



TIPSHEET

PROTECTION AND EDUCATION¹



Updated January 2018²

Humanitarian protection is about improving safety, well-being and dignity for crisis-affected populations. Protection refers not only to what we do, but also the way we do it. These principles include:

Do not cause further harm or create new risk of harm



Non-discriminatory access to assistance and services



Identify the most vulnerable and their specific needs



Safe and dignified access to basic services



Community participation and empowerment



Strengthen positive community protection capacities

Humanitarian protection also includes being aware of specific protection issues that arise in disasters and emergencies, but do not fall within a particular sectoral or organisational mandate or capacity. These issues require information-sharing, advocacy or referral to specialized actors for appropriate response. Such issues include:

- Child protection concerns (e.g. identifying and assisting separated and unaccompanied children);
- Gender-based violence;
- Sexual exploitation and abuse; and
- Protection of people with disabilities (e.g. physical, neurological or mental); people displaced by disaster; and other vulnerable groups.

Protection problems may include discrimination, violence, abuse, exploitation, deliberate deprivation or neglect of vulnerable individuals or groups (e.g. religious and ethnic minorities; people with disabilities; women; children; youth; older people; and people of diverse sexual orientation, gender identity and expression and sexual characteristics - SOGIESC) within the affected population. Some of these issues may have existed in the community before the disaster, and may increase with the shock and stress of the disaster or emergency. Others may arise due to humanitarian assistance and the way in which emergency relief activities are designed and delivered (e.g. inappropriate, inaccessible or unfair distributions).

Assistance or services provided must be (i) appropriate and accessible to all those in need within a population and (ii) provided in a manner that does not expose vulnerable people to further risk of harm.

Disasters affect people differently based on their age, gender, disability and many other factors. Vulnerable individuals or groups face different risks and barriers to accessing assistance and services before, during and after a disaster. These diverse needs should be reflected in assessments and response actions across all sectors. Below is a non-exhaustive list providing initial guidance in supporting protection-oriented relief and recovery activities.

General Protection Considerations for the Continuation of Schooling and Education³

- Identify which government agencies and other national actors are responsible for the provision of education assistance and take steps to work together with the responsible government authority or authorities.
- Ensure that child-friendly spaces, temporary learning centres and classrooms are located in safe areas that are not exposed to hazards (e.g. landslides, floods, toxic waste) and are accessible for all (including children with disabilities).
- Identify the most vulnerable individuals or groups within the students' community and be aware of specific needs of all groups according to age and gender. Use this information to guide the design and delivery of assistance to ensure the most vulnerable can access assistance in safety and dignity.
- Disaggregate beneficiary data by sex and age.
- Communicate information on relief and recovery activities to the affected population in a range of formats (e.g. radio, TV, newspaper), and in the local language, to ensure accurate and timely information reaches the most vulnerable.
- Ensure all employees and contractors are inducted in your organization's child safeguarding policy (i.e. rules and a clear set of behaviours when dealing with children which is binding on all staff).
- Child protection (i.e. working with children) background checks are included in recruitment of new staff and volunteers.
- Children and their families should be aware of the Code of Conduct and how to report cases of exploitation and abuse.

¹ A Protection Mainstreaming Tool for Emergency Response in the Pacific Region drawing on Global Protection Cluster Essential Protection Guidance and Tools. For more information contact pacificprotectioncluster@gmail.com or +679 3301 178 (UN Women, PHPC lead agency).

² Updated from the PHPC Think Protection! A Quick Guide to Integrating Protection into Disaster Response in the Pacific Region 2012.

³ Education should be prioritized as first response as it is a fundamental right, critical to healthy development and helps create a sense of normalcy for children.

- All staff should be trained in a Code of Conduct covering appropriate interaction with learners including the prohibition of sexual exploitation and abuse and also corporal punishment. All staff should be aware of procedures for prevention, reporting and referral of child abuse incidents occurring in child-friendly spaces and temporary learning centres.
- In developing and implementing educational programs, take into account the situation of unaccompanied children.
- Engage the affected population – including children and youth - in decisions regarding location, structure and environment of the educational facility and identification of safety concerns they may have (e.g. walking to the facility).
- Ensure that internally displaced and disaster affected children and youth have equal access to available education services and training opportunities without discrimination, including administrative barriers.
- Ensure displaced and affected communities have easy access to appropriate education and training ideally in their own language and in a format that respects their cultural identity.
- Consider potential safety issues of combining much older children with young children in education facilities and manage this through proper supervision, or where possible and appropriate, separate classrooms and/or play areas.
- Where emergency education kits are distributed (e.g. school-in-a-box) ensure that they are gender sensitive, responsive to girls' and boys' needs and distribution criteria is sensitive to vulnerable groups.
- Facilitate distribution of sanitary supplies to women and girls of reproductive age, and plan systems for washing and/or disposal of sanitary supplies in educational settings, consistent with the rights and expressed needs of women and girls.
- Identify the cultural practices, expected behaviours and social norms that constitute GBV or increase risk of GBV against girls and boys (e.g. preferential treatment of boys; child marriages; gender-based exclusion from education; domestic responsibilities for girls; child labour; recruitment of children into armed forces or groups.)
- Identify the environmental factors that increase children's and adolescents' risk of violence, understanding the different risk factors faced by girls, boys and particularly at-risk groups of children (e.g. presence of armed forces or groups; unsafe routes for firewood and water collection, to school and to work; overcrowded camps or collective centres; status as separated or unaccompanied child; being in conflict with the law; and existence of child trafficking networks.)
- Map community-based child protection mechanisms that can be fortified to mitigate the risks of GBV against children, particularly adolescent girls (e.g. child protection committees; community watch committees; child-friendly safe spaces; community-based organizations; families and kinship networks; religious structures; etc.)
- Identify response services and gaps in services for girl and boy survivors including child-friendly health care; mental health and psychosocial support; security response; and legal and justice processes.
- Assess the capacity of child protection programmes and personnel to recognize and address the risks of GBV against girls and boys and to apply the principles of child-friendly care when engaging with girl and boy survivors.
- Review existing and proposed community outreach material related to child protection to ensure it includes basic information about GBV risk reduction including prevention, where to report risk and how to access care.⁴
- Both male and female teachers have adequate training to provide psychosocial support to students as needed and have access to the support themselves if necessary.
- Sufficient and appropriate teaching aids and materials are available to support children with disabilities.
- Provide separate toilets for girls, boys, women and men in safe locations for each child-friendly space and temporary learning centre that are also accessible for people with disabilities.
- Ensure adequate quantities of water for drinking and for personal hygiene are available at the site of the learning centre/child-friendly space or in close proximity.
- Situate play areas in clearly visible and safe locations and ensure sufficient lighting or security if open at night.
- Provide training to children on emergency evacuation procedures.
- Include the following questions in on-going monitoring of education programs:
 - Does anyone in the affected population face any barriers/obstacles to access education?
 - Has the disaster changed whether girls, compared with boys, are able to attend school (e.g. increased household or care-giving responsibilities, pressure to contribute to family income, increased restrictions in mobility)?
 - Do schools or learning centres and their locations create protection problems or increase exposure to violence, neglect and exploitation?

Protection Considerations for Emergency Assessments

- Analyze the composition of the affected population in detail, ensuring the population and household composition is disaggregated by sex and age. Include the number of single-headed households disaggregated by woman/girl/boy/man head of household; pregnant or lactating women; unaccompanied girls and boys; elderly women and men; people of diverse SOGIESC; women, children and men with disabilities (disaggregated by type of impairment); and women, children and men with serious or chronic illness.
- Assess the situation of all displaced people (including those in temporary settlements, those dispersed in smaller groups and those living with host families).
- Identify existing coping strategies adopted by the affected population to respond to the disaster and prevent further harm (i.e. positive and negative coping strategies).

⁴ https://gbvguidelines.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/2015-IASC-Gender-based-Violence-Guidelines_lo-res.pdf

- Based on the above information, sectoral staff should consider what arrangements are needed for females and for males with specific needs (such as those in the population groups listed above) to ensure they are able to access humanitarian assistance or services in safety with dignity, including consideration of privacy or mobility issues.
- Ensure host communities are included in assessments to avoid tensions arising between displaced people and host communities in terms of assistance provided (or not provided).

⁴ https://gbvguidelines.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/2015-IASC-Gender-based-Violence-Guidelines_lo-res.pdf