The Needs of Internally Displaced Women and Children: Guiding Principles and Considerations

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I. Rationale

In keeping with its commitment to the most disadvantaged children, UNICEF must sharpen its focus on one of the least visible, most vulnerable child populations: the internally displaced. Internal displacement is one of the critical humanitarian issues of our time. An estimated 30 million internally displaced human beings, eighty percent of them children or women, have been forced to flee their homes and communities because of armed conflict, violence, systematic violations of human rights, or natural or man-made disasters.

Internally displaced persons (IDPs), according to the definition offered by the Representative of the Secretary General on Internally Displaced Persons, are those “persons or groups of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized state border.”

All children and families affected by conflict, strife, human rights abuses or disaster suffer. The internally displaced, because of their extreme vulnerability associated with separation from support systems, often suffer acutely. Absent the structure and nurturing environments of their home communities, they are more vulnerable to arbitrary action by those claiming authority, more liable to suffer forced conscription or sexual abuse, more regularly deprived of food, water, health care and other essentials.

Moreover, the internally displaced exist in a legal limbo and often remain, despite the magnitude of the problem, relatively invisible. Legally, they remain under the jurisdiction of their own government, although conditions of displacement may affect that government’s ability or willingness to provide basic protection and services, as well as that government’s ability or willingness to facilitate access. However, due to the universal nature of human rights obligations, the situation of IDPs is a legitimate concern to the international community. The international community therefore both can and should get involved in the concerns of IDPs. Although the displaced may concentrate in camps or large groups, conditions of displacement may, alternatively, mean locating in urban perimeter housing, with relatives, scattered within the general population, or in hiding, diminishing visibility and access.

Displaced children, an estimated half of all IDPs, have been uprooted during a particularly crucial and vulnerable period of their lives. As Madame Machel’s study on *The Impact of Armed Conflict on Children* states, “in the course of displacement, millions of children have been separated from their families, physically abused, exploited and abducted into military groups, or they have perished from hunger and disease.” Surveys cited in the Machel Study indicate that mortality rates among IDPs can be as much as 60 percent higher than rates for conflict affected,
non-displaced persons in the same country. Conditions of displacement put at high risk virtually the entire range of rights guaranteed children by the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), including survival, protection, and development without discrimination. Sudden and violent onset of displacement, by shredding family and community networks, can deeply disrupt the psycho-social well-being of children.

In addition to difficulties faced by all displaced children, subgroups may confront especially traumatic conditions, and may require targeted attention. These include unaccompanied minors, “child soldiers” and other children who have been required to perform military duties, sexually abused children, children who have witnessed traumatic levels of suffering, and children who suffer disabilities. Displacement increases children’s vulnerability during the reintegration period following displacement as well, increasing the risk of poverty resulting from loss of land, inheritance or other legal rights; incarceration or discrimination; inability to resume schooling; and related problems.

The international response on behalf of the internally displaced has historically been fragmented, conceptually disjointed, and inadequate. Although the number of internally displaced far exceeds the number of refugees world-wide, unlike refugees, the displaced share no discrete legal regime, no lead agency with sole responsibility for their welfare, and no consistent, sustained donor funding pool. The need for inter-agency cooperation is even more compelling when fulfilling IDP rights. The recent publication of Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, drafted by the Representative of the Secretary-General on Internally Displaced Persons, is a useful step in bringing coherence to the international community’s actions vis-à-vis IDPs, but much work remains, especially regarding institutional co-ordination.

In short, internally displaced children and their families present the world community, and UNICEF, with an exceptional crisis, the magnitude and severity of which demand a creative, focused response commensurate with the level of need.

II. UNICEF Policy and Goals

Taking as its starting point the Convention on the Rights of the Child, UNICEF’s policy is to ensure that children displaced under emergency conditions have the same rights to survival, protection and development without discrimination as other children. UNICEF policy is made manifest by accomplishing six objectives:

- UNICEF takes the leadership role in advocacy for IDP children at the community, national and international levels. UNICEF’s objective is to ensure that the special conditions and needs of displaced children are, for the duration of the displacement emergency, consistently brought to the attention of national leaders, international organizations and fora, the media, donors, parties to the conflict, and other audiences through presentations, reports and other dissemination
tools. Effective advocacy is built on accurate data collection, assessment, monitoring and reporting. The central role of UNICEF in all emergencies is to act as an advocate for children.

- UNICEF designs, promotes and selectively implements prevention activities that diminish the exposure of children to risks by addressing the root causes of conflict, attempting to keep communities from having to move from their place of origin, or attempting to maintain family and community cohesion during displacement. Although violence or fear of abuse challenges program efforts, creative attempts to support communities -- advocacy efforts with authorities, deployment of security forces, presence of international staff, strategic location of emergency services -- may prevent or diminish wholesale displacement with all its deleterious impacts on children.

- UNICEF designs, promotes, and selectively implements programs designed to ensure the survival of displaced children and women, and their protection against malnutrition and disease during the dangerous and chaotic emergency phases of displacement. Since high death rates and morbidity levels often accompany unplanned, chaotic, large-scale displacement, development of early warning indicators, prepositioning of supplies, and pre-crisis co-ordination efforts with program and community partners are critical. Focused planning to track mobile displaced populations, prioritize needs, and maintain logistics capacity under fluid conditions are crucial to the survival of displaced children.

- UNICEF actively promotes the protection of displaced children, who are highly susceptible to violence, exploitation, abuse, rape and recruitment into armed forces. Among the most difficult and dangerous of program interventions, protection activities -- whether carried out directly by UNICEF staff or colleague organizations alerted by UNICEF to the special needs of displaced children -- are essential to meeting the needs of IDP children and to preventing long-term damage from the displacement experience.

- UNICEF supports the rehabilitation and recovery of displaced children, their families and communities through actions to restore psycho-social health, cultural activities, maternal and child health care, schools, water supply and sanitation systems, and self-supporting economic activities at the displacement site, beyond those required for survival. Such activities to restore normalcy, planned with full community participation, provide the continuity of experience that permit the displaced child’s normal physical, intellectual, psychological, cultural and social development.

- UNICEF focuses, as soon as possible after life-threatening conditions are stabilized, on durable solutions to problems of internal displacement, primarily by assisting in the voluntary return, when feasible, by the displaced to their communities of origin or in voluntary resettlement in another part of the country. UNICEF program initiatives, built on a foundation of enhanced self-help capacity at the family and community levels, assist in the mobilization of communities for return or resettlement, assistance during the transport phase, and preparation of the community of return
or resettlement for the arrival of IDPs. Return and resettlement programs are alert to issues of social reintegration, including relations with persons not displaced, as well as the reconstruction of community infrastructure, and recognize the need for long-term assistance to special needs groups, like children with psycho-social needs.

III. Guiding Principles and Considerations

The **Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement** address the specific needs of IDPs worldwide. This landmark document “identifies rights and guarantees relevant to the protection of persons from forced displacement and to their protection and assistance during displacement, as well as during return or resettlement and reintegration.”

Drawing upon these **Guiding Principles**, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and UNICEF’s mandate, six considerations serve as the foundation for effective work in emergencies characterized by large-scale displacement. These are:

1. The circumstances of displaced children require special analytical focus.
2. Advocacy on behalf of displaced children will confront -- and must surmount -- issues of national sovereignty and responsibility.
3. Effective work for IDP children demands understanding of the multiformity and fluidity of displacement crises.
4. The gender dimension of UNICEF’s work is particularly critical during displacement emergencies.
5. Ensuring the survival and well-being of displaced children demands family and community capacity building.
6. Focus on cultural continuity during displacement crises is a central component of UNICEF’s work.

Clearly, other important principles and considerations guiding UNICEF’s work in general apply in displacement emergencies, as well. For example, UNICEF’s development orientation during emergency situations, its focus on country-specific analysis, and its integrated approach to child well-being are important lenses through which to view displacement interventions. This chapter on IDPs builds on these broad principles, which are covered extensively in other UNICEF documents.

**The circumstances of displaced children require UNICEF’s special analytical focus.** An important initial issue confronting UNICEF staff managing emergencies is whether to focus resources on displaced children at all. Obvious questions arise in environments of critical need and constrained resources: Is it better to remain focused on long-term needs of children, rather than be distracted by short-term crises like displacement? Should we focus on all war-affected children during periods of conflict, rather than the displaced? Are displaced children of greater concern than
other groups of children with special needs?

Specific answers to these questions can only be provided in the country context. The important principle presented here, however, is that the conditions of displaced children require UNICEF’s careful analysis and specific focus because, in the absence of strong international institutional arrangements for the displaced, these children may otherwise become invisible, may simply “fall through the cracks.” As stated in the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, “certain internally displaced persons, such as children…shall be entitled to protection and assistance required by their condition and to treatment which takes into account their special needs.” UNICEF, depending on relative agency capacities, may not take the program lead for displaced children on every occasion. But, with its central role as advocate for children, UNICEF must never fail to assess and understand the condition of displaced children, in order to advocate for their well-being and special needs.

Three aspects of displacement impel UNICEF’s focused attention on IDP children. First, as outlined in the “Rationale” above, displaced children are likely to be among the most at-risk of all children during emergencies, from food shortages, from disease, from assault. Second, the process of displacement itself -- with its disruption, insecurity and challenges to personal and community identity -- puts at risk many of the rights guaranteed by the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Third, the condition of displacement frequently acts as an intervening variable between conflict and other special needs of children. For example, conflict-driven displacement may lead to unaccompanied children, children in detention, children victims of sexual exploitation or other special circumstances.

In short, while UNICEF’s programmatic response in IDP emergencies will vary according to country conditions, resources, and relative capacity, UNICEF must always understand the condition and needs of displaced children to ensure national and international focus on this especially vulnerable group.

Advocacy on behalf of displaced children will confront -- and must surmount -- issues of national sovereignty and responsibility. Although UNICEF’s mandate in emergency settings is clear -- to generate a “first call for children” by serving as an unflagging advocate for those children -- internally displaced children, their families and communities are, by definition, within the boundaries of their nation and remain subject to the authority of the national government. The Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement clearly state that “national authorities have the primary duty and responsibility to provide protection and humanitarian assistance to internally displaced persons within their jurisdiction.” However, the human rights dimension in such situations makes internal displacement a legitimate concern of the international community.

Yet, in numerous displacement emergencies, national authorities have been incapable -- due to
resource constraints, the exigencies of conflict, or other factors -- or, in some cases, unwilling to extend protection and care to IDPs. Under these circumstances, national authorities may welcome international efforts on behalf of displaced children, remain neutral toward such efforts, or oppose them, especially when international efforts extend beyond resources to protection activities. These jurisdictional issues are further complicated when displaced communities are part of an ethnic or religious group opposed to government policies or are located in territory controlled by a political movement in opposition to government authorities.

UNICEF staff working in displacement emergencies should, while retaining a clear focus on their primary responsibility to children, anticipate and plan for these competing perspectives. Principle 25 of the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, drawing on international humanitarian law and other precedents, offers useful guidance: “International humanitarian organizations and other appropriate actors have the right to offer their services in support of the internally displaced. Such an offer shall not be regarded as an unfriendly act or an interference in a State’s internal affairs and shall be considered in good faith. Consent thereto shall not be arbitrarily withheld, particularly when authorities concerned are unable or unwilling to provide the required humanitarian assistance.” In actual country settings, however, relations between international advocates for the displaced and host governments with primary jurisdiction over and responsibility for their citizens may be ambiguous or even contentious.

Creative program design can bridge gaps, combining diligent advocacy for the displaced with efforts to assist governments in meeting the needs of citizens. In Angola, for example, a UNICEF project combined international assessment of IDP conditions with capacity building for the government’s lead statistics agency. In Tajikistan, UNHCR protection activities on behalf of returning IDPs was combined with delivering infrastructure reconstruction programs through government ministries. Certain program efforts on behalf of IDPs may, like these, complement local capacity building efforts or may strengthen relations with government authorities. In other cases, circumstances may demand UNICEF advocacy steps that generate official opposition. When difficult, country-specific choices must be made in these complex environments, the best interests of children should serve as a clear guidepost.

**Effective work for IDP children demands understanding of the multiformity and fluidity of displacement crises.** While the human beings who meet the definition of internal displacement offered above share key common characteristics -- departure from their communities, extreme vulnerability, large percentage of children and women -- IDPs live in multivaried conditions. Identifying differentiating characteristics is critical in designing effective responses to displacement.

For example, effectively meeting the needs of displaced children will require disaggregation and assessment by:

- cause of displacement
- type of displacement
Cause of displacement: Displaced persons may leave their homes for a range of emergency and non-emergency reasons (conflict, natural disaster, economic impoverishment, environmental crisis, poorly designed development projects, ethnic tension, political violence) that will affect children’s physical and psycho-social well being, their sense of community continuity, their adaptability to new surroundings, and their attitudes toward and preconditions for return or resettlement.

Type of displacement: IDP emergencies that evoke a response from the international community are frequently mass, crisis displacements, characterized by rapid, chaotic departure with abandonment of most resources and a focus on escape rather than on a viable destination. Such situation may be followed by multiple displacements, as with Rwandan Hutus fleeing that country’s civil war, in which displaced populations move, often on short notice, from one available sanctuary to another. Multiple displacement places extreme stress on children and requires particularly mobile and flexible responses from the international community. In cases like Mozambique, where RENAMO rebels moved entire rural communities for strategic military purposes, UNICEF may encounter forcible displacement, requiring representations to military commanders in order to access displaced children. In yet another category, as in the Republic of Georgia following the Abkhaz separatist crisis, IDPs may find themselves in a situation of static displacement, unable to return to their homes several years after departure, but no longer in life-threatening situations. This latter situation requires careful analysis of the best interests of children caught in such static conditions, the relative value of resettlement or integration, and issues of cultural continuity.

Location of displacement: Locating displaced children, assessing their needs, and advocating on their behalf will be dependent on the location in which the displaced have found refuge and whether they want to be identified. Displaced children may be in camps, in urban perimeter housing, with relatives, scattered within the general population, with kinship groups, or in hiding. IDPs may make frequent or infrequent visits to their home communities for assessment or maintenance, potentially complicating protection services. Children of varying ages may be sent to urban or rural areas, to relatives, or to a different region of the country, based on the family’s assessment of relative safety, probability of recruitment into military forces, or other factors. A critical factor in the viability of a displacement location in the attitude of local populations toward the displaced.

The crisis “timeline:” Clearly, not all emergencies that drive people from their homes follow a linear pattern. It is useful for analytical purposes, however, to conceptualize displacement crises in four stages, each of which drives certain programmatic responses. These are: (a) pre-emergency prevention and preparedness; (b) the onset of the emergency; (c) the ongoing crisis/early rehabilitation phase; and, (d) recovery and post-emergency. Priority actions in each of these
phases are described in detail in publication E/ICEF/1997/7, “Children and Women in Emergencies: Strategic Priorities and Operational Concerns for UNICEF.”

Categories of needs: Displaced children and their families may require a range of supports from UNICEF and partner organizations. IDPs may need water, food, medicines and other emergency services during the crisis phase of a displacement emergency, or may require protection from groups attacking, exploiting or recruiting them. IDPs may need advocacy support with government agencies or international organizations, may require assistance in returning to home communities, alternative settlement if return is not feasible, or assistance in earning a livelihood during the period of displacement. Special groups of displaced children -- handicapped, girl children, soldiers, children in single parent households -- may confront unique problems, and all IDPs may face legal issues, like land tenure disputes, either in the displacement site or in the home community. A clear understanding of priority needs in the country setting, and a clear understanding of which interventions will contribute to durable solutions, are critical to shaping UNICEF’s program choices and resource allocations.

Capacities of the displaced: Accurately assessing the capacities of displaced individuals and communities is central to designing UNICEF interventions. IDP capacity to manage the displacement emergency will vary according to factors like community cohesion; the continued presence and acceptance of traditional community leaders; the degree to which families have remained intact; the ability to transfer economic skills to the displacement site; and, the degree of acceptance of the displaced by local residents. Eliciting community views of strengths and weaknesses, assessing capacities and maximizing these capacities are essential to meeting the needs of displaced children.

The gender dimension of UNICEF’s work is particularly critical during displacement emergencies. UNICEF seeks to ensure that gender concerns are addressed in all its activities in emergencies, and gender issues and approaches are discussed in detail elsewhere in this volume. Two particular aspects of displacement -- the breakdown of traditional societal norms associated with displacement, and the increased likelihood of female headed households -- combine to increase the risk of abuse for girl children and for women in general, and the risk that program benefits may not reach them equitably. Recognition of this reality in UNICEF program design, in advocacy and protection efforts, in spurring attempts at family reunification, and in the provision of special accommodations in camps and elsewhere are crucial.

While recognizing that women and girls may be particularly susceptible to abuse during displacement emergencies, it is equally important to recognize they have key roles as actors, as sources of community opinion and leadership, as partners in program design, as economic forces in their communities and as providers of services. Mobilizing women throughout the stages of displacement emergencies maximizes program impact.
Ensuring the survival and well-being of displaced children demands support for family and community capacity building. Two axioms that relate to all emergency settings are particularly compelling during displacement emergencies: first, the total contribution by the entire international community to children’s well-being is likely to pale compared to what families and communities will provide; second, family and community structures will be under great stress in emergencies. The clear implication for UNICEF is that all advocacy and program interventions should be designed to buttress families and community institutions.

Recognition of family and community structures, eliciting their participation in decisions affecting the community, and supporting them as intermediaries in program delivery not only improves effectiveness, but provides a sense of continuity critical to the normal development of displaced children. Preservation of family unity and of community structures should guide all interventions.

Focus on cultural continuity during displacement crises is a central component of UNICEF’s work. Examining the turbulence faced by refugee children, UNHCR has eloquently described why culture is important: “Culture provides children with identity and continuity. By learning the values and traditions of their culture, children learn how to fit into their family, community and the larger society. Each social group has its particular rules concerning who takes care of children, what they are taught at which age, what is expected of children, how they should be disciplined, and what should be done when things go wrong.”

It is understandable during displacement crises, with their dramatic human suffering and life threatening elements, that cultural continuity is not foremost in the plans of international organizations. But the consequences for children deprived of their cultural bearings can be serious, in terms of psycho-social impact and ability to thrive in the post-crisis setting. Among the steps UNICEF and partners can take to maintain cultural continuity are:

- support for traditional community leaders by consulting and working through them;
- co-locating in camp settings and other relocation sites of community and kinship groups;
- support for voluntary religious events, festivals, and rituals; and,
- support for traditional music, dance and other arts and recreation activities, as well as for traditional skills.

IV. Field-level Strategies and Actions

Field-level strategies and actions for displaced children are built around the four primary components of UNICEF emergency work: (a) advocacy; (b) assessment; (c) care; and, (d) protection. UNICEF’s approaches to these four elements are defined generically and elucidated in detail in other parts of this handbook. For example, immunization interventions will obviously be crucial to displaced children and the handbook section on immunizations should be consulted when
staff confront outbreaks of communicable disease. Displaced children are obvious targets for recruitment as child soldiers, and the handbook chapter on child soldiers should be read in conjunction with this chapter on displacement. This section focuses succinctly on advocacy, assessment, care and protection in displacement emergencies, emphasizing unique elements of displacement that may affect program design or delivery.

UNICEF’s field level strategy derives from its policy to ensure that children displaced under emergency conditions have the same rights to survival, protection and development without discrimination as other children. That is, at a minimum, UNICEF staff should ensure that program benefits reaching other children in the country also reach displaced children.

The actual UNICEF field-level program for IDP children will depend on country-specific factors, but will generally include -- either as UNICEF implemented initiatives or UNICEF advocacy arenas -- the six policy goals stated above:
- a UNICEF leadership role in advocacy on behalf of IDP children
- prevention activities that diminish the magnitude of displacement
- programs that ensure the survival of displaced children
- activities to protect displaced children from violence and abuse
- rehabilitation and recovery activities that permit displaced children’s normal development,
  and
- voluntary return, when feasible, by the displaced to their communities of origin.

**Advocacy**

Vigorous advocacy for the rights of displaced children depends on accurate information about their condition, and may include (1) regular reporting on the conditions of the displaced (2) public education efforts internally and abroad (3) engagement of the media (4) preparation of publications or videos (5) strengthening CRC mechanisms and institutions (6) representations to national authorities (7) representations to donors (8) mobilizing partner organizations (9) ensuring that organizations working with the IDP community in general focus on special needs of children, and (10) making IDP communities themselves aware of their rights.

There should be no illusion that advocacy work will be easy or universally applauded. Especially when displacement is associated with membership in an identifiable religious, ethnic or political group that is party to a conflict, advocacy on behalf of the displaced may engender opposition, including from host government colleagues and other program partners. Balancing UNICEF’s role as primary advocate for children with the potential long-term costs to children of undermining development programs requires keen analysis within the country-specific context, but action steps should be shaped by UNICEF’s bedrock role as the primary advocate for children, especially highly vulnerable groups like internally displaced children. Important actions include:
Advocate to educate about displacement: Authorities, donors, opinion leaders and other advocacy audiences concerned about emergency conditions in the country may understand shortfalls in food, medicine, shelter and other essentials. Few will fully comprehend or weight the assault on children’s rights caused by the trauma of displacement itself, its dislocation, its impact on cultural norms, and break in continuity. Nor will many audiences fully appreciate the critical role of supporting family and community institutions to the long-term well-being of children. UNICEF advocacy efforts should emphasize these critical elements, in the context of guaranteeing to displaced children the same rights of all children.

Keep the discussion on durable solutions, especially return: Although the survival of displaced children and their protection from violence during the period of displacement are crucial, and while efforts to restore normalcy during displacement are only slightly less important, UNICEF advocacy efforts should remind audiences that durable solutions -- especially voluntary return to home communities, when feasible -- is the ultimate objective of all efforts vis-à-vis the displaced.

Target advocacy at national leaders: In conditions of internal displacement, national authorities -- the government in power and those aspiring to power -- retain the primary duty and responsibility for the well being of their citizens, among them children who have been forced to flee their homes. Although advocacy can be addressed to multiple audiences inside and outside the country, the focus of the advocacy should remain on those leaders who have the authority and responsibility to address the conditions of the displaced, to prevent abuses of children, to guarantee access to the displaced, to permit IDPs to return voluntarily to their communities, and to address underlying causes of displacement. Advocacy targets include national civilian and military leaders.

Focus advocacy on the displaced themselves: Training and awareness-raising to make the emergency-affected aware of their rights can mobilize pressure for durable solutions. Such efforts can be especially valuable for the psycho-social well-being of displaced communities experiencing a sense of powerlessness.

Advocate to mobilize resources: Interventions reaching the displaced inherently require substantial resources, human and financial. Yet, the displaced benefit from few dedicated funding streams, and donors -- justifiably concerned with measurable results -- may be hesitant to commit resources to populations on the move or in hiding. In part, therefore, advocacy efforts must be planned with the goal of raising donor awareness in order to guarantee needed resources.

Continue advocacy during “static” displacement: Media and public attention may spotlight the displaced during crisis periods of extreme deprivation, requiring relatively modest advocacy efforts. After conditions stabilize, displaced children may face continued severe problems -- stigmatization, disruption of schooling, military or criminal recruitment, psycho-social problems, sexual abuse, loss
of land tenure or other legal rights -- that may appear less dramatic or be less visible to outside observers. UNICEF advocacy efforts should ensure that these ongoing serious issues receive attention and resources.

B. Assessment

Assessment, monitoring and evaluation activities are, obviously, the foundation of sound programs, as well as the basis of effective advocacy. Determining the status of internally displaced children may require special efforts to overcome limits to access, uncertain legal standing, or simply difficulty in finding displaced children and following their condition over time. The circumstances of displacement may require extraordinary efforts to collect accurate data, especially in conditions of conflict or repeated displacement. Planning for and allocating resources to accurate, timely and current assessment are critical to effective interventions on behalf of internally displaced children. Important actions include:

Develop indicators of potential displacement: Early warning systems focused on assessment of community tensions can help prevent displacement, limit its scope or, at a minimum, assist in an effective emergency response. Developing such indicators and monitoring systems should be part of assessment planning in countries where indications of potential displacement are present.

Plan pre-displacement assessments to establish baselines: Following large-scale displacement, the absence of useful baselines hampers ongoing assessment work. In settings with a high probability that displacement will occur, investment in the acquisition of even rudimentary baseline data prior to the emergency may be a wise investment.

Design assessment tools with maximum flexibility: Populations on the move, dispersion of families and communities, children taken in by extended family, and conditions of multiple displacement make accurate assessment extraordinarily difficult during displacement emergencies. The architecture of surveys and other assessment tools should accommodate radically differing conditions likely to be faced by children during the period of displacement.

Plan to assess area of return or resettlement: Maintaining a focus on durable solutions to the displacement crisis, including the voluntary return of IDPs to their homes, requires planning and budgeting for surveys of conditions in areas of return or resettlement. Such data will assist in planning the return/resettlement, advocating with authorities for return/resettlement, and planning community programs upon return/resettlement.

Include protection issues in assessments: The extreme vulnerability of displaced children to many forms of abuse requires assessment of their physical safety, psycho-social well-being, efforts at
recruitment and other human rights factors in assessing their condition, in addition to nutrition, health and other measurements. Protection data should be appropriately disaggregated, for example by gender and age group.

Pay attention to cultural factors during assessments: The maintenance of cultural, religious and artistic traditions, beyond providing a psychological boost and respite from the demands of displaced life, guarantees community continuity and, thereby, helps provide children with a stable, nurturing environment. Assessments should determine whether cultural traditions are continuing and, if not, what would be required to maintain them.

Involve the displaced, including children; recognize limitations: As in all matters affecting their well-being, members of the displaced community -- including children -- should be involved in the design and conduct of the assessment process. Attempts at “understanding” the complex condition of displacement, with all its cultural variability, absent such input should be viewed with wariness. At the same time, UNICEF staff should be sensitive to the extremely vulnerable conditions in which displaced communities may exist, vulnerability which may affect their open participation in data gathering that may later be used for advocacy or protection efforts.

Co-ordinate assessment efforts with partners: Assessments during displacement emergencies are difficult, costly and time consuming. Duplication, conflicting or incompatible data -- the result of many agencies responding to their separate notions of the emergency -- is especially wasteful and counterproductive during displacement. UN and outside agencies should ensure that initial assessment and the establishment of monitoring systems are co-ordinated. The UN Inter-Agency Standing Committee Working Group on IDPs, based in Geneva, is attempting to model data collection methodologies to ensure greater inter-agency compatibility.

C. Care

Care of internally displaced children focuses on the most life-threatening problems. UNICEF, through its programming, collaboration and advocacy, attempts to ensure that emergency nutrition, water, hygiene, health and non-food relief services reach the most vulnerable, even if target groups have relocated away from their communities, are in a transient or camp status, or are on the move. A number of important actions should characterize UNICEF’s efforts to ensure that displaced children receive emergency care:

Pre-planning and co-ordination save lives: If there is early warning of potential displacement, meetings with government officials, community leaders, and program partners should begin immediately. The agenda should include possible steps to head off or diminish the scope of displacement. If displacement appears inevitable, information sharing, task allocation and resource
mobilization among program partners should be accomplished as the highest priority, since the early stages of a mass displacement will generate the greatest loss of life. Ensure that emergency pipelines are capable of meeting anticipated needs for potable water, food, medical supplies, shelter supplies and similar items.

Anticipate, and budget for, extraordinary efforts to meet needs of displaced children: Beyond the strenuous efforts demanded in any emergency setting, emergency care to the displaced requires special efforts, which may include:

- extraordinary attention to transportation, warehousing and other logistics issues, including detailed knowledge of transportation modes, recruitment of specialists, and, possible coordination with military units
- procurement of maps or satellite imagery to trace group movements
- knowledge of which program partners are operating in regions to which the displaced may locate, and their capabilities
- substantial investment in communications equipment
- allocation of additional staff and support resources, and
- specialized technologies, such as mobile cold chain systems.

Liaison, with traditional and non-traditional partners, will be required: Ensuring that emergency services reach the displaced requires extensive liaison with leaders of the displaced community, with program partners, and with civil and military authorities operating where the displaced have located. Delivery of care may require detailed negotiations over access and a special focus on equitable distribution systems -- especially for vulnerable groups like children and women-headed households -- in an environment where normal societal relationships have been disrupted by displacement.

Plan interventions to support community structures: During displacement, community structures -- family units, traditional hierarchies, social responsibilities -- will become frayed, increasing stress on displaced children. These community structures can be supported through the design of appropriate nutrition, medical and other emergency interventions. Use traditional leaders and established structures to disseminate supplies, for example. Ensure, in consultation with community leaders, that distribution systems do not inadvertently offer incentives for families to disperse.

Anticipate, and plan for, family dispersion during displacement: Every effort should be made to keep families together through design of shelter arrangements, allocation of food and other relief supplies, protection of young men from military recruitment, and similar steps. Nonetheless, children will lose parents or become separated from parents. Anticipate and plan for measures for family reunification, even in the early stages of displacement. A number of potential NGO partners have developed significant expertise in family tracing and unification programs. Engage them quickly. Be especially sensitive to the conditions of women and girl children. Single women or women heads of households may be especially vulnerable to abuse or discrimination in the receipt
of goods. Consult with community leaders, including women themselves, on community-based systems that will ensure adequate care for all individuals separated from families.

**Identify high risk groups:** Unaccompanied children, children targets of military recruitment, children targets of sexual abuse, and other high risk groups, discussed in detail in sections of this handbook, are most at risk during the chaos of initial displacement. Plan for and devote resources immediately to identifying and locating high risk groups, and designing community supported measures for their care and protection. NGO partners may be of special assistance with these tasks.

**Optimize the location of displacement:** The initial location to which displaced individuals flee may well be determined more by escape from immediate danger than by considerations of long-term viability. Displaced may be found in unhealthful, inaccessible areas like high mountains, riverine areas, or deep forest. Consultations with leaders of the displaced community, program partners, national authorities, military commanders, opposition groups, and local and international NGOs should begin immediately on locating sites -- whether formal camps or general areas of settlement -- that will combine safety and security with physical sustainability. Design emergency distribution systems to avoid settlement in unhealthy or unsustainable locations. Assume that the displaced will stay in this location for some time; perhaps months or years. Does the site or sites provide not only water and adequate drainage, but agriculture land and access to markets that will help sustain displaced communities over time, if that becomes necessary.

**Begin planning immediately for voluntary return:** At the same time that it is necessary to prepare for the worst case, that is, long-term displacement, it is essential to devote planning resources to support return of IDPs to home communities. In some cases, IDPs have begun to return to homes almost immediately after a flare-up in tension or violence, based on the community’s assessment that it is safe to return. In some cases, return will be self-generated, with little or no assistance required from the international community. In cases of extensive, distant or long-term displacement, considerable assistance may be required to assist communities in returning to their homes and re-establishing their lives.

In all cases, UNICEF and other international organizations should remind competent national authorities of, and seek to assist those authorities in, their responsibilities. *The Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement* state that “competent authorities have the primary duty and responsibility to establish conditions, as well as provide the means, which allow internally displaced persons to return voluntarily, in safety and with dignity, to their homes or places of habitual residence, or to resettle voluntarily in another part of the country.”

The following check-list can assist in planning return activities:

- Have detailed consultations been conducted with displaced community leaders about the
costs and benefits of return? Do community leaders have a clear understanding about how children will adjust in the area of return? What do community leaders think will be essential to ensure the well-being of children in the home area?

* Is the desire to return to home areas un-coerced by authorities?
* Are displaced community leaders assured that the home area is safe? Do they require additional resources, like assistance for site visits or escorts, to assure themselves of its safety?
* Have issues of de-mining and unexploded ordinance been addressed?
* Have long lead time issues in the area of return, like reconstruction of destroyed essential infrastructure, been addressed?
* Have consultations been conducted between displaced communities and communities remaining in the area of return, in order to resolve outstanding issues? Are there cases of housing or farmland being taken over by resident communities? How will they be resolved?
* How will transport to the home area be accomplished? Are there issues of permits, government concurrence, or negotiations with armed factions that must be resolved? Who will ensure adequate care, including water, food, and medical treatment, during the return trip? Who will ensure that family units remain together and that special needs groups (unaccompanied children, handicapped, and others) receive care in transit?
* Are the displaced themselves prepared for the return? Has there been adequate dissemination of information -- including to children -- about plans for return? Are family units grouped together? Has medical screening been accomplished to identify medical problems that may occur in transit or immediately upon return?
* Are children’s essential records in order? Are birth certificates and related identity documents completed to avoid problems upon return? Are immunization records intact? Are schooling records complete to avoid stigmatization or discrimination upon return?
* How will the displaced survive during the initial months of return? What provisions exist for water, food, health care, and education? What is the condition of shelter?
* What provisions are in place to assist in the re-establishment of livelihoods? Are seeds and tools available for farmers? Does the community require specialized “kits” to resume essential community services like carpentry, masonry, funeral care, and tailoring? Are essential markets still functioning?
* Are there guarantees that returnees will have access to available medical and other services? Will returnee children be guaranteed non-discriminatory admission to schools and other services?
* What provisions are in place to monitor the return and the condition of the community, including children and especially vulnerable groups, in the months following the return?

Recognize the costs of stigmatizing the displaced: Clearly, the displaced have special needs. Yet, both in the location of temporary settlement and upon return to their homes, specialized treatment
of displaced populations -- especially in conditions where the general population has been affected by war or other emergencies -- can lead to stigmatization, and can engender hostility from surrounding communities. Combine, where possible, efforts to meet the essential needs of displaced children and their families with broad-based community efforts to reach all those in need. For example, construction of school buildings for displaced children can be combined with an assessment of overall basic education needs in the displacement area, to ensure that all children -- resident or displaced -- have equal access to basic learning.

Mobilize resources within the displaced population: The nature of displacement means that highly skilled individuals -- community leaders, medical personnel, midwives, teachers, professional administrators, child care professionals, psychologists, skilled tradesmen, and many others -- are likely to be found within the displaced population. Make efforts to locate and mobilize these individuals to meet the needs of displaced children.

Remember education: Ensuring the survival of displaced children and their protection from direct violence remain the highest priorities during displacement emergencies, and are likely to be the focus of attention by donors and partner organizations. Recognizing the importance of education generally and school attendance in particular to the long-term well-being of children, UNICEF staff should make special efforts to advocate for and support the establishment of schools for displaced children. Even rudimentary educational facilities, both in the area of displacement and in the area of return, offer a sense of continuity, provide hope and help prevent future stigmatization of displaced children. Accurate record-keeping to support re-enrolment in the area of return should be a component of schooling for displaced children. UNICEF efforts should include advocacy to government education authorities to ensure they extend available educational facilities to displaced populations.

D. Protection

Broadly speaking, protecting the rights of the child means ensuring the rights provided for in the CRC. Protection of displaced children focuses, first, on shielding them from physical and psycho-social harm inflicted by others, such as violence, exploitation, sexual abuse, neglect, cruel or degrading treatment, or recruitment into military forces. Displaced status makes children especially vulnerable to each of these forms of abuse. Second, protection refers to those actions that preserve the identity and cultural, linguistic, and inheritance rights of displaced children, since children removed from their home communities are at significant risk of losing these portions of their heritage. But protection finally also entails providing or ensuring provision at the basic needs of children in terms of food, health and education.

UNICEF’s general approach to child protection activities in emergency settings is outlined in a separate chapter of this handbook. That chapter should be consulted, as well, for guidance in
displacement emergencies. Starting with the solid foundation provided by the Convention on the Rights of the Child, UNICEF must, realistically, build additional protection capacity, including staff training and skills development, in order to realize its full potential as the leading advocate for children.

Currently, however, there is much that UNICEF can do to help protect displaced children from abuse. UNICEF protection work in displacement emergencies can include direct intervention or advocacy to governments and other organizations to spur their protection work. Especially helpful in the country-specific setting will be strong links to and collaboration with UNHCR, the International Committee of the Red Cross, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR), peacekeeping forces, and NGOs active in protection activities. UNICEF has an especially important role in ensuring that such organizations are aware of and focus on the special needs of displaced children in their normal protection activities.

Physical protection of displaced children: Potential UNICEF activities include promotion of children as a “zone of peace,” physical protection, monitoring of violations, reporting of violations, creating protected areas such as “corridors of tranquillity,” evacuations, securing release of detainees, and other representations to authorities on behalf of displaced children. The following checklist, gratefully adapted from UNHCR’s Guidelines on the Protection and Care of Refugee Children, should be used to guide the design of protection work:

* What are the security threats to displaced children?
* Have any displaced children died? If so, from what causes? What actions might have prevented these deaths?
* Are any displaced children physically or sexually abused, tortured, abducted, recruited for military service or are they victims of any other forms of abuse or exploitation? Is there significant risk of such abuse or exploitation?
* Are any displaced children in jail, prison, long-term, closed camp confinement or in any other form of detention?
* Have effective steps been taken to prevent further abuse or exploitation of displaced children?
* Are remedial services available to all victims of abuse or exploitation?
* Are responsible national authorities fully aware of threats to the personal security of displaced children?
* Are national law and order systems providing the protection required? Does this protection effectively reach displaced children?
* What additional measures would strengthen security systems?
* Is an effective international presence being maintained in situations where there are threats to displaced children’s security?
* What advocacy efforts would enhance the safety and liberty of displaced children?
* Is training being provided for displaced leaders, government officials, security personnel,
other UN agencies and NGOs on special protection considerations for displaced children?
* Are incidents of abuse, military recruitment and detention of displaced children being monitored and reported?
* Is it necessary to change the location of the camp or place of residence of displaced families to enhance protection of children from abuse or exploitation?
* Can improvements in accommodations or security arrangements enhance families’ capacity to provide secure environments for their children?
* Are special accommodations or security arrangements needed for especially vulnerable groups of children or youths?

Focus on identity issues for displaced children: Article 7 of the CRC ensures the right of all children to “be registered immediately after birth and...the right from birth to a name, [and] the right to acquire a nationality....” Article 8 ensures that “states parties undertake to respect the right of the child to preserve his or her identity, including nationality, name and family relations as recognized by law without unlawful interference.” Conditions of displacement, especially if the child is a member of a minority or opposition group, may complicate efforts to register births, or otherwise establish the child’s identity and full citizenship. Protection activities should ensure that basic identity and registration documents are provided, and that government legislation and policies accord full citizenship to displaced children, including those born during displacement, whatever the causes of displacement. Protection of these rights helps ensure non-discrimination in future efforts to obtain schooling, employment, participation in civic functions, or other legal rights.

Focus on cultural and linguistic rights of displaced children: Recognizing that children’s cultural heritage will be severely tested by conditions of displacement, and recognizing that the most probable durable solution to the displacement will be return to the home community, protection of traditional community social structures, traditional culture and traditional language -- including instruction in that language in schools -- have important psycho-social and practical value.

Focus on the rights of displaced children after return: Displaced children returning to their home communities may face a range of challenges to their rights. Among these are uncertain legal status of orphans, attempted prosecution of children required to perform military service while displaced, and property rights issues, especially related to the ownership or inheritance of land. Unaccompanied minors or children in female-headed households may face particular problems. Begin addressing these issues with adequate registration procedures during the period of displacement, and during negotiations with community leaders prior to return. Resolution of outstanding issues may require ongoing efforts in the community after return.

V. Co-ordination and Partnerships
Co-ordination principles: Although co-ordination in the difficult environment of emergency operations can always be improved, the international response on behalf of the internally displaced has been especially fragmented, conceptually disjointed, and inadequate. Although the number of internally displaced exceeds the numbers of refugees world-wide, the displaced -- unlike refugees -- share no discrete legal regime, no lead agency with sole responsibility for their welfare, and no consistent, sustained donor funding pool. As this handbook goes to print, enhanced IDP co-ordination within the UN system, at the field and global levels, is the topic of intense discussion, but optimal co-ordination remains elusive.

The essential co-ordination imperative for UNICEF, in this ambiguous environment, is that displaced children must never become invisible, must never “fall through the cracks.” When conflict or other circumstances leave children displaced and in need, UNICEF may not always take the lead in providing every category of services and care. UNICEF should always be recognized, however, as the leading advocate for displaced children, based on a thorough assessment and analysis of their condition.

This fluid IDP management environment also implies that unique co-ordination models will evolve in the country setting, demanding immediate, intense, regular, systematic and ongoing field-level interagency communication, and that UNICEF’s interventions are carefully orchestrated with other partners. In some cases, the Resident Representative may take a co-ordination role; in other cases, a “lead agency” for IDPs may be designated; in yet other circumstances, when the magnitude of the displacement emergency requires, an IDP working group may be formed among resident international agencies.

Partnerships: Partners for work with IDPs -- especially in conflictive emergencies -- include both traditional UNICEF emergency colleagues and non-traditional partners.

- **Displaced community leaders, family heads, children:** The displaced themselves remain the single best partner for assessment of needs and program delivery.

- **Local NGOs and Community Organizations:** These groups, especially if they have been displaced themselves, provide an essential interpretation of local economic, cultural and social issues that will optimize program planning, and may provide important information on locating and accessing displaced communities. Local human rights groups, or committees focused on CRC implementation, may be especially useful in advocacy and protection work.

- **The National Government:** Especially in the chaotic “crisis displacement” phase of an emergency, co-ordination within the international community may require extreme effort, and national government resources may be overlooked. UNICEF, cognizant that national governments have the primary duty and responsibility to provide protection and
humanitarian assistance to internally displaced citizens, and bringing a developmental, capacity-building perspective to all emergency work, should ensure that national governments are encouraged and supported in taking a lead role on behalf of the internally displaced.

- **Opposition Groups**: While cognizant of the legitimate authority of the national government, UNICEF recognizes that displacement emergencies frequently result in IDPs locating in areas outside the effective control of the national authorities. Early, impartial, and above-board liaison with opposition groups, including military commanders, may be critical to accessing groups of displaced children and ensuring their protection.

- **International NGOs**: International NGOs, especially those operating in the country prior to the emergency, remain an excellent source of information and implementing partners.

- **The International Committee of the Red Cross**: Although the ICRC will focus on all conflict impacted, rather than the displaced *per se*, they are likely to be present in force in major conflict-related displacement emergencies. Co-ordination between the UN agencies and the ICRC to optimize service delivery to displaced communities and to co-ordinate protection/advocacy efforts (in areas of international humanitarian law) are essential.

- **UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)**: OCHA has been designated the focal point within the UN system for headquarters coordination of IDP issues, including global advocacy, data management and consolidated appeals. UNICEF’s close coordination with OCHA is essential as the Office develops this evolving mandate.

- **UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR)**: In the areas of advocacy on behalf of and protection of the displaced, the Office of the High Commissioner serves as an excellent resource for legal norms and principles and, increasingly, as a source of monitors and reporters present in the field during emergencies.

- **International, Regional, and Local Human Rights Organizations**: As the world community has increasingly focused on the human rights aspects of conflictive emergencies, human rights organizations present during conflicts become important to UNICEF in two ways: first, as partners in advocacy and protection work; second, as recipients on UNICEF assessment data, reporting on abuses, and advocacy work on behalf of displaced children. Such groups may not immediately focus on the CRC and
children’s rights issues; their presence provides an opportunity for UNICEF to mobilize additional resources on behalf of displaced children.

- **Peacekeeping Forces (UN, regional, bilateral):** UNICEF liaison with military units on peacekeeping duty offers two avenues to benefit the internally displaced: first, training and awareness raising of peacekeeping forces may avoid unintentional abuses of displaced populations by those forces themselves; second, these forces may offer logistics support (in crucial sectors like landmine removal) to programs for the displaced, may facilitate communications with national or opposition military leaders with whom they are in contact and, in extreme cases, peacekeeping forces may open access to communities of the displaced that are otherwise isolated due to security issues.

- **UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR):** As is obvious from the number of citations in this chapter, UNHCR has done much work with refugee populations that has application in meeting the needs of internally displaced children. In addition, UNHCR has been designated, in several country settings, as the lead UN agency for the internally displaced, and has developed considerable expertise on IDP issues. UNICEF and UNHCR have concluded a memorandum of understanding spelling out co-ordination steps vis-à-vis IDP children. UNICEF field staff should actively co-ordinate with UNHCR staff to optimize work on behalf of IDPs in the country setting.

- **The International Organization for Migration (IOM):** This Geneva-based organization with special expertise in transportation of displaced populations has become active in resettlement programs for IDPs. IOM is an obvious interlocutor for UNICEF on special needs of displaced children during transit.

- **World Health Organization (WHO), World Food Program (WFP), UN Development Program (UNDP), UN Volunteers (UNV), and other UN agencies:** Depending on in-country presence and the specific circumstances of the displacement emergency, the sister agencies of the UN system -- those mentioned above and numerous other with significant expertise and resources -- are obvious potential partners in areas of substantive expertise. As mentioned above, absent a clear-cut IDP management system within the UN, inter-agency communication and clarity of responsibility are essential.

- **The Media:** In all aspects of work with displaced children -- advocacy, protection, care, even data gathering/assessment -- local and international media can be powerful partners. Since the displaced can so easily disappear from the view of government leaders and others responsible for their welfare, use the media to maintain the spotlight on conditions, needs, abuses, and program successes.
VI. Further Guidance


GUIDING PRINCIPLES ON INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT

INTRODUCTION: SCOPE AND PURPOSE

1. These Guiding Principles address the specific needs of internally displaced persons worldwide. They identify rights and guarantees relevant to the protection of persons from forced displacement and to their protection and assistance during displacement as well as during return or resettlement and reintegration.

2. For the purposes of these Principles, internally displaced persons are persons or groups of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized State border.

3. These Principles reflect and are consistent with international human rights law and international humanitarian law. They provide guidance to:

(a) The Representative of the Secretary-General on internally displaced persons in carrying out his mandate;

(b) States when faced with the phenomenon of internal displacement;

(c) All other authorities, groups and persons in their relations with internally displaced persons; and

(d) Intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations when addressing internal displacement.

4. These Guiding Principles should be disseminated and applied as widely as possible.
SECTION I - GENERAL PRINCIPLES

Principle 1

1. Internally displaced persons shall enjoy, in full equality, the same rights and freedoms under international and domestic law as do other persons in their country. They shall not be discriminated against in the enjoyment of any rights and freedoms on the ground that they are internally displaced.

2. These Principles are without prejudice to individual criminal responsibility under international law, in particular relating to genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes.

Principle 2

1. These Principles shall be observed by all authorities, groups and persons irrespective of their legal status and applied without any adverse distinction. The observance of these Principles shall not affect the legal status of any authorities, groups or persons involved.

2. These Principles shall not be interpreted as restricting, modifying or impairing the provisions of any international human rights or international humanitarian law instrument or rights granted to persons under domestic law. In particular, these Principles are without prejudice to the right to seek and enjoy asylum in other countries.

Principle 3

1. National authorities have the primary duty and responsibility to provide protection and humanitarian assistance to internally displaced persons within their jurisdiction.

2. Internally displaced persons have the right to request and to receive protection and humanitarian assistance from these authorities. They shall not be persecuted or punished for making such a request.

Principle 4

1. These Principles shall be applied without discrimination of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion or belief, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, legal or social status, age, disability, property, birth, or on any other similar criteria.
2. Certain internally displaced persons, such as children, especially unaccompanied minors, expectant mothers, mothers with young children, female heads of household, persons with disabilities and elderly persons, shall be entitled to protection and assistance required by their condition and to treatment which takes into account their special needs.

SECTION II - PRINCIPLES RELATING TO PROTECTION FROM DISPLACEMENT

Principle 5

All authorities and international actors shall respect and ensure respect for their obligations under international law, including human rights and humanitarian law, in all circumstances, so as to prevent and avoid conditions that might lead to displacement of persons.

Principle 6

1. Every human being shall have the right to be protected against being arbitrarily displaced from his or her home or place of habitual residence.

2. The prohibition of arbitrary displacement includes displacement:

(a) When it is based on policies of apartheid, "ethnic cleansing" or similar practices aimed at/or resulting in altering the ethnic, religious or racial composition of the affected population;

(b) In situations of armed conflict, unless the security of the civilians involved or imperative military reasons so demand;

(c) In cases of large-scale development projects, which are not justified by compelling and overriding public interests;

(d) In cases of disasters, unless the safety and health of those affected requires their evacuation; and

(e) When it is used as a collective punishment.

3. Displacement shall last no longer than required by the circumstances.
Principle 7

1. Prior to any decision requiring the displacement of persons, the authorities concerned shall ensure that all feasible alternatives are explored in order to avoid displacement altogether. Where no alternatives exist, all measures shall be taken to minimize displacement and its adverse effects.

2. The authorities undertaking such displacement shall ensure, to the greatest practicable extent, that proper accommodation is provided to the displaced persons, that such displacements are effected in satisfactory conditions of safety, nutrition, health and hygiene, and that members of the same family are not separated.

3. If displacement occurs in situations other than during the emergency stages of armed conflicts and disasters, the following guarantees shall be complied with:

(a) A specific decision shall be taken by a State authority empowered by law to order such measures;

(b) Adequate measures shall be taken to guarantee to those to be displaced full information on the reasons and procedures for their displacement and, where applicable, on compensation and relocation;

(c) The free and informed consent of those to be displaced shall be sought;

(d) The authorities concerned shall endeavour to involve those affected, particularly women, in the planning and management of their relocation;

(e) Law enforcement measures, where required, shall be carried out by competent legal authorities; and

(f) The right to an effective remedy, including the review of such decisions by appropriate judicial authorities, shall be respected.
Principle 8

Displacement shall not be carried out in a manner that violates the rights to life, dignity, liberty and security of those affected.

Principle 9

States are under a particular obligation to protect against the displacement of indigenous peoples, minorities, peasants, pastoralists and other groups with a special dependency on and attachment to their lands.

SECTION III - PRINCIPLES RELATING TO PROTECTION DURING DISPLACEMENT

Principle 10

1. Every human being has the inherent right to life which shall be protected by law. No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his or her life. Internally displaced persons shall be protected in particular against:

(a) Genocide;

(b) Murder;

(c) Summary or arbitrary executions; and

(d) Enforced disappearances, including abduction or unacknowledged detention, threatening or resulting in death.

Threats and incitement to commit any of the foregoing acts shall be prohibited.

2. Attacks or other acts of violence against internally displaced persons who do not or no longer participate in hostilities are prohibited in all circumstances. Internally displaced persons shall be protected, in particular, against:

(a) Direct or indiscriminate attacks or other acts of violence, including the creation of areas wherein attacks on civilians are permitted;

(b) Starvation as a method of combat;
(c) Their use to shield military objectives from attack or to shield, favour or impede military operations;

(d) Attacks against their camps or settlements; and

(e) The use of anti-personnel landmines.

Principle 11

1. Every human being has the right to dignity and physical, mental and moral integrity.

2. Internally displaced persons, whether or not their liberty has been restricted, shall be protected in particular against:

   (a) Rape, mutilation, torture, cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, and other outrages upon personal dignity, such as acts of gender-specific violence, forced prostitution and any form of indecent assault;

   (b) Slavery or any contemporary form of slavery, such as sale into marriage, sexual exploitation, or forced labour of children; and

   (c) Acts of violence intended to spread terror among internally displaced persons.

   Threats and incitement to commit any of the foregoing acts shall be prohibited.

Principle 12

1. Every human being has the right to liberty and security of person. No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest or detention.

2. To give effect to this right for internally displaced persons, they shall not be interned in or confined to a camp. If in exceptional circumstances such internment or confinement is absolutely necessary, it shall not last longer than required by the circumstances.

3. Internally displaced persons shall be protected from discriminatory arrest and detention as a result of their displacement.

4. In no case shall internally displaced persons be taken hostage.
Principle 13

1. In no circumstances shall displaced children be recruited nor be required or permitted to take part in hostilities.

2. Internally displaced persons shall be protected against discriminatory practices of recruitment into any armed forces or groups as a result of their displacement. In particular any cruel, inhuman or degrading practices that compel compliance or punish non-compliance with recruitment are prohibited in all circumstances.

Principle 14

1. Every internally displaced person has the right to liberty of movement and freedom to choose his or her residence.

2. In particular, internally displaced persons have the right to move freely in and out of camps or other settlements.

Principle 15

Internally displaced persons have:

(a) The right to seek safety in another part of the country;

(b) The right to leave their country;

(c) The right to seek asylum in another country; and

(d) The right to be protected against forcible return to or resettlement in any place where their life, safety, liberty and/or health would be at risk.

Principle 16

1. All internally displaced persons have the right to know the fate and whereabouts of missing relatives.
2. The authorities concerned shall endeavour to establish the fate and whereabouts of internally displaced persons reported missing, and cooperate with relevant international organizations engaged in this task. They shall inform the next of kin on the progress of the investigation and notify them of any result.

3. The authorities concerned shall endeavour to collect and identify the mortal remains of those deceased, prevent their despoliation or mutilation, and facilitate the return of those remains to the next of kin or dispose of them respectfully.

4. Grave sites of internally displaced persons should be protected and respected in all circumstances. Internally displaced persons should have the right of access to the grave sites of their deceased relatives.

Principle 17

1. Every human being has the right to respect of his or her family life.

2. To give effect to this right for internally displaced persons, family members who wish to remain together shall be allowed to do so.

3. Families which are separated by displacement should be reunited as quickly as possible. All appropriate steps shall be taken to expedite the reunion of such families, particularly when children are involved. The responsible authorities shall facilitate inquiries made by family members and encourage and cooperate with the work of humanitarian organizations engaged in the task of family reunification.

4. Members of internally displaced families whose personal liberty has been restricted by internment or confinement in camps shall have the right to remain together.

Principle 18

1. All internally displaced persons have the right to an adequate standard of living.

2. At the minimum, regardless of the circumstances, and without discrimination, competent authorities shall provide internally displaced persons with and ensure safe access to:

(a) Essential food and potable water;
(b) Basic shelter and housing;

(c) Appropriate clothing; and

(d) Essential medical services and sanitation.

3. Special efforts should be made to ensure the full participation of women in the planning and distribution of these basic supplies.

Principle 19

1. All wounded and sick internally displaced persons as well as those with disabilities shall receive to the fullest extent practicable and with the least possible delay, the medical care and attention they require, without distinction on any grounds other than medical ones. When necessary, internally displaced persons shall have access to psychological and social services.

2. Special attention should be paid to the health needs of women, including access to female health care providers and services, such as reproductive health care, as well as appropriate counselling for victims of sexual and other abuses.

3. Special attention should also be given to the prevention of contagious and infectious diseases, including AIDS, among internally displaced persons.

Principle 20

1. Every human being has the right to recognition everywhere as a person before the law.

2. To give effect to this right for internally displaced persons, the authorities concerned shall issue to them all documents necessary for the enjoyment and exercise of their legal rights, such as passports, personal identification documents, birth certificates and marriage certificates. In particular, the authorities shall facilitate the issuance of new documents or the replacement of documents lost in the course of displacement, without imposing unreasonable conditions, such as requiring the return to one's area of habitual residence in order to obtain these or other required documents.

3. Women and men shall have equal rights to obtain such necessary documents and shall have the right to have such documentation issued in their own names.
Principle 21

1. No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of property and possessions.

2. The property and possessions of internally displaced persons shall in all circumstances be protected, in particular, against the following acts:

   (a) Pillage;

   (b) Direct or indiscriminate attacks or other acts of violence;

   (c) Being used to shield military operations or objectives;

   (d) Being made the object of reprisal; and

   (e) Being destroyed or appropriated as a form of collective punishment.

3. Property and possessions left behind by internally displaced persons should be protected against destruction and arbitrary and illegal appropriation, occupation or use.

Principle 22

1. Internally displaced persons, whether or not they are living in camps, shall not be discriminated against as a result of their displacement in the enjoyment of the following rights:

   (a) The rights to freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief, opinion and expression;

   (b) The right to seek freely opportunities for employment and to participate in economic activities;

   (c) The right to associate freely and participate equally in community affairs;

   (d) The right to vote and to participate in governmental and public affairs, including the right to have access to the means necessary to exercise this right; and

   (e) The right to communicate in a language they understand.
Principle 23

1. Every human being has the right to education.

2. To give effect to this right for internally displaced persons, the authorities concerned shall ensure that such persons, in particular displaced children, receive education which shall be free and compulsory at the primary level. Education should respect their cultural identity, language and religion.

3. Special efforts should be made to ensure the full and equal participation of women and girls in educational programmes.

4. Education and training facilities shall be made available to internally displaced persons, in particular adolescents and women, whether or not living in camps, as soon as conditions permit.

SECTION IV - PRINCIPLES RELATING TO HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

Principle 24

1. All humanitarian assistance shall be carried out in accordance with the principles of humanity and impartiality and without discrimination.

2. Humanitarian assistance to internally displaced persons shall not be diverted, in particular for political or military reasons.

Principle 25

1. The primary duty and responsibility for providing humanitarian assistance to internally displaced persons lies with national authorities.

2. International humanitarian organizations and other appropriate actors have the right to offer their services in support of the internally displaced. Such an offer shall not be regarded as an unfriendly act or an interference in a State’s internal affairs and shall be considered in good faith. Consent thereto shall not be arbitrarily withheld, particularly when authorities concerned are unable or unwilling to provide the required humanitarian assistance.

3. All authorities concerned shall grant and facilitate the free passage of humanitarian assistance and grant persons engaged in the provision of such assistance rapid and unimpeded access to
the internally displaced.

Principle 26

Persons engaged in humanitarian assistance, their transport and supplies shall be respected and protected. They shall not be the object of attack or other acts of violence.

Principle 27

1. International humanitarian organizations and other appropriate actors when providing assistance should give due regard to the protection needs and human rights of internally displaced persons and take appropriate measures in this regard. In so doing, these organizations and actors should respect relevant international standards and codes of conduct.

2. The preceding paragraph is without prejudice to the protection responsibilities of international organizations mandated for this purpose, whose services may be offered or requested by States.

SECTION V - PRINCIPLES RELATING TO RETURN, RESETTLEMENT AND REINTEGRATION

Principle 28

1. Competent authorities have the primary duty and responsibility to establish conditions, as well as provide the means, which allow internally displaced persons to return voluntarily, in safety and with dignity, to their homes or places of habitual residence, or to resettle voluntarily in another part of the country. Such authorities shall endeavour to facilitate the reintegration of returned or resettled internally displaced persons.

2. Special efforts should be made to ensure the full participation of internally displaced persons in the planning and management of their return or resettlement and reintegration.

Principle 29

1. Internally displaced persons who have returned to their homes or places of habitual residence or who have resettled in another part of the country shall not be discriminated against as a result of their having been displaced. They shall have the right to participate fully and equally in public
affairs at all levels and have equal access to public services.

2. Competent authorities have the duty and responsibility to assist returned and/or resettled internally displaced persons to recover, to the extent possible, their property and possessions which they left behind or were dispossessed of upon their displacement. When recovery of such property and possessions is not possible, competent authorities shall provide or assist these persons in obtaining appropriate compensation or another form of just reparation.

Principle 30

All authorities concerned shall grant and facilitate for international humanitarian organizations and other appropriate actors, in the exercise of their respective mandates, rapid and unimpeded access to internally displaced persons to assist in their return or resettlement and reintegration.