

Checklist to Identify the Special Needs and Vulnerabilities of Displaced Children

This checklist is designed to assist in the identification of the special needs and vulnerabilities of internally displaced children in both IDP camp and non-camp settings. It is not intended as a comprehensive assessment tool. Use of this checklist is intended to support identification of primary issues facing displaced children and of basic protection tools being used. All this is ultimately intended to lead towards improving understanding of the situation of displaced children and mechanisms that can be used to improve their protection.

General note: Please consider in each category if information is disaggregated by age and sex.

Demographics

- How many displaced children are living in IDP camps, host families and other settings?
- How is the composition of IDP camps and host families impacted by ethnicity? Are there groups of children who may be more vulnerable, such as children from minorities groups, disabled children, other?

Documentation

- Do displaced children have proper documentation establishing legal identity, such as birth certificates?
- If not, why not? Were documents lost or destroyed?
- Does lack of documentation prohibit access to needed services such as healthcare or school?
- How can proper documents be obtained if at all?

Separation

- Have displaced children been separated from their families?
- How many unaccompanied and separated children have been identified and documented?
- What circumstances contribute to the division of the family unit?
- How many child-headed households are there?
- Is separation linked to displacement, the family's socio-economic vulnerability, child labor, domestic violence and/or other forms of exploitation?
- Is there a tracing system for reuniting separated children with families?
- Is appropriate interim care available allowing children to meet basic needs?

Recruitment and Abduction

- How many displaced children have been abducted, recruited, re-recruited or "voluntarily" coerced into armed forces or groups from IDP camps or other IDP settings?
- For what purposes are displaced children abducted, recruited, re-recruited or "voluntarily" coerced (ie front lines, portering, domestic labor, sexual slavery etc.)?
- Are insecure conditions in IDP settings increasing the vulnerability of children, such as close proximity of military camps to IDP sites or unsafe access routes to schools?
- Are there opportunities for the reintegration of children released from armed forces or groups?

Education

- What types of formal and/or non-formal educational opportunities exist for displaced children?
- Do displaced girls and boys attend school in equal numbers throughout all years of basic education?
- What are some of the barriers preventing displaced children from attending school? (Security concerns, lack of family resources, school fees, distance to schools, overcrowded classes, domestic duties etc)
- Do certain groups of children have most difficulty attending school? (ie young mothers, disabled etc)

- Is the curriculum culturally, socially and linguistically relevant? Is it recognized by the home government? Does it include life skills? School feeding programs?
- Are there sufficient qualified, trained and adequately paid teachers?

Health

- Do children have access to minimum standards of food, water, medical services?
- What types of illnesses are commonly seen in displaced children? Is this different for girls and boys?
- What is the rate of malnutrition in children under 5 years-old? What is the percent receiving supplemental/ therapeutic feeding?
- What is the coverage of a measles vaccination campaign, if any? Other vaccinations?
- Are children exposed to air pollution/acute respiratory infection from burning firewood inside dwellings?
- What is the coverage of maternal child health services? Infant feeding programs in emergencies?
- What services are available to children to prevent/address sexually transmitted diseases including HIV/AIDs and to prevent unwanted pregnancy?

Psycho-social Support

- What types of psychosocial support services are available for displaced children?
- Are they age and gender appropriate?
- Are child-friendly spaces available to provide informal recreational, creative and educational activities?
- Do support services involve trained counselors?

Gender-based Violence (GBV)

- What forms of GBV are taking place? Are displaced children vulnerable or targeted?
- What factors contribute to their vulnerability (ie proximity to military camps, camp planning, child-headed households etc.)?
- Who are the primary perpetrators (government forces, non-state armed groups, family members)?
- What services exist to prevent GBV in IDP settings and support child-survivors of sexual violence?

Exploitation

- Are IDP children being trafficked, prostituted, subjected to harsh labor conditions, or forced into early marriage or illegal adoption?
- How does a parent or head of household's loss of livelihood impact displaced children?
- What are the livelihood strategies of displaced families, including child-headed households?
- Is vocational training available to teach basic competency skills needed to lead to income?

Discrimination

- Are displaced children who belong to ethnic or religious minorities suffering discrimination from local authorities, host communities or other IDPs?

Host Communities

- What are the major impacts of the displacement situation on the host community?
- How are children in the host community affected in terms of education, food security, health or other?

* In interviewing and reporting on children, attention should be paid to each child's right to confidentiality, to have their opinions heard, to participate in decisions affecting them and to be protected from harm and retribution. (UNICEF- *Behaviour Change Communication in Emergencies: A Toolkit*, 2006)

*For further information on the topics covered, including guidelines on taking appropriate action, see: *Handbook for the Protection of Internally Displaced Persons*, Global Protection Cluster Working Group (12/07)