

Community Safety Planning and Action

Key Messages

- UNICEF's community-based approach to building community safety **recognizes girls and women as active participants and agents in their own protection** and puts them at the centre of humanitarian action.
- While communities may not always be able to address all the threats facing girls and women in emergency settings, they play an important role in **identifying and analysing GBV-related risks. Communities can take locally and culturally appropriate action** to address those safety problems over which they have influence, and they can advocate with duty bearers and other actors to fulfil their responsibilities for protecting girls and women from GBV.
- **Girls and women should be actively involved, and their leadership encouraged**, in identifying safety and security threats they face, such as unsafe facilities and locations.
- Community safety planning is one component of UNICEF's **Minimum GBViE Response Package**.

Communities have responsibilities and capacities for their own protection in emergencies. Building on community strengths and resources in emergencies is an important strategy for activating local protection responses and promoting safety from gender-based violence (GBV).

Putting the voices and perspectives of the community – and of girls and women in particular – at the centre of humanitarian assistance and protection efforts is a cornerstone of UNICEF's human rights-based approach to humanitarian action.

Helping displaced and emergency-affected communities to identify GBV-related risks and take appropriate action to address them is one component of UNICEF's **Minimum GBViE Response Package**.

UNICEF's approach to community safety planning and action

UNICEF's community-based approach recognizes girls and women as active participants and agents in their own protection. The **objectives** of using a community-based approach to reduce GBV-related risks are:

1. To engage and mobilize affected communities to improve girls' and women's safety and protection from GBV; and
2. To strengthen the capacities of rights holders to make their claims, while strengthening the capacities of duty bearers to meet their obligations toward the protection of emergency-affected populations.

Kit 3.2: Programming – Building Girls' and Women's Safety and Resilience, *Section 2: Community Safety Planning and Action* provides information and tools to enable country offices to:

- Assist communities in conducting safety audits;
- Facilitate collaborative safety action planning;
- Support the implementation of safety plans; and
- Monitor the effectiveness of actions and emerging safety problems.

Dignity Kit Programming

Key Messages

- Dignity kits increase girls' and women's safety, mobility and dignity.
- They also have **other benefits, such as allowing for budget substitution** so that limited resources can be spent on other things, such as feeding children.
- Dignity kits are one component of UNICEF's **Minimum GBViE Response Package**.
- **UNICEF has two types of kits:** *The Immediate Response WASH and Dignity Kit*; and the *Family Hygiene and Dignity Kit*.
- **During the first 8 weeks of emergency response**, dignity kits can be procured through Supply Division. **During ongoing response**, consult girls and women to determine what to include in the kits, procure them locally, and monitor their effectiveness.

In the aftermath of an emergency, adolescent girls and women have gender-specific reproductive health, hygiene and protection needs.

Supplementing standard non-food item (NFI) distributions to displaced people with gender-sensitive NFIs – such as menstrual hygiene management materials, culturally appropriate garments and protection items – has many positive benefits for girls' and women's safety, security and well-being.

UNICEF distributes gender-sensitive NFIs in the form of dignity kits to adolescent girls and women to promote their rights to health, dignity and protection in emergencies – including protection from gender-based violence (GBV). Distribution of gender-sensitive NFIs can also serve as an important entry point for protection, education, psychosocial and health-related interventions.

Examples of gender-sensitive NFIs and how they improve girls' and women's safety, dignity and well-being

Sanitary items for menstrual hygiene management allow girls and women to move freely and continue with daily tasks.

Suitable clothing, such as headscarves, help girls and women maintain dignity and freedom of movement to attend school and move around in public.

Protection items such as torches, whistles and radios allow girls and women to light up areas where they are at risk of attack or attract attention if they need help.

Radios keep girls and women informed about risks and threats in the community.

Firewood/energy saving stoves minimize risk of attack when collecting firewood.

Dignity kit programming is one component of UNICEF's **Minimum GBVIE Response Package**.

UNICEF's approach to dignity kit programming

UNICEF has two kits to serve the needs of adolescent girls and women and their children in emergencies:

1. The *Immediate Response WASH and Dignity Kit*; and
2. The *Family Hygiene and Dignity Kit*.

Both kits are designed for families of five people with up to two girls and women of reproductive age (13–49 years).

The **objectives** of kit distribution are:

- To meet family hygiene needs and promote the hygiene, dignity and protection of girls and women in humanitarian emergencies; and
- To serve as an entry point for UNICEF Child Protection, WASH, Health, HIV and Education interventions.

The *Immediate Response WASH and Dignity Kit* is designed for distribution in the **first phase** (<8 weeks) of emergency response. It is a lifesaving pre-packaged kit, assembled by UNICEF Supply Division in Denmark and shipped to country offices upon request. In some situations, such as countries with frequent or recurring emergencies, local procurement options for this kit should be established as part of emergency preparedness, based on lessons learned from previous emergencies in which items are most suitable and culturally appropriate.

The *Family Hygiene and Dignity Kit* is designed for distribution in **either the first phase** (<8 weeks) **or the second phase** (>8 weeks) of an emergency response. In most situations, this kit should not be ordered from Supply Division; rather, it should be locally procured and customized with culturally and context-specific items after discussion with girls and women on the ground (ideally as part of emergency preparedness).

Acknowledging, however, that there are specific situations where some countries have limited supply options, a standard pre-packaged 15-item kit will be available from Supply Division.

Kit 3.2: Programming – Building Girls' and Women's Safety and Resilience, *Section 3: Dignity Kit Programming* provides information, guidance and resources to support UNICEF country offices and partners in distributing gender-sensitive NFIs that promote girls' and women's health, dignity and protection from GBV.

Safe Space Programming

Key Messages

- Safe space programming is one component of UNICEF's **Minimum GBViE Response Package**.
- Immediately following a rapid-onset disaster and during complex and protracted emergencies, UNICEF country offices should **establish women- and girls-friendly (WGF) spaces to provide a safe venue for girls and women to gather and receive information, assistance and support**.
- Safe spaces can be **temporary or permanent, fixed or mobile, stand-alone or integrated into other services**; the most appropriate model will depend of the context.
- Country offices must appropriately **address GBV through child-friendly space programming**.
- Once a situation has stabilized, safe spaces can serve as a **platform for an expanded set of community mobilization, education and empowerment activities** that help build girls' and women's resilience and capacity; reduce risks of GBV; and contribute to GBV prevention.
- It is essential to **consult with girls and women of different ages** when planning WGF spaces and effectively integrating GBV risk mitigation into child-friendly spaces.

‘Safe spaces’ are widely used by humanitarian actors to offer community-based, structured, age-appropriate and gender-specific services to displaced and other emergency-affected communities. While there are a variety of safe space models used in humanitarian settings, safe spaces generally offer a range protection, non-formal education and psychosocial supports to children, adolescents and women during emergencies.

Safe space programming is one component of UNICEF's **Minimum GBViE Response Package**.

UNICEF's approach to safe space programming

UNICEF's approach to safe space programming is two-pronged. First, it involves ensuring girls and women have access to dedicated safe spaces. Second, it requires appropriately incorporating gender-based violence (GBV) risk mitigation and response activities into *all* UNICEF-supported safe spaces.

UNICEF's safe space programming has two **objectives**:

1. To promote girls' and women's rights to safety, dignity and empowerment in emergencies by offering a range of social, economic and other support services, including those that address GBV; and
2. To engage and support local capacities to address GBV.

Women- and girls-friendly (WGF) spaces promote women's safety, protection and empowerment by – among other things – helping to mitigate the risk of GBV. They do this by providing a range of services to build girls' and women's capacity, confidence and resilience, as well as by creating an informal safety net. WGF spaces also provide a platform for delivering confidential GBV response services to facilitate access to life-saving healthcare, psychosocial support and safety options for survivors.

In addition to establishing WGF spaces, UNICEF-supported **child-friendly spaces** must appropriately integrate GBV risk mitigation and have capacity for appropriately responding to child survivors of violence, including referral for care and support for both boys and girls.

Kit 3.2: Programming – Building Girls' and Women's Safety and Resilience, *Section 4: Safe Space Programming* contains information and resources to help country offices and partners (1) establish safe spaces for girls and women in emergency setting, and (2) integrate actions to address GBV into UNICEF-supported child-friendly spaces.

Economic Strengthening for Adolescent Girls

Key Messages

- Girls need **social, human and economic assets** to be protected and empowered.
- Programming for adolescent girls should seek to **build multiple assets**.
- **Girls must be meaningfully engaged throughout the programme cycle.** From the very beginning, girls must be viewed as key informants on their needs and circumstances, the risks they face, and the factors that will enable them to succeed and be safe. Girls are also best placed to identify the barriers that could prevent them from participating in programmes.
- **Information must be collected from different groups of girls** who may experience GBV-related risks and vulnerabilities, including girls with disabilities, orphans and girls who are heads of households.
- **Families should be engaged from the very beginning** to help to facilitate girls' participation in programme activities.
- **Consult with specialized gender, health and education experts** when designing and delivering different components of an integrated economic strengthening programme for adolescent girls.

Girls face specific challenges in emergencies. They are at heightened risk of discrimination, violence and abuse linked to their gender, including multiple forms of gender-based violence (GBV). When combined with economic insecurity and unsafe income generation options, these challenges make them especially vulnerable to sexual assault, abuse and exploitation as they try to meet their basic needs, support their families or take care of their own children.

Carefully designed integrated economic strengthening interventions can help protect girls against GBV. UNICEF is playing an important role in testing and scaling up innovative interventions to reduce girls' vulnerability to GBV and set them up with knowledge, skills and resources to support their safe transition into adulthood.

UNICEF's approach to economic strengthening for adolescent girls

UNICEF's approach to economic strengthening for adolescent girls involves making a set of integrated asset-building services available to reduce girls' economic insecurity and promote their opportunities and agency.

UNICEF's programming for adolescent girls in emergencies has two **objectives**:

1. To reduce girls' vulnerability to sexual violence in emergencies by addressing the economic dimension of risk; and
2. To foster empowerment of girls by building their autonomy, bargaining power and decision-making capacity.

Kit 3.2: Programming – Building Girls' and Women's Safety and Resilience, *Section 5: Economic Strengthening for Adolescent Girls* contains information and resources to help country offices and partners implement integrated asset-building approaches to empower and protect girls and reduce their vulnerability to GBV.

Addressing GBV Through Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Processes

Key Messages

- Addressing the age- and gender-specific needs of former combatants and of children and women recruited and used by armed groups is **one important aspect of a successful disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) process**.
- DDR processes provide an opportunity to **address the GBV-related needs of survivors demobilizing from armed groups**.
- **During the planning phase**, UNICEF advocates for: age- and gender-responsive DDR policies, frameworks and programming; dedicated funding to address the needs of GBV survivors; and GBV risk-reduction measures in each step of programming.
- **During disarmament and demobilization**, UNICEF delivers an age- and gender-specific GBV mitigation and response package.
- **During the reintegration phase**, UNICEF offers GBV prevention and response interventions to support the reintegration of survivors into their families and communities and reduce their vulnerability to further GBV.

Girls and women recruited and used by armed groups are commonly exposed to gender-based violence (GBV) during conflict, including conflict-related sexual violence, forced marriage and intimate partner violence. Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) processes provide an opportunity to address the GBV-related support and reintegration needs of survivors demobilizing from armed groups, including protective intervention for those who need it.

UNICEF plays a critical role in ensuring DDR processes effectively respond to the needs and vulnerabilities of GBV survivors and integrate measures to prevent GBV.

UNICEF has significant expertise in DDR to share with States and other actors. By sharing this expertise, UNICEF can enhance the protection rights of girls and women recruited and used by armed groups during and after DDR, helping to break the cycle of violence and create peaceful and safe communities post-conflict.

UNICEF's approach to addressing GBV through DDR processes

Addressing age- and gender-specific support needs of children and women recruited and used by armed groups, including GBV prevention and response, is one important aspect of UNICEF's mandate. UNICEF's work to integrate GBV mitigation and response into DDR processes has three **objectives**:

1. To respond to the GBV-related health, psychosocial and safety needs of survivors participating in DDR processes and foster their reintegration into the community;
2. To reduce the risk of GBV occurring during disarmament and demobilization processes; and
3. To build resilience of girls and women recruited and used by armed groups and reduce their vulnerability to GBV after demobilization and during reintegration.

Kit 3.2: Programming – Building Girls' and Women's Safety and Resilience, Section 6: Addressing GBV Through Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Processes contains information and resources to help country offices and partners integrate GBV risk mitigation and response activities into DDR programmes.