



DURABLE SOLUTIONS FOR CHILDREN

CHECKLIST FOR CHILD-SENSITIVE NATIONAL AND LOCAL DURABLE SOLUTIONS STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT

Interagency group: Working document

March 2023

FOREWORD

This Checklist on Child-Sensitive Durable Solutions was drafted by a group of child-focused actors working in displacement-affected contexts. It focuses on situations of internal displacement, building on the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement and the IASC Framework on Durable Solutions for Internally Displaced People.

With the Child-Sensitive Durable Solutions checklist, we aim to advance the recommendations set out by the High Level Panel on Internal Displacement and the Secretary General's Action Agenda on Internal Displacement through:

- Ensuring that national and local governments and other actors working in internal displacement situations have an easily accessible catalogue of the practical measures **that** need to be in place to effectively protect the rights of internally displaced children.
- Providing a practical tool to local and national civil society organisations to help support, advocate, and hold authorities and other duty-bearers to account on the protection of IDP children and provision of child-sensitive durable solutions.
- Offering a reference document for development and humanitarian practitioners and policy makers at local, national and global levels on minimum standards of child-sensitive durable solutions.

The checklist is a working document, which is expected to be tested, adapted to local contexts, and revised as relevant based on feedback received. While indicators are to be set nationally, the current draft includes references to relevant SDG indicators to help guide practitioners in this process.

Based on feedback received, the next version of this document is expected to include additional details on promising practices and implementation measures.

For feedback or questions, please contact: MDI@savethechildren.org.

Almost half of the internally displaced persons across the world are children.¹ More often than not, displacement becomes protracted and lasts the whole journey from a newborn to an adult. Whether displaced due to conflict and violence or disasters, being caught in protracted displacement increases risks of numerous grave child rights violations and protection challenges and undermines development outcomes. Displacement often leads to losses in opportunities that are difficult or impossible to mend later on, resulting in devastating costs for individuals and societies. This is why focusing on access to durable solutions for children from the onset of a crisis is so paramount.

Governments have the responsibility to provide durable solutions, and to protect the rights of children in their territories. This checklist aims to ensure that national and local durable solutions strategies effectively take into account children’s priorities, needs, and rights. Children must not be kept waiting in a limbo: Early and urgent focus on displaced children’s rights and meeting their distinct developmental needs throughout the various stages of displacement must be prioritised through systematic efforts in order to prevent children’s lives being ‘lost in displacement.’

WHAT ARE CHILD-SENSITIVE DURABLE SOLUTIONS?

A durable solution is achieved when internally displaced persons no longer have any protection or assistance needs that are linked to their displacement, and can enjoy their human rights without discrimination on account of their displacement.² Broadly, achieving a durable solution means that the internally displaced child is able to live their life in an environment that ensures material, physical, legal and psychosocial safety in order to enable a child’s healthy growth and development. Achieving this requires careful consideration of the specific challenges that IDP children are facing, while equally protecting the rights of all populations.

¹ IDMC (2022): [Global Report on Internal Displacement 2022](#).

² IASC (2010): [Interagency Framework on Durable Solutions for Internally Displaced Persons](#). A durable solution can be achieved through sustainable integration in the place where the child currently lives, safe and voluntary return to the place of origin, or safe settlement in another part of the country.




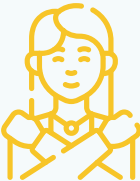

WHY THIS CHECKLIST?

The purpose of this checklist is to highlight key elements that should be incorporated into national durable solutions strategies and other solutions action plans in order to ensure that they are child-sensitive.

Pursuing durable solutions requires a whole-of-government commitment. In order to ensure that solutions strategies sufficiently address the impacts of displacement on IDP children and guarantee that their rights are respected, it is crucial to assign clear accountabilities to line ministries and agencies responsible for children’s welfare at national and local levels. In addition, different stakeholders such as the local civil society, the private sector, and religious communities play a crucial role in ensuring success. This checklist is aimed at national and local governments, as well as development and humanitarian actors working in internal displacement situations.

It outlines eleven key considerations for i) the outcomes that ensure that durable solutions address children’s displacement-related challenges and needs; and ii) the process of ensuring that children’s priorities are central to durable solutions strategies and interventions.

| Considerations for Child-Sensitive Durable Solutions | Why is it important? | Minimum Standards Relevant for all Durable Solutions Pathways | Indicators (To be set nationally) |
|---|---|--|--|
| I. Outcomes: What needs to be included in national durable solutions strategies to ensure they are child-sensitive? | | | |
| <p>1. Budget allocations for basic services for children</p>  | <p>Lack of access to essential services such as nutrition, health and education often has the most detrimental impact on children. In many displacement contexts, these services are often decimated by conflict and long-term lack of investment. Displaced children are also often overtly impacted by exclusion from public services in crisis-affected contexts. If government budget plans linked to durable solutions do not prioritise children’s rights, they lack a crucial focus on ensuring access to adequate standard of living in a sustainable manner through inclusion in national systems.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National and local authorities’ budgets include increase in investment in public services that benefit children (e.g. nutrition, health, including mental health, education). • Displaced children of different ages, genders and diversities are included in local and national level development plans and related budget allocations • Transparency towards displacement-affected communities and civil society, including child rights actors and local child-/youth-led groups in communicating public spend. | <p>e.g. SDG indicator 3.8.1. Coverage of essential health services</p> <p>Benchmark: <i>To be set nationally.</i></p> |


| Considerations for Child-Sensitive Durable Solutions | Why is it important? | Minimum Standards Relevant for all Durable Solutions Pathways | Indicators (To be set nationally) |
|---|--|---|---|
| <p>2. Sense of belonging and agency for children</p>  | <p>The psychological and social impacts of displacement can be substantial, but are often not considered in durable solutions policies, frameworks and programmes. Due to their developmental needs, overlooking these can have particularly long-lasting detrimental impacts on children that go much beyond the duration of displacement itself. Children must not only be safe, but also feel safe and connected to survive and thrive. Psychosocial safety is achieved when conditions are conducive for a child to feel like they belong, to feel that their communities are recognised and accepted, and when they are able to plan for the future and have ownership in decision-making.³</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Displaced children’s agency in decision-making and participation in public affairs is promoted. Children are recognised as key agents in advancing social cohesion and battling discrimination at community, regional and national levels. Children have access to safe spaces to play and socialise with others. | <p>e.g. SDG Indicator 16.7.2 Proportion of population who believe decision making is inclusive and responsive, by sex, age, disability and population group Benchmark: <i>To be set nationally.</i></p> |
| <p>3. Access to undisrupted accredited and quality learning</p>  | <p>Displacement affects the education of those who move, those who stay and that of host communities. It compromises the future of a whole generation, and limits progress toward achieving SDG 4 on ensuring inclusive and quality education for all.⁴ Access to education was prioritised by IDPs in consultations of the High-Level Panel.⁵ National durable solutions strategies need to address barriers for IDP children to access and learn in national education systems. Gender equality must be at the heart of education sector plans, budgets and policies, identifying and addressing gender disparities in access to education, transforming harmful gender norms, stereotypes and practices perpetuated in and through education.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equitable access to safe, inclusive, quality education and recovery of the education sector is prioritised in strategies and funding, based on the INEE Minimum Standards,⁶ including early learning and development, primary education, secondary and tertiary education, and vocational education. Pathways back to formal education are ensured for all children without delay, including through flexible registration systems, waiving documentation requirements or other legal and administrative barriers, and provision of psychosocial support. Flexible learning and vocational education opportunities, including a focus on attainment of literacy and numeracy skills, are in place for adolescents and young people who have missed out on education. | <p>e.g.SDG Indicator 4.1.2 Completion rate (primary education, lower secondary education, upper secondary education) OR SDG Indicator 4.2.2 Participation rate in organized learning (one year before the official primary entry age), by sex Benchmark: <i>To be set nationally</i></p> |

³ Save the Children (2020): [Pathways to psychosocial safety for Syria’s displaced children and adolescents. A policy brief.](#) July 2020.

⁴ Save the Children (2021): [Action towards increased quality education for internally displaced children.](#)

⁵ UNICEF and UN Major Group for Children and Youth (2020): [Voices of Young IDPs and their Host Communities Shining a light on the hopes, priorities and ideas of internally displaced youth in Somalia, Cameroon, Burkina Faso, Colombia, Syria and Ethiopia.](#)

⁶ Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies (2022): [INEE Minimum Standards.](#)

| Considerations for Child-Sensitive Durable Solutions | Why is it important? | Minimum Standards Relevant for all Durable Solutions Pathways | Indicators (To be set nationally) |
|--|--|---|---|
| <p data-bbox="147 331 403 592">4. Resilient and shock-responsive national systems to prevent and protect children against abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence</p>  | <p data-bbox="425 331 1075 560">Displacement often disrupts family, community and societal protective networks and creates a shock for individual coping capacity. As a result, displacement often compounds child protection risks. Ensuring access to functioning government child protection systems and harnessing community-based protection is crucial for every child to feel safe.</p> | <ul data-bbox="1120 331 1792 959" style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring tailored protection and (re)integration support in line with recognised standards,⁷ including prevention of child protection risks and alternative care options, for unaccompanied and separated children and child-headed households. • Mechanisms for the identification and response to specific child protection risks faced by children in displacement are accessible (including community-based protection, case management and referral mechanisms to specialised support services, best interest determination and investment in social workers and other workers caring for children). • Ensuring functioning mechanisms for family tracing and reunification, as well as establishing appropriate support for unaccompanied children. • Providing services and assistance to all survivors of gender-based violence, ensuring their safety, improving physical, mental, sexual and reproductive health, and facilitating access to justice. | <p data-bbox="1827 331 2089 1390">E.g. 5.2.1 Proportion of ever-partnered women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to physical, sexual or psychological violence by a current or former intimate partner in the previous 12 months, by form of violence and by age OR 5.2.2 Proportion of women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to sexual violence by persons other than an intimate partner in the previous 12 months, by age and place of occurrence OR 5.3.1 Proportion of women aged 20–24 years who were married or in a union before age 15 and before age 18 Benchmark: To be set nationally.</p> |

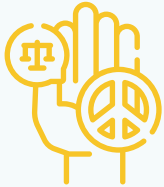

⁷ The Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Assistance (2022): [Primary Prevention Framework for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action](#).

| Considerations for Child-Sensitive Durable Solutions | Why is it important? | Minimum Standards Relevant for all Durable Solutions Pathways | Indicators (To be set nationally) |
|---|---|--|---|
| <p>5. Child-sensitive shock-responsive social protection systems</p>  | <p>Children and their caregivers have a right to social protection, and the presence of appropriate government-led social protection programmes is critical to sustainably address a wide range of deprivations and child rights violations, such as poverty, food insecurity, malnutrition, poor access to education, gender-based violence and early, child and forced marriage. Durable solutions strategies should support the (re)establishment of government-led social protection systems, complemented by humanitarian and development assistance. These systems need to be forward looking, and anticipate future shocks that trigger displacement of children and families.⁸</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using child poverty analysis⁹ to inform approaches that can mitigate risks for most vulnerable families impacted by displacement. Focusing on establishing or strengthening and adequately resourcing social protection schemes that correspond to the needs of displaced children and families, and effectively ensure that delivery and payment systems reach displaced populations. | <p>E.g.SDG Indicator 1.3.1: Proportion of population covered by social protection floors/systems, by sex, distinguishing children, unemployed persons, older persons, persons with disabilities, pregnant women, newborns, work-injury victims and the poor and the vulnerable</p> <p>SDG Indicator 8.7.1 Proportion and number of children aged 5–17 years engaged in child labour, by sex and age</p> <p>Benchmark: <i>To be set nationally.</i></p> |

⁸ Save the Children (2022): Shock-responsive social protection: Save the Children’s experience and value-add in using social protection to respond to the growing threat of major shocks including those linked to climate change. June 2022.


⁹ UNICEF and End Child Poverty Global Coalition (2017): [Ending child poverty as part of global goals. Milestone 2: Measuring Child Poverty.](#)


| Considerations for Child-Sensitive Durable Solutions | Why is it important? | Minimum Standards Relevant for all Durable Solutions Pathways | Indicators (To be set nationally) |
|--|--|---|--|
| <p>6. Guaranteeing the right to legal identity</p>  | <p>Legal identity is crucial for internally displaced people to have access to basic services and have their rights protected. Displacement often results in loss of civil and legal documentation and inability of IDPs to renew them. Children born in displacement may end up living much of their lives without ever being given crucial legal documents that enable their access to services such as health care, education or even humanitarian assistance, not to mention access to civil and political rights.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring access to birth registration for all children without discrimination. • Creating ways of supporting (re)issuance of documents, including through removing logistical obstacles (e.g. mobile and digital registration, waiving late registration fees). • Developing mechanisms for separated/unaccompanied /orphaned girls and boys with limited/documentation to access inheritance, property rights. | <p>E.g. SDG Indicator 16.9.1: Proportion of children under 5 years of age whose births have been registered with a civil authority, by age Benchmark: <i>To be set nationally.</i></p> |
| <p>7. Environmental sustainability and climate justice</p>  | <p>Climate change, environmental degradation and hunger drive and intertwine with other causes of displacement, including conflict and fragility. Considerations on environmental impacts must be included in all interventions supporting durable solutions. Disaster risk reduction and strengthening resilience and adaptability to future environmental shocks will be essential to ensure that durable solutions strategies can create a roadmap to sustainable solutions over time, including guaranteeing the rights of displacement affected children in the future.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recovery and response plans are environmentally friendly and conscious of climate-related risks for future sustainability. • Child-sensitive anticipatory action and integrated preparedness plans are prioritised to support children and communities before disasters strike (e.g. investment in analytics, pre-agreed financing and action plans) so they can continue to access essential services. • Actions reducing risks related to climate variability and shocks, their causes and consequences, including hunger, are prioritized. | <p>E.g. SDG Indicator 1.5.4: Proportion of local governments that adopt and implement local disaster risk reduction strategies in line with national disaster risk reduction strategies Benchmark: <i>To be set nationally.</i></p> |

| Considerations for Child-Sensitive Durable Solutions | Why is it important? | Minimum Standards Relevant for all Durable Solutions Pathways | Indicators (To be set nationally) |
|---|--|--|--|
| <p>8. Access to justice and safe participation of children in building peace</p>  | <p>IDPs must have access to mechanisms that provide remedies for violations of their rights and guarantees of non-recurrence. In conflict settings, grave violations of children’s rights are often rampant. At the same time, children of different ages, genders and diversities can play a crucial role in building peace now and in the future. Children’s perspectives on justice, social cohesion and peace are therefore crucial in order to sustainably address many root causes of displacement.¹⁰</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifying avenues for children to safely participate in peacebuilding processes. Peace agreements and transitional justice mechanisms include durable solutions and the specific needs of displaced children. Strengthening accountability mechanisms for grave and other violations affecting children in conflict,¹¹ and ensuring required child protection expertise within them. | <p>E.g. SDG Indicator 16.3.3 Proportion of the population who have experienced a dispute in the past two years and who accessed a formal or informal dispute resolution mechanism, by type of mechanism Benchmark: <i>To be set nationally.</i></p> |
| <p>II. Process: How to include children’s priorities in durable solutions strategies and interventions?</p> | | | |
| <p>1. Efforts are made before a displacement crisis and from the onset of an emergency towards pathways to durable solutions</p>  | <p>Children should have access to pathways that enable them to no longer feel like and be treated as displaced as soon as possible after a displacement event. This requires proactive efforts to identify pathways that can ‘end displacement’ by restoring a sense of normalcy and access to rights as quickly as possible through national systems on a par with non-displaced populations. In contexts with high risks of displacement, especially those impacted by climate change, efforts should also be made to prepare for potential solutions before populations are forcibly displaced.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Durable solutions planning and actions to advance solutions start from early on in a displacement crisis in order to enable future planning for families with children in different developmental stages. Risk analysis and forecasting are used to inform local and national development planning and inform community members, to increase adaptation capacity, mitigate the risks of forced displacement and facilitate planned relocations. | |

¹⁰ See for example UNICEF (2015): [Equitable access to justice for children in Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia](#).

¹¹ Save the Children and University of Oxford (2021): [Advancing Justice for Children: Innovations to strengthen accountability for violations and crimes affecting children](#)

| Considerations for Child-Sensitive Durable Solutions | Why is it important? | Minimum Standards Relevant for all Durable Solutions Pathways | Indicators (To be set nationally) |
|---|--|---|-----------------------------------|
| <p>2. Children are supported and equipped as key partners in developing durable solutions strategies, at local, national and global levels</p>  | <p>Children of different ages, gender and backgrounds have needs, priorities, interests, hopes and dreams about solutions that are often distinct from those of adults. Meaningful participation of children in decisions that affect them, according to their maturity, is a right set out by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. IDPs have the right to participate in the planning and implementation of durable solutions, including IDP children, who must be made aware of available solutions and consulted on decisions about their future. Lessons learned from various contexts show that engaging displacement-affected communities at all stages increase chances of success. Such participation needs to be sustained and promoted over time by relevant structures and systems at national and local levels.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Durable solutions strategies and interventions are based on direct consultations with children in all their diversity, or indirectly through civil society support, in line with international standards for the meaningful participation of children. • Effective mechanisms are in place to enable children's participation in the implementation and monitoring of solutions regardless of their language, ethnicity, gender or disability. • Durable solutions policies, plans and strategies are communicated in a manner that is accessible for children of different ages, disability, genders, cultural, ethnic, socio-economic and educational background. • Feedback mechanisms on the implementation of durable solutions strategies and related programmes include specific focus on accessibility for children ages, disability, genders, cultural, ethnic and socio-economic background. | |

| Considerations for Child-Sensitive Durable Solutions | Why is it important? | Minimum Standards Relevant for all Durable Solutions Pathways | Indicators (To be set nationally) |
|--|---|--|-----------------------------------|
| <p>3. Children’s unique needs and priorities are reflected in data and evidence informing durable solutions strategies and monitoring</p>  | <p>Reliable, standardised and up-to-date data is essential to ensure that children’s distinct needs and priorities are reflected in durable solutions strategies, their implementation, and monitoring of progress. Yet multiple challenges persist in painting a global picture of children in internal displacement.¹² These include a lack of disaggregated data for IDP children at the most basic level. Specifically, standardised data collection methods that allow for disaggregation of population data by age, gender and displacement history are essential to inform adequate support to children in internal displacement.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All data used to inform durable solutions (e.g. intentions surveys, assessments, profiling) is designed to capture the needs and priorities of children of different ages, disability, genders, cultural, ethnic and socio-economic background. • Analysis includes projections of demographic trends and related needs for infrastructure, services etc. in the future (e.g. education, livelihoods for young people). • Age-disaggregated data on internal displacement is collected based on standardised indicators, such as those presented in the International Recommendations on IDP Statistics, and included in the monitoring of national development plans and other official statistics. | |

Related resources:

IDMC (2022): [Global Report on Internal Displacement](#). Section 2. Children and Youth in Internal Displacement.

Save the Children (2019): [Durable Solutions for Children Toolkit](#).

World Vision (2018): [Faith Action for Children on the Move](#).

¹² IDMC (2022): [Global Report on Internal Displacement 2022](#).