of the vulnerable groups, including child soldiers, to have begun in September 2001 (slightly behind schedule).

In July 2001, BUNADER and UNICEF developed a strategy for rapid interventions to commence in the month of August, which they presented to those international agencies they have determined are key partners in the process (ICRC, Belgian Red Cross, UNHCR, UNDP, Oxfam-QB and SC-UK and IRC were present) as well as the local NGO's BICE (*Bureau Catholique de l'Enfance*), CAFES (*Centre Africain de Formation des Educateurs Sociaux*), CPES (*Collectif des Parents et Enfants Soldats*) and GADERES (*Groupe d'action pour la Démobilisation et Réinsertion des Enfants Soldats*). The strategy has prioritised child soldiers currently in training

centres and those "separated" from the army, either as "self-demobilised" or those allowed to return home and go to school while continuing to collect a military salary. Objectives, activities and potential partners have been identified for rapid interventions to prevent those currently in training from becoming incorporated into the active forces, which would prevent the possibility of their participation in combat thus reducing their exposure to related risks.

Security seems to be improving albeit a number of incidents the reporting period. There were a lot of military roadblocks at night and systematic searching of vehicles, especially those belonging to expatriates during the months of March, Aprilm May, June and December 2001: of armed robberies, false barriers in some areas of Kinshasa (Kinsuka, Kimbanseke and Mont Ngafula) . In December 2001 our office was visited by armed soldiers but they could not get into the compound.

**Eastern DRC:**

Despite the raise of Joseph Kabila to power in Kinshasa and his positive attitude towards the Lusaka peace accords, the security situation in Eastern DRC has remained unstable. This is likely to be complicated as the RCD, the largest rebel movement in the Kivu provinces, left out the power sharing agreement between the Mouvement de Libération Congolais / Congolese Liberation Movement of Jean Pierre Bemba and the Kinshasa Governement after the Inter-Conglose Dialogue of Sun City in South-Africa. At the time of writing this report, many demonstrations are being organised by the civil society to protest against RCD's position and support the above mentionned agreement.

The war is still going on. Although the front line has moved far away from the towns of Bukavu and Goma, there is still a lot of insecurity in rural areas as a result of disruption caused by repeated armed confrontations between the RCD, its allies and local militia groups ( mayi-mayi, Ngilima, etc.) siding with Interahamwe.

Large parts of both North and South-Kivu are still inaccessible for international and local humanitarian organizations and political and administrative authorities. Due to the widespread insecurity in the rural areas of South and North-Kivu, a large percent of populations arrived in the towns of Goma and Bukavu which are more secure than rural settlements. Their arrival put an extra pressure on already neglected social infrastructures and therefore has increased the problem of children's accessibility to basic services and protection.

Apart from insecurity, the other constraint encountered during the project implementation was the absence of other humanitarian organizations/agencies involved in Child Protection. For the moment, SC(UK) is the only international organisation with a social welfare program in Goma and Bukavu. This has put a strain on SC(UK) and all local organisations are presently at our doorstep asking for support. However, after having assessed the capacity of local partners, we have been able to focus our interventions and support to only ten organisations in the two provinces.

Finally, there is an ongoing power struggle between various governmental divisions and considerable unclarity in terms of their mandates and responsibilities. This is the

case of the Division des Affaires Sociales (DIVAS) / Division of Social Affairs, the Division de la Femme et Famille (DIFAM) / Division of Family and Women and the newly formed Brigade Spéciale pour la Protection de l'Enfance(BSPE) / Special Police Brigade for Child Protection. This has had somehow a negative impact on the development of activities related to the development of a legal framework for the protection of children and juvenile justice.

### 1.11. Objectives

The objectives of the project have remained the same with an overall objective of:

"Ensuring protection, access to basic services, social inclusion and secure livelihoods for children in urban areas"

Specific project objectives have also stayed the same and are as follows:

1. To promote a legal framework for children based on the UN Convention of the rights of the child (CRC) and to increase protection of children within that framework at provincial levels.

2. To promote access to basic services (health, education, water and sanitation) for all children.

3. To strengthen livelihood systems and to promote the access of all households to a secure livelihood and target assistance more effectively through community based structures and initiatives.

4. To build consensus on policy and practice for children among implementing agencies in Kinshasa and to contribute to the development of SC policy and practice for children in urban areas and how to liaise/link up with rural areas.

In relation to these four (4) objectives, seven (7) outputs were defined in order to focus the activities within each objective. The activities will be reported against the 7 outputs.

### 11. Activities

**General:**

During the period 2001-2002 a great deal of progress was made. Project activities dealing with child protection issues were carried out with both the government and a local NGO partner. Children have been demobilized from various armed groups and intensive lobbying in this regard has paid off. Hundreds of children have been reintegrated with their families, returned to school, have had access to health services through a range of livelihood/income generating activities. Community level child protection networks have been established to promote children's rights and protect them from abuse and exploitation.

**Legal Framework and Justice**

Output 1. An improvement in the Juvenile Justice System in Kinshasa

As part of the advocacy work at the national level, Save the Children in collaboration with the CNEN (Conseil National de l'Enfant), UNICEF and BICE (Bureau International Catholique pour l'Enfant) as well as the Research and Documentation department of the Ministry of Justice organised a workshop on legal reforms with regards to children. The objective of the workshop was to instigate a reform of the Congolese laws affecting children to conform to International Laws on children. A sub-objective was the elaboration of a "legal code for child protection" in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Participants agreed on the following:

- Extensive publicity on the need to reform the law regarding children in order to inform national and international opinion of the necessity for juvenile law reform in the DRC and to ensure that no children are marginalized.

- To prepare a report on the proposed law reform for submission to the government and to pressurize government into adopting it and have the president sign this into law.

- Compile a list of laws regarding children and a code for the legal protection of children in the DRC.

- Establishing community based child protection networks and later a children's' tribunal.

Following this workshop SC in collaboration with our main partners in the Juvenile Justice sector; BICE Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Human Rights, Ministry of Social Welfare, formed a multidisciplinary team which elaborated a draft law proposal to raise the legal and penal age from 16 years to 18, to set the penal minority to 13 years, establish special legal procedures for minors etc, in accordance with the CRC. This draft law has been submitted to the "Conseil Ministres" for approval and submission to the President for ratification.

In addition the following concrete results were achieved through our work with BICE in the area of Juvenile Justice:

Children in prisons: The central prison of Kinshasa received 89 minors (20 with their mothers), and 29 pregnant women. BICE was able to seek the release of 28 minors and 15 pregnant women. Through our work with BICE we will continue to press for the release of more minors and pregnant women from the prisons. Major activities included the following:

- 176 social workers were trained in the techniques of social protection

- 61 children were admitted to the transit centre for children in conflict with the law while awaiting reunification with their families.
- 547 children reunified with their families after being freed from prison
- 62 freed children have gone back to school
- 1,257 children and young mothers diverted from the traditional justice system and liberated
- 124 child protection committee members have been trained in the techniques of social protection
- 197 children in prison have are undergoing training in various skill which they can practise for a living when they leave the prison.

**Critical analysis of the system of juvenile justice in Kinshasa:**

During the period under review, we undertook a study of the juvenile justice system in Kinshasa. The study reviewed the period between January 1999 and December 2000. The main objectives of the study were:

- To determine the average number of cases and the gender ratios of offenders who appeared before the judges
- To identify geographical areas where juvenile suspects were arrested or come from
- To ascertain the kinds of offences that juvenile suspects were charged with
- To identify the case disposal methods.

The information and data collected from records at police stations and courts were classified and analysed according to the following criteria:

- the nature of the charges
- number of arrests
- gender of the arrested children
- police station where the children arrested were held
- case disposal method.

The main conclusions of this study were as follows:

- absence of special jurisdiction for children (no juvenile judges) and so offending children are treated like adults
- No differentiation of the children according to age or gender
- General lack of appropriate establishments or institutions for child offenders
- No appropriate method for trying children at the courts (adult procedures are used for children
- Non respect of the existing legislation with regards to the arrest of children
- The rights of children are generally violated when in the hands of the police

**Child Protection Committees:**

SC is implementing its plan to establish child protection networks at the grassroots levels. We were confronted with numerous difficulties due to government hostility to the idea of community mobilization and awareness of their rights. The situation has improved greatly since the change of government in January 2001 and also due to sustained advocacy at the national level by Save the Children. Government officials from the Ministry of Social Welfare participated in the launching of the first community child protection committee established in Mapela (Masina).

In collaboration with BICE, SC established 7 CPNs in Kinshasa. These are multidisciplinary groups including the police, social welfare officers, juvenile justice judges, nurses, teachers, government officials, traditional and religious leaders, youth group leaders and other resource persons available brought together to form committees to examine all forms of protection issues that confront children and try to resolve these. Each committee is composed of between 15 and 25 persons depending on the size of the community. These committees (120 members in total) were trained to increase their capacity to defend and protect children at the community levels.

The Child Protection Networks are now functional. The first CPN in Mapela has already undertaken a census of all the children in Mapela and categorized them according to the type of problems they face and the current socio-economic situation. Through this census, we are now aware that there are about 12,253 children in Mapela of which 3,758 falls outside the formal school system. SC (UK) has invited our Regional Education Advisor to assist in finding the best way forward to deal with this problem.

## UN SPECIAL SESSIONON CHILDREN (UNGASS)

As part of the United Nations Special Session on Children, Save the Children in collaboration with the CNEN elaborated a five (5) month program to increase children's participation in the process leading to the Special Session scheduled for May 2002. SC had sought to achieve 2 main objectives through this project. One was to advocate for more attention to be paid by the government to child related issues and secondly, to increase the knowledge of the CRC by children in the DRC and to provide them with an opportunity to speak out about their problems to national and international communities.

As part of this program, a series of activities were organised, the main one being the testing and evaluation of the knowledge of children about the CRC through the organization of local and national level children's fora on the CRC. For reasons of convenience (movements, proximity and facilities) 3 zones were selected for these: Kinshasa, Mbuji-Mayi and Goma. The direct target group of the program was 60 children, 3 per province and 30 for the province of Kinshasa. After the regional fora, a national forum was organised in Kinshasa, which regrouped representatives of all the provinces including the 2 Kivus. The children discussed the CRC in relation to the main problems confronting them and other children in the DRC and adopted a declaration which they were supposed to submit to the Head of State to present to the General Assembly during the UN Special session, had it taken place as scheduled in September. The session has been postponed because of the terrorist attacks on Washington and New York.

**Kivus:**

Due to the current context in Eastern DRC (instability, war and partially functionning government), it was not possible to work on legislative reform and juvenile justice. Therefore, very little progress has been made in terms of implementation of activities related to the above output as it was initially planned in the project proposal.

However, we have initiated some separated meetings with relevant partners working with children in conflict with the law so as to start the documentation process of their experience and understand what is being done in this sector. Discussions were held with the BSPE, the DIVAS, the DIFAM as well as local NGOs. As a result of these discussions, the Comité Provincial de l'Enfance (CPE) / Provincial Committee for Children has been re-established in Bukavu. The CPE is now holding regular meetings to discuss broader issues of child protection.

Among our partners, there are only 3 organizations working with children in conflict with the law by organising cell visits in prisons, advocacy with the police, militaries and lawyers, provision of follow-up and support to children in their communities. Although, we were not directly involved, we provided them with some logistics and material assistance so as to facilitate their field activities.

**Sensitization of children on their rights and the UN General Assembly on children.**

SC(UK) in Eastern DRC is working closely with two active fora of Children in Goma and Bukavu: Parlement d'Enfant (PARDE) and Carrefour d'Enfants du Congo (CARECO). These fora have proved efficient as children are not only sensitised on their rights but are now able to denounce violations and cases of abuses they face.

In South-Kivu, children through CARECO met the Governor of the province and made some important suggestions aiming at improving the respect of their rights. They freely expressed their disappointment and concerns on abuses (exploitation, sexual abuses and rape by militaries, child recruitment, etc.). Some decisions were made by the Governor and published though it will be difficult to meet them in terms of respect and implementation.

Two separated sessions with children were held in Bukavu and Goma to test and evaluate the knowledge of children on the CRC. 30 children participated in each session. As for other provinces, children discussed the CRC and the main problems they are facing.

Another session was organised in Goma and allowed children from Bukavu and Goma harmonize their declarations and produce one declaration for the East of the country. 24 children attended the session. One child from Goma was sent to Kinshasa to participate to the National forum.

<u>Output 2: The development of a code of conduct to regulate conditions of children in institutions and promote care in the community.</u>

The CPE (Conseil Provincial de l'Enfant) did a partial research on conditions of residential care in Kinshasa. A consensus was reached with 18 local NGOs operational in this area and 4 NGOs were selected to implement a pilot project to test the minimum standards of residential care. This work was not completed due to problems with the staff member leading the process. Her contract was terminated due to incompetence.

**Kivus:**

The DIVAS conducted a quick evaluation of the situation of children living in centres in Goma. A check list was developed and an SC(UK) technical assistant was seconded to the DIVAS. This joint work helped the DIVAS improve the work within some centers and led to the closing of 2 centers that were keeping children in inappropriate conditions. Also, It allowed the reintegration of 45 children into their families.

**Basic Services**

Output 3: Re-establishment of family and community protection in the DRC

Kivus

Due to the ongoing war and poverty, family separation and child recruitment are among the main problems affecting children in Eastern DRC. Also, thousands of Rwandan separated children, of whom the majority is located in inaccessible areas, are still living in Congolese families.

SC(UK) works with a range of local organisations to improve the protection of children separated by war through their reunification and reintegration with their families and communities. Also, SC(UK) has supported the reintegration of child soldiers as well the reintegration of street children through local NGOs. During the reporting period, 230 Rwandan separated children have been repatriated in their country of origin and 200 Congolese vulnerable children (street children, displaced children) reintegrated into their families.

Also, 223 Demobilised child soldiers have been reintegrated into their families and the follow-up is being provided by local partners with the support of SC(UK). SC(UK) provided technical support to partners involved in tracing and reintegration activities through training sessions, technical guidance and supervision.

Two Community Child Protection Networks (CCPN) were established in two poor urban communities in Bukavu and Goma: Nyamiera in Bukavu and Kyeshero in Goma. Each network comprises about 25 members of whom 30 to 40 % are women. Children are also represented in the network and therefore are associated in the decision making process and the implementation of community activities. Each Community Child Protection Network comprises 2 children: one girl and one boy.

Community Child Protection Networks are open framework were community members can meet to discuss issues related to child rights and child protection, take preventive and/or correctional decisions and pass the information on to

other community members. All members of networks within the forum committee pass on information afterwards to their respective structures.
These fora give the opportunity to discuss issues related to prevention of child recruitment and the role local communities can play in protecting their children against recruitment.

Community Child Protection Networks are established in a very representative manner since all the local community structures are gathering in the forum: local authorities, teachers, nurses, church representatives, local NGOs and other Community-based organisations, some independent persons, women associations, etc.

**Output 4: Access to basic services:**

**Kivus:**

It is now 10 months since the urban Community Child Protection Networks have been established and are active in the community with initiatives including counseling, sensitisation of parents on education, HIV/AIDS, dissemination of information, trench digging, improvement and rehabilitation of road/pathways etc.

As already mentionned, participatory research and discussions with children and other community members of Kyeshero and Nyamiera showed that sanitation and improvement of accessibility to the areas were the big issues for the community rather than mere access of children to education and health.

For example, the Nyamiera slum is located on a steep hillside, isolated from the rest of Bukavu by a rickety bridge. There are no health or education facilities, inadequate water and few sanitation facilities, deep gullies adjacent to steep narrow pathways.

As the bridge is frenquently washed away during the rainy season, the area is completely isolated and becomes inaccessible. Children cannot cross the river and therefore cannot reach adjacent schools located in neighbouring areas. During discussions with local communities, bridge rehabilitation and sanitation activities were identified as a means of facilitating access of children to education and health. SC(UK) provided material assistance for the rehabilitation of the bridge in Nyamiera (sand, cement, planks, nails, etc.) and the CCPN played a major role in mobilising local communities to participate in bridge reconstruction activities.

There are 1,472 children in the Nyamiera community of whom 85 % do not attend school. There are several thousands of children living in such conditions in the towns of Bukavu and Goma. We have supported some micro-projects of partners aiming at providing non formal education to out of school children. 10 micro-projects were supported (5 in each location). 2,742 childrens have been reached and assisted through these micro-projects.

Finally, we continued to work with our local partner FORSE (Forum d'Assistance aux Orphelins de SIDA et Séropositifs) on HIV/AIDS prevention programmes targetting children in schools, children in the street and child soldiers in transit centres.

**Education:**

As part our strategy for child protection at the grassroots level, SC supports a non-formal educational program as part of the Mapela Resource Centre. This program has provided an opportunity for 214 vulnerable children who had fallen out of the formal school system to follow an accelerated program of primary education. Twenty-eight of these children have passed their final examination for level III which corresponds to the primary school leaving certificates and 17 took part and succeeded in national secondary school entrance examination. This represents an 82% success rate for this group. The Mapela Resource Centre has been recognized by the Ministry of Social Welfare as one of the centres for the experimentation of the accelerated program for children who are not in the formal education system. About 50 children have also benefited from this program on the University of Kinshasa campus through support provided to our partner AELF.

**Health:**

SC was able to support the "Mamans Bongissa" (Community Health Animators) to set up a community health scheme to improve access to basic health services for their children. The revenue from their community vegetable garden and grinding mill is divided into 3 parts; one part is shared between them, a second in placed in community fund and the third is used to pay for health services for their members.

The work with the health zones of Masina and Kingasani to improve access to basic health services to children was stopped because used was found not to be effective (the evaluation). The intention was to promote income-generating activities so that the proceeds could be used to set up a community health insurance scheme but this did not work. We are looking at more effective ways of promoting the community health schemes.

**Nutrition Programme:**

Following the various nutritional assessments in Kimbanseke and Kingasani, we developed a programme to address the problem of severe malnutrition in 4 health zones: Kimbanseke, Kingasani, Kikimi and Biyela. The project has just started and team has been recruited to implement project activities. The main objectives are:

The project is meant to help reduce the prevalence of global acute malnutrition through the following activities.

**Goal:**

To reduce the prevalence of global acute malnutrition in the worst affected health zones in the eastern part of Kinshasa.

**Objectives:** The objectives of the project are to:

- Through currently existing structures, predict, prevent and mitigate the worst effects of child malnutrition in emergency situations

- To promote the practise of exclusive breast-feeding of children up to 6 months from birth.

- To reinforce the capacity of the "Mamans Bongisas" Maman Bongisas – how to recognise oedema and how to use MUAC as a quick, cheap and relatively effective method for screening malnourished children for referral to health centres.

- To reinforce the capacity of Health centre staff – how to identify oedema and how to use weight for height charts for identifying malnourished children for referral to feeding centres.

Output 5: Undertake participatory research on poverty indicators in urban settings and identify appropriate activities to improve access to basic health and education services for children.

**Prevention of family breakdown and support for family livelihoods system Socio-economic reinsertion of ex-child prostitutes in Kinshasa:**

**CFJFD:**

Save the Children has been implementing a project aimed at reintegrating about 100 ex-child prostitutes formerly living on the streets and young female single parents back into their families and communities. The girls are being given training in tailoring, bread making and hairdressing. After their training they will be supported to become financially independent.

**Vignette No. 1.**

**Soeurs de St Therese:**
This is project supported by SC through a religion congregation to provide life skills training for about vulnerable 145 girls. Most of these girls are orphans or single parents. They are given training in tailoring. To provide an opportunity for the training centre to be sustainable, SC provided funds to the congregation to establish a tailoring workshop where school uniforms will be made the girls for sale to the other catholic schools in their community.

**Soeurs de St Joseph:**

Through this religions congregation, 100 mothers of severely malnourished children are undertaking income-generating activities (baking and selling of bread) to be able to raise income, which they will use in improving the nutrition of their children. These women were already organised around the therapeutic feeding centre being run by the nuns.

Output 5: An improved understanding of the socio-economic problems of the poorest families

Several activities aimed at understanding the socio-economic problems of poor families have been undertaken:

- The nutritional survey carried out in March 2001 in the health zones of Kikimi, Biyela, Masina and Kimbanseke.
- The 2 social reintegration projects with ex child soldiers were analyzed by 2 consultants with the objective of finding ways of making them more sustainable.

- Save the Children is taking part in collecting information about the food security situation in the DRC to be used in writing the report to be presented to the World Food Summit. SC chairs one of the subcommittees.

**Kivus:**

As mentioned before, activities started with a participatory study that involved children and other community members. The aim of the study was to help identify key problems affecting children in poor urban areas and define strategies for appropriate interventions and responses. 12 areas were targeted by the research, both in Bukavu and Goma. After the research, 2 quarters were selected as pilot sites and we have decided to consolidate our work in these sites before any expansion of the urban project in any other areas of Goma and Bukavu.

The research was done by local partners and SC(UK)'s social protection staff. All the people involved in the research were trained in Participatory Research and Participatory Poverty Appraisal methodology prior the deployment in the field. More than 30 persons were involved in field studies.

During project implementation, additional information were gathered and we were obliged to modify the initial report as we realised that some important information were missing. We are now finalising the last version of the report and it will be shared and distributed as soon as possible to partners and donors as well.

Output 6: Improved capacity of local partners to carry out research and deliver sustainable services

As reported above an external evaluator from the University of Kinshasa evaluated the program in Kinshasa in March/April 2001. The objective of the evaluation was to determine results achieved thus far and find ways of strengthening partner organizations.

As part of the effort to improve the quality of our work and that of our partners organizational assessments were undertaken of all the partners. The objective of these assessments was to find out the strengths and weaknesses with a view of findings ways of improving their performance. These assessments showed that almost all the partners were very weak in the following areas:

- Financial management and accounting
- Report writing
- Lack of understanding of the fundamental issues concerning child protection
- Some organizations had very poor structures for both project implementation and management.

A workshop was organised in June 2001 for Save the Children staff and our implementing partners on monitoring and evaluation of projects. The aim was to arrive at a common understanding on the concept of monitoring and evaluation, determine what types of information should be collected in each sector of intervention, the elaboration of a framework for monitoring and evaluation.

Common indicators were identified to ensure consensus on the objectives of the projects we are implementing. At the end of this workshop, a plan of action was adopted to continue strengthening the capacity of partners in the field between June 2001 and January 2002. Further workshops were organised in July and August as part of the plan of action to analyze and improve the monitoring plans for each project.

Two training workshops were also organised to strengthen the capacity of 30 women and 38 young children undertaking market gardening activities under the auspices of AFSD (Association des Femmes en Situation Difficile) and BCCJ (Bureau de Coordination des Clubs des Jeunes) of Masina. After this training they were provided with gardening materials and seeds.

**Vignette No. 2**

**Kivus:**

Apart from regular support provided to local partners through supervision, technical guidance and training on child rights and child protection, 4 training sessions (2 in each location) on financial and administrative management of micro-projects and monitoring and evaluation of micro-projects were organised. Participants included local NGO partners, staff from the DIVAS, DIFAM and SC(UK)'s social protection.

As we don't have an internal capacity to facilitate such training, we hired a team of two external local consultants.

Finally, we organised an institutional assessment involving all our partners in Goma and Bukavu. The aim of this work was mainly to identify strengths and weaknesses of our partners and define new strategies to reinforce their capacity and improve our partnership. The assessment was carried out by two teams including 2 members each. A checklist was established and discussed with the teams before the assessment.

The results were presented and shared in a transparent manner in a meeting involving partners and SC(UK)'s child protection staff as well. A final report is also being finalised and will be distributed to partners who were involved in the exercice.

We anticipate that findings of the institutional assessment exercice, will allow us reduce the number of our partners in the urban project from 10 to 6 (3 organisations in each site). This will certainly increase our capacity to provide sufficient support and supervision to our partners and thus, increase our impact.

Output 7: Improved policy, practice and coordination services

In May 2001 Save the Children organised a preliminary training in IDTR (Identification, Documentation, Tracing and Re-unification) for some local partners and government departments to prepare them for the Demobilization and Reintegration of child soldiers when it begins. Another training was organised in August 2001.

**Summary of Demobilization and Reintegration Activities – Kinshasa/West DRC**

In conjunction with the official launching of the sensitization process, an NGO platform, GADERES, with support from BUNADER and UNICEF held a week of seminars for military authorities and civil society representatives to discuss pertinent issues related to the process and develop recommendations. The process was successful, opening the door to collaboration between military authorities, governmental and non-governmental bodies and civil society. Save the Children (UK) participated in the civil society seminar (see activities below).

In July, BUNADER, with support from the World Bank and the ILO held a weeklong planning process to develop an interim plan for DDR of the vulnerable groups. Local, national and international NGO representatives were invited, along with representatives of national government, intergovernmental organizations, and donors. Where the process did allow for a great deal of input from different sectors into the planning, the almost complete absence of representatives from the donor community was striking.

In order to develop better communication and relations with the donor community, BUNADER and UNICEF began monthly meetings with donors and representatives of international organizations in July. Weekly coordination meetings with key international NGO partners were also begun to discuss technical issues. Save the Children (UK) actively participates in these meetings.

**Reintegration Projects**

The beginning of this reporting period saw the arrival of the new Save the Children (UK) DR Project Coordinator in Kinshasa. Much of the first couple of months were spent meeting key partners in the DR process, BUNADER, ILO, PNUD, UNICEF, MONUC, Belgian Red Cross, ICRC, as well as local partners in the SC (UK) Urban Program. The DR Project Coordinator immediately began to work with the Urban Program Coordinator in supporting work on socio-economic reintegration of "self-demobilized" child soldiers. The projects were started in 2000 with local NGO partners ASCDE (*Alliance de Secours Chrétien pour la Développement de l'Enfant*) and PAYSANAT de KINGABWA, and ANEEVOMP.

SC (UK) work with ANEEVOMP (*Association Nationale des Epouses, Enfants, Veuves et Orphelins des Militaires et des Policiers*) focused on organizing 500 "self-demobilized" children in the 32 military camps in Kinshasa into small working groups. Training in life skills and the CRC was given to the children. ANEEVOMP planned to conduct a feasibility study on socio-economic reintegration activities. Work with ANEEVOMP was suspended in April with concerns about its lack of financial reporting and inability to share data that it reportedly collected on all the children. SC (UK) continued to try to address some of the organizational constraints with the coordinator. However, we were unable to accomplish even the basic processes of an institutional diagnosis due to lack of participation by all the members of the NGO.

The work with PAYSANAT has focused on the reintegration of street children and child soldiers. After the first phase of the project (in the last reporting cycle) the demand for participation in the project grew significantly, with particular interest shown by self-demobilized child ex-soldiers (all of whom are male). Thus far, 21 out of 30 children from the first phase have returned to school with the profits from their animal husbandry (rabbit rearing) projects (the sale of the meat of 2-3 rabbits will cover fees for a trimester). A reimbursement in kind (rabbits), core to the revolving credit scheme, is nearly 100%, allowing for provision to the next group, although this places demands on space for housing them during the interim period. PAYSANAT has also had some difficulty finding a market for the rabbit meat, and have been exploring market options in Brazzaville. We need to determine the demand for rabbits/meat to avoid swamping the market and destroying those who are already functioning well.

In March, a second group of 40 children, all ex-combatants began training in rabbit-rearing techniques with PAYSANAT. They demonstrated an increased interest in participation by constructing the rabbit hutches themselves, which also provided some savings in labor costs. They were scheduled to officially start the second project phase in April with the new group, which would have brought to 56 the total number of child ex-soldiers provided socio-reintegration support by PAYSANAT with support from Save the Children (UK). SC has asked PAYASANAT to wait until we have been able to resolve issues of sustainability. We have contracted a consultant to do a feasibility study and the results should be ready by the end of November 2001.

Work with ASCD (recently renamed ASCDE) also continued during the reporting period. Increasing numbers of (male) ex-soldiers have approached the organization asking to participate in economic reintegration activities. The initial project focusing on small-scale agriculture has continued with a group of 35 ex-soldiers (male). Increased participation on the part of their families has been viewed as a positive indicator of sustainable reintegration.

A new group of 60 boys expressed interest in an animal husbandry project, based on the PAYSANAT model. PAYSANAT began working with ASCDE in March to train staff in the techniques of rabbit rearing. Meetings were also held throughout the month with the children and their families to develop plans for the program. Training for the children and families took place and the new project commenced in April, purchasing extra rabbits from PAYSANNAT. A significant indicator of the parents' support of their children's participation in the program is that they paid the 300FC/participant fee to cover the training costs. The staff of ASCDE also reports that many more ex-combatant children are asking to participate in their programs.

**Vignette No.3:**

In July and August the DR Project Coordinator worked with two Field Officers of the Urban Program staff to develop group activities for the children participating in the projects with ASCDE and PAYSANAT. The objectives of the activities were as follows:

Global Objective: *Develop appropriate social interventions to strengthen internal, family and community support systems for children reintegrating into civilian/community life.*

Specific Objectives:

1) *Create participatory environments for self-expression, problem solving and action planning.*
2) *Understand and document how children frame their own experiences and perceive the contexts of their own lives.*

Activities included "ice breaker" games, and two drawing activities: the "Tree of Life," illustrating influences, accomplishments and hopes in each child's life; as well as a community imaging activity designed to illustrate differences between the communities the children now live in and their images of ideal communities. Social workers from

each NGO participated in each session. Most children expressed themselves surprisingly well through their drawings, and volunteers verbally presented their efforts eloquently. Minutes of each group session, along with summaries of the children's work are found in reports prepared by the DR Project Administrative Assistant.

It was apparent to the Project Coordinator that the staffs of the NGO do not engage in such activities with the children, though they claim to *encadrer*. The groups were treated as something very special, with even a photographer invited to one of the first sessions! It was also not clear that they knew all the names of the children. In response to these concerns, the Project Coordinator organised a meeting with the staff of ASCDE (with PAYSANAT to follow) to discuss and strengthen the social components of the reintegration projects. In this meeting a questionnaire was given to the staff to ask their views about the particular vulnerability of child soldiers in their communities (if there was any), why they provide the interventions they do, and what more they think they can be doing. The responses indicated very little analysis of the situation, all thought the children were vulnerable simply because they were child soldiers (not why), and they could not offer suggestions for other program interventions. This latter point seemed intriguing, and the only response presented was that those decisions were perceived to be guided by SC (UK), not the NGO's (or beneficiaries, for that matter). The end result was an important "lessons learnt" for the Project Coordinator and will contribute to future project development.

While a more in-depth evaluation of these two pilot reintegration projects will commence in September, some general observations can be made. The gardening project has been seen to involve families positively and offer a longer-term possibility for income generation. Some of the drawbacks have been the difficulty farming on the land available, as the water source is some distance and the soil quality is poor, and the lack of more immediate material gain. While the rabbits have the possibility of providing a more immediate material gain, the question of market demand is a very important one. In terms of social impact, it has been observed that the projects do have a positive impact on the families, leading to increased cohesion and involvement. On a community level, the impact is rather mixed. Communities have, on the one hand, expressed appreciation to the agencies working with ex-combatant soldiers, as there is a general fear of them becoming criminals. On the other hand, there is a sense of stigmatization that comes with any program targeting a specific group, especially one that is perceived negatively but given material advantage over other, perhaps equally impoverished children.

A related concern regarding these two projects has been a question about verification of the status of the children participating in the projects. Since DR has not formally started, it has been suggested to SC (UK) that there is little effective criteria by which to verify the children's status, and thus there is the possibility that they may not all be child soldiers. This presents an interesting and important dilemma for organizations that respect the guiding principle that children should be demobilized at any time during a conflict (considering their safety and best interests). All of these issues presented are being considered very seriously and must inform future socio-economic reintegration activities

**Training**

The DR Coordinator began some initial training projects by making presentations on principles of separation and reintegration at the University of Kinshasa (physical therapy department class on reintegration concerns for vulnerable groups) in April, as well as at a GADARES organised seminar on the DR process for civil society representatives in June.

Save the Children (UK) sponsored a consultant to come to Kinshasa for three weeks and assess IDTR capacity within the organization and its partners, as well as present a 5-day workshop for Kinshasa social services staff, and representatives of key NGO's, Ministry of Social Affairs and Ministry of Youth and Sports. This training resulted in follow-up meetings organised by the participants to develop strategic interventions in DR process, or other events that might involve separation of children.

In August, Save the Children (UK) staff assisted GADERES in presenting a similar 5-day training on work with separated children to the *Collectif des Parents des Enfants Soldats* (CPES). It is interesting to note that the group of parents of child soldiers quickly picked up the skills needed to carry out effective training during some case study practice sessions that their more "professional" counterparts in the May training struggled with. It is certainly evident that the ability to personalize the material so that it makes sense in a practical rather than theoretical way is key to developing the skills needed to work with children in difficult circumstances. Each of the parents had their own story of their child leaving for the armed forces, and their personal attachment to the content of the training material evidently assisted in their mastering of it.