Protecting Children at the time of Disasters
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WHAT IS DISASTER?

Disaster Occur when extreme events influence a society so strongly that it is overwhelmed and cannot cope using its own resources only.
Humanitarian Emergencies

Natural disasters
- Climatic
- Geographic

Manmade disasters
- Technological Disasters

Complex Emergencies
Complex Humanitarian Emergencies (CHE)

- Civil or armed conflict, leading to socio-economic collapse
- Large-scale population displacement
- Destruction of public health infrastructure
VULNERABILITIES

Factors which reduce the ability of a community to cope with a given hazard OR Factors that increase risk of a negative outcome when exposed to a hazard.
Who are the most vulnerable individuals?

80% of the victims are women and Children.

Children under 5 suffered 64% of the mortality
**Possible Effects of Disasters**

- Deaths
- Injuries
- Disabilities
- Collapsed infrastructure
- Hampered communication
- Loss of electricity, potable water, sanitation
- Population Displacement
- Destruction of health care infrastructure
- Increased incidence of communicable diseases
- Food shortage and famine
- Psychological distress
- Violation of human rights
- Child abuse and exploitation
Disasters and Conflicts
Effects on Children

Direct Risks

• Deaths, Injuries and disabilities
• Vulnerability to malnutrition
• Vulnerability to infections
• Acute and long term psychological trauma
• Vulnerability to Neglect, Abuse and Exploitation
Disasters and Conflicts
Effects on Children

- Used ac combatants
- Used as Informers
- Suicide bombers
- Early marriages
- Rape/Sex slaves
- Survival sex
- Abduction and forced displacement
- Child labor and other forms of exploitation
Effects of Conflict on Children

- Physical and psychological damages
- Disruption of their families, their communities, and their lives
- Attacks on schools and hospitals
- Attacks on health and other humanitarian aid workers
VULNERABLE CHILDREN

- Orphans
- Unaccompanied minors
- Ethnic minorities
- Child Soldiers
RISKS OF CHILD ABUSE AND EXPLOITATION

1. Disruption of normal child protection mechanism
   - Loss of parents / care givers
   - Disruption of communities
   - Displacement and living in temporary shelters

2. Weak Government Child Protection
   System and lack of resources.

3. Weak monitoring of child rights violation.
Child Protection

Child Protection means to protect all children from any form of abuse, including exploitation, violence and neglect.
International Law:

Children and families should be among the first to receive relief and protection in time of disasters.
Child Protection
Developing Response

Guiding principles:

• Non discrimination (Article-2)
• Best interest of the child (Article-3)
• Right to life (Article-6)
• Rights of participation (Article-12)
• Respect for rules of international humanitarian law relevant to children in armed conflict (Art.38)
• Right to physical and psychological recovery and re-integration (Article-39)
• CRC-Optional Protocol on involvement of children in Armed Conflict
Disaster/Conflict

Rapid assessment – Child Protection

• Situation of “violation of Children” rights before disaster
• Community’s normal mechanism to respond to and deal with psycho-social distress
• Support to families
• Opportunities to children to express their concerns
• Provision of educational and recreational activities
• Unaccompanied children
• Child tracking and reunification
Child Protection in Emergencies

- Registration of all unaccompanied/separated children
- Child tracing and family reunification
- Creation of suitable alternative care arrangements
- Creation of “Child Friendly spaces”
- Provision of psychosocial support
- Monitoring of child rights violations
Unaccompanied/Separated children

- Registration
- Tracing
- Avoid adoption, change of identity
- Family re-unification
- Community based care
- Security ensured
- Siblings should be always kept together
Strategies for psychological well-being

• Reunifying and supporting families
• Re-establishing a sense of normally
• Providing opportunities for expression
• Creation of child friendly spaces
• Training of care providers
Role of Media

• Media are first to define an event as emergency
• Public awareness lead to level of attention
• Key role in informing victims about services
• Images of horror and destruction may heighten children's stress
• A plan for working with media is of crucial importance
Promoting Resilience and Preparedness

- Strengthen the capacity of children, families and communities
- Income generating activities for families
- Involvement in relief work
- Disaster preparedness plan
THANK YOU