

Technical Annex: Recommendations to Support the 2023 Overview of the Impact of Crises on Children and Their Protection

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ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT

This Technical Annex accompanies [*The Unprotected: An Overview of the Impact of Humanitarian Crises on Children in 2023*](#). It has been developed in collaboration with the Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action’s members and partners, including consultations with child protection teams and coordination groups across 13 humanitarian crises. It includes thematic spotlights on “Children Affected by Armed Conflict” and “Children Separated from their Caregivers”, as the two top issues coming out of the consultations. It outlines three action areas for investment and prioritisation as we move into 2024: investment in the social service workforce, prioritising prevention of harm, and working across sectors and across the humanitarian system. Each thematic spotlight and action area includes specific recommendations relevant to child protection and wider actors across the humanitarian system.

1. THEMATIC SPOTLIGHTS

Spotlight 1: Children Affected by Armed Conflict

The escalation of armed conflicts and the increasing violation of International Humanitarian Law and disregard for International Human Rights Law has had devastating consequences for children’s protection in 2023. An increase in the scale and intensity of conflicts, often with no clear end in sight, paints a very bleak outlook for children in 2024.

Today, one in five children globally (400 million children) live in or are fleeing from conflict zones.¹ Horrifying numbers of children are being maimed and killed, recruited and used by armed groups and armed forces, abducted, and subjected to sexual violence. Meanwhile essential services and infrastructure that children depend on to survive and thrive, including hospitals and schools, are being attacked or used for military purposes, and lifesaving humanitarian assistance is being deliberately denied.

In the last 2023 report² covering the period January–December 2022, the UN Secretary-General highlights 27,180 grave violations against children verified, with the highest numbers of children affected in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Israel and the State of Palestine, Somalia, Ukraine, and Syria. This number corresponds to the violations and abuses that the UN was able to verify and thus constitutes only the tip of the iceberg. Nevertheless, it is the highest-ever number reported on in the annual report of the Secretary-General on children and armed conflict. Killing and maiming and recruitment and use have been the most prevalent of the grave violations against children. They affected 8,630 and 7,622 children respectively. In some countries the situation seems to have improved in comparison to 2021 with a decrease of violations against children (by 52% in the Central African Republic, by 41% in Yemen, and by 38% in the Philippines), however overall there is an increase of grave violations. Attacks on schools and hospitals increased by 112%, the recruitment and use of children by armed forces and armed groups by 21%, and abduction of children has increased by 15% compared to the previous reporting year, 2021. The increase of grave violations was significantly higher in Myanmar (142%), South Sudan (137%), and Burkina Faso (84%). Other trends affecting children are concerning, such as the detention of children for their actual or alleged association with armed groups (2,496 children), including groups designated as terrorist groups by the United Nations, and the military use of schools and hospitals (+60%). Verified

¹ <https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/children-live-world-increasingly-hostile-their-rights>

² <https://childrenandarmedconflict.un.org/document/secretary-general-annual-report-on-children-and-armed-conflict-2/>

cases of conflict-related sexual violence perpetrated against children decreased by 12%, but such violence continued to be vastly underreported for a variety of factors, including stigmatisation, fear of reprisals, social norms, and lack of access to services.³

During 2024, exacerbation of existing conflicts and new conflicts will likely increase the number of violations and abuses against children. The conflict that broke out in Sudan in April 2023 has displaced four million people and UNICEF has received allegations of more than 3,100 serious violations, including the killing and maiming of children.⁴ Children in the Gaza Strip have been killed, maimed, deprived of humanitarian assistance, and their hospitals and schools have been attacked. The tragic loss of life and injuries inflicted to children is devastating and exposure to violence is profoundly traumatic. For children, these levels of exposure to violence have lifelong consequences on their health and development and can lead to disability, developmental delay, malnutrition, post-traumatic stress, and emotional and behavioural disorders.⁵ Furthermore, in some contexts, children of a certain age are treated as adults or as “young” adults under the cover of traditional or cultural values or counterterrorism or national security responses. This has dramatic implications for the full enjoyment of their rights and protections provided by the CRC.

Addressing the issue of conflict-affected children is not only a legal and moral obligation but also a strategic investment in the future. To break perpetual cycles of violence that continue to harm children daily, we cannot afford to only be reactive, but we must proactively work together. The focus of efforts should be on prevention, protection, and accountability. Ending and preventing grave violations against children and ensuring that perpetrators are held accountable has never been more urgent.

Recommendations:

- **Uphold international law and endorse and implement key international standards and instruments to protect children in armed conflict:**
 - The scale, severity, and recurrence of grave violations against children in armed conflict must be strongly condemned and perpetrators held accountable.
 - All parties must uphold their obligations under International Humanitarian Law and International Human Rights Law, and in particular, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and demand immediate and concrete steps to hold ALL perpetrators accountable. All persons under 18 years old are children and should be considered and treated as children.

³ [idem](#)

⁴ <https://www.unicef.org/sudan/reports/unicef-sudan-humanitarian-situation-report-october-2023>

⁵ [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanchi/article/PIIS2352-4642\(23\)00326-7/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanchi/article/PIIS2352-4642(23)00326-7/fulltext)

- States should endorse and implement key international standards and instruments, such as the Paris Principles and Commitments, the Vancouver Principles, Safe Schools Declaration, and Political Declaration on Explosive Weapons In Populated Areas (EWIPA) as part of clear steps to end and prevent grave violations.
- In all circumstances, children should be treated primarily as the victims of violations of international law rather than as perpetrators, in line with Security Council resolution 2427 (2018), the Principles and Guidelines on Children Associated with Armed Forces or Armed Groups, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and International Human Rights Law and International Humanitarian Law instruments and standards.
- **Ensure issues related to conflict-affected children are explicitly referenced in discussions around Security Sector Reform (SSR); Disarmament, Demobilisation, and Reintegration (DDR); peace processes and mediation; conflict prevention; conflict analysis; early warning; stabilisation; and the Humanitarian-Development-Peace triple nexus.**
- **Fund and resource accountability mechanisms and ensure they have a specific focus on children, specifically:**
 - An emphasis on addressing crimes against children (and related expertise) should be included in the mandates of accountability mechanisms.⁶
 - Funding should be allocated, and advocacy conducted with states to support the consistent building and provision of expertise in the investigation and documentation of conflict-related violations and crimes against children.⁷
 - Sustainable and comprehensive funding should be made available for the Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism on children and armed conflict.
- **Make funding available for flexible, multi-year standalone and integrated programming to protection children in armed conflict, including:**
 - Funding for multi-year standalone and integrated programming to strengthen community-based services and supports that help address vulnerability to violations and support children, families, and communities that have been affected by them.

⁶<https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/document/advancing-justice-children-innovations-strengthen-accountability-violations-and-crimes/>

⁷ *idem*

- Sustainable and comprehensive funding for child reintegration programmes for Children Associated with Armed Forces and Armed Groups (CAAFAG) and Child Protection personnel. This should include approaches to prevent the recruitment of children.

For more information:

- [The CAAFAG Task Force of the Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action](#)
- [The Six Grave Violations – Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict](#)
- [Study on the evolution of the Children and Armed Conflict mandate 1996–2021 – Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict](#)



Figure 1: Two Palestinian children sitting in the rubble of what is left of their house in Rafah city, southern Gaza Strip in November 2023.



Figure 2: 17-year-old Habriel is standing in front of a building, destroyed by the shelling on 28 October 2023 in Izium, Ukraine.

SPOTLIGHT 2: SEPARATION OF CHILDREN FROM THEIR CAREGIVERS

The number of forcibly displaced people reached another record high in 2023 and is now over 114 million people.⁸ As more and more people are forced to flee situations of conflict, violence, and climate-induced disasters, preventing the separation of children from their families, and responding to the needs of unaccompanied and separated children, must be prioritised by the humanitarian sector. Without the care of their families, children are at heightened risk of physical and psychological harm, abduction, trafficking and unlawful recruitment or use by armed forces or armed groups, sexual abuse and exploitation, and permanent loss of identity.⁹

In Sudan, where the world’s largest child displacement crisis has unfolded since the outbreak of conflict in April 2023, unaccompanied and separated children are particularly vulnerable to recruitment by armed groups and armed forces.¹⁰ Available data from some of the world’s most dangerous migration routes suggest that an increasing number of children in 2023 were unaccompanied or separated from families or caregivers. More than 11,600 children crossed the Central Mediterranean Sea to Italy without their parents or legal guardians between January and mid-September 2023, an increase of 60% compared to the same period the previous year.¹¹ The Darien Gap—a remote jungle crossing point between Colombia and Panama—saw a seven-fold increase in the number of children making this dangerous crossing in 2023 compared to 2022, amongst them a growing number of unaccompanied or separated children.¹²

Children without parental care typically represent at a minimum 1% of the affected populations in humanitarian situations and up to 5%,¹³ yet we know that their numbers are consistently underestimated and children insufficiently identified. Additionally, case management and social service systems are only capturing a fraction of the cases of unaccompanied and separated children, leaving a large proportion of the most vulnerable children exposed to further harm.

⁸ <https://news.un.org/en/story/2023/10/1142827>

⁹ https://alliancecpa.org/sites/default/files/technical/attachments/handbook-web-2017-0322_3.pdf

¹⁰ Sudan: UN expert warns of child recruitment by armed forces- Sudan | ReliefWeb

¹¹ Number of unaccompanied children crossing deadly Central Mediterranean Sea migration route to Italy increases by 60 per cent – UNICEF- Italy | ReliefWeb

¹² Seven-fold increase in the number of children walking through the Panamanian jungle towards North America this year (unicef.org)

¹³ <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/01979183231202441>

Programming to prevent and respond to family separation in humanitarian settings remains insufficiently prioritised, despite it being a consistent feature of all humanitarian crises. There is an absence of the systematic use of indicators and targets dedicated to unaccompanied and separated children, family separation, and case management more generally. This in turn reduces visibility of the issue, personnel deployed, and resources mobilised.

A skilled cadre of local and international humanitarian responders is essential to adequately prevent family separation, facilitate the provision of quality care for unaccompanied and separated children, and ensure well-functioning case management systems. However, national and local organisations, who are always the first responders and best placed to respond to unaccompanied and separated children, due to the often long-term and highly contextualised nature of the services they require, are under-funded and under-supported. While international child protection actors struggle to deploy and maintain expert personnel, as needed, in some of the most acute crises. It is fundamental to mobilise child protection specialists with expertise in the core elements of UASC programming, including situation analysis, prevention of separation, applied case management, family tracing and reunification, Best Interest Determination, temporary care, information management systems, and cross-border work. This expertise should always be shared with local actors.

Decades of humanitarian experience in preventing and responding to family separation across diverse humanitarian contexts has led to the growth in tried and tested interagency materials, for example [The Field Handbook on Unaccompanied and Separated Children](#) and the [Alternative Care in Emergencies Toolkit](#). It is imperative there is continued investment in rolling out, contextualising, and updating these fundamental materials, targeting the needs of both child protection and broader humanitarian actors.

Beyond specialised child protection practitioners, all humanitarian actors, across sectors, should understand the risk factors related to family separation in their operational contexts, including those related to their specific programming and how they can exacerbate risks for children. Some sectoral programmes, such as education, health, and nutrition, that have daily contact with children may play a particularly critical role in prevention and response to separation. Close and regular collaboration with child protection actors and use of interagency tools and guidance can support humanitarian actors design and implement programmes that mitigate risks of family separation and ensure separated children and those at risk of separation are identified and referred to the appropriate services and supports.

Recommendations:

- Ensure that programming to prevent and respond to family separation in humanitarian settings is prioritised and funded through investing in:
 - Strengthened systems for identification of and response to UASC to ensure that those in need of services can receive them, through provision of training and outreach to a range of actors from child protection and other sectors.
 - The systematic use of indicators and targets dedicated to unaccompanied and separated children, family separation, and case management more generally.

- Strengthen technical capacity of child protection actors in working with unaccompanied and separated children:
 - Invest in rolling out, contextualising, and updating fundamental technical guidance and training materials—in core languages—to support the coordinated prevention and response to child protection risks experienced by unaccompanied and separated children.
 - Sustainably fund and support local actors to provide specialised and contextualised services to prevent and respond to family separation.
 - Fund the deployment of child protection specialists with expertise in the core elements of UASC programming to new humanitarian crises to support rapid adaptation of systems and contextualisation of technical materials.

- Strengthen knowledge and capacity of non-child protection actors to support the protection of unaccompanied and separated children:
 - Develop and widely socialise the use of tools and guidance targeting broader humanitarian actors to support the design and implementation of programmes that mitigate risks of family separation.
 - Develop and widely socialise the use of tools and guidance targeting broader humanitarian actors to ensure separated children and those at risk of separation are identified and referred to the appropriate services and supports.
 - Ensure all actors in humanitarian crises, across all sectors and the nexus, understand the risk factors related to family separation in their operational contexts, including those related to their specific programming, and how they can mitigate them.

For more information:

- [The Unaccompanied and Separated Children Task Force of the Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action](#)



Figure 3: Esther, a Haitian mother of two children, arrives in pirogue to Lajas Blancas Migrant Temporary Reception Center on 26 May 2023, after crossing the Darien jungle with her husband.



Figure 4: Two children staying at the CAS Hermanos Caminantes in March 2023 shelter head toward a tent for dinner. CAS Hermanos Caminantes is a shelter managed by World Vision that is on the road that connects Cúcuta with Bucaramanga, Colombia.

2: AREAS FOR ACTION IN 2024

Action Area 1: Invest in Strengthened Child Protection Workforce for Contextualised and Sustainable Child Protection

The protective factors that exist in a child's ecosystem are often eroded during times of crises, and children face new and increased protection risks. Lifesaving and life-sustaining protection services and supports, to meet increasing numbers of affected children and their families, need to be available and scalable. The provision of these services and supports requires a resourced and skilled social service workforce composed of actors from across local, national, government, and international agencies, as needed. A key element of this is the prioritisation of capacity sharing between local and international actors and across sectors to ensure programmes are well-adapted, high-quality, and sustainable. Efforts should be systematic and holistic rather than project-focused and ensure appropriate connection across sectors. They should target a wide range of actors, going beyond established partnerships.

Why is this important?

Investment in increased and sustained capacities for the child protection workforce can guarantee better services for children, avoid exposing them to further harm, and also prevent harm from happening. Capacity strengthening efforts can be a protection keystone provided they are grounded in identified learning needs and adult learning principles, adequately contextualised, co-created, and implemented in partnerships with key local stakeholders, including academic institutions.

They are also an indispensable step towards a shift to locally-led responses and a greater role to be played by local and national actors at the global sectoral level. Localised responses can better respond to increasingly dynamic humanitarian challenges, within an environment of dwindling resources, and help ensure that children are protected and thrive.

Effectiveness and efficiency of humanitarian action can be improved through local knowledge, trust, and other complimentary capacities, having local and national actors own an increasingly leading role through sustainably investing in their technical expertise and institutional systems.

What is being done?

Capacity strengthening for CPHA as a sector tends to take place at the level of the individual. It can include learning initiatives in technical subjects, including child protection risks (e.g., dangers and injuries, children associated with armed forces and groups), child protection strategies (e.g., case management), and working with other sectors as well as learning initiatives on core humanitarian competencies and coordination (e.g., understanding the humanitarian context, operating safely and securely).

The Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action has produced learning resources (learning packages, e-modules, massive open online courses) and organised online and face-to-face learning events, progressively shifting focus from a capacity building approach to one of capacity sharing. Over the course of the evolution and professionalisation of Child Protection in Humanitarian Action, several attempts have been made to strengthen the CPHA workforce. However, they do not sufficiently meet the increasing demand for specialised child protection services, cater for high staff turnover, the high demand for specialised child protection services, nor the need to link with other sectors to address children's holistic needs in humanitarian contexts. This is mainly due to the short term and project-based nature of the various initiatives, and although some interagency initiatives (i.e. the Child Protection in Emergencies Diploma and the CPIE Professional Development Programme) had promising scope and structure, they were insufficiently resourced to cater for the needs of the sector. With increasingly complex and interconnected crises, consistent investment is required to keep pace with mounting and evolving child protection needs.

It is a shared responsibility of donors, UN agencies, and international NGOs to invest in capacity strengthening and capacity sharing efforts of the CPHA workforce for all child protection actors intervening in a response, going beyond established partnerships.

What are the key recommendations?

- Ensure all capacity strengthening initiatives build on existing strengths while following interagency approaches and standards through contextualised and locally-led child protection action.
- Provide increased, regular, and predictable funding for capacity strengthening initiatives, in particular interagency initiatives that reach a range of actors, including local and national actors.
- Enhance the sustainability of holistic child protection programming, capacity strengthening efforts by international actors should shift focus from the programme and

project level and instead take a systemic approach to strengthening the Child Protection workforce across multiple contexts and regions.

For more information:

- [The Learning and Development Working Group of the Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action](#)
- [L&D WG Strategy 2021–2025](#)
- [L&D WG Strategy 2021–2025 Infographic](#)
- [CPHA Competency Framework and Competency Development Guide](#)
- [CPHA Learners Profile](#)



Figure 5: A child participates in an art therapy session at a Spilno Child Spot in a metro station in Kyiv, Ukraine, on 25 March 2023. To support children and their caregivers amidst the war, UNICEF, along with partners, created child-friendly spaces called Spilno Child Spots (Spilno means “together” in Ukrainian) to create a nurturing environment in which children can access free and structured play, recreation, leisure and learning activities, as well as therapy and counselling.

Action Area 2: Prevent Harm to Children Before Harm Occurs

Prevention is possible even amidst conflict and crises—by addressing root causes of harm. If we wait to act until a child suffers an abuse or violation, it is already too late, and the harm can have irreversible impacts. Furthermore, preventing harm to children before it occurs is an ethical responsibility of all actors in humanitarian contexts, including governments and actors across the humanitarian-development-peace nexus. Primary prevention also increases the cost-effectiveness and sustainability of humanitarian interventions.

Why is it important?

Within humanitarian action, including measures to protect children in conflict, the humanitarian sector predominantly focuses on responding to harm when it occurs. While the best prevention remains the end to violence and hostilities and respect for the rights of civilians, particularly children, prevention of child protection harm is possible even amidst conflict and crises. Humanitarian and development actors, including governments, can reduce the likelihood of child protection harms and child rights violations by addressing root causes of harm. Good quality response services can certainly alleviate suffering, but they often cannot fully remove the impact of abuse, exploitation, neglect, and violence against children. Such violations often leave a devastating impact on children’s well-being, adversely affecting their physical, cognitive, emotional, and social development. This highlights the importance of preventing harm before it occurs. Additionally, addressing the root causes of harm to children improves the sustainability and long-term impact of humanitarian responses. By allocating more resources to preventative strategies, we not only protect children, but also save resources in the long run by reducing the need for more costly response interventions.

Throughout 2023, including at the Oslo Conference to Protect Children in Armed Conflict and the Global Protection Forum, there was a steady increase across the humanitarian sector of calls to prevent harm before such harm occurs and to do so more systematically. While these are promising developments, it is imperative we now turn these words into tangible actions.

Primary prevention is about identifying and addressing the risk factors and root causes of harm to children at population level—and not waiting for those risk factors to turn into actual harm. This, by nature, requires a multi-sectoral approach. If lack of access to quality and protective education, social norms, and household food insecurity are identified among the main drivers of child

recruitment and use by armed forces and armed groups, for example, then this requires targeted joint interventions by food security, education, and child protection actors across the affected population. Children, their families, communities, and societies also have their own protective mechanisms, including children's agency, peer networks, family ties, and support systems. Therefore, an important element of primary prevention includes our role as humanitarian actors to uplift and support these protective factors during humanitarian crises.

What is being done?

Over the last four years, the Child Protection Sector has been prioritising prevention in child protection in humanitarian action. The Prevention Initiative of the Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action has produced a body of work that is building the foundations for a more prevention-focused child protection response, including through the development of practical tools and generation of evidence on primary prevention.

What are the key recommendations?

Preventing harm to children is everybody's responsibility. This approach fosters collaboration across humanitarian sectors, contributes to bridging the humanitarian-development-peace nexus, creates sustainable changes, and promotes holistic well-being and protective environments for children, families, and their communities. The Alliance sees three key areas that would scale up a prevention approach and ensure the protection of children in conflict before harm occurs. This includes:

- **A lens-shift for the whole protection sector to invest significantly in changing the culture of humanitarian action to be more prevention focused, alongside response.**
- **Invest more in research to showcase the effectiveness of prevention approaches to minimise harm in a cost-efficient and sustainable manner.**
- **A whole system shift is needed, for governments, donors, humanitarian leadership at all levels, and frontline workers; they all have a role to play in prevention. This must include other sectors and needs to happen across all stages of the humanitarian programme cycle, including in disaster preparedness, Anticipatory Action, and recovery.**

For more information:

- [A Framework on Primary Prevention for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action](#)
- [A one-day Learning Package on the Primary Prevention Framework for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action](#)
- [A Guidance Note on Primary Prevention of Family Separation: Addendum to the Field Handbook on Unaccompanied and Separated Children \(UASC\) and accompanying Toolkit](#)



Figure 6: Coumba takes part in an integrated child protection and livelihoods programme ‘Avenir Brillant’ led by Plan International Mali and funded by the Italian Ministry of Interior. The programme provides child protection case management for vulnerable children and vocational training courses for children and young people aged 15 and above. Vocational skills and livelihood opportunities near to home are helping to prevent family separation and unsafe migration due to climate shocks and food insecurity.

Action Area 3: Working Across Humanitarian Sectors to Centre Children and their Protection in Humanitarian Action

All humanitarian actors play a role in ensuring children realise their rights, including their protection rights. Against a backdrop of increasingly complex, layered, and protracted humanitarian crises, growing needs and widening funding gaps, it is more critical than ever to ensure all actors, across all levels of the humanitarian system, work hand in hand to address children’s holistic protection and well-being needs. This requires children becoming a central element of all policies and decision making across the humanitarian architecture.

Why is this important?

2023 is likely to be the first year in over a decade when humanitarian funding has decreased compared to the previous year. By December 2023, only \$28.4 billion out of the \$57 billion requested was received.¹⁴ The forecast for 2024 is looking bleak—the UN launched a \$46 billion appeal December 2023,¹⁵ which, if received, will likely only reach half of those in need of humanitarian assistance during 2024. This scale of funding shortfall means that it is more imperative than ever that humanitarian actors work in the most efficient ways. Furthermore, siloed funding and programming often emphasises outputs over outcomes, focusing more on expenditure rather than the long-term holistic benefits to children and families.¹⁶ Therefore it is critical that humanitarian actors from all sectors come together, with child protection actors, to effectively and efficiently meet the multi-sectoral and holistic needs of children.

Children and their protection should be a central feature in humanitarian action, and all actors have a role to play in it—no sector alone can meet the life savings needs of children. International law recognises children as an independent group of rights holders, distinct from adults. All actors and sectors should ensure the entire humanitarian system is actively and consciously engaged in realising broader child rights as well as children’s rights to protection in each step of humanitarian action. It is critical that entry points for ensuring children’s protection are identified and harnessed by all sectors.

¹⁴ <https://fts.unocha.org/global-funding/overview/2023>

¹⁵ <https://news.un.org/en/story/2023/12/1144652>

¹⁶ <https://www.worldvisionadvocacy.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/World-Vision-Moving-Beyond-Silos-Policy-Paper.pdf>

Children also have the right to exercise agency in decisions that affect their lives, and they can play a crucial role in protecting themselves and their peers and in helping adults and peers to better understand their specific needs. All humanitarian actors have the obligation to support the realisation of this right through ensuring all humanitarian programming is accountable to children and there are safe and meaningful channels for children to participate throughout all stages of humanitarian programme cycles.

We also need to invest in the people who are making decisions on behalf of children and have the ability to keep children safe. This includes the need to increase attention around caregiving amidst conflict and other crises to specifically support those who are most central and active in children's lives. There is also a need to increase attention to Child Protection within all sectors and improve mechanisms for safeguarding children from humanitarian workers, including preventing and responding to sexual exploitation and abuse. This includes ensuring humanitarian actors have the tools to ensure the protection and participation of all children.

What is being done?

New and existing partnerships are growing between the child protection sector and other sectors, including Education, Food Security, Health, and Camp Coordination and Camp Management. Joint efforts across advocacy, programming, coordination, and research are leading to new tools, resources, and capacity strengthening opportunities to enhance cross sectoral collaboration. In particular, the partnership between the Education Sector and Child Protection in the Humanitarian Action Sector has gained significant momentum. As two child-focused sectors, education and child protection actors play an important role in supporting humanitarian actors, across sectors, to contribute to holistic, positive outcomes for children and young people's protection, education, and well-being. Advocacy and policy efforts to centre children and their protection in humanitarian action have also started to take shape, and broader actors from across humanitarian leadership, sectors, and donors are engaged in and supportive of these efforts.

The Alliance has extended its networks with accountability to affected populations and child participation focused specialists and agencies. This collaboration will enable the child protection sector to join together with these actors to support humanitarian actors to achieve their responsibilities with regards to child safeguarding, as well as to facilitate safe and meaningful child participation.

What are the key recommendations?

- Ensure that protection of children is a strategic objective and collective outcome in humanitarian responses, under the obligations of humanitarian leadership, such as Humanitarian Coordinators and Humanitarian Country Teams, under the Centrality of Protection.
- Develop and fund the implementation of joint operational frameworks and strategies between child protection actors and other sectors, using children’s holistic well-being as the starting point, in order to ensure that all sectors prioritise, reach, and are accountable to the most vulnerable children.
- Update plans, policies, and strategies so that they allow more investment in children and their caregivers (including in humanitarian response plans, joint operational frameworks, and other key intersectoral and sector-specific strategies).
- Facilitate multisector and multi-year flexible funding, which contributes to child protection outcomes, adheres to the Minimum Standards for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action, and promotes the use of programmatic approaches that are child sensitive and put in place requirements so that children’s perspectives, alongside those of adults, are solicited in all funded programmes.
- Humanitarian workers from other sectors, including coordinators and programme specialists, should systematically consider the capacities, needs, and vulnerabilities of children in their programming and contribute to the protection and well-being of children.
- Scale up social protection systems, including the use of cash and voucher assistance, to reach the multi-sectoral needs of children and enhance the resilience of crisis-affected populations.
- Strengthen and systematise investments in capacities and tools to facilitate effective, safe, and meaningful child participation throughout all stages of the humanitarian programme cycle.

More information:

- [Centrality of Children and their Protection in Humanitarian Action – An Introduction](#)
- [Guidance Note of the Secretary-General on Child Rights Mainstreaming, Call to Action for Human Rights, July 2023](#)
- [Working Across Sectors for Children’s Protection, the Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action](#)
- [Caregiving in Adversity Framework](#)
- [The Minimum Standards for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action \(CPMS\)](#)
- [Child Protection in Humanitarian Action and Education in Emergencies Initiative of the Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action and the Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies](#)
- [The Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies \(INEE\) Minimum Standards for Education: Preparedness, Response, Recovery](#)
- [The Global Child Protection Area of Responsibility, Integrating Child Protection and Food Security in Humanitarian Action](#)



Figure 7- Iman, 13, takes part in a UNICEF-supported educational activity at a school-turned-shelter in Aleppo city, Syria, on 15 March 2023. In Aleppo, one of the areas largely affected by the deadly earthquakes, UNICEF, with partners, is reaching affected children, including children with disabilities, with educational entertaining activities and catch-up remedial classes to help them make up for the missed learning and restore a sense of stability in their lives.

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About the Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action (The Alliance): *The Alliance is a global network of 270 operational agencies, academic institutions, policymakers, donors, and practitioners. The Alliance supports the efforts of humanitarian actors to achieve high-quality and effective child protection interventions in humanitarian settings and is the standard setting body for the Child Protection in Humanitarian Action sector. For more information on the Alliance’s work and joining the network, please visit www.alliancecpha.org or contact us directly: info@alliancecpha.org.*

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