Child Protection Sub-Cluster Strategy, South Sudan

2017 – 2018 STRATEGY FOR THE CHILD PROTECTION SUB-CLUSTER HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE
JUNE 2017
Draft Child Protection Sub Cluster Strategy

This Child Protection Sub-Cluster Strategy outlines the protection priorities for conflict-affected South Sudanese children and builds upon the requirements already outlined in the Protection Cluster Strategy1. It lays out an overarching child protection response strategy complemented by more detailed strategic plans for national sub-working groups of Psychosocial Support (PSS), Children Associated with Armed Forces and Armed Groups (CAFAAG) and Unaccompanied and Separated Children. The Child Protection Sub-Cluster Strategy is intended to support a coordinated, comprehensive and predictable response for children affected by the conflict and other emergencies across South Sudan.

Child Protection situation

The conflict in South Sudan has forced more than two million children and their families to flee their homes seeking for refuge internally as well as in neighboring countries. Children make up 62 percent of the more than 1.8 million South Sudanese seeking refuge in neighboring countries and more than 1. Million children are internally displaced in South Sudan. Children continue to bear a heavy brunt in the long-lasting and violent conflict in, since the outbreak of the conflict in December 2013.

Children have been killed and maimed, abducted, exposed to rape and sexual violence, as well as recruited and used for different purposes by armed forces and groups. On top of this, in February 2017, famine has been declared by UNs in the counties of Leer and Mayendit and about 100,000 people are facing a famine and a million more are on the brink of famine in 3 three other states. The major child protection concerns resulting of the ongoing conflict and declared famine are:

**Family separation and unaccompanied and separated children**: Displacement and conflict have resulted in high levels of family separation, leading to 9,699 active cases of unaccompanied, separated, and missing children2. These children are extremely vulnerable for all kind of violence, exploitation and abuse and require individual case management, alternative care solutions and support to be reunified with their families or primary caregivers.

**Risks of children being associated with armed force and groups**: Recruitment and mobilization of children to take part in conflict continues to be a common practice, necessitating a comprehensive approach to identifying, releasing, and implement a sustainable reintegration program for children associated with armed groups. Over 317,000 children are reportedly associated with armed forces and groups.

**Sexual and Gender based Violence**: Girls, in particular are at risk of sexual violence, child marriage and early pregnancy- including as a result of abduction. Displacement and family separation during flight further exacerbates the risk SGBV.

**Psychological Distress**: Children’s psychosocial wellbeing and mental health are severely affected witnessing killings, destruction of homes, and loss of family and friends. Additionally, difficulties in accessing food, water, education, livelihoods, recreation, and other services contribute to children’s and caregivers’ stress on a daily basis. Approximately, 1 million children are believed to need

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1 FTR Weekly Caseload Summary 23_06_2017
2 Child Protection Information Management System Database
3 CAFAAG Working Group South Sudan
psychosocial support as increasingly negative coping mechanisms are often observed among children who have been displaced for several years and still continues to encounter the same or similar situations.

**Exploitation:** Conflict affected and displaced children are at risk of becoming involved in the worst forms of child labour, including child trafficking, hazardous work and begging in the streets. Children outside of parental care are more at risk of exploitation.

Abduction: Recent reports indicate that child abduction by cattle herders and/or armed forces and groups continues to persist. It’s believed that the numbers of children abducted from their villages and schools and forced into child labour and recruitment may be in hundreds.

**Denial of humanitarian access to children:** Humanitarian access is crucial in a situation where civilians, including children, are in desperate need of assistance. Denial of humanitarian access entails blocking the free passage or timely delivery of humanitarian assistance to persons in need as well as the deliberate attacks against humanitarian workers. The denial of humanitarian assistance to civilians trapped or displaced by conflict has been increasingly reported. This includes dangerous movements for civilians with risk of harassment at checkpoints, GBV, being trapped in crossfire and deliberately attacked on their way to reach humanitarian assistance.

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**Strategic Objective**

Contributing to the realization of the Protection Cluster strategic objectives outlined in 2017 Humanitarian Response Plan, the CPSC strategy aims to enhance the protection of conflict affected boys and girls in South Sudan from abuse, neglect and exploitation at homes, in the community and when in contact with humanitarian services through increased access to quality child protection services.

**Specific objectives:**

1. Girls and boys have increased access to quality child protection services and protected from violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation at home, in the community and when in contact with humanitarian services.

2. Girls and Boys coping mechanisms and resilience are strengthened and severely affected children are receiving appropriate support through community-based approaches.

3. Family separation is prevented and responded to, and unaccompanied and separated children are cared for and protected according to their specific needs and their best interests.

4. Children with critical protection needs are identified and receive appropriate, targeted support.

5. Girls and boys are protected from recruitment and use in hostilities by armed forces or armed groups, and are released and provided with effective reintegration services.

6. Child protection considerations inform all aspects of humanitarian actions and targeted child protection prevention and response services and mainstreamed into other sectorial responses.
7. Well-coordinated, predictable and comprehensive planning and response ensured through strengthened coordination mechanisms at national and sub-national level

**Overarching approach:**
Protection, including child protection, should be central in the design and delivery of humanitarian assistance. The humanitarian community runs the risk of causing unintentional harm to affected children if sectors do not cater to girls’ and boys’ specific needs and vulnerabilities or fully integrate child protection principles in their response. Further specialized protection services and expertise need to be prioritized, for children to have access to psychosocial care, family reunification, and other critical services.

The Sub-Cluster will integrate the accountability to affected Population AAP framework in all aspects of the child protection response, and ensure child participation in its different elements.

**Guiding Principles**

- **Survival and Development:** consider effects of the emergency and response on physical, psychological, emotional and spiritual development of the child, assisting children and their families to claim rights, remedies and recover from abuse;
- **Non-discrimination and access to equitably distributed assistance:** identify and monitor existing patterns of discrimination and address them in the response and ensure children have equal access to and are provided with impartial and needs-based assistance on an equitable basis;
- **Child Participation:** children are given space to participate and voice their views in the design of programs – support expression of their views in safety;
- **Best-interests of the child:** in all actions, the best interests of the child is a primary consideration.
- **Do-no-harm:** avoid exposure of children to further harm resulting from child protection interventions and actions including protection from physical, psychological and psychosocial harm.
- **Gender-analysis:** A gender analysis should inform the deliverers of humanitarian protection and assistance of the specific needs of the individuals or groups within the affected population requiring targeted action.

**Modalities in service delivery**

- **Indiscriminate and needs-based access and provision to services:** services are accessible to all conflict affected children from IDPs and host communities regardless of status and belonging to a particular social group. Modalities of assistance might differ because of status.
- **Focus on quality and sustainability through community-based approaches, resilience and the strengthening of national systems and local capacities through systematic approaches to capacity building and involvement of the community in planning, implementation and monitoring of activities.**
Focus on the family-unit over the individual child alone and ensure an integrated approach to child protection particularly protection, education, gender-based violence, health including mental health, distribution, nutrition and livelihood;

Promote area-based approaches in the child protection to ensure modalities remain flexible and adaptable to the local context, the operational environment and the evolving needs;

Uphold do-no-harm approaches and ensure protection and assistance remains principled, needs-based and humanitarian in character.

Specific Objectives with outcomes and prioritized actions

Objective 1 - Girls and boys have increased access to child protection services and protected from violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation at home, in the community and when in contact with humanitarian services

Children have access to safe spaces, including at school, in their homes and in communities. Proactive programming is in place to prevent violence against children, through community involvement, advocacy and targeted risk reduction measures. Referral mechanisms are in place and children; families and communities are aware of how to report abuse and where to get help. Children and adolescents, are actively involved in designing, delivering and evaluating programs to promote a protective environment.

Priority outcomes:

- Children’s rights are promoted and children’s meaningful participation enabled
- Children and community member’s child protection capacity is strengthened and the community is involved in the design of, and know about and access effective, child-friendly mechanisms to prevent and respond to violence against boys and girls.
- Case management system is established whenever girls and boys with high child protection concerns identified and receive age and culturally appropriate, multi sectoral and child-friendly response by trained case-workers and in a coordinated and accountable manner.
- Community-based child protection networks are established to prevent neglect, exploitation, abuse and violence against children and respond to humanitarian needs of girls and boys in all affected communities. Appropriate complaints and feedback mechanisms which is impartial, timely, safe, confidential, and accessible for children and families, is agreed upon and implemented with children, communities and other key stakeholders,
- Improved coordination, procedures and tools to ensure effective cross-border interventions and the care and protection of vulnerable boys and girls, including, but not limited to unaccompanied and separated children.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Indicator</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identifying, training and supporting community-based child protection mechanisms for prevention of and response to abuse, neglect, exploitation of and violence against children.</td>
<td># of community based Child Protection mechanisms strengthened</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify, develop and support community based child protection services targeted at supporting children at-risk, and those who are the most vulnerable;</td>
<td># of girls and boys participating in structured community-based psychosocial support activities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Establish and strengthen referrals between the child protection, particularly case workers, and GBV, food distribution/ nutrition, shelter and NFI, education and health, including MHPSS services</td>
<td># of girls and boys referred between child protection case workers and other service providers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop a consolidated approach to case management with standardize, operationalize and harmonize tools and resources, for UASC, CAAFAG and other vulnerable children, including training packages and resources;</td>
<td>Standard Operating Procedures with a consolidated training package for case management developed</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Coordinate with CPWG at regional level and in countries of asylum to establish inter-agency and cross-border standard tools and procedures for family tracing and reunification, restoring family links across borders, and case management for vulnerable children. Standard tools and procedures are agreed upon and information sharing protocols signed by key child protection actors across the region.

Establishing child help desks to support children at service delivery points – including identifying and facilitating access for vulnerable children. # of service food Distribution, OTP, Schools and registration points with child-friendly helpdesks established.

**Objective 2** - Girls and Boys coping mechanisms and resilience are strengthened and severely affected children are receiving appropriate support through community based approaches;

**Priority outcomes:**
- Children have opportunities and safe spaces to gather, socialize, play and receive psychosocial support.
- Community participation and promotion of children and families’ well-being, resilience and participation is strengthened.
- Strengthen the knowledge and skills of caregivers, community members, community based child protection committees and teachers on how to emotionally support and care for the children.
- Children and adolescents receive PSS built on available resources and capacities in the community and integrated support systems.
- Children and care givers are assisted with Psychological First Aid during and immediately after crises to reduce and alleviate the immediate distress, reduce psychosocial chaos, and to promote and support short- and long-term coping and adaptation mechanisms.

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<tr>
<td>Provide and strengthen community-based psychosocial support services and resilience programs for children, particularly adolescent girls and boys</td>
<td>% of targeted communities where communities are supported to initiate PSS activities for children and adolescents.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working with children and communities to design and deliver psychosocial support activities, including recreational, creative, cultural and social activities, for children in their communities.</td>
<td># of members of community based child protection structures trained on CP approaches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designing and delivering specific activities to involve and support adolescent boys and girls, including life-skills, non-formal education and age- and gender appropriate psychosocial support programs.</td>
<td># of adolescent girls and boys benefiting from life skills and resilience programming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promote children’s rights; enable children’s meaningful participation and build on available resources</td>
<td># of children’s committees, groups and structures operational and facilitating children’s participation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training of front-line Child Protection staff to provide psychological first aid (PFA) to children and care givers.</td>
<td># of women and men child protection workers and staff trained on CP approaches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training of community members to provide psychological first aid (PFA) to children and care givers.</td>
<td># of members of community based child protection structures trained on CP approaches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will we want to capture - Mainstream Child Protection and psychosocial support in schools through capacity building events</td>
<td># of teachers and Parents Teachers Association (PTAs) members trained on PSS/CP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workshop to review the UNICEF Psychosocial Support (PSS) guidelines with Child Protection PSS partners to review and endorse the guidelines.</td>
<td>Report from Workshop for revision of UNICEF Psychosocial Support (PSS) guidelines.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work with the MHPSS group to develop referral mechanisms for more specialized interventions for severely affected children and to allocate resources for capacity building on MHPSS.</td>
<td>Referral mechanism developed between CP and specialized MHPSS services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will we want to capture - Support community based child protection committees to engage in child protection activities</td>
<td># of boys and girls at risk identified and referred to services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will we want to capture - Provide parenting skills session to caregivers and community members based on existing tools</td>
<td># of women and men participated in parenting skills session</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establish and strengthen Adolescents groups/clubs for peer to peer support and support to younger children</td>
<td># of adolescent groups / clubs established and strengthened</td>
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**Objective 3-** Family separation is prevented and responded to, and unaccompanied and separated children are cared for and protected according to their specific needs and their best interests. **Priority outcomes:**

- Unaccompanied and Separated children are provided with timely identification and registration, adequate care and family tracing and reunification services through a coordinated manner and in line with the FTR WG SOPs and ISPs
- The technical programmatic and Institutional capacities of child protection actors on FTR processes, Child Protection Information Management System (CPIMS), case management Procedures, is improved through trainings, field support visits and mentoring.
- Standard operating procedures and the Information Sharing Protocol for the Identification, Registration, Documentation Tracing and Reunification of UASC and other vulnerable children are reviewed and updated based on the changing operating humanitarian context
- Children, Families and communities are empowered to actively prevent family separation and to promote benefits to family based care
- Children without appropriate care are respected and cared for in a setting appropriate to their individual needs and in the best interest of the child
- Procedures for separated and unaccompanied children, addressing issues of cross-border tracing and reunification with inter-agencies tools and procedures are in place and longer term alternative care solutions established.

| Activity | Indicator |
| Build the technical programmatic and Institutional capacities of partners on FTR processes, CP IMS, FTR Procedures, and Technical support for partners, | % of agencies that effectively provide FTR services that improve their management and FTR response |
### Objective 4 - Child protection considerations inform all aspects of humanitarian actions and targeted child protection prevention and response services as part of a multi-sectoral response.

#### Priority outcomes:
- Humanitarian assistance interventions consider the different needs of girls and boys of all ages, abilities, ethnicities, religions and backgrounds and act to ensure safe access to services.
- Threats to the safety and wellbeing of children are mitigated through timely, sensitive provision of humanitarian aid in all sectors.
- Personnel in regular contact with children understand the different needs of children and have the skills to communicate effectively with children.

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<tr>
<td>In coordination with other clusters, ensure that children at risks and survivors and their families have access to humanitarian services, including registration and food and NFIs distribution.</td>
<td>% of surveyed registration, food and NFI distribution activities that took specific measures to ensure safe access to services for children at risk and survivors and their families</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensure there is an accessible reporting mechanism for violations and abuses surrounding distributions</td>
<td># of reported child cases of abuse, violence or exploitation related to distribution addressed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensure child headed households, unaccompanied and separated children and other extremely vulnerable boys and girls are issued with ration cards in their own names and receive special distribution of food and NFIs as necessary</td>
<td># of CHH, UASC and other extremely vulnerable children issued with their own ration cards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For Rapid Response Missions, ensure a system to ensure that child headed households, UASC and other vulnerable groups</td>
<td>% of RRM have in place and can document priority systems for CHH, UASC and other vulnerable groups</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ensure clear linkages with partners working with Children Associated with Armed Forces and Armed Groups (CAAFAG) and conduct tracing and reunification of demobilized CAAFAG an reintegration follow up after reunification.

Develop Alternative Care guidelines for South Sudan to support case management process for UASC as well as other vulnerable children in need of alternative care

Develop and review yearly training and capacity building plans for FTR partners addressing capacity building needs and gaps

Roll out trainings to child protection/ FTR partners at Sub-national level on case management.

Revise the Standard Operation Procedures (SOP) for FTR and broadening it to “SOPs for case management and care and protection of UASC, and other vulnerable Children” based on the changing operational context
have priorities to distribution and access to monitored vulnerability lines.

Develop clear standard operating procedures including identification and referral mechanisms between child protection and nutrition, distribution, WASH and other services in IDP locations and distribution points outside formal settlements.  # of cross-sectoral Child Protection SOPs and referral pathways developed and agreed upon.

Ensure that frontline workers in other sectors are trained on Psychological First Aid for children  # of women and men non-child protection workers trained on CP approaches

**Objective 5 - Girls and boys are protected from recruitment and use in hostilities by armed forces or armed groups, and are released and provided with effective reintegration services.**

**Priority outcomes:**
- Prevention of the (re) recruitment and use of children by armed forces and groups and/or the mobilization of children to take part in violence
- Preventative and responsive services are mainstreamed to address the needs of children associated or at high risk of association with armed forces/groups into child protection and other humanitarian activities.
- Released children are provided with social reintegration services to include Case Management/FTR, interim Care, medical care, education/ALP, and other PSS/Social development activities.
- Monitoring and reporting objective information on violations of children’s rights and program activities systematically inform response and prevention mechanisms for child protection. Information on grave violations should feed into the Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism (MRM).

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<tr>
<td>Engage youth, communities, government, community and religious leaders, teachers, and focal points from the SPLA, SPLA IO, and other armed groups through awareness sessions and community dialogue to end the use of children under 18 in the conflict as well as other inter-communal/age-sect violence.</td>
<td># of girls, boys, women and men reached by awareness sessions/community dialogues conducted on the recruitment/mobilization and use of children.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Released children are provided with social reintegration services to include Case Management/FTR, interim Care, medical care (including GBV services), education/ALP, and other PSS/Social development activities.</td>
<td># of formally released children who receive social reintegration services to include case management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Released children are provided activities to support and foster economic reintegration to include skill building, training, and livelihood and socio-economic opportunities.</td>
<td># of released children who receive economic reintegration services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensure that community-based structures and responsive mechanisms are in place to assess, monitor, and support the safe return and reintegration of children who either escaped or were informally released.</td>
<td># of children associated with armed forces/groups who were informally released or escaped who are registered (in a confidential manner) and receive protective services.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Vulnerable adolescents are at reduced risk of recruitment and mobilization through provision of social development and economic strengthening activities.

# of vulnerable adolescents who have received social development and economic strengthening activities.

**Objective 6: Well-coordinated, predictable and comprehensive planning and response ensured through strengthened coordination mechanisms at national and sub-national level**

The primary goal of coordination and information management activities is to ensure that the efforts of national and international humanitarian actors to protect girls and boys in humanitarian settings are well coordinated, predictable and comprehensive.

**Priority outcomes:**

1. Child Protection situation and response are systematically monitored and analyzed.
2. Advocacy plan developed to address critical protection issues and gaps in the humanitarian response, including inadequate funding for child protection.
3. Inter-agency approaches and tools developed and disseminated
4. Capacity building plans and initiatives are well-coordinated including providing standardized training materials and cascade trainings where appropriate.
5. Child protection preparedness actions are integrated into the inter-agency Contingency Plans

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<tr>
<td>Strengthen child protection coordination mechanisms at national and sub-national level</td>
<td># of Sub-national coordination mechanism established and reporting on regular basis.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Enhance Child Protection situation and response system</td>
<td>Child Protection Monitoring Toolkit implemented in all States. # of partners regularly reporting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Identify child protection capacity needs and develop capacity plan</td>
<td>Capacity building plan developed. # of CP professionals and volunteers trained in CPiE topics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify response gaps together with partners, including geographic coverage and programmatic scope and seek solutions based on the analyses, to fill the gaps.</td>
<td>Child protection response Gaps report with recommendations based on the analyzes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Child protection preparedness actions are integrated into the inter-agency Contingency Plans</td>
<td># of Child protection preparedness actions integrated into inter-agency Contingency Plans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify child protection concerns that contribute to advocacy strategies</td>
<td># of child protection concerns contributed to advocacy strategies</td>
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