



# El Nino Rain

## Rapid Needs Assessment Report

### Marsabit, Kenya



The assessment was carried out by Plan International Kenya Emergency Response Team in November 2023.

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## Cover Photo

*The El Nino rain has caused a severe impact in the lives of women in Marsabit, walking for safer place to stay after flood hit their home in November 2023.*

# List of acronyms

<b>CHV</b>	Community Health Volunteer
<b>CPiE</b>	Child Protection in Emergencies
<b>CSG</b>	County Steering Group
<b>DCS</b>	Department of Children Service
<b>ECDE</b>	Early Childhood and Development Education
<b>FGD</b>	Focus Group Discussion
<b>FGM</b>	Female Genital Mutilation
<b>GBV</b>	Gender Based Violence
<b>HIV</b>	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
<b>IDP</b>	Internally Displaced People
<b>KII</b>	Key Informant Interview
<b>KIRA</b>	Kenya Interagency Rapid Need Assessment Mechanism
<b>KRCS</b>	Kenya Red Cross Society
<b>MHM</b>	Menstrual Health Management
<b>NFIs</b>	Non -Food Items
<b>OND</b>	October and December
<b>RNA</b>	Rapid Needs Assessment
<b>RVF</b>	Rift Valley Fever
<b>SGBV</b>	Sexual Gender Based Violence
<b>SRHR</b>	Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights
<b>TBA</b>	Ttraditional Birth Aattendant
<b>VTC</b>	Vocational Training Centre

# Key recommendations

## **ACTIONABLE recommendations: general/overarching**

1. Strengthen risk communication and community engagement in all sectors through continuous provision of early warning information working with key sector actors
2. Plan International should strengthen coordination and support to government agencies leading response processes and supplying NFIs
3. Continuous monitoring and documentation of processes for learning and repositioning for any eventualities

## **ACTIONABLE recommendations for relevant sectors**

### **Protection (child protection in emergencies)**

1. Plan and partners should lead child protection case management, including caring for child survivors of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) and girls at risk of child and forced marriage in their communities.
2. Establish/Strengthen and operate adolescent safe spaces; in partnership with other stakeholders
3. Conduct child protection and SGBV information and awareness raising.
4. Strengthen child protection coordination mechanisms.
5. Strengthen community-level child protection mechanisms, Plan International Kenya with partners should identify and work with existing child protection structures in the targeted communities.
6. Conduct joint advocacy and messaging for child protection with like-minded organizations.

### **Water, hygiene and sanitation**

1. Conduct hygiene promotion/education sessions in schools and communities.
2. Rehabilitation of strategic boreholes: Rehabilitate and maintain boreholes that have been affected by the floods.
3. Procure and directly distribute WASH NFIs to enable water, sanitation, or hygiene-related safe behaviours.

### **Shelter**

1. Support government on recovery, stabilization and reintegration initiatives for IDPs, through: provision of materials for shelter repairs.
2. Shelter upgrades and construction of transitional shelters in designated temporary resettlement and relocation sites.
3. Provide safe space for girls.

## Education

1. Pre-positioning of scholastic materials - teaching and learning materials and sanitary towels for girls.

## Non-food items and shelter

1. Provide life-saving assistance through distribution of emergency shelter-tents and non-food items (NFIs).
2. Extend needed assistance to the government on recovery, stabilization and reintegration initiatives for IDPs, through;
  - i) the provision of materials for shelter repairs,
  - ii) shelter upgrades and construction of transitional shelters in designated temporary resettlement and relocation sites

## Food security and livelihood protection

1. Provide multi-purpose cash transfer.
2. Conduct joint food and nutrition assessment processes with partners at county level.



*The assessment team pushing vehicle to cross the impassable road during the travel to Marsabit*



# Introduction and background

The floods have had devastating consequences for girls, women and children, heightening the risk of gender-based violence (GBV), sexual exploitation and abuse. Female headed households and adolescent girls are particularly vulnerable to increased violence, exploitation, and abuse as many now live in makeshift structures that are unsecure or sleeping in classrooms with a huge potential for attacks. Adolescent girls and women of reproductive ages are not meeting their menstrual hygiene and health needs. There



*Internally displaced camp for individuals affected by floods.*

is evidence of child abuse- physical, verbal, and emotional from parents who experience stress and trauma following the loss and damage of livelihoods and assets.

The floods affected communities whose food reserves were swept away or crops submerged are adopting negative coping mechanisms such as skipping meals and reducing food ration as relief provided by the national and county governments and KRCS are inadequate.

There are no toilets in the internally displaced people's camps where open defecation is practiced posing a grave danger of water borne diseases such as cholera. A total of 185 households representing 64% of the HHs from an entire village are hosted in an IDP camp in temporary makeshift shelter units that leak when raining, overcrowded, and families sharing houses without privacy.

Many families survive without necessary NFIs such as clothing, kitchen sets, water storage facilities, scholastic materials for school children, lighting and dignity kits for girls and women. Income is lost since main livestock markets in Moyale, North Horr and Laisamis Sub Counties have been disrupted due to impassable roads that has affected the transportation of goats to the main market as many areas are currently (at the time of reporting for this assessment) cut-off.

## Areas affected

Onset of the short rains was timely as it occurred in the second week of October as opposed to the normal start of the season on third week. Northern parts of Moyale (Moyale Township, Heillu and Butiye) Southern parts of Laisamis Sub County, Saku (Marsabit Central and Sagante wards) and Northern parts of North Horr sub-county received highly enhanced rains. In central areas of North Horr and Dukana the rainfall received in October is already above the normal/average that is typically received within the entire October and December (OND) quarter. Very heavy rainfall locally, particularly at the border and towards Saku sub-county has been recorded. According to the KMD Forecast, above normal rains are expected to persist and the situation will likely be worse hence a threat to the livelihoods, productive assets and access to basic services thus likely increased vulnerability of the flood affected communities across the county. Roads are impassable in some parts of the county, more than 4,000 households affected by floods, toilets submerged, some health facilities completely cut-off and infrastructure disrupted thus aggravating the already critical malnutritional rates across the county.

## Information on national, local authorities and Humanitarian Actors

Humanitarian partners are working with authorities to assess the needs, alongside scaling up response to the affected communities. Kenya Red Cross Society (KRCS) is the designated lead in humanitarian work in the country working closely with the National Disaster Operation Centre. They coordinate activities with other actors that include National and County government line ministries and agencies as well as UN agencies and other NGOs. Partners come with support and sectoral contribution based on their expertise and mandates. In Marsabit, the national and county governments have taken the lead role in coordinating the response planning and implementation through the County Steering Group. KRCS continue to coordinate with other partners including the National Drought Management Authority (NDMA), and as co-chairs of Kenya Cash Working Group.

There are 8 coordination hubs in emergency coordination and management across the country. The United Nations has a strong presence in Nairobi for the country and regional programmes. The UN Agencies working in partnership with partners such as Plan International include UNHCR (Refugee Programmes), UNICEF (Nutrition, and child protection), UNFPA (Reproductive Health and Gender-Based Violence), UNOCHA (coordination of partners and Training on Kenya Interagency Rapid Assessments), UN- WFP, UN Women, Food and Agriculture Organization and the International Organization for Migration.

## Access to affected areas

The ongoing El Nino rains have caused severe road damage especially in areas not connected with tarmac in the county. Flooding have led to substantial road cuts in almost every region rendering them inaccessible. The enhanced rains have resulted in extensive damage of the untarmacked road networks across the county. The general damage to the roads was noted to be washing away of gravel/ top cover, damage to culverts, gabions and other drainage structures, damage and washing away of drifts, road shoulders, formation of trenches and water logging.

Plan International Kenya assessment team was unable to access Shurr allocation adversely affected by floods and only 30Kms East of Marsabit town (the team successfully covered 17Kms and the remaining 13Kms became impassable for off-road vehicles). In Ilbarok where the assessment was successful on first day, follow-up action the following day was impossible as the roads were completely cut-off with the night rains.

In Marsabit, the main livestock markets in Moyale, North Horr and Laisamis Sub Counties have been disrupted due to impassable roads that has affected the transportation of goats to the main market as many areas are currently cut-off. This in turn will affect household purchasing power as this inhibit exchange of livestock for other food stuffs and NFIs. The floods-induced livestock diseases may aggravate milk production at household level.

## Gender-related context

The floods have had devastating consequences for girls, women, and children, heightening the risk of gender-based violence (GBV), sexual exploitation and abuse. Female headed-households and adolescent girls are particularly vulnerable to increased violence, exploitation and abuse as many now live in makeshift structures which are unsecure or sleeping in classrooms with a huge potential risk of security attacks. In pastoralist communities who have lost almost all their livelihood assets (cattle), child marriage will likely rise with families marrying-off young girls to acquire livestock resources potentially to replace losses as a result of livestock deaths. This is usually accompanied by an increase in Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). At the same time, the destruction of road infrastructure creates a barrier to accessing gender-based violence (GBV) and sexual reproductive health services from facilities.



*A woman whose manyatta was destroyed by floods, trying to save.*

In Ilbarok, Marsabit County floods displaced girls and boys aged 10 to 17 years sleep in classrooms in a near-by school since their relocation from their homes as a result of the floods.

The girls reported that while sleeping in the classrooms, boys disrupt and ask for sexual favours. Some of the girls were provided with sanitary towels in school before the holidays, unfortunately, the floods swept these essential items. Many reported utilizing reusable shopping bags to address their menstrual hygiene needs in both Shegel and Ilbaro.

Though most women are members of Village Savings and Lending Associations (VSLA) groups, all their savings and assets were lost across the county where the RNA was conducted. Many were rearing chicken and small stock such as goats but majority died.

Women as well as adult male FGDs reported that men are unable to get money to buy food. Some who have been doing farming cannot access their farms which are flooded and all crops washed away. This is providing a devastating situation recipe for gender-based Violence.



Most parents reported sending their girls to look for food to support families. It was reported by adolescent girls in Marsabit that displaced aggression towards children by parents is on the increase at community level in the forms of physical, verbal, and psychological abuse. Consequently, children are enduring physical harm, verbal aggression and psychological distress all stemming from their parents' emotional strain.

## **Objectives of the assessment**

- To generate key information to help Plan International develop an appropriate response for children and others hit by disasters
- To identify priority needs of girls, boys and their families as a key first step in designing an appropriate response and in helping Plan International managers decide on programming focus
- To analyse the specific and needs and challenges faced by girls, boys, women and men

## **The immediate results of the assessment would ensure the following:**

- Plan International Kenya has access to timely, critical and relevant data, disaggregated by sex, age and disability informing priority humanitarian needs of people, particularly girls and young women, with special reference to protection, health, education, water & sanitation, food and non-food Items
- Provide estimates of the affected population, extent of damage and general effects of the flooding in affected areas
- Provide communications materials for internal and external visibility/profiling and resource mobilization

# Methodology

Plan International Kenya conducted Rapid Needs Assessment (RNA) in Marsabit County from 12<sup>th</sup> -14<sup>th</sup> November 2023 to provide an initial overview of the situation to enable immediate identification of top priorities, needs, vulnerabilities and capacities of girls, boys, women and men for first-response activities. The assessments were conducted in areas affected by floods in Laisamis Sub County, Marsabit. Participatory approaches were used through participation of adolescent girls 9-13 years old, male and female young person 18-24 years old, male and female adults, persons with disabilities and key informant interviews with key stakeholders including the National Drought Management Authority Officers, Deputy County Commissioners, County Executive Officer responsible for disaster risk management and community elders. Desk review of secondary information, transect walks, videography, photography and observation approaches were also employed.

## Ethical and safeguarding considerations

During the assessment, the assessment team has taken the steps to ensure that data was collected in accordance with Plan International's ethical principles and standards. Informed consent was obtained from the participants who attended the discussions and interview were briefed about maintaining the confidentiality and security of respondents' data was ensured. The rapid needs assessment team, though they were Plan International Kenya staff had already taken the safeguarding and gender training and fully aware about the policy of Plan International. During the assessment, the team has also obtained consent for media use on some selected cases after going through a briefing to them about the uses of their photos and stories.

## Summary of secondary data assessment

The RNA factored in feedback from RNA conducted by the County Steering Group (CSG) and other related findings from reports from other organisations to draw the findings and conclusions to this report.

### Overview of locations assessed

In Marsabit, the assessment was conducted in Shegel and Log Logo ward-IIbarok location which had devastating impact of the flash floods from Mt Marsabit. On the 26<sup>th</sup> October 2023, 185 households were displaced with 1 reported death and over 150 shoats swept away.



Assessed area by the team

# Key findings

## Impact of crisis on girls, boys, women and men

### Impact on housing

In Ilbarok Log logo, Marsabit County, 185 households representing 64% of the them from an entire village are camping in an Internally Displaced People (IDP)'s camp with temporary make-shift shelter units that leak when raining and most of the houses are overcrowded since families are sharing houses. An elderly woman who is 63-year-old shared:

“I was away when the floods swept away our house and killed my husband. My other family members survived by screaming for help to the neighbours who helped to move them to higher ground. They then moved to Ilbarok where they sought shelter for few days.”

Boys and girls of age 10 to 17 years are currently sleeping in classrooms in neighbouring primary school with many lacking sleeping materials i.e. mattresses, bedsheets, blankets etc. Within the camp areas there are no functional toilets, the one at the near-by health unit collapsed. The same households had their clothing, kitchen sets, water storage facilities, scholastic materials, food and NFIs including dignity kits for girls were also washed way.

### Education

In Marsabit County, there is a total of 45 secondary schools, 181 primary schools, 364 Early Childhood and Development Education (ECDE) centres, 7 Vocational Training Centres (VTC) and 2 technical training institutes. Since the inception of rain which started in mid October 2023, almost all the schools are not accessible and several cases of destruction has been reported in learning institutions mainly having classrooms blown off or toilets collapsing. A major concern from both girls, boys, men and women FGDs is the loss of scholastic materials and the fear of children not resuming studies when schools will open in January 2024 due to lack of fees following livelihoods losses. A girl during the assessment narrated:

“My clothes and books were all swept by the rains. I cannot revise and I do not know how I will complete my homework.”

## Health

The proliferation of insects i.e. houseflies and mosquitos were noted across the 4 sub counties in Marsabit. In places like Namarei, in Laisamis, Dukana in North Horr and, Antuta, Dacha Lakole in Moyale Sub County, eye infections were also reported, attributed to increased house flies. Provision of integrated management of acute malnutrition services is ongoing, with major challenge being access to some outreach sites i.e. Olom, Mpagas areas, longer duration between outreach sites visit and lack of essential drugs and staff for outreaches. In Ilbarok, there is no functioning health unit.

## Food

Damage to agriculture, livestock and business units are increasing food insecurity in affected counties. Between October 2023 and January 2024, it is projected that 9% of the population (around 1.5 million people) in Mandera, Marsabit and Turkana counties, which are all affected by the floods, will experience Crisis (IPC Phase 3) levels of food insecurity or higher according to ACAPs report<sup>1</sup>. Floods affected communities whose food reserves were swept away or whose crops submerged are adopting negative coping mechanisms such as skipping meals and reduction in ration sizes as relief provided by the national and county governments and KRCS are inadequate.

## Markets, cash & livelihoods

Flooding and storms have damaged commercial services and businesses in Garissa, Mandera, Tana River, Marsabit and Wajir counties. By 20<sup>th</sup> November, flooding had killed over 2,441 livestock and damaged tens of thousand acres of farmland across Kenya. In Marsabit, a total of 678 shoats which include 457 goats and 221 sheep and 22 camels were swept away by floods across the county. Other livestock mortalities were caused by lightning strikes like the case of Dukana where 48 shoats belonging to five herders were lost and 30 kids and lambs in Bori junction due to heavy rains. The number of livestock mortalities reported since the onset of the short rains were mainly shoats. The deaths were mainly due to heavy rains which resulted in the deaths and in the case of Dukana they were struck by lightning. Livestock diseases have been noted with more of disease being most prevalent in goats, foot rot in sheep and goats reported across Laisamis, Moyale Sub County and around Dukana areas in North Horr Sub County.

Cases of foot rot commonly occur during the wet season when animal feet are softened by constant water and mud hence prone to injuries and being entry point for the *Nichelobacter nodosus* bacteria. Mosquito infestation has been reported in most parts of Moyale Sub County and Shurr in Turbi ward. Mosquito infestation is likely to cause Rift Valley fever if the livestock species are not vaccinated<sup>2</sup>. 317 shoats died in Ilbarok where the RNA was conducted. The main livestock markets in Moyale, North Horr and Laisamis Sub Counties have been disrupted due to impassable roads that has affected the transportation of shoats to the main market as many areas are currently cut off. This in turn will affect household purchasing power as this inhibits the exchange

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.acaps.org/en/countries>

<sup>2</sup> [Floods Assessment Report Marsabit County](#)  
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of livestock for other food stuffs and NFIs. The floods-induced livestock diseases may aggravate milk production at the household level.

## Water and sanitation

Boreholes, shallow wells, and water pans constitute the main water sources in affected counties. Storms and floods have damaged boreholes and latrines across flood-affected ASAL counties. Contaminated water and lack of access to WASH facilities have increased the risk of waterborne disease outbreaks. In Marsabit, Illaut, and Gangeisa areas, shallow wells are silted and the Merille borehole is completely submerged and unfunctional. In Ilbarok IDP camp Marsabit, there were no visible toilets meaning the displaced communities are practicing open defecation posing a grave danger of waterborne diseases such as cholera. According to the Marsabit floods assessment report, only 20% -30% of community households confirmed using water treatment chemicals. High surface water contamination has been witnessed. This is a result of poor human, animal, and household waste disposal practices. Despite the sensitization that has been offered by the health department, most communities have remained adamant about changing their attitude towards the practice due to their nomadic lifestyle and dependence on subsidies. Hand washing with soap is one of the most effective and inexpensive interventions for preventing diarrheal diseases but uptake of the practice was confirmed to be minimal amongst the communities. This is due to inadequate water supplies, ignorance, inadequate knowledge, and poor attitudinal change. Lucy, a 17-year-old girl told the team:

“I used to be given sanitary towels by Red Cross while in school but it was all swept away by the flood. I now have to use a polythene bag.”

## Sector wise findings and priority needs

Sector	Priority needs
<p><b>Child Protection in Emergencies</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plan International and partners should lead child protection case management, including caring for child survivors of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) and girls at risk of child and forced marriage in their communities. The Plan International Kenya, its partners, and community-based protection structures should ensure that children and adolescents receive appropriate and timely support through identification, assessment, referral, and follow-up.</li> <li>Establish/Strengthen and operate adolescent safe spaces; in partnership with other stakeholders, Plan International Kenya work closely with adolescents to develop and</li> </ul>

	<p>implement peer group activities according to their identified needs and preferences which shall be prioritised.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct Child Protection and SGBV information and awareness raising: Community and parents' awareness sessions should be conducted through group-based and interactive activities.</li> <li>• Sensitization on laws and policies that protect children and girls should be simplified and shared.</li> <li>• Strengthen child protection coordination mechanisms.</li> <li>• Conduct child protection assessments with partners.</li> <li>• Strengthen community-level child protection mechanisms, Plan International Kenya with partners should identify and work with existing child protection structures in the targeted communities. Together with partners engage communities and adolescent-led groups to conduct Child Protection risk mapping which will identify protective capacities and local understandings of adolescent well-being and collectively design actions to prevent and respond to risks.</li> <li>• Conduct joint advocacy and messaging for child protection with like-minded organizations.</li> </ul>
<b>Shelter</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support government on recovery, stabilization and reintegration initiatives for IDPs, through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provision of materials for shelter repairs.</li> <li>Shelter upgrades and construction of transitional shelters in designated temporary resettlement and relocation sites.</li> <li>Provide safe space for girls.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Provide cash for asset- reconstruction.</li> </ul>
<b>Education</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scholastic materials (learning materials, uniforms and books) for school children.</li> <li>• Education scholarship for needy students.</li> </ul>
<b>Health facilities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build dispensary to serve the community and drugs supplies-e.g. antimalarial and promotion of health information</li> </ul>
<b>Food</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide multipurpose cash transfer</li> <li>• Conduct joint food and nutrition assessment processes with partners at county level</li> </ul>
<b>Water and sanitation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct hygiene promotion/education sessions in schools and communities: Plan International and</li> </ul>

	<p>partners should conduct hygiene promotion sessions focused on the importance of maintaining personal hygiene through demonstrating five critical handwashing times and proper water handling and storage. Focus should be placed on enabling people to practice key hygiene behaviors (e.g., handwashing, bathing, proper water handling and storage, MHM, proper food preparation, and hygiene).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rehabilitation of strategic boreholes: Rehabilitate and maintain boreholes that have been affected by the floods.</li> <li>• Procure and directly distribute WASH NFIs to enable water, sanitation, or hygiene-related safe behaviors. Items to be procured and distributed include water transport/storage containers (100-liter containers to support rain water harvesting during the short rains season), soap, menstrual hygiene management kits, and water purification tablets (250g sachets) etc.to affected families.</li> </ul>
<b>Market, cash &amp; livelihoods</b>	Cash for assets
<b>Risk communication and community engagement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support partners in continuous monitoring of flood related information by stakeholders as well as strengthening communication network and structures. This includes monitoring the KENGEN dams' levels which adversely affects Tana River.</li> <li>• Work with local vernacular FM radio stations and disaster management committees interpret early warning information and dissemination on timely basis.</li> <li>• Conduct regular sensitization to community members on flood preparedness, response and recovery measures.</li> <li>• Provide psycho-social support to affected population.</li> </ul>

# Conclusion

Besides the destruction on physical infrastructure, roads, school, health facility, The El Nino rain caused heavy floods that has brought devastating consequences for girls, women, and children, heightening the risk of gender-based violence (GBV), sexual exploitation and abuse. The communities have lost their livelihood asset that may lead for more child marriage, domestic violence on and food scarcity at family. Plan International in coordination with other partners should strive to respond to urgent needs of Marsabit communities (protection, food, shelter, water, sanitation & hygiene) with special focus on children, adolescent girls, young women, men and all flood affected families in the county.



# Recommendations

Immediate action is required to respond to most urgent humanitarian needs which include;

1. Shelter, clean water and sanitation, healthcare, food, and psychosocial support.
2. Disruption in agricultural activities has led to food shortages and loss of income for many households. The magnitude of the disaster requires external assistance to support recovery efforts.
3. The findings emphasize the necessity for an immediate and coordinated response from government agencies, humanitarian organizations, and community initiatives.
4. Sustainable recovery efforts should focus not only on meeting immediate needs but also on building resilience within the community to mitigate the impact of future disasters. Collaboration, resource mobilization, and ongoing assessment will be pivotal in addressing the long-term recovery needs of the affected population.



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## Plan International Kenya

Plan International is an independent development and humanitarian organization that advances children's rights and equality for girls. Plan International strives for a just world, working with children, young people, our supporters and partners. The organisation has been building powerful partnerships for children for more than 80 years, and is active in over 85 countries across the world.

Plan International Kenya has been operating in Kenya since 1982 and over time, has carved out a niche for itself in delivering long-term development and relief programmes focused on the wellbeing of children and marginalized communities of Kenya. Plan International Kenya has made remarkable achievements making it distinguishable as a thought leader and the "to-go-to" organization on issues pertaining to child protection at the community level and girls' agency through influencing. Currently, Plan International Kenya has programme operations in 12 counties: Nairobi, Machakos, Kajiado, Tharaka Nithi, Siaya, Kwale, Kilifi, Tana River, Homabay and Kisumu. The country programme has also expanded its humanitarian work to Marsabit and Turkana.

### We work with communities and partners to:

- Empower children, young people and communities to make vital changes that tackle the root causes of discrimination against girls, exclusion and vulnerability.
- Drive change in practice and policy at local, national and global levels through our reach, experience and knowledge of the realities children face.
- Work with children and communities to prepare for and respond to crises and overcome adversity.
- Support the safe and successful progression of children from birth to young adulthood.

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