



**PROGRAMMATIC OFFER FOR
CHILD PROTECTION**

CONTINUITY DURING COVID-19



Save the Children

9TH APRIL 2020

Contents

Introducing the purpose of the Programmatic Offer	1
Summary of key response activities	2
Protecting Children in Homes	3
Protecting Children in Communities and through Child Protection Services	3
Protecting Children Separated from their Families	4
Protecting Children in their Online Communities	4
Supporting Children to cope with stress and anxiety through MHPSS	4
Adaptations for children affected by specific contexts	4
Detailed description of activities	6
Parenting without Violence	6
Community Level Child Protection	7
Child Protection Case Management	9
Appropriate Care	10
Online Safety	11
Mental Health and Psychosocial Support	12
Safe Schools	13
Migrant and Displaced Children	14
Children in Fragile States and Conflict	15
MEAL	17
Annexe 1: Leadership and Coordination	18
Annexe 2: Resource list	18

Introducing the purpose of the Programmatic Offer

Hundreds of millions of children around the world will likely face increasing threats to their safety and wellbeing – including mistreatment, gender-based violence, exploitation, social exclusion and separation from caregivers – because of the virus and actions taken to contain the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic. (UNICEF, 20 March 2020).

We have produced this *Programmatic Offer for Child Protection Continuity during COVID-19* as a technical companion to SC's COVID-19 Program Framework & Guidance and as a means of preserving children's rights to Be Protected during this pandemic. It outlines the modalities for Child Protection continuity in **five key intervention areas and across different contexts**. This will help determine what can be done to **protect children in homes; in communities and through child protection services; to protect children separated from their families; in their online communities; and to support children to cope with stress and anxiety through MHPSS**. It also outlines how we adapt our Child Protection work for **children affected by specific contexts – safe alternative learning during school closure and eventual reopening, migrant and displaced children, children living in fragile states and affected by conflict**.

The programmatic offer is intended to help COs consider what needs to happen now in their contexts to ensure Child Protection continuity during COVID-19 and, to see what resources are or will be available, by when and which technical specialists they can link to. It outlines the programme adaptation that will be available, for example in key Common Approaches, as well as the briefs, technical notes and guidance, which are being produced in the key intervention areas and for different contexts.

COs are not supposed to do everything and do not have to respond in all of the intervention areas, nor across all contexts. Child Protection priorities should be determined based on need, capacity and a localised understanding of how we can best support communities to focus on child protection and well-being during this crisis.

This programmatic offer is intended as a 'living' document in that it currently describes what is - or will be - available as key resources in this initial phase of the response. As we move into large-scale response and eventually the recovery phase, we will update existing - or produce new - resources based on the needs and issues identified and that need to be addressed in these phases.

A list of **key resources** is available in a separate Annexe linked at the end of this document. This list will be updated as new resources become available.

Summary of key response activities

At the global level, Save the Children's COVID-19 Child Protection response is focusing on how we can best support the protection of children in their homes; in their communities and through child protection services; of children separated from their families; in their online communities; as well as support children to cope with stress and anxiety through MHPSS. This includes the most marginalised, deprived, vulnerable and at risk children and families, including children in 'out of home' situations - children without appropriate care, children in residential institutions or in detention for security or immigration purposes, unaccompanied or separated children, irregular migrant children, and street-connected children.

Given existing resources and materials, current workforce capacity and Save the Children's value-add, in the **immediate term** programme adaptation and guidance is – or will shortly be – available in the following key five intervention areas:

- Protecting Children in Homes
- Protecting Children in Communities and through Child Protection Services
- Protecting Children Separated from their Families
- Protecting Children in their Online Communities
- Supporting Children to cope with stress and anxiety through MHPSS

Guidance will be developed for adapting work on Safe Schools in times of school closure, including safe distance learning and with a view to an eventual safe return to school. In addition, there is already or will be specific guidance for children affected by migration and displacement and children living in fragile states and/or affected by conflict.

Collaboration with other sectors, and the integration of Child Protection in other sectors' response, is of critical importance. Guidance on integrated programming with other sectors and the mainstreaming of cross-cutting issues is woven throughout each of the above intervention areas and contexts. The [Technical Note on the Protection of Children during the Coronavirus Pandemic](#), produced by the Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action, has strong recommendations on this and is a must read. We do not duplicate the key recommendations here. However,

integration with cash and social protection is not included in this Technical Note so, we highlight one resource below which is currently being adapted for COVID-19 and will be available for piloting.

Continuing to work with key government ministries is also important, as outlined in the Child Protection Area of Responsibility (AoR) call, April 2020: *'taking a whole of government approach and coordinating with relevant line ministries is critical to ensure a comprehensive multi-sectoral approach that ensures children are protected in all areas of their lives.'*

The activities outlined below aim at making sure that children are safe and protected at a time when they may be less visible, where there is less possibility of monitoring their protection and well-being, and where they have little or no access to the vital protective services that serve as a lifeline for vulnerable children and their families. They allow for the continuation of key interventions and global Be Protected priorities, which are being adapted for the contexts in which we now find ourselves working.

Ensuring appropriate support for children and caregivers' mental health and psychosocial support runs through all these activities.

Staff **wellbeing** at the country and regional office level is essential to ensuring quality services and safe practices. While supportive HR practices are integral, **staff-wellbeing guidance and training packages** are required to strengthen the mental health of staff members who will find themselves directly on the frontline of essential service provision protecting children and their families. Strengthening staff wellbeing will be essential to ensure safe practices and continuation of responsive services in the wake of the outbreak. **(Available: May)**

Tools and guidance on offer should always be adapted to context.

Protecting Children in Homes

Parenting without Violence:

With COVID-19, children and their parents and caregivers will be under much more pressure. We will develop a **set of key focused messages for parents and caregivers**, adapted from Parenting without Violence materials. The aim will be to share them with parents and caregivers via case and health workers, social media channels as well as through functioning government service providers, wherever possible **(Available: April)**.

In the medium-long term we will adapt and compile a selection of key short sessions from existing PwV materials in the toolkit (20 minutes each maximum), so that the Positive Parenting and Children's sessions, as well as possibly the Adult-Child interaction activities, can be conducted and delivered using distance and remote methods **(Available: May-June)**.

Both the above positive parenting activities will link with Social Behaviour Change, Education/Learning work with teachers and parents and MHPSS and resilience. See detailed activity description.

Protecting Children in Communities and through Child Protection Services

We will co-develop an **Interagency COVID-19 Guidance Note on community level approach to child protection**. This will provide practical support to Child Protection actors to adapt their community-level preparedness and response approaches during the COVID-19 pandemic and find safe and effective ways to mobilize communities to protect their children, building on community initiatives, groups, capacities and processes that are already led and organised by community members, including children and young people. The Note will also have guidance on remote risk communication and community engagement on COVID-19 and child protection, and cash and child

protection tools, which will help field staff to identify child protection risks in cash and voucher assistance, and monitor child protection outcomes resulting from cash and voucher assistance. **(Available: mid-April).**

To support the ability of case management actors to safely continue providing children and families with urgent and complex protection needs with support, we have developed [Guidance on Child Protection Case Management during Covid-19](#). This practical guidance, including training materials, will support the adaptation of case management programming during COVID-19, ensuring safety for case management actors, children, families and continuity of case management support. **(Already Available: 9th April).**

We will also support the development of detailed **interagency guidance** on child protection case management related challenges field staff face when adapting their programming for COVID-19, as well as a related **webinar series, MOOC** and other remote learning opportunities **(Available: May-June).**

Protecting Children Separated from their Families

Appropriate Care:

Through the Better Care Network, the Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action, UNICEF and others, we are developing [a series of Technical Notes](#). These will support advocacy with national governments to develop national contingency plans for the alternative care for children affected by COVID-19, supporting response to the child protection concerns faced by children at-risk of separation or in alternative care during the COVID-19 pandemic **(Already Available: 9th April).**

An internal document for Save the Children staff currently operating [interim care centres](#) on changes needed for COVID-19 response has also been developed **(Already Available: 9th April).**

Protecting Children in their Online Communities

The exposure of children to online abuse and exploitation, including sexual, has increased as children spend more time online, including for online learning.

We will produce a **guidance document** for COs on the **Dos & Don'ts for online safety**. This will be linked with Safe Schools guidance and Education guidance on digital learning modalities **(Available: May).**

Supporting Children to cope with stress and anxiety through MHPSS

The COVID-19 outbreak is likely to lead to separation of families, loss of life and exacerbation of child protection issues, all of which are major sources of severe distress for children and their families.

We will adapt age **appropriate and accessible tools** to ensure continued social and emotional support **(Available: May-June).**

We will roll out **training for staff on MHPSS adapted to COVID-19 and suicide risk assessment and management** in anticipation of an increase in self-harming behaviour/suicide ideation **(Available: May-June).**

We will develop **IEC materials** with targeted messaging in anticipation of, and to mitigate, expected stigma within communities as a result of fear, blame and rumours around COVID-19 **(Available: May).**s

Adaptations for children affected by specific contexts

Safe Schools:

Children must be protected, including when accessing alternative instruction while schools are closed and when they return to school. The [Safe Schools & COVID19 Guidance](#) will be updated to include top-line guidance and resources drawn from the upcoming Online Safety, MHPSS and Community-Level Child Protection guidance as well as relevant Education guidance such as the Interactive Radio Instruction guide. In addition, the updated Safe Schools & COVID19 Guidance will

adapt existing guidance from Safe Schools [Action Pack 4](#) to include tips for remote teacher training on Safe Schools topics like teacher wellbeing, PFA and de-stigmatization. Existing guidance from [Action Pack 2](#) will also be adapted to draft a safe “back-to-school” guide with participatory activities for back-to-school campaigns, educational continuity and public awareness messaging (**Available: May**).

Migrant and Displaced Children:

Migrant, displaced and refugee children are particularly vulnerable at this time. Many of the world’s refugees, migrants and displaced live in overcrowded camps, settlements, makeshift shelters or reception centres where they lack access to adequate health care and sanitation. Social distancing, handwashing in clean water and other prevention advice is difficult, if not impossible, to follow. The virus risks spreading rapidly amongst these communities and exacerbating challenges already experienced by vulnerable, displaced, and often unaccompanied, children. It is essential that we prioritise them at this time.

We have produced [guidance on COVID-19 and migrant and displaced children](#). This provides guidance on understanding the specific risks to M&D children, programming adaptations and advocacy messages to ensure that the rights and best interests of migrant and displaced children are respected at this time (**Already Available: 8th April**).

We have also contributed to the guidance **COVID-19 Pandemic: Trafficking in Persons (Already Available)** and [Children Deprived of Liberty](#) inter-agency guidance note (**Already available: 8th April**).

Fragile States and Children affected by Conflict:

The impact of COVID-19 on child protection will be significantly greater in fragile and conflict-affected states due to the inability to prevent its spread in impoverished urban areas and displacement camps, as well as respond in the wake of border closures and other travel restrictions. The socio-economic impacts will further exacerbate impoverishment and will drive children to more extreme forms of survival.

We are producing guidance on **Protecting Children in Conflict during the Global Covid-19 Pandemic (Available: April)**.

Associated with this but more broadly applicable to all humanitarian contexts, we are working with colleagues in the Humanitarian Policy, Advocacy and Campaigns TLG to adapt the **Centrality of Protection Policy for COVID-19**, to ensure continued monitoring and reporting (**Available: April**).

An internal [Guidance Note on Civil Military Coordination in the Covid-19 Humanitarian Response](#) is available which clarifies how Save the Children relates to state- and non-state armed actors to secure and maintain access during responses (**Already Available**).

An interagency [Guidance Note on COVID-19 and Children Deprived of their Liberty](#) is now **available, 8th April** (see Migrant and Displaced Children above).

Programme Guidance on Release and Reintegration of Children Associated with Armed Forces and Armed Groups is available on OneNet (**Already Available**).

An additional inter-agency **guidance note on advocacy and programming with CAAFAG and COVID-19** is being drafted (**Available: April**).

Detailed description of activities

Parenting without Violence

Introduction: With COVID-19, children and their parents and caregivers will be under much more pressure. During 2018-2019, we have built the capacity of over 380 staff and partners in 22 countries in the Parenting without Violence common approach. We will use the capacity of this trained workforce to ensure continuity of implementation while adapting it to the new and rapidly evolving situation as well as ensuring expansion to other countries.

Adaptation of activities: In the short term, we will adapt the common approach intervention to support parents dealing with multiple new stressors due to COVID-19, including emotional support and information related to parenting during a COVID-19 outbreak. We will therefore start with the 20+ countries where capacity on Parenting without Violence has already been built. In the medium-long term, we will continue to develop adaptation guidance, use technology and potential new partnerships to change our model of engagement and reach more people remotely. For example, we will build capacity among staff who have not yet been trained on Parenting without Violence, through remote webinars and linking them with the regional pools of trained staff and partners to mentor and supervise.

Activity	Adaptation guidance	Timeframe
Key messages and learning tips	<p>We will develop a set of key focused parenting messages for parents and caregivers. These will be extracted from the 10 Positive Parenting Group Sessions. They will be shared with parents via case and health workers, social media channels as well as through functioning government service providers, wherever possible.</p> <p>Topics will be very brief and include things like: encouragement and guidance, how to talk to children, resolving conflict, self-care and providing warmth and structure. The idea would be that these reflect the main principles of PwV and could then be adapted widely.</p>	April
Community engagement	We will collaborate with Social Behaviour Change (SBC) colleagues to craft the messaging around child protection and especially positive parenting. Through SBC we can also leverage the most effective modes of transmitting these messages so that they reach our target audiences, including through community messaging based on the poster activities central to PwV. We will also connect with Education on integrating messages for parents and caregivers for both Child Protection and Education. This will mean that when targeting families, they get some basic information on child development and learning as well as how to better care for themselves and their children.	April-May
Parenting sessions & Children's sessions,	<p>We will compile a selection of key short sessions from existing PwV materials in the toolkit (20 minutes each maximum), focusing on key messages, learning and tips for parents and caregivers. We will aim to make the content of these sessions so that they can be downloaded and watched on a phone.</p> <p>These key short sessions will link with social behaviour change, education/learning work with teachers and parents and MHPSS and resilience.</p>	May-June

	We will consider how we can continue the Adult-Child interaction as critical to building positive relationships and communication in families.	
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Key considerations: Due to the risks associated with continuing to run in-person parent groups, children’s groups and community sessions that are central to Parenting without Violence programming, adaptations will focus on continuing implementation through mobile and digital channels, with consideration given to ensuring all information and activities remain inclusive and accessible for adults and children with disabilities.

We have to continue to think about how to reach families and communities that may have limited access to internet/data/electricity. We may also want to explore how to involve older children directly.

This response is unique as it is affecting very high-income countries who also want this type of messaging and support as well as low income and conflict-affected countries who also need support, but in a very different way.

The gender and power dynamics within a household, both in terms of parenting and expected roles and responsibilities of children, may change – or negative dynamics be further perpetuated – due to COVID-19, and these will need to be identified and considered in adaptations. With school closures and continued work requirements for caregivers, there may be reduced supervision and neglect. Conversely, there may be caregivers in the household that are usually not there full-time as they are no longer able to work and responsibilities for parenting may change – for example, grandparents not being able to be as engaged as usual. The roles and responsibilities of girls and boys in terms of caregiving, household chores, labour etc., may also change, or gender stereotypes be further perpetuated.

Contacts: Rebecca Smith and Geoffrey Oyat (co-leads Safe & Appropriate Care TWG)

Resources: Key focused messages for parents and caregivers on positive parenting during COVID-19

Community Level Child Protection

Introduction: COVID-19 has a direct impact on the ability of child protection actors to engage with communities, as well as on the ability of communities to self-protect and support each other. Learning from other infectious disease outbreaks has taught us that effective responses to infectious disease outbreaks, including the protection of children, need to place communities at the centre of the response. Community actors, however, need to keep themselves and their communities safe in the context of infectious diseases such as COVID-19. It is therefore important to work with communities to protect children and to plan for and implement actions that support the public health of their communities.

In 2018 and 2019, Save the Children played a leading role in an interagency review of evidence in relation to community-level child protection, feeding into Child Protection Minimum Standard 17 on community level approaches, a Reflective Field Guide on Strengthening Community Based Child Protection, and the related training package and online video series. These different resources will form the basis for the adapted COVID-19 guidance note.

Adaptation of activities:

Activity	Adaptation guidance	Timeframe
Interagency COVID-19 Guidance Note on community	This guidance will include key considerations and hyperlinks to relevant supporting resources in relation to: 1. Assessing how communities organize themselves to protect children in times of COVID-19	Ready for dissemination mid-April

level approach to child protection	<p>2. The health, safety and wellbeing of community child protection focal points</p> <p>3. Safe, child-friendly and effective ways for community child protection focal points to support risk communication and community engagement on COVID-19</p> <p>4. Safe and effective ways for communities to protect their children in times of COVID-19</p>	
Guidance on remote community engagement	To slow COVID-19 transmission, we need to respect strict physical distancing. This poses a critical but necessary challenge to community programming. This guidance, which will be annexed to the interagency COVID-19 guidance note, will offer suggestions on how to continue to reach local leaders and community members with life-saving COVID-19 prevention information and support them to problem solve. Two-way communication with trusted community leaders (formal and non-formal) to implement appropriate responses is essential. The guidance will incorporate considerations around different means of communication and the safety of different communication platforms	Ready for dissemination mid-April
Cash and Child Protection tools	<p>As part of an inter-agency effort, SCUK is leading on the development of cash and child protection tools. These tools aim to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify child protection risks in cash and voucher assistance, and, • Monitor child protection outcomes resulting from cash and voucher assistance. <p>The guidance is being adapted for COVID-19 and available for piloting. It is linked to the inter-agency Guidance Note above.</p>	Ready for dissemination mid-April

Key considerations: existing community level child protection programming may be significantly affected by COVID-19, and child protection risks, issues and needs may also evolve due to changes in home and community dynamics and environment as a result of the pandemic. Similarly, usual and existing mechanisms to prevent and respond to child protection issues will be disrupted due to, for example, school closures, inability to meet in groups and/or ability to identify child protection issues that may now have reduced visibility. In addition, both formal and informal services and resources may no longer be viable or available for COVID-19 response. As a result, adaptations may need to be made to any areas of existing programming to support community level child protection and ensure the safety and wellbeing of children during this time. This will include ensuring boys and girls have access to support from adults with whom they feel comfortable, taking into considerations issues such as community leaders often being male, as well as how adapted mechanisms and services may not be accessible to children with disabilities and those with chronic health conditions. This also highlights the need for inclusive communication tools (easy-to-read documents, use of sign language etc.).

Contacts: Caroline Veldhuizen and Jane Calder (co-leads CP Systems TWG)

Resources: Interagency COVID-19 Guidance Note on Community-Level Child Protection (includes hyperlinks to all relevant additional resources)

Child Protection Case Management

Introduction: Crises like COVID-19 lead to an increase in violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation of children, compounded by social isolation directives that make it even harder for children and families with protection concerns to reduce the violence or abuse and seek help. Child protection case management is an essential service, and continuity of existing programming is critical for the ongoing and newly emerging issues related to the protection of children. Continued support for the most vulnerable children will be ensured through adapted measures and appropriate responses to new child protection risks and concerns generated by the pandemic. Steps to Protect, our common approach on Child Protection case management, has been adapted to take the implications of COVID-19 into account and enable staff and the social service workforce to continue delivering vital child protection services as effectively and safely as possible, while adapting to the new context. In 2019, regional pools of child protection experts supported over 31 countries to introduce Steps to Protect, and strengthen their case management system, training over 400 staff and partners. We will use the capacity of this trained workforce to ensure continuity of implementation while adapting S2P to the new and rapidly evolving situation.

Adaptation of activities:

Activity	Adaptation guidance	Timeframe
SC COVID-19 CP case management guidance	Framed around the different components of a case management system, the guidance includes key considerations and hyperlinks to relevant supporting resources (guidance, tools, training materials, repositories etc.) that supports child protection teams to adapt existing case management practice. The guidance covers the preparedness and initial response phases. It adapts Steps to Protect to the COVID-19 context and responds to questions and requests for support that have been received from the field.	Already available 9 th April
SC Covid-19 CP case management FAQ	This living document includes frequently asked questions from the field and answers draw from SC's case management guidance. We will continue updating the document during the COVID-19 response.	Already available 9 th April
Interagency Covid-19 CP case management guidance	SC, Terre des Hommes, Plan International, IRC and UNICEF (under the IA CM TF) will lead the development of interagency guidance on child protection case management for COVID-19. The guidance will be framed around the components of a case management system, will cover all emergency phases and address different scenarios (access, limited access, no access). It will build on good practice and guidance and tools from the field and answer frequently asked questions in relation to, for example, case prioritization, remote provision of case management, duty of care, the role of community volunteers in case management, alternative care, confidentiality and data protection	Ready for dissemination mid-April
Interagency series of webinars	The interagency case management guidance will be accompanied by a series of webinars on child protection case management in times of COVID-19 (topics to be determined), held in different languages. SC is part of the organizing team.	April – June
Interagency MOOC	The interagency case management guidance comes with a MOOC, an innovative and highly interactive digital platform that offers case management actors in the field a unique learning opportunity. The MOOC will allow an unlimited number of participants to be trained worldwide, offering course materials and interaction on case management in times of COVID-19.	April – June

Remote learning and capacity building materials	Building on S2P and the interagency COVID-19 child protection case management guidance, SC will develop a capacity building plan for key case management actors in the field (child protection teams, partners, case workers, supervisors etc.), addressing their learning and capacity building needs through appropriate online platforms and digital tools.	April – May
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Key considerations:

The types, rate of and complexity of child protection issues that require case management may vary due to changes in home and community dynamics and environment as a result of COVID-19. Similarly, the needs, issues and risks of children and their families we are already working with may change as a result of COVID-19 and changing circumstances will need to be considered. Existing mechanisms, as well as formal and informal services and resources, may no longer be viable or available due to COVID-19 response. How adapted services and mechanisms will be accessible to all children, including children with disabilities, will need to be considered. The gender and power dynamics within a household and community may change, and/or negative dynamics or gendered stereotypes perpetuated, which may also affect existing case management responses, and new kinds of intervention may be required to respond to child protection risks.

Contacts: Caroline Veldhuizen and Jane Calder (co-leads CP Systems TWG)

Resources: SC Covid-19 [Child Protection Case Management Guidance](#) (includes hyperlinks to all relevant additional resources)

Appropriate Care

Introduction: We are already seeing Governments take a series of radical responses to children in residential care, either recommending that they are all sent home or that they are further isolated from the community. During an infectious disease outbreak, children can be separated from their primary caretakers and might be unaccompanied due to strict preventative measures, treatment, illness and loss. We therefore expect that the number of children at-risk of separation and in need of alternative care will increase in both the short and longer term. Providing safe, appropriate care can be lifesaving for these children.

Adaptation of activities:

Activity	Adaptation guidance	Timeframe
Technical Notes	<p>We are helping to develop a series of technical notes on alternative care together with UNICEF, the Better Care Network and the Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action.</p> <p>The technical note will aim to support child protection practitioners and government officials in their immediate response to the child protection concerns faced by children who are at risk of separation or in alternative care during the COVID-19 pandemic. It will build on the Alliance Technical Note, and is based on international standards and practice relating to the care and protection of children.</p>	Already available (9 th April)
Short term interim care	We are developing an internal document for Save the Children staff currently operating interim care centres and those who may need to support interim care	Already available (9 th April)

	facilities as part of COVID-19 response. A Powerpoint and webinar are also available for information to decide on when to use interim care. We will also circulate the guidance on safe programming for Interim Care Centres, developed with the SCI safeguarding team, once final.	
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Key considerations: Existing programming and case management of children who have been reunified/ placed with families should continue to the extent possible, with appropriate mitigation measures put in place (see child protection case management section). This will be particularly important to reduce disruptions to placements that may be caused by COVID-19, for example increased health vulnerabilities and financial impacts of kinship carers (particularly when grandparents) and foster carers. Rapid closure of RCIs and children’s return to families and communities without care plans may exacerbate child protection risks and stress and instability within the family and community. This is elaborated on in the inter-agency Technical Note. The group environment of RCIs may also lead to increased risk of cluster infections for children remaining within an RCI.

Any gendered dimensions to alternative care work, including who makes decisions regarding the care of children as well as child protection risks for boys and girls both in and out of alternative care, may change due to COVID-19. Due to caregiver work requirements and/or changes to caregivers who are in the household as they are no longer able to work, the decision-maker regarding both sending children to RCIs, as well as having children reintegrated, may change. The roles and responsibilities of girls and boys who have been reintegrated (that is, caregiving, household chores, labour), and subsequent child protection risks, may also change or gender stereotypes be further perpetuated.

Risks may be exacerbated for children with disabilities who are sent home from residential care. As children with disabilities may need additional care compared to other children, families who are not used to having the child home full-time may struggle, which can put the child at risk of abuse, neglect and violence.

Contacts: Rebecca Smith (co-lead Safe & Appropriate Care TWG) and Lauren Murray (member of the Safe & Appropriate Care TWG)

Resources: [Inter-agency Technical Note on Alternative Care](#), [Covid-19 Considerations for Interim Care Centres](#)

Online Safety

Introduction: The exposure of children to online abuse and exploitation, including sexual, is likely to increase as children spend more time online, including for online learning.

Adaptation of activities:

Activity	Adaptation guidance	Timeframe
Guidance Document	Produce guidance document for COs on Dos & Don’ts for parents and caregivers and children on online safety that can be linked with Education guidance on digital learning modalities	By mid-May

Key considerations: Existing online safety programming which utilizes digital learning modalities and platforms can likely continue to be implemented. However, online safety programming that utilizes in-person activities (that is, sessions in schools, peer-to-peer education, group awareness-raising sessions) will need to cease – or be adapted to be remote activities – while the COVID-19 pandemic is ongoing.

The pandemic may lead to many children engaging with activities online (such as e-Learning) who do not have much experience using the internet, leaving them vulnerable to harm. In addition, the risks for children online are likely to be different for girls and boys. For example, although all children could be vulnerable to all forms of exploitation online, girls (especially of adolescent age) might be more likely to experience sexual exploitation and abuse.

Contacts: Jamileh Abu-Duhou (co-lead SGBV TWG)

Resources: Guidance note on online safety – “Dos and Don’ts” for caregivers and children

Mental Health and Psychosocial Support

Introduction:

Quarantine and self-isolation are likely to exacerbate stressors such as boredom, fears of infection, having inadequate supplies, excess and/or inaccuracy of information, leading to increased feelings of frustration, anxiety and a sense of hopelessness. These stressors and potential feelings associated with them are known to increase violence, abuse, neglect and substance abuse within the household. Children and adolescents, with and without disabilities, are the most at risk of protection-related consequences. The death of loved ones and the absence of usual societal interactions may also give rise to the experience of grief and loss. Persons with pre-existing mental health conditions may experience worsening of symptoms, and some members of the community might be vulnerable to the development of acute mental health disturbances. It is anticipated that, in some cases, there may be increased risk of suicidal thoughts and self-harming behaviour amongst caregivers and children/youth.

Adaptation of activities:

Activity	Adaptation guidance	Timeframe
Adaptation of tools for remote support	Development, adaptation and implementation of guidance and SoPs to ensure delivery of safe and emotionally supportive remote service provision, (i.e. secure platforms) and appropriate remote implementation (i.e. HEART delivered remotely, peer-to-peer PFA).	Adaptation of tools: May – July
Staff orientation and training on MHPSS best practices and supervision	Training for key staff, with appropriate adaptations for the COVID-19 outbreak, will be provided in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Psychological first aid (PFA) • Suicide risk management protocol • Remote supervision and peer-to-peer supervision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PFA : May – June • Suicide risk management: available for pilot, finalised in August
Address discrimination and stigma within communities	Adaptation of IEC materials debunking myths and providing accurate information about COVID-19, and dissemination through mass media campaigns of key MHPSS messages. Training for teachers on safe back-to-school campaigns, will also be encouraged to address stigma and discrimination.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keys messages: May – June • Training back to school: June - July

Key considerations:

MHPSS considerations need to be mainstreamed across all sectors of humanitarian assistance and effective coordination with other MHPSS agencies/providers and humanitarian cluster/working group leads ensured. Staff should be trained on PFA and adequately supervised to implement MHPSS considerations into their role. We need to ensure that access is arranged to a range of

supports (remote as needed) varying in intensity, with a recognition that people are affected by emergencies in different ways, with some requiring minimal support and some requiring high levels of care (please refer to IASC intervention pyramid of [MHPSS in Emergencies](#), p.13). All services and messaging will be disseminated following universal design ensuring access of information to children with and without disabilities and strong linkages with child protection and sexual and gender-based violence actors due to the increased risk of protection concerns for girls and boys as a result of COVID-19.

Contacts:

MHPSS programming: Anne Filorizzo Pla and Michelle Engels (co-leads MHPSS TWG)
 Inclusion of persons with disabilities: Anne Filorizzo Pla and Martina Orsander (co-chair disability inclusion TWG)

Resources:

Suicide risk assessment protocol and accompanying training package (pilot on going)
 Updated training content will be added to the Kaya COVID-19 learning pathway: [link here](#)
 Staff-wellbeing package for country offices (in development)
 PFA Peer to Peer with module on remote (in development)

Safe Schools

Introduction: Children must be protected, including when accessing alternative instruction while schools are closed and when they return to school. The [Safe Schools & COVID19 Guidance](#) will be updated to include top-line guidance and resources drawn from the upcoming Online Safety, MHPSS and Community-Level Child Protection guidance as well as relevant Education guidance like the Interactive Radio Instruction guide.

Existing Safe Schools programming can be adapted by ensuring that risks and risk mitigations related to health hazards like COVID19 are fully integrated into the ongoing programming and by adapting activities for remote implementation. These adaptations can build on the participatory foundation of the Safe Schools Common Approach to ensure that children’s voices are still heard and that whole school communities can contribute to children’s safety as schools are closing, closed and reopening. In the COVID19 response, it is even more crucial that Safe Schools programs maintain an integrated approach between CP and Education as well as Health, WASH, etc. The [Safe Schools & COVID19 Guidance Version 1.0](#) emphasizes integration, child participation and building on existing structures.

Adaptation of activities:

Activity	Adaptation guidance	Time-frame
Safe Schools & COVID19 Guidance Version 2.0	To facilitate an integrated approach to Safe Schools in the COVID19 response, this guidance will be a “one-stop-shop” for SC staff and partners for technical guidance related to protecting children in and around schools during COVID19. The guidance will include deep dives on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tips for remote teacher training, with a focus on teacher wellbeing during the COVID19 crisis, their PFA skills while delivering remote lessons and helping support children’s wellbeing and protection in and around schools when they re-open. - A safe back-to-school checklist to provide guidance to school communities on ensuring the safe and inclusive reopening of schools. 	May – to be updated as other guidance becomes available and CO best practices emerge.

	The guidance will link to work on online safety, community level child protection (reporting and referral mechanisms), MHPSS (messaging & activities for children and parents/carers, as well as messaging & remote training for teachers), Interactive Radio Instruction and Child Participation in COVID-19 response.	
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Key considerations: Remote activities related to education continuity and MHPSS, CP, and hygiene messaging need to be accessible to children with and without disabilities (that is, shared oral and visual IEC, specialized interventions to reach children with disabilities). To prepare for safe, inclusive return to school special attention must be paid to de-stigmatization campaigns and community advocacy to ensure girl learners and learners with disability are re-integrated.

Contacts: Questions can be posted in the [Safe Schools Community of Practice](#) on Workplace or sent to [Elyse Leonard](#) (Co-lead, Protecting Children in and around Schools TWG).

Resources:

- [Safe Schools & COVID19 Guidance Version 1.0](#)
- UNICEF/WHO/IFRC Key Messages & Actions for COVID19 in Schools ([English](#), [French](#), [Spanish](#), [Arabic](#))
- [Tips for parents and caregivers supporting children’s wellbeing and learning during school closures](#)

Migrant and Displaced Children

Introduction: Understanding the scale and severity of the vulnerability of refugees and migrants at this time is critical. WHO’s basic advice for protecting against COVID-19 focuses on social distancing, vigilant personal hygiene, and rapidly accessing medical attention when symptoms occur: advice which is difficult, if not impossible, to follow in most refugee / IDP / migrant camps or asylum detention centres. We see such conditions as potentially creating further displacement and family separation, exacerbating domestic violence and GBV and possibly generating increased levels of xenophobia against ‘the outsider’ at a time when all resources are stretched to their limits.

As an already marginalised, over-looked group, migrant and displaced children are likely to find themselves even more vulnerable at this time. They should be included amongst the highest risk groups of children we work with, and communities and governments should be urged to ensure they are included in all national and regional response plans and interventions.

Governments could also use the pretext of COVID-19-driven security or health concerns to enact, cement and/or legitimise draconian long-term anti-migrant and refugee policy. Advocacy efforts may need re-doubling to ensure the rights and best interests of migrant and displaced children are respected and upheld; and advocacy, preferably in coordination with UN and NGO partners - may form a greater part of your programming.

Adaptation of activities:

Activity	Adaptation guidance	Timeframe
Guidance Document	We will produce a guidance document on the impact of COVID-19 on migrant and displaced children . This provides guidance on understanding the specific risks to M&E children, programming adaptations and advocacy messages to ensure that the rights of migrant and displaced children are respected at this time.	Already available (8 th April)
Children Deprived of Liberty	We have contributed to an inter-agency guidance note on Children Deprived of Liberty – which includes children detained for immigration purposes. This will particularly support with advocacy	Already available (8 th April)

	to ensure that public security and health concerns are not used by governments to legitimise the detention of migrant children.	
Trafficked children	We have also contributed to Global Protection Cluster guidance on COVID-19 Pandemic: Trafficking in Persons (TIP) considerations in internal displacement contexts	Already available

Key considerations:

Strong advocacy will be required in all settings where we support migrant and displaced children, highlighting that M&D children are highly vulnerable to COVID-19 and must be prioritized; immediate advocacy actions include:

- Calls for immediate and substantive scale-up to prevent (and test) outbreaks in camps/settlements
- Ensure funding for M&D populations
- Facilitate humanitarian access, e.g. to camps, to settlements.
- Inclusion of M&D populations in national COVID-19 response plan. **Do not de-prioritise**
- Consider temporary amnesties, to ensure M&D populations engage with response measures
- Fundamental refugee/migrant rights (e.g. to claim asylum, non-refoulement) must be upheld.
- Ensure that M&D populations are not **scapegoated or stigmatized**

For more detailed guidance and rationale for priority advocacy messages see SC guidance note: **COVID-19: Operational Guidance for Migrant and Displaced Children**. Also UNHCR [The COVID-19 Crisis: Key Protection Messages](#)

Family tracing and reunification efforts for unaccompanied refugee and migrant children should continue – even across borders. Staff should work with authorities to ensure that measures which restrict movement allow for reunification of parents / caregivers and children, and help families remain together, whenever possible.

As services and activities increasingly become on-line, we must remain cognizant that migrant and displaced children and families may not have access to laptops, smart phones and other such appliances. Equally the language in which vital messages about health risks and other communication are conveyed must be accessible in commonly spoken refugee and migrant languages in your context. Not being able to access key information in troubling times like this can cause increased distress and anxiety.

Contacts: Hannah Newth (co-lead Protecting the Rights of Children Affected by Migration and Displacement TWG)

Resources: [Guidance document on the impact of COVID-19 on migrant and displaced children](#)

We have also contributed to:

- Global Protection Cluster guidance on [COVID-19 Pandemic: Trafficking in Persons \(TIP\) considerations in internal displacement contexts](#) ;
- [Inter-Agency Guidance on Children Deprived of Liberty](#), (including children in immigration detention)

Children in Fragile States and Conflict

Introduction: The impact of COVID-19 on child protection will be significantly greater in fragile and conflict-affected states. Containment measures will be harder to enforce across porous borders and in locations where governments lack legitimacy with parts of the population. The virus will spread fastest amongst populations living in crowded areas with poor sanitation, including impoverished urban areas and displacement camps. The impact of border closures on the delivery of external

humanitarian assistance to these populations will weaken already fragile health infrastructures which will be quickly overwhelmed by the scale of need. Death and incapacitation of caregivers, loss of livelihoods and subsequent impoverishment will drive children to more extreme forms of survival, including early marriage, sexual exploitation and recruitment and use by armed forces and armed groups. In many conflict-affected states, children are detained for real or perceived association with armed groups, putting them at high risk of transmission as they are unlikely to be able to take preventive measures. Securitised containment measures may increase the numbers of children detained either individually or with their families. As justice systems slow down and stall, children in detention are likely to remain for prolonged periods of time without due process. The economic and social consequences of the pandemic threaten to aggravate social division in the medium and long-term, amplifying existing and generating new conflict. Border closures may prevent parts of the population from seeking asylum. Travel restrictions are impacting on conflict prevention and resolution measures, peace processes and peace-keeping initiatives, undermining the achievement of child rights and derailing efforts to release children from armed forces and armed groups or repatriate children of foreign fighters with caregivers/mothers to countries of nationality.

Adaptation of activities:

Activity	Adaptation guidance	Timeframe
Guidance	We are developing a short guidance document that includes a narrative of the impact of Covid-19 on the protection of children in conflict, steps to take for country offices operating in the context of armed conflict to align PCiC strategies and pooled funding with the Covid-19 response plans, and an overview of advocacy messages and relevant programming guidelines.	April
Centrality of Protection	We are developing a guidance document and templates to adapt the Centrality of Protection Policy for COVID-19. This will ensure that key violations of the international legal framework are monitored with a focus on the specific impact on children and will provide guidance on how to continue monitoring and reporting of grave and other serious violations of child rights and on child protection analysis across key sectors in the COVID-19 response.	April
Civil-military and ANSA relations	Internal guidance note available in order to support increased cooperation with military, police and armed non-state actors in the delivery of humanitarian assistance and the promotion of child rights and child protection. This is based on SCI policy and procedure.	Already Available
Children Deprived of Liberty	We have developed an interagency Guidance Note on Covid-19 and Children Deprived of their Liberty to guide advocacy and programming in this area. This addresses potential restrictions on freedom of movement or detainment of children due to immigration status as well as children already deprived of their liberty within national justice systems or related to security.	Already available (8 th April)
Work with CAAFAG	Programme Guidance on Release and Reintegration of Children Associated with Armed Forces and Armed Groups is available on OneNet. An additional inter-agency guidance note on advocacy on and programming with CAAFAG and Covid-19 is being drafted	Already Available April

Contacts: Christine McCormick and Kiran Kothari (co-leads PCiC TWG)

Resources:

- Protecting Children in Conflict during the Global Covid-19 Pandemic;
- The Centrality of Protection in the Covid-19 Response;
- Internal Guidance Note [Civil/Military Coordination Covid-19 Humanitarian Response](#);
- [Guidance Note on Covid-19 and Children Deprived of their Liberty](#);
- Programme Guidance on Release and Reintegration of Children Associated with Armed Forces and Armed Groups.
- Inter-agency Guidance Note on Children Associated with Armed Forces and Armed Groups and Covid-19.

MEAL

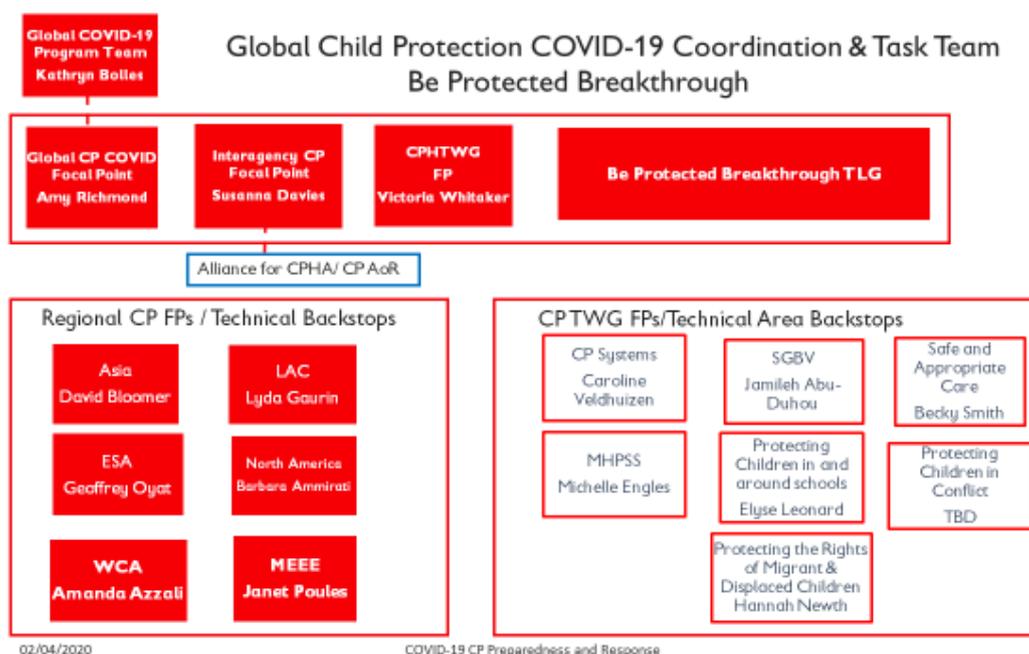
It will continue to be important that we undertake MEAL activities to understand if adapted programming is achieving the results expected of key interventions, as well as more broadly ensuring children are safe and protected. Alongside the key activities/adaptation guidance that will be developed for each of the child protection intervention areas, adaptations to MEAL guidance (where this exists, for example the Common Approaches), will also be undertaken, in line with SCI COVID-19 MEAL guidance. This will include:

- Consideration of what critical or time-sensitive MEAL activities should continue to be implemented.
- Revisions to key indicators to align with adapted programming.
- Revisions to global data collection tools (where these exist) to align with revised indicators.
- Guidance on remote data collection and/or mitigation measures where face-to-face MEAL activities are deemed critical and necessary.
- Revised learning agenda questions (where these exist) to understand how COVID-19 is impacting on key child protection indicators (i.e. rates of violence).

Annexe 1: Leadership and Coordination

Internal leadership and coordination

As we know, this pandemic is requiring work across humanitarian and development teams as we look to repurpose existing child protection activities and support children’s protection and wellbeing across contexts. The CP COVID-19 Programme Lead is on the Save the Children COVID-19 Task Force, and liaises with and coordinates the CP COVID-19 Coordination Team, which has weekly calls every Wednesday. The CP COVID-19 Coordination Team works through and with the Technical Working Group structure.



External engagement

Save the Children teams are encouraged to collaborate with other child protection agencies, governments and national/ local partners through the existing inter-agency child protection coordination groups. In humanitarian contexts, the inter-agency coordination group may be led by the Child Protection Area of Responsibility/ UNICEF or UNHCR. Save the Children often co-leads these groups at national and sub-national level. Where inter-agency coordination mechanisms do not exist, Save the Children should collaborate with other agencies to help assist them. Please consult “**Meeting our Coordination Obligations in COVID19 Humanitarian Response**” brief for more on Save the Children’s role in inter-agency coordination in humanitarian settings. **(Link to be confirmed)**.

Annexe 2: Resource list

Please see the [resource list for COVID-19 response](#). This will be regularly updated.