



HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
CANADA

Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Development

FAAE • NUMBER 030 • 2nd SESSION • 41st PARLIAMENT

EVIDENCE

Wednesday, May 28, 2014

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Chair

Mr. Dean Allison

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• (1620)

[English]

The Chair (Mr. Dean Allison (Niagara West—Glanbrook, CPC)): Pursuant to Standing Order 108(2), we are studying the protection of children and youth in developing countries. We'd like to get started.

I'm not sure if there are going to be votes and whether, if there are, we're still going to go to 5:30, but I want to get started to give us as much time as possible. Thank you for being flexible as we rearrange our schedule. We're just going to have the one panel today, and if there are no votes, we'll probably go right to 5:30.

From the Kids' Internet Safety Alliance, we have Paul Gillespie, who is the president. Thank you, sir, for being here today.

Next we have, from Journalists for Human Rights, Rachel Pulfer, who's the executive director. Welcome.

Next we have Linda Dale, who is the executive director of the Children/Youth as Peacebuilders. Welcome, Linda, to you as well.

Why don't we start with you, Mr. Gillespie? We'll start with you and work our way across.

I believe all of you have 10-minute opening statements. Once we're done, we'll go around the room, back and forth between opposition and government members, and we'll get through as many rounds of questions as we can.

I'll stop talking and I'll turn it back over to you, Mr. Gillespie. Welcome. The floor is yours, sir, for 10 minutes.

Mr. Paul Gillespie (President, Kids' Internet Safety Alliance - KINSA): Thank you.

Mr. Chair, honourable members of Parliament, and ladies and gentlemen, thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak with you today. I'm here to discuss the online abuse of children in the developing world.

My name is Paul Gillespie. I'm the president of the Kids' Internet Safety Alliance, KINSA, a registered Canadian charity that empowers developing nations to rescue children from sexual abuse. Previously, I was the officer in charge of the child exploitation unit for the Toronto Police Service for many years, and I'm still a member of the Interpol specialist group on crimes against children.

At a time when governments all around the world struggle financially, people of all political stripes recognize the need to spend public money with extra care. If one were to suggest that Canadian taxpayers fund safety patrols on the roads of Peru or Poland, folks

here at home would object, and with good reason. Routine highway safety is not a proper target for foreign aid dollars. But if we move from safety in the physical world to safety in the cyberworld, the thinking must change accordingly.

Global law enforcement investigations reveal that millions of computers worldwide are actively trading in the most explicit images and movies of child pornography, including 200,000 right here in Canada. It is clear that hundreds of thousands of children are risk. The numbers are staggering and the risks are grave. Children will be sexually groomed or abused online and suffer daily with the stark reality that images of their sexual abuse are being traded online around the globe.

Bringing online child sex predators to justice is therefore a top priority of law enforcement. Certainly we must educate parents—and children too—about the dangers of online child abuse, but all the education in the world will not take away the inherent vulnerability of children. The problem of Internet child abuse will not go away without bringing to justice those who sustain the market for child pornography.

Thus, the central question to be asked is, how can police hunt these predators most effectively? Perhaps surprisingly, it means doing what would be objectionable in the physical world, paying to put trained cybercops on the online information highways in other countries. Why is this so?

Starting with the now trite observation that Internet activity of all kinds is borderless, every cybercop will tell you that online child sexual predators join online communities and trade images and movies of child pornography—almost five million of them—with like-minded people all around the world. Every online predator is simply one member of a global predator community. Consequently, every Internet child exploitation investigation, no matter where it begins, will yield solid leads about predators in other countries.

If we want to make the world's children as safe as possible online, we need to make sure countries around the world have highly trained cybercops on the electronic beat, because it is inevitable that if we train them, cyber investigators from Brazil to Botswana to Belarus will tell us more about what predators in Canada, Colombia, and China are up to.

Training cybercops from other countries puts more patrol officers in the very same Internet neighbourhoods that Canadian kids play in. This is wise foreign aid to developing countries that lack the capacity to conduct sophisticated online investigations. At the same time, it is local policing that helps Canadian kids.

In other words, foreign and domestic policy gains can be achieved simultaneously, and it is remarkably cost-effective. In Canada, it costs about \$150,000 a year in salary and benefits to pay a police officer to be a cyber-police officer. On the other hand, KINSA regularly delivers world-class training to foreign cybercops for about \$2,000 per officer. In both cases, the net result is one more officer protecting children everywhere. Hire one or train 75; the math is simple and compelling.

But even though the economics make perfect sense, this issue is not and cannot be just about money. Countries like Canada, with world-leading cyber-investigative expertise, should support the training of cybercops in less developed countries, because it shows global leadership. Most important, it is the right thing to do for kids everywhere, including those here at home.

KINSA works with global law enforcement and other partners to deliver training and build capacity in developing nations to rescue children from harm. Our vision is to set all children free from online exploitation. KINSA is a member of the Virtual Global Taskforce. KINSA works with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police under a memorandum of understanding. KINSA training is accredited by the Canadian Police College. KINSA has been named as a trusted training partner by the Southern African Regional Police Chiefs Cooperation Organisation, representing 16 countries, and the Eastern Africa Police Chiefs Cooperation Organization, representing 12 countries.

•(1625)

KINSA is highly respected by Interpol and law enforcement agencies around the world. KINSA delivers best-in-class, targeted, highly effective training to law enforcement agencies utilizing best practices from global leaders who deliver the training. The RCMP, United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement, the Norwegian national police, Queensland Police Service in Australia, Newcastle University, the Ministry of the Attorney General of Ontario, and the Interpol Specialists Group on Crimes against Children are just some of the organizations that provide trainers to deliver the training we do.

Since 2006 KINSA has delivered Internet exploitation investigative training to 386 police officers and prosecutors in 26 countries. Our graduates have gone on to identify and rescue 85 children worldwide and delivered Internet safety presentations to 10,000 police officers and 20,000 citizens worldwide.

I would like to tell you now about some of the tremendous results that KINSA training has achieved.

Romanian national police, in 2007 KINSA delivered a general Internet child exploitation investigators' training course to police officers from the cybercrime unit of the Romanian national police. Based on our training, the national police officers created a specialized unit to tackle Internet child pornography investigations. Almost every one of the officers we trained at that time has now

been promoted, and they are assigned to be in charge of cybercrime units around the country. The Romanian national police are now valued contributors to the Interpol Specialists Group on Crimes against Children; and they played a significant role in the very recent Canadian Project Spade, which was a global investigation rescuing almost 400 children around the world, many of whom were shown on a Romanian website being abused.

Brazilian federal police, in 2008 KINSA delivered training to members of the Brazilian federal police. During the training these officers were made aware of and told how to join the Interpol Specialists Group on Crimes against Children. During this training prompted by investigators they were shown a case study involving horrific images of abuse occurring somewhere between New Brunswick and Maine. The case had stalled. One of the Brazilian officers in the training program revealed the fact that their police force had 400,000 categorized images of child pornography that the rest of the world knew nothing about. When the officer returned to Brazil, he searched their database and found that many images of the series being investigated in North America were sitting on the computer of a Brazilian suspect. He added those pictures to the investigation, and it allowed the RCMP to identify the home of the offender who was living in Tracyville, New Brunswick. He was then convicted of abusing 10 Canadian children.

South African Police Service, since 2009 KINSA has delivered training to 260 South African Police Service officers and national authority's prosecutors. A significant part of our efforts in Africa has been to work with the police service to develop and deploy a national strategy dealing with Internet crimes against children. In 2012, while KINSA was delivering training to the police officers and prosecutors, we coordinated efforts with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police to ensure that all information regarding South African Project Spade suspects—again, that was a large Canadian project that identified offenders around the world—would be delivered to the police service when we were delivering the training, so that one of our trainers from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police could explain the case and work with those officers to develop a strategy.

The SAPS then formed a provincial unit, which was part of their new national strategy that we worked on with them, and over the next 14 months conducted a very thorough investigation on the dozens of Project Spade suspects living in South Africa. In August of 2013 the South African Police Service executed dozens of search warrants and to date have arrested and charged eight men, with many more to be arrested, including three teachers, and have identified and rescued five children.

I'm proud to report that in April of 2014, just over a month ago, we graduated our first class of advanced ICE trainers from the South African Police Service and the National Prosecuting Authority, who are now qualified to deliver Internet child exploitation training. They were given all the material needed to do so and they will continue to get KINSA support.

Uganda national police, in August of 2013 KINSA delivered training in Nairobi, Kenya, to police officers from 10 East African countries. Prior to the training, Facebook provided us with information asking for help to alert Ugandan authorities to a dangerous situation involving a Ugandan adult male who was actively targeting and exploiting teen and preteen girls living in Australia.

• (1630)

KINSA trainers on the course from the RCMP and U.S. Immigration gathered all appropriate information about the case and referred it to the Ugandan officers on the course. The trainers worked with the officers to fully understand the case and to develop an investigative strategy so that when they returned to Uganda they could do something about it.

Upon returning to Uganda the investigators put their newly obtained knowledge to work and initiated an investigation. They executed a search warrant, seized a computer, and then, working closely with our other partners from the Australian federal police, who provided computer forensic support to them and then investigative support in Australia, they found the evidence they needed. As a result of the investigation the suspect was arrested, and many teen and preteen female victims were identified, mainly in Australia, and the offender is currently facing multiple charges of exploiting children in Uganda.

What's going to happen in the future? KINSA will deliver regional training to 1,000 police officers and prosecutors in East Africa over the next five years. This training, in conjunction with the Eastern Africa Police Chiefs Cooperation Organization, will begin October 2014 in Tanzania, and 100 of these officers will be trained as trainers.

KINSA will work with each African country that requests our help to develop and deploy a national strategy dealing with Internet crimes against children. KINSA-trained countries will have police officers and prosecutors who are trained in the latest cybercrime techniques, which very importantly can be used across all types of crimes. They are also going to be enabled to be linked to work with worldwide law enforcement agencies and other partners that are actively involved in the same investigations.

Finally, some may ask, why Africa? Africa has seen a wave of increased Internet connectivity in recent years powered by the wide availability of mobile technology and the emergence of new approaches to rural access such as something called white space wireless. White spaces are unused channels in the broadcast TV spectrum.

Along with great social and economic benefits, this increased access is also empowering criminals in new ways. As soon as child sex offenders get online they can quickly find a welcoming community of like-minded criminals to share the latest technologies, facilitate abuse, and evade police.

Africa's police services are generally not so lucky. Many agencies are only beginning the process of looking beyond the physical world's policing technology requirements and are faced with the prospect of starting from scratch, while local criminals are using the developed world's latest technologies.

Significant benefits will accrue from the presence of KINSA in Africa including a highly skilled technical workforce to protect vulnerable children worldwide, and isn't that why we're all here?

Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr. Gillespie.

We'll now turn to Ms. Pulfer.

Ms. Rachel Pulfer (Executive Director, Journalists for Human Rights): Thank you very much.

My name is Rachel Pulfer, and I'm the executive director of Journalists for Human Rights.

JHR is an independent, non-partisan charity that works to strengthen media in developing countries, societies in transition, and other places where the media sector is traditionally weak.

[*Translation*]

Thank you for this opportunity to speak with you today.

I'd like to share some insights and strategies learned from our experience. These show how media development can significantly contribute towards Canada's ambition to secure a better future for children and youth in developing countries.

[*English*]

Thank you very much for this opportunity to speak with you. I'd like to share with you some insights and strategies learned from 12 years of operations that show how media development can significantly contribute towards Canada's ambition to secure a better future for children and youth in developing countries.

[*Translation*]

Further, I'd like to invite the committee to consider ways to leverage the tools that media development offers to scale Canada's positive impact on child welfare into a global leadership position for Canada on this and other files.

• (1635)

[*English*]

Further, I would like to invite the committee to consider ways to leverage the tools that media development offers to scale Canada's positive impact on child welfare into a global leadership position for Canada on this and other files.

For the rest of my submission I will speak in English, which is the language I am most comfortable in as I am sure my accent shows. However, if you have questions you would prefer to ask me in French, I would be happy to attempt a response.

The need to focus on securing the future of children and youth internationally has never been greater. Today's generation of children and youth is the largest in history. Nearly half of the world's population of seven billion are under the age of 25. Among them, more than 90% live in the developing world. But for too many, difficult challenges stand in the way of becoming healthy and productive members of their societies.

Services that are hard to access or that lack quality can undermine the survival of children and youth. For many, violence, exploitation, and neglect are all too common, particularly in situations of fragility and conflict. This is especially true for young women and girls, whose rights are all too often abused.

In recent years, Canada has made a powerful and focused commitment to addressing these issues head-on through development efforts designed to secure the future of children and youth. CIDA's children and youth strategy prioritized, as I'm sure you all know, three key themes. The result, in part, as this week's summit in Toronto shows, is that Canada's laser-sharp focus on maternal health in particular has translated into an international leadership position for Canada on this file. It is one that we at JHR would like to expand upon in future years and extend to other themes through leveraging Canada's full potential as a future global leader in media development when it comes to child welfare.

Journalists for Human Rights has been implementing media development programs of varying scope across sub-Saharan Africa for the past 12 years. We send journalism trainers to work side by side with local journalists, providing skills development and vocational training. The result is a form of tough, hard-hitting accountability journalism that foregrounds local human rights issues and holds local authorities to account for their actions.

Time after time, JHR-led stories have opened up public space for a constructive public conversation on child rights and child welfare issues across the continent. The result is locally appropriate, locally financed, locally led, and locally sustainable solutions to human rights problems and significantly better governance outcomes for those who are amongst the most vulnerable and voiceless in the population—children. No further expenditure of aid, expensive international consultants, military engagement, or other form of international effort is required.

I'll give you an example. JHR recently wrapped a five-year program in Liberia entitled Good Governance Through Strengthened Media. It was financed by the Department for International Development in the U.K. As part of that program, JHR worked with a young Liberian newspaper journalist named Theophilus Seeton.

Seeton wanted to find out why, despite millions of international donor dollars flowing to the Liberian Ministry of Education, a school in the capital city was in a terrible state of disrepair. Kids were crowded four to a desk, and teachers hadn't been paid in months. When Seeton's first story came out, JHR's network of reporters across the country picked up the theme. Ten additional stories followed, all showing the problem to be systemic and countrywide.

Faced with such coverage, the president of Liberia, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, suspended the Minister of Education and ordered an internal

investigation. Shortly afterwards, she sacked the minister for corruption and appointed a more accountable successor. Schools were refurbished and teachers paid across the country. A targeted investment in media training, of a value of approximately \$20,000 Canadian, changed the game for a generation of Liberian school-children. Further, Liberian politicians learned an important lesson about the power of watchdog journalism. In an environment of tougher media oversight, corrupt behaviour has serious consequences. Sunlight, truly, is the best disinfectant.

When it comes to transformational change across communities and countries, I'd like to highlight the governance impacts of media training informed by the children and youth strategy's three priority themes: health, access to education, and greater security and more secure futures for children and youth.

As in the Liberian education study, JHR's work with local reporters has catalyzed locally led, locally owned, locally financed, and appropriate solutions to local problems. In Sierra Leone, JHR-trained journalists investigated power shortages that affected the infant incubation unit at a major hospital in Freetown, the capital city. Since the feature ran, the unit has functioned normally. That was four years ago.

JHR-led investigations have ensured that clinics were staffed with nurses in northern Ghana and doctors sent to hospitals in rural Liberia, expanding access to quality health care for 325,000 people.

Further, on the theme of ensuring greater child security, JHR-led investigations have shut down child brothels in refugee camps in Ghana, ensured justice for victims of child rape in DR Congo and Liberia, and forced a major police inquiry into the widespread practice of police rape of street children in Dar es Salaam, in Tanzania.

These outcomes have been achieved in a particularly cost-effective manner. The average JHR trainer works with a minimum of 20 journalists during their time in-country. Those journalists have, on average, an audience reach of 20,000 people or more. The actual impact of development dollars invested in media is, in fact, exponentially greater than the number of people directly trained because we are working with journalists. This is a phenomenon known as the media multiplier effect.

To give you another example, when we were working with the Canadian International Development Agency on a project in Sierra Leone, the total dollar value of the project was \$200,000 Canadian, over a two-year period. With that \$200,000 investment, we reached 4.9 million Sierra Leoneans with stories about child welfare issues. This gives you some idea of the kind of power that we put at your disposal when you work with media development.

These stories also illustrate another central trope in media development. As one of our Liberian partners, newspaper editor Rodney Sieh, puts it, investing in and training an accomplished and professional network of local journalists to provide watchdog oversight over the use of development funds in countries is one of the ways, if not the only way, donor agencies can build real checks and balances for how aid money is used. This point may help to explain why, from USAID to DFID to the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, more and more donor agencies are investing millions upon millions in media development as an innovative, efficient, and powerfully sustainable way to ensure greater aid transparency and better development outcomes.

Directly, we invest in training that also improves the quality of journalism education in target programs. In environments where journalism education is too often painfully theoretical, we build internship networks between schools, outlets, and practitioners, and provide crucial investments in mentorship opportunities, fellowships, and grants. These programs open vital pathways for young people to use to reach their full potential in the fields of media and communications.

●(1640)

As another example, in Liberia again, we worked with a particularly talented and ambitious young journalist named Nathan Charles. Charles became part of our local trainer program. He used the skills and experience he gained through it to land the top job, running the national newscast for the Liberia Broadcasting System. Last year, Charles oversaw the launch of LBS's first nightly newscast in 22 years. This man is effectively setting the public agenda in Liberia. Reflecting Charles's youth and perspective, the newscast frequently emphasizes coverage of education, access to employment, and other concerns shared by young people across Liberia.

The kinds of remarkable transformational changes that JHR has seen to date indicate to us that Canadian media involvement efforts offer enormous potential for Canada's effort to become an international leader in securing child welfare and many other files.

In light of our experiences, we would like to make two recommendations to the committee.

First, we encourage the committee to review the policy reasons that an international consensus has formed among other international agencies, including DFID, the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights, USAID, Sida, the Danish International Development Agency, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit, UNICEF, the United Nations Democracy Fund, and many others to commit substantially to funding media development initiatives that prioritize child rights and other themes.

Second, we invite the committee to consider a scenario of Canada following suit, particularly when it comes to strategies of protecting children and youth, the most vulnerable and voiceless in these societies. We do this on the premise that it is considerably more cost-effective, locally empowering, and sustainable to train local journalists to ensure the rights of children and youth are respected by local governments and service providers, than to step in and have the Canadian military, NGOs, or INGOs provide those services directly in some sort of parallel republic of NGOs. This point is particularly relevant given Canada's extraordinary wealth of resources in media.

Canada is the source of some of the world's strongest journalistic talent. Our journalistic exports include Peter Jennings of ABC, Lyse Doucet of the BBC, Malcolm Gladwell of *The New Yorker*, and Morley Safer of *60 Minutes*. JHR's current roster of trainer talent includes some of the country's leading journalistic lights: CTV's Lisa LaFlamme; *The Globe and Mail's* Iain Marlow, and former editor John Stackhouse; *Toronto Star* editor Michael Cooke; former MuchMusic VJ Jennifer Hollett; CBC's Alison Crawford; and many more.

Given the exceptional quality of journalists and journalism education in this country, and the experiences that we have seen to date, we see an incredible opportunity for Canada to take on a global leadership position in this field and work through media development to have a transformational impact on governance outcomes to further child welfare in developing countries. We at JHR would be delighted to discuss ways to help make this future happen.

Thank you so much for the opportunity to speak with you today, and I look forward to answering any questions.

●(1645)

The Chair: Thank you very much, Ms. Pulfer.

Now I'm going to move over to Ms. Dale for 10 minutes, please.

Ms. Linda Dale (Executive Director, Children/Youth as Peacebuilders): Good afternoon. My name is Linda Dale. I'm the executive director of Children/Youth as Peacebuilders, CAP as we call it.

First, I thank the committee very much for this invitation to examine and speak about the role of Canada in child protection. As a small organization, for which I'm the director, we really appreciate this opportunity. I also want to say that on a personal level I'm really delighted to be here. It's not very often you get invited to tell the Canadian government what it should do. This is quite a treat. I came all the way from the Bay of Fundy to do this, so thank you very much.

I want to begin by providing a little bit of background about CAP. Our work focuses on youth contributions to peacebuilding in active conflicts and in the transitions to peace. Rather than being service oriented, our programs involve their direct participation. In that way, I could say it's almost like a youth leadership program and lots of volunteer time on their part to work. As a Colombian youth once said to me, "We are working for the future we want rather than the one they are giving us." Most of the young people who are involved in CAP and involved in the programs we do, have been directly affected or involved in war and active conflict in some shape or form.

We've been operating for about 14 years and we've worked with young people in many different countries. The first step in our work is always a participatory research project, to be able to understand the situation through the prism of young people's experience because we want to know both from their point of view the differences and the strengths of how they see their world. As we know, it is often quite different from how adults understand their world. This has also been used as a basis for our projects.

This brings up a strategy question in terms of child protection work that I know the committee is probably looking at. It's generally agreed that a systems-based approach is a more effective way to do child protection work, particularly with large initiatives. CAP would agree with that, but to be honest, in practice we don't do that. That's partly because of the scale of our organization, which is very small. It's also because we work very directly with young people, and young people usually want to focus on concrete issues that they understand are affecting their lives right now, rather than looking at a more general systems-based approach. They see that as the best way they can contribute to positive change.

As they're working, young people usually see how things are interconnected, but their way of working and their approach is usually more issues-based. From my point of view, I understand how a systems-based approach is more effective in many ways because it's more comprehensive. However, I also know there are certain issues, particularly for children in conflict situations, that are very unique in terms of their characteristics, and therefore, require special interventions.

I would therefore probably recommend to the committee that both approaches are required. Yes, a systems-based approach is very important, but there are certain issues that require special attention.

In the past few years, CAP has focused considerable attention on the protection of children and youth in terms of sexual violence and forced marriage. As part of that, we recently produced a collective portrait of the Lord's Resistance Army's forced wife system in northern Uganda. I will use some of that information from that collective portrait as a reference point, which will focus primarily on early and forced marriage and also on sexual violence against young people, particularly in conflict situations.

I'll start by reminding us, I guess, why we do all this work, why it's important. When we were doing the work with the girls, they were very concerned about privacy. They were very concerned about security. So we had them produce masks that they coloured to represent their thoughts and feelings about their time in the bush and

their time with the LRA. I'm going to read you one of the interpretations.

This is by Vicky. She said:

I am Vicky. I want to explain the different colours and feathers I put on my mask.

The blue is for the time when I was still at home. I was really very happy with my family and all of our life together. The yellow colour is about cruelty – because it was cruelty that made the LRA come and get me and take me into the bush.

The black colour is for that time. I was in darkness; I thought I would never come out of it. The red colour is for when I was moving with the LRA, all the danger. There was a lot of bloodshed, a lot of death, a lot of suffering. So I put red colour for that.

Then there is the top part of my mask with the feathers, the greenish colour and also the butterfly. It is for the time when I flew back like a butterfly to my home. Now I think there is going to be a lot of things that will be good in my life. I have a feeling of a new life.

● (1650)

Vicky was with the rebels for eight years. This is a great hope for the future on her part.

The recommendations I would like to make are to look at how we can support young people to both protect themselves from these violations—or how we can help that to happen—and also to help them in the transition for their life in the future.

As I talk I'm going to show you a very brief, two-minute slide show. I hope that the slides don't distract you from listening to me. These are slides of the masks that the girls made. As I say, each mask has quite an elaborate interpretation, but we don't have time for all. I'll briefly tell you about this one. They said that they put red around here because they wanted to say, "This is our lipstick, and we're so happy that now we're going to have a new life."

I want to make some recommendations and I'm going to begin with community programming. I would like to recommend that a small rapid-response funding program on child protection be established and operate out of Canada's embassies. This fund could provide support for local child protection issues, both emergencies and emerging problems specific to the local context. For us over here in Canada, we often don't know what's going on, but people in the embassies do. They can provide very much needed support very quickly. I think that's really important.

I think it's important to establish clear parameters for this fund, one focused on child protection. I recommend that these funds be limited to community-based national organizations or a local organization.

Second, I recommend that Canada invest in programs to support the resiliency and leadership of female youths who escape from forced marriages or are survivors of sexual violence. Some of the elements that I think would be important in this are sexual and reproductive health services to help girls recover from the physical and emotional effects of these violations. For example, the majority of girls abducted by the LRA were 11 to 14 years old; that was the preferred age. They were continually raped and many still have injuries from this. STDs are common, and to be frank, female returnees can be preyed upon by males as they are seen as spoiled goods, so programs are needed to both fortify their physical health and strengthen their sense of self in ways that encourage them to protect themselves and to make positive decisions.

Third, I think these programs should have an element of maternal care. Most girls who have been forced into marriage have also been forced to become pregnant, even if they are very young. These young mothers need support, particularly once they are outside a contained area where all their actions are controlled. Because of the stigma attached to sexual violence, they cannot always depend on their families.

Education is important. Again, to use a northern Uganda example in that war, many girls were held for seven or eight years or longer. They lost the literacy skills they had before abduction. They have not been inside a school environment, so it is very scary for them. They don't know how to handle it. It is not just enough to be given the opportunity to go to school; they have to be given remedial assistance.

Leadership and citizenship are also important. Girls who have survived these situations have enormous resiliency. Programs can have a tendency to forget this and identify them as victims in ways that enhance passivity. This is a complaint I hear from girls all the time. Instead we should be providing opportunities for them to learn about the meaning of citizenship in civil society and strengthening their capacities and the avenues for them to contribute to their communities. This is particularly important, I think, for forced wives and children born in captivity, as they are often separated out from their societies.

This brings me to the fourth point, and that's birth registration. I'm sure this is something that other people have talked to you about, how important it is. It is the basis for all child protection work. It's fundamental.

• (1655)

I want to speak about particular other aspects of birth registration that I think are important, particularly in African countries and in countries where there has been a conflict.

When girls have children in these situations, usually those children are not going to be registered, so it's very important to do that as soon as they come back home. In African countries, at least the ones I've been working in, there are two levels of citizenship. I think it's important to think about that. It's not just the national legal citizenship; it's also your clan citizenship. That is usually through your father. Girls in northern Uganda, even if they were with these men for eight years, often never knew their names. They were not allowed to know their names. So when they come back home, the clan leaders will not recognize the children, because they say they

need to know the father's name. That's something that needs to be looked at.

That's not to say that birth registration at the national level is not important. It's just that when we do this work and support this very important work, it's important to understand the complexities of it.

At the prevention and policy level, I'd like to make two main recommendations. One, I hope that Canada continues and strengthens its work to eliminate early forced marriage and to make this practice, which affects the lives of so many girls, unacceptable and something that is universally condemned.

There are a few points. I think it is very important to maintain the agitative force as it recognizes the lack of free and full consent and thus identifies forced marriage as a violation of a person's right to liberty. The Convention on the Rights of the Child is also critical, particularly its article supporting a child's right to have a say in decisions affecting her life. Of course, in conflict situations, this choice does not exist.

I think it would be useful and important for Canada to gain a strong knowledge of the practices of early and forced marriage in different contexts and cultures. This would deepen our credibility and capacity to speak with authority about the roots of these practices and their consequences for gender equality and girls' rights.

I think, finally, it is also very important to make the connection between forced marriage and sexual violence. I've been told that recommendations are usually given in odd numbers, so I have to do one more. That would be just to say how important I think it is in any program to include participation of young people.

That is not to say that young people need to be responsible for their own protection, but it is to say that if we, as adults, take it away from them, and they don't have the responsibility to support themselves and others around them, they will be feeling more vulnerable rather than stronger.

Those are my recommendations.

I know you've probably heard from many other people, as well as from my two colleagues. I'm sure we all look forward to your questions.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

Here's what we're going to do. I believe there are going to be bells in about two minutes, so I need to have unanimous consent to know if we could have maybe one quick round of five minutes each, for each party. Are we okay with that?

Some hon. members: Agreed.

The Chair: All right, why don't we get started?

We'll start with Mr. Dewar and then we'll move over here and finish off with Mr. Garneau.

Mr. Paul Dewar (Ottawa Centre, NDP): Thanks, Chair.

Thanks to all our guests.

Mr. Gillespie, I think you were fairly comprehensive, and I understand your point of view and how you've integrated things, so I'm not ignoring you, I'm just acknowledging you and the fact that you did give us a very comprehensive overview of what you do. I might note that you are also showing the model of what people are talking about with reference to universalizing our approach post-2015. That is, we don't just focus externally; we look at what's happening domestically, and I think you give us a really clear idea of what that looks like right now.

I want to go to our two other guests.

For many of the conflicts we're dealing with now, we're talking about societies and cultures in which a majority of the population is youth. I'm thinking of Central African Republic, for example, as well as South Sudan.

In both of those examples—and there are many others, and you cited some—there is this challenge around having the norms, if you will, reflect the needs for change. The norms are the silence and the lack of credibility of youth and their voices, and the idea—and both of you touched on this—of how you can protect children when children aren't heard or seen. In fact, there are the invisible children, as we've heard them referred to often and as we've seen in Nigeria.

On top of what you've mentioned in your recommendations, my question to both of you is this, because I'm not sure we do it well here in Canada. How do we put in place mechanisms to have children's voices at the table? Can you give examples if you have them? Ms. Pulfer has already given one. I'd like to see how that's connected as well to any of the UN processes.

I'll just leave that with both of you to answer. How do we get children's voices to be heard? I think that's what you both touched on. If we're going to talk about child protection, it can't just be something we do paternalistically. We really have to involve them.

• (1700)

Ms. Rachel Pulfer: That's a very good question.

One of the things we found to be absolutely critical in our training process is to talk to journalists about the importance of talking to those directly affected and who are on the front lines of the experiences that they're covering.

I'll give you an example. The last time I was in Sierra Leone, I read three different stories about the epidemic of teen pregnancy, in part due to rape from ex-combatants, that was breaking out in schools across the country. There was not a single teenage girl quoted in any of these stories. I said to the trainers that we need to work on making sure that these journalists understand the need to talk to the people directly affected by these problems so that these stories are informed by their perspectives, first and foremost.

We've developed a method of training whereby the number one principle is the participatory approach to journalism training, which means talking to those who are directly affected, first, and in a manner that is respectful of both their privacy and their human rights.

Obviously, we are in the business of first doing no harm. The goal is to ensure that these voices are out there, that these issues are told, that there's a human face on these issues, that people start to care

about them, and that they're not simply statistics but real, lived tragedies. Then the community in question gathers around to decide that they need to own this problem and do something about it.

Time and again, we found that happened because another key part of our training is empowerment, by which we mean not only ensuring that those voices have sufficient time to be either voiced or reported upon, covered, but also engaging authorities both in an understanding of their legal obligations in the situation in question and in a public, constructive discussion on how best to resolve the problem.

We don't just encourage our journalists to publish rants about teen pregnancy or child brides, or whatever it might be. We encourage our journalists to propose solutions and actually take on that leadership role in an environment where governments are very insecure and often don't actually know what the appropriate solution might be out there in society and appreciate the journalists showing that leadership and providing a constructive element of how best to engage the civil society and government in resolving this problem.

We've seen time and again that a locally credible journalist covers a story, a local issue is aired, and local authorities take on that issue as their responsibility and deal with the problem, and then we have local government working for their local constituents on issues of child welfare.

I hope that gives you an example.

• (1705)

The Chair: Thank you very much.

I'm sorry, that's all the time we have. We may have to get picked up again.

Mr. Anderson, you have five minutes, please.

Mr. David Anderson (Cypress Hills—Grasslands, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I wish we had a little bit more time with you folks, but I want to thank you for your presentations. We will use them later when we make a report on this.

Mr. Gillespie, we had some enthusiastic support from some witnesses earlier in the DFATD child protection unit for this \$3 million commitment to implement minimum standards for child protection. Have you been able to work with that unit so far? I want your opinion on that.

Mr. Paul Gillespie: This May weekend is KINSA's 10th anniversary. We're a very small charity. We've never ever been able to access or receive any federal funding for what we do. We raise it all, like "tin cup" it. People cross the street when they see me coming. It is what it is. I'm just hoping that, at some point, people recognize the value of what we're doing because we're doing a lot of good out there. I understand there's some new processes in place. We are starting to communicate about the potential resources, and buckets of funding open up, so we're taking any direction you can give us to try to do a little bit more and a little bit better than we're doing now.

Mr. David Anderson: I'd actually like you to give us some advice. We're working to bring in some domestic laws to advance some cyberbullying initiatives in that. Can you make the connection from the domestic application of those laws to global initiatives that perhaps our government could take and be involved in? I realize we have trouble with legislation going across the international borders, but how could we show leadership?

As we're working domestically to bring in some of these things to protect our own children, what would you recommend the Canadian government do to extend that protection internationally?

Is it enough that we put money into the kind of programs you're doing, or is there something more we can be doing legislatively?

Mr. Paul Gillespie: First of all, Canada has some of the best laws in the world on the books in regards to child exploitation and child pornography. When I go around the world, almost every country we go to basically asks us to leave a copy of the Criminal Code, so they can fill in the blanks with things they don't have. So we're doing a lot of good things.

There are many direct lines, especially with cyberbullying and some of the things that are occurring now. Offline exploitation quickly becomes online exploitation and victims of cyberbullying, and bullying in general, are very likely and susceptible to become victims of other kinds of child abuse. I think there are a lot of direct lines between some of these things that are occurring.

In regard to what the government of the day is doing, I would just say that you're actually doing quite a lot well. I would just be cognizant of the fact that there's only one Internet. There are about 200,000 bad guys in Canada trading child pornography right now and Canadian police, every year, arrest about 500 people. They're doing their best.

We need to sort of crowdsource a solution. We need a distributed effort to work together until smarter people than us can figure this out. We have to work together. Rather than training them from the grassroots, we have tens of thousands of really smart cybercops around the world. They're university educated but they just don't do this. They're told to work on credit card frauds or other things. We top them up with the information they need to conduct these kinds of investigations, they join the global team, and we'll see exponential results.

Mr. David Anderson: I'm running out of time already.

Ms. Dale, you work around the world in various conflict-ridden locations. One of the things we've heard often is that the providers of these programs find themselves in tough situations as well. Could you tell us a little bit about the main challenges you face when you're trying to protect children in locations where you and your staff are not particularly safe as well?

Ms. Pulfer, this may apply to you as well. How do you protect your own people as you're trying to work in these very difficult situations?

Mr. Gillespie's folks are police. They often have that kind of protection, but what do your folks do and what do you do to train your people to be careful?

The Chair: Ms. Dale, you have 60 seconds.

Ms. Linda Dale: I should say that we work directly with people overseas, so we don't actually have the staffers there. The only thing we can say is that they understand the situations a lot better than we do. I'm often told, after the fact, oh, did you know this was going on? A lot of it is about reading and understanding. I could go on, but I don't think I can.

• (1710)

Mr. David Anderson: You have 15 more seconds if you want to add anything.

Ms. Linda Dale: Oh, if only I'd known that!

Ms. Rachel Pulfer: We have a few different strategies. Our methodology of media development is radical grassroots media development, which means that we send trainers to work side by side with journalists. They won't be credible and they won't build the trust or confidence of the sector if they're not taking the local public transit and using all the local means of getting around and accessing stories. If they're in a big white car and in an air-conditioned compound villa, then there is a credibility issue that's established from the get-go. We have to initially hire folks, like Bonnie Allen, from CBC Saskatchewan, for example, who was a trainer on our program for several years in Liberia, who'd had AKE journalist-at-war training and knew how to navigate those kinds of conflict environments, or Lisa LaFlamme, who's been in just about every conflict zone known to contemporary man.

We hire carefully and then we work with local security services. We have contacts in local security services who know who we are and what we're doing and champion it in a potentially insecure or initially insecure situation. Our model is always to work with, and through, a local media resource centre that has both the respect of the security services and of the government and the ear of the government in a situation where things can get a little bit fraught.

The Chair: Thank you. That's all the time; we're actually over.

We're going to finish up with Mr. Garneau, please, for five minutes.

Mr. Marc Garneau (Westmount—Ville-Marie, Lib.): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

My first question is to Mr. Gillespie. Congratulations on the successes that KINSA has had. I certainly understand your point about well-trained cyberpolice.

Let me ask a naive question. All of this requires the Internet. If the Internet is not there, I assume that the problem goes away. However, we do all believe in an open and universal Internet. Have people, who do similar work to you, raised the issue of Internet service providers having some responsibility or taking some responsibility in controlling what is accessible to people? Certainly that would be one way of choking off some of this material.

Mr. Paul Gillespie: Yes, certainly. There are two parts.

First of all, on the Internet, let's talk about developing nations. South Africa has about 50 million people. Internet ability from houses is about 14% or 15%. I gave the number of 200,000 in Canada. South Africa actually has 9,000 suspects. Based on their population and the relevance, they're very similar to Canada. I want to point that out because that's home computer access, but everybody is on mobile phones now, especially in the developing nations.

I am a firm believer that the main way people trade these pictures is through file-sharing or peer-to-peer networks, the same way our kids and some of us download music. I absolutely believe that service providers could bring a little more to the table in the discussions, because the reality is that they are facilitating the access that we all have to these things.

I think yours is a great point. There's technology available to choke, frustrate, or throttle—call it what you want—the distribution of this horrific material, and I don't think we're doing as much as we could. I would be 100% behind trying to help that initiative, within reason.

I think that's a great question.

Mr. Marc Garneau: Thank you.

My second question is for Ms. Pulfer. Canada invested a lot in Afghanistan in lost lives and also invested quite a bit in terms of helping to develop certain aspects of the country. I'm curious as to whether your organization was in Afghanistan, whether you met journalists there, and whether you passed on some of the values that you subscribe to. Were you present in Afghanistan?

Ms. Rachel Pulfer: No, we were never in Afghanistan. We are now working very productively with a woman in northern Ontario who has done grassroots regional media development initiatives in Afghanistan. She is doing training with aboriginal communities, so we're practising what we preach at home.

As the Afghanistan situation was unfolding, our feeling was that we are most productively put to use in a post-conflict environment, and for much of the time that Canada was engaged in Afghanistan, it was a hot conflict environment. We felt that we should put our resources into environments where the war is effectively over and we are rebuilding a sector that has been wiped out, whilst monitoring situations in other parts of the world to see where we could be most effective.

We are currently contemplating an engagement in South Sudan. We've been doing ongoing needs assessment work in South Sudan for three years now, and we feel that there is an opportunity there to work with independent media. But in the Afghanistan situation, there were a number of different factors, including language concerns and the extraordinary cost of security that would have been involved in the kind of model that we do, so we decided against it.

• (1715)

Mr. Marc Garneau: Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

To our guests, thank you very much for being here today and for being flexible on our schedule with votes. You are dismissed.

Very quickly, I need to pass a budget for lunch, for hosting our guest:

That the Clerk of the Committee make the necessary arrangements and that the necessary funds be allocated from the Committee's hospitality budget for a luncheon with the UNHCR High Commissioner, António Guterres, on Thursday, May 29, 2014.

(Motion agreed to)

The Chair: Okay. Thank you very much.

Thank you once again. With that, the meeting is adjourned.

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