



COVID-19 MINIMUM CARE PACKAGE FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

This guidance has been produced by CBM Australia for UNICEF's East Asia and the Pacific Regional Office and UNICEF Australia. This document provides background, identifies key risks, risk mitigation measures, and provides links to key resources available to support UNICEF staff and partners in designing a COVID-19 response that is inclusive of children and youth with disabilities. It briefly presents information known at this time (May 2020) while recognising that as the pandemic evolves resources and evidence will also evolve.

Background:

It is essential to understand that children with disabilities are children first, and are part of the diversity of humanity. It is also important to recognise children and youth with disabilities are amongst the most vulnerable populations in the COVID-19 pandemic. The one billion people with disabilities globally need to be explicitly taken into account in the COVID-19 response if we are to avoid negative, though unintended, consequences. Many children and youth with disabilities have an elevated risk of serious illness and death if infected with COVID-19 due to pre-existing health conditions. At the same time, children and youth with disabilities are more likely to be forgotten during COVID-19 response as evidenced by past emergencies. Children and youth with disabilities also experience additional barriers to preventing disease due to inaccessible public health information, and inaccessible WASH facilities. Additionally, people with disabilities may find social distancing unfeasible due to their care requirements. For further background and recommendations, refer to *UNICEF guidance* and *International Disability Alliance (IDA) recommendations* (links provided in table below) and to the UNICEF guidance document outlining critical considerations for children with disabilities: https://www.unicef.org/disabilities/files/COVID-19_response_considerations_for_people_with_disabilities_190320.pdf.

Risk factors and mitigating actions to take to protect children with disabilities:

The following table identifies key risks, minimum care interventions and links to useful resources. Minimum care recommendations draw upon UNICEF guidance, the 10 recommendations of the International Disability Alliance (IDA) for an inclusive COVID-19 response and CBM's guidance for an inclusive COVID-19 response. Links to these and other useful documents are included in the resources section.

Strategic priority 1: Public health response to reduce novel coronavirus transmission and mortality

Risks	Minimum Care	Tools/Resources
Lack of access to health and safety information	Parents and children with disabilities receive information about vulnerability of children with disabilities, infection mitigating tips, public restriction plans, and the public health response, in a diversity of accessible formats using accessible technologies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNICEF, Risk Communication & Community Engagement for COVID-19 – Engaging with Children and Adults with Disabilities: https://www.unicef.org/disabilities/files/COVID-19_engagement_children_and_adults_with_disabilities_final.pdf • UNICEF, Inclusive Communication Module: https://www.unicef.org/disabilities/index_90418.html • UNICEF, Including Children with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action: General Guidance (particularly the practice tips on pages 82 – 83 covering terminology and practical communication tips): http://training.unicef.org/disability/emergencies/downloads/UNICEF_General_Guidance_English.pdf • CBM, Humanitarian Hands-on-Tool: https://hhot.cbm.org/en/card/communication • Parenting for Lifelong Health, Online COVID-19 parenting resources for the use of families during the COVID-19 crisis, available in multiple languages: https://www.covid19parenting.com/tips-in-other-languages • World Federation of the Deaf & World Association of Sign Language Interpreters (WFD & WASLI), Guidelines on Providing Access to Public Health Information in National Sign Languages during the Coronavirus Pandemic, available in multiple languages: https://wfdeaf.org/news/3-important-key-points-how-do-your-country-make-sure-all-deaf-people-are-updated-on-the-latest-news/.
Overlooked in planning and implementation of response	Engage with organisations of persons with disabilities (OPDs) in country; ensure women, girls, men and boys with disabilities are consulted and involved; monitor the involvement of all age and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNICEF country offices are generally already connected with the disability movement in country; when this is not the case contact your respective disability focal point at country office level or Lieve Sabbe, Programme Specialist (Children with Disabilities), in the EAPRO office: lsabbe@unicef.org or Rosangela Berman Bieler, Senior Advisor (Children with Disabilities) in the Programme Division, NYHQ: rbermanbieler@unicef.org

Strategic priority 1: Public health response to reduce novel coronavirus transmission and mortality

Risks	Minimum Care	Tools/Resources
	sex groups with disabilities throughout the response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow UNICEF guidance related to standard indicators and disability disaggregated data In monitoring and evaluation of the public health response, ensure that user input includes the disability movement, including people with disabilities and parents of children with disabilities including people with disabilities and parents of children with disabilities
Children with disabilities are more likely to live in poverty and with a lack of access to clean water and adequate sanitation facilities	<p>COVID-19 response requires access to clean water and soap. Water sources need to be accessible for parents with a disability and children with disabilities.</p> <p>Considerations around providing access to WASH facilities should particularly focus on the intersection of poverty and disability.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UNICEF, Disability Inclusive WASH Practices: https://www.unicef.org/disabilities/files/WASH_Disability_Inclusion_Practices_programming_note_-_Draft_for_review.pdf CBM Australia, Guidance Note: Foundations of Disability-Inclusive WASH (2018): https://www.cbm.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/CBM-Inclusive-WASH-Guidance-Note-June-2018.pdf
People, including children and youth with disabilities are deprioritised in the public health response	<p>Guard against any suggestion of deprioritising people with disabilities in the health response to COVID-19.</p> <p>Advocate for children and youth with disabilities to be prioritised in the response.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CBM, Disability Inclusion in COVID-19 Preparedness and Response, provides useful information and links to resources: https://www.cbm.org.au/disability-inclusion-covid-19-preparedness-response/ International Disability Alliance, Toward a Disability-Inclusive COVID19 Response: 10 recommendations from the International Disability Alliance: http://www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org/sites/default/files/ida_recommendations_for_disability-inclusive_covid19_response_final.pdf

Strategic priority 2: Continuity of health, education and social services; assessing and responding to the immediate secondary impacts of the COVID-19 response

Risks	Minimum Care	Tools/Resources
<p>Overlooked in planning and implementation of response</p>	<p>Engage with organisations of persons with disabilities (OPDs) in country; ensure women and children with disabilities are consulted and involved; collect information on the involvement of women, men, girls and boys with disabilities in all aspects of the design and delivery.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNICEF country office are generally already connected with the disability movement in country; when this is not the case contact your respective disability focal point at country office level or Lieve Sabbe, Programme Specialist (Children with Disabilities), in the EAPRO office: lsabbe@unicef.org or Rosangela Berman Bieler, Senior Advisor (Children with Disabilities) in the Programme Division, NYHQ: rbermanbieler@unicef.org • UNICEF, Including Everyone: Strengthening the Collection and Use of Data about Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Situations: https://data.unicef.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Including-everyone-disability-data-in-humanitarian-action-English_2019.pdf • UNICEF, Including Children with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action: General Guidance http://training.unicef.org/disability/emergencies/ (also sector-specific sections available on the same webpage) • International Disability Alliance, Toward a Disability-Inclusive COVID19 Response: 10 Recommendations from the International Disability Alliance: http://www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org/sites/default/files/ida_recommendations_for_disability-inclusive_covid19_response_final.pdf • UNHCR, Age, Gender and Diversity Considerations – COVID-19: https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/75295 • ICRC COVID-19: Inclusive Programming – Ensuring Assistance and Protection Addresses the Needs of Marginalised and At-Risk People: https://www.icrc.org/en/document/covid-19-coronavirus-inclusive-programming • Humanity & Inclusion, A principled and inclusive response to COVID-19, focused on the most vulnerable: https://hi.org/sn/uploads/document/SHORT-HI-Messages-on-COVID19-Policy-Paper-15042020-ENG.pdf • Source, an international online resource centre on disability and inclusion (use the search function for specific resources): https://asksource.info/

Strategic priority 2: Continuity of health, education and social services; assessing and responding to the immediate secondary impacts of the COVID-19 response

Risks	Minimum Care	Tools/Resources
Increased risk of all forms of violence	Ensure GBV and child protection measures are inclusive of children and youth, women and girls with disabilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender-Based Violence Area of Responsibility (GBVAoR), Disability Considerations in GBV Programming during the COVID-19 Pandemic: https://gbvaor.net/sites/default/files/2020-03/Disability%20Considerations%20in%20GBV%20programming%20during%20COVID_Helpdesk.pdf • The Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action, Guidance Note: Protection of Children During Infectious Disease Outbreaks: https://alliancecpha.org/en/child-protection-online-library/guidance-note-protection-children-during-infectious-disease • The Global CP Area of Responsibility has a dedicated folder where relevant guidance and tools on disability inclusive protection programming are regularly uploaded: https://www.dropbox.com/sh/yt0yvy97mjt3tn/AADXA8nTX0X2FTIFtgnycT2a?dl=0
Difficulties in daily life resulting from disrupted personal support and services	Take additional protective measures for vulnerable children and youth with disabilities. Work with OPDs and service providers to ensure sign language interpreters, personal assistants, sighted guides and others providing direct support to people with disabilities have appropriate PPE and continuity of service. Guard against any suggestion of institutionalization.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact national organisations of people with disabilities (OPDs), disability support service providers, and support advocacy to government which ensures continuity of these personal support services • Use UNICEF considerations and IDA’s key recommendations for a disability inclusive COVID-19 response as guidance to support advocacy efforts: https://unicef.sharepoint.com/sites/PD-Disability/ (internal), www.unicef.org/disabilities (external), and http://www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org/content/covid-19-and-disability-movement. • DFID, The Impacts of COVID-19 on People with Disabilities: A Rapid Review is an evidence-based analysis of how COVID-19 might impact on people with disabilities, including on the education of learners with disabilities: http://www.sddirect.org.uk/media/1909/disability-inclusion-helpdesk-query-35-covid-19-rapid-evidence-review.pdf

Strategic priority 2: Continuity of health, education and social services; assessing and responding to the immediate secondary impacts of the COVID-19 response

Risks	Minimum Care	Tools/Resources
<p>Learners with disabilities left out of distance learning and schools which are in session unprepared for keeping children safe</p>	<p>Take into account modalities and differentiated approaches for learners with disabilities and for children living in poverty in any distance learning programs. Ensure schools have the information they need to keep children and staff safe. As schools start to reopen, ensure that children with disabilities receive any needed support to safely and timely return to school.</p>	<p>Distance learning support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dell, Dell and Blackwell (2015). Applying Universal Design for Learning in Online Courses: Pedagogical and Practical Considerations: https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1068401.pdf • Explore Access, online toolkit for designing accessible courses: https://exploreaccess.org/accessible-online-course/ • The National Institute for Early Education Research provides useful links on a range of topics related to early childhood development, parent support, child protection and social protection for families during the response: http://nieer.org/2020/03/24/beyond-borders-in-a-crisis-the-global-response-to-support-children <p>In schools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNICEF, WHO and IFRC. Interim Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention and Control in Schools: https://www.unicef.org/reports/key-messages-and-actions-coronavirus-disease-covid-19-prevention-and-control-schools • Additional resources on integration of CP and Education and transition to reopening of school are available in the EAPRO CP share drive here. (internal link) • UNESCO, COVID-19 Educational Disruption and Response: https://en.unesco.org/covid19/educationresponse • INEE, Coronavirus (COVID-19) Resources: https://inee.org/covid-19/resources
<p>Disrupted continuity of home-based or centre-based</p>	<p>Allocate resources to support the continuity of disability specific services and protection of front line workers, prioritising</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNICEF EAPR guidance for frontline workers on children with disabilities and COVID: here (internal sharepoint, access for staff from UNICEF EAP region only) • CBM, Matrix and Community Based Inclusive Development (CBID) COVID-19 Guidance Note, developed for front line disability service programs:

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Risks	Minimum Care	Tools/Resources
disability services	community based service options tapping into a service directory or mapping.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://www.cbm.org/news/news/news-2020/cbm-develops-disability-inclusive-community-action-covid-19-matrix/ • See also the resource listed under social protection below.
Overlooked in Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE) interventions	<p>RCCE was the first response to COVID-19, providing information on how to prevent the spread of the disease and keep oneself safe, and disseminating tips and supportive messages for affected groups.</p> <p>Children and caregivers with disabilities need to be considered in RCCE products and strategies to ensure full accessibility and inclusiveness of such interventions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNICEF, Risk Communication & Community Engagement for COVID-19-Engaging with Children and Adults with Disabilities: https://www.unicef.org/disabilities/files/COVID-19_engagement_children_and_adults_with_disabilities_final.pdf
Overlooked in social protection measures	Ensure social protection plans are inclusive and take into account the specific needs of children with disabilities and their families.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The UN Special Rapporteur, UN Partnership on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and IDA have developed useful information for ensuring disability inclusive social protection measures: https://www.social-protection.org/gimi/gess/ShowResource.action;jsessionid=dd5vZXh8uPFDr9jr9AF0cWyLyVe_X3Q98ZUnjnkP0mkMYrSRmJT!-1463413688?id=56029 • The same link includes an informative video
Overlooked in the provision of mental health	The pandemic causes distress in people's lives and contributes to feelings of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WHO, Mental Health and Psychosocial Considerations During the COVID-19 Outbreak, contains useful considerations for mental health, including considerations for carers of

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Risks	Minimum Care	Tools/Resources
and psychosocial support (MHPSS)	fears, anxiety and uncertainty. People with psychosocial disabilities may find their symptoms are exacerbated and may require additional support. Ensure children with disabilities and their caregivers and caregivers with disabilities have access to MHPSS information and support.	<p>children: https://www.who.int/publications-detail/mental-health-and-psychosocial-considerations-during-the-covid-19-outbreak</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> UNICEF EAPRO produced a number of tools specific to the Region and also undertook an extensive review of all COVID-19 MHPSS resource available. The folder with all this material is available here. (internal sharepoint, access for staff from UNICEF EAP region only) For a detailed description of a comprehensive MHPSS response, including its adaptation during COVID-19, please refer to UNICEF COVID-19 Operational Global Guidance for Implementation and Adaptation of Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) Activities. Interim Briefing Note Addressing Mental Health and Psychosocial Aspects of COVID-19 Outbreak (developed by the IASC’s Reference Group on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support): https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/iasc-reference-group-mental-health-and-psychosocial-support-emergency-settings/briefing-note-about.

For additional information:

UNICEF, the International Disability Alliance and many other organisations maintain libraries of COVID-19 and disability related resources.

- UNICEF: <https://unicef.sharepoint.com/sites/PD-Disability/> (internal), www.unicef.org/disabilities (external)
- The IDA resources page can be found at: <http://www.internationaldisabilityalliance.org/content/covid-19-and-disability-movement>.
- CBM Australia hosts a resources page on a wide range of topics related to disability inclusion at DID4All: www.did4all.com.au. There is a page on COVID-19 and Disability Inclusion, and sub-themes are currently being added: <https://www.did4all.com.au/ResourceTheme.aspx?9213ea00-9d1b-4407-9aa5-1a9f07491343>