Protecting Children of Concern through a Systems Approach:

Guidance for Field Offices
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Introduction to the Handbook

1. Background

Almost half of the population of concern to UNHCR are children. More importantly, children have special protection needs that require specific prevention and response strategies to ensure their rights and to preserve their safety and physical and psychological well-being.

For the purposes of the Handbook, the definition of Child Protection equates to all forms of abuse (psychical, sexual and mental), neglect, exploitation and violence. Child Protection is a component of the broader UNHCR protection mandate.

During conflicts and other humanitarian emergencies, the risks of child protection violations increase. At the same time, existing safeguarding mechanisms, including those of family and community, often break down and basic social services can become sporadic, fragmented or cease altogether. Yet, refugee and other displaced children are first and foremost children and, as such, should, regardless of their status, be safeguarded through systems established to contribute to their protection.

Since the UNHCR Executive Committee adopted the first thematic Conclusion on Refugee Children in 1987, the need to enhance the protection and care of children falling under UNHCR’s mandate has been a matter of increasing awareness and concern within the Organization. This has prompted the development of strategy, guidelines and protocols to promote such care.

In 1988, UNHCR published the ‘UNHCR Guidelines for Refugee Children’ and in 1993 UNHCR adopted a ‘Policy on Refugee Children’. This policy specifically set out principles and objectives to inform the discharge of UNHCR’s responsibilities vis-à-vis children and acknowledges that their protection and care is central to the fulfilment of UNHCR’s mandate. In 1994, the revised UNHCR, ‘Guidelines on the Protection and Care of Refugee Children’, used the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) as a conceptual framework providing important and comprehensive guidance to address a wide spectrum of protection issues affecting refugee children.

The importance of addressing child protection from a holistic perspective was underscored by the UN Secretary-General’s Study on Violence against Children, which recommended that a systematic and multifaceted framework be developed to respond to violence against children. The 2006, Decision on the Five Global Priorities for Refugee Children, by UNHCR’s Standing Committee also acknowledged that a systematic approach to the protection of refugee children is required. It encouraged UNHCR to enhance its partnership with child protection agencies, to build a common understanding of an effective child protection system and a strategy to implement child protection in all operations.

Also of particular note is UNHCR’s ExCom Conclusion No. 107 (LVIII) that recognized States’ responsibility to promote the establishment and implementation of child protection systems and to which children under their jurisdiction should have non-discriminatory access. It noted that the support provided by UNHCR and other relevant agencies and partners in helping States fulfill their obligations should supplement and strengthen the national child protection system in areas where gaps exist. It restated that (i) children should be among the first to receive protection and assistance; (ii) the principle of the bests interests of the child shall be a primary consideration in all actions concerning children and (iii) emphasis should be given to children in the prioritization of resources.

This Handbook seeks to further support the realisation of UNHCR’s policy in the area of child protection and

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1 ExCom Conclusion No. 47 (XXXVIII) 1987, on “Refugee Children”.
2 ExCom Conclusion No. 84 (XLVII), 1994, on Refugee Children and Adolescents
its operationalization. It has been created in order to ensure a more systematic approach to child protection in UNHCR operations and to assist UNHCR staff and partners in defining their role/functions and fulfilment of responsibilities to protect children more effectively.

An aim of UNHCR is to ensure that children of concern have access to child protection systems that take action to prevent, respond to and, mitigate the effects of child protection violations. This Handbook particularly promotes the use of a “systems approach” to improve the manner in which child protection concerns are addressed. More detailed information is given below in Chapter Two on the components of a child protection system. In brief however, a systems approach comprises a coordinated and inter-related set of legislation and policies, services and capacities needed across a range of sectors at national, local and community level to strengthen the protective environment around all children. It differs from some existing approaches in that it addresses the child in a holistic manner taking into consideration the multiple concerns they may have rather than working to address different individual CP issues i.e. violence, abduction, early marriage, trafficking separately. Furthermore, it requires that all necessary processes and procedures that allow for the delivery of child protection support are also addressed.

This Handbook refers to the protection of children of concern to UNHCR, which refers to boys and girls who are asylum-seekers, refugees, internally displaced or returnees assisted and protected by UNHCR, or stateless. In this Handbook “children of concern to UNHCR” will be used.

UNHCR considers a child to be a person “below the age of 18 years, unless, under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier”. Nonetheless, where an assessment of the actual needs of children above the age of majority under national law but, below 18 years old, reveals the necessity to implement measures to protect the child, UNHCR would respond. For example, in a context in which UNHCR may be working, if a 10 year old child was, in accordance with national law, able to be married legally, UNHCR would still consider interventions for that child within the framework of protection and child rights.

2. Purpose of the Handbook

In order to assist UNHCR staff and staff of partners, this Handbook aims to:

• Provide minimum guidance and background information regarding the functioning of a Child Protection System
• Promote understanding and practices for jointly working within a systems approach to child protection with other governmental and non-governmental actors
• Promote increased access to applicable child protection support for children of concern to UNHCR within a national Child Protection System

It is not intended that UNHCR should undertake all the activities as laid out in the Handbook. Indeed, it is important to note that, implementation of the actions and tools in this Handbook requires extensive work and cooperation amongst various actors and stakeholders: governments, UN organisations including UNICEF, NGO’s and donors operating at local, national and international levels, community based organisations (CBOs) and community members including families and children.

This Handbook therefore, lays out some basic information pertaining to how a Child Protection System could and should function. The aim is to enable UNHCR staff to have information regarding what to look for when assessing the Child Protection System operational in their own field of operation. This will also assist in making informed decisions on actions that will increase children of concern’s access to more effective support working in coordination and cooperation with others. In this way, UNHCR will be concerned about advocacy with National Authorities and/or other organizations promoting and delivering components of a child protection system that strengthen the protective environment and ensure the protection rights of children of...
concern. UNHCR where needed and to varying degrees will, play a role in the strengthening existing structures and mechanisms within a child protection system that contributes to delivering CP to support children of concern. UNHCR will also consider situations where it may be necessary to provide direct provision of components of a CP system and linking them into any existing system.

The Handbook is intended to be used in situations of asylum, statelessness, return and integration as well as of internal displacement and return in which UNHCR is providing protection and assistance.

### Of note:

It is important to note that globally, child protection specialists working outside of UNHCR have a particular brief as to the range of child protection concerns they address. This means that these practitioners interpret the word ‘protection’ in a distinct manner that differs to the broader protection mandate of UNHCR which is concerned with all activities aimed at obtaining full respect for the rights of the individual. The phraseology ‘child protection’ throughout this Handbook will therefore refer to the concerns of prevention, response and mitigation of the effects of all forms of abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence.

### 3. Who is the Handbook For?

This Handbook is intended for representatives, other managers, protection, and programme staff in the field and at headquarters. It is intended that staff and partners belonging to different sectors, such as social welfare, justice & security, health, education and others involved in child protection, find this Handbook a useful source of information and a necessary and practical tool to guide child protection programming. This Handbook also aims to provide some useful guidance for those sectors that may not have a particular child protection focus but nevertheless, through their actions, may have a positive or negative impact on child protection concerns as for instance water and sanitation (WATSAN), nutrition and, shelter and site planning.

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### Of Note:

This Handbook is to be used in conjunction with other UNHCR programming tools including the Results Based Framework, ProGRESS and FOCUS.

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### 4. Contents of the Handbook

The Handbook is divided into 4 Chapters and accompanying Annexes.

- **Chapter 1** gives a brief introduction and overview to this Handbook: the background, purpose, contents and target audience
- **Chapter 2** provides a basic overview of some of the child protection violations that children of concern could be at risk of or, are subject to. It briefly introduces the concept of a Child Protection System with information regarding core components.
- **Chapter 3** explains *how to* use the Matrix and Action Sheets contained within the Handbook
- **Chapter 4** contains a Matrix of Interventions and Action Sheets. The main objective of the Action Sheets being to assist UNHCR and partner staff to effectively identify areas of programming for their work on child protection and child protection systems. Each Action Sheet also contains references to further resources and information.
- **Annexes**
5. What risks do children of concern to UNHCR face?

During times of peace and during humanitarian crises, children are exposed to child protection violations that can cause harm to their safety and survival, well-being, dignity and development. This includes all forms of physical, sexual and emotional abuse, exploitation, neglect and violence.

The different categories of child protection violations include:

- **Physical abuse** - the use of violent physical force so as to cause actual or likely physical injury or suffering
- **Emotional abuse** - the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and persistent adverse effects on the child’s emotional development
- **Sexual abuse and sexual exploitation** - forcing or enticing a child to take part in sexual activities whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.
- **Exploitation** - pressuring, enticing, coercing, or compelling a child to perform acts or activities for someone else's advantage, gratification or profit often resulting in unjust, cruel and harmful maltreatment of children
- **Neglect and negligent treatment** - the persistent failure either deliberately or through careless negligence, to meet a child’s basic physical and/or psychological needs and is likely to result in the serious impairment of the child’s health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse
- **Violence** - the deliberate use of physical force or power or, the threat to use any form of aggression, against a child that is committed by an individual or group and either results in or, has a high likelihood of resulting in, actual or potential harm to the child’s survival, health, development or dignity.

These violations in all their manifestations exist as potential threats throughout childhood. It can cause major obstacles to children’s survival and development and leave lasting emotional and social impacts that persist throughout their life.

Child protection violations can happen in all contexts including those during flight, within a camp on non-camp setting, in a rural or urban environment during a protracted situation or shorter term crises. Child abuse happens in industrialised and non-industrialised countries.

Child protection violations can happen in any domestic or community setting. Child protection violations also occur in formal settings such as schools, health centres, police station, prisons and residential institutions.

Although many families take great care to protect their children to the utmost of their ability, child protection violations are committed by parents and relatives. Children are also abused by people known but unrelated to a child and, by strangers. Abuse and violence can be perpetrated by males and females. Children can be violated by adults and by other children.

It is recognized that in situations of humanitarian crises and natural disasters, the prevalence, breadth and severity of child protection concerns increase. Lack of availability of basic services, displacement, breakdown in family and social structures, a rise in violence, weak governance and absence of accountability can all contribute to a situation that exacerbates serious child protection violations. For example large numbers of children can become displaced, separated from family and orphaned. Children may be abducted or coerced to join armed groups. They may be killed or maimed as a result of combat, landmines and other unexploded ordnance. Children maybe sexually exploited during and after conflict. They become more vulnerable to trafficking. Armed conflict and periods of repression can also increase the risk that children will be tortured. The list below offers some brief information on these and other child protection concerns that children of concern to UNHCR may be at risk or subject to:
| **Children associated with armed groups** | Children associated with armed groups relates to any child under 18 years of age who is part of any kind of regular or irregular armed force or armed group in any capacity. This includes but is not limited to children being used as: cooks, porters, messengers, and anyone accompanying such groups other than family members. It includes girls and boys recruited for forced sexual purposes and/or forced marriage. The definition, therefore, does not only refer to a child who is carrying, or has carried, weapons |
| **Children living without parental care including:** |  |
| **Separated children** | Those children separated from both parents, or from their previous legal or customary primary care-giver, but not necessarily from other relatives. These may, therefore, include children accompanied by other adult family members. |
| **Unaccompanied children (also called unaccompanied minors)** | Children who have been separated from both parents and other relatives and are not being cared for by an adult who, by law or custom, is responsible for doing so. |
| **Orphans** | Children both of whose parents are known to be dead. |
| **Children living in institutions** | Including children living in orphanages and other forms of residential care as well as children incarcerated in prison and detention centres. |
| **Children living on the streets** |  |
| **Children living in bonded labour/with employees** |  |
| **Child headed-households** | A child headed household is a family unit headed by a boy or girl under the age of 18. This group of families may find it hard to survive, be vulnerable to abduction, risky methods of obtaining income and, have reduced access to services. There are many ways in which children are separated from their primary caregivers including accidentally during flight, abduction, coerced, sale and abandonment. All these children are at additional risks including those of recruitment by armed forces, physical abuse, sexual exploitation, violence, trafficking and forced labour. This is in addition to coping with the loss of those who are most important to them and those who normally provide their social and protective networks. |
| **Children without Birth registration** | Children without birth registration are at particular risk as they can be considered as not officially existing and therefore have virtually no rights at all |
| **Children in conflict with the law** | Any child who comes in contact with law enforcement authorities because he or she is suspected - - or has been found guilty -- of breaking the law. |
| **Children effected by mental health or psychosocial distress** | Children can be exposed to a variety of extreme circumstances including those of the horrors of war, loss of someone they love or violations to their person for example, some of which are beyond their capacity to cope. Mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS ) describes any type of local or outside support that aims to protect or promote psychosocial well-being and/or prevent or treat mental disorder. Psychosocial concerns are heightened in times of crisis. Just some of the reasons that may contribute to psychosocial concerns include increased stresses and changes to family and community, disruption of routine and loss of school and recreational facilities, being subject to or, witnessing, violence, sense of loss through displacement and loss of or separation form a family member |

| **Risks children may be exposed to** | **Description** |
| **Killing and maiming as a result of armed conflict** | Children who are caught up in armed conflict are at risk of being killed and maimed. Permanent disability being an outcome of such injuries. |
| **Dangers of landmines, other unexploded ordnance (UXO)** | Landmines and other unexploded ordnance endanger the lives of children in a totally indiscriminate manner and can remain hidden for years after conflict has ceased. UXO are |
| **and small arms** | particularly attractive to children as many consider them souvenirs of war, a source of income to sell on or, toys to play with. Landmines and UXO can result in death or severe disability. The undertaking of mine action are steps to identify and reduce the impact and risk of landmines and UXO to a level where people can live in safety. A proliferation of small arms can either mean children and young people can have easier access to such weapons or, are at greater risk of being killed or injured by the use of them |
| **Gender-based violence** | Violence that is directed at a person on the basis of gender or sex. It includes acts that inflict physical, mental or sexual harm or suffering, threat of such acts, coercion and other deprivations of liberty. While women, men, boys and girls can be victims of gender-based violence, women and girls are the main victims. The psychological and physical consequences of sexual abuse for child victims are often devastating and may lead to premature and unwanted pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS, suicide, physical injury and depression. The association of guilt and uncleanliness can severely exacerbate the suffering caused by the initial violation. |
| **Torture and cruel, inhumane and degrading treatment** | The act of torture is defined in the 1984 Convention against Torture (CAT) and includes ‘any act by which severe pain or suffering, whether physical or mental, is intentionally inflicted on a person’ for purposes of obtaining information or confession, punishing them for an act they have or, are suspected of, committing or, to intimidate or coerce a person. Torture of children happens in different contexts including those held by police, in detention centres and prisons, taken by militia groups and can cause severe physical and psychological harm often with long term consequences. |
| **Child Trafficking** | The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a child, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, abduction, fraud, deception, abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation |
| **Child Labour** | Any work performed by a child which is detrimental to his or her health, education, physical, mental, spiritual, moral, physical or social development. Whether or not a particular form of "work" can be called "child labour" depends on the child's age, type and hours of work performed, conditions, etc. and is guided based on guidelines in the ILO Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138) |
| **Worst forms of child labour** | (a) All forms of slavery or practices similar to slavery, such as the sale and trafficking of children, debt bondage and servitude and forced or compulsory labour, including forced or compulsory recruitment of children for use in armed conflict; (b) The use, procuring or offering of a child for prostitution, for the production of pornography or for pornographic performances; (c) The use, procuring or offering of a child for illicit activities, in particular for the production and trafficking of drugs as defined in the relevant international treaties; (d) Work which, by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to harm the health, safety or morals of children and guidance contained within Article 3 of ILO ‘Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention’, No. 182, 1999) |
| **Child marriage** | Child marriages are incompatible with the rights of girls and boys not only because they deny the right freely to decide whether or not to marry and to choose one's spouse when they are mature enough to fully understand the consequences are able to disregard any improper pressures, but also because they entail serious risks to reproductive health. |
| **Slavery** | The procurement, in order to obtain, directly or indirectly, a financial or other material benefit of the illegal entry of a person into the State Party of which the child is not a national or a permanent resident. |
| **Female genital mutilation/cutting** | Female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C) refers to all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external genitalia or other injuries to the female genital organs for cultural or other reasons that are not medical necessities. Children subject to FGM/C can suffer immediate and long term physical effects including infection, haemorrhaging, septicemia and pre-natal deaths as well as psychological and psychosomatic disorders. |
| **Honour killing and maiming** | Maiming or murdering a woman or girl as punishment for acts considered inappropriate for her gender that are believed to bring shame on the family or community |
| **Infanticide** | Killing of a child - for instance, many female children are the victims of infanticide because they are considered to be of less value in a society than male children. |

Note: Different languages and different professional fields can use different terminology to refer to all the issues above.

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5. **Who is responsible for protecting children from risks and upholding child rights?**

The protection of children from the risks and violations mentioned in the tables above are especially enshrined in the Convention of the Rights of the Child (CRC). It is important to recognise that those duty bearers with responsibility for ensuring that these rights are upheld. The State, organizations and individuals together hold the responsibility to creating a protective environment around each and every child:

- Parents and other family are considered the most important sources of protection for children and have a responsibility to protect their children’s rights.
- The State is tasked with ensuring protection and care as is necessary for children’s well-being and should take all legal, administrative and any other necessary measures to protect children.
- All members of society are obligated to respect, protect and fulfill child rights (including individuals as well as community, national and international organizations).

It is also important to acknowledge that children have the right to actively participate in their own protection.

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**The Protective Environment**

UNICEF promotes the use of a Protective Environment Framework that sets out eight protective elements all interacting with one another at different levels, national, provincial, local, community and family. Strengthening a protective environment for children requires different levels of engagement, cooperation, coordination, partnerships and communication all based around shared child protection goals. The eight elements key to creating or strengthening the protective environment around children, are depicted in the diagram below.

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As you will see in the remainder of this Handbook, these elements of a protective environment have been built upon further within the components of a Child Protection System.

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6. **Why do we need a Child Protection System?**

As seen from information above in this Handbook, there are a range of child protection risks that children can be exposed to and, to which they may be exposed simultaneously. In order to respond to these concerns we need a mechanism, a **Child Protection System**, that works to recognise, prevent, respond to and, mitigate all the risks and violations that effect children in a holistic and comprehensive manner.

We need a system that instead of pursuing child protection from a fragmented position of treating each category or form of child abuse separately i.e. child trafficking or separation, places the complete child who may be facing a multitude of protection concerns as the central focus.

We need a System that offers a more comprehensive way to ensuring that all the necessary elements that contribute to a protective environment including mechanisms to regulate, develop, implement and manage the system and delivery of services are fully coordinated, complementary and synchronized.

We need a system that also holds duty bearers to their responsibilities, considers changes needed to the norms and practices in society that threaten the protective environment and that brings perpetrators to account.

It is in this way that a Child Protection System ensures all child protection efforts are united and the full range of child protection issues are more effectively addressed in each context.

7. **What is a Child Protection System?**

A national Child Protection System is the coordinated series of functions and actions undertaken by a range of duty bearers **at all levels**, family, community, provincial, national and international that combine to prevent, respond to and mitigate, the multiple child protection risks children face.

A Child Protection system should be framed within a rights-based approach and ensure the non-discriminatory access to support for all children.

A Child Protection System is comprised of a collection of inter-related, multi-sectoral and multi-level components that include:

A. **Coordination**
B. Knowledge and Data – including surveys, assessments and other data collection and analysis upon which informed planning and programming is made, management information systems, monitoring and evaluation.
C. Legal and Policy Framework – encompassing legislation and policy, oversight, strategies regulation, gatekeeping, standard setting
D. Prevention and Response Services – incorporating functions of government departments and other agencies and the delivery of services, protocols and structured linkages between social work, legal, health, police services etc. The continuum of care including processes of identification, assessment, referral and child protection case management.
E. Capacities - both human and financial
F. Advocacy and Awareness Raising
Diagram X: Components of a Child Protection System

1. Coordination
   - All child protection actors work together
   - To influence change
   - Calling perpetrators to account

2. Assessment
   - Risks, prevalence, causality/capacities

3. Law and Policy Framework
   - Policy details standards, strategy and protocols regulating service delivery
   - Laws define who needs to be protected by whom and how

4. Prevention and Response Services

5. Capacities - Human & Financial
   - Raising ability

6. Advocacy & Awareness Raising

Diagram X: components of a Child Protection System
8. **What are the key components of a Child Protection System?**

### A. **Coordination**

It is important that there is a holistic and coordinated approach to developing or strengthening a child protection system within and across government sectors, non-governmental organizations, civil society groups, practitioners and community mechanisms at different levels.

This requires those engaged in any area of a child protection system to coordinate and communicate with each other. This could include, for instance, providers of social protection, justice, health, education and national security as well as community welfare mechanisms and any other relevant services that directly and indirectly support and influence the protection of children.

Strong inter-sectoral co-ordination should unite the child protection efforts of all actors at the various levels, national, provincial, local and community, emphasizing:

- More accurate oversight to ensure all elements of the Child Protection System are being developed and delivered
- Coordination to attain a comprehensive, integrated and complementary child protection mechanisms
- Clearly identified roles and responsibilities and the avoidance of duplication
- Shared objectives, goals and standards
- Shared understanding and information
- Mutually agreed plans for development of the CP system
- Agreed priority setting
- Linking children with appropriate actors
- Maximizing benefit from finite resources
- Shared reporting mechanisms
- Joint lobbying and advocacy
- Emergency preparedness planning

It is also important that there is coordination at the level of decision making and delivery of the most appropriate services for each child affected and this is discussed further in Section D. Prevention and Response Services (please refer to page XX for further information).

### B. **Knowledge and data**

Understanding the current magnitude, characteristics, and trends of child protection problems in any refugee or displacement setting is a crucial first step in supporting and developing an effective and appropriate child protection system, addressing gaps and informing evidence based policy making and planning. This requires an exercise of mapping, assessments and surveys to gather such data as:

- The prevalence of child protection problems and the key risks children face
- The cause and effects of child protection concerns

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• Children’s own risk and resiliency mechanisms
• Attitudes, customs and practices towards children
• Functions and capacities of any existing child protection system components including
  o Coordination mechanisms
  o Regulatory frameworks incorporating laws, policies, regulations, standards and accountability
  o Formal and informal structures, services and service delivery mechanisms (for example, provided by
    ministries, agencies, communities)
  o Human capacities and competencies
  o Financial resource mobilization
  o Continuation of data collection and monitoring, evaluation and reporting mechanisms
  o Communication and awareness raising activities
  o Advocacy actions

It is also important that ongoing data and information is collected and managed through the development of
Management Information Systems and processes for monitoring and evaluation of all aspects of the Child
Protection System development and utilization.

Of Note:

Accountability Actions for Age, Gender and Diversity Mainstreaming (AGDM):

C. Legal and Policy Framework
A child protection system needs an explicit legal and policy framework. Such a framework would include the
foundation of all necessary national legislation that underpins child protection work within different but inter-
related sectors. The framework would also denote the oversight necessary by national bodies to ensure that
children’s best interests are protected and against which duty bearers are held to account.

Legislation should be accompanied with policies, directives and guidance that support implementation and
regulation. Standards and agreed outcomes and impact to be achieved for children should also be set. Such a
regulatory framework importantly provides the necessary direction and authorization for personnel to
undertake the implementation of child protection mechanisms and services.

Legislation and accompanying policies should be particularly guided by the CRC and other relevant
international human rights and humanitarian laws and treaties. (please see Action Sheet 3 for reference
material). In addition, humanitarian and refugee treaties and conventions must be followed in emergency
situations

D. Prevention and Response Services
In order to effectively respond to the protection needs of children, a Child Protection System should contain
relevant institutions i.e. government departments and formal and non-formal agencies and organizations.
Within and across these institutions there should be appropriate functions that provide a range of support
services to children and their families.

A Department of Social Welfare may include for instance, an inter-connecting system of services
encompassing, social worker support, psychosocial programmes, services for family reunification and children
without parental care including fostering and adoption, child welfare benefit payments, support for children
with disabilities, early childhood development activities and ways by which to receive and make referrals of
children to and from other services etc. NOTE: UNHCR to PROVIDE EXAMPLE

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Diagram XX: Cooperation between services

Formal and non-formal institutional structures and services must inter-connect across sectors to ensure children receive the multiple elements of support they each require. So for instance, social workers, teachers, health workers, police, lawyers, community workers and the protocols, sub-structures and networks within which they work should all inter-relate and work in a complimentary and coordinated manner.

A Child Protection System encompasses a number of processes providing a continuum of care including those of identification, prevention and response.

1. **Identification** of risks should be an inherent component of prevention. There should also be mechanisms that identify high risk populations of children and individual cases of child abuse. (Please also refer above to Section B. Knowledge and Data).

2. **Prevention** activities are aimed at stopping an action or behavior. This includes promotion of positive actions and behavior in order to reduce risk factors and strengthen the protective environment around the child. Protective factors might include therefore, messaging to influence social attitudes and behavior as for instance around the issue of female genital mutilation or child marriage. It might also include providing resources and support to those affected, building on coping strategies and ensuing adherence of legislation.

3. **Response Services:**
In order to be able to support children who are at risk or have been subject to harm, there needs to be a range of different services available at different levels of intervention for groups as well as individual children(refer to Diagram X).
Within a Child Protection System, there is the requirement for processes that assess and where required, ensure the provision of support services for individual cases of suspected or, proven, child protection violations. This process is normally referred to as ‘case management’ which comprises a number of functions including:

- detection of a child at risk
- initial assessment followed by plans for referral where necessary to the appropriate persons/multi-disciplinary team for further verification
- supervision and oversight of each child’s case
- provision of services
- reintegaration into the family and community if the child has had to be temporarily removed for their safety or has been separated for other reasons
- ongoing monitoring of the child’s situation

Case Management

How do Community-based Child Protection initiatives fit in?

Community-based child protection initiatives should be an integral component of any Child Protection System. Community-based child protection initiatives have an important role to play in both emergency and development settings. Their ability to monitor protection violations, to assess children’s protection needs and to mobilise scarce community resources can make a real difference to children’s lives at the ‘grassroots’ level. Active community involvement in the protection of children is an important part of any national child protection system, as is the ability of the system to build upon existing ‘assets’ and positive practices at the community level. Their role becomes even more important where government is unable or unwilling to provide the resources or coordination even to support a minimum ‘package’ of child protection services at the local level. This is also applicable to situations where, due to their status, children of concern to UNHCR are excluded from or, have very restricted access to, from the formal child protection system. Wherever possible such groups should be integrated into the national child protection system with the aim of supporting not controlling them. Care needs to be taken though not to ‘overload’ such groups with responsibilities for which they have neither the resources nor the training to fulfill.

Further information on community based child protection mechanisms can be found in Annex XX.
A Systems Approach to Child Protection...
Case study in an industrialized context: Ukraine

Note: this page will be dedicated to illustrating a systems approach in an industrialized context by describing an actual programme in Ukraine. However, we welcome other examples that may also be appropriate.
**E. Capacities and Resources:**

**A skilled child protection workforce**
There are many professionals and volunteers who come into contact with children that have a role to play when children are at risk of or, have been subject to abuse and violence. These maybe government employees, or staff and volunteers of non-governmental agencies and community based child protection mechanisms for example. It is recognized that social workers have a key role to play but health workers, teachers, police, the judiciary, immigration staff, community workers and many others who interact with children also need to be equipped with the motivation, skills, knowledge and authority to identify and respond to child abuses or prevent them before they can occur.

Members of community based child protection mechanisms are particularly important to remember when consideration is being given to capacity building activities. So too, are the capacity of families to protect their children, an essential element of ensuring a protective environment.

**Adequate Financial Resourcing**
Financial resources need to be provided in ways that support agreed priorities and address the building or strengthening of child protection system including the provision of different services that children and their families receive. This requires for instance:

- Adequate national budget allocations across all child protection activities
- Costing and financial planning for all components of the child protection system
- Alerting donors to the importance of funding such a holistic approach to child protection funding
- Good budgetary management systems within institutions and organisations.
- Financial accountability

**F. Advocacy and Awareness Raising**

**Advocacy**
Advocacy is the use of evidence in order to influence and persuade decision makers to adopt legislation and policies and, to take actions to protect children. It aims to communicate the reality of their situation and should include the perspectives of children themselves in order to try and stop the violations against them and address gaps in the systems to protect them. Advocacy should lead to specific actions being taken including addressing and responding to protection concerns, adherence to international laws and standards and, accountability of perpetrators.

**Awareness Raising**
Strengthening the protective environment around children requires the involvement and support of the wider public that can play an active part in preventing child protection problems and identifying ‘at risk’ children. For instance, these may be local advocates for changing the practice of female genital mutilation or community condemnation of physical punishment of children.

Changes in attitudes and practices are fundamental to ensuring the protective environment. However, shifts required in cultural behavior and addressing knowledge, attitude and practices of individuals, families and communities can be complex. This often requires awareness raising campaigns to make the general public more alert to child protection issues, challenge social norms that condone harmful practices and, promote a better understanding of children’s rights as well as their development needs.

Raising awareness should also include giving importance and credence to the voice and participation of children themselves.

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An element of raising awareness and advocating for the cessation of violations is the action of reporting on the violations and protection concerns that effect children. This brings to the attention to duty bearers and other stakeholders, the situation of children they hold responsibility for. It also publicises the information that monitoring has revealed and can help in holding to account those have violated children’s protection rights.

Reporting allows for sharing of information amongst concerned actors and raises awareness at a local, national and international level of child protection concerns and prompts action. Reporting can be used as an effective advocacy tool.

In particular respect to children affected by armed conflict, a monitoring and reporting mechanism (MRM) has been established by the UN Security Council resolution 1612. The mechanism calls for the monitoring of six grave violations against children in situations of armed conflict committed by members of armed groups. The categories are:

- Killing or maiming of children
- Recruitment or use of children by armed forces
- Attacks against schools or hospitals
- Denial of humanitarian access for children
- Abduction of children
- Rape and other grave sexual abuse of children

As of March 2009, a total of ten countries have been mandated by the UN to report under this mechanism. Several other countries have also volunteered to monitor and report on these violations.

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A Systems Approach to Child Protection...
Case study in an urban context: Jordan

Note: this page will be dedicated to illustrating a systems approach in an urban context by describing an actual programme in Jordan. However, we welcome suggestions of other examples that may also be appropriate.
9. Core Principles

Throughout the processes of designing and implementing the key components of a Child Protection System it is vital to consider some core principles that relate to child protection and the overarching principle of ‘Do no harm’. This is especially because, child protection has the potential to do additional harm due to the sensitive issues it deals with as for example, exposing a child who has been the victim of abuse without then offering the necessary scope and quality of protection and support she or he requires.

In relation to this principle the following guidance should be considered:

- The guidance within the CRC on this matter which includes:
  
  i. In all actions concerning children, the **best interests** of the child shall be a primary consideration” (Article 3). This requires that any actions or decisions taken regarding an individual child must be in his or her best interest in terms of safety, long-term development and wellbeing. When taking decisions regarding the child therefore, different procedural safeguards need to be in place in order to identify which among the available options is in his or her best interests including:
    
    o Decision-makers with relevant areas of expertise
    o Full consideration of all relevant factors based on all available information in order to assess the best option to support children/a child.
    o UNHCR staff and partners reviewing the situation of a child in a comprehensive manner, ensuring that decisions are in line with the provisions and spirit of the CRC, and other relevant international instruments
  
  ii. Promotion of **equity and non-discrimination** i.e. maximise fairness in the availability and access to child protection support among affected populations and localities without discrimination of any kind, irrespective of the child’s or his or her parent’s or legal guardian’s race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status (Article 2).

  iii. Children shall be assured the **right to express their views freely** in all matters affecting them, their views being given due weight in accordance with the child’s age and level of maturity. (Article 12). This stresses the importance of knowing and understanding the child’s thoughts, feelings, and opinions in order to properly assess the impact of a proposed action on his or her welfare.

- Every child is treated with dignity and respect
- Participation of children, families and communities
- Competence of those providing child protection support
- Applied codes of conduct and confidentiality
- Programming based on up to date learning from best practice
- Application of cultural sensitivity
- Effective coordination to build on existing best practice, minimise duplication and address gaps
- Openness to scrutiny and evaluation
- Partnership between different professions, and different sectors
- Building on strengths and resiliencies of children and families as well as addressing difficulties
- Emphasis on prevention as well as response
- Full consideration of the cultural, social, political, and institutional context in which the child protection system operates

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CHAPTER THREE

10. The operational context of UNHCR’s child protection work

Key actions for UNHCR to consider when working within a Child Protection Systems approach is the
assessment, identification of capacity/gaps within that System that hinders the access of children of concern
to effective and appropriate child protection support. Decisions will also be influenced regarding appropriate
programme implementation by taking into consideration the particular context of each different operational
setting.

UNHCR works in many different operational contexts. When deciding how UNHCR will respond to the
protection risks that children of concern may be facing there will be a number of factors to be considered.
These include:

1. Whether the situation is one of:
   • emergency preparedness
   • the onset of an acute emergency
   • an ongoing acute emergency
   • a protracted emergency within a unstable environment
   • a protracted refugee situation within a stable environment

2. Whether there is a:
   • well functioning CP System to which children of concern have full access
   • well functioning CP system to which children of concern have restricted or no access
   • dysfunctional or undeveloped CP system to which children of concern have full access to what is
     available
   • dysfunctional or undeveloped CP system to which children of concern have restricted or no access

3. Of further consideration is:
   • whether or not the State is able and/or willing to take responsibility as a primary duty bearer to
     protect children and ensure the functioning of a CP system or,
   • whether the State is unable and/or unwilling to take responsibility as a primary duty bearer to protect
     children and ensure the functioning of a CP system
   • whether a UN agency or some other organisation has taken responsibility of coordination and
     oversight for the development/functioning of a CP system (wherever possible, in close association
     with State agencies).

Of Note
The process of emergency preparedness is recognised as being important especially as it can activate
immediate responses in the onset of an emergency contributing to the prevention and mitigation of CP
risks children may be faced with. Emergency Preparedness is considered in more depth in Annex XXX.

In any of the other contextual situations mentioned in list 1, there may be a combination of factors as listed in
points 2 and 3 above to also consider. For example: the onset of an acute emergency with a dysfunctional CP
system to which children of concern to UNHCR have restricted access and the State is not able to take prime
responsibility for governance of the CP system or; a stable protracted refugee situation with a well-
functioning CP system to which children of concern have full access and the State is taking prime
responsibility for governance of the CP system.

Depending on the combination of these factors where you are working, consideration should be given to the
following:
   • how to best advocate for inclusion of children of concern into any existing CP system

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• how practically, children of concern might be best integrated into any existing CP system and/or;
• if components of the CP system are missing, dysfunctional or inaccessible, to what degree will UNHCR either contribute to or, develop direct provision, of components of the CP system for children of concern whilst ensuring these will be integrated into any national or local system

Working in Partnership
In any context, in order to effectively realise any work concerning child protection, partnerships with other organisations is important to UNHCR. UNHCR continues to engage with a broad range of organizations including governments, the UN system, intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

UNHCR recognises the State as being a primary duty bearer with responsibility to develop a CP system that protects children from all forms of violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect. UNHCR will where possible therefore, endeavour to support the State in this role also in partnership with other UN agencies and national, local and international organisations. However, in situations where the State is unable or unwilling to take on this function, UNHCR will work closely with the recognised agency (or agencies) that have taken on the role of coordination and oversight to ensure the development and strengthening of all aspects of a CP system. It will be necessary for UNHCR staff to consider how they will undertake this cooperation and coordination at a national, local and community level.

UNHCR works in close partnership with other UN agencies. In particular, but not exclusively, UNHCR will continue to work particularly closely with UNICEF on concerns of child protection. The vision and approach of UNICEF is to ‘create a protective environment, where girls and boys are free from violence, exploitation, and unnecessary separation from family; and where laws, services, behaviours and practices minimize children’s vulnerability, address known risk factors, and strengthen children’s own resilience’. As a key component of its mandate, UNICEF is committed to ensuring special protection for the most disadvantaged children including those who are victims of war, disasters and all forms of violence and exploitation. It is usual for UNICEF to play a key role in the coordination of child protection working groups and to work in support of the State in order to strengthen child protection systems. UNHCR will therefore continue to advocate to UNICEF on behalf of children of concern to ensure they are considered in all developments of national and local components of a CP system.

UNHCR will also continue to work in partnership both in terms of coordination and implementation of services, with international, national and local NGOs. Approximately 75% of UNHCR’s NGO partners are local organizations who are able to bring an in-depth knowledge of CP concerns, have good local knowledge and are able to become quickly operational in emergency situations.

UNHCR Staffing Requirements:
For the emergency designate a UNHCR Information Focal Point. This person will be dedicated to taking meeting minutes, tracking down and and distributing key information. [This person or team acts as the information hub. Maintains and updates any Cluster website established for the emergency. Increasingly, websites and sms are highly useful tools in sharing information and keeping stakeholders informed. It is important that a specific workforce is designated to collecting, organizing and distributing the information, and that is not an ad hoc action by the protection team].

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A Systems Approach to Child Protection...
Case study in a camp context: Dadaab, Kenya

Note: this page will be dedicated to illustrating a systems approach in a camp context by describing an actual programme in Dadaab Camp, Kenya. However, we welcome suggestions of other examples that may also be appropriate.
11. Using the Matrix and Action Sheets

In any of the above mentioned scenarios, UNHCR will be concerned with different levels of activities. As mentioned previously in this Handbook, UNHCR will consider advocacy with National Authorities and/or other organizations to encourage the effective delivery of all components of a child protection system that strengthen the protective environment and ensure the protection rights of children of concern. UNHCR where needed and to varying degrees will, play a role in the strengthening of a child protection system that contributes to delivering the CP support children of concern. UNHCR will also consider situations where it may be necessary to provide direct provision of components of a CP system and linking them into any existing system. A Matrix and corresponding Action Sheets have been developed within this Handbook to assist with these processes.

Reading and using this entire Handbook in any given situation will not always be possible or necessary. As each context in which you are working is unique, it is not possible to provide an in-depth guide for each and every situation. Also remember that not any one agency can be expected to implement all the steps and activities outlined in the Handbook. This Handbook therefore, provides you with a brief overview of the way in which each core component of a Child Protection System functions. It will then be necessary for you to select those activities from the Matrix and corresponding Action Sheets that are most relevant to your own particular situation depending on a variety of factors including what already exists, what is needed, actions of others, competencies and resources available etc.

Section One of The Matrix therefore provides an at-a-glance outline of the actions that contribute to the functioning of a child protection system broken down into the 9 different components of a Child Protection System. Section Two of the Matrix provides guidance on working with other non-child focussed sectors.

There are corresponding Action Sheets to each of the six components of a Child Protection System and working with other sectors.

Each Action Sheet consists of:

- Objectives
- Background Information
- Key Actions
  - Assessment and analysis of current situation
  - Identification and implementation of actions that will improve CP support to children of concern to UNHCR
  - Monitoring and Evaluation of outcomes
- Linking activities to FOCUS
- Additional information
- Further Resources
1. **Background Information**

A Child Protection System is comprised of different components that together, inter-relate in order to build a protective environment around each and every child. One key element of a Child Protection System is good coordination and communication between all relevant agencies and those working to protect children (please refer to page XXX for more information on the different components of a Child Protection System).

The primary role of a Child Protection Coordination Group is to ensure strong coordination between all those responsible for developing and implementing all elements of a Child Protection System. The benefits of good coordination include:

- More accurate oversight to ensure all elements of the Child Protection System are being developed and delivered
- Comprehensive, integrated and complementary child protection mechanisms
- Clearly identified and shared roles, responsibilities, objectives and, the avoidance of duplication
- Shared standards to be attained
- Shared understanding and information exchange
- Agreed priority setting for the development of the Child Protection System
- Efficient linking of children with appropriate support
- Maximizing benefit from finite resources
- Shared reporting mechanisms
- Joint lobbying and advocacy
- Emergency preparedness planning

By identifying and supporting existing Child Protection Coordination Mechanisms (CPCM), UNHCR is likely to avoid duplication, use resources more efficiently, ensure a more comprehensive and coordinated approaches to CP issues in cooperation with other agencies and, improve chances of sustainability.

The coordination of Child Protection activities through a coordination mechanism might be realised in different ways. For example, there might be a specific child protection working group. However, it may also be that Child Protection issues are included in or, are a sub-group, of another form of Protection working
There may also be a number of child protection coordination sub-groups as for instance those on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Services (MHPSS), Juvenile Justice or Mines Action.

Government is always considered as holding the prime responsibility for overseeing any child protection coordination mechanism. In situations where the government is not able or willing to undertake this role, UNICEF or other government counterparts or non-governmental agencies may also take on this role.

Coordination mechanisms should function at different administrative/geographic levels i.e. national, provincial, local and community. There should also be strong linkages and good channels of communication and information sharing between each of these levels. The different levels should be mutually reinforcing in order to contribute to shared overall aims and objectives. Please see diagram X below:

Diagram X: Inter-linkages between levels of Child Protection Coordination Mechanisms

P & L CPCM – Provincial and Local Child Protection Coordination Mechanisms
C = Community Based Child Protection Coordination Mechanisms/Camp Based Child Protection Coordination Mechanisms

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There is no prescriptive list of those who participate in a child protection coordination mechanism and this will vary in each context. It is important however, that there is participation and representation of actors drawn from all aspects of society including government and other national authorities’ representatives, non-governmental and community based organisations, children and young people, family members and, the international community. It is also important that the range of sectors engaged in any aspect of a child protection system be included. This could for instance, include providers of social protection, justice, health, education, immigration services and national security as well as community welfare mechanisms and any other relevant services that directly and indirectly support and influence the protection of children.

It is also important that there is an inter-sectoral co-ordination mechanism (often led by Social Services) that allows for decision making and delivery of the most appropriate services for individual children affected. (please refer to Action Sheet 5 for further information).
2. **KEY ACTIONS**

Please note that it may not be possible or necessary to undertake all the Actions listed below. This list provides you with some guidance as to what to look for regarding a well functioning network of Child Protection Coordination Mechanisms. It may be necessary however, for you to select those Key Actions that are relevant and possible in your field context depending on the humanitarian context in which you are operating and such factors as time available, resources, the levels (i.e. national, provincial, local, camp) at which you are working etc.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Actions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Step One: Assessment and analysis of current situation</td>
<td>How do the Child Protection Coordination mechanisms in your area of operation function? Are there gaps that affect children of concern to UNHCR?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Map current external Child Protection Coordination Mechanisms (CPCMs) at different levels and inter-linkages between them. Levels to consider include: National</td>
<td>- Is there a national Child Protection Coordination Mechanisms (CPCM) with an oversight for strategic child protection concerns and the coherence of a national child protection system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Province (sub-national)</td>
<td>- Are there CPCMs at a province (sub-national), local and community levels in the area in which you are working</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local</td>
<td>- Are there ways to ensure that representation from CPCMs at provincial, local and community levels are fed into national level decision making and information sharing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community/Camp</td>
<td>- If you are working in a camp setting, is there a CPCM within the camp and if so, do members have linkages with and/or representation in, other community based, local, provincial and national level CPCMs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Way in which you are working</td>
<td>- Is there an appropriate government or other agency with responsibility for oversight and supervision of the different CPCMs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are there ways to ensure that representation from CPCMs at provincial, local and community levels are fed into national level decision making and information sharing</td>
<td>- Do CPCMs have multi-sectoral representation (social welfare, security, legal, health and education etc, see Matrix Section B for list of some of the sectors involved in child protection)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consider the following questions when reviewing the activities of any CPCM. Bear in mind how these activities may have an impact on the inclusion of children of concern to UNHCR in accessing child protection support:</td>
<td>- Are the opinions of girls and boys, families and community representatives represented in CPCMs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Has a Terms of Reference for the CPCM been developed and agreed upon</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Has the CPCM developed a set of shared objectives, goals and standard</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Has any assessment of all or some of the components of the child protection system been undertaken (see Action Sheet 2)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Have any joint surveys been undertaken to assess child protection concerns affecting the population</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Are there agreed programme priorities and promotion of joint CP programming and funding to strengthen all components of a national CP system as required</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Is there a functional division of labour amongst actors with clearly identified roles and responsibilities</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Has inter-agency cooperation on joint actions been initiated</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Are there mechanisms for sharing information on agency approaches, materials and lessons learned</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Are there any joint training initiatives</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Are there shared monitoring and evaluation and reporting mechanisms</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Analyse the information you have gathered consider the following:**

11. Has the CPCM developed a joint advocacy strategy (see Action Sheet X)  
12. Has the CPCM developed an Emergency Preparedness Plan

- Identify any gaps with regards the functioning of CPCMs. Begin with the level of assigned participation; e.g. National, Provincial, Local, Community
- Are the child protection issues of children of concern to UNHCR being included in the work of the CPCMs. If not what are the gaps.
- Consider how the work of the CPCMs do/could impact on the level and quality of CP support to children of concern to UNHCR

**Step Two. Identify, plan for and implement activities**

**How can UNHCR contribute to the strengthening of relevant CPCMs to effect better protection outcomes for children of concern?**

- Decide in which CPCMs it is most appropriate for UNHCR to participate in order to advocate for children of concern to UNHCR (e.g national, local, community etc.
- It is possible you will need to make some strategic choices as in some countries, there may actually be multiple CP working groups and sub-groups. Consider the capacity and resource available in the Office In which CPCMs should UNHCR participate
- Establish and activate linkages with the chosen Child Protection Coordination Mechanisms
- If there is a gap in coordination in the area in which you are operating which cannot be covered by an existing body/organisation give consideration to initiating a process to set up a coordination mechanism to address this gap. This role however, should only be undertaken by UNHCR after all other possibilities have been exhausted and only as an interim measure with a view to another national body/organisation taking over ownership and responsibility for this as soon as is practicable. UNHCR should first work with other relevant organisations to lobby and support the development a CP coordination mechanism to be led by if possible, by a suitable government department. If a government department cannot undertake this role, identify an organisation that has a child protection focus or child welfare focus to lead a coordination mechanism. Identify organisations to participate in CP coordination mechanisms that also have a child protection focus or child welfare focus. (Note: In some countries child protection is coordinated through other sectors such as health or education) (Please Refer to text Box 5 ‘Additional Information’ below)
- Identify in participation with CPCM members which gaps and weaknesses exist in the functioning of CPCMs
- Prioritise in participation with CPCM members, which actions would strengthen the coordination mechanism
- Jointly develop and where possible agree on inter-agency indicators for Child Protection work if not already established
- Identify which capacity building activities would increase the benefit to children of concern to UNHCR. Refer to the list of CPCM activities 1-12 listed in Step One above.
- Advocate within the CPCM for joint efforts to start/strengthen these activities.
- In cooperation with other CPCM members, decide, plan and budget for activities to which UNHCR can offer support i.e. technical, financial.
- Assess and identify which local, national and international partner organisations you will engage with to undertake these activities.
- If necessary, undertake resource mobilisation for CPCM strengthening activities.
- Determine which other sector working groups UNHCR can engage with in order to represent child protection concerns.

### Step Three: Monitoring and Evaluating Outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step Three: Monitoring and Evaluating Outcomes</th>
<th>How will you measure whether your chosen activities have contributed to improvements in the functioning of Child Protection Coordination Mechanisms?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cell 1</td>
<td><strong>Develop and where possible agree on inter-agency SMART indicators that your planned activities aim to achieve.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cell 2</td>
<td><strong>Develop a joint monitoring and evaluation plan to measure progress to achieving planned activities and their overall effectiveness.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cell 3</td>
<td><strong>Monitor and evaluate programmes in relation to planned activities and pre-defined indicators.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cell 4</td>
<td><strong>Disseminate results and lessons from monitoring and evaluation activities.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cell 5</td>
<td><strong>Use lessons learned in future planning exercises.</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. **Links to Focus**

This box will contain Objectives, Outputs and Indicators from FOCUS that relate to this component. This will help staff to better capture all aspects of child protection activities in their planning process.

4. **Additional Information**

**UNHCR’s roles and responsibilities in Coordination**

In humanitarian situations involving refugees, UNHCR holds the lead responsibility for their protection (Emergency Handbook, para 4. p102). Further guidance on how UNHCR will respond regards coordination responsibilities are set out in UNHCR’s Handbook for Emergencies (2007: Chapter 7. p102). In emergency settings, a child protection coordination group if not chaired by national CP authorities, may be led by UNICEF or a CP NGO. If a government body is not willing or able to undertake this role and, if UNICEF is not present, then UNHCR as protection lead would look to seek a means to addressing this gap. This maybe by fully incorporating child protection concerns into the Protection Working Group or, by assigning a lead agency to coordinate a child protection coordination mechanism. It is preferable however, that representatives of government departments should where possible and/or appropriate, always be a member of any CP coordination mechanism. As soon as conditions permit, responsibility for coordination should be transferred to the appropriate authorities.

In a humanitarian context in a situation that affects only IDPs, the UN Cluster Approach would become operational. This approach predetermines who the cluster lead will be. UNHCR is the cluster lead for protection in conflict generated IDPs, with UNICEF being the ‘area of responsibility’ for child protection within the larger protection cluster umbrella (REFERENCE AND MORE).

*IF need be can also mention that UNHCR is lead for Camp Management /coordination and emergency shelter for conflict IDPs. Also refer to GBV AoR*

In complex emergencies, involving refugees and IDP – so called refugee mixed caseloads – UNHCR will remain solely responsible for protection and assistance activities on behalf of/with regard to? Refugees. However, as the cluster lead on protection UNHCR remains accountable to the Emergency Relief Coordinator (ERC) that effective relief and coordination is being delivered **MONIKA – you said**

‘Let’s discuss this para – it is my understanding that HCR is only accountable to the ERC for the interventions related to IDPs not refugees?"
5. **Reference Materials**

Child Protection Working Group - Child Protection in Emergencies Co-ordinators Handbook:  
http://oneresponse.info/GlobalClusters/Protection/CP/Documents/handbookFINAL.pdf

Inter-Agency Standing Committee - Child Protection in Emergency Coordination Structures within the Cluster Approach:  
http://www.humanitarianreform.org/humanitarianreform/Portals/1/cluster%20approach%20page/clusters%20pages /Protection/Child%20Coordination%20within%20Cluster%20Approach_Survey%202008.pdf

Inter-Agency Standing Committee Guidelines on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergency Settings (Action Sheet 1.1. p.23:  

Inter-Agency Standing Committee - Guidance Note on Using the Cluster Approach to Strengthen Humanitarian Response:  
Objectives of this Action sheet:
• To identify child protection risks relevant to children of concern to UNHCR
• To identify how the Child Protection System in your field of operation functions

By means of:
  o Gaining information from existing assessments and mapping exercises
  o Deciding if the undertaking of further mapping and assessments exercises is necessary
  o Analysing and using data and information to inform the child protection activities UNHCR will undertake

Note: Please refer to pages X and X of this Handbook for guidance on using this Action Sheet.

1. Background Information
Understanding the current magnitude, characteristics, and trends of child protection concerns in any setting is a crucial first step in supporting and developing a child protection response through an effective Child Protection System. Information gathered will also help in identifying gaps in provision and informing evidence based policy making and planning.

Assessments will assist UNHCR in identifying the key child protection responses required to support children of concern and positioning its work alongside other actors. Gathering data can be used to develop a base line against which to set targets and measure achievements. The undertaking of assessments can even be seen as an intervention in itself, as it can initiate dialogue about child protection issues, promote public awareness and prompt discussion among key stakeholders at all levels of society.

This Action sheet prompts you to gather, analyse and use information regarding:
• What are the child protection concerns to be addressed
• What are the underlying causes of those concerns
• What is currently being done to address these concerns and by whom
• Information about children’s own coping and resiliency mechanisms
• Whether attitudes, customs and practices contribute to the ill-treatment of children

This Action Sheet also guides you in considering how and, how well, the different functions of a Child Protection System work to prevent and respond to child protection risks and violations including aspects of:
• Coordination mechanisms
• Law and Policy framework
• Prevention and Response Services (including Case Management Systems)
• Human capacities and financial resource mobilization
• Advocacy, reporting and awareness raising activities
Mapping exercises should provide such information as:

- Where are child protection agencies working
- Which child protection services can children and their families access in their locality
- Where are there child protection facilities i.e. children’s centres, child protection units, group living arrangements for children without parental care etc.

Please note that additional information on the different components of a Child Protection System can be found in Chapter Two above and, assessment of these components, in Action Sheets One to Six in this Handbook.

Age, Gender and Diversity Mainstreaming (AGDM) and Participatory Assessments:

FOR MONIKA – you said that { WE CAN ADD ONE SENTENCE HERE ON THE AGDM APPOACH }

Participatory assessments are an important strategy in implementing the AGDM approach. Through participatory assessments with the population of concern – in all its diversity – important information and data on child protection concerns and risks are collected, including GBV, birth registration and, unaccompanied and separated children (XX reference to website).

UNHCR particularly encourages the use of participatory approaches to assessment and planning. Please see Further Resources listed below and Annex XX for additional information on participatory methodology.
### 2. Key Actions

Please note that it may not be possible to undertake all the Actions listed below. The lists of Actions below are to provide some guidance as to what to consider when gathering information on child protection risks and violations. Some Actions also aim to assist you in understanding how, and how well, the Child Protection System in your field of operation functions. It will be necessary however, for you to select those Key Actions that are relevant and possible in your field context depending on the humanitarian context in which you are operating and such factors as time available, resources, the levels (i.e. national, provincial, local, camp) at which you are working etc. Regarding the functions of a Child Protection System, this is a matter that other agencies especially UNICEF, are also concerned with and may be able to provide you with more information.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Actions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Step One: Assessment of current situation</strong></td>
<td>What are the main child protection risks facing children? Does the existing Child Protection System work to address these concerns?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Taking into consideration what you may already know about the child protection risks facing children of concern to UNHCR, find out what assessments/mapping have been made relating to: | Identify different sources of information i.e. CPCMs, Government, UNICEF, OCHA, ICRC, NGOs etc in order to establish whether any child protection assessments or mapping have already been undertaken that might contain information relating to the protection of children of concern to UNHCR including:  
  - The types of child protection risks and violations affecting children of concern to UNHCR  
  - The prevalence of child protection violations  
  - Which children are particularly vulnerable - at risk or have been subject to abuse and violence  
  - The cause and effects of these risks and violations and who are the perpetrators  
  - Children's own resiliency and coping mechanisms |
| Type and prevalence of Child Protection risks and violations in the area you are working and factors affecting them | Determine if any mapping and assessment has already been undertaken relating to the functions and capacities of any existing child protection system components (please refer to pages X-XX) including:  
  - Coordination mechanisms (Please refer to Action Sheet One)  
  - Existing Law and Policy Framework - laws, policies, regulations and standards that strengthen the child protection environment (Please refer to Action Sheet Three)  
  - Available child protection services – and availability of these to children of concern to UNHCR (Please refer to Action Sheet Four)  
  - Existing service providers and their capacity  i.e. ministries, national, local and international agencies, community and camp organizations) |

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### Analyze the data and information you have gathered

- What are the staffing capacities for all elements of a child protection system including management and oversight as well as child protection service delivery services (Please refer to Action Sheet Five)
- What national and local monitoring, evaluation and child protection reporting mechanisms are there
- What current attitudes, customs and practices are contributing to children’s risks and are awareness raising activities being undertaken to change these attitudes (Please refer to Action Sheet Six)
- What advocacy work is being initiated in order to effect changes at policy level for children (Please refer to Action Sheet 6)
- Analyze what information you have been able to gather
- Identify what gaps you think there are in your information

### Step Two. Identify, plan for and implement activities

**How will you improve your understanding of child protection issues affecting children of concern to UNHCR?** How will you improve your understanding of how the Child Protection System in your field of operation functions?

**Decide what assessments and mapping exercises you will need to carry out**

- If no recent assessments have been undertaken, or, there are gaps in the information gathered, UNHCR should promote the idea of further assessments with, wherever possible, other national, local or community members of a Child Protection Coordination Mechanism (CPCM) (please refer to Action Sheet 1 for more information on CPCMs)
- Identity and plan UNHCR’s contribution to and, role in, these assessments/mapping exercises. The assessment process must be carefully planned and managed, including preparatory as well as field work whilst also bearing in mind any time bound need for such information. You will need to decide therefore whether you are at a stage where a rapid assessment in order to gather preliminary information is necessary or whether there is time and resources for a more in-depth study. (please see Reference Materials below for information on different assessment tools)
- Identify the information to be gathered and choose appropriate tools and methods to be used. Promote the use of tools that where possible are jointly developed in partnership with other members of CPCMs to ensure consistency and breadth of coverage
- Consider whether UNHCR should undertake specific aspects of this assessment within populations of concern to UNHCR with the assistance of partner organizations
- In partnership with members of the CP sector, promote the following in regards to mapping and assessments:
  - Use of participatory assessment methodology especially the inclusion of children (see Reference Materials below)
  - Utilization of assessment team members who have relevant skills and experience
  - Inter-sectoral mapping exercises involving any sector that has child protection responsibilities i.e. social welfare, health, psychosocial, security, justice and education sectors
  - Close attention being paid to ethical considerations when researching such a sensitive issue as child protection (see Additional Information below)
  - Sharing of preliminary findings, conclusions and recommendations with all the main stakeholders
  - Use of findings to assist child protection sector joint planning in order to build capacity of components of the child protection system, strengthen the protective environment, intensify prevention and, increase children’s access to child
Use the findings of assessments to plan child protection activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step Three: Monitoring Outcomes</th>
<th>How will you measure the implementation and outcomes achieved for your chosen activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| • Use the situational analysis as a resource and guide including the use of baseline data for developing a plan of action for UNHCR in order to support children of concern in the prevention of and, response to child protection violations.  
• Decide on joint actions with other members of a relevant Child Protection Coordination Mechanism to strengthen and support components of the Child Protection System. (Please also refer to the other Action Sheets in this Handbook for further information and guidance.) | • Develop and where possible agree on inter-agency SMART indicators that your planned activities aim to achieve.  
• Develop a joint monitoring and evaluation plan to measure progress to achieving planned activities and their overall effectiveness.  
• Monitor and evaluate programmes in relation to planned activities and pre-defined indicators.  
• Disseminate results and lessons from monitoring and evaluation activities.  
• Use lessons learned in future planning exercises. |

3. Link to RBF/FOCUS

This box will contain Objectives, Outputs and Indicators from FOCUS that relate to this component. This will help staff to better capture all aspects of child protection activities in their planning process.

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4. Additional Information

**Different categories of data:**

**Primary data** is new information collected directly i.e. through a health survey in a camp. **Secondary data** is information which has already been gathered and can be gained from other sources i.e. taking information from a World Bank or OCHA report and other surveys.

**Quantitative data** is numbers and statistics. Quantitative data is measurable. It usually answers such questions as:


**Qualitative data** is information that is difficult to measure, count, or express in numerical terms. It gathers information for example about attitudes, values, the nature of relationships among various groups in a community etc. It is information that usually helps understand some of the underlying reasons for a situation. It answers such questions as:

*why? how?*

**Triangulation:** A combination of quantitative and qualitative research can give the best results.

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**Research Tools:**

Below are just a few of the tools you might consider:

- Formal surveys and questionnaires
- Semi-structured interviews
- Population counts
- Direct Observation
- Key informant interviews
- Ranking exercises - confirming the values, categories, choices and priorities of a community
- Case studies
- Focus Group Discussions – gathers information on children’s ideas regarding factors that protect or constrain wellbeing
- Risk and resource Maps - provide information on the risks children face, their problems and anxieties and the resources they have access to
- Spider Diagrams - generates information about children’s social networks and the people that they may turn to for help with different situations/problems
- Body maps – generates information about children’s ideas about physical, psychological and emotional wellbeing and ill-being
- References to other sources of information on tools for data collection can be found at the bottom of this Action Sheet

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**Ethics and Principles of research:**

It is important to collect information in accordance with guiding principles for safety, confidentiality, respect, and non-discrimination with special attention paid to the sensitive nature of the issue of child protection.

- Refer to the ‘do no harm’ principle on page XX of the Manual
- Use techniques that will gain rather than alienate community and individual trust, incorporating cultural sensitivity and extreme care in discussing sensitive topics.
- Ensure anonymity and safety of all information sources.
- Do not place children in a situation when providing information that could them at further risk
- Use same-sex interviewers and interpreters.
- Ensure there is a system of referral and follow up for anyone who has been interviewed and identified as being in need of CP support

With regards data protection:

- Keep named records separate from all detailed records coded with a study number
- Substitute numerical codes to encrypt identifiable data
- Remove any pages which contain identifiable personal information (e.g. address, birth date)
- Record information from group discussions without identifying individual participants
- Ensure all team members - including drivers and translators - understand the critical importance of confidentiality
- On a daily basis, ensure all papers are stored in locked cabinets and that there is password protection for all computerised documents
- Limit access to identifiable data to key staff
- Written field notes should be destroyed if they have been typed up and dispose of all other records and notes in a way that they cannot be found
- Witnesses and survivors of violations should not be taped or photographed
- Think clearly about how the final information will be shared, both with agencies participating in the assessment and other interested parties.

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5. **Reference Materials**


UNHCR Handbook For Emergencies: [http://www.the-ecentre.net/resources/e_library/doc/han_Em.pdf](http://www.the-ecentre.net/resources/e_library/doc/han_Em.pdf)


UNHCR Project Planning in UNHCR - A Practical Guide on the Use of Objectives, Outputs and Indicators (2002) [http://www.unhcr.org/3c4595a64.html](http://www.unhcr.org/3c4595a64.html)


UNHCR Tool for Participatory Assessment in Operations (2006)

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UNHCR Manual on a Community Based Approach in UNHCR Operations (2008)
http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/462df4232.html
Reinforcing a Community Development Approach, UNHCR Executive Committee of the High Commissioner’s Programme, Standing Committee, EC/51/SC/CRP.6, 15 February 2001
http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/470629c82.html
Inter Agency Working Group on Children’s Participation – Minimum Standards for Consulting with Children:
http://www.iawgcp.org/publications.html
Save the Children – So you want to consult with children: A toolkit of good practice:
www.savethechildren.net/alliance/.../childconsult_toolkit_final.pdf

UNHCR Accountability Framework for Age, Gender and Diversity Mainstreaming and Targeted Actions

XXMONIKA I CANNOT FIND THE WEB PAGE TO REFERENCE THIS DOCUMENT YOU SENT ME?
### ACTION SHEET 3: Legal and Policy Framework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objectives of this Action sheet:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To ensure that a Child Protection Legal and Policy Framework for Child Protection functions in a manner that benefit children of concern to UNHCR by means of:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Assessing the effectiveness of any current Legal and Policy Framework for Child Protection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Defining how UNHCR will contribute to the planning and implementing of activities that strengthens a Legal and Policy Framework for Child Protection as necessary</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** Please refer to pages X and X of this Handbook for guidance on using this Action Sheet.

### 6. Background Information

This Action Sheet outlines a process of working in partnership with other members of Child Protection Coordination Mechanisms in order to assess and contribute where necessary, to the development of a child protection framework comprised of laws and policies that advance the goals of child protection.

Laws mandate what is to be done and who holds responsibility for oversight and delivery. Policies outline the principles, standards, regulations, methods and other factors necessary for achieving policy goals. Strategies and plans then detail how law and policy will be realised.

A Child Protection System therefore, should be founded on:

- National legislation that prohibits violations and mandates responsibility for preventative and responsive actions
- Accompanying policies to guide and support the actions authorized by legislation
- Operational standards and procedures that regulate for the oversight and implementation of laws and policy and appropriate monitoring and evaluation mechanisms

Such laws and ensuing policies should ideally be informed by international standards, humanitarian and other laws and treaties (see Reference Materials below). In addition, humanitarian and refugee treaties and conventions must be followed in emergency situations.

In the location in which you are working, there may be an array of laws and corresponding policies such as those that govern and regulate social welfare, justice, security, education, health, immigration etc. each contributing to the strengthening of the protective environment for children. These laws that govern the actions of different agencies responsible for child protection should be comprehensive and also complement rather than contradict one another. Policies likewise should offer clarity to the manner in which child protection duties are to be undertaken. Child protection actors should work together to develop and/or strengthen the Legal and Policy Framework as necessary in order to fully secure children’s rights to

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protection. Interventions may for instance, involve supporting the drafting of laws, creation of policies and development of operational standards and procedures.

Very often communities including affected populations have their own traditional, cultural and religious laws and practices. Some may be protective and some may be harmful. These also need to be identified and taken into consideration when undertaking work within a Child Protection System. Such customary laws and practices should be taken into account when mapping and reviewing the national Legal and Policy Framework as they may not have been incorporated into national laws and policies and/or might function side by side and may play a more direct role in child protection.
7. **KEY ACTIONS**

Please note that it may not be possible or necessary to undertake all the Actions listed below. This list provides you with some guidance as to what to look for regarding a well functioning Child Protection Legal and Policy Framework. It is recognised however, that the assessment of Laws and Policies can be a particularly challenging undertaking. Other agencies such as UNICEF and UNDP if they are present in the country may, have already been tasked with such an assessment and might be able to supply you with information. Select those Key Actions that are relevant and possible in your field context depending on the humanitarian situation in which you are operating and such factors as time available, resources, the levels (i.e. national, provincial, local, camp) at which you are working etc.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Actions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Step One: Assessment and analysis of current situation</strong></td>
<td>How do the CP coordination mechanisms in your area of operation function? Are there gaps that affect children of concern to UNHCR?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Map current legislation and policies that relate to Child Protection** | (Please refer to Action Sheet Two for further information on assessments of the Child Protection System) Identify different sources of information i.e. CPCMs, Government, UNICEF, OCHA, ICRC, NGOs etc in order to establish whether any previous assessments have already been undertaken that might contain information relating to a Child Protection Law and Policy Framework including:  
- Has the Government developed a national Child Protection Law and Policy Framework  
- Are there legal or policy provisions covering all child protection issues  
- Does the Government have a national Child Protection Policy statement  
- Has a national Child Protection Law/Children’s Act has been established that mandates for child protection service provision for children who are at risk or subject to violations (please see below in the ‘Additional Information’ section)  
- Has the government signed/ratified the CRC and other relevant international and regional conventions and instruments on child protection (see Reference Materials below)  
- Have laws and policies been developed and/or revised to bring them into compliance with the CRC and other international standards  
- Are there clear and agreed upon definitions of various forms of abuse, exploitation, neglect and violence  
- Does legislation allow for children of concern to have non discriminatory access to national child protection services  
- Is there consistency between laws, policies and plans across sectors  
- Have minimum standards been established for the professional qualification, training and ethical conduct of child protection workers  
- Have minimum standards been established that govern the quality of services provided by both government and non-governmental service providers |
| Analyse the information you have gathered | • Are there appropriate monitoring and evaluation mechanisms that measure progress and attainment of goals as set down in a Legal and Policy Framework  
• Are child protection service providers (e.g. NGOs/children’s institutions) licensed and regulated  
• Are child protection service providers regularly inspected and assessed  
• Is there any independent monitoring and reporting of how the child protection system is performing  
• Are structures in place for children to participate in the development of laws, policies and plans i.e. a children’s parliament  
• Have traditional, cultural, religious and customary laws in the community been identified and incorporated in national law or do they exist in a parallel structure |
| --- | --- |
| Step Two. Identify, plan for and implement activities | How can UNHCR contribute to the strengthening of a Legal and Policy Framework to effect better protection outcomes for children of concern?  
• If the analysis of information gathered is insufficient identify ways of gathering additional data (please refer to Action Sheet Two)  
• If analysis of information gathered identifies gaps or inconsistencies in legislation and policy relating to Child Protection, UNHCR should wherever possible, advocate with other national, local or community members of a Child Protection Coordination Mechanism (CPCM) to:  
  o Address this situation by planning joint activities to produce/improve a National Child Protection Legal and Policy Framework  
  o Determine joint actions needed to develop/strengthen the different legislation and corresponding policy, standards and regulations that ensure a comprehensive protective environment for children (see Additional Information and Reference Materials below)  
  o Jointly assist in the development of Child Protection indicators  
  o Determine joint actions needed to strengthen where necessary, child protection monitoring and evaluation mechanisms  
  o Ensure that customary laws and traditions are understood and acknowledged in programme planning and activate awareness raising programmes in order to change those that threaten the child’s protective environment  
  o Promote the adoption of international laws and conventions including humanitarian law with particular reference to the CRC and other instruments concerning Child Protection (please refer to Reference Materials below)  
  o Activate methods that ensure the participation of children and families in informing the development of laws and policies  
• Advocate with all those necessary for the non-discriminatory inclusion of children of concern in all aspects of national law and policy that protects children |
| Step Three: Monitoring and Evaluating Outcomes | How will you measure whether your chosen activities have contributed to improvements in the functioning of a Child Protection Legal and Policy Framework?  
• Develop and where possible agree on inter-agency SMART indicators that your planned activities aim to achieve  
• Develop a joint monitoring and evaluation plan to measure progress to achieving planned activities and their overall effectiveness  
• Monitor and evaluate programmes in relation to planned activities and pre-defined indicators  
• Disseminate results and lessons from monitoring and evaluation activities  
• Use lessons learned in future planning exercises |
8. Links to Focus

This box will contain Objectives, Outputs and Indicators from FOCUS that relate to this component. This will help staff to better capture all aspects of child protection activities in their planning process.
9. **Additional Information**

**Some additional factors to consider when assessing a Child Protection Legal and Policy Framework**

**Provision of Child Protection Services**

Has a national child protection law been enacted to establish the framework for the provision of child protection services that establishes clear procedures and accountabilities for reporting, assessment and intervention in cases of children at risk and children who have experienced child protection violations. If so does it:

- Identify responsibilities for professionals working with children (health professionals, teachers, child care workers, etc) for reporting suspected incidents of child protection violations
- Specify duties and powers of social welfare agencies and others to prevent child protection violation, to support children at risk, and to take protective measures where necessary.
- Promote a coordinated and multidisciplinary response to children in need of protection.
- Specify a variety of supportive and protective interventions that may be used (family supervision orders, respite care, parental education, temporary foster or other alternative care, emergency shelter, counselling, therapeutic services, financial assistance, income generation support, education/vocational training assistance etc), and procedures and criteria for applying those interventions.
- Require the best interests of the child be the paramount consideration in any decision affecting the child, and provide guidelines for the best interest determination
- Require that the views of the child be sought and respected in any decision about intervention or support services.

**Family and Child Separation:**

Are there regulations / minimum standards governing the operation of alternative care options such as children’s institutions, fostering and adoption? Do they ensure that:

- It prohibits separation of a child from their family against their will except by order of a competent authority, and when necessary in the best interests of the child
- Defines the legal obligations to provide alternative care for children without parental care or who cannot in their best interest be permitted to remain in parental care
- Defines the forms of alternative care to be provided (foster care, kinship care, guardianship, adoption and institutional care)
- There are legal limitations on the ability of parents to voluntarily give up their parental responsibilities (e.g. by admitting a child to an orphanage or other institution).
- The law designates a competent authority (National Child Protection Agency or a court) to make determinations about when a child can be separated from his/her parents, and stipulates grounds and procedures for doing so. These decisions are subject to judicial review.
- The law requires that priority be given to placement of a separated child with members of their wider family, with appropriate support where necessary. Institutionalisation is explicitly a measure of last resort.
- The law requires that the best interests of the child be the primary consideration in making decisions about alternative care, and that due regard must be paid to the desirability of continuity in a child’s upbringing and to the child’s ethnic, religious, cultural and linguistic background.

Continued next page...
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- The law requires that the child’s views be taken into consideration in any decision made about alternative care, and that those views be given due weight in accordance with the child’s age and maturity.
- The law requires that all children in out-of-home care (foster care, adoption, institutions, etc) are subject to a regular review of that placement.
- The law give children separated from their parents the right to maintain personal relations and direct contact with both parents on a regular basis, except if it is contrary to the child’s best interests.
- Standards of care have been established for residential care facilities and other forms of alternative care (including fostering, guardianship, etc).
- The law require that all adoptions be authorized only by a competent authority
- Authorities must be satisfied that the adoption is permissible in view of the child’s status and that all consents required by law have been given and where consent is required, the law requires that counselling be provided
- Due regard must be paid to preservation of the child’s identity and the desirability of continuity in the child’s background and to the child’s ethnic, religious, cultural and linguistic background

**The Justice System**

- Do children have a right to legal representation, legal aid, access to justice, services and protection within all sectors of the justice system
- Are there child victim and child witness sensitive measures at all stages of the criminal justice process (the investigative, pre-trial, trial and post-trial stages)
- Is there a child friendly legal system and provision of Family courts
- Is there a Juvenile Justice system operating in a child friendly environment and using language that is understandable incorporating all aspects pertaining to appropriate representation, promotion of diversion programmes and restorative justice with sentencing used as a last resort etc.
10. Reference Materials

International Humanitarian Law and Conventions

Rights of the Child and Child Protection

- *Declaration on Social and Legal Principles relating to the Protection and Welfare of Children* (1986)
- *Stockholm Declaration and Agenda for Action* (1996)
- *Yokohama Global Commitment* (2001)

International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966) Article 10(3)


Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War: [http://www.icrc.org/ihl.nsf/385ec082b509e76c41256739003e636d/6756482d86146898c125641e004aa3c5](http://www.icrc.org/ihl.nsf/385ec082b509e76c41256739003e636d/6756482d86146898c125641e004aa3c5)


Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949 and relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts (Protocol I): [http://www.icrc.org/ihl.nsf/7c4d08d9b287a42141256739003e636b/f6c8b9fee14a77fde125641e0052b079](http://www.icrc.org/ihl.nsf/7c4d08d9b287a42141256739003e636b/f6c8b9fee14a77fde125641e0052b079)

Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949 and relating to the Protection of Victims of Non-International Armed Conflicts (Protocol II): [http://www.icrc.org/ihl.nsf/7c4d08d9b287a42141256739003e636b/d67c3971b3ff1c10c125641e0052b545](http://www.icrc.org/ihl.nsf/7c4d08d9b287a42141256739003e636b/d67c3971b3ff1c10c125641e0052b545)

Abduction


Children Associated with Armed Groups and Forces

- *Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court*

December 1, 2010
United Nations Security Council Resolutions: Resolution 1612 (2005); Resolution 1539 (2004); Resolution 1460 (2003); Resolution 1379 (2001); Resolution 1314 (2000); Resolution 1261 (1999)

Child Labour
ILO Convention 182 on Worst Forms of Child Labour (1999)
ILO Convention 138 on Minimum Age for Workers (1973)

Child Marriage
Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) Article 16
Convention on Consent to Marriage, Minimum Age for Marriage and Registration of Marriages (1962)
Recommendation on Consent to Marriage, Minimum Age for Marriage and Registration of Marriages (1965)

Children without Parental Care
http://www.hcch.net/index_en.php?act=conventions.text&cid=69

Disabilities

Discrimination

Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting
The Cairo Declaration for the Elimination of Female Genital Mutilation (2003)

Juvenile Justice
United Nations Rules for the Protection of Juveniles Deprived of their Liberty or 'JDLs' (1990)
United Nations Guidelines For the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency or 'The Riyadh Guidelines' (1990)

December 1, 2010
Children’s Rights in Juvenile Justice, CRC General Comment No. 10 (2007)

Landmines and Explosive Remnants of War
Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction or ‘Mine Ban Convention’ (1997)
Further UN General Assembly Resolutions and Decisions on Disarmament

Refugee Children
Convention relating to the Status of Refugees (1951)
Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees (1966)
Separated and Unaccompanied Children
Treatment of Unaccompanied and Separated Children outside their Country of Origin, General Comment no. 6 to the CRC (2005)

Physical Abuse
The right of the child to protection from corporal punishment and other cruel or degrading forms of punishment.
General Comment No. 8 to the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC/C/GC/8) (2006)

Racial Discrimination
Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (1965)
Convention against Discrimination in Education (1960)

Sexual Exploitation

Small Arms and Light Weapons
The illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects, UN General Assembly Resolution A/RES/60/81 (2006)
Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be
**Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects** or 'Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons' (1980)

Further **UN General Assembly Resolutions and Decisions on Disarmament**

**Street Children**

**The Plight of Street Children**, UN General Assembly Resolution 49/212 (1994)

**Torture**

Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, 1984

[http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/cat.htm](http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/cat.htm)

Optional protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, 2002

[http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/cat-one.htm](http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/cat-one.htm)

**Trafficking and abduction**

**Traffic in Women and Girls**, UN General Assembly Resolution (2001)


**Supplementary Convention on the Abolition of Slavery, the Slave Trade and Institutions and Practices Similar to Slavery** (1956)

**Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction** (1980)


**OTHER MATERIALS**

**Standard setting**

TearFund – Setting the Standards: A common Approach to Child Protection For NGOs

OBJECTIVES OF THIS ACTION SHEET:

- To ensure that children of concern to UNHCR have access to relevant quality child protection services by means of:
  - Gaining information from existing assessments and mapping of child protection services
  - Analyzing and using information gathered to inform UNHCR as to the service provision children of concern required
  - Identify ways to increase availability and access to Child Protection services

NOTE: Please refer to pages X and X of this Handbook for guidance on using this Action Sheet.

1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

To support children who are at risk of or, have been subject to, child protection violations, there needs to be non-discriminatory access to a range of child protection services. (Please refer to pages X – XX for a summary of different child protection issues that children of concern to UNHCR may be at risk of or, have been subject to, thereby requiring prevention and support services).

UNHCR is already providing and/or supporting access to, a range of child protection services within its fields of operation. This Action Sheet particularly promotes further, the gaining of access to and use of services wherever possible, within the National Child Protection System be they provided by governmental agencies, NGOs or community organisations.

A Child Protection System should make services available that provide a continuum of care including those of identification, prevention and response as outlined in the table below:

**Table X: Continuum of Care**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Identification</th>
<th>Prevention</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Of the possible risks to children</td>
<td>Prevention of violations occurring</td>
<td>Services and activities that promote the prevention of abuse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Of children who have been subject to harm</td>
<td>Preventing re-occurrence of violations to children who have already been subject to abuse</td>
<td>Services that support children who have been subject to abuse and help to mitigate effects</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A. **Identification** - it is important to identify high risk populations of children (please also refer above to Action Sheet Two) as well as individual cases of those children who are being subjected to violations.

B. **Prevention measures** are aimed at stopping at mitigating risks and stopping violations. They can be directed at three different levels:

- Primary prevention is aimed at the total population in order to stop child protection violations before they occur and might include, for example, parent education and support programs, access to social support
services and resources, public awareness campaigns, instigation of child protection protocols within service delivery agencies and work with possible violators i.e. armed groups.

- Secondary prevention activities focus more on high risk populations and might include more directed awareness and education programs, intensive parental and community support, immediate referral and access to welfare services and resources, work with and, holding to account of, such perpetrators as armed groups.
- Tertiary prevention focuses on children where violations are already occurring. There is a need to prevent re-occurrence. This would require more intense support and service provision as necessary. It may include the temporary movement of the child to a place of safety if this was in the best interest of the child.

C. Response Services:
In order to be able to support children who are at risk or have been subject to child protection violations, there needs to be a range of different services. These services should be available for groups as well as individual children.

Examples of primary level services might include for instance the development of appropriate legislation and social protection policies, regulation of services, monitoring of those who might harm children and access for children and families to a range of social welfare, health and education programmes.

Examples of secondary level services for the most vulnerable children considered in need of more direct support might include a range of social welfare, education and legal services. For instance, services that intensively monitors and reports those who are prepared to violate the protection rights of children. In a camp situation for instance, this could be ensuring comprehensive and timely access to appropriate shelter, food, health, water and sanitation as well as education, counselling, legal advice and other services that offer support to the most vulnerable families.

Examples of tertiary level of services for children who have already been exposed to harm could include intensive support through social work and health, psychosocial and judicial services. Tertiary services will be required for children who, for their own safety, have had to be temporarily placed in alternative care outside of the family setting (but only as a last resort if it is in their best interest). In addition, tracing, reintegration and reunification services for children who have been separated so that they may return to their families and communities may be necessary. When deciding on appropriate support services for individual children who are at serious risk or are being abused, there is a need for a process often referred to as ‘child protection case management’, which comprises a number of functions including:
- Initial identification of a child at risk
- Assessment of the child’s situation by members of relevant
- If confirmation of risk or violation, a plan for referral to the appropriate services
- Supervision and oversight of each child’s case
- Reintegration into the family and community if the child has had to be temporarily removed for their safety or has been separated for other reasons
- Ongoing monitoring of the child’s situation

All of these actions should be undertaken considering one of the primary principles of the CRC – the best interest of the child. Please refer to ‘Additional Information’ and ‘Reference Materials’ sections below for further information on UNHCR Guidelines on Formal Determination of the Best Interests of the Child – a process that incorporates the steps of case management for individual children of concern.

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Structures of service providers

Service providers include government ministries and non-governmental organisations. In order to provide efficient and effective services there needs to be the appropriate and effective structures and processes within these bodies. To be able to assess whether child protection services are being most effectively provided, it is necessary to understand the functioning and organisational abilities of these bodies. Furthermore, in order that children receive the multiple elements of support they may require, social workers, teachers, health workers, police, lawyers, community workers and the sub-systems within which they work should all work together in a complimentary and coordinated manner (see diagram X below). Particularly at a local level, coordination mechanisms should have a strong focus on bringing child protection actors together to assess and assign responsibility for child protection activities in the locality (also refer to Action Sheet 1 for further discussion of coordination mechanisms).

DIAGRAM XX: Inter-sectoral service response to child protection concerns
2. Key Actions

Please note that it may not be possible or necessary to undertake all the Actions listed below. This information above describes what ideally there would be in place. The list below is to provide you with some guidance as to what to look for when assessing and planning for child protection services. It will be necessary however, for you to select those Key Actions that are relevant and possible in your field context depending on the humanitarian context you are operating in and such factors as time available, resources, the levels (i.e. national, provincial, local, camp) at which you are working etc.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Actions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Step One: Assessment of current situation</strong></td>
<td><strong>Do existing services address the child protection risks and violations affecting children on concern to UNHCR? Do children of concern have access to these services</strong>&lt;br&gt;(Please refer to Action Sheet Two for information on assessment and mapping)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Step Two. Identify, plan for and implement activities</strong></td>
<td><strong>How will you improve the access to relevant quality services for children of concern to UNHCR?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decide what services or improvement in service provision and access are required</td>
<td>- If the analysis of information gathered is insufficient identify ways of gathering additional data (please refer to Action Sheet Two)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plan UNHCR’s contribution to implementing improvements</td>
<td>If the analysis of information gathered identifies lack of access for children of concern to suitable and quality Child Protection services, UNHCR should:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Advocate with government agencies and other service providers on behalf of children of concern to UNHCR for their access to available services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Promote actions to strengthen/develop service provision with, wherever possible, other national, local or community members of a child protection coordination mechanism (CPCM) (please refer to Action Sheet 1 for more information on CPCMs) (please see Additional Information and Resource Materials boxes below for suggested prevention and response services)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- With consideration to the range of services that will mitigate risks and respond to any violations affecting children of concern to UNHCR, identity and plan UNHCR’s contribution to and, role in, strengthening current services including those offered by</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o NGOs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Community/Camp based organisations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- If government or other agencies are not able or willing to provide services to children of concern, identify appropriate partners who can provide the support to children and their families required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Activate a UNHCR BID system (see below in Further Information for guidance on BID and Reference Materials). The BID</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
panel should involve representatives from the national Child Protection System (see BID Guidelines). This will ensure that informed decisions can be made jointly regarding services available and in a manner that best involves and promotes access to the national system.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step Three: Monitoring Outcomes</th>
<th>How will you measure whether the access to relevant quality services for children of concern to UNHCR has improved?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Develop SMART indicators and ways to measure whether planned activities have achieved the planned outcomes/impact | • Develop and where possible agree on inter-agency SMART indicators that your planned activities aim to achieve  
• Develop a joint monitoring and evaluation plan to measure progress to achieving planned activities and their overall effectiveness  
• Monitor and evaluate programmes in relation to planned activities and pre-defined indicators  
• Disseminate results and lessons from monitoring and evaluation activities  
• Use lessons learned in future planning exercises |

3. Link to RBF/FOCUS

This box will contain Objectives, Outputs and Indicators from FOCUS that relate to this component. This will help staff to better capture all aspects of child protection activities in their planning process.
4. **Additional Information**

Below is a suggested but, not exclusive, list of actions and services to prevent and respond to cases of child abuse including:

**Prevention Activities**
- Registration
- Access to education and health services
- Legal documentation
- Family counselling
- Accessible, confidential, safe and child friendly reporting mechanisms
- Awareness raising to change attitudes and bad practices
- Providing children with awareness of their protection rights and ways to protect themselves
- Drop-in centres/Child-friendly spaces/Children’s Centres
- Reporting and holding perpetrators to account
- Social welfare programmes
- Home visits
- Income generation schemes
- Sexual health education
- Peace education
- Advocating and working with perpetrators as for instance armed groups
- Use of child protection protocols in service providing agencies i.e. schools, health centres and care institutions
- Raised awareness of particularly vulnerable children including those with disabilities, separated children, children without parental care, in institutions, on the streets, working, used in the sex industry, in detention, child refugees, child migrants and those internally displaced
- Elimination of gender discrimination
- Inspection and monitoring of places of employment
- Monitoring of supply and demand of weapons, alcohol and drugs
- Safe environmental spaces and routes for children to use
- Free and accessible systems of compulsory birth registration
- Activities to reduce domestic violence
- Systems of monitoring and reporting actions of (possible) perpetrators
- Awareness raising activities to prevent child and family separation

**Response Services**
- Accessible, confidential, safe and child friendly reporting mechanisms
- Social worker support
- Case Management Systems (please refer to Annex XX for further information)
- Psychosocial counselling
- Family counselling
- Child help lines
- Child friendly police units
- Health services
- Legal supports
- Professionally staffed Family Courts and child friendly defence lawyer services
- Child centred juvenile justice system that utilises restorative mechanisms and use deprivation of liberty as a measure of last resort and for the shortest period of time
- Prosecution of those that violate
- Safe and caring emergency/interim/durable placement services for children
- Reintegration services for children who have been separated from family/community
- Family tracing & reunification services
- Better parenting programmes
- Demobilisation, disarmament and rehabilitation (DDR) programmes for children used by armed forces
- Removal from hazardous or the worst forms of labour
- Mines awareness education
- Access to education
- Life skills and vocational training for older children
Extracts from UNHCR’s Guidelines on Formal Determination of the Best Interests of the Child (BID)

The formal Best Interests Determination (BID) is a process that is conducted for certain children of concern to UNHCR, whereby a decision-maker is required to weigh and balance all the relevant factors of a particular case so that a comprehensive decision can be made that best protects the rights of children.

Stage 1 – Registration and assessment (UNHCR’s main tools here are ProGress and the Heightened Risk Identification Tool)

Heightened Risk Identification Tool:
All children involved should be registered. This information collection can be operationalized in tools such as play centre registration forms, home visit assessments, hygiene promotion or clinic attendance registers. These tools have a twofold function: 1. to collect basic data on the child and 2. to visually assess the child’s exposure to risk. In all assessments of children, risk assessments should be an essential activity to ensure the urgency of the case is determined. Categorisation of the type of protection problems will assist with providing a clear picture at the information recording stage. Information concerning the particular problem should be collected from the child, parents and other relevant parties (e.g. community members, other organisations or Government actors involved).

Stage 2 – Case planning

Basic System: Information concerning the child’s family and living situation should be recorded in a basic child file. Problems and the needs of the child and family should be recorded. The action taken regarding child and family should be recorded and the necessary steps, along with a timeline for these to be achieved. There should be clear information from the worker responsible for following up the case. Information should be stored and monitored by a relevant manager.

Advanced System: This phase of case management is where trained staff will work more closely with the child and with identified resources. Often this process reveals more complex issues and requires more detailed responses. All relevant information should be detailed in a case file, preferably electronically. Cases will be classified according to their problem type and assessment of risk. This information will be used to allocate cases to relevant and suitably skilled staff; less serious cases will be handled by staff more centrally located with communities (play centre staff or clinic staff), while the more serious or complex cases will be allocated to more specialist staff (social workers, community health supervisors, psychologists, etc.) in consultation with community based staff.

All cases in this system must be brought to case conferences, to enable planning of necessary actions and to facilitate discussion and monitoring within a team context. All actions must be recorded and a review date set to assess progress.
2.a Case mapping with clear goals and exit strategies

Case mapping must involve the child, parents, Government services and community members. All of these actors will have an expectation and hold different levels of responsibility to the child. The child must be made active in their own protection and UNHCR/partner staff should encourage and make sure this happens. Regular case management meetings with these actors are central to this, matched to goal driven case mapping. A simple method of achieving case mapping is to clearly identify the issue(s) and establish a clear goal to be achieved.

2.b Case conferences

Case conferences are a key process in the success of case management. The case conference is a time for all staff to share their cases and identified problems. This allows for staff to hear about similar problems being faced and also to identify and share resources and solutions. Senior management should be present at these meetings. Not only to support decision making, but also to gain a clear picture on the progress of the cases and the child protection issues being identified by the project. This conference can give managers a clear picture of UNHCR’s/partner’s relationship with the community and the general progress of the project.

Stage 3 – Review and closure

The basis of a sound case management system is the requirement that cases are regularly reviewed to ensure that services are delivered within a timely manner.

**Basic System**: There should be a basic tool to monitor deadlines along with information to ascertain whether planned actions and desired outcomes have been achieved. The review could be conducted at team meetings or through individual follow-up with individual workers. It is also important that high risk cases are regularly reviewed. Only once case goals have been achieved or the case is inactive because one cannot assist further, the case should either be referred or closed.

**Advanced System**: As a protection project moves from its initial emergency response it is likely more ‘hidden’ problems or chronic issues of child protection will emerge. This requires a more detailed monitoring process and information recording. There is also a need for greater supervision from specialist protection staff and/or project management. Consideration should be given to facilitating and mobilizing child and community intervention and/or developing joint strategies with INGO/NGO or Government actors.
5. Reference Materials

UNHCR Guidelines on Formal Determination of the Best Interests of the Child

Child Labour
Save the Children – Children and Work: www.savethechildren.net/alliance/resources/child_wk.pdf

Child Protection in Emergencies
Save the Children- Child Protection in Emergencies, Priorities, Principles and Practices
ECPAT – Protecting Children from Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Violence in Disaster and Emergency Situations:
http://www.ecpat.net/Publications/Care_Protection/Protecting_Children_from_CSEC_in%20Disaster_ENG.pdf
http://www.unicef.org/publications/index_4401.html

Children and armed groups
Save the Children-Stolen Futures: The reintegration of children affected by armed conflict:
Fighting Back: Child and community-led strategies to avoid children's recruitment into armed forces and groups in
Children — Not Soldiers: Guidelines for working with child soldiers and children associated with fighting force:

Children’s Centres
CCF - Starting Up Child Centres Spaces in Emergencies: A Field Manual
UNICEF – A Practical Guide for Developing Child Friendly Spaces: www.psychosocialnetwork.net

Children without Parental Care
UNICEF position on inter-country Adoption: http://www.unicef.org/media/media_41918.html

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Keeping Children Out of Harmful Institutions: Why we should be investing in family-based care: http://www.savethechildren.org.uk/en/54_9678.htm

**Early Marriage**

**Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting**

**Gender-based violence**
ECPAT International. Website: http://www.ecpat.net
ECPAT - Protecting Children from Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Violence in Disaster and Emergency Situations: http://www.ecpat.net/eng/pdf/Protecting_Children_from_CSEC_in_Disaster.pdf

**Juvenile Justice**
UN Guidance Note of the Secretary General: UN Approach to Justice for Children http://www.unrol.org/files/Rol_Guidance_Note_UN_Approach_Justice_for_Children_FINAL.pdf

**Mental Health and Psychosocial Support**
The Psychosocial Group- Considerations in Planning Psychosocial Programmes

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Prevention
ECPAT- Prevention Programme for Children and Families at Risk:

Sexual Exploitation
UNICEF- Profiting from Abuse: An investigation into the sexual exploitation of children:
http://www.unicef.org/publications/index_5623.html
UNICEF – Combating Child Trafficking: Handbook for parliamentarians:
http://www.unicef.org/publications/index_33882.html
Save the Children’s Policy on Protecting Children from Sexual Abuse and Exploitation:
http://www.savethechildren.net/alliance/resources/childabuse1003eng.pdf

Street living and working Children
Save the Children - Street and Working Children: A practical guide to setting up and running a project for homeless or working children: http://www.savethechildren.org.uk/en/54_2357.htm

Unaccompanied and Separated Children
UNHCR Refugee Children: Guidelines on Protection and Care:
http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/search?page=search&docid=3b84c6c67&query
http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/search?page=search&docid=3bc6ec457&query
http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/search?page=search&docid=3d4f91cf4&query
http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/search?page=search&docid=4aa76b949&query
Save the Children - Whose Children? Separated Children’s Protection and Participation in Emergencies : Enabling children to have a voice in the development of policy and good practice.

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Trafficking

UXO and use of light arms and small weapons
UNICEF – No Guns Please we are Children: http://www.unicef.org/publications/index_4420.html

Violence
Challenging Violence against Children: A handbook for NGOs working on follow-up to the UN Study: http://www.savethechildren.org.uk/en/54_5679.htm
ACTION SHEET 5: Capacities – Human and Financial

Objectives of this Action sheet:
- To ensure the skills and knowledge of those responsible for all aspects of a child protection system— including service delivery—allow for the best child protection practices possible by means of:
  - Gaining information from existing assessments that assess capacities of child protection actors
  - Deciding if the undertaking of further information gathering is necessary
  - Analysing and using data and information to inform the activities UNHCR will undertake to support the building of capacities
- To seek increased funding for child protection activities

Note: Please refer to pages X and X of this Handbook for guidance on using this Action Sheet.

1. Background Information

Human Resources

In reference to the principal of ‘do no harm’, so we should be concerned with the work of staff and volunteers who are only partially equipped to undertake the sensitive and challenging work of child protection. Investment in the appropriate technical abilities and knowledge of those who deliver front line child protection services is essential. However, it is also important to consider the competencies of those responsible for the development, regulation and management of the Child Protection System and their significant role in supporting and improving programming for children. It may be that Trainers in child protection are themselves in need of improved skills and abilities.

When addressing issues of capacity building, it is workers and volunteers in all sectors that contribute to child protection who should be considered. Social workers, police, members of health, education, security and immigration services, the judiciary etc. all come into daily contact with children who may be at risk. These and other staff who interact and hold responsibilities for children should all be equipped with the relevant skills and knowledge to identify and respond to child protection violations. Likewise, it is important to support the raising of abilities where necessary of members of non-governmental organisations and community based child protection mechanisms (please refer to Annex X for further information on community based child protection mechanisms).

A range of methods could be employed by which enhancement of technical capacities and skills might be achieved. For instance, it could be through working to improve academic courses offered by such educational establishments as universities and technical colleges. It might be the offer of on-the-job training or perhaps a combination of extra curricula courses and at work technical supervision.

Training needed might be specifically around the technical skills applicable to certain professional sectors. It may also cover issues relevant to all co-workers as for instance:
- Child rights
- Child protection issues

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• Shared processes, regulations and tools
• Shared protocols for joint working and information sharing
• Ethics
• Standards
• Participatory methodology
• Coordination and communication for integrated working practices

Financial Resourcing

It is of course fundamental that adequate financial resources are available for all aspects of a Child Protection System. In reality, the financing of child protection concerns are usually insufficient. Working to increase budget allocations for child protection work might include a number of actions including:

• Production of well prepared, evidence based expenditure plans
• Child Protection agencies able to demonstrate abilities in efficient budget management and cost effectiveness
• Advocacy with Government budgetary decision makers to increase allocations
• Advocacy with and, applications to, the donor community to increase support to child protection activities
2. Key Actions

Please note that it may not be possible or necessary to undertake all the Actions listed below. This list provides you with some guidance as factors to consider regarding capacities of those responsible for management and delivery of a Child Protection system. It also briefly refers to activities of financial resourcing. It will be necessary however, for you to select those Key Actions that are relevant and possible in your field context depending on the humanitarian situation in which you are operating and such factors as time available, resources, the levels (i.e. national, provincial, local, camp) at which you are working etc.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Actions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Step One: Assessment of current</td>
<td>Are those responsible for developing, managing and delivering components of the child protection system equipped with the knowledge and skills to do so?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>situation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assess human and financial resources</td>
<td>(Please refer to Action Sheet Two for information on assessments)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| within the Child Protection System    | In consideration of the context you are working i.e. at a national, provincial or local level, determine if assessments that have been undertaken by members of Child Protection Coordination Mechanisms (CPCMS) or other bodies and agencies (please refer to Action Sheet One for more information on CPCMs) to ascertain the following:  
  • Capacities within government agencies for planning, management and delivery of all components of a child protection system (please refer to page XX for further details of these components)  
  • Understanding of Child Protection and technical proficiency of front line workers i.e. social services, health, education, police, judiciary, immigration, labour and any other services in your locality with responsibility to deliver child protection services  
  • Capacities of non-governmental organisation staff in the planning, management and delivery of child protection services (please refer to Action Sheet Four for further information on child protection services)  
  • Relevance and standards of training for those whose work hold child protection responsibilities  
  • Abilities of local community based child protection networks/committee members to undertake child protection activities (please refer to Annex for further information on community based child protection committees)  
  • Have child protection priorities have been integrated into broader National Plans and Ministry budgets  
  • What financial support for the development of all aspects of a child protection system are donors providing  
  • What other funding sources are available for child protection work  
  • Are there reasons why funding for child protection activities are not being fully met                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Analyse findings                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |

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### Step Two. Identify, plan for and implement activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How can UNHCR contribute to building the capacities of those responsible for the planning, management and delivery of child protection? How can UNHCR mobilise financial resources for child protection activities?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Give support to the development of technical skills and capacities of the child protection workforce where necessary</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| • If the analysis of information gathered is insufficient identify ways of gathering additional data (please refer to Action Sheet Two)  
• If analysis of information gathered identifies lack of skills/technical knowledge of child protection workforce members, UNHCR should advocate for actions to address this situation with, wherever possible, other national, local or community members of Child Protection Coordination Mechanisms  
• In partnership with other members of national and local (as appropriate) Child Protection Coordination Mechanisms, identify and plan ways to increase human resource capacities within the Child Protection System. Identify UNHCR’s contribution and role in such activities as:  
  o Capacity building activities for governmental partners who develop and manage components of the Child Protection System  
  o Capacity building activities for members of governmental and non-governmental agencies who directly provide child protection services to children of concern to UNHCR  
  o Implementation of training for community/camp cased child protection committees  
  o Capacity building activities for those with responsibility for budgetary planning, management and fundraising  
  o Advocate with donors to raise their awareness of the importance of increased funding for all components of a child protection system |
| **Support capacity building of community child protection mechanisms** |
| **Determine means of increasing funding for the Child Protection System** |
| **Determine appropriate UNHCR staffing and funding for child protection activities** |

### Step Three: Monitoring Outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How will you measure whether the capacity of child protection workers has improved? How will you measure the impact any increased funding has had?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| • Develop and where possible agree on inter-agency SMART indicators that your planned activities aim to achieve  
• Develop a joint monitoring and evaluation plan to measure progress to achieving planned activities and their overall |
ways to measure whether planned activities have achieved the planned outcomes/impact

- Monitor and evaluate programmes in relation to planned activities and pre-defined indicators
- Disseminate results and lessons from monitoring and evaluation activities
- Use lessons learned in future planning exercises

3. Link to RBF/FOCUS

This box will contain Objectives, Outputs and Indicators from FOCUS that relate to this component. This will help staff to better capture all aspects of child protection activities in their planning process.
4. Additional Information

5. Reference Materials

Better Care Network - Training Manual: Capacity Building on the Key Competencies in Child Protection Modular Series

Keeping Children Safe – A Toolkit for Child Protection
http://www.keepingchildrensafe.org.uk/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=5&Itemid=4
1. Background Information
This Action Sheet prompts you to consider advocacy and awareness raising actions in relation to Child Protection and the strengthening of the protective environment for children. Advocacy and awareness raising activities as elements of a Child Protection System are used to influence and create positive changes in the protection outcomes for children. These actions are particularly important in prevention of child protection violations.

**Advocacy** is a key element of UNHCR activities to protect children of concern and an important component of a Child Protection System. Advocacy is the use of evidence in order to influence and persuade decision makers to make changes to legislation, policy or, its implementation and, to take actions to protect children.

**Awareness Raising** activities aim to strengthen the protective environment around children by taking steps to change attitudes, behaviour and practices that can be harmful. Shifts in cultural behaviour and addressing attitudes and practices of individuals, families and communities can be complex and so awareness raising activities often involve intense work both with individuals and within communities.

An element of raising awareness and advocating for the cessation of violations is the action of **monitoring and reporting**. This brings to the attention of duty bearers and other stakeholders, the situation of children they hold responsibility for. It can be one way of holding to account those have violated children’s protection rights. In particular respect to children affected by armed conflict, a monitoring and reporting mechanism (MRM) has been established by the UN Security Council Resolution 1612 (see also UNSC 1882). The mechanism calls for the monitoring of six grave violations against children in situations of armed conflict committed by members of armed groups (please see Reference Materials below).

Advocacy and awareness raising activities should be:
- Based on good assessments and evidence of the situation and causalities
- Based on a good understanding of the social and cultural context
- Precisely defined as to the cause or issue you’re advocating for –i.e. have a clear goal/changes to be achieved
- Undertaken in participation with stakeholders especially children
- Designed in a manner that is appropriate for the audience you are trying to influence with clear and succinct messaging
Either an advocacy or awareness raising process should incorporate the following steps:

- **Assess and analyse the situation**
- **Define the goal**
- **Identify target audience**
- **Choose approaches**
- **Evaluate impact**
- **Plan and implement activities**

The UNHCR Guidance Note on **Advocacy** (please see Reference Materials below) advises you to target stakeholders who can influence child protection concerns with the aim of bringing about a change including:

- National decision and policy makers,
- Local actors and institutions
- Individuals or groups who might have an interest in the issue at stake such as members of affected communities, children, local community groups and the media.
- The international community

**Whilst working through this Action Sheet, please remember that children themselves should have a key participatory role in activities that aim to effect changes in their lives.**
2. Key Actions

Please note that it may not be possible to undertake all the Actions listed below. The lists of Actions below are to provide some guidance regarding the undertaking of advocacy and awareness raising activities. It will be necessary however, for you to select those Key Actions that are relevant and possible in your field context depending on the humanitarian context in which you are operating and such factors as time available, resources, the levels (i.e. national, provincial, local, camp) at which you are working etc.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Actions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Step One: Assessment of current situation</td>
<td>What steps are being taken to improve the protective environment for children through advocacy and awareness raising actions?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Determine the following:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Has the Child Protection Coordination Mechanisms (CPCMs) (particularly those in which you might be participating) developed a joint Advocacy Strategy. If so, do planned initiatives include child protection issues affecting children of concern to UNHCR (please refer to Action Sheet One for more information on CPCMs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Have previous assessments identified any attitudes, behaviors and practices that can lead to children being put at risk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Are programs being undertaken by other Child Protection actors in order to address attitudes, behaviors and practices that can put children at risk. Do they include issues affecting children of concern to UNHCR and are they reaching populations that affect children of concern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Are there any jointly established mechanisms for regularly monitoring and reporting on child protection violations including use of the UNSC Resolution 1612 Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism. If so, are children of concern to UNCHR included in these mechanisms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o Have any recent Reports and Position Papers been disseminated on child protection issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step Two. Identify, plan for and implement activities</td>
<td>How will you improve your understanding of child protection issues affecting children of concern to UNHCR? How will you improve your understanding of how the Child Protection System in your field of operation functions?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gather additional information if necessary</td>
<td>• If there are gaps in information regarding matters relating to advocacy and awareness raising concerns, UNHCR should promote the idea of further data gathering with, wherever possible, other national, local or community members of Child Protection Coordination Mechanisms (CPCMs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use the findings of assessments to plan</td>
<td>(Please refer to Action Sheet One for more information on CPCMs and Action Sheet Two for information on assessments)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| | • If current advocacy and awareness programs are not sufficiently representing the child protection issues affecting children of concern to UNHCR consider undertaking the following in coordination with other members of the CPCM:
### advocacy and awareness raising initiatives that will benefit children of concern to UNHCR

- Identify key Child Protection issues not currently being advocated for/ reported on
- Identify key advocacy messages that would result in improved child protection outcomes for children of concern
- Include these core messages in a joint communication and advocacy strategy containing practical plans for implementation
- Implement joint advocacy campaigns using the most appropriate tools and targeting those who are best placed to effect the changes needed
- Develop joint awareness raising tools containing agreed messages. Plan and implement programs that aim to shift attitudes and practices that negatively impact on children of concern to UNCHR
- Support the establishment or further development as appropriate, of monitoring and reporting mechanisms on child protection violations
- Identify key issues that you can promote through the development of Reports and Position Papers

### Step Three: Monitoring Outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How will you measure the implementation and outcomes achieved for your chosen activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Develop and where possible agree on inter-agency SMART indicators that your planned activities aim to achieve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Develop a joint monitoring and evaluation plan to measure progress to achieving planned activities and their overall effectiveness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Monitor and evaluate programmes in relation to planned activities and pre-defined indicators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Disseminate results and lessons from monitoring and evaluation activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Use lessons learned in future planning exercises</td>
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3. Link to RBF/FOCUS

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01 December 2010
4. Additional Information

Key considerations for the implementation of an advocacy strategy

In selecting the right approach to deliver advocacy messages:

• Watch for potential risks to persons of concern and humanitarian staff - it is important to assess the potential consequences of the different approaches. In the case of individual advocacy initiatives, it is vital to ensure victim safety, maintain confidentiality and respect the wishes of the victim regarding advocacy action on his/her behalf. It is essential to elicit feedback from persons of concern about the proposed advocacy actions.
• Calculate the timing to intervene in light of the expected impact. Reversing a finalized decision is always far more challenging and unlikely to happen in the short term. Try to launch advocacy campaigns to influence the decision-makers before a final decision has been made.
• Identify agencies or groups in other communities or countries that have undertaken a similar advocacy strategy – a large number of operational partners and civil-society groups can provide valuable information about their experiences to strengthen the advocacy strategy. Some of them might also be instrumental in influencing the government response.
• Build community support in the early part of the strategy –
• Formulate advocacy tools, documents and messages that enable the target audience to understand the protection issues of concern
• Mobilize your target audience by advocating for concrete actions that should/could be within their means to attain

Advocacy can be carried out in numerous ways including:

• Personal meetings and lobbying
• Campaigns
• Letters
• Publication of reports and position papers
• Research and publications
• Use of media
• Being present at summits, national and international meetings and conferences
• Information on websites
• Visits of high profile representatives
• Events
• Printed materials

5. Reference Materials

UNHCR - UNHCR NGO Toolkit 3: Information Sharing, Planning and Advocacy – Guidance Note on Advocacy:  
http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/search?page=search&docid=4794a3f12&query=advocacy

UNICEF- Behaviour Change Communication in Emergencies: A Toolkit  

UNICEF – Create! http://www.createforchildren.org/

The Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary General for Children and Armed Conflict:  

(Containing information on UNSC 1612 Monitoring and Reporting Mechanisms and UNSC Resolution 1882)