



**THE ALLIANCE**  
FOR CHILD PROTECTION  
IN HUMANITARIAN ACTION

# WORKING ACROSS SECTORS

**Indicators to measure  
cross-sectoral  
contributions to  
children's protection  
and well-being**

**Summary Indicator Package**

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# CONTENTS

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INTRODUCTION.....	4
THE FIVE CORE ACTIONS FOR ADVANCING CHILD PROTECTION IN SECTORAL WORK .....	6
MONITORING THE FIVE CORE ACTIONS USING PRIORITY INDICATORS ...	8
GUIDANCE ON HOW TO OPERATIONALIZE THE LOGICAL FRAMEWORK AND PRIORITY INDICATORS.....	12
APPENDIX 1. CHECKLIST TO MONITOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FIVE CORE ACTIONS.....	14



# INTRODUCTION

## Background

The Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action (“The Alliance”) is a global network of agencies and practitioners aiming to protect children from abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence in humanitarian settings. The [Alliance’s 2021-2025 Strategy<sup>1</sup>](#) advocates for prioritizing the protection and well-being of children through cross-sectoral collaboration. The multi-faceted nature of child protection risks, and the adversity that children and their families can face as a result, often requires multi-sector approaches and cross-sectoral collaboration to prevent risks, respond to needs, strengthen protective factors, and contribute to well-being. Child protection alone cannot achieve this; neither can any other individual sector.

The whole humanitarian system has a role to play in realizing children’s rights, including their right to protection. Greater collaboration, action, and investment is needed to ensure all humanitarian interventions are safe, accessible, and child protection sensitive. When protecting children is a central and common objective across sectors, it contributes to greater accountability to children, provides concrete means to prevent violence, exploitation and abuse, reduces harm to children, and strengthens the overall impact of sectoral interventions.

In comprehensive inter-agency, multi-sectoral consultations from 2021-2022, the [Alliance’s Child Protection Minimum Standards Working Group](#) (CPMS WG), engaged nearly 400 stakeholders to pinpoint obstacles, opportunities, and crucial priorities for cross-sectoral endeavours on children’s welfare. This culminated in the launch of the [Inter-Sectoral Framework for Advancing Children’s Protection and Well-being](#), which emphasizes the importance of building data, evidence, and learning to enhance practical strategies.

This report summarizes the indicator package, which is a vital tool for collecting, analysing, and utilizing data that illustrate how the four sectors contribute to enhancing the protection and well-being of children.

1. Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM);
2. Education;
3. Food Security; and
4. Health.

This document details the full indicator package, a vital tool for collecting, analysing, and utilizing data that illustrate how the four sectors contribute to enhancing the protection and well-being of children.

## Purpose

The primary purpose of this package is to outline a set of indicators that measure sectoral contributions towards children’s protection and well-being. The package does this by providing technical guidance for

<sup>1</sup> Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action (2022). A Clarion Call: the Centrality of Children and their Protection within humanitarian action. <https://alliancecpha.org/en/child-protection-online-library/alliance-strategy-2021-2025-clarion-call-centrality-children>



collecting and analysing data on key indicators in humanitarian action. It includes indicator definitions, calculations and other relevant metadata needed to collect, analyse and understand the indicators.

## Audience

The primary audience for the package is humanitarian technical staff, including inter-agency coordinators, technical advisors and programme managers for sectoral and integrated programmes.

## Contents

This rest of this document is organized as follows:

- **The Five Core Actions:** An outline of the Five Core Actions, their sub-components and their usefulness in monitoring the cross-sectoral advancement of child protection and well-being by the four sectors.
- **The Logical Framework** which states key indicators for each core action and demonstrates how these indicators contribute to children's protection and well-being.
- **An indicator metadata table** which details all of the indicators presented in the logical framework, complete with indicator definitions and type, methods of computation, data sources and other notes necessary to correctly collect, analyse and use these data.
- **Guidance on how to operationalize the logical framework and indicator table**, including how to prioritize, collect, analyse and use data.
- **An additional checklist** for managers to identify if they have gaps in how they assess, design, implement and monitor the Five Core Actions in their work.



# THE FIVE CORE ACTIONS FOR ADVANCING CHILDREN'S PROTECTION IN SECTORAL WORK

Over two years of collaboration with multi-sectoral partners, the CPMS Working Group developed the Five Core Actions for Mainstreaming Child Protection in Sectoral Work to operationalize critical actions that all sectors must take to meet their responsibilities for the protection and well-being of children, a key segment of affected people in all humanitarian crises. The framework outlines essential programmatic actions to ensure all humanitarian sectors contribute to keeping children safe and protected in their interventions. It brings together key actions from the Child Protection Minimum Standards<sup>2</sup> in a straightforward manner for non-protection specialists, without replacing the sector-specific guidance included in the standards. This is a useful framework for programme monitoring efforts and is applicable all technical sectors, including Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM), Education, Food Security, and Health<sup>3</sup>.

The Five Core Actions and their sub-components are:

## **Core Action 1. Prioritize children's safety & wellbeing and avoid causing harm**

- incorporate children's protection concerns into sectoral programme planning
- identify actions your sector can take to reduce risks to children accessing your services
- child safeguarding: ensure all staff are trained on codes of conduct, appropriate behaviour with children & how to report inappropriate behaviour<sup>4,5</sup>
- ensure physical safety for children in programme sites: identify and mitigate potential physical risks

## **Core Action 2. Adapt services to the needs of children**

- adapt sectoral programming to needs of children of different ages, genders and abilities

## **Core Action 3. Child participation, communication and accountability**

- provide child-friendly information on your services
- support children's participation throughout the programme cycle
- Ensure accountability mechanisms are child-friendly and accessible to children of different ages, genders and abilities
- strengthen staff skills on child-friendly communication and consultations<sup>6</sup>

## **Core Action 4. Safe and equitable access for children to humanitarian support**

- facilitate safe access for all children to your sector's intervention
- monitor children and families' access, identify and remove barriers

## **Core Action 5. Safe Recognition, Referral and Response<sup>7,8</sup>**

- train staff on safe recognition and referral of children facing protection risks
- collaborate with child protection actors to maintain clear, up-to-date referral mechanisms
- provide targeted support to children with protection concerns from your sector, as needed

<sup>2</sup> Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action (2019). Minimum Standards for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action. <https://alliancecpha.org/en/child-protection-minimum-standards-working-group>

<sup>3</sup> The CCCM, Education, Food Security, and Health sectors all contributed to this package and have ongoing collaborations with the Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action and its members. However, it is hoped that the package may be used by all humanitarian technical sectors.

<sup>4</sup> Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) training is also useful, but needs to include specific modules on the needs of children and obligations under child safeguarding which go beyond typical PSEA training.

<sup>5</sup> See also the Core Humanitarian Standard. <https://www.corehumanitarianstandard.org/the-standard>.

<sup>6</sup> Psychological First Aid training can also be considered as needed.

<sup>7</sup> Recognition here is used to mean that staff have the ability to recognize the signs that a child may be experiencing or at risk of abuse, neglect, exploitation or violence. "Safe recognition and referral" is an agreed upon term in Alliance publications as of 2024. However, in older documents, the term "safe identification and referral" has been used.

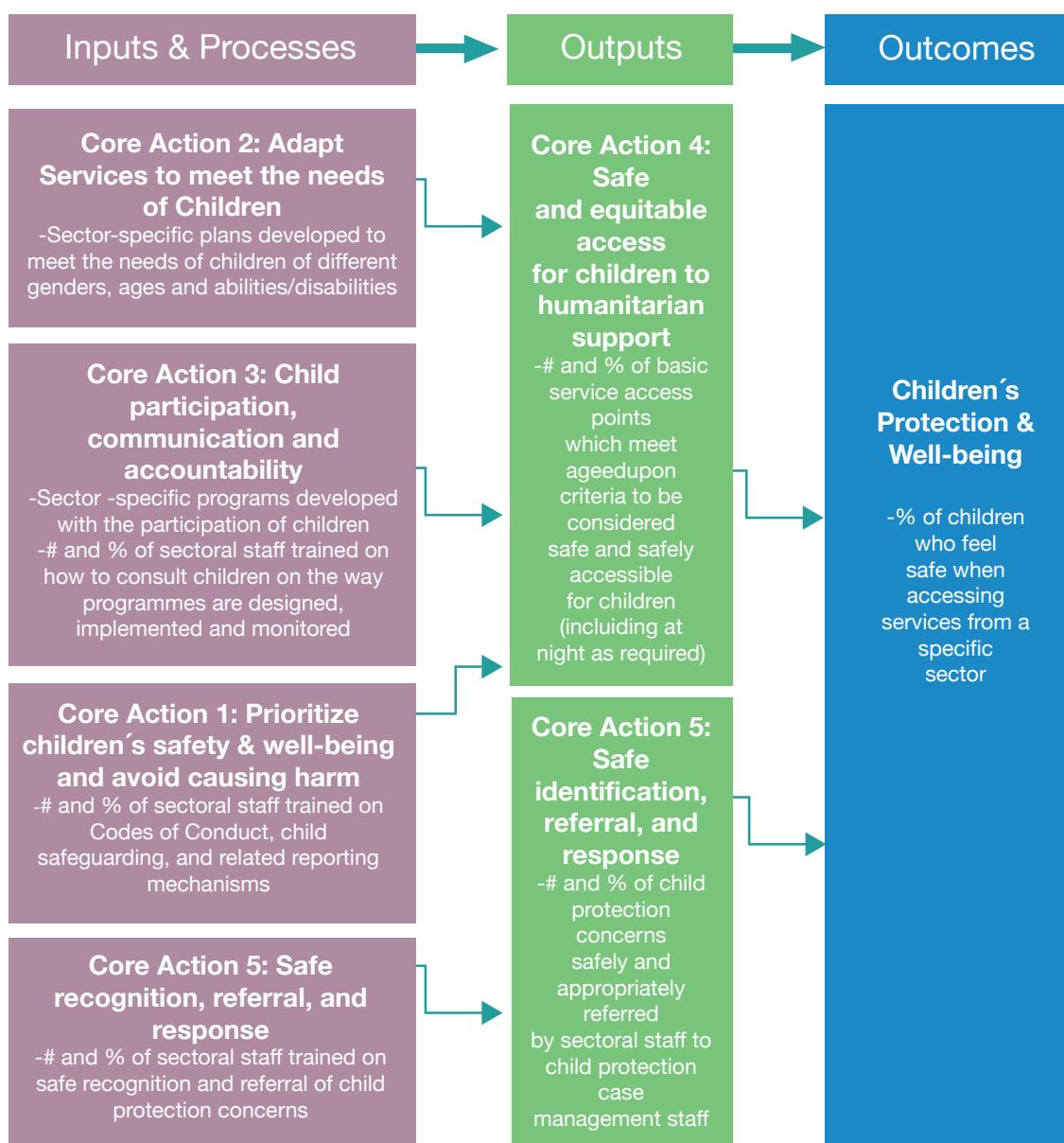
<sup>8</sup> See Child Protection Area of Responsibility (2024). Safe Recognition and Referrals for Child Protection Concerns: Rapid Guide for non-Child Protection actors. <https://www.cpaor.net/working-together-for-child-protection-and-wellbeing>.



Figure 1 outlines how the Five Core Actions contribute to children's protection and well-being. In the framework, children's protection and well-being is measured using an indicator of children's safety, which is an overarching outcome for the child protection sector and cross-sectoral interventions. Figure 1 also states the specific indicators for each core action, details of which can be found in Table 1.

Apart from these indicators, a checklist on implementing the Five Core Actions is also available for programme managers (see Appendix 1). This checklist covers key actions that programme managers should perform during assessment, design, implementation and monitoring of the Five Core Actions and is useful to identify any gaps in the programmatic approach to advancing child protection in a sector.

**Figure 1. Logical Framework for Monitoring the Five Core Actions**





## MONITORING THE FIVE CORE ACTIONS USING PRIORITY INDICATORS

The table below outlines the priority indicators in figure 1, specifying the indicator definition and type, the exact computation method for the indicators, potential data sources and additional notes. These indicators were created or adapted from minimum humanitarian standards for child protection and other sectors and other measurement frameworks , based on an extensive desk review covering over 700 indicators. Indicators can be used by all technical sectors (see previous footnote) and will require minimal adaptation to the sector's needs.

Other sector-specific indicators from the [joint work](#) of the Global CP AoR and the Alliance will be available in the future. These can be used within the framework of this package through further adaptation.

**Table 1. Indicator metadata table for priority indicators for monitoring the Five Core Actions**

Core Action	Indicator	Type	Method of Computation	Data Source Examples	Notes
<b>Overarching</b>	% of children who feel safe when accessing services from a specific sector	Outcome	Divide the numerator by the denominator  <b>Numerator:</b> number of children who report feeling safe when accessing services from a specific sector  <b>Denominator:</b> total number of children accessing services from a specific sector	Survey of children and/ or parents who are service users, exit interview of children or parents who are service participants.	This may be measured using the following question: How safe or unsafe do you feel when accessing services from [Sector]? 1. Very unsafe 2. Unsafe 3. Safe 4. Very safe 5. Don't know 6. Declined to answer  The minimum age for this question should be 12 years. Alternate creative methodologies would be needed for younger children, and must be organized only by staff with appropriate training in ethical child consultations in humanitarian contexts. Children who respond unsafe or very unsafe should be referred to child protection specialists for follow up and support.



Core Action	Indicator	Type	Method of Computation	Data Source Examples	Notes
<b>1. Prioritize Safety &amp; Well-Being &amp; Avoid Causing Harm</b>	# and % of sectoral staff trained on Codes of Conduct, child safeguarding, and related reporting mechanisms	Input/ Process	The numerator (shown below) is the # indicator and the % is calculated as follows:  Divide the numerator by the denominator  <b>Numerator:</b> number of sectoral staff trained on Codes of Conduct, child safeguarding, and related reporting mechanisms  <b>Denominator:</b> total number of sectoral staff	Programme document review (HR files, child safeguarding training report); pre- and post-training questionnaires	All staff have an obligation to report child safeguarding concerns and staff misconduct and understand appropriate and inappropriate behaviours with children.  Sectoral staff are not responsible for responding to child safeguarding cases, rather they must report/ refer potential concerns through agreed upon internal and inter-agency reporting mechanisms and/ or whistle-blower hotlines.
<b>2. Adapt Services to meet the needs of Children</b>	Sector-specific programme and response plans developed to meet the needs of children of different genders, ages and abilities/ disabilities	Input/ Process	This is a qualitative indicator where the response categories are 'yes' or 'no'.	Programme document review (mapping of services)	This indicator has three sub-components (gender, age and ability/disability), all of which should be measured.
<b>3. Participation, Communication &amp; Accountability</b>	Sector-specific programmes/ response plans developed with the participation of children	Input/ Process	This is a qualitative indicator where the response categories are 'yes' or 'no'.	Programme document review (mapping of programme locations and available child-participation mechanisms)	Child participation is a key mechanism to ensure accountability to children, to adapt services to meet the needs of children, and to ensure services are safe and appropriate for a diverse group of children.



Core Action	Indicator	Type	Method of Computation	Data Source Examples	Notes
<b>3. Participation, Communication &amp; Accountability</b>	# and % of sectoral staff trained on how to consult children on the way programmes are designed, implemented and monitored	Input/ Process	The numerator (shown below) is the # indicator and the % is calculated as follows:  Divide the numerator by the denominator  <b>Numerator:</b> sectoral staff trained on how to consult children on the way programmes are designed, implemented and monitored  <b>Denominator:</b> total number of sectoral staff	Programme document review (HR files, child safeguarding training report); pre- and post-training questionnaires	Children's participation is a critical component to meeting obligations in accountability to affected populations.
<b>4: Safe and equitable access for children to humanitarian support</b>	# and % of basic service access points (e.g., water points, distribution points, health centres, community centres) which meet agreed-upon criteria to be considered safe and safely accessible for children (including at night as required)	Output	The numerator (shown below) is the # indicator and the % is calculated as follows:  Divide the numerator by the denominator  <b>Numerator:</b> number of basic service access points that meet agreed-upon safety criteria for children  <b>Denominator:</b> total number of basic service access points	Programme document review (mapping of basic service access points and monitoring report based on checklist of agreed-upon criteria), safety audits.  Children should be supported to participate in safety audits whenever possible and when doing so would not expose them to further risks. Joint safety audits conducted by child protection and sectoral actors together are highly recommended.	A list of criteria should be identified and agreed-upon amongst actors in-country, including children themselves, and in line with sector minimum humanitarian standards.  The criteria should reflect the differentiated needs of children of different genders, ages, and abilities/ disabilities.  Replace “basic service access points” with the most relevant sector-specific term.



Core Action	Indicator	Type	Method of Computation	Data Source Examples	Notes
<b>5. Safe Recognition, Referral &amp; Response</b>	# and % of sectoral staff trained on safe recognition and referral of child protection concerns	Input/ Process	The numerator (shown below) is the # indicator and the % is measured as follows:  Divide the numerator by the denominator  <b>Numerator:</b> number of sectoral staff trained on safe recognition and referral of child protection concerns  <b>Denominator:</b> total number of sectoral staff	Programme document review ( safe recognition and referral training report); pre- and post-training questionnaires	Training on safe recognition and referral should include training on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- how to recognise signs a child is experiencing or at risk of abuse, neglect, exploitation, and violence</li><li>- how to communicate with children, possibly including Psychological First Aid</li><li>- Referral pathways and procedures; and</li><li>- Ethical considerations, including confidentiality.</li></ul>
<b>5. Safe Recognition, Referral &amp; Response</b>	# and % of child protection concerns safely and appropriately referred by sectoral staff to child protection case management staff	Output	The numerator (shown below) is the # indicator and the % is calculated as follows:  Divide the numerator by the denominator  <b>Numerator:</b> number of child protection concerns safely and appropriately referred by sectoral staff to child protection case management staff  <b>Denominator:</b> total number of identified child protection concerns referred by sectoral staff to child protection case management staff	Programme document review (referral monitoring tool or referral documentation); IMS (CPIMS+, ProGres)	Protection cases must follow safe and appropriate referral pathways designed in a manner that adheres to quality standards of referrals including timeliness, safety (including confidentiality), and effective response.



# GUIDANCE ON HOW TO OPERATIONALIZE THE LOGICAL FRAMEWORK AND PRIORITY INDICATORS

## Prioritizing Indicators for Data Collection and Analysis

The indicators in this package are intended for monitoring purposes. This package intentionally recommends a limited set of indicators, many of which are not new to these sectors or which can easily be collected by tweaking existing indicators. Managers should collect all of these indicators, if possible. If resources are scarce early in programme implementation, the input and process indicators can be prioritized, but as implementation develops, managers should prioritize the outcome and output indicators. Inter-agency sectoral coordinators (e.g. cluster coordinators) are encouraged to include these indicators in humanitarian and refugee response plans where possible.

Note that managers should consider how to involve children in the monitoring and make necessary arrangements including training on child friendly methods and budgeting for activities with children. Child participation can work to ensure that indicators are age, and gender sensitive to children and that feedback loops are built and implemented over the course of the programme. Managers must consider ethical considerations when facilitating children's participation and ensure it will not expose them to potential harm. Many detailed guidance packages exist on children's participation and children's consultations in humanitarian contexts, including [Save the Children's Guidance on Children's Consultations in Humanitarian Contexts<sup>9</sup>](#)

To operationalize this package, managers should incorporate actions across several phases of work. These phases are planning, data collection, data analysis and data use. New/ separate processes are not demanded, rather these steps should be incorporated into normal planning, data collection, data analysis and data use procedures for the whole of a sectoral programme or response.

## Planning for Data Collection

In general, the data for these indicators come from routine programme monitoring. During the planning phase, managers should first analyse if the priority indicators are already being collected by reviewing the list of indicators (and their definitions) against data captured by routine programme monitoring. Managers should also review if the desired disaggregates are being collected. This analysis identifies gaps in data which will be filled during data collection.

## Data Collection

Managers should then integrate any priority indicators and disaggregates that are not currently being collected into the data collection tools used in routine programming monitoring. If similar indicators are being collected, managers should modify the data collection tools so that the indicators from this package can be collected.

<sup>9</sup> Save the Children (2023). Guidance on Children's Consultations in Humanitarian Contexts. <https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/document/guidance-childrens-consultations-in-humanitarian-contexts/>



Managers should provide data collection and reporting specialists with an overview of the indicators and disaggregates and the indicator reference sheets (provided in the Full Indicator Package which accompanies this document). The indicator reference sheets provide clear descriptions of the indicators. However, managers may find it necessary to provide additional training and explanation of the indicators to ensure that they are collected correctly.

During data collection, managers should review the data on an ongoing basis to identify if there are any issues related to the reporting and data quality. The most common issues usually are related to misunderstanding the numerators or denominators, calculation errors and incomplete reporting across a programme from different programme sites.

## Data Analysis

The data analysis phase is relatively straightforward. The general calculation for these indicators is to divide the numerator by the denominator (for percentages) or provide a count. These indicators require that data managers aggregate the data from various sites into a single number.

Managers are expected to check the quality of data. After calculating the levels of each of these indicators and their disaggregates, managers should examine if the results meet their expectations, looking for inconsistencies between observed implementation and the data. In general, the data across sites (such as schools and food service delivery points) should differ based on the intensity of programming, a fact that should also be reflected in data disaggregates. Finally, as data are collected over time, managers should see fairly consistent patterns that match the programme's implementation. Spikes in data can occur if there is a rapid response or injection of resources to the programme.

When considering data analysis, it is essential that data remain anonymous. Ensure that reporting does not include any names or identifiers of people and only aggregate data are reported. See CPMS Standard 5: Information Management for more information.<sup>10</sup>

Within this package, indicators can be analysed using a number of disaggregates. At a minimum, the disaggregates should include age, gender and disability. Disaggregating data is contextual and will require managers to choose which disaggregates will provide the most useful information for making programmatic decisions. In general, local contexts are key to making such choices. Additionally, disaggregates that target or measure the progress of prioritized populations should also be calculated.

## Data Use

Based on the data collected and analysed, managers can review the data to identify gaps in services and processes and identify if programmes are contributing to the intended outputs and outcome of the Five Core Actions. Any gaps, once identified, can be filled through programmatic shifts including political, financial and human resource mobilization. Over time, successful programmes should see higher numbers in each of these indicators.

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<sup>10</sup> Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action (2019). Minimum Standards for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action, Standard 5: Information Management. p.88. [https://handbook.hspstandards.org/en/cpms/#ch004\\_006](https://handbook.hspstandards.org/en/cpms/#ch004_006)



## APPENDIX 1. CHECKLIST TO MONITOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FIVE CORE ACTIONS

### 1. Assessment

Checklist		Relevant Core Action(s)	Response -Yes -Partly -No -Not applicable	Comments
1	Have you consulted with children about your programme/ response plan?	4		
2	Have you identified needs of children of different ages, genders, and disabilities?	2		
3	Have you identified barriers <sup>11</sup> to children accessing your services and feedback mechanism?	1,2,4		
4	Have you put in place appropriate child safeguarding measures prior to consulting with children	4		
5	Do you have the latest Child Protection referral pathway?	5		
6	Have you considered risks to children in your risk analysis for the program/ response plan?	4		

### 2. Design

Checklist		Relevant Core Action(s)	Response -Yes -Partly -No -Not applicable	Comments
1	Have you integrated children's needs in your program design/proposal?	2		
2	Have you addressed children's barriers to access your services and feedback mechanism in your program design/proposal?	1, 2		

<sup>11</sup> AAAQ framework for children



3	Have you considered how to support children's participation throughout the program, including through child-friendly program monitoring?	3		
4	Have you integrated risk mitigation measures in your program based on the risk analysis for children?	4		
5	Have you integrated training on safe recognition and referrals of child protection concerns (including Psychological First Aid)?	5		
6	Have you integrated a budget for course correction/programme adjustments to keep making your services and program child friendly?	4		
7	Have you integrated at least one indicator related to Child Protection mainstreaming in your proposal/ program plan?	All		

### 3. Implementation

	Checklist	Relevant Core Action(s)	Response - Yes - Partly - No - Not applicable	Comments
1	Have you consulted, over the past six months, children about how effectively your assistance is responding to their distinct needs and about how to address any challenges in accessing assistance?	1, 3, 4		
2	Do all your frontline workers know how to safely recognize and refer child protection concerns in need to child protection service providers?	5		
3	Have you ensured that children are consulted and know how to channel their feedback and complaints?	3,4		
4	Have you changed some aspects of the way you work/your services based on the feedback you received from children?	1,2,4		
5	Have you created and provided child-friendly information about your service/facilities to children?	3		



## 4. Monitoring Child Participation

Checklist		Relevant Core Action(s)	Response -Yes -Partly -No -Not applicable	Comments
1	Does your organization collect and use data on the access, the use and the quality of your service/facilities, disaggregated by age, sex and disability?	1		
2	Do you regularly monitor children's access and use of your service/facilities, through safety audits (or any other methods) and discussion with children and their communities?	1		
3	Do you regularly monitor how children feel when they use your services?	1		
4	Are obstacles to safe and equitable access promptly addressed?	1,2,4		

**The Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action** (the Alliance) sets standards and provides technical guidance to support humanitarian actors in preventing and responding to harm to children.

Find more information on the Alliance's work and join the network at



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