

## *Guidelines to conduct an assessment in Emergency (1. Methods)*

### **1. Generic Issues and Methods**

#### *Emergency responses should*

- **Promote children's rights.** *Protect and promote children's rights in all situations. The CRC is a good reference point for planning programmes, and all programmes should take into account the fact that ultimately, states are the duty bearers. This means that whilst an immediate response may address the need, some advocacy or capacity building to 'responsibilise' the state or its representatives may be appropriate.*
- **Take account of children's views** *in matters that concern them, and to encourage innovation and creativity in the development of activities that build on children's own ideas and capacities.*
- **Promote the principle of non-discrimination** *by ensuring that assessment, programme planning and implementation responds to the needs of all children regardless of gender, disability, ethnicity, religion or citizenship.*
- **Have in-built systems to support accountability.** *This covers the responsible and efficient use of resources, adherence to agreed project goals and codes of conduct, and responsible and appropriate staff behaviour. These systems will normally be built into programme processes (monitoring and evaluation), and human resource policies.*
- **Build on the capacities of families and communities to provide for, and protect, their children.** *An initial response to protection must build on existing and potential capacities in the affected population since child protection is a collective, societal responsibility, where States are the ultimate duty bearers. This means that family and community strategies for assisting and protecting vulnerable children should be identified in the assessment, along with civil society, state and international level systems and institutions for the protection of children.*
- **Strive to achieve long-term effects:** *maximise the impact of humanitarian aid and promote sustainability by supporting the ability of households, communities and local authorities to protect children, to prevent separations or military recruitment and to facilitate reunification and reintegration.*
- **Be co-ordinated with others.** *Inter-agency co-operation and co-ordination based on agreed principles of child protection are essential for effective response both during an emergency and over the longer term. Organisations involved in the emergency response need to agree roles and responsibilities; the strategy for emergency response and handover to local*

*authorities; the strategy for long-term social policy and child protection needs. Promote the development of, and take an active role in, co-ordination mechanisms between all organisations involved in the response.*

***How assessments should be conducted?***

- *in a way that builds on existing knowledge and documentation, and after a review of any prior assessments involving the same population;*
- *periodically, as the situation of separated children typically changes over time, sometimes radically so, owing to the emergence of new factors;*
- *jointly by two or more of the specialized agencies, as inter-agency cooperation beginning with the initial assessment paves the way for a strong coordinated response later on. In cases where joint assessments are not possible, findings should be shared between concerned agencies;*
- *in the field by means of direct observation, focus groups and interviews with a broad range of key community informants and leaders. These include children, religious leaders, women's groups, local and national authorities, teachers, soldiers, prison authorities, orphanage staff, local and international organisations, NGOs and UN staff.*
- *in such a way as to sensitise the community, the authorities, non-governmental organizations and others regarding the issues related to separated children;*

***What protection issues should an assessment cover?***

You will already have an idea of what kinds of protection issues the affected community may be facing. However, you may want to do some further information gathering and prioritisation exercises with different groups in the community before deciding which specific protection issues an agency should follow up on.

***It is important to avoid jumping into assessment on a specific protection issue before understanding the bigger protection picture*** – by making assumptions and acting on them you may end up missing priority protection problems.

**Because of the sometimes ‘invisible’ nature of protection problems, it is vital to listen carefully to a wide range of informants at the initial stage of assessing the general protection situation.** Even when you have decided to focus on one or two key areas in protection, you need to keep antennae up for other issues that people may disclose new information about as they become more comfortable talking to you and as the situation develops.

***Therefore, remember that children have their specificity: Children are not a homogenous group***

An assessment, particularly in protection, needs to look beyond the category of ‘children’ to achieve a more detailed picture of the protection problems facing different groups of children. Assessors should take into account:

- a) **issues of discrimination** in terms of gender, age, ethnicity, disability and social class /status should be considered at all stage of the assessment
- b) the fact that children of **different ages and phases** in their development are vulnerable in specific ways during emergencies; and

c) the fact that children also become vulnerable due to being in **specific situations (for example child heads of households)** or after having gone through particular **experiences (for example children who have been sexually or physically abused, children who have served in the armed forces etc.)**.

Other 'Golden Rules could include:

- Co-ordinate with others and don't tire beneficiaries with multiple assessments
- Always triangulate in the field

## ***Guidelines to conduct an assessment in Emergency (II Keys)***

### **Before starting an assessment, Remember:**

#### **Three Key rules**

- 1. Always get consent from children and adults (including community leaders or authorities if necessary) before interviewing them.***
- 2. Don't ask about things that you know you will not be able to follow up.***
- 3. Don't interview anyone whom you think may be endangered because of the fact they have talked to you or the kind of information they may give you.***

#### **Respect- be respected**

##### ***1. Presentation***

Present yourself

Make sure the objective of the assessment is understood and agreed to

##### ***2. Patience and time***

The collection of sound and precise info to document human rights is a long difficult process requiring expertise.

A variety of sources needed. Info must be examined, compared

Immediate results should not be expected. Persistence is necessary in raising concerns with national authorities.

Act as a group, share information with other NGOs and protection bodies (ICRC)

##### ***3. Confidentiality***

A breach of confidentiality could have serious consequences

- for the person interviewed and for the victim
- for the staff members own credibility and safety
- for the level of confidence enjoyed by international organisations in the minds of the local pop
- it might jeopardise

##### ***4. Consent***

Get personal consent to use information If the individual does not want information attributed he might agree information can be used outside with no names..

Be aware of where and when and in whose presence info is done

Special measures should also be taken to safeguard the confidentiality of documents including identities of victims, witnesses

##### ***5. Credibility***

Never make promises, which cannot be followed, and guarantee

##### ***6. Impartial and Objective***

Impartiality

Equality

##### ***6. Precision...***

Thorough and well-documented assessment can help identify patterns of protection issues and problems.

If possible, ask for precise info (who where how and when)

Written communication should always have a date of interview, place and name of interviewer.

#### **7. ....*Not inquisition***

In any case, make sure the person knows she has all rights **not** to answer any question. The interview can be postponed or cancelled.

To prevent rejection, make sure to get a sound understanding of the country, the community you are working with and have some background of the person you are going to interview

#### **8. *The information gathered is to help the communities***

The assessment should in any case not attempt to gather evidence for criminal prosecution or replace protection-mandated actors. Investigations should be left to proper authorities.

### ***Children's participation in an assessment***

#### ***Children as resources***

*Although much of the focus on children and adolescents during the early stages of emergencies will be on their status as part of the "affected population", the assessment should also attempt to evaluate whether children and young persons are also being recognised as resources. Even rapid assessments could contribute to making this visible.*

#### ***Children's understanding of the situation***

*Assessors should if possible attempt to find out how children themselves understand the situation. Unnecessary anxiety may be caused through misinterpretations or misinformation. Adults do not always appreciate the needs of children to be informed, and young children cannot always form the "right" questions. Young children have less possibility of assessing rumours correctly. It may be possible, for example when some form of schooling is established, to develop ways of ensuring children have access to as correct information as possible.*

*It is also important that children understand the limits of what a potential programme can do for them, and that there is a possibility that no programme will be run at all.*

#### ***Which checklist?***

This section contains checklists on the following protection issues:

- Access to essential services
- Missing and Separated children
- Institutions
- Children with special needs
- Recruitment of children into the armed forces

However, this is not a definitive list, and you may have to be responsive and creative as you learn from the community about the protection issues they face and how these issues could be addressed.