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**CHILD PROTECTION MAINSTREAMING
BRIEFING PAPER FOR ALL SECTORS**

CHILD PROTECTION MINIMUM STANDARDS #19 – 26

“All sectors of humanitarian response are critical to providing an adequate and holistic response for children who have survived different types of violence, exploitation, abuse and neglect. Following the immediate humanitarian response, all humanitarian sectors have an important contribution to make to the effective rehabilitation and reintegration of child survivors. ‘Mainstreaming’ child protection, or ensuring that child protection considerations inform all aspects of humanitarian action, helps to maximize the child protection impacts of the work that all humanitarians do.”¹

How to Use This briefing paper: This briefing paper is a quick reference for Plan International Child Protection in Emergencies (CPiE) staff on how to engage with other sectors operating in the emergency to ensure that child protection principles and considerations inform all aspects of humanitarian programming in other sectors. While there is child protection mainstreaming guidance for how to work with specific sectors (e.g. WASH, nutrition, distribution) this “All Sectors” briefing note can give CPiE staff the big picture of shared child protection mainstreaming messages that should be conveyed to all sectors. This briefing is aligned with the Minimum Standards for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action and the Sphere Standards, as well as Plan International staff feedback on what actions are the most vital for child protection mainstreaming in other sectors.

This briefing complements specific mainstreaming briefings geared toward CPiE staff engaging with WASH, nutrition and distribution sectors. These cover:

- Common risks for girls and boys in each sector
- Key actions for designing and implementing child-friendly and safe programmes in each sector
- Key indicators and tools to monitor the successful child protection mainstreaming in the sector

INTRODUCTION: WHY MAINSTREAM CHILD PROTECTION IN OTHER SECTORS?

Provision of services is important in emergency responses, but – just as important – is how these services are provided. In order to maximize children’s safety, Plan International must ensure that child protection principles and considerations are integrated into the assessments, planning, implementation and monitoring and evaluation of all sectors.² No matter the sector, involving children in the design and implementation of programmes will enhance these services, prevent harm or exploitation of vulnerable groups of children, give children a sense of purpose and empowerment, and ensure sustainability of services provided. All CPiE mainstreaming activities should adhere to these principles by being:

In the best interest of the child: Minimize the instances in which the risks to children are inadvertently exacerbated by programmes designed without proper consideration of children’s safety or wellbeing.

¹ CHILD PROTECTION WORKING GROUP, MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR CHILDREN PROTECTION IN HUMANITARIAN ACTION, p. 163.

² THIS MAINSTREAMING TOOLKIT FOCUSES SPECIFICALLY ON WASH, NUTRITION AND DISTRIBUTION PROGRAMMES.

Strategic: It is not feasible to expect all sectors to mainstream child protection immediately. It takes time to build capacities of staff in other sectors and joint efforts should work towards this goal. The toolkit provides guidance on key actions that can support this goal.

Evidence and Rights – based: All children – whatever their age, gender or circumstance – deserve access to basic services. Mainstreaming actions should be informed by assessments and data, and driven to make all services accessible to boys and girls.

Context-specific: The toolkit provides suggested considerations in each sector. However, assessments in partnership with communities, boys, girls, adolescents, youth and other sectors should inform the contextualization.

With the help of this briefing, CPiE staff will be able to ensure that protection risks children are exposed to in other sectors, or obstacles to children’s access to vital services in those sectors, are prevented or minimized as much as possible. Ensuring a quality response in all sectors involves considering children in the following shared areas:

- Human Resources & Staff Capacity Building
- Communications, Advocacy & Media
- Program Cycle Management
- Referral Pathways & Complaint/Feedback Mechanisms
- Logistics & Procurement
- Coordination

This briefing sheet is divided into four parts:

1. Human Resources & Staff Capacity Building
2. Communications, Advocacy & Media
3. Programme Cycle Management
4. Referral Pathways & Complaint/Feedback Mechanisms

HUMAN RESOURCES & STAFF CAPACITY BUILDING

When engaging with any sector partner, key human resources and staff capacity building messages include encouraging sectors to:

- Develop, implement and monitor a child safeguarding policy or child protection policy that applies to all sector staff and partners.
- Ensure that all sector staff members have been educated and signed on to at least Plan International’s child protection code of conduct, particularly the rules governing behaviours related to the protection of children against sexual exploitation and abuse, and are aware of the consequences of violating the code.
- Designate at least one sector staff member to act as a child protection focal point (e.g. for referrals of children for sector-specific services), to implement a monitoring and complaints/feedback mechanism for children and families and to attend CPiE coordination meetings on behalf of the sector.³

³ IF OTHER SECTOR STAFF ARE UNWILLING OR UNABLE TO ATTEND CPiE COORDINATION MEETINGS, A CPiE STAFF MEMBER CAN SIT IN ON OTHER SECTOR MEETINGS TO ENSURE CONSIDERATIONS FOR CHILDREN’S PROTECTION ARE MADE IN WORK PLANS UNDER THAT SECTOR.

Train sector staff on:

- How to sensitively communicate with children to avoid further distress.
- Prevention of Sexual abuse and Exploitation (PSEA).
- Specific child protection issues and vulnerability criteria in your context.
- How to ensure children's access to your sector's services, particularly for excluded children, such as children living or working on the streets, children with special needs, children living in child-headed households, etc.
- How to identify potential child protection concerns and how to refer to available services.

COMMUNICATIONS, ADVOCACY & MEDIA

Before engaging with other sectors' communications, advocacy or media teams, do your own preparatory work:

- Pre-identify the child protection concerns that CPiE staff deem most relevant to advocate on, adapt and target specific messages that will be used at local and national level with:
 - Communities, families, children
 - Authorities
 - Humanitarian actors in other sectors
- Develop guidance (e.g. basic rules) for visitors such as media or donors to schools and Child-Friendly Spaces to ensure that visitors do not put children at risk (e.g. regarding photographs, interviews, etc.).
- Ensure that key child protection issues are discussed in the relevant forums coordination meetings, humanitarian country teams, government bodies etc.) and included in joint advocacy responses.

When engaging with any sector partner, key communications, advocacy and media messages include encouraging sectors to:

- Ensure that all sector communication material is prepared in visual form so that children can easily understand messages.
- Use simple language translated into relevant local language(s) to ensure the other sectors' messages are clearly and successfully communicated to all, including children themselves.
- Ensure that other sectors use child-friendly media for their awareness-raising sessions, i.e. story-telling, games, plays, images, etc.
- Ensure that children, parents and guardians have been properly informed and have signed an informed consent form before using any image, recording or quote of them in other sectors' communications materials.
- Always make sure that stories related to and images of children used are accurate and sensitive.
- Do not label children, exaggerate situations or depict children as powerless.
- Do not use images of boys and girls that could be viewed as sexual by others.
- Do not expose children to further harm, e.g. by maintaining stereotypes.
- Do not use children's real names, unless they have specifically requested that their names be used and their parent or guardian has consented to this.
- Never reveal the identity of any children.
- Where possible, give children safe access to media to express their own opinions.

PROGRAMME CYCLE MANAGEMENT

Before engaging with other sectors on how to mainstream child protection considerations into their programme cycle management, do your own preparatory work:

- Carry out immediate situation analysis, including by reviewing existing information on the emergency or similar scenarios, to identify immediate needs and root causes of threats to children, including in other sectors.
- Involve children in situation analysis and programme planning to make sure their views on services are taken into consideration.
- Understand existing formal and informal child protection mechanisms and build your response – and your advocacy with other sectors – on them.
- Prioritise inter-agency assessments over single-agency assessment, using existing structures for collection information as much as possible. This can include collaborating with other sectors.
- Carry out child protection rapid assessments within the first five weeks of the response.

When engaging with any sector partner, key programme cycle management messages include encouraging sectors to:

- Design sector programmes to meet needs that cannot or will not be met by the state, while building on existing, functioning and positive structures, where these exist.
- Design sector responses to consider vulnerable and marginalized children and children most at risk.
- Prioritize life-saving action in sector programmes.
- Ensure that the most vulnerable – including children – receive your services first.
- Ensure that children know they are not expected to give anyone anything in return for the items or services received within your sector.
- Set up sector-specific feedback and complaint mechanisms, ensuring accessibility of children to these mechanisms.
- Ensure feedback mechanisms' findings are incorporated into adjustments to sector programmes.
- Ensure that sectors' logistics and procurement processes take into account child protection concerns (e.g. assessing risk of child labour in sector supply chains, raising awareness among sectors' external associates, such as truck drivers, on children's rights and protection).

REFERRAL PATHWAYS & COMPLAINT/FEEDBACK MECHANISMS

Before engaging with other sectors on how to mainstream child protection considerations into their own referral pathways and complaint/feedback mechanisms, do your own preparatory work:

- Ensure that each sector is aware of the 'referral pathway' for vulnerable children. This should explain who sector partners should contact when a child protection case is identified by their staff and outlines the required response. Update this regularly and explain the referral and reporting process from other sectors to Plan International to children and other stakeholders.
- Raise awareness among other sector partners of what constitutes abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence to children.

When engaging with any sector partner, key messages on referral pathways and complaint/feedback mechanisms include encouraging sectors to:

Complaint/Feedback Mechanisms:

- Work with Plan International Child Protection team and children to develop illustrated posters to be displayed at other sectors' facilities or locations (e.g. distribution sites, clinics, etc.) that make it clear that acts of abuse by other sectors' staff or volunteers during other sectors' activities will not be tolerated.
- Ensure that other sectors' complaint/feedback mechanisms are confidential and encourage people – including children – to report abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence against children. This can be supported by involving communities and children in designing these complaint/feedback mechanisms. Other sectors should put in place an anonymous recording system (e.g. complaints box, phone line, etc.) and designate a secure place to keep files of complaints/feedback.
- Ensure that children and adults are aware of how to report any matters of concern regarding children's treatment in other sectors.
- Put in place an investigation protocol for the sector, in coordination with human resources team and/or Plan International's Child Protection team, and authorities as necessary (e.g. in the case of sexual abuse and exploitation). Sector staff should not attempt to investigate complaints/feedback themselves.
- Ensure that feedback is given to individuals registering complaints/feedback on how their complaint/feedback is being processed by sector staff and, once it is investigated, how it was dealt with.
- Include a contingency budget in grant proposals for following up any child protection cases that are identified during sector programming. For example, if a child abuse case is identified in your sector, you may need money for transport or medical and legal fees.

Referral Pathways:

- Display child protection referral pathway, including a child friendly and visual version, on a clearly visible noticeboard at each of the other sectors' programme sites, e.g. within sectors' facilities in villages, IDP or refugee camps.
- When Plan International refers vulnerable children to other sectors for services, other sectors should keep all cases confidential; Plan International's trained child protection workers will monitor follow-up to be sure services were provided according to the referral.

Further Resources

ChildFund International, World Vision, IRC, and Save the Children, *Inter-Agency Facilitator's Guide: Applying Basic Child Protection Mainstreaming in Training for Field Staff in Non-Protection Sectors* - <http://resourcecentre.savethechildren.se/sites/default/files/documents/5340.pdf>

Global Protection Cluster, *Protection Mainstreaming Training Package*, 2014 - http://www.globalprotectioncluster.org/_assets/files/aors/protection_mainstreaming/PM_training/1_GPC_Protection_Mainstreaming_Training_Package_FULL_November_2014.pdf

Save the Children, *Ethical Guidelines – For ethical, meaningful and inclusive children's participation practice*, 2008 - <http://childethics.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/Feinstein-OKane-2008.pdf>

Save the Children, *Practice Standards in Children's Participation*, 2005 - <http://resourcecentre.savethechildren.se/sites/default/files/documents/3017.pdf>

ARC Resource Pack, *Foundation Module 4: Participation and Inclusion*, 2009 - <http://www.refworld.org/pdfid/4b55d8d22.pdf>



About Plan International:

Plan International is an independent child rights and humanitarian organisation committed to children living a life free of poverty, violence and injustice. We actively unite children, communities and other people who share our mission to make positive lasting changes in children's and young people's lives. We support children to gain the skills, knowledge and confidence they need to claim their rights to a fulfilling life, today and in the future.

We place a specific focus on girls and women, who are most often left behind. We have been building powerful partnerships for children for more than 75 years, and are now active in more than 70 countries.