What approaches and tools are available to support data use in care system reform and strengthening?

DECISION

Care System Reform and Strengthening

Q1: First, how do our care system reform activities relate to the results and impact we want to achieve for children and families?

Your tool:

Care System Reform Logic Model

Q2: How can we systematically identify strengths and areas that require attention in our national care system reform and strengthening efforts?

Your tool:

Tool for Assessing, Addressing, and Monitoring National Alternative Care Systems

Q3: How do we measure progress on different components of care system reform in a systematic way across stakeholders?

Your tool:

Care System Reform Performance Indicators

Q4: Which are the most appropriate sources of information to use for measurement and guide decisions around care system reform?

Your tool:

Care System Reform Information Needs Framework

Monitoring & Evaluation and Information Systems

Are there digital systems in place for child care and protection and/or case management?

No.

Yes.

Q5: How can we build on best practices in the design and strengthening of child protection case management information systems?

Your tool:

Child Protection Case Management Information Systems - Promoting Appropriate Care for Children: A Framework for Engagement

Q6: What is the current status of case management information systems in our context?

Your tool:

Case Management Information Systems Assessment and Planning Toolkit

Q7: What is the current capacity of our staff to use a digital case management information system or other digital solutions for child care and protection and how can it be improved?

Your tool:

Digital Skills Assessment Guide

Q8: Based on our current context, what is the best solution for compiling information from existing sources and visualizing it for decision making?

Your tool:

Guidelines on the Use of Data Warehouses in Child Care and Protection Information Management and Analytics

Q9: What internal standards or policies are in place to ensure data on children and families are protected, private, accurate, and accessible for decision making and improving services?

Your tool:

Case Management Information Systems Governance Guidelines

How do our care system reform activities relate to the results and impact we want to achieve for children and families?

Q1.

Your tool: Supporting Countries to Measure Progress and Outcomes of National Care Reforms - Development of Care System Reform Logic Model and Indicator Mapping Activity

Intended users: Government, civil society organization (CSO), and non-governmental organization (NGO) staff contributing to child protection and care reform, program design, and implementation.

Purpose: This logic model supports USAID—and other stakeholders—to plan, track, and strengthen national care systems, evaluate impact, and ensure accountability at country and global levels. It describes the impact, outcomes, intermediate outcomes, outputs, and enabling environment as they relate to care system reform. Key indicators were also developed to enable program designers and implementers to measure progress and outcomes of national care reform across six system components. This guide is designed to be implemented by a team rather than an individual. This framework was developed after extensive review of guidance and research evidence on care reform and validated by key representatives in the care reform sector.

Investment: Requires staff time to map program inputs and processes to the outputs and outcomes of interest using this framework as a guide. More extensive and long-term staff time would be required to utilize indicator resources to monitor progress and adapt program activities to results.

Tool uses and outputs: The logic model describes the inputs and processes needed to create an enabling environment for effective care reform programming. Under this environment, program implementers should expect to see broad outputs linked to specific care reform processes like policy and legislation, fiscal management and resource allocation, skilled workforce, services across a continuum of care, data for decision making, and advocacy for social mobilization of initiatives. With the right processes in place, intermediate and overarching outcomes will lead to the desired impact—where all children grow up in safe, nurturing, and stable family environments.

Q2. **How can we systematically identify strengths and areas that require attention in our national care system reform and strengthening efforts?**

Your tool: Tool for Assessing, Addressing, and Monitoring National Alternative Care Systems

Intended users: Country government and implementing stakeholders supported by USAID and other donors invested in strengthening national systems to ensure family-based care for children.

Purpose: This Excel-based assessment tool was developed to support countries as they assess, address, and monitor national care system reform. The tool applies the United Nations (UN) Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children framework that covers key areas of caring for children outside of family care: foster care, residential care, supervised independent living, kinship care, other forms of informal care, adoption, and family reunification and deinstitutionalization. This tool also has questions related to preventing unnecessary child-family separation, which is a critical component of keeping children in family-based care. The tool uses the Care Reform Assessment Framework to apply a system strengthening approach and presents system components that are critical to sustainably and effectively strengthening national systems. This guide is designed to be implemented by a team rather than an individual.

Investment: Requires holding a participatory workshop or meeting to convene key stakeholders to conduct a self-assessment of the national alternative care system. This requires time among participants to plan and conduct the assessment, a consensus on next steps, and the development of an action plan. Implementation of an action plan would require long-term financial and human resources.

Tool uses and outputs: This tool facilitates a participatory assessment—each country should engage stakeholders to complete this tool and review the final responses. Each section of the tool consists of a series of statements and corresponding response options. Dashboards automatically present basic graphical analysis and visualization of the responses as results for stakeholders to use. Finally, the last Excel tab in this tool is a list of key definitions of terms to provide clarification and guide responses. Results can be used to make plans to address gaps in care system reform.
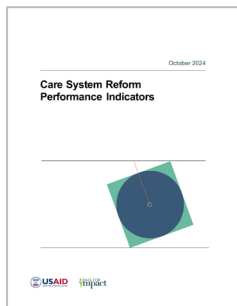
Q3. **How do we measure progress on different components of care system reform in a systematic way across stakeholders?**

Your tool: Care System Reform Performance Indicators

Intended users: Child protection and care reform decision makers, program designers, and implementers, especially those responsible for monitoring and evaluation.

Purpose: In the context of ongoing care system reforms, there is a need for an assemblage of relevant data to monitor and evaluate their effectiveness, including progress toward deinstitutionalization and protection gaps that children face. After undertaking a comprehensive process of indicator mapping and prioritization, D4I developed detailed reference sheets to guide key actors in using these indicators to track progress and performance in strengthening national care systems at the country level. For each of the 43 indicators, the sheets include a full description, definitions of the terms used in each indicator, the numerator and denominator, the method of measurement, the data source, and data disaggregation. They may be referenced by an individual or team.

Investment: Requires adequate time to assess existing indicators in a country's national strategies or relevant M&E frameworks for care reform against the detailed sheets to ensure alignment and resolution of gaps or corrections as needed.

Tool uses and outputs: These reference sheets are intended to aid those responsible for measuring progress in care system reform in strengthening existing or adopting new, well-constructed indicators across six components of the care system: governance, service delivery, social service workforce, financing, social norms, M&E, and information systems. Alignment with the recommended numerators and denominators, data source(s), and disaggregation can also help in tracking changes over time and across different geographies, as these indicators are more widely accepted and used.
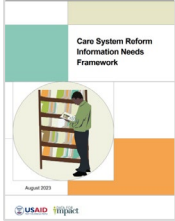
Q4. Which are the most appropriate sources of information to use for measurement and to guide decisions around care system reform?

Your tool: Care System Reform Information Needs Framework

Intended users: Child protection and care reform decision makers, program designers, and implementers.

Purpose: The care system reform information needs framework serves as a supplement to the logical model and indicator mapping tool in Question 1. The framework provides easy-to-reference tables on the different information sources that can be used, alongside scenarios illustrating their use. Each data source is defined, with key characteristics and questions that it can be used to answer. Additionally, background is provided on how data are usually collected and by whom, the typical frequency of data collection, with reference to real-life examples. This guide is designed to be implemented by a team rather than an individual.

Investment: Requires staff time to review the framework, identify needed source data, and to define strategies for data collection and analysis based on the use case or research question.
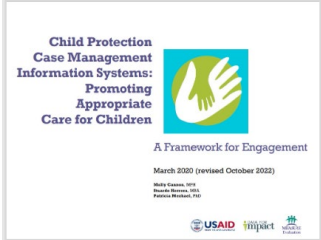
Tool uses and outputs: This framework is intended to help users in identifying the most appropriate data for answering key questions around care system reform and in their broader monitoring and evaluation activities. By referencing this framework, those responsible for reporting on care system reform will be able to clearly define strategies for data collection and analysis that will improve the efficiency of planning efforts.

Q5. How can we build on best practices in the design and strengthening of child protection case management information systems?

Your tool: <u>Child Protection Case Management Information Systems - Promoting Appropriate Care for Children: A Framework for Engagement</u>

Child Protection Case Management Information Systems: Promoting Appropriate Care for Children

A Framework for Engagement

March 2020 (revised October 2022)

Molly Canner, MFS
Ricardo Herrera, MBA
Patricia Michael, PhD

USAID   mpact   MEASURE Evaluation

Intended users: Child protection and care reform decision makers, program designers, and implementers. Developed for procurers, developers, implementers, and users of case management information systems (CMIS) for child protection and care as well as policymakers who are interested in investing in or strengthening a CMIS. This framework was written with the intention of supporting government-led and owned systems, but it recognizes that nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) may have other systems that feed into those government systems or operate independently for their programming purposes.

Purpose: This framework aims to consolidate lessons learned from those who have developed, implemented, and used CMIS. It can be applied in many settings and is intended to generate consensus among global stakeholders towards standardization across systems and the development of sustainable, useful CMIS. Each chapter is dedicated to a specific perspective—the child, services and planning, and the digital design. The framework is a product of a participatory design workshop involving a wide array of stakeholders. It is written in accessible language, including examples with useful visual illustrations, so that it can be easily understood by people who are not information technology (IT) specialists. It was designed to reflect a broad range of child protection and care issues in different country contexts. It reflects many lessons learned and will be a living document to be validated by partners and countries through its adoption and use. This guide is designed to be implemented by a team rather than an individual.

Investment: Requires time to review the framework, ideally through a participatory workshop or series of meetings. More extensive human and financial resources may be needed depending on the system and user needs.

Tool uses and outputs: The framework can be used in different ways—to guide the development of a scope of work for those responsible for procurement of a CMIS; as a checklist to follow when developing or implementing systems; as a communication tool for stakeholders; or as a tool for monitoring the implementation of systems.

Q6. **What is the current status of case management information systems in our context and how could it be improved?**

Your tool: Case Management Information Systems Assessment and Planning Toolkit

Intended users: Developed primarily for government agencies that specialize in child protection and are looking to digitize their CMIS, or to review and assess their existing CMIS. This includes information and communication technology and child protection project managers. Other potential audiences include NGOs and donor organizations who advise on or utilize CMIS themselves, as well as digital solutions providers who develop case management information systems or seek to understand the utility and functionality of existing CMIS solutions in a specific context.

Purpose: The CMIS Assessment and Planning Toolkit is a comprehensive toolkit designed to improve the capacity of governments to evaluate digital systems to support child protection and care case management activities, and to assess their potential for scaling up and achieving long-term sustainability. This toolkit builds upon the lessons learned through the CMIS framework in Question 5. It provides a thorough guide for government agencies to identify the gaps and needs of case management systems through an organizational self-assessment, followed by a set of questionnaires to evaluate solutions. This guide is designed to be implemented by a team rather than an individual. The toolkit is a product of a participatory design process, through which a technical working group validated the tools.

Investment: Requires time, ideally through a participatory workshop with key stakeholders, to conduct the self-assessment and identify action items for implementation. Implementation of an action plan would require long-term financial and human resources.

Tool uses and outputs: The toolkit provides a starting point for the thinking behind the implementation or selection of a CMIS platform. The assessment should be conducted by a team that represents the different positions and levels within a child protection system. Evaluating a CMIS or any technology is highly subjective and requires weighing an array of factors. Both tools in the toolkit are therefore designed more as discussion tools rather than pure diagnostics. The outcomes of the self-assessment process will help project teams to determine if the technology or CMIS platform(s) being evaluated aligns with the country's priorities, resources, and local context to plan their next steps.
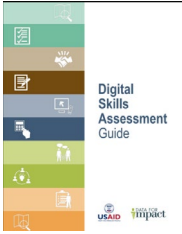
Q7. **What is the current capacity of our staff to use a digital case management information system or other digital solutions for child care and protection and how can it be improved?**

Your tool: Digital Skills Assessment Guide

Intended users: Developed primarily for child protection agencies within governments, as well as CSOs and NGOs dedicated to working in child care and protection. However, consideration was also given to secondary audiences during the development of this guide, including CMIS vendors looking to gauge the digital skills readiness of a client, social impact organizations, and technology companies that are supporting child protection programs or services.

Purpose: All activities and resources can be customized as needed to better reflect the user as well as the context. Teams should be assembled to work through each step of the guide, utilizing the accompanying worksheets along the way. Section 1 starts with an exercise in reflecting on team members' organizational goals, targets, and digital context to prepare for actual assessment development, which begins in Section 2. Section 3 offers guidance for developing a complementary training program as a counterpart to the digital skills assessment, before Sections 4 and 5 guide users through planning and executing the digital skills assessment implementation. Throughout the custom assessment, the guide provides accompanying worksheets for team use, as well as ample references, examples, and considerations for the entire process. This guide is designed to be implemented by a team rather than an individual.

Investment: Staff, consultant, or subcontractor time and resources to design and implement the assessment and to analyze, report, and disseminate results. Developing and implementing a digital skills assessment takes considerable effort from a team and requires maintenance of a thorough record of all conversations, discussions, decisions, and activities that the team conducts throughout the process. If possible, maintaining a dedicated meeting space will provide not only a physical location for housing documents and resources, but will also be more conducive to project longevity and continuity.

Tool uses and outputs: This guide is intended to provide a general roadmap for the development and implementation of a custom digital skills assessment within a child protection government agency or organization. Given the ever-increasing significance of digital skills for all work, especially work requiring collection and use of sensitive data related to children in precarious situations, the results of such an assessment can be used by employers to inform the development of or updates to training materials and guide recruitment efforts of child protection workers.
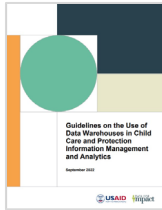
Q8. **Based on our current context, what is the best solution for compiling information from existing sources and visualizing it for decision making?**

Your tool: [Guidelines on the Use of Data Warehouses in Child Care and Protection Information Management and Analysis](#)

Intended users: Most sections of the guidelines are intended for audiences with a monitoring and evaluation or information technology background, but the document can also foster discussion among leadership and policy makers about data integration possibilities and goals for the future of child care and protection information management and analytics.

Purpose: These guidelines were developed to support governments and other child care and protection stakeholders in the conceptualization, development, and use of data warehouses to manage and analyze information from multiple sources for more efficient and informed decision making and improved services and outcomes for children and families. It provides a technical overview of the options available for developing analytical solutions to integrate data using a data warehouse approach. For any level of complexity and budget, there are suitable solutions available; these guidelines aim to empower stakeholders with the key information needed for selecting the most appropriate option. Each section includes an overview of the topic paired with a selection of external resources to provide deeper learning and instructions for implementation. This structure is intended to provide readers with the tools and knowledge to design the best process for their context, regardless of the starting point or final goals for the system. This guide is designed to be implemented by a team rather than an individual.

Investment: Staff time and commitment to review the guidelines and design an outline or technical plan for the development of a data warehouse to fit user needs.

Tool uses and outputs: These guidelines serve as a starting point to understand the breadth of options available in terms of type of data warehouse, technical considerations, hosting options, and further to outline the types of additional resources and expertise needed to implement a solution.

Q9. **What internal standards or policies are in place to ensure data on children and families are protected, private, accurate, and accessible for decision making and improving services?**

Your tool: [Case Management Information Systems Governance Guidelines](#)

Intended users: Implementation and oversight of a CMIS is led by the country-specific government agency with responsibility for children—but a CMIS that is longitudinal in nature also has information relevant to different ministries and may need to interoperate with those entities and their information or data. Data sharing is critical as there are other sectors involved in case management for children, such as security, education, judiciary, and health, and this situation will vary depending on country-specific context. Written from a multisectoral perspective of CMIS implementation, these guidelines designate responsibilities and decision making in a way that ensures that the most appropriate parties contribute and that roles and responsibilities of each substructure are defined within the CMIS and larger, related information ecosystem. This guide is designed to be implemented by a team rather than an individual.

Purpose: This document builds upon the lessons learned through the CMIS framework and consolidates governance components that inform the design, implementation, oversight, and strengthening of CMIS. This guidance aims to 1) define a governance framework for large-scale CMIS implementation; 2) provide operational guidance for use by countries in strengthening CMIS governance; 3) outline the structures and processes representing the norms, values, and rules for CMIS governance; 4) highlight actionable steps towards achieving higher maturity levels in CMIS governance; and 5) provide a CMIS Governance Maturity Model to help countries in assessing and determining the degree of maturity of their CMIS governance processes. The toolkit is the product of a participatory design process, through which a technical working group validated the tools.

Investment: Requires time to map out existing processes and to develop needed governance processes using this tool as a guide. More extensive and long-term time and commitment would be required if this guidance is used alongside the CMIS Assessment and Planning Toolkit (Question 6).

Tool uses and outputs: Enables program stakeholders to determine the governance processes required for the implementation and oversight of a CMIS. This guidance document is part of the larger governance activity by D4I in development of a CMIS Assessment and Planning Toolkit which is designed to improve the capacity of governments in evaluating digital systems to support child protection and care and to assess their potential for scale-up and long-term sustainability.

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