



## **Myanmar Child Protection Working Group**

### **Emergency Preparedness and Planning 2020/21**

#### **Context Analysis and Situation overview**

Myanmar has been experiencing Civil war since independence with this affecting selected parts of the country at different times and with different drivers. The HRP 2020 pointed out factors including armed conflict, inter-communal violence and natural hazards as drivers for humanitarian needs of the most vulnerable in Myanmar resulting into displacements, distraction of life and property and other humanitarian consequences leaving a total of almost one million people in need currently. With the advent of COVID-19, these needs have taken an additional toll on humanitarian assistance available. The HRP addendum 2020 identifies total of nearly one million (950,861) People in Need (PIN) with at least 37% of these being children.

2020 presents an added challenge to deliver interventions in the light of COVID-19. This means increased pressure to deliver under added risks of spreading virus, movement restriction as a result of health measures as well as consideration to put in place preventative and responsive measures for COVID-19 in each situation. Preparedness and response actions are critical in ensuring alertness and sensitivity to the changing humanitarian situations and detecting risks in order to prevent and respond to the Child Protection Risks Children are faced with and ensuring protection from abuse, neglect and exploitation.

This Preparedness and Response document for Child Protection identifies humanitarian scenarios and outlines risks for Child Protection at National level and acts as a guide for all actions for Preparedness and Response. It will be used as a basis for State level Coordination to adapt according to the specific context i.e. humanitarian risks, likely population to be affected as well as specific partners responsible for each preparedness and response action. It provides screen shot summary of the explanations below in annexes outlining preparedness and response actions for each identified scenario.

#### **Scenarios and Preparedness and Response actions.**

##### **Pandemic**

Myanmar has not been exceptional to the COVID Pandemic and while these are not as sporadic as other countries and has seen children be affected indirectly and directly. COVID-19 has been a main cause closing of services which have included Child Protection services leading to the heightening the risk of exposure to negative environments and consequently child abuse, neglect and exploitation in the form

of trafficking to reduce the economic and psychosocial burden on the family as a result of changes in the family dynamics, Child Labor and caregiver ability to continue to provide for the family reduces, gender based violence, Mental Health and Psychosocial Distress negative practices to cope with the situation.

Pandemics also meant that access to services is reduced for children in need of care and protection. This lack of access to humanitarian assistance further puts children at risk in their environment. To reach children, service providers have to find innovative and context specific methods to deliver services to children. For example, while Child Protection actors in most places have not been able to access children in quarantine centers, Child Protection actors have trained Health workers accessing quarantine centers to detect child protection issues and refer to service providers for acute cases as well as distribute Child Protection food and non-food items to children in quarantine centers.

Although children were not found to be directly impacted by migrant returnee populations, they could be impacted by loss of income to households. This could result in issues of Child Labor and early marriages as families strive to cope and adapt to the new challenges.

### **Preparedness actions**

1. Engagement and Capacity building for local and other sector actors by local coordination. This to include training on Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) Child Protection Minimum Standards, MHPSS and Case Management for a Care team/Rapid Response Team.
2. Develop strategies to support localization by investing in equipment and strategies that ensure continued support to affected communities.
3. Identification and development of service mapping/referral pathways.
4. Development of services where gaps exist for essential services.
5. Awareness raising and Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA).
6. Engage Government in preparedness planning particularly departments working in Health and Child Affairs.
7. Prepositioning of supplies including review of Child Protection messages and other materials.

### **Response actions**

1. Establishment of service provision: Case management and MHPSS.
2. MHPSS interventions including safe set-up of Child friendly spaces in line with safety guidelines under the pandemic.
3. Engage Government (DoR, DSW and Health Department) in response interventions.

### **Conflict**

The conflict in Myanmar is characterized by sporadic incidences in different states that are inter-communal violence and armed conflict in different parts of the country and with different drivers. The HRP shows how the situation in Rakhine has been declining since August 2017, while in Northern Shan, outbreaks of armed conflict have occurred in 2018 and 2019. A look at Kachin in the recent past also reveals that while previous conflicts have led to over 97,000 IDPs from 2011, there has been limited conflict and displacement since August 2018 (HRP 2020:12). UNHCR update for Myanmar issued on June 30, 2020, reported ongoing fighting in Northern Rakhine resulting in displacement of a total of over 2,800 people. This number included IDPs from Rathedaung who was hosting 14,575 IDPs already. In

addition, conflict also continues to hamper Humanitarian access to affected populations in need of services.

The conflict situation has an aftermath of mass displacements of populations, Unexploded ordinances, reports of grave violations, families separated, children and care givers in desperate need of Mental Health and Psychosocial Services (MHPSS).

**Preparedness actions have been identified as;**

1. Training in basics of Child Protection response and services including Child Protection minimum standards, Rapid Assessments, Simulations, MRE, Psychosocial First Aid and PSEA, Alternative care and Child Safeguarding for a core team/Rapid Response Team.
2. Development and strengthening of Referral pathways.
3. Awareness raising on Child Protection risks and services for children in need of care and protection.
4. Protection monitoring training including Monitoring Rights Mechanisms (MRM).
5. Engage Government in Preparedness Planning.
6. Prepositioning of supplies including review of Child Protection messages and other materials.

**Response actions include:**

1. Case management including identification, documentation, tracing and reunification (IDTR).
2. Coordination with service providers and other sectors humanitarian actors.
3. MHPSS activities for Group and individual as well as for children and care givers using strategies to include communities.
4. MHPSS interventions including safe set-up of Child friendly
5. Reintegration services.
6. Child Protection awareness raising including MRE.
7. Child Protection Risk mapping with children.
8. Engage Government with Response actions.
9. Protection monitoring including MRM.

**Landslides, Tsunami, Cyclone and Floods**

HRP 2020 points out that Myanmar is amongst the most disaster-prone countries in the world with these disasters affecting more than 13 million people since 2002 (HRP 2020:12). Kachin State is specifically prone to Landslide with the last landslide having occurred in June 2020 and others in August 2019 and 2018. This situation results in displacements, loss of lives and property and significant disruption of essential services. It leaves children additionally vulnerable to Child Protection risks associated with family separation, vulnerability of households, disruption in protection mechanisms at household and community level.

As a result of floods and landslides, unexploded ordinances can often shift and become a danger in on-conflict affected areas. This call for additional risk analyses and mapping to adequately address the dangers associated with these shifts.

**Preparedness actions**

1. Development and strengthening of Referral pathways.
2. Training of core national team/Rapid Response Team in training of key Child Protection issues including Child Protection Rapid Assessments, Simulations, Child Protection Minimum Standards, MHPSS and Case Management.
3. Awareness raising on Child Protection risks and services for children in need of care and protection.
4. Prepositioning of supplies including review of Child Protection messages and other materials.
5. Training of core national team/Rapid Response Team in training of key Child Protection issues including Child Protection Rapid Assessments, Child Protection Minimum Standards, MHPSS and Case Management.
6. Engage Government in Preparedness planning.
7. Risk mapping for and awareness/EORE.

**Response actions include:**

1. Case management including identification, documentation, tracing and reunification (IDTR) in the case of Family separation as well as alternative care.
2. Coordination with service providers and other sectors humanitarian actors.
3. MHPSS interventions including safe set-up of Child friendly Spaces.
4. Engage Government in Response actions.
5. Risk mapping for and awareness/EORE.

**Drought**

While drought was identified as a risk that is least likely to happen, Myanmar experienced drought in 1972, 1979, 1982, 1983, 1986 and 1987 and 2010 ([http://drought.unccd.int/drought/Asia-Pacific\\_files/Myanmar.pdf](http://drought.unccd.int/drought/Asia-Pacific_files/Myanmar.pdf)). This scenario is likely to have an adverse impact as it affects the household food security of a large part of the population. Drought affect household food security especially for agriculture reliant communities. It mainly impacts the agricultural fields, farmers, drinking water scarcity and livestock. As agriculture is the basis for household food security, it affects large populations with its effects threatening to spiral into chronic poverty and risking social protection safety nets which are a key component of a good Child Protection system.

The increased household vulnerability puts children and communities at risk of negative coping mechanisms. These may include sexual related abuses which vulnerably communities are already at risk of including sex for food, early marriages and trafficking, child labor and other abuse, exploitation and neglect related risks.

**Preparedness actions**

1. Ensure that drought preparedness actions by other sectors take considerations for Children and ensuring their protection.
2. Migration awareness.
3. Training of humanitarian actors in Child Protection minimum Standards, Child Safeguarding, MHPSS and PSEA.
4. Engage Government and other agencies in Preparedness Planning.
5. Prepositioning of supplies including review of Child Protection messages and other materials.

#### Response actions

1. Activation of referral mechanisms.
2. Awareness of services, social protection programs and migration.
3. Awareness for PSEA.
4. Engage Government in Response actions.

#### Conclusion

Even with the scenarios identified, it is possible to have humanitarian developments that are unprecedented either in scale or nature. This document also recognizes the possibility of developments in humanitarian situations which may be unprecedented. In this regard, it recognizes the need for rapid assessments to detect the Child Protection Risks and Vulnerabilities associated to the situation and apply the Child Protection risk management strategies in line with Child Protection Minimum Standards. It recognizes situations that are new including Pandemics as COVID-19 at the start of the pandemic as well as the influx of migrant workers returning to Myanmar from neighboring countries are situations that need to be monitored to determine how they affect children and appropriate responses to be applied. Finally, this document is valid for 2020 and will be reviewed every six months or based on changes in the humanitarian situation.

**Annexes****Pandemic**

Refer to excel sheets

**Conflict**

Refer to excel sheets

**Tsunami, Landslide, Flood and Cyclone**

Refer to excel sheets

**Drought**

Refer to excel sheets