



# Moving from institutional care to a community based child protection in Sri Lanka

Creating Safe Child Friendly Spaces



CONGREGATION OF  
OUR LADY OF CHARITY  
OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD



GOOD SHEPHERD  
INTERNATIONAL  
FOUNDATION  
ONLUS

# Moving from institutional care to a rights based approach

2015 Congregational Direction Statement invited to develop a clear **Strategic Plan *Integrating Spirituality***

- + justice and peace
- + best ministry practices

A plan adopting a human rights approach to development integrating the Congregation's vision with best ministries to provide best services to most vulnerable children.



# Background

17 Child Care Centres, one detention home and a safe home (residential programs) providing child protection support to 800 children (730 girls and 70 boys) across Sri Lanka in 2016.

**Urgent need to review practices  
and programs for children**



# Background

Rights based approach in accordance with the principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

- ✓ **Non discrimination**
- ✓ **Best interest of the child**
- ✓ **Right to life, survival and development**
- ✓ **Right to participate**



# Key objective of GS Sri Lanka Strategic Plan

**Transition from  
Institutionalized care to  
deinstitutionalization  
of children to  
community based programs**

*Any desired changes in the children in  
GS residential centres*



# Key Result Areas

**Good Shepherd Best Practice  
in Child Protection established  
and children supported**

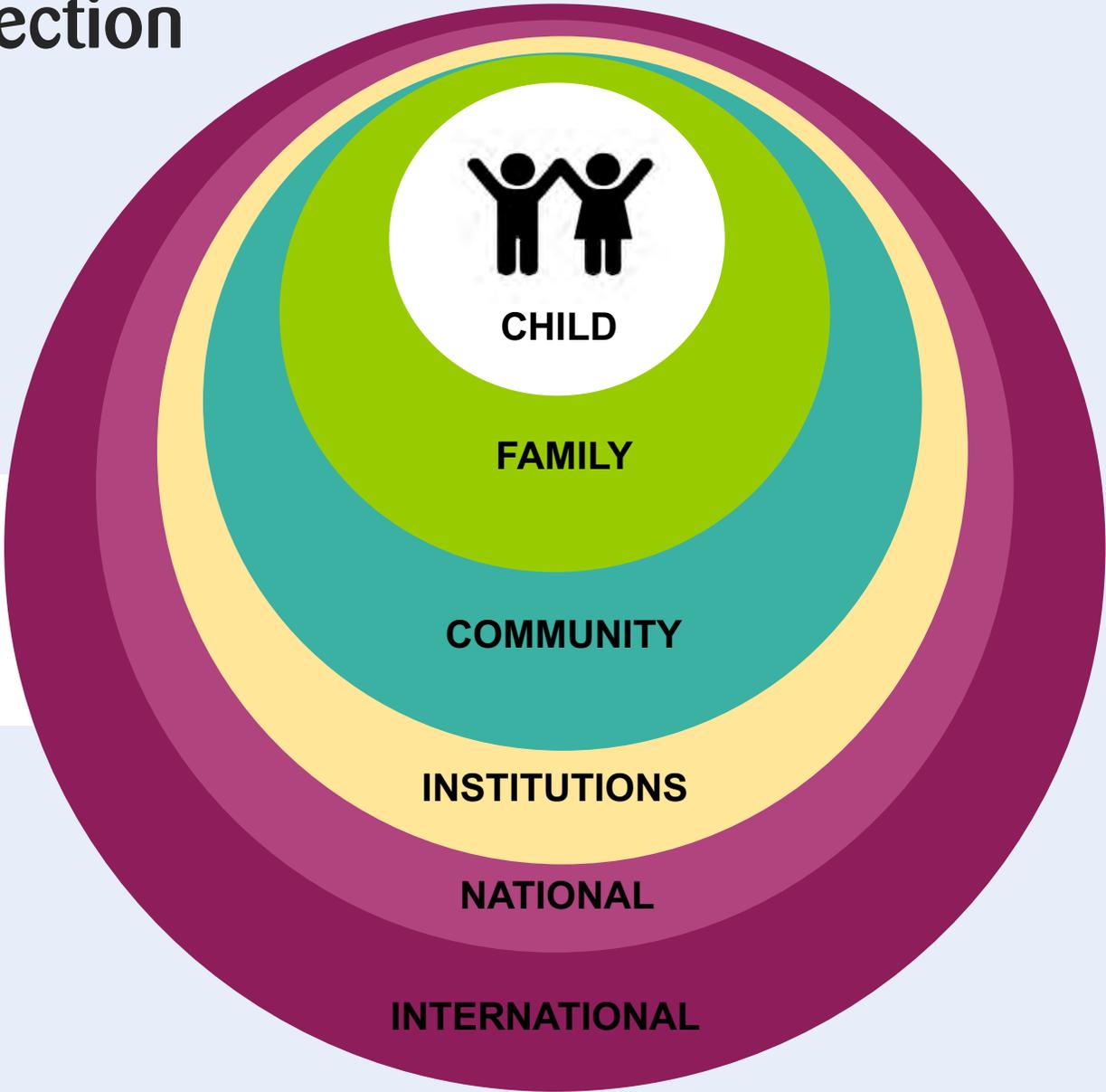
**Empowered communities for  
effective child protection**

**Support government in  
enhancing national / regional  
child protection systems**

**Scale up and roll out a  
systems approach to child  
protection within Good  
Shepherd sisters Sri Lanka**

# Community Based Child Protection

**PRIMARY CIRCLE OF CARE  
RINGS OF RESPONSIBILITY**



# Rights based approach

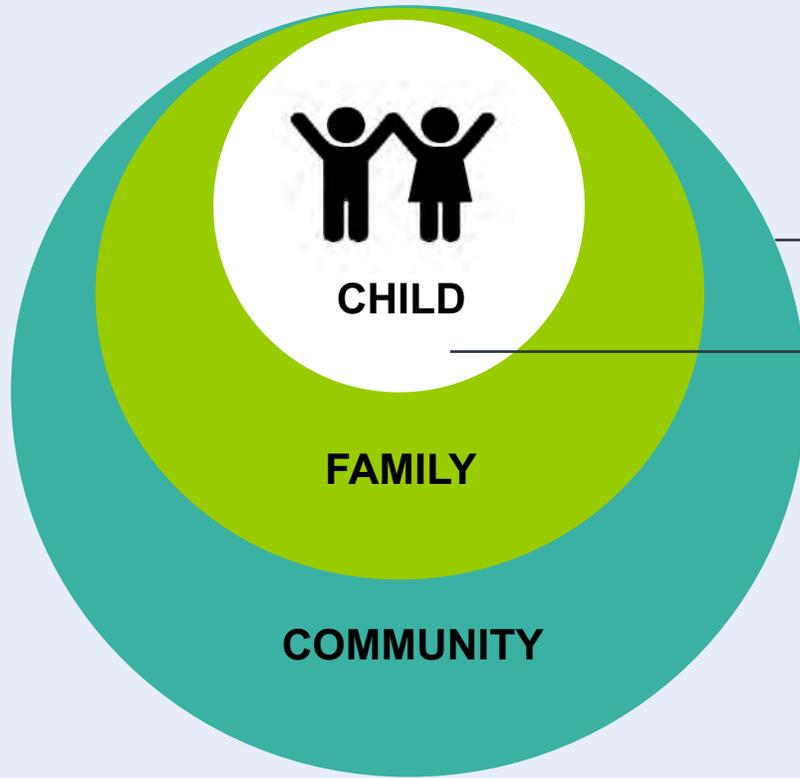




# Creating Child Friendly Safe Spaces

Community Based Child Protection Programs in Sri Lanka

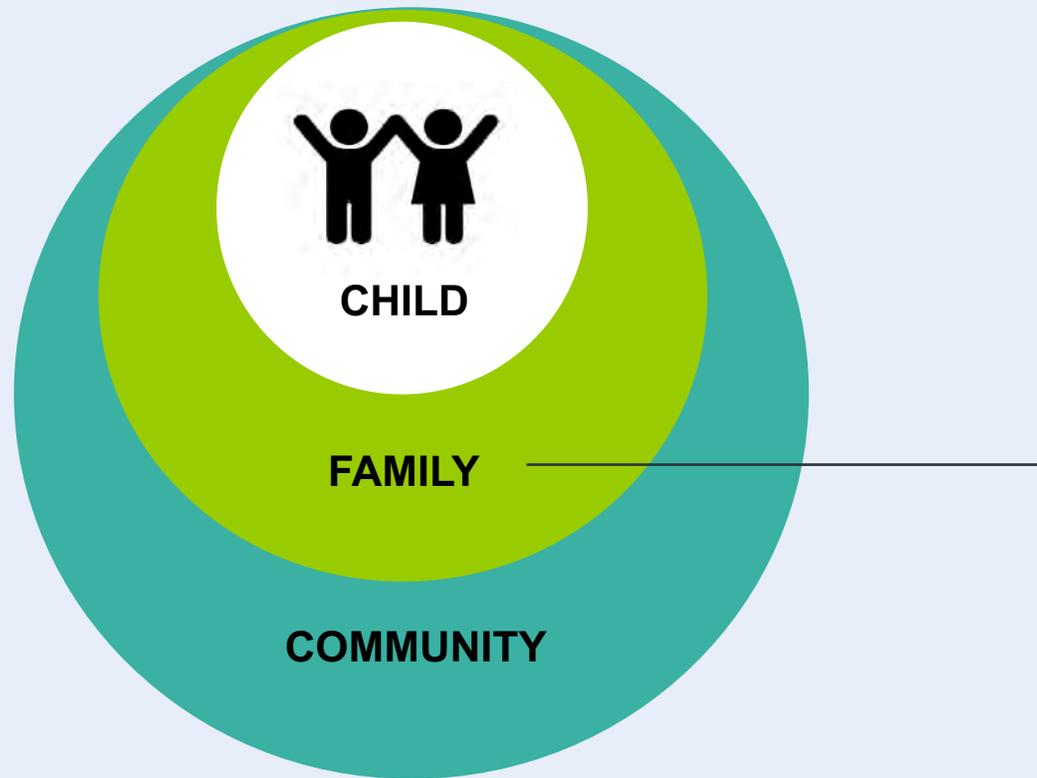
Focus of activities are three pronged



## Child

- **Child centered teaching and learning;**
- **Learning their rights and responsibilities;**
- **Nutrition;**
- **Empowering children to keep safe;**
- **Group games / play time;**
- **Spiritual and psychological support.**

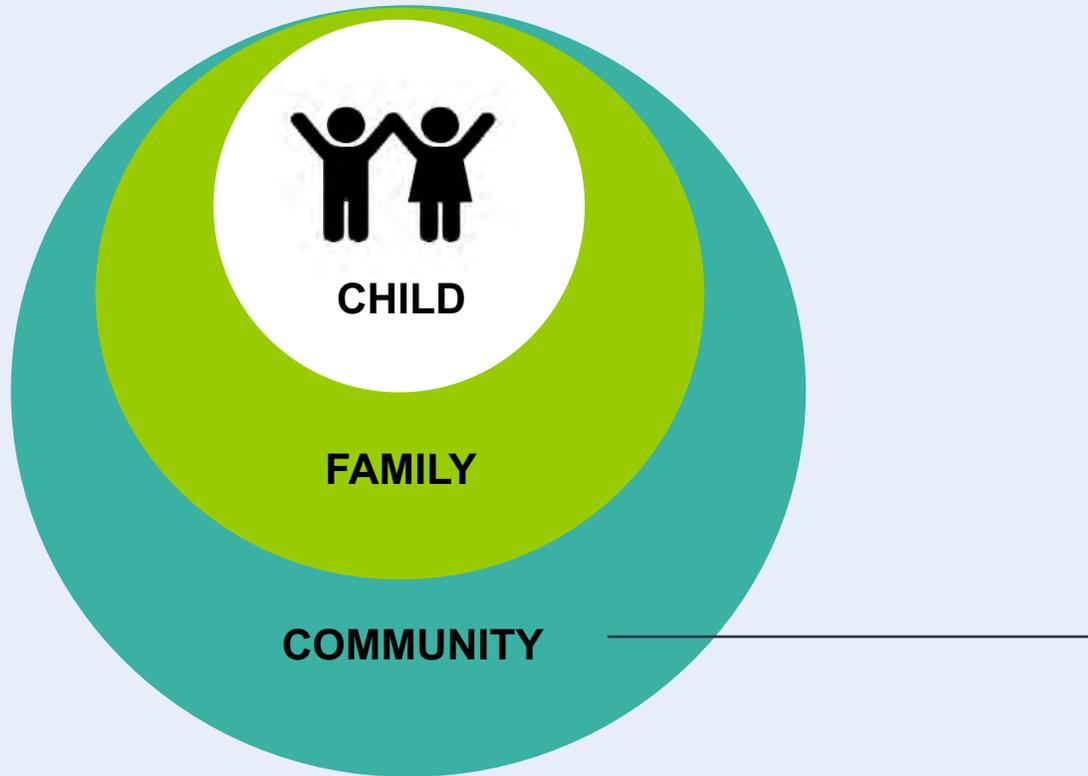
Focus of activities  
are three pronged



## Family

- **Forming Self help groups for the mothers;**
- **Parenting skills;**
- **Awareness of child rights especially to education and protection;**
- **Introducing income generating activities.**

Focus of activities  
are three pronged



## Community

- Community awareness programs;
- Community working together on projects;
- Engagement of supervisors of tea estates, community elders, etc.

## Number of programme participants in 5 locations

Location	Start Date	Children	Women	Men	Total
Sinnapaduwa (Fishing village-North west)	2017	431	271 (25 SHGs)	-	702
Balangoda (3 tea estates: Waleboda, Halina, Walawa)	2018	346	157	136	639
Mankany (Eastern coastal town)	2018	200	98	-	298
<b>Total</b>		<b>977</b>	526	136	1,639

# **Documenting Emerging Practices and Lesson Learned in Alternative Care for Vulnerable Children**

Community-Based Child Protection Initiative by Good Shepherd Sri Lanka

*Research conducted in February 2019*

# Research Findings

- Overall findings show that CBCP created positive mindset among the families and community
- Children's participation high in research locations
  - ✓ Interested in studies 83%
  - ✓ Know child rights 79%
  - ✓ Health programs 60%
- Children and parents interaction are visible; positive transformation in CBCP families

# Research Findings

- **Child friendly safe spaces created opportunities for children to interact with one another and develop their skills**
- Overall improvement in children's educational performance
- Children were happy and active; learned good habits
- Participation of male members of the community to be further encouraged.

## Research Findings

- The women are empowered through creating self help groups; income generating activities introduced
- Parents are aware of their responsibilities towards their children
- Communities are empowered to take the responsibility to protect their children

## Other positive observation

- Greater collaboration of like minded organizations, schools and some local government agencies.
- Greater support from the funding agencies.
- Greater support from the **Congregation**

# Challenges

From within the sisters' communities:

- Attitudes and resistance from our own sisters towards change.
- Fear of change and lack of trust
- **Lack of skills, and reluctance to gain new skills that are required to respond to the emerging needs of our society.**

# Challenges

## From external parties

- Lack of cooperation by beneficiary communities at the initial phase of the project - fear of religious conversion
- Attitudes of the Church authority which are not familiar and not receptive to sisters doing rights based social services.
- Attitudes and receiving mentality of the people in the community
- Difficulty in employing the professional staff
- Motivating the women to form the SHGs



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