



AN OVERVIEW OF THE 2025 ANNUAL MEETING FOR CHILD PROTECTION IN HUMANITARIAN ACTION

From the 3rd to the 5th of June, **841 participants** from across the globe—including practitioners, donors, academics, policymakers, youth and child advocates, and community leaders—came together for the **2025 Annual Meeting for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action**, hosted by the Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action.

Spanning **18 sessions**, the meeting explored how the child protection sector is adapting and responding in a rapidly changing humanitarian landscape. The focus was clear: How to strengthen local and national systems and actions, including local ownership and leadership of accountable child protection actions, how to strengthen equitable partnerships for child protection, and how to continue to centre children’s rights and their right to protection - especially in the face of growing political, financial, and operational pressures.

Highlights from the Meeting Included:

- **Strong local leadership and participation:** Local actors and national organisations shaped many of the discussions—sharing the leadership roles they have taken, rich experiences across diverse contexts, and practical solutions to entrenched barriers in the system.
- **Children and young people front and centre:** Child and youth advocates from conflict and crisis contexts, powerfully reminded us of their current realities, the efforts they are leading and what they gain from this, and the importance of listening to each other and working together.
- **Child protection systems strengthening:** Examples of locally owned social protection and child care mechanisms informing public policy and being adapted in times of crises to protect children were shared. Alongside calls to value indigenous knowledge and amplify existing voices before stepping in.
- **Urgent calls for localisation:** Participants pushed back against top-down models of capacity “building”, calling instead for shifts in power, resources, visibility, and decision-making to local actors—not as a future goal, but a present, urgent necessity.

- **New ideas to strengthen ground-up approaches to child protection:** From interactive ways of facilitating children’s participation in the programme cycle, to community-led project design, participants shared innovations and adaptations that are helping practitioners respond more effectively and collaboratively to child protection risks in today’s complex crises.
- **Recognition of the impacts of the funding crisis and the need to enhance collaboration for continued, quality child protection:** Practitioners shared how cuts are reducing critical child protection programmes and shrinking teams—yet also spotlighted how partnerships and collective action, including across sectors, are helping sustain impact.
- **A reaffirmation of core principles:** Amid increasing fragmentation, the Alliance’s common standards and frameworks—like the Minimum Standards for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action—were seen as anchors that help hold the line on quality programming, effective coordination, and accountability.
- **Hearing directly from donors:** A panel discussion with representatives from Norway, ECHO, Denmark, Canada, UNHCR, and Beyond the Classroom Foundation Nigeria shed light on donor priorities, constraints, and strategies for maintaining child protection as a humanitarian priority as well as the challenges of and guidance for strengthening funding to local and national organisations.
- **Emerging findings on the Vancouver Principles:** A session shared early findings from an Alliance-UNICEF-Plan study exploring collaboration between peacekeeping operations and child protection actors to prevent recruitment, enable release, and support reintegration of children associated with armed forces and groups.
- **Planting the seeds of an Alliance position and eventual policy on investing in local and national Child Protection Systems and Actors in humanitarian contexts.**

Facilitator and Speaker Organisations:

Abs Development Organization for Women and Child

Agrajttra

Asia Youth Association

AYEVAC Youth Movement

Behind the Classroom Foundation

Child Destiny and Development Organisation (CHIIDO)

ChildFund International

Dallaire Institute

Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Daystar University

DG ECHO

Elevate Trust

Global Affairs Canada

Global Child Protection Area of Responsibility (CP AoR)

Global Fund for Children

Government of Chile

Ground Truth Solutions

Human Rights Center, University California Berkeley

InterAction

Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies

International Association of Schools of Social Work, McGill University

International Bureau for Children's Rights

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)

International Rescue Committee (IRC)

METAdasi

Ministry of Gender, Women's Protection, Family and Children, Central African Republic

Pan-European University

Plan International

REPSSI

Right to Play

Save the Children

Street Child

Taller de Vida

Teenergizer Ukraine

Terre des hommes

UNAS Heliópolis

UNICEF

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

United Nations Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence Against Children (SRSG VAC)

War Child

Women for Justice and Equality

World Vision

Youth Association for Development (YAD) Pakist

Alliance Working Groups, Task Forces, and Initiatives Represented:

Advocacy Working Group (Save the Children)

Assessment, Measurement, and Evidence Working Group (UNICEF Innocenti Global Office of Research and Foresight)

Child Protection Minimum Standards Working Group (IRC and Save the Children)

Learning & Development Working Group (UNICEF)

Case Management Task Force (Hold the Child)

Children Associated with Armed Forces and Armed Groups Task Force (Plan International)

Prevention Initiative (Plan International)

Unaccompanied and Separated Children Task Force (Save the Children)

2025 Annual Meeting Key Materials:

Explore the links below to find the key material outputs from the 2025 Annual Meeting for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action.

- **2025 Annual Meeting [Recordings Playlist](#) in English** - with translated captions in Spanish, French, and Arabic!
- [Blog Series](#) from the 2025 Annual Meeting
- [Session Summaries and Recordings](#) from the 2025 Annual Meeting
- **Background Paper** from the 2025 Annual Meeting: [Protection of Children from the Ground Up - Enhancing Localised Approaches in Conflict and Crises](#)
- Use the [2025 Annual Meeting Agenda](#) to guide you through this report!

A position paper on ground-up approaches to strengthening local and national child protection systems and actors is currently being developed building on the meeting [Background Paper](#) and learning from the [meeting sessions](#).

Missed the Annual Meeting? Find the links to the recordings in their original language below, along with session summaries!

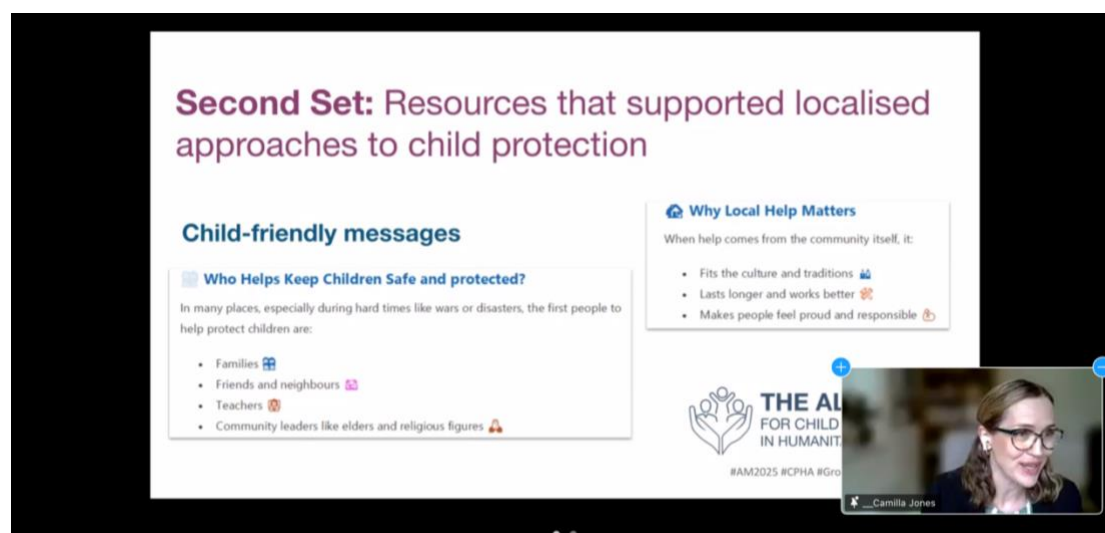
3RD JUNE: PROTECTING CHILDREN FROM THE GROUND UP IN A CHANGING HUMANITARIAN LANDSCAPE

The first day of the Annual Meeting began with a soft opening, offering participants a chance to explore the latest Alliance resources and their relevance to today's humanitarian landscape. This was followed by a session led by the Alliance's technical groups on how to advance learning and collaboration amid funding cuts and changes in the humanitarian sector. A dynamic speed networking session helped participants connect and get to know who was in the room. The meeting then was officially opened with contributions from children and local actors, sharing perspectives on ground-up approaches to protecting children. Participants were also introduced to the Alliance's newly released Strategic Brief—a one-year stopgap strategy designed to sustain critical child protection interventions amid funding shortfalls and shifts in the humanitarian architecture. The day concluded with two thematic sessions: the first focused on strengthening context-relevant, community-owned child protection, and the second, held in Spanish, on strengthening child protection systems—followed by a Spanish-language networking session.

Session 1 | Hot Off the Press with the Alliance Working Groups, Task Forces, and Initiatives - [Watch Here](#)

This rapid session featured presentations from seven technical groups within the Alliance, showcasing their newest tools and resources. Included are resources developed in response to current funding challenges and that enable ground-up approaches.

Facilitators and Speakers: Camilla Jones, Amanda Brydon, Eric Gisairo, Thomas Sanderson, Hani Mansourian, Wajahat Ali, Stephanie Acker, and Elena Giannini.



Second Set: Resources that supported localised approaches to child protection

Child-friendly messages

Who Helps Keep Children Safe and protected?

In many places, especially during hard times like wars or disasters, the first people to help protect children are:

- Families 🏠
- Friends and neighbours 👥
- Teachers 🍎
- Community leaders like elders and religious figures 🙏

Why Local Help Matters

When help comes from the community itself, it:

- Fits the culture and traditions 🌍
- Lasts longer and works better 🔄
- Makes people feel proud and responsible 🙌

THE ALLIANCE FOR CHILD PROTECTION IN HUMANITARIAN ACTION

#AM2025 #CPHA #GroundUp

Camilla Jones

Session 2 | Strength in Solidarity: Advancing Learning and Collaboration Amid Crisis - [Watch Here](#)

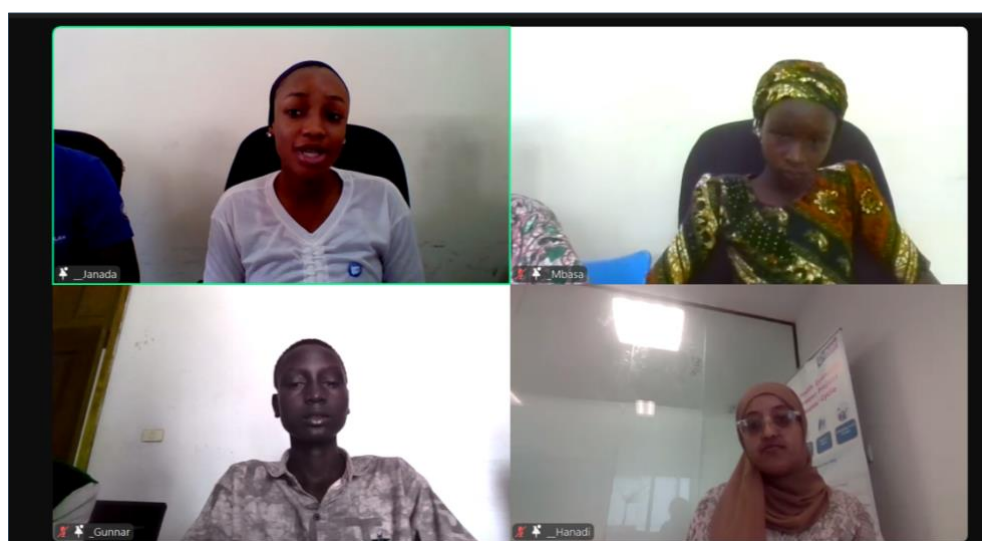
This session examined the evolving landscape of humanitarian action and its implications for child protection. As complexity increases and resources decline, practitioners face significant operational and financial challenges. The session therefore highlighted key trends shaping the sector and underscored the vital role of Learning and Development (L&D) in sustaining and adapting child protection efforts. Presenters shared practical strategies—from L&D to broader programme design—for navigating funding constraints while advancing the protection agenda. The session fostered collective reflections on how to uphold quality, relevance, and impact in a resource-constrained world.

Facilitators and Speakers: Amanda Brydon, Elspeth Chapman, Elena Giannini, and Marion Mwebi.

Session 3 | Opening Session: Ground Up Approaches to Protect Children Affected by Humanitarian Crises - [Watch Here](#)

This session featured a diverse group of actors reflecting on how this year's meeting theme connected to their lives, work, and advocacy. It included keynote remarks from Najat Maalla M'jid, Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General on Violence Against Children; a panel with child and youth leaders from Nigeria and Ethiopia working with Plan International; and a panel with local and national actors from Lebanon, Greece, and Uganda, facilitated by Sheema Sen Gupta, Director of Child Protection at UNICEF. The session also placed the theme in today's global context and walked through the agenda for the days ahead, marking the official opening of the meeting.

Facilitators and Speakers: Hani Mansourian, Camilla Jones, Najat Maalla M'jid, Child and Youth Speakers, Sheema Sen Gupta, Lora Papa, and Lam.



Session 4 | The Centrality of Child Protection in a Changing Humanitarian Landscape - [Watch Here](#)

This session marked the official launch of the Alliance's new 12-month [Strategic Brief](#), which outlines how we will work to sustain essential child protection prevention and response efforts in a rapidly evolving humanitarian landscape. The session highlighted the evidence behind the Brief, its connection to the humanitarian reset, and reflections from local and international actors in Yemen and Uganda on how it can strengthen their work. Together, we explored how we can collaborate to protect children in an era defined by crisis and change.

Facilitators and Speakers: Elspeth Chapman, Camilla Jones, Ron Pouwels, Wafa Tayeb, Michael Byamukama, Gurvinder Singh, and Steve Miller.



Session 5 | Shifting Power to Children and Communities for Locally Owned and Led Child Protection - [Watch Here](#)

This session explored how community ownership can be possible across diverse humanitarian contexts and invites participants to discuss how to meaningfully shift power to communities and foster equitable partnerships. Speakers shared practical examples of community-led child protection efforts, including trauma-informed art therapy for Afghan refugee children in Pakistan and locally-led protection initiatives in Colombia.

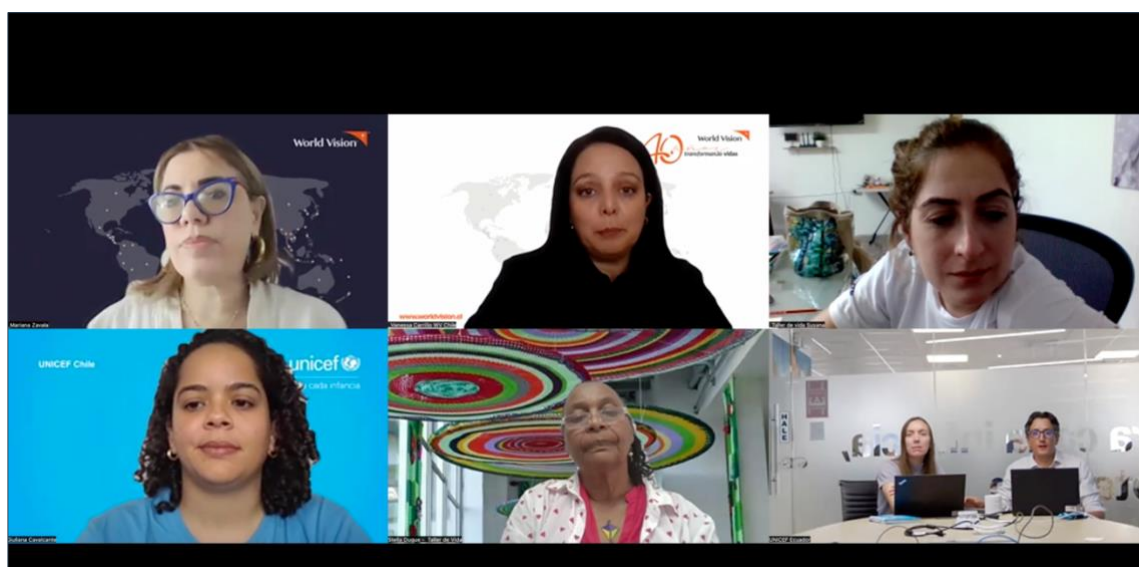
Facilitators and Speakers: Juan José Castellanos, Michael Boampong, Atta ul Haq Khaderzai, Connolly Butterfield, and David Amé Atsu.

Session 6 | Strengthening Resilience and Child Protection Systems in Humanitarian Contexts: Voices and Actions from Latin America and the Caribbean - Watch in [English](#) and [Spanish](#)

This session — held in both English and Spanish — offered a unique opportunity to learn from diverse actors across Latin America who are driving approaches to strengthening local child protection systems. Drawing from powerful examples from Chile, Ecuador, and Colombia — including responses to armed conflict and displacement, escalating armed violence and grave violations against children, and delivering humanitarian child protection in the absence of formal international coordination structures — the session explored how strengthening local systems and engaging a broad range of actors is not only possible but essential.

Esta sesión — disponible en inglés y español — ofreció una oportunidad única para aprender de diversos actores de toda América Latina que lideraron enfoques para fortalecer los sistemas locales de protección infantil. A partir de ejemplos contundentes de Chile, Ecuador y Colombia —incluyendo respuestas al conflicto armado y al desplazamiento, el aumento de la violencia armada y las graves violaciones contra la niñez, y la prestación de protección infantil en contextos humanitarios sin estructuras formales de coordinación internacional—, la sesión analizó cómo fortalecer los sistemas locales y movilizar a una amplia gama de actores no solo era posible, sino esencial.

Facilitators and Speakers: Carlos Miranda, Mariana Zavala, Margarita Grijalva, Vanessa Geraldine Carrillo, and Stella Duque Cuesta.



4TH JUNE: STRENGTHENING LOCAL LEADERSHIP AND SYSTEMS FOR CONTINUED CHILD PROTECTION

The second day of the Annual Meeting deepened the exploration of the meeting theme with a focus on strengthening local and national actors, child protection systems, and the financing needed to sustain this work. The day began with two sessions from the Alliance's Case Management and CAAFAG Task Forces, which highlighted how these technical areas were advancing locally led approaches that responded to the realities of today's humanitarian context. A networking session on the meeting theme followed, offering participants an opportunity to share experiences and connect around common challenges. The programme then turned to the critical issue of funding, starting with a session on the localisation of financing for child protection, followed by a dedicated discussion on donor perspectives and the future of financing in the sector. The day concluded with two thematic sessions: the first explored local leadership in the prevention of recruitment and gender-based violence, and the second examined strategies to strengthen child protection systems through a range of entry points.

Session 7 | Enhancing the Role of Community Networks in Case Management - Watch in [English](#) and [French](#)

Operating at a time of shrinking humanitarian funding, are you wondering how child protection actors can ethically involve community volunteers in the case management response? Are you curious to know more about the role of community volunteers in child protection case management in emergency contexts? Are you curious to find out how an inter-agency cohort of facilitators working in West and Central Africa spent a year strengthening practice around this theme in their humanitarian responses? Watch this session, held in English and French, to find out more.

Session 8 | Bridging Forces in a Changing Context: Peacekeeping and Child Protection Actors Advancing CAAFAG Prevention and Release Strategies - [Watch Here](#)

This session shared preliminary findings from a study on the Vancouver Principles, with a focus on collaboration between peacekeeping operations and child protection actors to prevent child recruitment, support the release of children associated with armed forces and armed groups, and ensure their reintegration. The study draws on experiences from contexts where peacekeeping operations are ongoing (South Sudan, Central African Republic), closing (Democratic Republic of the Congo), or have closed (Mali).

Facilitators and Speakers: Elspeth Chapman, Sandra Maignant, and Shelly Whitman.

Session 9 | Local Leadership in Humanitarian Action: Strengthening Child Protection Through Local Partnerships and Equitable Resource Mobilisation - [Watch Here](#)

This session spotlighted two initiatives that are shifting power and resources to local and national actors (LNAs) through equitable partnerships, tailored capacity strengthening, and innovative support such as help desks for resource mobilisation. Local actors involved in these initiatives shared firsthand insights on what's working, what needs improvement, and what's critical to enabling truly locally led child protection responses.

Facilitators and Speakers: Denis Kioko, Helena Minchew, Joyce Mutiso, Emily Jacquard, Ramya Madhavan, Neelima Akhter Chowdhury, and Raquel Kasham Daniel.



Session 10 | Keeping Child Protection on the Agenda in a Shifting Funding Environment – [Watch Here](#)

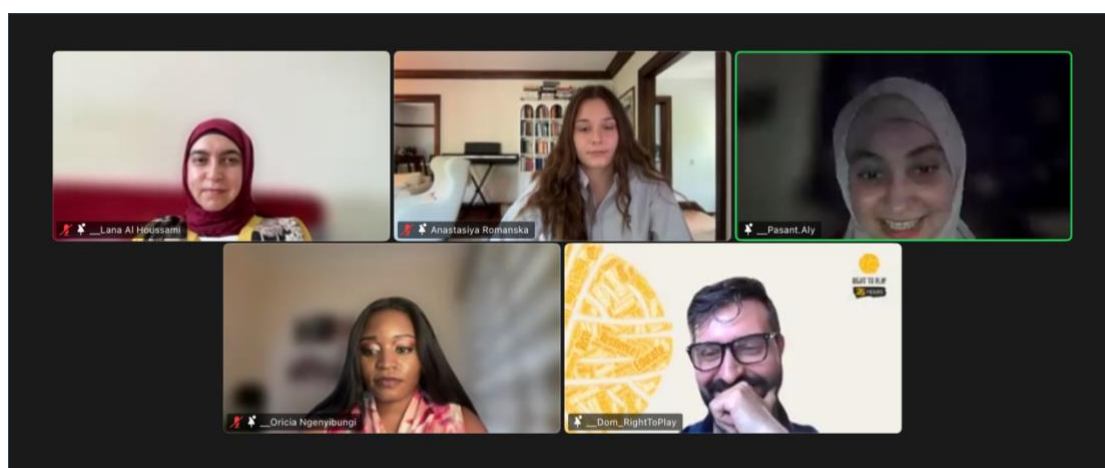
This session explored how child protection can remain front and centre in an evolving humanitarian funding landscape. We heard directly from donors about the factors shaping their decisions, the challenges they navigate, and the opportunities to unlock critical financing. Watch the recording to explore strategic approaches for securing vital resources and identify ways to strengthen collaboration and advocacy with key donors.

Facilitators and Speakers: Hani Mansourian, Elspeth Chapman, Matthew Wingate, Raquel Kasham Daniell, Elsa Laurin, Nuria Elkout, Andreas Ahrenfeldt Kiaby, and Elizabeth Tan.

Session 11 | Shifting Power to the Frontlines: Strengthening Local Leadership to Prevent Child Recruitment and GBV in Humanitarian Contexts - [Watch Here](#)

This session explored how strengthening local leadership can enhance the prevention of child protection risks in humanitarian settings. Speakers from academic institutions and refugee-led organisations shared research and programme experiences with community, local, and national actors—highlighting efforts to prevent child recruitment and Gender-Based Violence.

Facilitators and Speakers: Domenico di Nuzzo, Pasant Aly, Lana Al Houssami, Anastasiya Romanska, and Oricia Ngenyibungi.



Session 12 | Child Protection at the Crossroads: Indigenous Knowledge, Community-Level Approaches, and Cross-Sector Solutions - [Watch Here](#)

This session explored how indigenous knowledge, grassroots mobilisation, and community-based systems are shaping child protection in humanitarian and fragile contexts. Drawing on experiences from Zimbabwe, Brazil, and conflict-affected regions across Africa, speakers highlighted how traditional guardianship structures, localised service delivery, and community advocacy address gaps left by formal systems. The session showcased how these local innovations can inspire scalable, culturally grounded solutions that strengthen child protection in times of crisis.

Facilitators and Speakers: Mara Tissera Luna, Elena Giannini, Joao Victor da Cruz, Lilla Garay, and Iggy Saviere.

Mini Closing | Cluster Simplification: Updates and Discussion - [Watch Here](#)

This open-format session discussed emerging insights on the Cluster Simplification outcomes and what this means for the CPHA sector.

Facilitators and Speakers: Hani Mansourian, Camilla Jones, and Ron Pouwels.

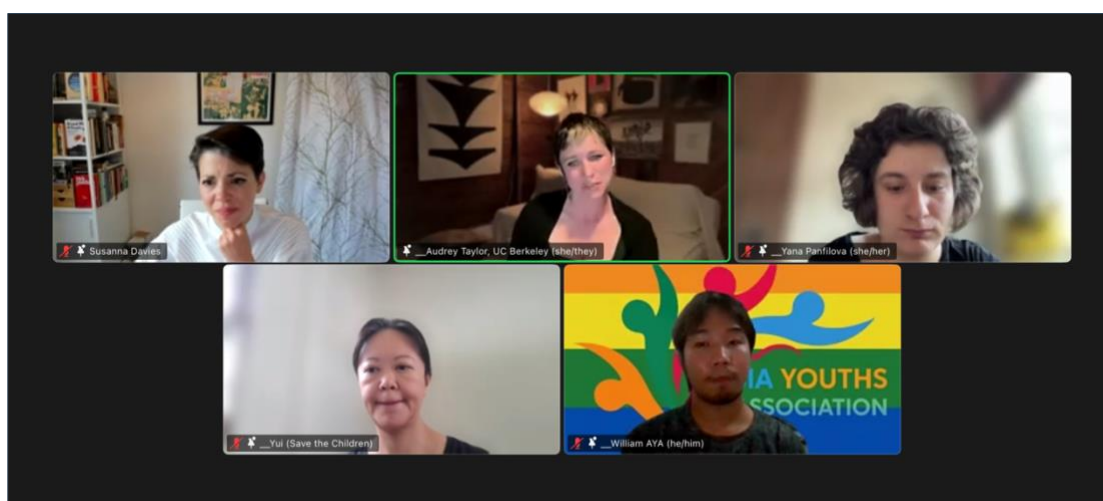
5TH JUNE: PREVENTING A ROLLBACK ON CHILD PROTECTION STANDARDS AND HUMANITARIAN PRINCIPLES

The final day of the Annual Meeting centred on standards and principles in child protection. The day began with an in-depth session on working with local actors to support LGBTQI+ children and their families. This was followed by a French-language session on engaging a range of local actors to strengthen systems, accountability, and local-to-global action, along with a French-language networking session. The afternoon opened with a session on child and community co-creation and implementation of accountability mechanisms and tools. This was followed by contributions from the Alliance's CPMS Working Group and UASC Task Force, which highlighted key technical areas within the meeting theme. The day—and the meeting—concluded with reflections from diverse perspectives on the theme and participant inputs on the way forward.

Session 13 | What now? Supporting LGBTQI+ Children and their families in CPHA Programming - [Watch Here](#)

National actors, LGBTQI+ organisations, and informal networks often lead support for LGBTQI+ children, frequently with limited funding and support from international organisations. This session therefore uplifted strong examples from youth- and LGBTQI+-led organisations and partnerships in crisis contexts, while encouraging participants to share their own experiences of locally-led, impactful partnerships—especially those engaging the LGBTQI+ community.

Facilitators and Speakers: Susanna Davies, Yana Paniflova, Audrey Taylor, and Warangkana 'Yui' Mutumol



Session 14 - Français | De la base au sommet: Innovations communautaire pour la protection de l'enfance - [Voir l'enregistrement](#)

Cette session a mis en lumière la manière dont les systèmes ancrés localement et les acteurs non traditionnels pouvaient transformer la protection de l'enfance en contexte humanitaire. Qu'il se soit agi d'utiliser des dispositifs communautaires d'observation en Afrique de l'Ouest ou de renforcer la résilience face aux conflits prolongés, ces initiatives ont démontré que les savoirs locaux, la participation active et les partenariats équitables comblaient les lacunes laissées par les systèmes formels. La session a plaidé pour un soutien renforcé aux innovations locales et à la collaboration intersectorielle en faveur d'une protection des enfants plus adaptée, durable et efficace.

Facilitateurs et intervenants : Sandrine Lerenard, Elena Giannini, Corneille Muhindu Kambere, Walid Jeblii, and Kalulu Maisha Shelly.

Session 16 | Outcomes of Accountability Mechanisms Co-Created with Children and Communities - [Watch Here](#)

This session explored how accountability mechanisms can be co-created with children and communities in humanitarian settings. Speakers shared examples from South Sudan on designing safe, survivor-centred Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) reporting systems in partnership with women-led organizations, and from Burkina Faso on co-developing an innovative, child-friendly consultation tool—game jams—with children themselves.

Facilitators and Speakers: Domenico di Nuzzo, Matildah Musumba, Yika Marina Mogga, Sophie Mareschal, and Capucine Tibit.



Session 17 | Do the standards still matter? Adapting to Deliver Quality and Accountability for Unaccompanied and Separated Children - Watch in [English](#) and [Spanish](#)

This session, held in both English and Spanish, focused on the day's theme by examining the importance of maintaining safe, ethical programming guided by the Minimum Standards for Child Protection. Case studies from Peru and Panama will highlight quality programming aligned with key standards, including support for unaccompanied and separated children (Standard 13) and alternative care (Standard 19).

Esta sesión, tanto en inglés como en español, se centró en el tema del día examinando la importancia de mantener una programación segura y ética guiada por las Normas Mínimas de Protección de la Niñez. Estudios de caso de Perú y Panamá destacaron la calidad de la programación en consonancia con las normas clave, incluido el apoyo a los niños no acompañados y separados (Norma 13) y el cuidado alternativo (Norma 19).

Facilitators and Speakers: Susanna Davies, Lauren Murray, Nery Roldan, Giovanna Cavero Mogollon, and Bladimir Romero.

Session 18 | Closing and Way Forward - [Watch Here](#)

The closing session invited participants alongside speakers from civil society (South Sudan and Syria) and donors (ECHO) to reflect on the week's discussions. A brief group activity also helped shape the Alliance's position on protecting children from the ground up through localised approaches in conflict and crises, while energising Alliance members to take meaningful action in this critical area.

Facilitators and Speakers: Hani Mansourian, Camilla Jones, Faiza Hassan, Yvonne Agengo, Kamila Partyka, Alaa Zaza, Riing Garwech Kuol, James Grey, and Child and Youth Speakers

