

Child Friendly Spaces (CFS) Minimum Standards Cox's Bazar | Rohingya Emergency Response

The purpose of this minimum standards is to encourage consistency and ensure quality in relation to the establishment and running of child friendly spaces. This standard uses the term 'child-friendly spaces' to mean safe spaces where communities create nurturing environments in which children can access free and structured play, recreation, leisure and learning activities such as key messages around WASH, abuse, exploitation, safety, or protecting themselves from harm. This reflects Standard 17 in the Minimum Standards for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action.

Child Friendly Spaces (CFS) are the main Psychosocial Support (PSS) intervention used to provide psychosocial activities for children. Along with Temporary Learning Spaces (TLC's) these activities provide structure, normalizing activities, safety, socialization and adult supervision and are virtually the only structured activities offered for children in the Bangladesh Rohingya refugee camps. These are all qualities that build resilience and are found to mitigate against children developing more serious psychosocial problems. CFS's can also be protective in the sense that they provide a venue for monitoring protection issues that may affect children as well as a safe place to play. They are designed and operated in a participatory manner and designed for a variety of age ranges.

CFSs are a gateway for cross-sectoral interventions such as:

- In-formal education and PSS Activities for out of school children and young people (ensuring that CFS are not pulling children away from formal education).
- Identification, documentation and reunification of separated and unaccompanied children and case management for other vulnerable children or children at-risk.
- Health and nutrition interventions or messaging.
- Emergency preparedness awareness against cyclones and other national disasters.
- Support for parents and caregivers.
- Safe water, sanitation facilities, and hygiene promotion.
- Community-based protection mechanisms, outreach, community sensitization activities, and adolescent/peer to peer initiatives.

Standard 17: All Children and young people can go to community supported child friendly spaces that provide structured activities that are carried out in a safe, child friendly, inclusive and stimulating environment.

1. SETTING UP A CFS

1.1. Preparation

- For new static CFS's it is necessary to follow established procedures on space allocation, please contact Child Protection Sub-Cluster Coordinator to discuss available spaces and allocation process.
- Before implementing mobile CFS's walk around the camp and to find available spaces and receive permission to use the space.

- Ensure safety and security of area (e.g. removal of hazards, access to safe water, safe access, etc.).
- Explain purpose and function of CFS to community leaders and parents to gain their support.
- At the planning phase, fully involve boys, girls, women and men and vulnerable groups (such as people with disabilities) from the community in developing and supporting CFS activities.
- Develop a phase-out or transition plan that links with broader recovery planning.
- Make sure that the community is aware from the beginning that a phase-out period or hand-over may take place.

1.2. Staffing

- Staff should be recruited from both the refugee and the host communities to support social cohesion and address language barriers.
- Basic training package for CFS staff or workers includes: facilitation of age appropriate activities, instruction on how to use materials, child development, child rights, Psychological First Aid (PFA), Child Protection in Emergencies, identification and registration of vulnerable children and referral, child safeguarding and reporting mechanisms, and inclusion of children with disabilities. Basic First Aid training is highly recommended.
- Identification of unaccompanied and separated children and they know who to contact for case management including family tracing and reunification.
- CFS staff are aware of alternative care arrangements for unaccompanied children and know how to make referrals to relevant services.
- Staff have signed the organization's Code of Conduct and child safeguarding policy.
- The children staff ratio should be minimum 2 staff for 25 children, regardless of the number of children there should always be 2 staffs present in the CFS.
- Enlist and train community volunteers and youth group members to assist in running activities.

1.3. CFS construction

- Static CFS's should be built according to UNICEF/Ministry of Social Services design standards of at least 80 square meters and should be rain and cyclone proof.
- No more than 125 children per static CFS/per shift should be in attendance.
- CFS should provide adequate space for small groups to conduct different activities simultaneously. The space can be divided by rope or string, tape or bamboo.
- Ensure properly maintained WASH facilities, and water for drinking as well as for hygiene purposes are available; i.e.: separate boy/girl latrines with locking doors, water and soap for handwashing, and safe water for drinking.
- Since smaller mobile spaces will necessarily have less children than larger spaces such as static CFS's, have multiple spaces within the camp blocks for mobile CFS's.
- Mobile CFS's should be protected from sun and rain whenever possible using a temporary structure or plastic tarp.
- Access to outdoor area for recreational activities whenever possible.
- Area for confidential private discussions between children and CFS staff identified. It is recommended to create a private room within the CFS area.

CFS CONSTRUCTION

Semi – permanent (Recommended)

- This is a semi-permanent structure – This could be a bamboo and tarpaulin structure with walls and a floor, or a pre-fabricated container. This applies to the UNICEF/Ministry of Social Services standard design.

Mobile/Satellite

- This is a makeshift CFS, for example tarpaulin on bamboo sticks, or a space where the CFS is provided completely outdoors.

Temporary

- This is a short-term structure, such as a tent.

Permanent

- This is a sealed building with a roof, walls and a floor, designed for long term use. This may be built from bricks, wood or concrete. CFS's in host communities should follow this structure whenever possible.

CFS APPROACHES

Static

- This is a full-time space that takes place in the same location every day with one team.

Mobile

- Mobile CFSs can be used also to reach remote area, their approach ensure flexibility as needs arise.

COMMUNITY-BASED CHILD PROTECTION MECHANISMS:

- Activities of CFS will be supported by Community-based Child Protection Committees (CB-CPC) or other community-based structures.
- Parents, grandmothers, religious leaders, Madjees, youth groups, and others may be involved in the CPC (*see annex for guidelines*).
- Terms of reference for CBCPC must be in place (*sample ToR in Annex 10*) and CBCPC members should be familiar with the ToR and understand their responsibilities.
- Community-based groups need basic training in child rights, CPiE including identification and referral of vulnerable children, and be knowledgeable re: referral pathways for vulnerable children and their families.
- Community-based groups can be engaged in risk mapping and service mapping as part of their training.
- Recruit staff from the community whenever possible and link with other community-based mechanisms such as Child Protection Committees (CPCC), Madjees, religious leaders, Learning Spaces and other relevant actors.

2. RUNNING A CFS

2.1. Schedule and attendance

- Set up clear guidelines, programme and schedules for activities with children weekly
- Schedule should be visible and available in relevant languages and shared with parents, children and communities.
- Ensure that the timing and nature of activities are compatible with daily routines of girls and boys and family members. Activities should run the same time and in the same place each day.
- CFS's should not replace regular schooling and children should be encouraged to attend camp learning spaces. Mechanisms for supporting school attendance should be developed.
- Children should attend CFS at least 2 shifts week on different days for three months.
- Activities should be tailored to different age range and stage of development.
- Organize separate CFS sessions or group activities for girls and boys of different age groups, such as 0-3 accompanied by caregiver, 4-7, 8-11, and 12-15 years for a minimum of 1.5 hours.
- Make sure there are services and activities available for children ages 16-18.
- CFS facilitators should collect three types of information to report their activities:
 - *Individual number of children access PSS support: Children are registered individually on the first time they join the CFS. The cumulative number of children registered constitutes the total number of children accessing CFS.*
 - *Daily attendance: Children attendance in CFS is recorded on a daily basis and constitute the number of children attending the CFS. This number cannot be cumulated over a period of time, and cannot be used as number of children as it would result in double counting individuals (children attend multiple time over one week, or one month).*
 - *Number of children referred to specialized services including health, mental health, nutrition, shelter, food, NFI, education, and GBV.*

2.2. Activities with children

- Make a weekly activity schedule and prepare materials ahead of time so you know what you will do when children arrive.
- Using locally available play materials, traditional games, handicrafts, and cultural activities such as drama, dance and singing whenever possible. These are more sustainable and contextually relevant than activities using Early Child Development, (ECD), CFS, and recreation kits.
- Divide children into groups before giving them play things to prevent fighting.
- Show them how to use different games especially ECD material.
- CFS provides a wide range of activities including art and craft, sport and physical activity and imaginative, communicative and manipulative activities.
- It works best to form small groups of children of roughly the same age and let them choose an activity.
- Frequently monitor small group activities to make sure all members in the group are participating. Provide ongoing monitoring with feedback mechanisms that involve the children and families.

2.3. Inclusion

- Make CFSs accessible and inclusive for girls and excluded children such as those with disabilities and tailoring activities to meet their distinctive needs and capacities.
- Make sure boys and girls have equal access to all activities.
- Ensure access for adolescents with children or younger siblings.
- Set up a programme of activities that addresses the needs of all children and Rohingya communities overall, and coordinate with other agencies and sectors to provide support such as health and hygiene education, breastfeeding groups and spaces, supplemental feeding, information on humanitarian assistance, etc.

2.4. Activities with parents

- Inform parents of CFS activities and facilities through community outreach.
- Collect contact information (minimum shelter location) and consent from parents for children to attend the CFS.
- Organize regular parents meeting (minimum bi-weekly).
- Parents meeting should cover the following topics: CFS objective and activities, CFS rules, child safe guarding policy and complaints mechanism, staff code of conduct, key awareness messages around child protection including Inter Sector Coordinating Group (ISCG) see annex) child protection messages, positive discipline, importance of education Especially for girls.

2.5. Identification of protection concerns and referrals

- Make sure staff are aware of types and signs of abuse and other protection concerns and know how to refer vulnerable children to case management or specialized services for further assessment and care.
- Ensure a referral contact directory is available in the CFS.
- Listen and be supportive to children who have particular protection concerns or children at risk, making referrals for children who need specialized services.
- When a child with protection concerns is identified, refer to closest case management actors in the zone.
- All referrals should follow confidentiality guidelines.

2.6. Safety and Security

- CFS facilitators should wear identification at all time (organization ID cards or/and visibility).
- Visitors should not be let inside the CFS without prior authorization from management.
- Ensure first aid box is available in every CFS (static and Mobile).
- Emergency contacts details (police, ambulance, fire) are on display in the CFS.
- All actors are responsible for security and safekeeping of CFS assets. Actors should secure a night guard for static CFS's and secure mobile CFS materials when activities finish for the day.
- The media can only enter a CFS with prior consent of the CFS manager and best interest of children must be maintained. Consult your organizations media guidelines.

2.7. Integration with other sectors

Coordination:

- CFS facilitators should meet with the closest learning space to harmonized schedule of different age groups.
- Education actors will promote the CFS activities and schedule.
- Children in CFS not attending the learning space will be referred to nearby TLC.
- Joint parents meeting with education and CFS should be organized.

2. CLOSING A CFS

- When it is clear that there is no longer funding available, provide information to the community as soon as possible about when the phase-out or transition will take place and the steps to be taken.
- Organize group discussions with children to provide child friendly information regarding the closing.
- Organize meetings with parents and communities to inform about the closing.

Revision

- The CFS Minimum Standards will be reviewed every four months based on the recommendation of the Sub-Sector coordinator or any of the members, taking into account the changes in the camps and host communities.

Additional-References:

Child Protection Sub-Sector for Sudan (2011). Minimum Standards for CFS and Children's Centres Sudan

Christian Children's Fund (2008). Starting Up Child Centred Spaces in Emergencies: A Field Manual
IASC, INEE, Global Protection Cluster, Global Education Cluster (2011). Guidelines for Child-friendly Spaces in Emergencies

IFRC and Save the Children Denmark (2012). The Children's Resilience Programme – Psychosocial support in and out of school: Booklet 1 Understanding Children's Wellbeing. (2012)

Save the Children (2008). Child-friendly Spaces in Emergencies – a Handbook for Save the Children staff

Terre des Hommes (2009). 20 games with a psychosocial aim

UNICEF (2009). A practical guide for developing Child-friendly Spaces (2009)

Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989)

Annexes:

- CFS checklist
- ISCG CP messages
- CFS Building Plan