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CHAPTER - 8

SUPPORTING CHILD PROTECTION AND PSYCHOSOCIAL RECOVERY

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WHY PROMOTE CHILD PROTECTION IN EMERGENCIES?



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NEPAL: A child club meeting at Khairnistar High School, 2004

Child protection is a special concern in emergencies as many of the defining features of a disaster - displacement, breakdown in family and social structures, erosion of traditional value systems, potential violence, weak governance, absence of accountability, and inaccessibility to basic social services - put children at risk of being injured, disabled or separated

from their primary caregivers or being orphaned; for trafficking, physical and sexual abuse, and other forms of exploitation. In the South Asian context, where girls are often marginalised even in stabilised situations, the environment in a camp or emergency site can make them even more vulnerable to abuse and exploitation.

The threat of physical harm to children is compounded by the stress and trauma created by the emergency. Nearly all children and adolescents who have experienced catastrophic situations will initially display various symptoms of psychological distress, including intrusive flashbacks of the stress event, nightmares, withdrawal and an inability to concentrate. Child development professionals consider that the key element in promoting a child's recovery is building resilience as well as meeting basic needs.²

In emergency situations where people are displaced, parents/primary caregivers are faced with situations where:

- Boys and girls are in unfamiliar surroundings with people they do not know (i.e. in camps or in temporary shelters).

- Increased alcohol consumption may be prevalent – because of the general destabilisation and higher availability of cash among men from relief efforts.
- Adolescents may also be psychosocially affected, which can increase the risk of sexual and physical abuse of children, especially among girls.
- Crowded living conditions, where families share sleeping quarters, can lead to adults having sex in front of children.

Moreover, parents/primary caregivers might feel helpless in the aftermath of disasters because of destroyed support systems. They may attempt to lessen their responsibilities by forcing girls to marry early or live with distant relatives; sending children to work with “employers” who are traffickers; and engage in other actions that put children, especially girls, in harm’s path.

UNICEF recommends the following child protection strategies in an emergency situation:³

- Advocacy and increasing knowledge.
- Ensuring written commitments.
- Monitoring and reporting violations.
- Creating safe environments.
- Strengthening local institutions

Depending on the detailed priorities of the child protection and psychosocial development response efforts, your communication initiative should support the above priorities in partnership with the government, affected community, camp management, sister UN agencies and other relevant stakeholders.

Child protection in emergencies

Remember: Children in the midst of armed conflict and natural disasters, such as droughts, floods and earthquakes, have the same needs and rights as children in stable environments.¹

Communication initiative key to protecting children in Sri Lanka tsunami camps In Sri Lanka, an estimated 5,000 children lost one or both parents, and countless more lost relatives, friends and teachers. UNICEF’s response to protect these children in the camps focused on the issues of injury, being orphaned or separated from their primary caregivers, child abuse, trafficking, exploitation and other vulnerabilities. UNICEF put emphasis on advocacy and awareness raising campaigns on these issues. Actions were taken to identify the relevant protection messages using available means to mobilize the affected community and to ensure that the messages reached the intended audience.

UNICEF partnered with the National Child Protection Authority on a set of key messages on the protection of women and children against sexual abuse and exploitation. The messages were sent out as part of instructions to all police officers in the camps from the Police Headquarters. Posters on child abuse were also developed and posted in strategic places within the camps. The same messages were distributed by *Sarvodya*, the largest Sri Lankan NGO, in the camps.

These messages covered the following four issues:

- Giving extra love and attention to children during this difficult time.
- The importance of family unity and protecting children from being separated from their families, injuries, sexual abuse and exploitation.
- Procedures for reporting unaccompanied and separated children; the need to avoid institutionalization of unaccompanied children; the importance of following national laws and procedures when handing over children to caregivers.
- Mine-awareness (education messages were produced and included in the school-in-the-box), because landmines may have been carried by the tsunami.

PRINCIPLES OF CHILD PROTECTION PROMOTION



Communication efforts to support child protection in emergencies require a multi-pronged approach - advocacy, social mobilisation and behaviour change communication. These efforts should seek to improve the prevailing knowledge, attitudes and practices of the various stakeholders (at all levels) toward child protection, wellness and survival. The following principles provide some guidance for your emergency child protection communication programme.

- 1. Emphasise behaviours that decrease risks of child trafficking, abuse, exploitation and separation**

To protect children, some of the practices emphasised are the ones that prevent abuse and violence from happening in the first place – i.e. not leaving children unattended; knowing the normal/abnormal reactions to stress and how to manage them; parents and primary caregivers using camp-or-shelter provided education/recreation activities; and reporting abuse to authorities. Special attention should be paid to protecting girls from different forms of exploitation and abuse.

- 2. Strengthen local capacity through communication activities**

Communication initiatives should equip the affected parents/primary caregivers, health workers, teachers, police officers, social workers, children and youth groups and other relevant partners with the knowledge, authority and motivation to identify and respond to child protection issues.

- 3. Develop communication activities that give children life skills, knowledge of their rights, and the ability to protect themselves**

Children need information and knowledge to help protect themselves. If children are unaware of their rights, or of the signs and dangers of abuse, they become more vulnerable in emergencies. Children also need to be provided with safe and protective channels for participation and self-expression. Communication initiatives

that support life skills should be gender sensitive, and encourage the development of non-traditional life skills for both, boys and girls.

4. **Advocate with affected communities, local governments, police and law enforcement agencies to strengthen child protection mechanisms and systems in an emergency**

Communication interventions must recognise and build upon the local community's coping mechanisms to protect affected children within the community. Our efforts should focus on increasing the affected community's knowledge and ability to practice behaviours that protect their children. Moreover, we should support legal mechanisms and systems that allow communities to quickly report cases of child abuse, trafficking or violence.

In the India tsunami shelters, UNICEF supported the printing and distribution of more than 5,000 booklets and posters, along with 1,000 banners on trafficking awareness. The materials had phone numbers of a helpline and helped to report child trafficking cases quickly. These communication actions took place in early 2005.

In planning for disasters and seeking to mitigate its' potential impact on the emotional and physical well-being of children, we have to prepare communication efforts in advance.

Communication channels

UNICEF mobilized several communication channels to get the message out to the affected community: mass media, small media and capacity building via the training of local NGO workers and community volunteers.

Mass media

Child protection messages were broadcast over local radio stations both in government and Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE)-controlled areas. The same messages were also printed in both Sinhalese and Tamil and distributed to the affected communities.

Small media

Previously developed leaflets were distributed in all camps on the prevention of under-age recruitment into the army. Given the large number of new agencies operating in the North and East who are not familiar with these policies relevant to child recruitment, UNICEF briefed INGOs on procedures for registering cases of under-age recruitment.

Capacity building

Capacity building took place on several levels: UNICEF provided training to all staff members of Sarvodya, a Sri Lankan NGO, on psychosocial activities and on the use of UNICEF psychosocial kits. The Department of Social Services, Tamil Relief Organization (TRO) and SCISL coordinated the training of community volunteers and SCISL volunteers on protection issues and activities. They were trained on conducting awareness campaigns on the Rights of the Child so that volunteers could sensitize communities on child rights, child abuse and reporting of abuse.

DOING THE GROUNDWORK



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The details for your groundwork will largely depend on how well you were prepared, what kind of capacities and resources you have at your disposal, and which partnerships are already in place. For instance, do you have any partnerships with the police, military, journalists, lawyers, humanitarian organisations, UN sister agencies, local governments, religious leaders, academic institutions and others? These types

of alliances can provide valuable assistance in an emergency in your communication initiative towards building a protective environment for children. Also, explore if any qualitative and quantitative data exists from which you could draw from to plan your communication initiative.

Some tools to do the groundwork

Group discussions/observations

If the affected community is one where attitudes or traditions facilitate abuse – for example, sex with minors, the appropriateness of severe corporal punishment, the application of harmful traditional practices or differences in the value of boys and girls, or ethnic and disabled children – it is likely that the environment will not be protective. In societies where all forms of violence against children are taboo, and where the rights of children are broadly respected by custom and tradition, children are more likely to be

What is psychosocial development (PSD)?

“Psychosocial” refers to the dynamic relationship that exists between psychological and social effects, each continually interacting with and influencing the other. “Psychological effects” are those that affect different levels of functioning including cognitive (perceptions and memory as a basis for thoughts and learning), affective (emotions), and behavioural. “Social effects” pertain to altered relationships, family and community networks, and economic status.¹

The psychosocial effects of a disaster can be long-lasting if appropriate and



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SRI LANKA: Children gather around as sports and other games from a UNICEF Recreation Kit are distributed at a relief camp for people displaced by the tsunami, in Rahula College in the southern city of Matara. Each kit contains recreational items for 80 to 90 children.

protected.⁴ You can find out the practices and attitudes toward child protection via group discussions, key informant interviews, observing the treatment of children in the camp or household, etc. **See Tool 5 in Part III of the toolkit.**

Observations and group discussions can also help determine the need for psychosocial counselling of children and adults.

Other tools

Participatory activities that are geared toward children such as role play, drama and other play activities can be used as means to provide information on child protection issues.

A note on police records as information sources:

Police records may provide useful information about the extent and type of abuse and violence against children, both pre-and-post emergency. Be aware that there may be gross under reporting.

Observations from India

In some districts in India, adults left the tsunami camps during the day either to work or to go back to their original residences leaving children considered to be “old enough to take care of themselves” alone in the camps. These children were not technically considered “unaccompanied” or “separated” but their situation posed a risk to their safety and protection. Girls were put in a rather risky situation considering the observed increase of alcohol consumption among the men folks in shelter camps. Many feared that this could lead to both sexual and physical abuse.

GETTING THE MESSAGE RIGHT

Child protection messages will most likely focus on preventing and reporting child abuse, trafficking, exploitation and on monitoring children’s psychosocial development.

Initially you may have to focus on three immediate risk-reducing strategies.

1. Don't leave children unattended in the camps/temporary shelters.
2. Send children to education or camp activities to restore a sense of normalcy.
3. Give extra love and attention to children in emergencies.

Fight child trafficking

- Inform authorities in the camp or community if you know of suspected traffickers that enter the camp or the affected community.
- Take note of strangers entering the camp.
- Talk to your children about traffickers and ensure that they know the danger signs for trafficking.
- Do not leave children alone in camps or in the affected community.

Reporting cases of child abuse and trafficking took on different forms in the three South Asian countries which were hit by the tsunami in December 2004. In the Maldives and India, they used telephone hotlines. In Sri Lanka, confidential boxes were strategically installed in various camps so that child abuse cases could be anonymously reported. In India, community-based networks were established to prevent child abuse and trafficking. These experiences show that in future emergencies it would be worthwhile to combine the different strategies.

Prevent child separation

- In case of migration, have children walk in front to prevent separation.
- Insist on the importance of registering children at birth to aid in tracing efforts in case of separation.

Prevent and monitor abuse

- Report child abuse to camp authorities.
- Children should report abuse to themselves (or their friends) to a trusted adult.

Encourage mothers primary caregivers to aid in the recovery of children

- Know the signs of ab/normal reactions to stress.
- Help children get back to daily routines.
- Don't discourage children when they verbalise their feelings or use other forms of communication such as drawing, playing, etc.
- Seek help if children continue to show abnormal signs of stress even after one month.

- Allow children to attend recreation/education activities.
- Don't minimise children's fears, and ensure that you respond with correct information.
- Don't send children away from you, to get them away from the scene of disaster; separation from parents/loved ones will traumatise them even more.

Observations from the Maldives

After the tsunami hit the Maldives in December 2004, mothers in Ishdhoo Island agreed that there was much fear among children. "They wake up during the night, cannot sleep, and easily cry", the mothers reported. Children refused to stay alone in the house, not even with elder family members. Often, they could not go to the toilet alone, and needed someone to be near when they studied for school. A child protection communication initiative used a mix of communication channels: counsellors and TV programmes disseminated psychosocial development messages about child stress management, the importance of being honest about the tsunami, and organising play groups so that the children didn't have to play alone. Afterwards, mothers said that they could more easily talk to their children about the aftermath of the disaster, answer their questions, and be honest about the possibility of another tsunami.

What camp authorities and service providers should know

Create a protective environment

- Regulate alcohol selling and consumption.
- Make sure camp is well lit.
- Build separate latrines for men and women.
- Build latrines that give women privacy.
- Immediately register unaccompanied, separated children.
- Provide proper security guards for camps and settlements.
- Provide a play/recreation area for children within the camp or temporary shelter, close enough to be observed by adults.
- Encourage older children to look out for the younger ones.

In the Maldivian tsunami shelters, there were situations where three or more families were living together in one room. This increased the risk of sexual abuse to women and children. Night posed special dangers because the latrines were not well lit and were far from the sleeping quarters. While some might argue that this is a camp management issue, communicators can disseminate child protection messages to camp managers, and advocate for appropriate living quarters, well-lit latrines that are close to the sleeping quarters, and the designation of safe play areas for children.

Protect separated/orphaned children

- Separated/orphaned children have the right to participate in and be informed of plans being made for them.
- Place unaccompanied, separated and orphaned children in the care of reputable affected community members.
- Adoption should not be the first option for orphaned children.
- Register all unaccompanied, separated and orphaned children and make sure that they receive the essential basic needs.
- Avoid institutionalisation of children until all other alternatives have failed.

Sample media release: Unaccompanied and separated children

The below media release was issued by UNICEF Sri Lanka, National Child Protection Authority, Department of Probation and Child Care, and Save the Children a few days after the tsunami had devastated parts of the country in December 2005.

“Many of the children who survived last week’s (26 December 2005) lethal earthquake and tsunami were separated from their families and caregivers. The Government of Sri Lanka, UNICEF and Save the Children Sri Lanka (SCiSL) are working together closely to ensure that these children remain in safe environments, protected from violence, exploitation and abuse. The National Child Protection Authority (NCPA), Dept of Probation and Childcare, UNICEF and SCiSL have mobilised teams to identify and register all unaccompanied and separated children. Joint teams are identifying children living in temporary camps for the displaced as a priority. They will then be working with communities to identify and register all children who have been separated from their immediate families.

The agencies are asking communities to contact any of the above agencies at their local offices, with information on separated children within their communities.

The teams will be tracing the children’s closest relatives, in order to reunite them as quickly as possible. If relatives cannot be found, Probation Officers will make comprehensive assessments to plan for the best possible care. Options include fostering, adoption or, as a last resort, a home for children. The agencies stress that children will not be considered for adoption during the emergency phase, and until every opportunity to locate family members is exhausted. Adoption is a lengthy process and takes many months. The relevant authority for this is the DPCC.

Family members or others who are caring for children who have lost their parents should register with the Divisional Secretary or the Department of Probation and Child Care (DPCC). Even if children are being cared for they should register the children so that tracing of their family can be activated for the child – in the case of children whose parents have died other family members will be traced.

Parents and other family members who have lost children should go to any of the following agencies to register details of their child: District Child Protection Committees, Department of Probation and Child Care, Save the Children Sri Lanka or UNICEF”.

Prevent recruitment of children

- Increase knowledge among camp officials on the international laws on child rights and recruitment.
- Advocate with military groups and local authorities for the demobilisation of child soldiers.
- Be on alert for “creeping recruitment”.

Some child protection issues in Sri Lanka after the Tsunami devastated the country in December 2004:

Within the first 10 days of 2005, there were 14 verified reports of underage recruitment by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) in Sri Lanka. Because of the presence of the militia groups, and reported cases of forced recruitment, UNICEF widely distributed previously developed leaflets on the prevention of underage recruitment. Efforts such as this can be strengthened by encouraging parents/primary caregivers not to leave their children alone, promoting the provision of supervised child activities and play, and advocating with camp officials to design camps that are safe for children.

COMMUNICATION ACTIONS FOR CHILD PROTECTION

Child protection communication actions will depend on the priorities of the emergency, capacity, established partnerships and the knowledge, attitudes and practices of the affected community in regards to child protection and survival. UNICEF commits to the protection of children and women from violence, exploitation, abuse and neglect.



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The table below outlines UNICEF’s Core Commitments for Children in Emergencies in the area of Child Protection. Included are suggested behaviour change communication (BCC) and social mobilisation activities that have proven to be effective in improving child protection and psychosocial development in emergency situations. Remember to plan your communication and social mobilisation actions with the involvement of the affected community and your partners. And to carefully monitor and evaluate the programme.

PAKISTAN: Children gather outside a tent in the Jalalabad camp for people displaced by the earthquake, in Muzaffarabad, capital of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK), in Pakistan-administered Kashmir. About 1,500 people are sharing cramped quarters in 170 tents in the camp. In some cases, 30 people in 3 families, more than half of whom are children, are living in one tent.

TABLE: Extract from UNICEF's CCC in child protection and corresponding suggested BCC and social mobilisation support.

FIRST SIX TO EIGHT WEEKS	BCC AND SOCIAL MOBILISATION ACTIONS TO SUPPORT
<p>1. Conduct a rapid assessment of the situation of children and women. Within the appropriate mechanisms, monitor, advocate against, report and communicate on severe, systematic abuse, violence and exploitation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ensure that the affected community receives information on severe, systematic abuse, violence and exploitation of women and children and knows how to monitor and report it to camp management, local authorities and relevant humanitarian agencies – i.e. hotlines, IEC materials, establishment of camp watch groups, peer educators, etc. ■ Train social workers, healthcare professionals and other service providers on the signs of abuse, violence and exploitation, and how to monitor and report it to the proper agencies/authorities. ■ Advocate and mobilise support with camp management, social welfare departments and local authorities to establish simple monitoring and reporting systems on abuse, violence and exploitation, – i.e. boxes for anonymous reporting, etc. ■ Work with camp management to design camps that provide well-lit latrines that are close to sleeping quarters and safe spaces for children to play to decrease the likelihood of abuse, exploitation, trafficking, etc. ■ Increase knowledge among humanitarian workers and all UN staff members and partners about the code of conduct and zero tolerance policy on abuse and exploitation. ■ Provide all humanitarian workers the six core principles to prevent sexual exploitation.

FIRST SIX TO EIGHT WEEKS	BCC AND SOCIAL MOBILISATION ACTIONS TO SUPPORT
<p>2. Assist in preventing the separation of children from their caregivers, and facilitate the identification, registration and medical screening of separated children, particularly those under 5 years of age and adolescent girls.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ensure that the affected parents/primary caregivers know how to prevent child separation in camp situations migration/evacuation; that separated children should be registered; where and how to register separated children, and the policies regarding separated children. In addition, ensure that separated children know their rights to be informed of-and-participate in the plans being made for them, and know where to go to receive essential services. ■ Train social workers, police, and camp managers to communicate with affected parents/primary caregivers on how to prevent child separation, how to register separated children, and how to reach communities with the child protection messages, particularly those on keeping girls safe. ■ Advocate and mobilise support with the local government, camp management, social welfare departments and humanitarian agencies to provide families' basic needs to prevent intentional separation; immediately implement systems to register separated children straight away, and to increase knowledge on the rights of separated children to receive medical screening, and other essential services.
<p>3. Ensure that family-tracing systems are implemented with appropriate care and protection facilities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ensure that the affected parents/primary caregivers and separated children know where to go for family-tracing services and the process – i.e. social workers, healthcare professionals, mass media and IEC materials.

FIRST SIX TO EIGHT WEEKS	BCC AND SOCIAL MOBILISATION ACTIONS TO SUPPORT
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Advocate with camp officials, local authorities, social welfare departments, religious institutions and other relevant stakeholders to establish family-tracing services that use community monitoring; and provide appropriate follow-up services.

BEYOND THE INITIAL RESPONSE	BCC ACTIONS OR SOCIAL MOBILISATION TO SUPPORT
<p>4 Within established mechanisms, support the establishment of initial monitoring systems, including on severe or systematic abuse, violence and exploitation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Establish and build upon the initial response to ensure that the affected community continues to receive information on severe, systematic abuse, violence and exploitation of women and children and knows how to monitor and report it to camp management, local authorities and relevant humanitarian agencies – i.e. hotlines, IEC materials, establishment of camp watch groups, peer educators, etc. ■ Provide refresher training to social workers, healthcare professionals and other service providers on the signs of abuse, violence and exploitation; and how to monitor and report it to the proper agencies/authorities. ■ Continue to advocate and mobilise support with camp management, social welfare departments and local authorities to maintain systems to monitor and report abuse, violence and exploitation. ■ Increase knowledge and provide refresher training among humanitarian workers and all UN staff members and partners about the code of conduct and

BEYOND THE INITIAL RESPONSE	BCC ACTIONS OR SOCIAL MOBILISATION TO SUPPORT
	<p>zero tolerance policy on abuse and exploitation. Provide all humanitarian workers the six core principles to prevent sexual exploitation, and ensure that they are able to adhere to the principles.</p>
<p>5 In cases where children are separated, or at risk of being separated from caregivers, work directly or through partners to:</p>	
<p>(i) assist in preventing the separation of children from their caregivers;</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ensure that affected parents/primary caregivers know where/how to register their children at birth to facilitate tracing in the event of a separation, know how to prevent separation in the camp or in case of migration/evacuation, etc. – i.e. counselling, social workers, IEC materials, mass media, etc. ■ Enable social workers, healthcare professionals, humanitarian agencies and other relevant stakeholders to communicate with parents/primary caregivers on how to prevent the separation of children. ■ Advocate and mobilise support with the local government, camp management, and humanitarian agencies to provide the basic needs of families to prevent intentional separation, particularly for those under five and adolescent girls, and to implement evacuation plans. ■ Enable social workers, camp leaders, humanitarian workers to facilitate emotional and social support to single parents/primary caregivers, to ensure that they take on/continue their parenting responsibilities.

BEYOND THE INITIAL RESPONSE	BCC ACTIONS OR SOCIAL MOBILISATION TO SUPPORT
<p>(ii) facilitate the identification, registration and medical screening of separated children, particularly those under five and adolescent girls;</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Build upon communication initiatives implemented in the initial response to ensure that the affected community knows and can help separated children register and be medically screened, knows where to register separated children, and is aware of the policies regarding separated children. In addition, ensure that separated children know their rights to participate in and be informed of the plans being made for them, and know where to go to receive essential services. ■ Provide refresher training to social workers, police, camp managers and service providers on the policies regarding separated children, the importance of working with the community to immediately identify, medically screen and register separated children – and how to communicate this to the affected community. ■ Continue to advocate and mobilise support with the local government, camp management, social welfare departments and humanitarian agencies to provide the basic needs of families to prevent intentional separation; to immediately implement systems to register separated children straight away, and to increase knowledge on the rights of separated children to receive medical screening, and other essential services.

BEYOND THE INITIAL RESPONSE	BCC ACTIONS OR SOCIAL MOBILISATION TO SUPPORT
<p>(iii) facilitate the registration of all parents and caregivers who have lost their children;</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ensure that affected parents/primary caregivers and separated children know where to go to register for tracing services and the procedures – i.e. social workers, service providers, IEC materials, mass media. ■ Ensure that social workers, camp officials, and service providers know how to communicate the tracing process to parents/primary caregivers who have lost their children. ■ Advocate with camp officials, local authorities, social welfare departments on the relevant laws, standards and good practices in the protection for and care of separated children.⁶
<p>6. Support the establishment of safe environments for children and women, including child-friendly spaces, and integrate psychosocial support in education and protection responses.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ensure that the affected community knows where to take their children for recreation/education activities and the importance of doing so – i.e. IEC materials, loudspeaker announcements, social workers, etc. ■ Promote child protection and psychosocial development through the establishment and facilitation of child-friendly spaces, life skills promotion, art, drama, theatre and class activities. ■ Ensure that camp officials, police, local authorities know how to make camps safe for women and children and participate in doing so. ■ Provide training for community workers, camp volunteers and teachers to organise recreation groups and activities for children.

MONITORING MILESTONES

The objective of an emergency child protection programme is to protect children and women from violence, exploitation, abuse and neglect. Be sure to monitor whether your communication strategy is supporting this objective. Identify the indicators you will need to monitor your communication efforts based on the behavioural results and actions you have defined from the outset. The following are some common core behaviour result indicators. **Tool 13 in Part III lists possible sources of information to help you measure the indicators.**

1. Parents/primary caregivers know the importance of children's participation in recreational activities in hastening healing from trauma and psychological recovery. They also know where these activities are provided in the camp and are sending their children there.
2. Parents/primary caregivers know the dangers of leaving their children unattended, and are aware of the unsafe areas for children in the camps.
3. Parents/primary caregivers know how to prevent child separation in the camp, during migration or evacuation and are doing it.
4. Parents/primary caregivers understand the risks of sending their children away for employment and marriage and refrain from doing so.
5. Camp officials know the importance of lighting latrines, providing adequate camp security and designating safe spaces for women and children and are making the necessary adjustments.
6. The affected community knows to report strangers, (suspected) traffickers that enter the camp and are doing it.
7. Parents/primary caregivers who have lost children know how to register and where to go to facilitate tracing.
8. Separated children know their rights to be involved in the decisions being made for them; know where to go to register, facilitate tracing and receive essential services.
9. Social workers, camp managers, service providers know the rights of separated children and how to communicate these rights to them.
10. Community members know the signs of abuse, trafficking, molestation; and know where to report it.
11. Affected children know where to report abuse to them or friends.

PRACTICAL EXPERIENCES

Participatory drama helps children move on after tsunami

It is 3 p.m. at the IDH Watte camp in Galle, Sri Lanka. The community centre is crowded. More than 50 children are anxiously waiting for the play to start. Eight-year old Rajan and his friends are beaming with delight. As the animators enter the room and address the young audience, it springs to mind that this is not a regular performance: this is an awareness programme on the tsunami using high drama.

"Is this the sea?" asks one animator.

"Those days we loved the sea", answers the other.

"What did you do at the sea?"

"Playing, fishing, bathing..."

"What do you know about the tsunami?"

"We are the people who got caught by the big waves. Our homes were damaged and washed away".

"We used to fly kites on the beach".

Rajan and his friends mime flying kites. They laugh and eagerly answer questions from the audience. Most of the children belong to fishing communities in Galle that were terribly affected by the tsunami. Most are still living in camps or transitional shelters. As the two actors move on with the show, personal memories amongst the audience are triggered and they begin to think about their own experience on 26 December 2004.

Rajan becomes more involved in the stories they tell and he too remembers. The big wave that the actors are pointing at in the picture destroyed his house. He had to run away, but the water caught him and his mother. They had to cling to a tree and wait for the wave to withdraw. His little sister didn't survive. "But now I am happy I can play with my friends", he says. "I still have my mother and my father, and I can go to school".

"What is a tsunami? Have countries other than Sri Lanka suffered from the waves? Will another tsunami come again? How can we protect ourselves from another tsunami?" These are the questions raised during the one-hour long programme.

"After the tsunami, UNICEF quickly identified the need for an Awareness Programme. Nobody was prepared for the tsunami. Nobody expected it and it was a great shock to the country", explains UNICEF Child Protection Officer Sarah Graham. "There were many rumours and unanswered questions: Will another tsunami come? Why did it hit Sri Lanka? Is the water poisoned? Can we eat fish again? People wanted and needed to learn more about the tsunami and tsunamis in general so UNICEF decided to work on a programme to answer their questions".

UNICEF's Tsunami Awareness Programme gives children and adults the opportunity to learn, participate, and reflect on their own experiences. The tsunami awareness materials come with a guide that is used by community support workers, youth leaders and teachers to facilitate the programme. It is designed so that each child or adult can participate in their own way. Some will sit and listen, others will share their ideas and some will stand up and interact with the facilitators.

"Each material was carefully planned to initiate a discussion based on children's personal experience and perceived notions, the facts and what they can do to insure their safety and to rebuild their lives", Graham said.

UNICEF has tested the Tsunami Awareness materials in affected areas across Sri Lanka. In the South, this was carried out with support from Multi Diverse Community (MDC), a local organisation that is implementing child well-being programmes in camps around Galle. "The reactions were very positive, Graham said. "We tested the materials in Hambantota the day after the last scare on 28 March 2005. It was amazing to hear people's personal experiences from the night before. They realised that they, as a community, were able to protect themselves and that was very empowering".

Thousands of young Sri Lankans are still haunted by the specter of the tsunami. Although very sensitive issues are tackled through the programme, the children are given the opportunity to interact and reflect on their own experiences. Lack of information about tsunamis had created fear among the Sri Lankan people. But the Tsunami Awareness Programme stimulated discussions amongst children and communities. The programme also provided *accurate* information on what happened that tragic day late last year, along with the role each person has in rebuilding their own lives and community.

RESOURCE BANK

Further reading

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Web sites

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<http://www.crin.org>
2. Childtrafficking.com
<http://www.childtrafficking.com>

3. Save the Children
<http://www.savethechildren.org/uk>
4. United Nations Children's Fund
http://www.unicef.org/protection/index_3717.html
6. Academy of American Paediatrics
<http://www.aap.org/new/disasterresources.htm>

Glossary

Child means any person under the age of 18, unless under the (national) law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier (Convention on the Rights of the Child, or CRC, Article 1).

Child protection refers to protection from violence, exploitation, abuse and deprivation from primary givers. Violation of the child right to protection, in addition to being human rights violation, is also massive, unrecognized and underreported barriers to child survival and development. Children subjected to violence, exploitation, abuse and neglect are at risk of shortened lives, poor physical and mental health, education problems, poor parenting skills later in life and homelessness, vagrancy and displacement.

Child-friendly space consists of a safe space where children can go a few hours a day, attending pre-school, taking part in youth activities, playing sports, having access to trained social workers, etc. These hours help children socialize and give relief to overwhelmed caregivers. They can also make it easier to detect children with particular problems and provide assistance to them and their families. Having designated child friendly spaces and engaging in these activities facilitate a return to normalcy.

Fostering refers to situations where children are cared for in a household outside their family. Fostering is usually understood to be a temporary arrangement and in most cases, the birth parents retain their parental rights and responsibilities. The term fostering is used to cover a variety of arrangements as follows:

- **traditional or informal fostering**, where the child is taken into the care of a family or other household that may or may not be related to the child's family – no third party is involved in these arrangements, though they may be endorsed or supported by the local community and may involve well-understood obligations and entitlements;

- **spontaneous fostering**, where a family takes in a child without any prior arrangement – this is a frequent occurrence during emergencies and may involve families from a different community in the case of refugee children;
- **arranged fostering**, where a child is taken into the care of a family as part of an arrangement made by a third party, usually an agency involved in social welfare such as a government department, a religious organization, or a national or international NGO – this arrangement may or may not be covered by formal legislation.

Orphans are children, both of whose parents are known to be dead. In some countries, however, a child who has lost one parent is called an orphan.

Separated children are those separated from both parents, or from their previous legal or customary primary caregiver, but not necessarily from other relatives. These may, therefore, include children accompanied by other adult family members.

Traffic in persons has been defined as: the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the 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.

Unaccompanied children are 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.

Footnotes

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- 4 *O'Donnell, D., Child Protection, a Handbook for Parliamentarians, UNICEF Geneva, 2004, pp. 18-20.*
- 5 *Save the Children, Psychosocial Care and Protection of Tsunami Affected Children: Guiding principles, SAVE, London, 2005, p. 1.*
- 6 *ICRC, Inter-agency Guiding Principles on Unaccompanied and Separated Children, 2004, p.66.*