



2022 DROUGHT RESPONSE

PROTECTION MAINSTREAMING GUIDANCE

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4 Essential Actions to Mainstream Protection in the Drought Response today

1. **Respond** - Every cluster/partner should develop a list of 2 to 3 mitigating measures for each of below listed identified priority risks, and adapt their drought response programming accordingly.
 1. Risk of Minority Clan exclusion from assistance distribution, and violence in assistance delivery.
 2. Risk of increased exposure to SGBV for women and adolescent girls due to displacement.
 3. Risk of Forced Eviction, particularly within and around Mogadishu.
 4. Risk of insufficient communication and dialogue, participation and closing the feedback loop with communities on any concerns and questions raised, reducing ability for affected populations to make informed decisions for themselves.
2. **Refer** - Ensure field staff are aware of Child Protection and GBV referral mechanisms in the area of operation. If none are identified, report this gap to the GBV and/or CP AoR as relevant, and the Protection Cluster.
3. **Present** - Clearly and effectively communicate, and be transparent about resources and services available, targeting criteria, and the targeting process. Information should be available to all – including those not within targeted groups, and reviewed to avoid language/dialect gaps. Consider that community-based targeting may reach marginalized groups more effectively. The Somali languages/dialects this information can be disseminated include: Maxa, May, Bravanese, Kibajuni, mushunguli, Garre, Tunni, Aweer and Boni.
4. **Prevent** - Review staff involved in assessments, assistance, distributions, and reconstruction activities and identify if and when they have been trained to use and apply, as a minimum; (1) Code of Conduct, (2) Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA), (3) Child Safeguarding, and (4) Fraud. Ensure all staff (including volunteers, suppliers, and otherwise) duly sign associated documentation prior to implementing activities.

What is Protection Mainstreaming?

Protection is a collective responsibility¹ for all humanitarian actors,² and system-wide efforts are required to address the key protection priorities emerging because of the drought. Protection Mainstreaming is the process of incorporating protection principles by promoting meaningful access, safety, and dignity in humanitarian aid throughout the program cycle. It focuses not on what we do (the product) but rather on how we do it (the process). Protection Mainstreaming³ has four core protection principles;

1. **Prioritize Safety & Dignity** and avoid causing harm. Prevent and minimize unintended negative effects of the intervention which can increase people's vulnerability to both physical and psychosocial risks.

¹ See the IASC Policy on Protection in Humanitarian Action [iasc_policy_on_protection_in_humanitarian_action.pdf \(interagencystandingcommittee.org\)](#)

² In Somalia Protection Mainstreaming is listed under Strategic Objective 3 of the [2022 Humanitarian Response Plan](#).

³ For a full list of resources see the Global Protection Cluster's dedicated page [Protection Mainstreaming | Global Protection Cluster](#) and the Protection Mainstreaming Toolkit (2017) [gpc-pm_toolkit-2017.en.pdf \(globalprotectioncluster.org\)](#). Other key resources are the IASC [Guidelines for Integrating Gender-based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Action](#) and the [Minimum Standards for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action \(CPMS\)](#).

2. **Ensure Meaningful Access:** Access to assistance and services must be in proportion to need and provided without any barriers (e.g., discrimination), paying special attention to individuals and groups who may be particularly vulnerable or have *difficulty accessing* assistance and services.
3. **Accountability:** Ensure people and local networks are fully engaged in the response efforts and have adequate information about and involvement in the planning to make informed decisions for themselves. In addition, appropriate and effective mechanisms should be established and managed through which all populations can measure the adequacy of interventions and address their concerns and complaints (see the Community Engagement and Accountability Section).
4. **Participation and empowerment:** Communities need to be recognized and engaged with as active in their own response efforts (not as passive recipients of aid). Supporting people in their development of self-protection capacities and assisting them to claim their rights and entitlements through a do no harm approach is critical. This includes ensuring participation outside of existing traditional leadership structures.

Guidance Rationale and Emerging Trends

Somalia is a complex emergency combining insecurity and increasingly severe environmental shocks; abuses against its citizens and refugees remain a defining feature - including forced displacement, exploitation of IDPs, unlawful/forced evictions, sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), child recruitment and affiliation with armed groups and forces (CAAFAG), indiscriminate and disproportionate attacks on civilian areas and infrastructure, and increasing explosive hazards contamination due to armed engagements. The UN has called for urgent action following an “alarming” 80 per cent rise in sexual violence in 2021.⁴ Members of minority clans are also at heightened risk of exclusion based on structural patterns of societal discrimination and have fared worse comparatively to majority clans in previous droughts.⁵

In addition to the protracted conflict, three consecutive rainy seasons with below-average rainfall are bringing about severe drought conditions. 4.5 million people are affected, while 671,000 individuals were internally displaced as of 09 March 2022⁶. Inter-communal conflicts as a result of climatic shocks including drought are on the rise according to Protection and Return Monitoring Network (PRMN). In Galgaduud Region in February 2022, 14,100 individuals were displaced due to inter-clan conflict over pasture and water for livestock.

The Protection Cluster through its partners conducts regular data collection and analysis through the Somalia Protection Monitoring System (SPMS). This includes information for the period October-December 2021, and January-February 2022 in the regions most severely hit according to the Somalia 2022 Drought Response Plan.⁷ Specifically, data was collected in Bakool, Bari, Bay, Galgaduud, Gedo, Lower Juba, and Mudug. Comparison between data collected in Q3 and Q4 shows little variation in main violations reported, including sexual assault, family separation, child marriage, and no access to duty bearers. In comparing data from Q4 and the first two months in 2022, an increase in reports of sexual assault can be seen (2% increase), as well as family separation (2% increase) and no access to duty bearers (3.5% increase). More notably, exclusion from assistance is reported in 2022 (almost 14%), as well as violence in assistance delivery (14%).

⁴ [Somalia: Call for urgent action following ‘alarming’ 80 per cent rise in sexual violence | UN News](#)

⁵ Protection Cluster Mapping of Minorities for the DOCC (2022)

⁶ [Somalia: 2022 Drought Impact Snapshot \(As of 9 March 2022\) - Somalia | ReliefWeb](#)

⁷ [Somalia: 2022 Drought Response Plan - Somalia | ReliefWeb](#), p. 5.

As Banadir Regional Administration is a main destination for displacement – whether drought induced or otherwise – analysis of trends in this area is also relevant. Q4 data analysis indicates that the main population group affected by violence in and exclusion from assistance, lack of access to duty bearers, and family separation are IDPs. Sexual assault is also predominantly reported to affect IDPs, as well as refugees in Q4 2021 in the listed regions. The affected population by said violations remains largely unchanged in the first two months of 2022. However, there is a notable spike in reports of violence in assistance delivery (18.76%, not reported in Q4), and sexual assault (27.06% from 17.39%). Reports of family separation remain largely unchanged between compared timeframes.

The increase in reports both in areas of severe drought as well as presumed displacement destinations may indicate that inter-communal tensions as a result of scarcity of resources and desperation for assistance are on the rise. Furthermore, it clearly underscores the additional protection risks women, children, and families are exposed to as a result of the drought.

According to the briefing paper issued by the HLP AoR in March 2022, worsening drought escalates forced evictions in Banadir region. In an alarming trend, more than 170,000 people have arrived in Mogadishu because of drought displacement since September 2021 and within this period, **66,630 individuals have been forcefully evicted in Mogadishu** with the highest number of eviction incidents taking place in February 2022.⁸

The most severe and acute HLP needs remain concentrated in areas affected by drought and locations hosting large numbers of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and returnees. Newly-drought displaced households are joining existing IDP settlements as a coping mechanism with unclear tenure arrangements, putting them at further risk of forced evictions. The violation of HLP rights, in the form of forced evictions, remains a major negative factor affecting the overall protective environment for newly drought-displaced populations, thereby perpetuating social marginalization. Moreover, the majority of those displaced are elderly, children and women, including pregnant and lactating mothers. The lack of proper shelter and privacy in overcrowded IDP settlements has exposed women and children to protection risks such as gender-based violence including rape and physical assaults. The pressure on limited resources as well as continued to contribute to rising tensions, conflicts and land disputes in the existing IDP settlements and affected communities.

According to Somalia 2022 Drought Response Plan, the drought situation has worsened significantly across Somalia following three consecutive below-average rainy seasons.⁹ The drought emergency is as bad and possibly worse than the 2016/17 drought. According to the Food Security and Nutrition Analysis Unit (FSNAU), *an estimated 4.1 million people, or 25 per cent of the population, could face acute food insecurity at Crisis levels (IPC Phase 3) or worse outcomes through mid-2022, if humanitarian assistance is not scaled up.*¹⁰

Humanitarian Principles

Protection Mainstreaming strives to ensure that humanitarian assistance, in this specific context to drought affected persons is distributed based on needs alone, adhering to the humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality, and independence. Factors such as minority status – due to ethnic,

⁸ <https://evictions.nrcsystems.net/>

⁹ [Somalia: 2022 Drought Response Plan - Somalia | ReliefWeb](#)

¹⁰ [Somalia: Drought Situation Report No.4 \(As of 20 February 2022\) - Somalia | ReliefWeb](#)

religious, or clan affiliation, disability, age and/or gender can influence prioritization processes for humanitarian assistance. Access of minority and marginalized groups to access assistance and protection cannot be compromised, and inclusive approaches should be at the forefront of humanitarian response to ensure assistance reaches the affected population most at risk and/or vulnerable. Needs-based, principled humanitarian action is paramount to avoid doing harm and to ensure lives are saved, and these principles should be applied in all phases of the program cycle.

Most At-Risk Groups

In the Somali context it is essential that humanitarian partners take adequate measures to guarantee access to assistance for population groups which may face barriers or have traditionally shown to have less coping capacity for an acute emergency such as drought. Key groups are:

- Minority Clans
- Children
- Adolescent girls
- Women
- Elderly persons without support
- Persons with disabilities (PwDs)
- Unaccompanied and separated children (UASC)
- Female- or child-headed households (F/CHH)
- Pregnant and lactating women (PLD)
- Chronically ill individuals

In situations of drought and displacement, the risk of family separation, severe distress for children due to shock, loss of homes, and disruption of daily life and routine, as well as a potential increase in SGBV due to a breakdown of community structures, law and order, and a lack of physical protection during displacement or upon arrival at a (temporary) shelter, may require specific protection responses. In addition, a lack of information about critical lifesaving and protection services available is all too often lacking and can further hinder mitigation of risks faced by women, girls, youth, and other vulnerable groups. Furthermore, while in areas of origin, communities may be aware of contaminated areas, people on the move may be at additional risk to encounter explosive remnants of war and/or explosive hazards.

Humanitarian partners should respond to the needs of the various affected groups and/or individuals with consideration for potential differences in coping capacity and resilience, and continuously monitor the situation of populations - both those who are directly and indirectly affected by the drought. Programming and targeting should reflect intersectional factors influencing the extent of vulnerability. An example is that a woman who is both a minority and head of household may be more vulnerable to the impact of drought and have limited access to information and services compared to other women.

Priority Protection Risks

The following sections highlight the key protection risks for drought affected communities.

Risk of Exclusion of Minority Groups

There is a lack of reliable data on the size and location of minority clans (defining minorities as the 0.5 in the 4.5 formula), however, they are estimated to represent 30% of the population.¹¹ Marginalization,

¹¹ OCHA, "A study on minorities in Somalia," August 2002: Available at: <https://reliefweb.int/report/somalia/study-minorities-somalia>

however, is not based on comparative population numbers but rather at the degree to which a population is subjugated and has unequal access to social, economic, and political opportunities.¹² Somalia and Somaliland’s minority clans have a history of being disproportionately affected by consequences of climate and environmental shocks, impacting on several socio-political levels. Drought cannot be separated from (a) historical trends of marginalization and exclusion of minority clans, (b) the lack of humanitarian access to rural populations in the South-Central region, (c) the impact of non-state armed group presence and utilization of droughts and famine to control populations, as well as (d) the ability of clans to support themselves in times of crisis through networks, diaspora remittances, and temporary displacement patterns. A 2019 survey amongst IDPs in Mogadishu and Kismayo found that some members of minority clans were unwilling to return home due to their experience of drought and the presence of armed actors.¹³

Minority clan communities possess low social capital and political influence under the 4.5 system, a political power-sharing formula that gives an equal quota to four major clans and a half-point to a cluster of “minority” clans. When displacement happens, the already existing inequalities are aggravated, introducing a whole new dimension of marginalization and exclusion. IDPs from minority clans, or those with weak social connections in host communities, face more obstacles in accessing information about rights and entitlements, services and assistance, and protection – both from local government and from aid providers.

Exclusion and Aid Diversion

Previous about environmental shocks also indicate a significant occurrence of exclusion due to clan affiliation affecting minority and majority clans.¹⁴ The SPMS reported in 2021 that minority clan community informants consistently reported higher levels of exclusion from aid and extortion/diversion of aid, with little access to redress. Key informants (KIs) originating from minority groups, attributed exclusion from aid due to discrimination based on social background more than non-minority informants. Minority clans do not traditionally own herds and thus might be considered to be sheltered from the livestock (asset and income) loss associated with drought. Yet the casual labor income stream of minority clans is heavily dependent on a healthy economic situation overall, whereby most individuals in any location have disposable income to invest in building projects or to pay for labor, services or similar. Minorities’ income stream collapses as a result of general increase of poverty and limited income, thus no longer employing casual labor. Simultaneously, generally speaking minority clan affiliated individuals have fewer networks, contacts, or diaspora than majority clans to support to prevent the worst associated impacts (e.g., starvation, death) within their clan in line with Somali cultural norms.

Impact on Gender Roles and Increased Prevalence of SGBV

Minority women and girls are especially vulnerable to displacement, and prevalent SGBV such as Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), rape, sexual exploitation, and abuse, have inadequate or non-existent political participation and representation in national institutions, and lack of access to economic and social rights and justice. These risks have escalated in the context of COVID-19, drought, and environmental

¹² Somalia Protection Cluster Position Paper, “Defining a Common Definition of Vulnerability: Marginalized and Minority Groups,” March 2021. Available at: [HumanitarianResponse](#)

¹³ Minority Rights Group (MRG) / Marginalized Communities Advocates – Network (MCA-N), “A Survey Report on how the marginalized communities in IDP sites in Mogadishu and Kismayo perceive their exclusion,” 2019. Available at: [Minority Rights Group](#)

¹⁴ Reports from the Beledweyne flood response in 2019 in addition to more recent data from Anticipatory Action indicate that exclusion based on clan affiliation is a significant impediment to accessing humanitarian assistance.

degradation. A 2018 Joint Partner Assessment¹⁵ noted that the drought changed gender roles within the household. While forced displacement into IDP settlements further limited opportunities for income generation for men, women increasingly engaged in paid work. Men experienced frustration and loss of traditional societal and livelihood roles, reported to contribute to increased rates of domestic violence. There is a high likelihood that consumption patterns change in families when drought and environmental shocks persist, which may lead to gendered discrimination in access to food, with women being encouraged to practice altruism. In the context of exclusion and aid diversion, these risks potentially render the situation of minority women more perilous.¹⁶

Intercommunal Conflicts

During this drought displacement, intercommunal conflicts as a result of drought are on the rise. According to the PRMN, 14,100 individuals were displaced due to inter-clan conflict over pasture and water for their livestock due to the prolonged drought in Galgaduud region in February 2022. Protection partners continue to monitor the situation of affected populations and advocate for all humanitarian agencies to ensure their programs do not cause further harm as a result of conflict sensitive approaches.

Droughts have left herders in Somalia desperate to find pasture for their cattle and brought them into conflict with landowners and yet poor land management is making it more difficult for these pastoralist communities to adapt.

Information Sharing with Affected Populations

Humanitarian programs, including drought response initiatives, should be designed based on partnership, engagement, and feedback from community members where they desire this, with a particular focus on those who are most at risk and/or vulnerable, including minority communities. Communication with communities about plans for an intervention should take place in a language and dialect the community understands and prefers, and use a modality that reflects the communities' existing resources or those that can be sustainably provided. Ensuring communities, particularly those on the margins of local community leadership and power structures, receive information and engage in dialogue with aid providers is critical; this requires mapping vulnerable groups specific preferred channels of communication and delivering information effectively through these. These channels of communication could be health workers, teachers or youth networks who are trusted, or they could be more traditional media communications (radio call in programs, IVR mobile phone audio messages, social media where appropriate). The key is to ensure two-way dialogue is possible and effective to ensure reach and consideration.

Humanitarian partners should put in place safe, appropriate, and accessible communication pathways through multiple channels for drought affected populations to allow confidential reporting of perceived or actual exclusion of services and aid provision without fear of reprisals. This can be done through existing CFM channels, which should be reviewed for awareness, reach, quality, and effectiveness. However, to understand appropriateness and relevance for the various affected groups - including persons affiliated with minority clans, humanitarian partners should conduct a series of consultations on their preferences and adjust program modalities and communications channels accordingly.

¹⁵ [Somalia: Drought and Protection Concerns in IDP sites - Joint Partner Assessment \(April 2018\) - Somalia | ReliefWeb](#)

¹⁶ Source UNFPA 2021 Briefing Note [situation of women and girls - drought in somalia.pdf \(un.org\)](#)

Protection Mainstreaming Principles

During all phases of the humanitarian program cycle as part of the drought response, including distributions, attention should be paid to; (1) avoid causing harm through assistance activities and prioritize safety and dignity of the affected populations, (2) ensure meaningful access to assistance for persons in need through making separate arrangements for vulnerable individuals and groups where so required, (3) be aware of and ensure effective communications, engagement and accountability to affected populations, placing their voices and needs at the center of all humanitarian action, and (4) actively encourage and nurture a vision for community participation and empowerment of communities in design, implantations, monitoring and re-design.

Protection Mainstreaming Checklist: Overarching Considerations

Prioritize Safety and Dignity

- Ensure targeting of humanitarian assistance is done in line with humanitarian principles, with a particular consideration **for the vulnerable groups** listed in this guidance.
- Each Cluster/partner should develop a list of 2 to 3 mitigating measures for each of the following priority risks identified in this guidance, these are –
 - Risk of Minority Clan Exclusion
 - Risk of increased exposure to GBV
 - Risk of Aid Diversion
 - Risk of Forced Eviction
 - Risk of insufficient communication and dialogue with communities, participation and closing the feedback loop on any concerns and questions raised so people can make informed decisions for themselves.
- Design registration or distribution locations so that all individuals can access them safely and with dignity, with specific arrangements for disabled, women and children, in line with cultural practices and/or sensitivities. Some of these considerations are:
 - Ensure the distribution or registration sites are considered based on the shortest distance to the IDP sites and that it is in a safe and accessible area for the community.
 - Consult a diverse representation of community members and ensure distribution and registrations are done at the appropriate time of the day (not during darkness hours). Ensure distribution staff are aware of the timings of female responsibilities. Ensure to provide referral options for SGBV survivors by displaying contact details of the SGBV response team. When responding to SGBV survivors, allocate a registrar/case worker of the same gender to understand the specific needs of the survivor better.
- Ensure all staff are aware of available protection services using the referral pathways dashboards (General Protection¹⁷ and Child Protection dashboard¹⁸) and how to provide a referral if a survivor needs support safely and appropriately. Managers have a particular responsibility to ensure that staff are provided with this information.
- Ensure special consideration is given to disseminate Emergency Explosive Ordnance Risk Education (EEORE) along displacement routes. People on the move and in situations of distress may deprioritize or refocus attention away from usual caution for suspicious items. EEORE messages should encourage IDPs to remain vigilant while on the move, and to inquire about the area of arrival with local community members, authorities, or humanitarian agency staff to

¹⁷ [Somalia PC referral pathway dashboard.](#)

¹⁸ <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/somalia/child-protection>

prevent the risks of injuries or death as a result of EH contamination. Individuals should be instructed to not touch or temper with unknown objects and report the location and presence of such objects to humanitarian organizations or local authorities.

- Review staff involved in assessments, assistance, distributions, and reconstruction activities and identify if and when they have been trained to use and apply, at a minimum; (1) Code of Conduct, (2) Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA), (3) Child Safeguarding, and (4) Fraud, and ensure all staff (including volunteers, suppliers, and otherwise) duly sign associated documentation prior to implementing activities. Consult with the Protection Cluster and AoRs for gaps in knowledge identified and provide refresher courses for staff if the last time they attended such trainings was over 24 months ago.

Ensure Meaningful Access

- Community-based targeting is one way of attempting to ensure that marginalized groups are not excluded, as this approach typically contains a significant element of participation and transparency.
- Humanitarian partners to coordinate their consultations with communities and provide sufficient time and/or staff to ensure that all groups (age/gender/minority/ethnicity) are equally consulted. This requires an adequate plan to engage with the leadership, but to also speak out other key groups purposefully outside of these social, political, and economic groups. As a follow on to these consultations,
 - Adjust the timing and location of distributions to ensure safe and meaningful access
 - Ensure that communities have supported agencies to choose distribution locations that are easily and equally reachable and accessible for all those affected, away from security threats.
- Map Minority Rights Organizations in your cluster/area that can support the identification of instances of aid diversion or exclusion by gatekeepers, local authorities or others and can support with redress or advocacy.
- Ensure measures are in place to distribute supplies to most vulnerable individuals (prioritize) and those who are unable to travel to distribution points, such as the elderly or PwDs.

Accountability

- Clearly and effectively communicate and be transparent about resources and services available, targeting criteria, and the targeting process. This information should be openly available to those not on target lists too so that they can engage in the process as appropriate.
- A culture of openness needs to prevail to ensure anyone can come forward and ask questions about how and why the list was created.
- The lists of target populations selected to receive support and services needs to be flexible to add and remove people as needed to ensure the most vulnerable are included.
- Do not rely on the community leader or gate keeper to share this information – you need to effectively resource how you will reach people with this information and how you will build a two-way dialogue process. This information should be openly shared with authorities and other stakeholders.
- Effectively communicate that there are no charges for services (health, nutrition, protection etc.,) and ensure people know how and where to confidentially report issues.
- Clearly communicate service operating times (clinic opening and closing, food distribution etc.,) and adhere to commitments given.

- Ensure that important information (e.g., cash or voucher transfer explanations, distribution timings and locations) is agreed with and communicated clearly and effectively and reaches the people it is intended for.
- The Somali languages/dialects this information can be disseminated includes: Maxa, May, Bravanese, Kibajuni, Mushunguli, Garre, Tunni, Aweer and Boni.
- Some of the channels of communication to consider include radio, audio messages / mobile phone calls, social media / local trusted networks who can pass on information.
- HR and Project Managers to review the gender and ethnic composition of their teams and identify gaps in representation.

Engagement, Participation, and Empowerment

- Begin with a vision for active participation of the communities you work with. Identify local community mobilizers, volunteers, and others to support your efforts and build the capacity of these groups into your plans. Have an exit strategy built into your plans that removes your agency or partner from the equation.
- Conduct a mapping of local community power structures and ensuring people outside of leadership structures have access to information, services, and support. This includes for new arrivals who may be outside of local community committees and authorities - understand how, when where and through whom they get trusted information and leverage this in your plans.
- Conduct an in-house session with field staff and local networks, authorities, and others on their knowledge of existing coping mechanisms and community-based protection mechanisms; develop recommendations to support these. Conduct the same session with a wide and diverse representation of communities and build and develop the recommendations with them, while potentially coordinating between agencies to be more effective.
- Consult with GBV partners and share information on how women and communities organize to enhance the safety of women and girls.

Care with Referrals

In case of identification of individuals in severe distress, children with protection concerns - including UASC, SGBV survivors, evictions, or when explosive hazards/remnants of war are found/suspected, please refer the individual/situation to the dedicated specialized protection service provider in the respective location making use of usual referral pathways.

While referring:

- Ensure confidential management of the case (for example: do not send personal details to a wide audience and ensure password protection / sealed envelopes when sharing referral documentation and information).
- Ensure the affected individual is informed of the referral.
- Ensure the individual provided informed consent (or, in exceptional cases relating to children; assent) to the referral and is provided the chance to indicate any information they wish to omit within the referral. Do not probe for details of incidents.
- Do not collect “proof” of whether an incident did or did not actually occur.
- Do not insist the affected individual recounts his/her story multiple times.

Specifically regarding SGBV survivors who come forward:

- Do not document or record the details of the case (in writing, photographs, recorded interview, etc.)
- Do not attempt to seek out SGBV survivors or to investigate/mediate the case yourself.
- Do not share the details of the case/survivor with anyone unless the survivor has consented

IMPORTANT: Following an incident of sexual violence, there is a limited time window during which clinical interventions (medication to prevent HIV transmission, emergency contraception, etc.) are effective. If the survivor consents to seeking services, it is important to try and connect her/him with health care providers as soon as possible.

For further guidance, take note of the annexes on dealing with children (Annex 1) and GBV survivors (Annex 2).

Annex 1 – General Considerations for Dealing with Children in Distress

Natural disasters, violence or conflict can be traumatic and distressing for children and their families. Experiencing a dangerous situation or displacement is frightening for children as this undermines a child's sense of security and normalcy. Children look to the significant adults in their lives for guidance on how to manage their reactions during and after the immediate threat is over.

CHILDREN WITH OBVIOUS SIGNS OF DISTRESS:

The below is a list of normal reactions of children who experienced shocking/traumatic situations. In severe distress they may need specialized assistance.

- Have physical symptoms of not feeling well, such as shivering/shaking, headaches, loss of appetite, aches, and pains.
- Cry excessively/more than usual.
- Be hysterical and panicking.
- Be aggressive and try to hurt others (hit, kick, bite, etc.).
- Cling continuously to their caregivers.
- Seem confused or disorientated.
- Appear withdrawn or very quiet with little or no movements.
- Hide or shy away from other people.
- Do not respond to others, do not speak at all.
- Visibly scared.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

- **Do No Harm:** Be careful not to distress the child further. You do not know what experiences the child has been through. Avoid questions, attitudes or comments that can come across judgmental, insensitive to cultural values, expose a child to humiliation, or that reactivate a child's pain and grief from traumatic events.
- **Ensure confidentiality:** Do not share children's personal information/ photo with people not related to the child, only with informed consent in case of referral, and using basic data protection practices at a minimum.
- **Best interest of the child:** Any action taken should ensure that the child's physical and emotional safety, and overall wellbeing comes first.

- **Non-discrimination:** All children receive appropriate care and support regardless of their individual characteristics or a group they belong to (e.g., gender, age, socio-economic background, race, religion, ethnicity, disability).
- Link separated and unaccompanied children with their family immediately, or with organizations that can care for the child while family tracing is being conducted.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO PROTECT CHILDREN FROM FURTHER HARM:

- Take the child to an identified child protection agency with staff trained to support the child's needs and able to utilize established resources to provide the child with the needed support or assistance – including family reunification.
- Do not allow random people to approach the child. People might have good intentions, but it can further distress the child and expose children to further risks unwittingly.
- Keep the media away from the child. Do not allow any media to take photos or conduct interviews with a child. Take special care in sensitive situations where children may be more exposed to media attention.
- Keep any personal information/details of the child confidential. Do not share name, age, gender, ethnic /tribal origin, location of the child to anyone but humanitarian actors who can assist, and in doing so apply data protection protocols and best practices.
- Do not share any photo, name, location of the child in social media such as Facebook, Twitter, or other messaging fora such as WhatsApp, Messenger, or otherwise.

BEFORE YOU SPEAK TO THE CHILD:

- Try to limit the number of people the child interacts with, as too many people/interactions might distress the child further.
- Be patient and remain calm. It may take time for children to trust strangers, especially if they are afraid.
- Sit with the child in a peaceful area and give the child your undivided attention.
- Try to sit down next to the child, or bend down to talk to the child, so you are at the same level.
- Ensure a trusted adult is with the child if they are not separated. Take special care in engaging with girls - a female staff/ worker should accompany them.

WHEN YOU SPEAK TO THE CHILD:

- First introduce yourself, and explain that you are there to help, explain where the child is, what will happen next, where they are being transported, and that you are taking them to people who will assist them.
- Speak softly, slowly, and calmly. Speak in simple terms and language the child is most likely to understand based on their age.
- If the child does not want to speak, explain that silence is okay and what is happening/planned to assist the child with.
- If the child does speak, remain quiet and let the child speak without interruption. Use your body language and small verbal cues to show that you are listening and concentrating on what the child is saying. Be sure to block out any distractions.

- Where appropriate, nod and smile to put the child at ease. Repeat what the child said in your own words to ensure that you have understood the child correctly.
- Accept and support all emotions the child may express or show. While you cannot prevent a child from being worried and anxious, you may help the child understand that such emotions are common after bad or unexpected experiences.

Do Not:

- Force a child to answer a question that he or she is not ready to answer.
- Force a child to speak before he/she is ready.
- Probe, you are there to help. Probing and asking questions about the child’s experience can harm the child in the initial phase after a stressful event. Listen and focus on the child’s basic needs.
- If the child is disclosing abuse, **do not** have the child repeat the story of their experience/abuse.
- Become angry with a child.
- Use weapons in front of the child unless it is necessary to physically protect the child.
- Make any promises or raise expectations (such as “we will find your father and mother”).
- Release personal details, photos, or video of the child to media or post on social media forums. This could cause harm to the child.
- Give the child to anyone who claims to be relatives of the child unless the relationship has been confirmed. If in doubt, contact child protection organizations in your area for further assistance.
- Discriminate in choosing children to talk to/interview because of sex, race, age, religion, status, educational background, or physical abilities.
- Take photos that can compromise the anonymity of a child and program site like an Interim Care Center (ICC), a GBV shelter, or other types of Safe Spaces. Its security is dependent on keeping its location secret.

Annex 2 – Key Messages to Support Survivors of SGBV When A GBV Actor Is Not Available

The below key messages are directly taken from the GBV Guidelines Pocket Guide. The full guide offers concise but comprehensive guidance. Humanitarian and other emergency responders are encouraged to take note of the *full guide*¹⁹.

- **Always talk to a GBV specialist first to understand what GBV services are available in your area.** Some services may take the form of hotlines, a mobile app or other remote support.
- **Be aware of any other available services in your area.** Identify services provided by humanitarian partners such as health, psychosocial support, shelter, and non-food items. Consider services provided by communities such as mosques / churches, women’s groups, and disability service organizations.
- **Remember your role.** Provide a listening ear, free of judgment. Provide accurate, up-to-date information on available services. Let the survivor make their own choices. Know what you can and cannot manage. Even without a GBV actor in your area, there may be other partners, such as a child protection or mental health specialist, who can support survivors that require additional

¹⁹ <https://gbvguidelines.org/en/pocketguide/>

attention and support. Ask the survivor for permission before connecting them to anyone else. Do not force the survivor if s/he says no.

- **Do not proactively identify or seek out GBV survivors.** Be available in case someone asks for support.
- **Remember your mandate.** All humanitarian practitioners are mandated to provide non-judgmental and non-discriminatory support to people in need regardless of gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, disability status, age, ethnicity / tribe / race / religion, who perpetrated / committed violence, and the situation in which violence was committed.

USE A SURVIVOR-CENTERED APPROACH BY PRACTICING:

- **Respect:** all actions you take are guided by respect for the survivor's choices, wishes, rights and dignity.
- **Safety:** the safety of the survivor is the number one priority.
- **Confidentiality:** people have the right to choose to whom they will or will not tell their story and maintaining confidentiality means not sharing any information with anyone.
- **Non-discrimination:** providing equal and fair treatment to anyone in need of support.
- If health services exist, always provide information on what is available. Share what you know, and most importantly explain what you do not and let the survivor decide if s/he wants to access them. Receiving quality medical care within 72 hours can prevent transmission of sexually transmitted infections (STIs), and within 120 hours can prevent unwanted pregnancy.
- Provide the opportunity for people with disabilities to communicate to you without the presence of their caregiver, if wished and does not endanger or create tension in that relationship.
- If a man or boy is raped it does not mean he is gay or bisexual. Gender-based violence is based on power, not someone's sexuality.
- IDPs affiliated with minorities are often at increased risk of harm and violence due to their weak protection within the society. Actively listen and seek to support all survivors.
- Anyone can commit an act of gender-based violence including a family member, caregiver, in-law, stranger, parent, or someone who is exchanging money or goods for a sexual act.
- Anyone can be a survivor of gender-based violence – this includes, but isn't limited to, people who are married, elderly individuals or people who engage in sex work.
- Protect the identity and safety of a survivor. Do not write down, take pictures, or verbally share any personal/identifying information about a survivor or their experience, including with your supervisor. Put phones and computers away to avoid concern that a survivor's voice is being recorded.
- Personal/identifying information includes the survivor's name, perpetrator(s) name, date of birth, registration number, home address, work address, location where their children go to school, the exact time and place the incident took place etc.
- Share general, non-identifying information to:
 - o Your team or sector partners to make your program safer.
 - o Your support network when seeking self-care and encouragement.

Do:

- Allow the survivor to approach you. Listen to their needs.
- Ask how you can support with any basic urgent needs first. Some survivors may need immediate medical care or clothing.
- Ask the survivor if s/he feels comfortable talking to you in your current location. If a survivor is accompanied by someone, do not assume it is safe to talk to the survivor about their experience in front of that person.
- Provide practical support like offering water, a private place to sit, a tissue etc.
- To the best of your ability, ask the survivor to choose someone s/he feels comfortable with to translate for and/or support them if needed.

Examples of what to say:

- “You seem to be in a lot of pain right now, would you like to go to the health clinic?”
- “Does this place feel OK for you? Is there another place where you would feel better? Do you feel comfortable having a conversation here?”
- “Would you like some water? Please feel free to have a seat.”

Do Not:

- Ignore someone who approaches you and shares that s/he has experienced something bad, something uncomfortable, something wrong and/or violence.
- Force help on people by being intrusive or pushy.
- Overreact. Stay calm.
- Pressure the survivor into sharing more information beyond what s/he feels comfortable sharing. The details of what happened and by whom are not important or relevant to your role in listening and providing information on available services.
- Ask if someone has experienced GBV, has been raped, has been hit etc.

Annex 3 – Key Messages on Housing, Land and Property in Drought Response

- **Support proactive engagements to negotiate improved tenure arrangements** and/or facilitate dignified relocations to alternative land with secure tenure for drought-affected populations; to mitigate the risk of forced evictions, local authorities, humanitarian and development stakeholders should pay particular attention and take steps to improve tenure security for Displacement Affected Communities through land tenure documentation.
- **Undertake due diligence:** this helps identify and increase understanding of the type of rights relating to land, housing and property, the degree to which tenure arrangements are secure, ownership and types of ownership/control, documentation (agreements, title deeds etc.), permitted use, legality of construction, encumbrances and easements.¹ It remains critical that even within an emergency response, due diligence processes are followed.
- **Increase access to justice for HLP specific cases:** empower vulnerable displacement affected communities to access justice: support legal aid projects in all locations where forced evictions are high.
- **Invest in policy influence and practice through advocacy:** collective and organized campaigns should be implemented to ensure displacement affected communities’ HLP concerns are well represented and addressed in policy reform.