STANDARD 24

[1] Shelter and child protection

[2] Shelter is a complex sector with many implications for child protection. [3] Sphere standards (2018) state the objective of humanitarian shelter support to, at a minimum; provide a safe physical living environment that allows people to lie with dignity, access services and livelihoods. Beyond survival, shelter is necessary to provide security, personal safety and protection from the climate and to promote resistance to ill health and spread of disease. Quality shelter support can contribute to psychosocial well-being and a more stable family and community life. [4] Vulnerability for children can increase during and after disasters, when children may be living with new, reduced or altered family units, or alone. [5] Family sizes in displaced populations and host communities can also vary greatly, resulting in the need for flexibility in the shelter provided. [6] Knowledge of local land and property rights is also central to making good decisions on where and how shelter is provided, and this may be important in safeguarding families from further violence, and in some cases from being forcefully evicted. [7] An integrated approach is a model based on inclusion and complementarity, valid for all sectors and should be systematically applied.

Note to Reviewers

This draft is an updated version of the 2012 standards in the CPMS. The text in blue represents the changes from the 2012 text. (To see what has been deleted kindly check the current version of the standards.). Indicators and references (except addition of 2018 Sphere) has not been updated yet in this standard.

Please keep in the mind that the CPMS are standards. They are not guidance on how to do programming. The standards give the essential on what as a minimum needs to be achieved in a specific area of humanitarian child protection work. Practitioners should refer to guidance documents listed in the reference section for further information on how to achieve the standards.

When reading through this document, please consider: is this useful for practitioners? Is the language clear and easy to understand? Does it reflect best practice and evidence? What points are non-essential and can be deleted? Are they developed in the form of standards or leaning more towards guidance?

How to provide feedback on this draft: Please use the accompanying feedback form that can be found here.

Thank you for your contribution to improving the CPMS!
Standard

[8] Child protection concerns are reflected in the assessment, design, monitoring and evaluation of shelter programmes. [9] All girls and boys and their caregivers have appropriate shelter provided which meets basic needs, including protection and disability access, and which facilitates longer-term solutions.

Key actions

KEY ACTIONS FOR CHILD PROTECTION ACTORS

24.1. [10] Conduct inter-sectoral assessments followed by joint sector analysis and strategies, or support age and gender disaggregated data in all assessments and surveys conducted by shelter colleagues. [11] Ensure time is taken to discuss affected population common for shelter and child protection, implications of respective sector information for the other sector, and strategies for intervention for children of all ages;

24.2. [12] Jointly decide coordination and information sharing mechanisms;

24.3. [13] Jointly decide on key indicators, including measurement on children’s perception and statements of safety;

24.4. [14] Incorporate questions about shelter into discussions with caregivers, community members and children and invite shelter actors to attend these discussions. [15] Discuss the situation of children in different care arrangements (for example children in residential care, child heads of households, children on the street, children with disabilities);

24.5. [16] Meet with early recovery staff to establish a referral system, with a monitoring element, for vulnerable children and families who should be prioritized during beneficiary selection;

24.6. [17] Ensure child protection actors regularly coordinate with shelter actors and support feedback or reporting mechanisms in settlements or camps;

24.7. [18] Support shelter and settlement organizations in ensuring child protection outcomes in their shelter services and settlements, including return and resettlement operations;

24.8. [19] Include appropriate shelter- and settlement-related messages in community-based child protection activities; ensure regular contact between CP and Shelter actors at an operational level;

24.9. [20] Make sure shelter sector workers are briefed on and can use referral mechanisms for unaccompanied and separated children and other child survivors of violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect;

24.10. [21] Encourage continuous monitoring to ensure that the impact of shelter services on the protective environment of the child is regularly updated, and that promising practices are identified and reproduced;

24.11. [22] Advocate for common child protection and shelter outcomes to be explored in evaluations and resource allocation processes such as the Post Disaster Needs Analysis or the Post Conflict Needs Analysis.
KEY ACTIONS FOR SHELTER AND SETTLEMENT ACTORS

24.12. [23] Wherever possible, conduct inter-sectoral assessments followed by joint sector analysis and strategies, [24] Ensure time is taken to discuss affected population common for shelter and child protection, implications of respective sector information for the other sector, and strategies for intervention for children of all ages;


24.14. [26] Jointly decide on key indicators, including measurement on children’s perception and statements of safety;

24.15. [27] Include the safety of children and their families as a sub-objective of each shelter intervention;

24.16. [28] Prevent overcrowding, and review project design and implementation to ensure that shelter responses support and encourage families to stay together;

24.17. [29] Work with children and their families of affected communities to design shelter and settlement that responds to the varying sizes, disability or other access barriers, specifics and needs of families in those communities, without putting them all in the same area and risking stigmatisation;

24.18. [30] Work with child protection actors to ensure that personnel working in shelter and settlement projects have adequate information and training on child protection issues, including unaccompanied and separated children, sexual exploitation and abuse, and exploitative child labour;

24.19. [31] Ensure that transit shelters meet agreed standards on safety, have clear and identified reporting mechanism for security concerns and are regularly reviewed by protection actors;

24.20. [32] Work with child protection staff to identify adequate collective spaces for children, including spaces for education, child-friendly spaces, etc., and provide spaces available for children’s activities, non-formal education, and cultural ceremonies;

24.21. [33] Ensure that those working in shelter have signed up to and been trained in a code of conduct or other policy which covers child safeguarding; and

24.22. [34] Invite child protection workers to trainings, retreats or workshops where you think their perspective and information may enhance the outcome.

Measurement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OUTCOME INDICATOR</th>
<th>OUTCOME TARGET</th>
<th>NOTES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>24.1. [35] Percentage of shelter projects where child safety and wellbeing, including family unity, are reflected in design, monitoring and evaluation</td>
<td>100%</td>
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Guidance notes

24.1. **Assessments:**

[40] Assessments should involve women, men, girls and boys, and should include caregivers of children at risk, in order to identify protection concerns in relation to shelter.

[42] Women and girls should be consulted as a priority, separately from men and boys, and particularly on the times and places of distribution of shelter materials, and on setting the site.

[43] This will help ensure reduced access barriers to assistance and help reduce the risk of violence.

[44] Monitoring teams and interpreters should systematically include women and groups faced with access barriers, reinforcing a continuous monitoring of conditions in settlements.

[45] It is critical for site planners to be aware of the number of children and related requirements for the number of schools, child-friendly spaces, and so on. Site planners also need to be aware of children identified during registration who may have specific needs in terms of accessibility of shelter, help with construction, etc.

24.2. **Programming:**

[47] CP and shelter specialists need to work together to ensure the short- and long-term shelter needs of the most vulnerable groups are addressed.

[49] This may include mobilizing the wider community to...
provide women, child-headed households, the elderly and disabled with help in building their shelter units. It also involves tailoring shelter programmes to tackle the needs of specific groups reducing access barriers and ensuring that the environment provides access for disabled beneficiaries. If polygamy is practiced, it is important to make sure that the adult women in all households (except single-male-headed households) are registered as the people who should receive help, so that second wives and their children are not excluded. Enough bedding and blankets should be provided to allow girls and boys to sleep separately. Take steps to prevent separation of children and families by providing adequate shelter, and ensure there is enough privacy and dignity for women and children, for example for cooking and bathing. Make sure that settlements are safe by providing well-lit sites and WASH facilities.

It is critical to make sure that site shelter strategies do not increase dangers for children, including making sure there are safe routes for children to access schools, sufficient child-friendly spaces, an absence of holes in the ground, an absence of open water, and so on. Shelter programming should always be done in conjunction with the affected population to identify barriers and risks by specific groups as well as solutions to support their priorities.

Multi-disciplinary:

Shelter cannot be planned as a stand-alone project: plans and action must be coordinated across sectors, including child protection. Throughout the whole programme cycle, protection risks and threats related to shelter needs to be considered, including social norms and perception from the host community. Also always consider human, financial, physical, environmental and social resources available.

Capacity building:

Generally shelter specialists have not covered child protection in their formal professional training. It is therefore critical that child protection organisations work with shelter specialists to find effective ways to ensure that child protection is included in any action related to provision of shelter.

References

- IASC (2005). *Guidelines for Gender-based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Settings*. Chap. 4.7: Shelter and site planning and non-food items
- IFRC and UN-Habitat (2009). *Shelter Projects 2009*
- UNHCR and IOM (2010). *Collective Centre Guidelines*
- Sphere standards 2018 edition, forthcoming