13. CROSS CUTTING ISSUES IN EMERGENCIES

WHAT ARE THEY?

The cross-cutting issues in emergencies identified by UNICEF are: Gender Equality; Early Childhood Development (ECD); Adolescent Development and Participation; Children with Disabilities; Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP); Communication for Development (C4D); Cash-based Approaches in Humanitarian Action; Conflict Sensitivity; and Disaster Risk Reduction.⁴⁸

COs must incorporate into their humanitarian action the priorities and key actions associated with each cross-cutting issue and the accountability to affected populations.

KEY PRIORITIES AND ACTIONS

GENDER EQUALITY

Priorities

- Ensure that all UNICEF regular and humanitarian programmes are designed to contribute to gender equality in clearly defined measurable ways.
- Plan and implement humanitarian action in a way that benefits girls, boys, women and men in line with their rights and through the analysis of their distinct needs and capacities, recognizing that girls and women are disproportionately affected by emergencies.

Actions

- Have updated, gender-disaggregated baseline data available to inform preparedness planning.
- Disaggregate data by sex and age in assessments, monitoring, and evaluation; and conduct gender analysis.
- Identify the specific risks and needs (for services and facilities) of women, girls, men and boys.
- Ensure that women participate effectively in decision-making consultations.
- Take special measures to include women and girls in qualitative data collections, eg same-sex interviewers.
- Design and implement programmes to meet gender needs (eg separate toilets with door locks).
- Take special measures to prevent and mitigate gender-based violence.
- Ensure coordination between actors addressing gender-based violence eg government officials, civil society organizations and legal practitioners.

Guidance and Tools
- EMOPS intranet: Gender Equality in Humanitarian Action
- EMOPS Gender Quick Reference Guide
- IASC Policy Statement of Gender in humanitarian Action
- IASC Guidelines for integrating Gender Based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Action

EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT (ECD)

Priorities

- Ensure all UNICEF regular and humanitarian programmes are designed to contribute to the support of children under 8 and reduce toxic stress which can affect their social, psychological and health-related wellbeing.
- Protect children 0-8 and their families from toxic stress by planning and implementing multi-sectoral programmes and services (Health, Nutrition, Protection, Education, WASH, HIV and AIDS, Social Inclusion, Gender, Peacebuilding).

Actions

- Have updated, gender and age-disaggregated (0-2; 3-5; 6-8) baseline data available to inform preparedness planning focusing on pregnant women, children under 8 and their families.

⁴⁸ Note: Gender equality and AAP are also reflected as commitments by UNICEF.
• Map ECD services for children under 8 and their families.
• Identify and adapt parenting programmes for fathers, mothers and caregivers of children under 8 to support parents’ wellbeing and parenting practices during emergencies.
• Provide support so that children under 8 are stimulated by caring parents and caregivers, giving priority to family reunification (FTR).
• Take measures to ensure children under 5 are appropriately fed and cared for with health, nutrition, hygiene and stimulation services combined.
• Facilitate opportunities for early learning for children 0-8, not only preschoolers.

Guidance and Tools
ECD-Nutrition and Health Technical Note
ECD-Child Protection in Emergency Technical Note
ECD in Emergencies Programme Guide
CCD package ready to implement
ECD Kit for Emergencies
Applying Neuroscience Evidence in Support of ECD

ADOLESCENT DEVELOPMENT AND PARTICIPATION

Priorities
• Promote and increase age- and gender-responsive and inclusive programmes that contribute to the protection, health and development of adolescents.
• Support systematic engagement and partnerships with adolescents, in all phases of humanitarian action, through sharing of information, capacity building and involvement in decision-making processes at all levels.
• Recognize and strengthen adolescents’ capacities to be effective humanitarian actors in prevention, preparedness, response and recovery.

Actions
• Disaggregate data by sex and age (10-14, 15-19 years) in assessments, monitoring and evaluation.

CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

Priorities
• Ensure that all UNICEF regular and humanitarian programmes are designed and adapted so that they are inclusive of and accessible to children with disabilities and benefit them in measurable ways.
• Collect reliable data and evidence on girls and boys with disabilities to inform the planning and implementation of humanitarian services and assistance.

Actions
• Disaggregate data by age, sex and disability and use it to inform preparedness and response interventions.
• Include questions and components on children with disabilities in risk analysis, assessments, monitoring and evaluations.
• Design and adapt all general programmes/interventions for children so that they are disability inclusive; ensure infrastructure such as child-friendly spaces, WASH facilities, temporary schools are disability accessible.
• Sensitize all staff and personnel on issues of children with disabilities.
• Plan and implement targeted programmes to address the specific needs of children with disabilities, eg rehabilitation, physiotherapy, assistive devices.
• Map existing resources and available expertise on disability, eg special schools, rehabilitation centers, NGOs working on disability and Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (DPOs), and partner with them wherever required.
• Facilitate participation of children with disabilities and their families as well as DPOs in consultations and in designing, adapting, monitoring and evaluating programmes. Let them know what type of interventions are planned/implemented for them, seek their feedback and take corrective actions, if needed.

Guidance and tools
Take Us Seriously!: Engaging Children with Disabilities in Decisions Affecting Their Lives
Disability in Humanitarian Action Intranet Page
Humanitarian Guidance on Disabilities

ACCOUNTABILITY TO AFFECTED POPULATIONS (AAP)

Priorities 49
• Demonstrate leadership / governance commitment to accountability to affected populations by ensuring feedback and accountability mechanisms are integrated into country strategies, programme proposals, monitoring, training, recruitment and reporting.
• Provide transparent, accessible and timely information to affected populations on organizational procedures, structures and processes that affect them to ensure that they can make informed decisions.
• Actively seek the views of affected populations to improve policy and practice in programming, ensuring that feedback and complaints mechanisms are effectively used.
• Enable affected populations (particularly most marginalized and affected) to actively participate in decision-making processes.
• Design, monitor and evaluate the goals and objectives of programmes with the involvement of affected populations, feeding learning back into the organisation on an ongoing basis.

Actions
Country Office Level (through coordinating internally, with clusters and at an inter-cluster level)
• Ensure that affected populations participate in needs assessment and targeting.
• Establish and coordinate community feedback mechanisms and address complaints.
• Apply UNICEF C4D programming across the CCCs based on at risk and affected people’s inputs and feedback.
• Use inputs and feedback from affected people in decision making: data analysis for humanitarian planning, response monitoring and programme adjustments, both at local levels and strategic levels.
• Strengthen capacity of local first responders using the Core Humanitarian Standard as a reference point.
• Strengthen national and local social accountability mechanisms or C4D programming (where longer-term country programming allows), with attention to preparedness, and define how capacities and systems can be developed to allow adaptation for humanitarian response.

49 These priorities reflect the IASC Commitments to Accountability to Affected Populations
INTER-AGENCY LEVEL

• Advocate for and support HCT/inter-cluster strategy development, plans and common standards around accountability to affected people, communications and community engagement, and localization (drawing on guidance and lessons from the Communication and Community Engagement Initiative).

• Designate UNICEF staff to support overall leadership for the above and/or allocate UNICEF resources to support specific inter-cluster level activities based on comparative advantage.

Guidance and Tools
EMOPS intranet: Accountability to Affected Populations
IASC Accountability to Affected Population Toolkit
Nutrition Cluster Guidance on Mainstreaming AAP
Tools to assist in implementing the IASC AAP Commitments.pdf

COMMUNICATION FOR DEVELOPMENT (C4D)

Priorities
• Ensure that all UNICEF regular and humanitarian programmes incorporate C4D strategies that are (as much as possible) participatory, dialogic, rights-based, gender- and disability-sensitive and respect local cultures and contexts.

• Plan and implement evidence-based C4D approaches that promote rapid access to life-saving information and knowledge across the CCCs in the first 24 to 72 hours.

• In the recovery phase, continue with C4D across the CCCs and engage with affected populations, including children, in planning and facilitate feedback and complaints mechanism (as per Accountability towards Affected Populations).

Actions
• Coordinate with partners engaged in C4D, Communication, Risk Communication, Community Engagement and related areas to set up a local C4D working mechanism under Emergency Operations.

• Ensure needs assessment missions take into account C4D and community engagement requirements (access to information, behaviours to promote, facilitation of feedback systems).

• Conduct rapid research on socio-cultural practices and communication patterns to develop a C4D plan.

• Identify communication options/channels and identify and pretest key messages needed to promote protective and preventive practices to affected populations.

• Trigger existing networks and local partners to maximize mobilization, outreach and engagement with communities.

• Use interactive platforms (rapid SMS) to poll and to promote messages.

• Validate the C4D plan with key stakeholders, implementing partners and select communities.

• Establish or mobilize existing partners to do rapid surveys and other data collection to monitor uptake of practices.

• Work closely with AAP stakeholders to listen to communities and address feedback through appropriate communication channels.

Guidance and Tools
EMOPS intranet: C4D in Emergencies

CONFLICT SENSITIVITY

Priorities
• Translate into action the principle of ‘do no harm’ and a commitment to avoid creating or exacerbating conflict and insecurity for affected populations (as outlined in the CCCs) – so that projects and programmes are ‘conflict sensitive’ in practice.

• Provide and use tools that help UNICEF field programmes understand and apply conflict sensitivity in a more systematic way to humanitarian responses.
**Actions**

**Preparedness**
- Undertake a basic conflict analysis and incorporate its findings into the emergency preparedness and response plan. The basic conflict analysis can be updated or deepened later as the situation changes or an actual emergency happens.
- Provide training to staff on conflict sensitivity as part of emergency preparedness and other training.

**Assessment and Planning**
- Update basic conflict analysis with detailed analysis of the context to reflect changes as a result of an emergency, especially if the emergency is caused by conflict.
- Based on the updated conflict analysis, design response interventions that take measures to manage and mitigate conflict risks.
- Where possible, develop targeting criteria based on consultation and feedback from communities.

**Implementation**
- Ensure that staff recruitment takes into account the potential identity-based divisions among staff and between staff and beneficiaries/participants.
- Ensure procurement services and supplies from the local/national market or the selection of suppliers do not cause or reinforce conflicts.
- Establish communication, complaints and feedback mechanisms for sharing information about programme activities and with communities.

**Monitoring and Evaluation**
- Integrate questions related to conflict risks into monitoring and any real-time or post-implementation evaluations.

**DISASTER RISK REDUCTION**

**Priorities**
- Highlight vulnerabilities of children, as well as their critical role as agents of change in disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation.
- Disaggregate data by age, sex and disability, including in risk assessment, damage and loss records and data sets.
- Promote social services, including social protection, as opportunities to reduce vulnerability and risk (e.g., robust health and education systems that continue to provide essential services during and following a hazard).
- Emphasize the importance of safe schools, DRR and CCA education in preparing children and communities for possible disasters and reducing their impact.

**Actions**
- Strengthen the capacity of UNICEF, governments and partners in child-centred risk assessment.
- Address underlying drivers of risks through adapted social services, e.g., education programmes that promote school safety, preparedness and relevant life skills.
- Support social safety nets to help the most vulnerable and excluded to deal with economic and other shocks.
- Support the participation of children and young people in global and regional conferences and include them in development of national policies (e.g., through participatory risk assessments).

**Guidance and Tools**

**Risk and Resilience, Fragility and Peacebuilding**

**Community of Practice on SharePoint:**

**Children in a Changing Climate Coalition website** (Child Fund, Plan International, Save the Children, UNICEF, World Vision)

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CASH-BASED APPROACHES IN HUMANITARIAN ACTION

Priorities
- Increase the routine use of cash alongside other tools including in-kind assistance, service delivery & vouchers.
- Build an evidence base to assess the costs, benefits, impacts, and risks of using cash in humanitarian contexts.
- Collaborate, share information and develop standards and guidelines for cash programming to understand its risks and benefits.
- Ensure coordination, delivery, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms are put in place for cash transfers.

Actions
- Focus on households when targeting for cash, not on individual children.
- Ensure that local markets are functioning in the area available.
- Ensure “do no harm” principle while targeting and delivering cash.
- Conduct risk assessment for partners and beneficiaries, to look at the risk of inflation, risk of inadequate targeting and feasibility of third party monitoring.
- Use the private sector for delivery of cash through money vendors, mobile phones, local banks, smart cards.
- Link humanitarian cash intervention with existing social protection systems where possible. Where none exist or this is not feasible, keep in mind strengthening capacities for future use.
- Coordinate with stakeholders in establishing amount of cash to be transferred, establishing the geographic coverage and delivery mechanism.

Guidance and Tools
EMOPS intranet: Cash based approaches in Humanitarian Action
EMOPS intranet: Cash Transfer in Emergency Affected Households – Technical Note