

Terms of reference

Impact evaluation of the Positive Discipline in Everyday Parenting Programme (PDEP)

I. Background

Main objective of PDEP

Positive Discipline in Everyday Parenting (PDEP)¹ is a parent support programme aimed at eliminating parents' use of physical and humiliating punishment. It provides parents with a framework for understanding, and responding constructively to, parent-child conflict. By increasing parents' knowledge of child development, their skills in scaffolding children's learning, and their empathy with children's emotions, it is expected that PDEP will lead to a significant reduction in punishment and a significant increase in parenting behaviours that promote children's healthy development.

Basic elements

PDEP is based on two foundational pillars – the elimination of physical and humiliating punishment of children, and the promotion of the rights of all children as outlined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. PDEP is based on the most current understanding about healthy child development informed by research in neurobiology, cognitive psychology, and emotional regulation.

Characteristics

PDEP differs from traditional parents training programmes in several key ways:

- **Theoretical approach:** traditional parent training programmes are based on principles of behaviorism, teaching parents how to implement reinforcement and punishment contingencies. PDEP on the other hand is developmentally based, focusing on the importance of trust and attachment, helping parents understand children's perspectives, and building parental empathy.
- **Target outcomes:** traditional parent training programmes are aimed ultimately at reshaping children's behavior to increase compliance. PDEP's objective is to shift parents' thinking so that they reduce their use of physical and humiliating punishment and increase their use of problem-solving methods that promote children's healthy development.
- **Target group:** parent training programmes were initially developed for at risk or highly aggressive parents or children. Most of them are secondary prevention programmes. PDEP was conceived from the outset as a universal programme for typical parents facing everyday conflicts with their children. It is a primary violence prevention programme.

¹ The programme was developed by Dr. Joan E. Durrant together with Save the Children Sweden. For more information visit: <<https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/library/positive-discipline-everyday-parenting-pdep-fourth-edition>>.

- Practice approach: Parent training programmes are generally prescriptive, giving parents direction on what to do in specific situations. PDEP is non-prescriptive. Rather than suggesting particular strategies, it gives parents a framework for figuring out why the child is behaving in a particular way and then problem-solving a solution that scaffolds the child's learning.
- Many parent training programmes focus on the early years. PDEP focuses on all of childhood, from birth through adolescence, to help parents understand the developmental themes that underlie much parent-child conflict.

The PDEP logic model

The PDEP logic model outlines the intended outcome and focuses on three stages of progress: short, medium and long-term outcomes. The focus is on a progressive shift in thinking, which is expected to lead to shifts in behavior. The logic model is clear on how the programme aims to change behaviour but does not take into account the external/contextual factors that may influence behaviour. The aim is that this evaluation will look into such factors.

PDEP implementation

The programme, in some form, is being implemented in some 30 countries worldwide. In Kosovo, the case study for this evaluation, Save the Children is working with six partner organizations on PDEP. In 2017, more than 300 parents participated in the PDEP sessions in Kosovo. Before 2017 the programme had reached some 200 parents in Kosovo.

In Kosovo the target population is varied and how parents became part of the programme also varies. On one hand, there are those who independently sought the PDEP sessions. On the other hand, there were also cases where implementing partners suggested individual parents be targeted as the implementing partner felt they would benefit from attendance. In all cases parents have volunteered to attend the PDEP sessions. Some attend with their spouses; others attend by themselves. The location of the PDEP sessions also varies (urban/rural, community centres, schools etc.).

Monitoring and evaluation

To date, the global level monitoring and evaluation of the programme has primarily focused on the implementation of a set of standardised questionnaires administered at the start and end of the programme measuring attitudes towards physical punishment; satisfaction with the programme, etc. Data collection has been carried out as part of a research collaboration between Save the Children Sweden and its PDEP programme development partner, Prof. Joan E. Durrant. The data have been used for conference presentations and in peer-reviewed journal articles². The findings suggest that the programme reduces parents' approval of physical punishment of children and that the programme is relevant across a range of cultural contexts.

Evidence to be able to claim that behaviour changes have taken place has not yet been systematically collected. For this reason Save the Children Sweden decided in 2016

² Parents' Views of the Relevance of a Violence Prevention Program in High, Medium, and Low Human Development Contexts, Durrant et al, 2017; Preventing Punitive Violence, Preliminary Data from the PDEP Program, Durrant et al, 2014;

that an impact evaluation³ of PDEP will be carried out. Kosovo has been selected as the country where the impact evaluation will be carried out.

In planning for this impact evaluation the questionnaires have been revised and new questions have been introduced that assess behaviour changes. In the 2017 round of PDEP parent sessions in Kosovo, these new questionnaires have been implemented. Follow-up data from the same parents will be collected in early 2018.

A randomized-controlled trial (RCT) of standard group PDEP is underway in Canada carried out by a team led by Dr. Elisa Romano at the University of Ottawa. This five-year project began in 2017. There is also another RCT of a hybrid model of PDEP carried out in Indonesia, led by Dr. Monica Ruiz Casares at McGill University in Canada. The results will be released later in 2018.

2. Purpose, use and scope of the evaluation

With its current scale of implementation (some 30 countries, in some form) and its importance as a direct contributor towards achieving Save the Children's Breakthrough on Violence⁴, Save the Children Sweden recognises the need for a systematic in-depth impact evaluation of the PDEP programme. The purpose is to gain a better understanding of what behavioural changes the programme brings about and what factors affect the outcomes of the programme. Save the Children wants to understand to what degree the PDEP programme is effective as a behaviour changing intervention and when the intervention is most effective. Save the Children also wants to gain a better understanding of the costs of the intervention in relation to the results achieved. The latter will not be a full cost effectiveness analysis which takes alternatives into account, but rather an inquiry into what has been achieved with the investment made that allows Save the Children to have an informed discussion on to what extent the results justify the costs. For this reason it is suggested that this evaluation uses a Value for Money approach to cost effectiveness.

The three main objectives of the evaluation are:

- To assess whether the PDEP programme as implemented in Kosovo has achieved its intended results, in particular (but not limited to) in reducing the use of physical and humiliating punishment by parents and caregivers
- To identify and describe the external/contextual factors which enhance or hinder the impact of PDEP in particular (but not limited to) in reducing the use of physical and humiliating punishment by parents and caregivers
- To carry out a Value for Money analysis of the intervention

Key evaluation questions:

1. To what extent did the PDEP programme achieve intended results?
2. Were there any unintended effects, positive or negative?
3. What difference has participating in the PDEP programme made for beneficiaries (parents and caregivers that have taken the programme)? What difference has it made for their children?

³ Defined as an evaluation concerned with effects *caused* by the intervention (aims to establish causal linkages)

⁴ "Violence Against Children is No Longer Tolerated" one of three breakthroughs in Save the Children's global strategy "Ambition for Children 2030"

4. What factors contributed to achieving the intended results? What factors negatively affected intended results?
5. What lessons can be learned that can inform PDEP programming in other places/ countries?
6. What has been achieved with the investment made (results achieved in relation to the costs)?

The evaluation team is expected to further elaborate the evaluation questions during the inception phase, together with Save the Children Sweden.

The OECD/DAC evaluation criteria in focus for this evaluation are: effectiveness, efficiency and impact. Although evaluating sustainability is not a main objective of this evaluation, it is important that the evaluation reflects upon issues of sustainability and likelihood of behaviour changes enduring over time.

Intended users and uses of the impact evaluation

The primary intended users of the evaluation findings are Save the Children Sweden and the Save the Children International in Kosovo country office. Save the Children

Sweden intends to use the findings of the evaluation to:

- inform strategic decision-making regarding the programme (where and how to invest in PDEP)
- further develop the programming guidelines of the PDEP programme
- to critically assess what functions best under what type of conditions to see if there are elements of the programme model or delivery mode that need to be modified under particular circumstances

Save the Children in Kosovo intends to use the findings of the evaluation to:

- inform decisions on PDEP implementation and strategic decision-making in relation to investment in the programme in Kosovo
- to assess what delivery mode should be the way forward (e.g. with CSO partners or other institutions)
- accredit the programme in Kosovo⁵

It is Save the Children Sweden's aim that this impact evaluation will contribute to a broader learning process on PDEP, on what works, how and under what circumstances. A reference group has been formed to involve key internal and external stakeholders with interest in this evaluation and in the evaluation process.

Scope

Kosovo has been selected as the country where the impact evaluation will be carried out. Save the Children in Kosovo has received rigorous PDEP training and mentorship. The evaluation will focus on the 2017 round of PDEP implementation in Kosovo in which 14 PDEP facilitators were trained and 377 parents participated in parent sessions carried out by six partner organisations in cooperation with Save the Children.

⁵ PDEP currently is the only parenting programme in Kosovo

3. Approaches and standards

It is expected that the *Utilization Focused Evaluation* and *Equity Focused Evaluation*⁶ – approaches guide the conduct of this evaluation.

Child participation

To ensure consistent, high quality child participation practice Save the Children has a set of standards⁷ for children's participation. Children may participate in an evaluation process in a number of ways. For the purpose of this evaluation children will participate as respondents, using child-friendly methods and tools. Children's participation should always be meaningful, safe, voluntary and inclusive and in accordance with the practice standards.

Child safeguarding

According to Save the Children's standards, children's safety and well-being should always be paramount. Children and young people should not be exposed to any risks and all staff, partners and consultants should adhere to Save the Children's Child Safeguarding Policy and Code of Conduct.

The evaluation is expected to adhere to widely agreed standards for evaluation quality⁸ and research ethics.

4. Evaluation design and methodology

In the search for an appropriate design for this evaluation Save the Children Sweden commissioned a pre-study to assess the evaluability of the PDEP programme, review the appropriateness of existing questionnaires, and propose a design and methodologies for the impact evaluation. During the planning process the following has been concluded:

Firstly, not to opt for a randomized controlled trial (RCT): Many parenting interventions of different types have been evaluated using RCTs. Save the Children Sweden concluded early on that this design would be too costly, cumbersome and would not answer the questions on *how* and *why* that it is interested in.

Secondly, although this will not be a RCT; quantitative data on (changes in) attitudes and behaviours of PDEP beneficiaries should be collected pre-programme, post-programme and 3,5 months after completion. Pre, post and follow-up questionnaires are typical features of the monitoring and evaluation systems of other similar programmes and Save the Children is expected to be able to present such data.

⁶ *Utilization Focused Evaluation*: Michael Quinn Patton (2008). *Equity Focused Evaluation*: Kim Forss, Mita Marra (eds) *Speaking Justice to Power: Ethical and Methodological Challenges for Evaluators*

⁷ International Save the Children Alliance, *Practice Standards in Children's Participation*, 2005. Available at: <https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/node/3017/pdf/3017.pdf>.

⁸ such as the DAC Quality Standards for Development Evaluation

Save the Children Sweden has concluded, based on the recommendations of the pre-study, that the following methods and tools are suitable to answer the questions in this impact evaluation:

- Most Significant Change workshops to collect the experiential perspective of beneficiaries and their children
- Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA) to enable a systematic comparison of cases (which for this study are likely to be family units) and analysis of factors that affect the attainment of results
- Analyses of available quantitative data on attitudes and behaviours (have been collected during the 2017 round of PDEP implementation). The evaluation team will receive the datasets and will be expected to perform analyses.
- Interviews with the partner organizations, PDEP facilitators, parents that have participated in the PDEP programme, family members and children, Save the Children and others
- Value for Money analysis using the 3E Approach

In the proposal, the consultant may make an argument for why an alternative to the above should be employed, and detail how such an alternative is better suited.

5. Organisation, roles and responsibilities

The following management structure has been put in place for the evaluation:

The *evaluation manager* at Save the Children Sweden will assume the day-to-day responsibility for managing the evaluation process from Save the Children's side. The evaluation manager will be the main point of contact for the evaluation team and is responsible for providing the team with access to relevant documentation and information. Technical support will be provided by the *evaluation specialist*.

An *evaluation steering group* will be responsible for managing overall evaluation process, support prioritisation and focus for the evaluation, approve inception report, draft report and final reports. The steering group reports back to the *Evaluation and Research Committee* which is the commissioner of this evaluation.

A *reference group* consisting of key stakeholders will have an advisory role in the evaluation process. The reference group will provide feedback to the ToR, the inception report and the draft report and guides post evaluation action planning.

Save the Children in Kosovo will support the evaluation process. Specifically, Save the Children in Kosovo will support the evaluation team's access to information and informants during in-country data collection.

6. Work plan, timeline and deliverables

The assignment will be carried out between May 2018 and March 2019

<i>Evaluation phase</i>	<i>Focus/content</i>	<i>Deliverable</i>	<i>Timeline</i>
Inception phase (June-August)	The inception phase will include, but not necessarily be limited to: further elaboration of the evaluation questions, design and methodology, including design of data collection and analysis tools. Detail stakeholder participation. Analyze risks, risk management. Develop detailed work plan and timeline. One trip to Kosovo envisioned. Possibly also one trip to Stockholm. Inception report to be developed according to an agreed format	Draft inception report	June (end) 2018
		Final inception report	August (beginning) 2018
Evaluation research phase (September-December)	Data collection and analysis. Data collection in Kosovo in September.		September-December
Report writing phase (January-February)	Developed according to an agreed format.	Draft evaluation report	January-February 2019
	When the draft report has been submitted the evaluation team will present the report to stakeholders. Possible trip to Stockholm.	Workshop for discussion at SCS	February 2019
	The final report should be presented in a way that enables publication without further editing.	Final evaluation report	February 2019
Presentation of the evaluation findings	Two seminars where the evaluators present the evaluation findings, support use of findings: one in Stockholm and one in Pristina	Two seminars on final report	March 2019
Preparation of communication materials	Prepare summary report and PowerPoint presentation for the use of Save the Children according to an agreed format	Summary Report PowerPoint	February-March 2019

7. Qualifications of the evaluation team

It is expected that the assignment will require a team of consultants. Preferably the team will be small (2-3 persons), The team shall have the following skills:

- All team members shall have an advanced academic degree, i.e. a minimum of a Master's degree or equivalent

- All team members shall be fluent in English, written and spoken
- The team shall have significant practical and theoretical knowledge and experience of conducting evaluations of development projects, including projects that aim to change behaviours
- Experience in conducting evaluations of projects/programs related to child rights issues or child development
- An evaluation Team Leader with extensive experience in leading evaluation studies and teams
- Experience of utilization focused evaluation
- Demonstrated experience of using Qualitative Comparative Analysis and Most Significant Change
- Expertise in interviewing children: ample experience in the design and implementation of interview techniques that are effective with and safe for children
- Experience in quantitative data analysis
- Knowledge of methods and experience of conducting Value for Money analysis

Additionally,

- It is expected that the assignment will require a local consultant in Kosovo that can collect data in the local language. The local consultant will be recruited by the Team Leader selected for this assignment together with Save the Children in Kosovo
- It is expected that the assignment will require support from a parenting expert and possibly other specific technical support from additional persons. These additional experts will be identified in collaboration between the Team Leader and Save the Children Sweden
- It is expected that the evaluation team will travel within this assignment

8. Submission of Proposals

The deadline for proposals is: 21st of February 2018

Proposals are expected to contain:

- CVs of each person in the team
- the roles (who will do what) and hourly/daily rate of each person in the team and estimated number of work days for each person
- an explanation how the skills and experiences of the team match the requirements of this ToR
- design considerations: consultants' view of the proposed design and methodology
- quality assurance system: how quality assurance of the evaluation will happen
- ethical considerations: how the consultants will ensure that the evaluation is conducted in an ethical manner

Contact persons

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