Foundational Guidance
About the Adolescent Kit for Expression and Innovation

The Adolescent Kit for Expression and Innovation (Adolescent Kit) is a package of guidance, tools, activities and supplies for supporting adolescents ages 10-17 who are affected by conflict, poverty and other humanitarian crises. It provides an innovative approach to working with adolescents in humanitarian situations that can be integrated into UNICEF and partner country programmes, or introduced as a stand-alone initiative.

What is the aim of the Adolescent Kit?

The Adolescent Kit aims to bring about positive change in the lives of adolescents in challenging circumstances. It is a package of resources to support adolescent girls and boys to develop key competencies that can help them to cope with stressful circumstances, build healthy relationships, learn new skills and engage positively with their communities. It targets the most vulnerable adolescents in humanitarian situations, through cross-sectoral approaches that focus on arts and innovation. This involves bringing groups of adolescent girls and boys ages 10-17 together in a safe space on a regular basis to have fun, cope with difficult experiences, learn and work together.

How to use the Adolescent Kit

The Adolescent Kit is a package of guidance, tools and activities that can be used within a range of humanitarian programmes to make them more relevant and effective for adolescents. It can be integrated into existing child protection, education and youth interventions such as child friendly spaces, recreation programmes, formal and informal learning initiatives, and youth clubs, or used to set up new ones.

Programmes can use all of the tools, guidance and activities in the Adolescent Kit, or select particular ones to target specific areas that need strengthening for adolescents. What matters is that the Adolescent Circles approach is adapted to the needs of adolescent girls and boys in each particular environment, and used to help programmes meet their goals (or set new ones) for adolescents.

Who is the Adolescent Kit for?

The guidance, tools and activities in the Adolescent Kit can be used by anyone involved in working with adolescents in humanitarian situations. This includes UNICEF and partner staff across different sectors, teachers, Child Friendly Space assistants, youth workers, community volunteers and others.

In particular, the Adolescent Kit is aimed toward staff or volunteers involved in managing interventions with adolescents (Programme Coordinators) and working directly with adolescent girls and boys (Facilitators). Programme coordinators can use the guidance and tools to design, oversee and support programmes or interventions that reach adolescents, especially the least reached, and engage adolescents throughout the programme cycle to create interventions that address their interests and priorities. Facilitators can use the guidance, activities and supplies in the Adolescent Kit to plan structured sessions, and to work with adolescent girls and boys through different stages that address their needs and interests.

Working with the Adolescent Kit

The Adolescent Kit draws from best practice in psychosocial support, life skills education, child protection, child participation, and peacebuilding. It can, and should, be used in different ways depending on the situation and needs of adolescents.

- It can be introduced within a range of humanitarian contexts, including recent-onset emergencies, protracted crises and situations of poverty.
- It can be adapted to adolescents’ developmental levels, interests and priorities.
- It can be integrated within an existing programme for adolescents, or established as a separate project to target a specific group or community.
- Programmes can use all of the tools, guidance and activities in the Adolescent Kit, or select particular ones to target specific areas that need strengthening for adolescent girls and boys.
Resources in the Adolescent Kit

The Adolescent Kit includes guidance, tools, activities and supplies for working with adolescents.

1. Guidance

Before starting your work with the Adolescent Kit, read through the guidance sections. While some of these sections are specifically targeted at Programme Coordinators and Facilitators, users are encouraged to read all of the guidance to get a full picture of how the Adolescent Kit works.

• **Quick Guide:** A helpful overview of the Adolescent Kit that provides a snapshot of all of the guidance, tools and activities available to users. Use this to get a sense of what the Adolescent Kit has to offer – and how it can support your work!

• **Foundation Guidance:** An introduction to the key principles and approaches that underpin the Adolescent Kit. The Foundation Guidance is for everyone who plans to use the Adolescent Kit, and includes an explanation of the competency domains that guide activities, key approaches to working with adolescents and technical guidance.

• **Programme Coordinators’ Guidance:** Guidance and tools for programme coordinators to design and manage interventions for adolescents using the Adolescent Kit.

• **Facilitators’ Guidance:** Guidance, tools and activities for facilitators to work directly with adolescents through the Adolescent Circles approach.

• **Supply Guidance:** Guidance for managing, storing and replacing supplies for interventions with the Adolescent Kit. This includes advice on creating and finding your own supplies if you don’t have access to a Supply Kit.

2. Activity Box

The Activity Box includes useful tools and resources to help facilitators as they work with adolescents. These range from in-depth guidance and instructions for running activities to quick and easy ideas to motivate participants.

• **Activity Guides:** Step-by-step guides to activities that can be adapted to adolescents’ interests, needs and developmental level

• **Energizer Cards:** Cards with instructions for short, fun games or restful activities to run with adolescents

• **Inspiration Cards:** Inspiring ideas for quick activities to keep adolescents motivated and interested

• **Facilitator Tools:** Useful tools for planning and facilitating sessions with adolescents, includes a topic bank with a list of additional ideas that can be integrated into activities and emotion cards to help adolescents identify and communicate their emotions

• **Other resources:** Inspiration cards, Energiser cards, Emotion Cubes and other resources to help make activities with adolescents engaging and fun

3. Supply Kit

A package of materials, equipment and supplies that can be used to support activities with the Adolescent Kit

4. Digital Resources

A website and USB Key that include electronic versions of all of the guidance, tools and activities in the Adolescent Kit, as well as templates and videos for constructing a Supply Kit

How to access the Adolescent Kit

All of the guidance, activities and tools in the Adolescent Kit are available online at www. http://adolescentkit.org and can be downloaded for use. The Supply Kit is listed in UNICEF’s Emergency Supply Catalogue.
Why a kit for adolescents’ expression and innovation?\(^1\)

The Adolescent Kit for Expression and Innovation (Adolescent Kit) was created in recognition of the particular challenges that adolescents face in humanitarian situations, and the gap in programming to support them. It aims to support adolescent girls and boys in difficult circumstances, and to bring about positive change in their lives.

Adolescents are a key age group affected by conflict and other humanitarian situations. Their rights are often violated during times of crisis, and they may face risks to their lives, health, development and wellbeing. Despite these challenges, many adolescents demonstrate significant resilience in humanitarian situations, finding constructive ways to adapt to their situations and cope with difficulties. Drawing on their resourcefulness and skills, they can, and do, contribute great energy, creativity and enthusiasm to improving their own lives, as well as their communities – and can be resources for peace and stability.

Gaps in support for adolescents

Aid actors have established a number of helpful initiatives to support the development and protection of adolescents in humanitarian situations. These include youth, child protection, education, psychosocial, life skills, HIV/AIDS, reproductive health and other programmes. Many of these interventions provide children with opportunities to recover, learn and engage in productive ways.

Who are adolescents?

The United Nations defines adolescents as human beings in the second decade of life, ages 10-19. Adolescents ages 10-17 (to the moment they turn 18) are children, and as such are within UNICEF’s mandate as custodians of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. (People ages 18-19 are both adolescents and adults).

The following definitions of different age groups may be useful:

- Children are “human beings up to age 18” as defined by the Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- United Nations agencies, including UNICEF and UNFPA, use a working definition of youth as human beings ages 15-24, but individual states utilize their own official definitions of ‘youth,’ which sometimes extend to higher age ranges.
- ‘Young people’ are defined by the United Nations as people ages 10-24.
- UNICEF defines adolescents as human beings ages 10-19.

The Adolescent Kit for Expression and Innovation is designed to support programmes and interventions for adolescents ages 10-17 – the subgroup of adolescents that are also children within UNICEF’s mandate. Depending on their context and goals, programme coordinators, facilitators, and anyone else using the kit may also choose to reach out to and include younger children and older adolescents or youth, adapting the approaches as they see fit for those populations.

in positive activities within safe environments such as child friendly spaces, sports clubs, mentoring schemes, children’s clubs, and youth centres.

Despite these initiatives, huge gaps exist and missed opportunities remain for supporting adolescents. Evidence suggests that the majority of interventions for children in humanitarian situations focus overwhelmingly on younger girls and boys under the age of 10, with very few targeting adolescents specifically.

Why are adolescents left behind?

There are a number of reasons why adolescents are often left behind:

It can be more challenging to work with adolescents than young children: Developing interventions that meet adolescents’ developmental level and interests is challenging. It can be difficult to find activities, projects and issues that engage adolescents, particularly in contexts where resources and information are limited, space is difficult to secure and facilitators lack training and experience in working with young people.

Resources and tools for working with adolescents in humanitarian situations haven’t been gathered systematically, despite many creative and effective initiatives for young people globally. As a result, humanitarian staff often lack clear guidelines and tools for setting up interventions with adolescents, and are unable to take into account lessons learned from working with young people around the world.

Opening space for adolescents to voice their opinions and take leadership roles can be controversial. Adolescents may challenge traditions and conventions, test boundaries, and voice unpopular views. In some cultural contexts, providing adolescents with opportunities to speak out or participate in decision-making may challenge conventional norms around deference, authority and age. Humanitarian staff operating in difficult, unstable circumstances may want to protect their working relationship with the host community, and may be concerned that working with adolescents could put them at risk.

What does this mean?

The upshot is that there is often very little support for adolescents in humanitarian situations, and the programmes that are available often fail to reach the adolescent girls and boys who could benefit the most. This means that adolescents are often left to fend for themselves in extremely challenging circumstances and to navigate the transition from childhood to adulthood without support or protection. It means that their rights as children are neglected. And it means that we fail to capitalize on the important roles that adolescents can and do play as agents of social change, peacemakers and contributors to their communities in times of humanitarian crisis.

Filling the gap

The Adolescent Kit aims to address this gap in support, by providing humanitarian organisations with a practical package of guidance, tools, activities and supplies for supporting adolescent girls and boys. It is the result of a collaborative effort involving experts, communities and adolescents, and builds on best practices that have already been established by UNICEF and partners in humanitarian contexts in Kenya, Haiti, Indonesia, South Sudan, Timor-Leste, Uganda, Jordan, and Myanmar.

The Adolescent Kit brings together approaches for working with adolescents that have been tried and tested with adolescent girls and boys around the
world, and found to be effective for making positive change in their lives. It revolves around evidence that adolescents often demonstrate great resilience in challenging situations, and tries to nurture this through activities that build on their strengths. It provides them with opportunities to learn new skills, develop positive relationships and give back to their communities.

The activities, tools and guidance in the Adolescent Kit can be used through any kind of programme or intervention that brings groups of adolescents together to learn, play, practice new skills, or work on projects together. It can be used to catalyse or strengthen the kinds of child protection, education and/or youth development interventions that aid actors already implement in humanitarian response, such as child- and adolescent-friendly spaces, recreation programmes, learning initiatives, and clubs, making them more appropriate, relevant and effective for the adolescent age group.

**The Adolescent Kit:**

- Supports programmes to bring a particular focus to **children ages 10-17**;
- **Builds on best practices and standards** in child protection, psychosocial support, education, life skills, peacebuilding and other sectors, to support adolescents’ psychosocial wellbeing, learning, and engagement with their communities;
- Focuses on **reaching the adolescents who are most in need of support**;
- Uses **the arts** as a way for adolescents to express and explore the world around them, learn and use key skills, discover their own talents, and reconnect with their cultural heritage;
- Supports adolescents in becoming **innovators** by providing them with opportunities to think creatively, explore problems and opportunities, and experiment with solutions and possibilities; and
- **Addresses both younger and older adolescents**, and can be adapted to adolescents’ developmental levels, needs, interests and abilities.

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Children’s rights are the foundation for the Adolescent Kit.

This promotes an integrated and holistic approach to supporting adolescents in humanitarian situations, and emphasizes that all adolescent girls and boys, even the most vulnerable, should be included in interventions.
Understanding adolescents in humanitarian situations

The guidance and approaches in the Adolescent Kit revolve around a number of key understandings about adolescents in humanitarian situations. These include a recognition that while the experiences of adolescents are extremely diverse, during times of crisis, adolescents may share certain challenges and opportunities.1

Adolescence is a critical time: Adolescence is a time of physical, cognitive, behavioural and psychosocial change, usually marked by increased independence, autonomy and exploration, as adolescent girls and boys define their identities and learn how to become adults.

Adolescents may disappear or be forgotten. Adolescents may disappear during times of crisis, as a result of trafficking, recruitment into fighting forces, child marriage, or to seek livelihood opportunities elsewhere. Other adolescents may seem to disappear if they are counted as adults in situation analyses, or confined to their homes due to social norms, safety concerns, or social stigma (especially girls).

Adolescents in humanitarian situations are more likely to experience violence, abuse and neglect and may be at risk of recruitment into fighting forces, exploitative labour and child marriage. They may lose access to education, health and livelihood opportunities and endure separation from their families or caregivers. Adolescents with disabilities are particularly vulnerable to violence, abuse and neglect in humanitarian contexts.

Understanding adolescents in humanitarian context requires understanding the different experiences of adolescent girls and boys, and the different risks and opportunities they face. In all contexts, and especially in developing and fragile countries, girls’ and boys’ developmental paths begin to diverge as they enter the second decade of life. As adolescent boys and girls begin to take on the responsibilities and identities of adult men and women, gendered roles are consolidated. To a great extent, as most boys enter their teen years, they experience increased freedom and independence, with opportunities to study, play, and interact with their peers outside the home, and away from adult supervision. In contrast, girls in many societies face increased restrictions and prohibitions as they reach adolescence, while simultaneously taking on significant tasks and responsibilities, such as household chores and caring for younger or older family members.

Adolescents in the world today

Adolescents make up approximately 1.2 billion of the world’s population.

Defined by the UN as all human beings ages 10-19, adolescents are an inherently diverse group with their own unique interests and needs. Around the world, as they grow up they play a range of roles within all sorts of circumstances, and face different challenges and difficulties. Some are cared for by families, go to school and participate with friends in sports, music, youth groups and other activities. Others grow up apart from their family, become parents early, miss out on education and participate in harmful forms of child labour.

Whatever background, age group, culture, religion or abilities adolescents come from, any intervention to support them must be rooted in an understanding of their particular needs, challenges, opportunities and interests.

In humanitarian contexts, adolescent girls and boys take on the roles of adult women and men, at an even earlier age and with even less support and protection from the adults who in stable contexts might guide them. Adolescent girls may be more likely to be forced into child marriage and pregnancy, and/or take on increased responsibilities for caring for households and other family members. Boys, as well as girls, may take on risky income-generating activities to provide for themselves and their families. All of these circumstances limit adolescent girls’ and boys’ access to programmes and essential services including schooling and health care, and put them in situations that they are unprepared for developmentally.

Discrimination and violence against adolescent girls, as well as adult women and younger girls, is exacerbated in humanitarian contexts. Conversely, the impacts of war on girls and women are compounded by pre-existing gender inequalities and discrimination. All forms of violence against women and girls increase during armed conflict. This includes sexual and gender-based violence, with adolescent girls facing the risk of rape and sexual exploitation at the hands of fighting forces, community members and humanitarian workers. During and after war, girls and

Adolescent girls in humanitarian contexts...

- Are at great risk of violence and other harm to their physical safety due to separation from families who might protect them, living in insecure shelters, and as community and social norms break down. Sexual violence, including rape and forced impregnation, are inherent to the violence of war and armed conflict.
- May be fed last and may be the first to go hungry in the face of food insecurity, and are more likely to be malnourished, as some families prioritize the nutrition ‘investment’ in other family members, or even livestock.
- Suffer from inadequate sanitary conditions and supplies, especially during menstruation and lactation, as well as from a lack of sexual, reproductive and maternal health care services, which can mean a death sentence for many women during childbirth or when seeking to terminate a pregnancy.
- May be even more likely than girls in other contexts to be forced to marry as children. Girls’ (forced) marriage may reduce the financial burden on their parents while providing them with more income (a bride price). Also, in some contexts marriage may be seen as ‘protective’ for girls in the unsafe circumstances of an emergency, connecting them to a family structure and ensuring their ‘honour,’ and their families’, in a context in which they are at risk of sexual violence.
- Often become involved in unsafe livelihoods, including transactional sex, to provide for themselves and their families
- Take on an increased disproportionate share of the burden of household responsibilities – As a result, they are isolated within their homes, leaving them vulnerable to violence, and without access to social networks and formal and informal learning opportunities that are essential for their development and wellbeing.
- Disappear – literally, for those become victims of trafficking or abduction – and figuratively, for those who become confined to their homes to carry out chores, care for others, and in many cases becoming wives and mothers.

Adolescent boys in humanitarian contexts...

- Are at risk of participating in risky income generating activities, for their own survival, and to respond to an expectation that as young men they should provide for their families
- Are often recruited into militias and fighting groups – Some adolescent boys may become involved in fighting forces to earn income, or to fulfill the role of an adult in contexts in which men are expected to perform military service.
- May be separated from their families during displacement, or to pursue income-generating opportunities remotely.
- Are at risk of sexual violence, including rape.
- Are often left idle and bored in emergencies, lacking opportunities to continue formal education, learn and develop skills through informal channels and connections with elders, or to take on roles and responsibilities that allow them to contribute to their communities and societies at a moment of great need.
- See the Technical Note on Adolescents and Gender Equality for information on how the Adolescent Kit can be used to support interventions that uphold and promote principles of gender equality.

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women are often even less likely to have access to even the most fundamental of their rights, including the right to health care, education, food, shelter and even a nationality.²

Yet humanitarian situations may also offer opportunities transform gender roles, including those that can be harmful or restricting for both adolescent girls and boys.³

Adolescents face risks to their health and their lives. Conflict and natural disasters put adolescents at a higher risk of injuries or death from violence or accidents. Similarly, malnutrition may limit their physical growth, and their cognitive development may be disrupted as a result of experiences of protracted violence, anxiety or isolation. Injuries and malnutrition can result in permanent disabilities with adolescents then facing the exclusion, discrimination and vulnerability that many adolescents with disabilities experience.

Adolescents’ sexual and reproductive health is vulnerable: Inadequate access to contraception, child marriage, and limited awareness about safe sex mean that adolescents are often vulnerable to sexually transmitted diseases (including HIV and AIDS), and early pregnancies. Due to erroneous beliefs that adolescents with disabilities do not (or should not) engage in sexual relations, adolescents with disabilities are particularly excluded or denied access to sexual and reproductive health information and services.

Adolescents may become isolated during humanitarian situations as family and work responsibilities increase, and they spend less time in

In humanitarian contexts, adolescents with disabilities…

- Are more likely to be left behind, abandoned or neglected.
- Are exposed to a higher risk of violence and/or abuse than their peers, especially when separated from family and careers.
- May lose essential medicines and assistive devices (such as glasses, wheelchairs, crutches and hearing aids) reducing their independence and increasing their reliance on others.
- Have increased vulnerability when the networks that they rely on for assistance and support (e.g. family, friends, teachers and social services) are disrupted or break down.

In addition to enhanced vulnerability in humanitarian contexts, adolescents with disabilities also face significant barriers to accessing humanitarian services. Adolescents with disabilities…

- Are often considered a lower priority and experience discrimination in accessing humanitarian services. [Children and Young People with Disabilities Fact Sheet. UNICEF, 2013.
- May not be able to access humanitarian aid as services or information about the services are not accessible.
- May be excluded from humanitarian responses and services as humanitarian actors at all levels lack awareness and capacity to design and implement inclusive responses, ensuring the participation of adolescents with disabilities.
- May not be counted in needs assessments and data collection, rendering them invisible within both humanitarian preparedness and response.
- May be excluded due to policies that are not inclusive and do not consider the impact of humanitarian contexts on children, adolescents and adults with disabilities.

See the Technical Note on Adolescents and Disability for more information.

school or other places where they can interact with friends. Girls in particular may be kept indoors by family members concerned for their safety and/or damage to their honour, and may have to take on the role of care provider to injured families members or those that have acquired a disability.

Adolescents with disabilities experience higher risk and vulnerability in humanitarian situations. In disasters, the mortality rate for all persons with disabilities is significantly higher than the rest of the population (e.g. in the earthquake and tsunami in Japan in 2011, the mortality rate for persons with disabilities was twice that of those without disabilities). Adolescents with disabilities are also often excluded from accessing support in humanitarian situations.

Most adolescents can recover their psychosocial health and overcome difficult experiences: Adolescents have deeply upsetting emotional experiences in humanitarian situations, including loss, grief, fear, horror, and despair. Yet the vast majority of those who survive crises are able to ‘bounce back’ and return to a normal state of psychological functioning and wellbeing, especially once they are able to rebuild a normal life.

There may be tensions between adolescents and adults in humanitarian situations. Adults may be concerned about the ways in which adolescents are challenging traditional roles, or see them as troublemakers. In some cultures there may also be limited acceptance of young people’s right to express their views or participate in decisions.

Adolescents in humanitarian contexts often have the same interests and concerns as those living in stable contexts. They are interested in friendships, romantic relationships, sexuality, health, popular media, and the world around them.

Humanitarian crises can provide adolescents with positive opportunities. While humanitarian crises can be extremely difficult and challenging situations, they can also present adolescents with opportunities to develop new skills, take on different roles and to learn about other cultures and people.

All adolescents have a valuable role to play in humanitarian situations. Adolescents often contribute great energy, enthusiasm and creativity to improving their own lives as well as their communities during times of crisis. They can use their unique skills and talents to help them in their transition to adulthood, and can contribute to humanitarian response efforts in a range of ways – from participating in emergency assessments, to caring for separated children and forming clubs to protect and support other youth.

Humanitarian crises can provide adolescents with opportunities to make positive change. In humanitarian crises, adolescents can help to transform traditional norms, including discriminatory beliefs and practices around gender. They can take active roles as peacemakers in their communities, and help to disrupt cycles of violence, conflict and discrimination that pass from one generation to the next. As they take on new roles and responsibilities, adolescents can change the way that adults see them – and help to transform attitudes toward young people. They can also help to create welcoming, inclusive and accessible environments for adolescents with disabilities who may be excluded from formal education in non-emergency contexts.
Supporting adolescent girls and boys through the Adolescent Kit

The activities, guidance and tools in the Adolescent Kit are designed around the key understandings of adolescents in humanitarian situations described above. They aim to address the challenges and opportunities that adolescent girls and boys face by:

- Supporting adolescents to develop key competencies that can help them to cope with stressful circumstances, build healthy relationships, learn new skills and engage positively with their communities;
- Creating safe, welcoming, inclusive and accessible spaces for adolescents to work, learn, make friends, have fun, and to take a break from stressful circumstances;
- Reaching out to all adolescents – especially the most vulnerable adolescent girls and boys, and supporting everyone to participate equally in and benefit equally from activities;
- Designing programmes that address the interests, circumstances, abilities and priorities of different groups of adolescents, taking into account gender, age, and other aspects of their identities and circumstances;
- Working with adolescents in a participatory way that allows them to explore activities and topics that interest them, to learn through doing and to take the lead;
- Giving adolescents space to express themselves through art, drawing, singing, dancing, writing, storytelling, sports and drama;
- Providing adolescents with opportunities to innovate – experiment, solve problems, and explore new ideas;
- Supporting adolescents to build or strengthen positive relationships in their lives, particularly with family and friends;
- Providing adolescents with opportunities to contribute to their communities and take positive actions for themselves and others;
- Connecting adolescents to useful information, programmes and support to prevent and respond to risks to their health, safety, protection and wellbeing.
The Foundation Guidance provides an introduction to the key principles and approaches that guide all of the activities, tools and guidance in the Adolescent Kit. It explains why it is important to work with adolescents in humanitarian situations and how to engage with them in ways that can positively change their lives.

The Foundation Guidance outlines how to support adolescents to develop key competencies that can help them to improve their wellbeing, build healthy relationships and learn new skills; and introduces key approaches for engaging adolescent girls and boys. It explains why there is a need to target adolescents separately from younger children, and the particular challenges adolescents may face in humanitarian situations.

The Foundation Guidance brings together best practices for engaging adolescents and also provides technical guidance from key sectors such as psychosocial support, life skills education, child participation, gender, disability and peacebuilding. It explains how innovation and the arts can promote adolescents’ wellbeing, and lists key resources, guidance and standards that can be used to support activities with the Adolescent Kit.

Who is the Foundation Guidance for?

The Foundation Guidance is for Programme Coordinators, Facilitators and anyone else who plans to use the activities, tools and supplies in the Adolescent Kit. It can also be used as a stand-alone resource for anyone who is simply interested in learning more about working with adolescents in humanitarian situations.

How to use the Foundation Guidance

The Foundation Guidance provides the foundation for all of the activities, tools and guidance in the Adolescent Kit. Refer to it alongside the guidance for Programme Coordinators and Facilitators to obtain a full understanding of how to engage adolescents and to plan and manage successful interventions with the Adolescent Kit.
Ten Key Competencies for adolescents

The Adolescent Kit for Expression and Innovation supports adolescents in humanitarian situations to develop key competencies for emotional wellbeing, healthy relationships and other skills that are relevant to their lives and circumstances. These competencies draw from child protection, psychosocial, education and youth empowerment initiatives, and are at the core of activities and approaches in the Adolescent Kit.¹

The competencies in the Adolescent Kit are organized into a framework of ten competency domains. These are broad categories of knowledge, attitudes, and skills that are essential for the wellbeing and healthy development of all adolescents, particularly those who have been affected by crisis and conflict. They include the abilities adolescents need to cope with crisis, build (and restore) healthy relationships, explore the world around them, engage with their communities and pursue their interests and goals.

Each of the activities in the Adolescent Kit is designed to help adolescents to acquire or practice their knowledge, attitudes and skills within one or more of these competency domains. Some activities introduce these competencies at a basic level, while others offer adolescents the opportunity to develop their knowledge and skills to a higher standard.

Ten competency domains

This section outlines the ten competency domains and describes how they can be addressed through activities with adolescents. They provide a starting point for deciding what you want to achieve with adolescents in your particular situation, and the best way to use the tools and approaches in the Adolescent Kit.

It is important to work with adolescents to identify which competency domains are the most relevant and important to them. The next step is to develop goals within these domains (these can be applied to adolescents individually or as a group), and to select activities that address them.

These competency domains are intended to serve as guidance only. They can be altered or expanded depending on the context and programme, and need not be limited to these ten. Adolescents should always be given the opportunity to identify other competencies they may wish to develop.

The ten competency domains include:

- Communication and expression
- Identity and self-esteem
- Leadership and influence
- Problem solving and managing conflict
- Coping with stress and managing emotions
- Cooperation and teamwork
- Empathy and respect
- Hope for the future and goal setting
- Critical thinking and decision making
- Creativity and innovation

1. Communication and expression

Adolescents are continually learning new ways to communicate and express themselves. Communication and expression includes the wide range of skills involved in conveying ideas, feelings and opinions, and understanding the feelings and opinions of others. Communication and expression skills can be used to address conflict, promote peace, understand and manage emotions, and build and foster relationships.

Adolescents’ ability to communicate with others may be affected in humanitarian crises. In situations where adolescent girls and boys have been separated from their families, isolated, or exposed to social stigma, they may have fewer opportunities to practice communication skills with others. Adolescents affected by violent conflict may have difficulty expressing their feelings and emotions, or trusting others enough to communicate openly. Cultural and social norms may also influence how comfortable adolescents feel communicating with members of the other sex, and across generations.

Finding ways to communicate effectively can help adolescents to direct their own lives and to engage positively with others. By reflecting on their communication style, and learning to recognise (and avoid) negative ways of communicating, adolescents can positively influence the lives of those around them and gain self-awareness and confidence.

¹The framework of ten competency domains used in the Adolescent Kit is based on a framework outlined in Peacebuilding Knowledge, Attitudes and Skills: A desk study (UNICEF, 2013). This framework was developed to support UNICEF’s education, child protection and youth programmes in conflict-affected programmes, and identifies key capacities that children require to cope with the effects of conflict and to contribute to peace. The Adolescent Kit uses these same competencies in recognition of their benefits to the healthy development of all adolescents in adverse situations, particularly adolescent girls and boys living in humanitarian crises and poverty.
Communication skills can also help adolescents to solve and negotiate problems with others, to cooperate, to work in teams, to develop positive relationships and to resolve conflicts.

Goals within this competency domain may include helping adolescents to:

- Listen to other people's perspectives, concerns and needs;
- Accurately express their ideas, perspectives or opinions;
- Communicate calmly and effectively in challenging situations; and
- Understand how verbal and non-verbal communication can contribute to conflict or build peace in the community.

2. Identity and self-esteem

Adolescents are constantly re-exploring their identities and often don't reach a fully developed sense of ‘self’ until adulthood. However, they can gain a stronger sense of identity and self-esteem by learning more about themselves, and how they fit into groups and society.

Adolescents should be encouraged to reflect on their individual identities, including their strengths, weaknesses, roles and responsibilities. They can also explore their group identities, and how they define themselves in relation to their family, peer groups, gender, ethnic or religious groups. This is particularly important during times of conflict and upheaval, when these identities and roles can shift and present both challenges and opportunities for adolescents. For example, gender roles may change during times of conflict, and adolescent girls may take on traditionally male tasks such as heads of household.

The individual or group identity that an adolescent associates with can either promote peace or contribute to conflict. Adolescents should learn to see the positive attributes of people and groups, and the benefits of sharing group identities. They should also understand how different groups of people across age, cultural, gender, caste or ethnic groups share similarities, and can work together to achieve common goals.

Self-esteem can help adolescents to engage with others and to influence them in positive ways. Adolescents can develop a more positive sense of self-esteem by reflecting on their strengths and achievements, and ways in which they are valued and respected by others. Goals within this competency domain may include helping adolescents to:

- Understand their personal strengths and weaknesses;
- Reflect on their individual identities in relation to their social, cultural, and historical context -- answer the question Who am I?
- Reflect on their group identities and how they feel towards their group (e.g. peer group, ethnic group, age group) -- answer the question Who are we?
- Understand the strengths and weaknesses of the group(s) they are associated with.

3. Leadership and influence

It is critical for adolescents in challenging circumstances to understand that they can influence things that happen in their lives. This can motivate them to make positive choices and to affect change.

Opportunities for constructive involvement in leadership and decision-making can be limited in humanitarian situations. However, practicing leadership skills, and learning how to positively influence their surroundings can empower adolescents to work for positive change in their family, friend and peer groups, as well as in the community.

Adolescents who understand their capacity for leadership and influence are more likely to engage in practices that are important to their social and cognitive development, such as seeking new knowledge, practicing, experimenting, and persisting when they encounter challenges or obstacles.

Developing leadership and influence can also help to resolve conflict and promote peace. Adolescents with strong leadership skills can influence others to promote peace and contribute to harmony in their communities.

Goals within this competency domain may include helping adolescents to:

- Recognize that they have influence over things that happen in their lives;
- Stay with a project until a goal is achieved and overcome setbacks;
- Take action to help themselves and others; and
- Contribute to transforming conflict/problems with family, friends and peer groups.
4. Problem solving and managing conflict

The ability to resolve conflicts and problems in a nonviolent way is critical to maintaining positive relationships with others, and building peace in the community. This can help adolescents in challenging circumstances to navigate difficult transitions and to manage disruptions within their family, friend and peer groups.

Adolescents who have lived in violent conflict settings may have developed unhealthy ways of managing conflicts, and need to learn constructive ways to solve their problems. They need to learn how to analyse the roots of their problems and conflicts, to find win-win solutions and to practice practical skills such as negotiation and mediation. This can help them to resolve conflicts and problems in non-violent and creative ways, and to contribute to building peace in their community.

Goals within this competency domain may include helping adolescents to:

- Understand the issues underlying problems or conflicts;
- Explore multiple solutions/options to resolve a conflict or problem;
- Persuade others to understand and respect their perspective;
- Use negotiation skills during an interpersonal conflict; and
- Consider and respect different perspectives and positions in a conflict, disagreement or problem.

5. Coping with stress and managing emotions

For adolescents to grow in a healthy manner, they need to learn how to manage their emotions and to develop strategies for coping with stress. They should be able to recognise and understand why they have emotions such as sorrow, anger and regret, and find ways to deal with stressful situations calmly.

Adolescents in humanitarian contexts live in particularly challenging circumstances. Developing skills to manage their stress is critical to mitigating its potentially toxic effects on their mental and physical health. By learning how to manage their emotions, and to deal with stressful situations in a calm way, they can enhance their resilience.

Adolescents who are able to manage their own stress and emotions are also better at recognising and understanding other people's emotions – and transforming them positively. For example, adolescents who understand the link between emotion and conflict can more readily de-escalate conflict in their families and communities.

Goals within this competency domain may include helping adolescents to:

- Recognise and express different emotions safely and constructively;
- Recognize and understand their emotional and behavioural response to stress;
- Use healthy strategies for reducing stress and managing their emotions;
- Recognise how emotions and stress affect the behaviours of others; and
- Respond constructively to other peoples’ emotions and stress.

6. Cooperation and teamwork

Practicing cooperation and teamwork can help adolescents to form and maintain healthy relationships with others, and prepare them for active participation in their community as they grow into adulthood. Adolescents should learn the benefits of cooperating with others, find ways to overcome barriers to cooperation, and be encouraged to work as a team in ways that help to build peace.

Adolescents in humanitarian contexts may be restricted from practicing cooperation and teamwork, particularly if they are isolated, burdened with adult responsibilities, or if societal forces prohibit cooperation with certain groups. In some conflict situations, for example, if they have been involved in armed forces, adolescents may have even used negative or violent forms of cooperation and teamwork. In this case, it is important to recognize the strengths in these experiences and to provide adolescents with more positive ways to practice cooperation and teamwork that contribute to peace.

Adolescents can replace negative patterns of problem solving and blame that contribute to conflict by learning positive ways of cooperating and working in teams. They can learn ways to identify and include people or groups who are excluded, and to promote reconciliation and peace in their communities.

Goals within this competency domain may include
helping adolescents to:

- Recognize how their skills and others’ skills are valuable assets to a team;
- Listen to the ideas and opinions of others and find solutions cooperatively;
- Work in inclusive ways and compromise when working on a group or team task; and
- Form healthy, respectful and cooperative relationships with others.

7. Empathy and respect

Empathy is the ability to imagine, see and understand the situation, feelings and experiences of another person from that person’s perspective. It includes the capacity to recognize other people’s issues, needs and goals. Adolescents should learn to appreciate similarities and differences, and to have respect for themselves and others.

Supporting adolescents to speak with and listen to others, and to understand and imagine themselves from other people’s perspectives, can help them to restore positive relationships with adults and peers, and to learn how to trust others. By giving time and energy to others, and having meaningful relationships with diverse types of people, adolescents can develop empathy and respect.

Adolescents with empathy and respect for others tend to be more tolerant, to respond more positively to others, and to be better at resolving conflicts. They can play an active part in promoting mutual understanding in family, friend and peer groups, as well as in the community.

Goals within this competency domain may include helping adolescents to:

- Imagine a positive future for themselves, their families and communities (including the possibility of peace);
- Communicate and share their hopes and goals for the future with others;
- Set goals and develop an action plan for achieving their hopes and vision; and
- Take steps and work with others toward achieving their goals.

8. Hope for the future and goal setting

Feeling hope for the future is important for adolescents’ psychosocial wellbeing. It can decrease stress, increase resilience and empower adolescents to make positive changes in their lives.

In humanitarian situations, adolescents’ hopes and dreams may be lost due to disruptions to their family, community and education. Adolescents may lose hope that they can return to the way their lives were, or that they can make up for the time lost. They may feel discouraged, and stop preparing for their future.

Adolescents who have hope for the future are more likely to believe that their situations will improve, and to envision positive possibilities for themselves, their families and communities. Their ability to set goals can help them to pursue their hopes, and to work toward this vision.

Goals within this competency domain may include helping adolescents to:

- Listen to and understand the thoughts and feelings of others;
- Associate positive images and traits with people of different backgrounds and identities;
- Recognise and respect similarities and differences between themselves and others; and
- Build positive relationships with family, friends and peers.

9. Critical thinking and decision making

Critical thinking and decision making are important to adolescents’ wellbeing and development. Learning to doubt, question and test information can help adolescents to critically analyze the situations, and to identify causes of conflict.

In humanitarian contexts, many adolescents don’t have the opportunity to practice critical thinking or decision making due to cultural norms, restrictions or heightened tensions. Adolescents (particularly girls) are often discouraged from questioning common views, making decisions or coming up with their own ideas. At worst, they may be influenced and manipulated into actions that disrupt peace or contribute to conflict, such as perpetuating prejudices or behaving violently toward others.

Learning how to think critically and to understand the consequences of their actions can help adolescents to break down harmful stereotypes, analyse bias and prejudice, and distinguish whether their behaviours contribute to peace or conflict. This can make it easier
for adolescents to identify alternative responses, and to make decisions that lead to peace.

Goals within this competency domain may include helping adolescents to:

- Balance the risks and benefits of different courses of action;
- Gather and assess information to make informed choices;
- Support decisions with evidence and strong arguments; and
- Recognise common stereotypes (gender, cultural, race).

10. Creativity and innovation

Creativity is the ability to think of, and express, new and original ideas. It involves imagining possibilities beyond one’s experience and exploring them in real life, or through artistic channels such as drama, art, storytelling and poetry. Innovation, like creativity, involves experimenting with different ways to improve things or to solve problems.

In humanitarian situations, opportunities for adolescents to express themselves creatively and to innovate are often disrupted. Day-to-day survival may leave adolescents little time to play in creative and artistic ways, or to experiment with innovative ways to explore new ideas or address challenges.

Adolescents should be encouraged to think creatively, and to find innovative solutions to problems. This includes the ability to consider issues from various angles, imagine different outcomes, and to think of creative ways to transform conflict. By fostering creativity and innovation, adolescents can find ways to work with others toward shared goals and contribute to peace.

Goals within this competency domain may include helping adolescents to:

- Explore creative ideas through writing, music, drama and other arts;
- Experiment with innovative ways to solve problems;
- Brainstorm and generate creative ideas, concepts and solutions; and
- Take healthy risks and to take advantage of opportunities that arise.
The Ten Key Approaches are at the heart of all of the guidance, activities and tools in the Adolescent Kit, and are critical to successful interventions with adolescents in humanitarian situations. They explain how programme coordinators, facilitators and others can engage positively with adolescents, and outline ways to make the most out of their time together.

The Ten Key Approaches have been tried and tested with adolescent girls and boys around the world, and found to be the most effective approaches for working with adolescents and making positive changes in their lives. They bring together best practice and standards from:

- Life skills basic education;
- Psychosocial support and mental health;
- Child protection and peer to peer support programmes;
- Child, adolescent and youth participation;
- Conflict sensitivity and peacebuilding;
- Gender sensitivity, resilience and equity initiatives; and

There are specific actions that both programme coordinators and facilitators can take to put the Ten Key Approaches into action. Make sure that you work together and support each other as you take steps to engage adolescent girls and boys.

When working with adolescents, it is how you engage with them that matters. The way that you involve adolescent girls and boys in activities, the type of environment you create for them and the approaches that you use to connect with them can make a real difference in your work together.

The Ten Key Approaches Include:

1. Reach out to all adolescents
2. Provide structure and support
3. Listen to adolescents
4. Let adolescents take the lead
5. Include all adolescents
6. Make space for expression and creativity
7. Challenge and encourage adolescents
8. Improvise and adapt
9. Build connections
10. Build on the positive
1. Reach out to all adolescents

In times of crisis, the most vulnerable adolescents are often the hardest to reach. Take steps to identify the adolescent girls and boys who are most in need of support, and work actively to include them in interventions.

The most marginalized adolescent girls and boys in humanitarian situations are often the least visible. For example, adolescents with disabilities may be confined to their homes due to limited mobility or social stigma, and adolescent girls may not be able to move around freely due to social norms or safety concerns. This means they are often overlooked in humanitarian programmes, and face barriers to accessing support. Work to identify adolescent girls and boys who could benefit from your intervention, including adolescents of different ages, ethnicity, clan, language, sexual orientation and religion, and those with disabilities. Go out and look for them in the places where they live, gather, learn, eat, work, pray and play, and try to motivate them to get involved. Raise awareness with their families and communities about your intervention, and enlist their support in bringing vulnerable adolescents on board.

Create safe, welcoming spaces for adolescents to come to. This doesn’t have to involve setting up a formal centre for adolescents. It could simply mean finding a temporary space near where they live and play – for example, in an unused classroom, or under a tree. Make sure that participants have a safe and affordable way to get to the space, including girls and adolescents with disabilities who may have limited mobility. And if adolescents can’t come to you, then go to them!

Try to schedule sessions at times when adolescents are available, and consult with them to design activities that will attract and interest them. Remember that reaching out to all adolescents is not just something that you do at the beginning of your intervention, it is something that you do every day. If enrolment is low among marginalised groups of adolescents, seek them out and ask them why. Work with them, and other adolescents, to come up with creative ideas for overcoming barriers to attendance.

Reaching the most vulnerable adolescents involves more than just opening the door. It means going to them if they can’t get to the door, noticing if they stop participating, and reaching out to try to bring them back. It means making sure they feel welcome, valued and safe.

• Identify the most vulnerable adolescents in your area and encourage them to participate in activities.
• Raise awareness in the community regarding your intervention, and enlist the help of community leaders, teachers, parents and others to involve vulnerable adolescents.
• Work together as facilitators and programme coordinators to monitor adolescents’ attendance, and to make sure that the most vulnerable adolescent girls and boys aren’t overlooked.
• Find ways to overcome barriers to participation and adapt your intervention if vulnerable adolescents don’t attend (or stop attending) activities.

2. Provide structure and support

Adolescents in crisis situations often cope better when they have structure and support in their lives. Create a welcoming space for adolescent girls and boys with clear routines and structured activities, and provide them with ongoing support as you work together.

A clear structure and routine can be comforting for adolescents who are coping with difficult experiences and adjusting to many changes around them. Schedule activities at consistent, well-announced times and make sure adolescents know when there are changes to the programme, such as a new time or place to meet.

Follow a predictable sequence in sessions and activities, so that adolescents know what’s coming and feel more comfortable participating. Guide discussions and activities in a structured way, even when the aim of your session is simply for adolescents to have fun, or express themselves creatively. Don’t be rigid or strict, but do have a clear beginning and end to activities, give instructions and provide suggestions as adolescents work together.

Support adolescents by stepping in when they need help. Give them space to work on their own, but be ready to provide suggestions or an extra set of hands when they need support. Let them experiment and struggle with challenges, but intervene if their feelings of frustration, confusion, tiredness or anger become unmanageable. Help them to manage their expectations when they try something ambitious, and encourage them to use disappointment and failure as a chance to practice coping skills and patience.

Support adolescents by setting limits and taking preventive action when their safety is threatened.
Recognise when adolescents explore topics in their group in a way that could put them at risk, and be ready to intervene gently. For example, it may not be safe for adolescents to discuss sensitive political or religious issues, and revealing very personal or painful information could leave them (or other adolescents) feeling distressed. As they experiment and explore, watch for warning signs that they may be about to do something that could result in harm to themselves or others. If so, step in and stop them. If they have been harmed, connect them with the support and services they need.

Work with adolescents so that they create structure and support for each other. Help them to create rules for sharing ideas and feedback in positive ways, and to treat each other with respect. Encourage adolescents to listen and learn from each other, and to welcome others with different backgrounds and interests. Practice and respect their rules when working with them.

- Schedule sessions at consistent times and follow a predictable sequence of activities - e.g. start and end sessions with a particular ritual such as a song or a dance.
- Guide activities and discussions in a structured way rather than leaving them too open-ended, as this can make sessions difficult to manage and pose risks to adolescents.
- Provide support for girls and boys when they need it, and help them to avoid becoming overwhelmed or too discouraged when things don’t work out.
- Set boundaries for adolescents and protect them from harming themselves or others
- Help adolescents to develop rules for working together that set limits for behaviour and encourage respect and tolerance
- Recognise when you need support and ask for it.

3. Listen to adolescents

To work successfully with adolescents you need to listen to them. Make sure that you take time to learn about adolescents’ lives, to explore their ideas for working together, and give them space to express themselves.

Adolescents know better than anyone else about their needs, interests and challenges. Work with them to design interventions that they find interesting and helpful, and enlist their support in reaching out to other girls and boys. Allow them to set their own goals, to propose new activities and listen to their suggestions for improving your work together.

Encourage adolescents to express themselves in different ways, through drawing, writing, role-playing, dancing, music and humour, so that you can learn what the world looks like through their eyes. Let them to talk about issues that matter to them, (even when they raise uncomfortable topics), but also pay attention to what they say through nonverbal communication – with their faces, silences, energy and behaviour. Bear in mind that adolescents may be preoccupied with issues or concerns in their lives, and may not always be able to focus on activities.

Find different ways to communicate and connect with different groups of adolescents, such as girls, boys, or younger and older age groups. Allow them to speak openly about their lives and to describe their relationships, interests and challenges. Give them space to talk about difficult experiences and to express emotions such as sorrow and anger if they want to – however never push them to share painful experiences. Wait for adolescents to raise difficult topics themselves, and respect their decisions about what they want to share.

Respect cultural norms for how girls and boys are supposed to express feelings and emotions, or exchange personal information - for example crying, eye contact or physical contact may be encouraged or discouraged, or certain topics may be very sensitive. Don’t ever force anyone to communicate in ways that make them feel uncomfortable or ashamed.

Listen to adolescents. Ask questions. Listen to their responses. Use this information to work together in ways that meet girls and boys needs and allow them to connect and grow.

- Take time to talk with adolescents about their interests, concerns, hopes and goals.
- Involve adolescents in all aspects of planning and managing your intervention, and listen to their ideas for improving your work together.
- Don’t lecture, preach or dominate the talking during sessions
- Use culturally appropriate body language and eye contact
- Pay attention to the way adolescents express themselves verbally and non-verbally.
- Give girls and boys space to talk openly about positive and negative issues in their lives, but don’t push them to share painful experiences or feelings if they don’t want to.
• Be aware of any barriers that might prevent adolescents from speaking comfortably or openly – for example they may not want to discuss certain issues in front of their parents, or girls may not want to speak in front of male facilitators.

4 Let adolescents take the lead

Adolescents can and do take a lead in their lives - they make decisions that shape their paths, and take active roles in their families and communities. Don’t underestimate them! As you work with girls and boys, let them take the lead and encourage them to try new roles and responsibilities.

Adolescents are capable of doing things for themselves, and taking charge of their lives. During your time together, give them opportunities to try out different tasks such as facilitating activities, managing supplies, inventing tools and reaching out to other vulnerable girls and boys. Allow them to use their own initiative to come up with creative ways to work together, and let them step in and take over different roles if they feel ready.

Take into account that some girls and boys may be ready for bigger responsibilities than others. For example, older girls and boys, who already have adult roles in their families and communities, may be interested in trying out jobs that are typically carried out by adult volunteers or even programme staff - such as facilitation, planning or monitoring. Give them opportunities to run sessions and let them come up with their own ideas for supporting your work together.

If adolescents don’t want to take on more difficult tasks, don’t force them to. In particular, younger girls and boys, and those coping with difficult experiences may not feel ready for roles with high levels of responsibility. Instead, find simpler, smaller-scale ways for them to take the lead when they feel ready.

Giving adolescents the lead means stepping back when they step in. Stand by, offer suggestions and provide support if needed. But be prepared for adolescents to surprise you with their ability to do things for themselves.

Give adolescents space to take the lead in different tasks and roles including taking care of supplies, planning activities, facilitating sessions, leading warm-up or energizer exercises, taking charge of younger groups, and managing activity spaces.

• Encourage adolescents to suggest ways that they could take the lead, and to decide when they are ready to move on to another Adolescent Phase
• Don’t force girls and boys to take on tasks or roles that they aren’t ready for or don’t feel comfortable with.
• Let adolescents take the lead, however be ready to step-in with support and encouragement when they need it.

5. Include all adolescents

It is important to welcome all adolescents with support. Take steps to include girls and boys from all walks of life in your intervention, and adapt activities so that everyone has the chance to participate equally, learn from each other and feel part of the group.

Inclusion starts with reaching out to all adolescents. Strive to invite adolescents of all genders, age, ethnic groups, language, sexual orientation, religion, and those with disabilities. Include adolescents regardless of what they do outside of programme activities, or what they have experienced in the past. Never exclude or discriminate against adolescents on the basis of their identity, experience or background.

Some programmes may target specific adolescents such as younger/older girls/ boys, or marginalized groups with particular interests and needs. However, it is important not to reinforce divisions between adolescents or strengthen traditional roles that create
inequalities (i.e. between girls and boys). Instead, create opportunities for adolescents who are different to learn about each other and work together.

Focus on activities that allow adolescents to share and celebrate their different backgrounds, abilities and cultures, and to overcome stereotypes and prejudices. Bring together participants with and without disabilities, adolescents from host and refugee communities and girls and boys with different religions, cultural or ethnic backgrounds. However, be aware that in some cases it may be difficult or inappropriate for certain adolescents to work together, for example if they belong to rival conflict groups. Remember to always be sensitive to cultural, social and conflict dynamics in your particular community, so that you don’t cause any inadvertent harm to adolescents.

Make sure that all adolescents are equally included in programme activities. Vary activities so that adolescents with different skills have a chance to experience challenges and show their talents. Adapt others so that adolescents with different abilities can be fully involved, and no one has to watch from the sidelines (unless they want to). Try to create an environment where everyone is able to join in on an equal footing.

Work with adolescents to create group agreements so that everyone has a chance to speak, try different activities and shape decisions. Most importantly, work with adolescents to respect and include each other, so that everyone feels comfortable and valued in their group.

- Encourage adolescents to share and celebrate their different background and cultures.
- Plan a mix of energetic/restful, creative/problem solving and other activities so that everyone gets to do something they enjoy or are good at.
- Let adolescents participate in their own way, even if they simply choose to sit on the sidelines. Keep welcoming and encouraging them, and remember that they may be benefiting from sessions in ways that aren’t obvious.
- Find ways to adapt activities for adolescents who may be less literate, have disabilities or be shy about participating
- Support adolescents to set rules for working together that give everyone a voice in making decisions, participating in activities and to feel part of the group.

6. Make space for expression and creativity

All adolescents need opportunities to express themselves and to explore their creativity, particularly during times of crisis. Create space for girls and boys to experiment with new ways of communicating their thoughts and feelings, and to use their imagination through different arts and activities.

There are lots of ways to encourage adolescents to express themselves creatively. Show them different ways to communicate through speaking, singing, dancing, writing, drawing, drama and building. Connect them with cultural traditions from their communities and expose them to new ones. Give them opportunities to make things, and allow them to be playful and experimental as they express themselves through language, music and art projects.

Let adolescents enjoy creativity for its own sake. Don’t push them to do things the right way, especially when they are working on creative projects, or always direct their ideas toward projects that are practical or helpful. Help them to set attainable goals, but let them imagine worlds beyond what seems possible, through drama, drawing, storytelling, and other forms of expression.

Girls and boys need space to wonder and to explore new ideas so that they can learn and engage positively with the world. This can be particularly helpful for adolescents who are coping with difficult experiences, and need a break from thinking about them. Give them time to feel relaxed and free, and to enjoy their imagination and creativity.

- Give adolescents time and space to practice, experience and play
- Provide adolescents with opportunities to express themselves creatively through speaking, singing, dancing, writing, drawing, drama and building
- Build in some flexibility to your sessions so that adolescents can spend time on ideas, activities or
projects that capture their imagination.

- Encourage girls and boys to connect with cultural traditions and rituals, and expose them to new ones.

7. Challenge and encourage adolescents

Adolescents can surprise you with their ability to take on demanding and complex tasks.

Challenge them throughout your work together and support them in experimenting with solutions.

Adolescents need new challenges to stretch their minds and keep them interested. Present them with different challenges throughout their activities, and support them to come up with their own ways of meeting them. Support them take on new roles and responsibilities, and to take the lead in activities when they feel ready.

Experimenting is an important part of managing challenges. Give adolescents space to brainstorm, debate solutions and try out different strategies to achieve goals. Remember that experimenting means that they won’t always achieve their goal on the first attempt. When things don’t go as adolescents hoped, remind them to think about what they learned, rather than to focus on feeling that they have failed.

Encourage adolescents as much as possible. Notice when they learn something new or do something well and make sure that they recognize their achievements. Acknowledge their efforts, even when they don’t do something perfectly, and praise them for their courage and persistence in facing challenges.

Challenging and experimenting should always be balanced by structure and support. Don’t frustrate adolescents by letting them take on challenges that are too ambitious for the time and resources they have available. Help them to experiment with the same ideas on a more manageable scale and encourage them to keep trying new ways to solve problems and find solutions.

- Find challenging tasks that appeal to adolescents’ different areas of interest and ability
- Give adolescents space to experiment with different challenges and activities
- Allow adolescents to make mistakes, and even to fail and give up (or to take a break), but encourage them to learn from their experiences and to move on.
- Avoid giving adolescents challenges that they may find too overwhelming, or which could leave them feeling very discouraged or frustrated, and step in with support if necessary.

8. Improvise and adapt

You will need to continuously improvise and adapt activities as you work with adolescents. Take time to understand what adolescents want and need from your time together, and be ready to do things differently.

It is important to listen to and observe adolescents closely as you work together. Change or modify activities if they seem bored, confused, or frustrated, and listen to their suggestions for how things could be done differently. Adapting can also mean doing more of what is working. Pay attention when adolescents enjoy certain kinds of activities, or want more time to work on things that interest them.

Bear in mind that adolescents are not all the same (their age, abilities, gender and other factors will affect the degree to which they can participate) and adapt sessions so that everyone has a chance to get involved in activities and decisions. Group adolescents together by age, developmental level, gender, or interests, (if this makes sense in your context), and adapt activities to meet their needs. As they grow, find new ways to challenge them and build on their skills, and improvise with new approaches to stimulate their curiosity and creativity.

Improvise and be flexible! Take an activity in a different direction or try a new type of game, exercise, or arts activity. Better yet, brainstorm with the adolescents, and see what ideas they come up with. Use the Ten Key Approaches, but don’t be confined by them, and let improvising be a way to create new connections and discoveries.

- Observe and consult with adolescents as you work together, and adapt activities to meet their interests and priorities.
• Tailor activities to adolescents’ age, gender and abilities. For example if adolescents have low levels of literacy, focus on music, drama and other non-text activities; and modify activities for different age groups so that they are shorter, longer or more/less complex.

• Adapt activities to meet new contexts, such as welcoming new girls and boys, saying goodbye to departing participants, or responding to events such as birthdays, changes in the humanitarian situation or anything else that matters to adolescents.

• Be ready to improvise, try new activities and listen to adolescents’ suggestions for working and having fun together.

9. Build connections

Feeling connected to friends, family, community and the world around them is essential for adolescents’ wellbeing. Help adolescents to build these connections as you work together.

Give adolescents a chance to get to know each other. Let them become friends and feel part of a team. Allow close friendships to emerge naturally, and support everyone in feeling connected and working well together. Encourage them to include other girls and boys in their programme activities, and to welcome everyone.

Encourage adolescents to use their growing skills in communication and teamwork to build better relationships with friends, family members, and other community members. Check in with them to see how these relationships are developing.

Help adolescents to connect with the resources and opportunities around them. Encourage them to look for materials, space and information that they can use in their projects and activities, and to connect with community members who have knowledge and skills they can share, such as expertise in the arts or cultural traditions. Help adolescents to advocate for resources from people who can lend them space or materials, and to collaborate with managers, steering committees and organizations. Connecting also means preparing adults to listen to adolescents, be open to their views, and to support their work.

Connect adolescent with services for their essential needs. Make sure they know where and when they can find support, especially food, water, essential supplies, health care, and education opportunities. Learn to recognize those with specific needs, such as adolescents who are separated from their parents, affected by violence and in need of mental health care, and take steps to connect them with the appropriate services.

• Help adolescents to get to know each other through teambuilding, group projects and fun activities, and let friendships emerge naturally.

• Reach out to community members who can share valuable skills and knowledge with adolescents, and teach them about their history, heritage and culture.

• Give adolescents opportunities to collaborate with adults through steering committees, community exhibitions, events and projects

• Provide adolescents with information about issues that matter to them, and connect them to any services that they may need.

10. Build on the positive

Even in the most difficult circumstances, adolescents have resources and strengths that they can draw on. As you work together, encourage adolescents to focus on the positive aspects of their lives, and try to create a fun and creative atmosphere for working together.

Adolescents may have more skills and strengths than they realise. Help them to recognise the ways that they
contribute to their families and communities, and care for themselves and others around them. Support them to reflect on their abilities and strengths, and to explore ways that they can use their creativity and energy to solve problems, contribute new ideas, and build peaceful communities.

Encourage adolescents to focus on what they do have, rather than what they don’t. They have people around them who can support them, resources they can use and opportunities for learning. Set a good example for adolescents by showing them what you can do even when supplies and equipment are limited, and conditions are challenging.

Try to create a positive atmosphere for your work together. Focus on having fun, being creative and taking a break from concerns and stress. Show adolescents that it is possible to have positive experiences even in difficult situations, and that you can still have fun and laugh together. Try out new activities, discuss different ideas, take risks – and most of all enjoy your time together!

Building on the positive does not mean pretending that difficulties don’t exist. Adolescents, especially in times of crisis, face very real losses and deprivations that can be difficult to put aside. If girls and boys want to talk about negative experiences and feelings, let them. Always respect their emotions or moods; don’t force them to smile, laugh, or pretend to feel happy when they don’t. Instead, let adolescents know that you are there for them, and that you support them.

As much as possible, try to create a welcoming and cheerful space for adolescents to work together, and encourage them to build on the positive aspects of their lives.

- Help adolescents to recognise, and build on, their strengths and abilities
- Encourage adolescent to identify the resources they have around them, including people who can help them, materials they can use, and information they can learn from.
- Create a fun, positive atmosphere for your work together, and try to put your own frustrations and concerns aside
- Encourage adolescents to play, laugh and to have fun, but respect their emotions and don’t force them to act happy when they aren’t.
- Be positive and encouraging, and let adolescents know you are there to support them

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**Do No Harm**

The most important thing to remember as you work with adolescents is to Do No Harm. That means making sure that girls and boys aren’t unintentionally harmed by your work together. For example:

- Pushing adolescents to talk about distressing life experiences, to participate in activities they are uncomfortable with, or to take on roles they don’t feel ready for, may upset or embarrass them, and even risk driving them away.
- Putting adolescents in charge of valuable supplies could put them at risk of theft or anger from their peers if they lose or damage items
- Organizing mixed gender activities in cultures where adolescent girls and boys are strictly segregated may stigmatize participants and result in punishment by their families or communities
- Setting up activity spaces in places which are difficult for adolescents to reach could expose them to danger en route (e.g. robbery, mines, assault)
- Encouraging adolescents to speak up publicly about controversial issues in places where there is limited tolerance for free expression could endanger them.

No matter what you do with adolescents, first consider the potential risks involved and make sure you don’t expose them to harm.
Don’t give up!

Working with adolescents can be challenging. Sometimes it may feel like you aren’t making any progress, and that adolescents aren’t really benefiting from (or enjoying) your work together. But don’t give up! It can take time for adolescents to feel comfortable and to trust you, especially in difficult circumstances.

Be patient. Keep reaching out to adolescent girls and boys, encouraging them to participate in activities, and letting them know you are there for them. Remember that even the most withdrawn, or the most troublesome adolescent may be benefiting from your work in ways that you can’t see. Keep showing up, and keep showing them that you care.

Make sure that you recognise when you need support, and ask for it. Work together as facilitators and programme coordinators to help each other, share information about what is or isn’t working, and to resolve any problems. Recognise that the work you are doing is challenging, and that asking for support doesn’t mean that you have failed. Try to learn from your experiences, and don’t be too hard on yourself.

Most of all - try to enjoy your time with adolescents! Put aside your own concerns and difficulties, and keep a sense of humour when things don’t go as planned. Take time to connect with adolescent girls and boys, to laugh, have fun and be creative. And - don’t forget how much you can learn from adolescents as you work together.

Using the Ten Key Approaches

You will see reminders to use one or more of the Ten Key Approaches as you read through the guidance and tools in the Foundation Guidance, Programme Coordinator’s Guidance and the Facilitator’s Guidance. This will help you as you manage your intervention with the Adolescent Kit and work with adolescents in their Adolescent Circles.
The Adolescent Kit for Expression and Innovation (Adolescent Kit) supports adolescent girls and boys to improve their wellbeing, learn important life skills and connect with their communities through activities that focus on expression and innovation.

This allows adolescents to experiment, express themselves and tap into talents they may not be aware they have. It gives them time to reflect, to create and to have fun while they solve problems and explore new ideas.

By prioritising expression and innovation, the Adolescent Kit complements, and provides a creative alternative to, other approaches for adolescents that focus more on sports, formal learning and vocational skills. In this way, adolescent girls and boys are given an opportunity to try out different kinds of activities, practise new skills, and to enjoy something new!
The Adolescent Kit supports adolescents to express themselves through the arts, in order to promote their wellbeing, learning, and engagement with their communities.

Working with the arts can help adolescents to express ideas and feelings, learn life skills and experience the world around them in new ways. Different types of art can connect adolescents with their cultures and heritage, and give them opportunities to contribute creatively to their communities.

In humanitarian contexts, opportunities for adolescents to express themselves through the arts are often disrupted. The challenge of day-to-day survival leaves adolescents little time to play in creative and artistic ways, or to pursue types of art that interest them.

Exploring the arts can help adolescents to improve their emotional wellbeing. Through drawing, painting, singing or dancing, they can take a break from the stress and difficulty of their circumstances. They can express difficult feelings in safe ways, for example by telling or writing a story, and use their imaginations to explore hopes and concerns. In conflict-affected communities, adolescents can use traditional and other types of art to support each other’s healing after experiences of violence or loss. In other cases, adolescents, just like adults, may simply find joy and comfort in the experience of creating art.

Working on arts projects, individually and in groups, can help adolescent girls and boys to develop new abilities and life skills. Through different types of art, adolescents learn new ways to express their feelings and ideas, and to interpret what they see and hear around them. Arts such as storytelling and drama help adolescents to develop empathy and respect, by allowing them to explore the experiences and feelings of other people, real or imagined. Arts like drafting and sketching allow adolescents to strengthen their perseverance and patience. Collaborating on arts projects such as exhibitions or performances also gives adolescents a rich opportunity to practice interpersonal skills. They learn to communicate, plan, make decisions and solve problems.

Expressing themselves through the arts can also support adolescents to connect positively with their communities and to build social relationships that are important for their wellbeing. By involving adult community artists in activities with the Adolescent Kit, adolescents can benefit from their experience and knowledge and learn more about their traditions and culture. Adult artists may also enjoy the energy and creativity of young people, and help them to take on positive roles in their community.

The arts include:

- Drawing
- Painting
- Creating murals
- Making collages
- Singing
- Dancing
- Chanting
- Playing musical instruments
- Story telling
- Writing stories, poems or plays
- Drama
- Improvisation
- Craft making
- Photography
- Video
- Sculpture
The arts can also be a way for adolescents to take positive action. For example, adolescents can use the arts to share life-saving messages and useful advice with their communities. As educator-artists, adolescents around the world have used drama, dance, song and art to inform their communities about violence, disease and other risks associated with humanitarian situations.

When adolescents share works of art, they can bring new energy and vibrancy to their communities, and help to restore some of the creativity that may have been lost through disaster or conflict. Adolescents’ exhibitions of drawings, paintings or sculpture and performances of dance, drama or music can also serve as valuable forms of entertainment for communities, providing opportunities for people to gather and have fun in challenging circumstances. In this way, adolescents can contribute to their own recovery and to that of their families and communities.
Adolescents and innovation

The Adolescent Kit encourages innovation as a way to help adolescents to improve their wellbeing, learn new skills and connect with their communities.1

Adolescents have a special capacity for innovation. As they grow and develop between the ages of 10-17, their brains undergo a burst of neurological progress that opens them up to more advanced thoughts, emotions and behaviours. This allows them to analyze the world in different ways, and to use new abstract and reasoning skills to solve problems and explore complex ideas. It is no surprise then, that girls and boys bring new energy and curiosity to their lives as they become adolescents, and are ready to question and challenge. Adolescents need to innovate – experiment, solve problems, and explore new ideas, so that their minds can develop in healthy ways. This is particularly important in humanitarian situations, where adolescents’ cognitive development may be disrupted by the stresses and emotional impact of conflict or disaster, and opportunities to reflect, imagine and invent are often limited.

Supporting adolescents to become innovators means providing them with opportunities to think creatively, explore challenges, come up with ideas, and find solutions to problems. This allows them to learn constructive ways of responding to their own problems and difficulties, to take advantage of opportunities around them, and to find ways to positively influence areas of their lives that matter to them. Collaborating on innovative projects also teaches adolescents how to work with others to plan, make decisions and find solutions cooperatively. This can help them to build healthy relationships, and prepare them for active participation in their community as they grow into adulthood.

By working on innovative projects and creating inventions, adolescents can practice experimenting and exploring different strategies for reaching goals. This allows them to learn patience and perseverance, and to practice overcoming setbacks. They learn how to make mistakes, to fail and to give up – and then to learn from their experiences and to move on.

Working as innovators also gives adolescents space to express themselves and to use their imaginations. Through different inventions and creations, adolescents can find new ways to express their ideas, and to interpret what they see and hear around them. They can connect with their communities and take positive action through projects that work to support humanitarian response efforts or development initiatives.

Why innovation?

For adolescents, the benefit of working as innovators is what they learn through the process of innovation. By creating inventions, brainstorming solutions and collaborating on creative projects, adolescents can develop important competencies - knowledge, attitudes and skills - that are important to their wellbeing.

Supporting adolescents to become innovators means encouraging them to take advantage of what they have – rather than what they don’t have. It means helping them to see what they can achieve even when resources are limited and conditions are challenging – and how they can come up with their own solutions and creative ideas for improving their lives.

The Adolescent Kit supports adolescents to become innovators in their lives, through activities such as:

- Planning and carrying out creative projects;
- Experimenting and working on inventions;
- Collaborating on innovative tasks, games and exercises;
- Exploring new ideas and concepts;
- Collecting and analysing information; and
- Brainstorming solutions to problems and challenges.

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1 UNICEF defines innovation as: “...doing something new or different that adds value, and can refer to processes, products, programmes or partnerships.” United Nations Children’s Fund, Innovation Handbook, (Version 0.9), UNICEF, Unpublished, 2014
The Adolescent Kit empowers adolescent girls and boys with life skills that can help them to cope with the challenges of humanitarian situations and build their resilience.

Life skills are cognitive, personal and interpersonal skills and abilities that can help adolescent girls and boys to adapt to change, and to meet the demands and challenges of humanitarian situations in constructive ways. Life skills can help adolescents to think critically, solve problems, communicate effectively, build healthy relationships, empathise with others and to develop a sense of self-worth.

Life skills in humanitarian situations

Life skills are particularly important for adolescents in humanitarian situations, where they often face considerable challenges, such as separation from their families, disruption to their education and displacement from their communities. Without adequate resources to deal with these difficulties, adolescent girls and boys risk resorting to negative ways of coping, including isolating themselves, taking out their frustration and anger on others, or abusing alcohol and drugs.

Life skills education can help adolescents to develop more constructive ways of responding to their problems, supporting them to make more healthy choices and resist negative pressures – and to build on their existing strengths and resilience.

Building life skills through the Adolescent Kit

The Adolescent Kit supports adolescents to develop key competencies - knowledge, attitudes and skills. Essentially the same as life skills, these competencies help adolescents to cope effectively in areas of their lives that matter to them most. For many adolescent girls and boys, this may involve navigating relationships or concerns related to family, friends, school, work, safety, sex, money, food and health.

The Adolescent Kit uses interactive and participatory methods to nurture life skills in adolescent girls and boys through activities such as role plays, group exercises, creative projects and brainstorming. This involves supporting adolescents to learn through doing, practicing and reflecting, rather than lecturing or preaching to them. Adolescents are then given opportunities to practice these life skills within their Adolescent Circles, and supported to use them more widely in their lives through interactions with their families, friends and communities.

The Adolescent Kit helps to build life skills by supporting adolescents to:

- Learn how to be part of a group;
- Cope with overwhelming emotions, stress and change;
- Develop empathy, tolerance and respect for others, particularly those with different backgrounds and cultures;
- Communicate effectively, cooperate and solve conflicts peacefully;
- Plan how to solve problems and make decisions;
- Find ways to avoid danger and to protect themselves;
- Advocate for their rights, and the rights of others;
- Develop personal awareness, confidence and self-worth;
- Set realistic goals for the future;
- Strengthen relationships with their family, friends and others; and
- Engage constructively with their community.

These skills can be applied across different areas of adolescents’ lives, helping them to meet challenges as they grow and develop. However, it is important to look carefully at the needs and challenges of adolescent girls and boys of different ages, cultures, backgrounds, abilities and language - and to avoid grouping them all together as the same. Certain life skills will be more relevant to some adolescents than others. Activities with the Adolescent Kit should be tailored to meet those different needs, so that adolescents learn skills for coping with the issues that really affect them.

Life skills education is not just about getting adolescents through times of humanitarian crisis. It is about giving adolescent girls and boys skills for life - equipping them with ways to protect themselves, manage challenges and deal constructively with whatever life throws at them.

Link to the Life skills section of Resources (page 46) for more information and support in this area.

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2 The Adolescent Kit focuses on building skills that can help adolescents across different areas of their lives (such as communicating effectively, and making decisions), rather than on particular issues such as HIV and AIDS, child protection, disaster risk reduction, reproductive health, financial literacy and human rights.
The activities, tools and guidance in the Adolescent Kit support adolescents to improve their psychosocial wellbeing and to cope with the challenges of humanitarian situations.

Adolescents’ psychosocial wellbeing in humanitarian situations

One of the foundations of psychosocial wellbeing is access to basic needs (food, shelter, livelihood, healthcare, education services) together with a sense of security that comes from living in a safe and supportive environment. Unfortunately this wellbeing is often disrupted in humanitarian crises, causing severe impact to adolescents’ psychological and social development.

The disruption, uncertainty and violence associated with humanitarian crises can put considerable psychological and social strain on adolescents. Adolescents may have to cope with the breakdown of their families and communities, take on adult responsibilities before they are ready, and face risks such as recruitment into fighting forces, trafficking, exploitative labour and sexual violence.

While adolescents react to challenging circumstances in different ways, nearly all adolescent girls and boys are likely to demonstrate some initial changes in their behaviour, emotions, thoughts and social relations during a humanitarian crisis. Common responses can include grief, pain, depression, hopelessness, fear, anxiety, worry and guilt. Some adolescents may have trouble concentrating and may feel a sense of detachment, while others may engage in risky behaviours. This is normal.

It is important to remember that with some support, most adolescents can recover their psychosocial health and overcome difficult experiences. While some adolescents may have trouble functioning and may require specialized mental health support, most adolescent girls and boys have the ability to cope or ‘bounce back’ from stressful experiences.

Supporting adolescents’ psychosocial wellbeing through the Adolescent Kit

The Adolescent Kit aims to improve adolescents’ psychosocial wellbeing in humanitarian situations, by providing girls and boys with a safe and positive space to learn and have fun, express themselves creatively, and take a break from difficult circumstances. This involves helping adolescents to develop key competencies – knowledge, attitudes and skills, which are critical to addressing their psychosocial needs, and helping them to cope with crisis.

The Adolescent Kit supports adolescents’ psychosocial wellbeing by:

- Helping to establish a sense of structure, routine and support through regular activities;
- Creating an environment where adolescents feel free to talk about their ideas, interests and concerns, without being pressured to relive difficult experiences or discuss sensitive issues;
- Helping adolescents to find positive ways to cope with challenges in their lives, solve problems and manage their stress;
- Encouraging adolescents to support and respect each other, and to make friends, through teambuilding and group activities;
- Supporting adolescents to build or strengthen positive relationships in their lives, particularly with family and friends;
- Giving adolescents space to express themselves through art, drawing, singing, dancing, writing, story telling, sports and drama; and
- Providing adolescents with opportunities to contribute to their communities and take positive actions for themselves and others - for example, through rebuilding homes or supporting humanitarian response efforts.

When working with adolescents in difficult circumstances, it is important to create a positive and welcoming atmosphere where they feel comfortable.

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and can speak openly about their lives, interests and relationships. However, adolescents should **never** be pushed to discuss painful experiences or sensitive topics if they don’t want to. Adolescents’ decisions about what they want to share (or not share) should be respected, and discussions and activities should be guided in a **structured** way that protects them (and others) from unnecessary distress or harm.

It is also important to avoid the assumption that adolescents are traumatized – which is a clinical condition that only affects some adolescent girls and boys in humanitarian situations (and is a label that risks stigmatizing them).³

At the same time, adolescents should be observed carefully and referred to specialized support if they show persistent signs of distress or worrying behaviour.

Ultimately, supporting adolescents’ psychosocial wellbeing with the Adolescent Kit is about fostering a stable, positive (and fun!) environment where adolescent girls and boys can take part in activities that build their resilience and help them to cope with difficulties in their lives. Encouraging adolescents to engage positively with their families and communities, and to care for themselves and others, are important parts of this effort.

Link to the **Psychosocial support section of Resources** (page 47) for more information and support in this area.

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³ Trauma is a clinical condition that should be diagnosed by a qualified mental health professional. There is debate around the prevalence of trauma in crisis situations; however, it is only thought to affect a percentage of the population. Inter-Agency Standing Committee, Guidelines on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergency Settings, IASC, 2007.
Adolescents and participation

The activities and approaches in the Adolescent Kit support adolescent girls and boys to express themselves, participate in decisions that affect them and achieve change in their families and communities.

Adolescents’ right to participation

According to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, children of all ages, including adolescents, have the right to participate in any matter concerning them and to have their opinions taken into account. Yet in reality, adolescents are often treated as though their views don’t matter.

Adolescents have the right to participate in decisions that affect their lives, their communities and the larger society in which they live. Giving adolescents a voice not only contributes to their personal development, it empowers them to protect themselves, stand up for their rights and to learn how to be active and responsible citizens.

Adolescents’ participation in humanitarian situations

Adolescents are directly affected by conflict and other humanitarian crises, and have the right to be actively engaged in efforts to rebuild their communities and contribute to building peace.

Supporting adolescents’ meaningful participation during times of humanitarian crisis can make a difference in their own lives, as well as to their communities. It can help adolescents to develop important skills, gain confidence and to speak up about their rights and needs. It can also empower them as social actors (rather than passive recipients) who can and do play an important role in supporting their families and communities, and contributing to humanitarian response initiatives.

Engaging adolescents can lead to more effective programmes for adolescent girls and boys in humanitarian situations – as they are best placed to decide what interventions and activities will address their needs, to reach out to their peers and to figure out what works and doesn’t work. Adolescents can also serve as valuable resources within humanitarian response efforts, by participating in emergency assessments and forming initiatives to protect children, and helping with reconstruction and supporting peacebuilding processes.

Supporting adolescents’ participation with the Adolescent Kit

The Adolescent Kit supports adolescents to participate more actively in areas of their lives that matter to them – in their homes, at school, with friends, at work and in the community. It does so by helping adolescent girls and boys to develop key competencies – knowledge, skills and attitudes – which are critical to promoting their participation. Adolescents are given opportunities to practise these competencies, first within their Adolescent Circles, and then within the wider community.

The Adolescent Kit supports adolescents’ participation by:

- Providing a safe, welcoming space for all adolescents where they are encouraged to express themselves and participate in decisions, discussions and activities;
- Building adolescents’ communication skills, confidence, and belief in their ability to positively influence their lives;
- Helping adolescents to recognize their own abilities and strengths, and the ways that they contribute to their families and communities;
- Providing adolescents with information about their rights and issues that affect their lives;
- Supporting adolescents to build or strengthen relationships with adults and encouraging their collaboration;
- Helping adolescent girls and boys to carry out meaningful projects or initiatives in support of their communities; and

- Encouraging adolescents to participate in or set up youth committees, clubs, steering groups, peacebuilding initiatives and other decision-making structures.

**Participation as a process for working with and for adolescents**

The approaches and activities in the Adolescent Kit reflect a view of participation as **process for working with and for adolescents** - rather than a once off activity. This involves opening up space for adolescents to focus on their own priorities, to decide what activities and projects they want to work on – and which issues they want to take action on. When adolescents come up with ideas for activities or projects that surprise you, or want to take action on issues that you aren’t even aware of, those are signs that participation is working! It is important to adolescents take initiative themselves, rather than to push them to take action.

Adolescent participation should be inclusive and voluntary. That means that activities and approaches with the Adolescent Kit should be flexible enough to encourage participation of adolescent girls and boys from all backgrounds, cultures, religions, ages and those with disabilities. Adolescent girls and boys should also be well informed about what they are doing, and why, so that they can decide whether or not they want to participate in different activities or initiatives, and to what extent.

As much as possible, adults should also be involved in efforts to promote adolescents’ participation. This may involve encouraging parents, teachers, religious leaders and government officials to take adolescents’ views seriously (and to act upon them), to work together collaboratively, and to be accountable for meeting adolescents’ rights. This is particularly important in contexts where adolescents’ right to express their views or participate in decisions are not recognized or supported by others. Most of all, it is important to try to find a balance between encouraging adolescents to become active agents in their own lives, and ensuring that they are protected from any potential risks or harm that increased participation could bring.

Link to the Child Participation section of Resources (page 44) for more information and support in this area.
Adolescents and peacebuilding

The Adolescent Kit supports adolescents to develop knowledge, skills and attitudes that can help them to promote peace and transform conflict.

Adolescents can play an important role in building peace and contributing to positive social change during humanitarian situations. They can introduce peaceful behaviours to their communities, change negative social attitudes or practices, and help to disrupt cycles of conflict and violence that pass from one generation to the next. As the next generation of adults, they are in a unique position to contribute to real changes in their lives, their families and their communities.

Adolescents have much to offer peacebuilding

During times of conflict and instability, adolescents are not just victims or drivers of violence. They can also act as ‘agents of peace,’ – condemning violence, and urging that it be replaced by peaceful and caring ways of resolving conflict. Despite adversity, and often against the odds, adolescents find ways to contribute to their families, to address problems and to overcome difficulties. They bring energy and enthusiasm to rebuilding their communities, and contribute to humanitarian relief efforts.

Engaging adolescents as peacebuilders with the Adolescent Kit

The activities in the Adolescent Kit empower adolescents to develop key competencies – knowledge, skills and attitudes – that can help them to become peacebuilders. The idea is to support adolescents to think, behave and relate to others in ways that promote peace within their immediate lives, friends and family, and to encourage them to build on this foundation to contribute to broader social change in their communities.

The Adolescent Kit provides adolescent girls and boys with space to practise building peace within their Adolescent Circles as well as in their interactions with the wider community. This includes supporting adolescents to:

• See themselves as active citizens, peacebuilders or leaders, who can and do make positive changes in their lives and their communities, rather than as victims;

Engaging adolescents as peacebuilders goes beyond just creating peaceful adolescent girls and boys. It is about supporting adolescents to actively promote peace and transform conflict in their own lives, and through interactions with their family, friends and community.

• Overcome stereotypes and prejudices through group work with adolescents from different cultures, backgrounds and ethnic groups and opportunities to share stories and perspectives;
• Resolve conflicts in constructive and non-violent ways, compromise, negotiate and engage with others to make decisions;
• Practice teamwork and cooperation, build positive relationships and demonstrate respect, empathy and tolerance for others; and
• Develop hope for a peaceful future for their families and communities and set goals for achieving it.

Activities in the Adolescent Kit can also provide adolescents with more direct opportunities to explore and understand the conflicts that affect them, and to find ways to contribute to peace in their communities. Engaging adults and working to overcome sometimes negative perceptions of adolescents as troublemakers or burdens are critical to these efforts.

Activities for adolescents could include:

• Participating in conflict analysis exercises to explore the causes, consequences and impacts of conflict, and to identify opportunities for building peace;
• Conducting inter-generational dialogues with adults to discuss ways of jointly promoting peace and resolving violence;
• Collaborating with adults on joint cultural events, interfaith dialogues, community development projects or relief efforts, as a way to break down negative perceptions or distrust;
• Forming peace or mediation clubs, and promoting peace through drama, art and music performances; and
• Conducting projects to examine the perspectives of different community members and exploring different paths toward peace.

2 Adolescents may be actively involved in fighting and violence during conflicts, both within and outside of armed forces and armed groups.
It is important to remember that there are large forces that drive conflicts – poverty, inequality, exploitation, marginalisation – which adolescents can't be expected to overcome on their own. However, by supporting adolescent girls and boys to change the ways they relate to others, by modelling participatory, inclusive ways of working together, and by fostering positive connections with adults, the Adolescent Kit can help adolescents to take a first step toward building more stable and peaceful communities.

Link to the Peacebuilding section of Resources (page 46) for more information and support in this area.
Adolescents with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments, AND who face barriers that may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.

Their rights are promoted under the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), which demand that all children, irrespective of their ability or disability, enjoy their rights without discrimination – and are recognised as full members of their family, community and society.

Supporting inclusion of adolescents with disabilities through the Adolescent Kit

The Adolescent Kit takes an inclusive approach that includes all adolescents, and recognises that every adolescent girl and boy, regardless of their ability or disability, has the right to enjoy the same opportunities and to express their views. Taking an inclusive approach means working with adolescents with and without disabilities to plan and run interventions that meet their needs, while reducing barriers to participation and creating an environment where everyone can take part in activities, voice their opinion, and contribute – even if they do so in different ways.

You don’t need to be a disability specialist to work with adolescents with disabilities! While specific measures may be needed to reach out to adolescent girls and boys with disabilities, often very simple steps can be taken to adapt activities and approaches to make them more inclusive.4

The Adolescent Kit supports the inclusion of adolescents with disabilities by:

- Collecting information about adolescents with disabilities – including the challenges they face, the key issues affecting their lives, their family

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2 The Adolescent Kit promotes adolescents with disabilities as equal partners who have the right to enjoy the same opportunities as other adolescent girls and boys, and supports them to develop key competencies, knowledge, skills and attitudes that are relevant to their particular needs and circumstances. In this way, the Adolescent Kit aims to open up new ways of thinking about adolescents with disabilities, and to empower them as individuals who can and do contribute to their lives and communities.

3 Humanitarian situations and disability

Adolescents with disabilities are particularly vulnerable during times of humanitarian crisis. They are more likely to be abandoned by their families, may acquire new impairments due to injuries (caused by the disaster or conflict), lose access to medical care and/or assistive devices, and face disruption of the social networks they rely on for support – such as family, friends, neighbours and social services.2 Often confined to their homes due to stigma or limited mobility, they become ‘invisible’ and face significant barriers to accessing humanitarian support.3

4 See the Understanding adolescents in humanitarian situations section of the Adolescent Kit for information regarding the different challenges that adolescents with disabilities face in humanitarian situations.

5 There are many useful resources that outline practical steps that facilitators can take to adapt information and activities for adolescents with visual, hearing, communication, intellectual and other impairments, including the forthcoming Children with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action, to be published by UNICEF and Handicap International. See the disability section of the Adolescent Kit Resources for other resources.
situations, their interests and priorities, and the barriers they may face – in order to design interventions that address their particular needs and interests;

• Reaching out to all adolescents, including adolescent girls and boys with disabilities, and finding ways to overcome barriers to their participation in interventions with the Adolescent Kit, such as limited mobility, discriminatory attitudes and inaccessible activity spaces – for example, it may be necessary to work with Disabled Persons Organisations (DPOs) to identify and reach out to adolescents with disabilities who may be hidden away, to organise safe transport for adolescents with disabilities to learning spaces, or to persuade parents or caregivers of adolescents with disabilities to allow them to attend activities;

• Creating welcoming spaces that adolescents with disabilities can access and move around in safely – this may involve exploring creative options such as organising activities in or near adolescents’ homes (if they face physical or security barriers to moving freely), adapting spaces to include features such as ramps, effective lighting and accessible toilet facilities, and using accessible learning/play materials and supplies;  

• Including all adolescents equally in activities and discussions, regardless of their abilities or disabilities – this means selecting, adapting or modifying activities so that adolescent girls and boys with physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments can participate; setting ground rules that encourage respect and tolerance and give everyone a say in decisions; and opening up space for adolescents with and without disabilities to connect, value their differences and overcome stereotypes and prejudices; 

• Preparing and supporting facilitators to work with adolescent girls and boys with disabilities in participatory and inclusive ways – this involves including practical guidance for facilitators in Training of Trainers (ToT) sessions on how to adapt their communication, activities and learning spaces to accommodate adolescent girls and boys with different types of disabilities;

how to promote peer-to-peer support between adolescents with and without disabilities; and how to challenge and encourage all participants. It also means identifying specialist support that facilitators can call on for help or advice if they need it – for example, humanitarian Disability Focal Points, DPOs or informal groups made up of persons with disabilities;

• Encouraging the involvement of parents and caregivers of adolescents with disabilities in interventions with the Adolescent Kit, as well as adults with disabilities as mentors, role models and resources that can empower and support participants – for example, facilitators can often learn from caregivers or family members how to best support and communicate with adolescents with disabilities;

• Connecting adolescents with disabilities to services, programmes and information that they can benefit from, and taking steps when their health, safety or wellbeing is at risk – this involves being aware of the different issues, protection risks, concerns and services that may be particularly relevant to them; and

• Involving adolescents with disabilities in all aspects of planning, running and monitoring interventions with the Adolescent Kit, including selecting and adapting activities to meet their particular needs, interests and circumstances – this involves empowering adolescents to build on their abilities (rather than disabilities), and to take on the same tasks, responsibilities and leadership opportunities as other participants.  

An inclusive Supply Kit

The Supply Kit includes a magnifying ruler and an Emotion Cube with high contrasting colours and Braille for adolescents with visual impairments. All of the other materials, supplies and equipment in the Supply Kit can be adapted or used in different ways so that adolescents with disabilities can participate in activities.

Local DPOs or Disability Focal Points may be aware of accessible activity spaces in the community.

For example through team building and activities that help adolescents to learn about each other.

For example, due to mistaken beliefs that adolescents with disabilities do not (or should not) engage in sexual relations, they are often excluded from sexual and reproductive health information and services.

For example, facilitating sessions, running energizers, taking care of activity spaces, managing supplies and participating on steering committees.
Above all, the activities, tools and guidance in the Adolescent Kit advocate a flexible and adaptable approach to working with adolescents (with or without disabilities), that encourages adolescents to take the lead. This approach involves consulting with adolescents on an ongoing basis regarding how activities should be organised so that they can participate, contribute, (and have fun!), equally and safely. It also means taking into account the particular needs and challenges of adolescent girls and boys with disabilities, and finding ways to address barriers they may face.

Consult the Disability section of the Adolescent Kit Resources (page 45) for more information and support in this area.
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Adolescents and gender equality

The Adolescent Kit supports gender equality through guidance, approaches and activities that address the unique needs of adolescent girls and boys and that promote inclusion.

Adolescents and Gender Equality

Gender refers to the socially constructed roles of adolescent girls and boys, as well as the relationships among them. It defines what behaviours, attitudes and actions a given society considers appropriate for adolescent girls and boys, including what they are expected to do, how they are supposed to behave and how they relate to each other. Gender determines who does what, who has what, who decides and who has power.

Gender roles and inequality

In both humanitarian and more stable situations, adolescent girls and boys are socialised into different gender roles. They are expected to do different types of work, to behave in different ways and to take on different responsibilities. This rigid definition of their roles can limit adolescent girls’ and boys’ ability to reach their full potential and to realise their rights as defined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC).

Gender roles and norms vary in different cultures, and they change over time. In many societies, girls’ lives become more restricted to the domestic sphere as they enter adolescence, while boys’ worlds start to expand. In many cases, gender norms favour boys and men, providing them with more power, freedom, rights, and a stronger voice in decision making; while negative attitudes, stereotyping and prejudices mean that girls and women are often expected to defer to males and may experience life-long discrimination and even gender-based violence.

Gender Equality

Gender equality means that adolescent girls and boys enjoy the same rights, resources, opportunities and protections. This does not mean that adolescent girls and boys should be treated exactly the same, but rather that their unique needs, circumstances and experiences should be taken into account so that they can enjoy the same opportunities.

Gender equality means that adolescents should not be discriminated against simply because they are male or female. This is particularly important in humanitarian situations, where gender roles and inequality are often exacerbated. Adolescent girls and boys in humanitarian situations may face very different challenges, risks and opportunities, which can influence their ability to participate in and benefit from humanitarian interventions.

Supporting gender equality through the Adolescent Kit

The Adolescent Kit takes a gender-sensitive approach that promotes inclusion of all adolescents, regardless of their gender, and takes into account the unique needs of adolescent girls and boys. This approach involves working with adolescent girls and boys to design and run interventions that are relevant to their particular circumstances, interests and needs, and creating an environment where everyone is able to participate on an equal footing.

A gender-sensitive approach to the Supply Kit

Adolescent girls and female facilitators who piloted the Supply Kit for UNICEF in Indonesia requested a ‘backpack-style’ carrier for their supplies, rather than a cross-body carrier, in order to better adhere to cultural considerations around modest dress for girls and women.


3 See the Understanding adolescents in humanitarian situations section of the Adolescent Kit Foundation Guidance for information regarding the different challenges that adolescent girls and boys face in humanitarian situations.
The Adolescent Kit includes guidance and tools on how to:

- **Collect gender-disaggregated information** about adolescent girls and boys, including the different challenges they face, how they spend their time, their family situations, roles and responsibilities, interests and priorities;
- **Reach out to vulnerable girls and boys**, find ways to overcome barriers that may prevent their participation in activities, and keep them involved through inclusive ways of working – for example, girls may need permission from their parents to attend activities, and boys may not have much time available if they are involved with fighting forces or are working to support their households;
- **Create interesting, welcoming spaces** that both adolescent girls and boys can access safely, and schedule activities on days and times that suit the adolescents’ schedules;
- **Group adolescents** in a way that makes girls and boys feel comfortable and safe – for example, when discussing sensitive issues, it may be appropriate to create separate groups for girls and boys where they may feel more at ease interacting;
- **Build a gender-sensitive team** of facilitators that includes a mix of men and women who can work with adolescent girls and boys in participatory and inclusive ways so that everyone’s voice is heard, and who are aware of the different needs, challenges and priorities of adolescent girls and boys;
- **Connect adolescent girls and boys to services, programmes and information** that they can benefit from, and take steps when their health, safety or well-being is at risk – this involves awareness of the different issues, protection risks, concerns and services that may be particularly relevant to adolescent girls and boys (such as sexual reproductive health services for girls);
- **Include both men and women as mentors, role models and resources** to help empower and support adolescent girls and boys; and
- **Involve adolescent girls and boys** in designing, monitoring and evaluating their work together, and in selecting and adapting activities to meet their particular needs, interests and circumstances – this includes empowering adolescents to take on take on new tasks, responsibilities and leadership opportunities regardless of their gender.²

Most importantly, the tools, activities and guidance in the Adolescent Kit advocate an inclusive approach that involves letting adolescent girls and boys take the lead in designing and managing their work together. This means that from the start, both adolescent girls and boys should be consulted about where, when, and how their work together should be organised, so that they can participate equally and safely, and about what types of activities meet their particular interests, concerns and needs.

The Adolescent Kit also presents opportunities to transform limiting attitudes about gender through activities that support adolescents to reflect on their identities as girls and boys, and to examine the ways in which being male or female shapes their lives, experiences and opportunities.⁵ These opportunities can open up space for adolescent girls and boys to connect, learn about each other, overcome stereotypes and prejudices, and develop competencies – knowledge, skills and attitudes – that are relevant to their particular needs and circumstances.

Ultimately, supporting gender equality with the Adolescent Kit is about understanding adolescent girls’ and boys’ different needs, circumstances and constraints – and adapting interventions so that even the most vulnerable girls and boys can access and benefit from them. Supporting gender equality involves working with adolescents to identify and overcome the particular barriers they may face to participating equally, and making sure that girls and boys can enjoy the same opportunities and benefits as they work together in their Adolescent Circles.

Consult the **Gender section of the Adolescent Kit Resources** (page 46) for more information and support in this area.

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² For example, facilitating sessions, running energizers, taking care of activity spaces, managing supplies and participating on steering committees.

⁵ Examples of activity guides that explore these issues include: Our days; Our environment; Our challenges, our solutions; Ourselves on the inside and outside; I am, I have, I can.
This glossary provides definitions of terms used in the Adolescent Kit for Expression and Innovation (Adolescent Kit). Users can adapt or replace these terms to make them more culturally appropriate or adolescent-friendly.

**Adolescent:** The Adolescent Kit refers to an adolescent as a child between the ages of 10 and 18 years. Early adolescence often refers to children between 10 and 14 years, and late adolescence to 15 and 18 years.

**Adolescents with disabilities:** The Adolescent Kit refers to adolescents with disabilities as those who have impairment which are physical (e.g. wheelchair users), mental (e.g. clinical depression), intellectual/learning, or sensory (e.g. deaf, blind).

**Circle (as in Adolescent Circle):** A group of adolescents who gather to learn, practice skills, socialize, express themselves, build a team, and take action in their communities.

**Cognitive processes:** mental processes such as thought, imagination, perception, memory, decision-making, reasoning and problem solving.

**Community:** A group of people with a common identity related to factors such as: geography, language, values or interests – In the Adolescent Kit, community often refers to the area in which adolescents live and the other people living there. It could be a refugee or Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camp, permanent settlement, neighbourhood, village, town or city.

**Community mobilization:** Activities that encourage community members to participate in the various aspects of an intervention; examples include meetings with community leaders, large community meetings and events, forming an issue-based group.

**Competencies:** Knowledge, attitudes, and skills that are essential for the wellbeing and healthy development of adolescents, particularly those who have been affected by crisis and conflict.

**Coping:** The process of adapting to a new life situation – managing difficult circumstances, making an effort to solve problems or seeking to minimize, reduce or tolerate stress or conflict.

**Demographics:** Information about the characteristics of a population or community, such as age, gender and ethnicity.

**Do No Harm:** A basic principle for successful programming; cautions against the unintentional harm that may be caused to those who are supposed to benefit from any intervention.

**Facilitator:** A trained professional or volunteer who works directly with a group of adolescents to facilitate activities and run sessions; related terms: teachers, coaches or animators.

**Gender:** refers to the social roles and identities of adolescent girls and boys; gender roles vary in different cultures, change over time and shape routine aspects of daily living.

**Gender equality:** means that adolescent girls and boys enjoy the same rights, resources, opportunities and protections.

**Inclusion:** The fair and equitable participation of all adolescents in all spheres of their life, school, community, programmes and services, regardless of their age, gender, ethnicity, family, culture, geographical location, language, religion, ability, or financial situation.

**Life skills:** Abilities for adaptive and positive behaviour that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life; can be general (for example, communicating effectively and making decisions) or relate to specific topics such as HIV prevention, peacebuilding, health promotion or child protection.

**Participation:** In the Adolescent Kit, participation refers to adolescents’ informed and willing involvement in matters that concern them, both directly and indirectly. This involves giving adolescents opportunities to express their views, influence decision making and achieve change. Children’s right to participation is encoded in the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

**Peacebuilding:** Involves a range of measures to reduce the risk of a lapse or relapse into conflict by addressing both the causes and consequences of conflict.

**Phase (as in Circle Phase):** A series of sessions linked by a common outcome, goal or theme.

**Programme or Intervention:** Used interchangeably to refer to any type of formal or informal programme, initiative or scheme that uses the activities, tools and guidance in the Adolescent Kit.

**Programme coordinator:** A general term to describe a staff member who has a key role in designing, managing or running a programme or intervention that uses the activities, tools and guidance in the Adolescent Kit; includes programme managers, programme officers, technical specialists or other staff within UNICEF or partner organisations.

**Psychosocial:** Refers to the close connection between a person’s mind, thoughts, emotions, feelings and
behaviours, and their social world, e.g. relationships with family, friends and community networks, cultural traditions, economic status and life tasks such as work and school.

**Psychosocial support:** Refers to actions that address both the psychological and social needs of adolescents and promote their wellbeing; includes support provided by family, friends, neighbours, teachers and the wider community, and may also extend to care and support offered by specialised psychological and social services.

**Psychosocial wellbeing:** A positive state of being where someone thrives as a result of their psychological and social needs being met; One of the foundations of psychosocial wellbeing is access to basic needs (food, shelter, livelihood, healthcare, education services) together with a sense of security that comes from living in a safe and supportive environment.

**Referral pathways:** The individuals or institutions available to respond to the needs of adolescents when special support or services are needed.

**Resilience:** In the Adolescent Kit, resilience refers to adolescents’ ability to react or adapt positively to a difficult and challenging experiences, and to 'bounce back' and recover.

**Session:** The period of time that adolescents spend working together on individual or group activities, usually with support from a facilitator; generally lasts between one to two hours.

**Stakeholder:** A person, group, organization or system that affects or is affected by something in a programme, initiative or community.

**Steering committee:** The group of people who are responsible for overseeing and making decisions about the programme or intervention where the Adolescent Kit is used; may include representatives from UNICEF, implementing partners, local or national government officials, parents, and adolescents.

**Sustainability:** The ability to maintain something into the future – in this context, an intervention with the Adolescent Kit – Active adolescent and community participation in planning and running interventions encourages ownership, and strengthens the likelihood of sustainability.

**Vulnerability:** A range of factors that may decrease an adolescent’s ability to cope with challenges or difficulties, e.g. poverty, mental or physical health disabilities, lack of a social network, lack of family support, age and gender; particularly vulnerable adolescents may include: unaccompanied and separated adolescents, adolescents in institutions, adolescents with disabilities or special needs, marginalized adolescents, unregistered adolescents in humanitarian settings, adolescents who are pregnant or mothers, and girls and boys in adolescent-headed households.
The following guidance and resources can be used to support interventions with the Adolescent Kit

Adolescents

Adolescents: An Age of Opportunity - The State of the World’s Children
UNICEF, 2011.
Examines the global state of adolescents, and outlines the challenges they face in health, education, protection and participation

ARC Foundation Module: Child and Adolescent Development
Provides guidance and tools for supporting children and adolescents in humanitarian situations

INEE Minimum Standards Toolkit: Adolescents and Youth
Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE).
List tools and resources for ensuring adolescents’ access to learning activities and education http://spHEREprototype.conted.ox.ac.uk/cases/learningistheirfuture/pdf/doc_1_INEE_Toolkit_-_Adol_and_Youth.pdf

Child participation

Every Child’s Right to be Heard
UNICEF and Save the Children, 2011.
A resource guide that includes guidelines for upholding children’s right to participation in conflict and humanitarian settings (Chapter 7, p.139) http://www.unicef.org/french/adolescence/files/Every_Childs_Right_to_be_Heard.pdf

ARC Foundation Module 4: Participation and Inclusion
Provides practical guidance and tools for supporting children’s participation and inclusion in humanitarian situations http://resourcecentre.savethechildren.se/sites/default/files/documents/arc-mod4-studymaterial-2009_0.pdf

Putting Children at the Centre: A practical guide to children’s participation
Save the Children, 2010.
Offers guidance on how to support children’s meaningful involvement in governance, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation across humanitarian and other programmes http://resourcecentre.savethechildren.se/sites/default/files/docs/Putting_Children_at_the_Centre_final_%282%29.pdf

Speaking Out, Being Heard: Experiences of child participation and accountability to children from around the world
Save the Children UK, 2010.

Brings together theoretical and practical approaches to supporting children’s participation

UNICEF Participation Resource Guide
Online guide with resources on child and youth participation
http://www.unicef.org/adolescence/cypguide/41190_index.html

Listen and Learn: Participatory Assessment with Children and Adolescents
UNHCR, 2012.
A tool for conducting participatory assessments with children and adolescents
http://www.unhcr.org/50f6d1259.html

A Toolkit for Monitoring and Evaluating Children’s Participation
Save the Children, 2014
A six-part guide on how to monitor and evaluate children’s participation in programmes, communities and in wider society
http://www.savethechildren.org.uk/resources/online-library/toolkit-monitoring-and-evaluating-childrens-participation#sthash.kKsCl5yb.dpuf

Child protection

Minimum Standards for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action

A Matter of Life and Death: Child protection programming’s essential role in ensuring child wellbeing and survival during and after emergencies
Explains how child protection interventions in humanitarian situations support children

Child Protection Rapid Assessment Toolkit
Guidance and tools for conducting a rapid child protection assessment in the aftermath of a rapid-onset emergency http://www.globalprotectioncluster.org/_assets/files/tools_and_guidance/info_data_management/CPRA_English-EN.pdf

A Practical Guide for Developing Child Friendly Spaces
Guidance on establishing and operating child friendly spaces in humanitarian situations
Child Friendly Spaces in Emergencies: A Handbook for Save the Children staff
Save the Children, 2008.
Guidance on establishing Child Friendly Spaces for children during and immediately after an emergency such as a natural disaster or situation of armed conflict http://resourcecentre.savethechildren.se/sites/default/files/documents/2923.pdf

Interagency Guidelines for Case Management and Child Protection
Step by step guidance on conducting case management in humanitarian situations

Our Right to be Protected from Violence: Activities for learning and action for children and young people
Guidance for staff who work with young people ages 12-18 to explore issues around violence against children; includes 18 learning activities, and ideas for taking action against violence http://www.unicef.org/violencestudy/pdf/Our%20Right%20to%20be%20Protected%20from%20Violence.pdf

Stolen Futures: The Reintegration of Children Affected by Armed Conflict
Save the Children, 2007.
Guidance for reintegration of children affected by armed conflict

Child rights

Convention on the Rights of the Child
The international human rights treaty that sets out the civil, political, economic, social, health and cultural rights of children. UNICEF is specifically named in the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) as a source of expert assistance and advice, and the fundamental mission of UNICEF is to promote the rights of every child as defined in the CRC.
http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CRC.aspx

ARC Foundation Module 2: Child Rights-Based Approaches
Explains how to use child-rights based approaches in humanitarian situations

Children with disabilities

ARC Critical Issue Module 3: Children with Disabilities
Provides practical guidance and tools for supporting children with disabilities in humanitarian situations
http://resourcecentre.savethechildren.se/sites/default/files/documents/arc-modf4-studymaterial-2009_0.pdf

Children with Disabilities: The State of the World’s Children
Examines the situation of children with disabilities around the world

Children with Disabilities: Ending discrimination and promoting participation, development and inclusion
Provides recommendations for upholding the rights of children with disabilities in programmes in humanitarian settings

Disabilities among Refugees and Conflict-Affected Populations
Examines the challenges that face refugees with disabilities, and the unique capacities that they have to overcome them

Listening Together: Examples of child participation in action
Lumos, 2013.
Examines some of the methods and challenges involved in supporting the meaningful participation of children and adolescents with intellectual disabilities in development programmes

Provides guidelines for creating opportunities for children with disabilities to exercise their right to be heard and taken seriously.

Education

Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE), 2010.
19 standards to enhance the quality of educational preparedness, response and recovery in humanitarian settings.

UNICEF School in a Box: UNICEF Education Kit Handbook
Guidance and supplies for supporting children and adolescents to continue their education in humanitarian situations.
Good Practice Guide: Assessing resource needs and capacities in an initial emergency
Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE).
Good practice in assessing and analysing non-formal education needs in humanitarian settings.

Education in Emergencies: Including Everyone. INEE Pocket Guide to Inclusive Education
Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE), 2009.
Provides guidance for implementing an inclusive emergency education approach

Gender

Guidelines for Integrating Gender-Based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Action: Reducing risk, promoting resilience and aiding recovery
Inter-Agency Standing Committee, 2015.
Guidelines to assist humanitarian actors in humanitarian emergencies to coordinate, plan, implement, monitor and evaluate essential actions for the prevention and mitigation of gender-based violence (GBV) across sectors

Guidelines for Gender-Based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Settings: Focusing on prevention of and response to sexual violence
Inter-Agency Standing Committee Taskforce on Gender in Humanitarian Assistance, 2005.
Guidelines for establishing and coordinating a set of minimum multi-sectoral interventions to prevent and respond to sexual violence in emergencies

Program H|M|D: A Toolkit for Action - Engaging Youth to Achieve Gender Equity
Promundo, 2013.
A toolkit that supports adolescents to work toward gender equity
http://promundogloball.org/resources/program-hmd-a-toolkit-for-action/

Girl Centred Program Design
A toolkit for setting up and running programmes for adolescent girls

HIV/AIDS

Guidelines for Addressing HIV in Humanitarian Settings
Inter-Agency Standing Committee, 2010.
Guidelines for providing a minimum set of HIV prevention, treatment, care and support services to people affected by humanitarian crises

Guidance on HIV in Education in Emergencies
Inter-Agency Network on Education in Emergencies (INEE), 2010.
Guidance for education practitioners on integrating HIV and sexual and reproductive health issues into formal and non-formal education responses for adolescents ages 10-19

Humanitarian response

Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action
UNICEF’s central policy for upholding the rights of children affected by humanitarian crisis

Sphere Project, 2011.
Minimum standards, principles and best practice across humanitarian response sectors
http://www.sphereproject.org/handbook/

Life skills

Life Skills – Skills for Life: A handbook
International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies Reference Centre for Psychosocial Support, 2014.
Provides detailed guidance on life skills programming in the field

Child Social and Financial Education: A companion to the Child Friendly Schools manual
Supports children in learning about social responsibility and financial competency, through activities that allow them to explore their rights and responsibilities and to address social issues that are important to them

Action research: Participatory PM&E tools ‘I DEAL’ intervention
War Child Holland, 2012.
Outlines War Child Holland’s innovative monitoring and evaluation tools for life skills and psychosocial interventions

Conflict Sensitivity and Peacebuilding

Conflict Sensitive Education Pack
Inter-Agency Network on Education in Emergencies (INEE), 2013.
Guidance and tools for integrating conflict sensitivity into education programmes in fragile and conflict-affected settings

**Building Peace through Education**
Provides information and resources for promoting non-violence and peace http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0016/001607/160787e.pdf

**Guiding Principles on Young People's Participation in Peacebuilding**
UN Inter Agency on Youth Development, 2014.

**Engaging Adolescents in Conflict Analysis: A guidance note**

**Peacebuilding Knowledge, Attitudes and Skills: Desk review and recommendations**

**Conflict Sensitive Education Pack**
Inter-Agency Network on Education in Emergencies (INEE), 2013.

**Conflict Sensitivity and Peacebuilding in UNICEF, Technical Note**
Technical note that explains key concepts, offers tools and approaches, identifies entry points in UNICEF strategies, frameworks and programmes, and provides examples of UNICEF programmatic contributions in the areas of conflict sensitivity and peacebuilding

**Learning to Live Together: Building Skills, Values and Attitudes for the Twenty-first Century**
A global study of approaches to support young people’s development of skills and need to develop respect for human rights and accept the responsibilities of citizenship, resolve conflicts peacefully in their personal relationships, and protect themselves and their health, presenting case studies, lessons learned, and recommendations.

**Learning to Live Together: Design, Monitoring and Evaluation of Education for Life Skills, Citizenship, Peace and Human Rights**
Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) and UNESCO, 2008.
A guide for policy-makers, curriculum planners and NGO programme managers to strengthen the curricula for education for life skills, citizenship, peace and human rights, with suggestions for monitoring and evaluation processes.

**Youth and Conflict: Best practices and lessons learned**
Mercy Corps, 2011.

**ARC Critical Issue Module 7: Children associated with armed forces or armed groups**
Provides guidance for supporting children associated with armed forces or armed groups http://resourcecentre.savethechildren.se/sites/default/files/documents/arc-modc7-studymaterial-2009.pdf

**Programme monitoring and evaluation**
Evaluation Handbook
Save the Children, 2012.

**Psychosocial Support and Mental Health**
Inter-Agency Standing Committee Guidelines on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergency Settings
Guidelines to enable humanitarian actors to plan, establish and coordinate a set of minimum multi-sectoral responses to protect and improve people's mental health and psychosocial wellbeing in emergencies

**IASC Guidelines on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergency Settings: What should protection programme managers know?**
Inter-Agency Standing Committee, 2010.
Provides an overview of what Protection staff should know about mental health and psychosocial support in humanitarian emergencies https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/system/files/legacy_files/MHPSS%20Protection%20Actors.pdf

**Assessing Mental Health and Psychosocial Needs and Resources: Toolkit for humanitarian settings**
Guidance for designing and conducting an assessment of mental health and psychosocial needs and resources in humanitarian crises

**Psychosocial Support for Youth in Post-Conflict Situations: A trainer’s handbook**
Danish Red Cross Youth and International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies Reference Centre for Psychosocial Support, 2014.
Training on community-based psychosocial support for youth in post-conflict situations

**Psychosocial Interventions: A handbook**
International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies Reference Centre for Psychosocial Support, 2014.
Guidance on how to plan, monitor and implement psychosocial interventions

**Caring for Child Survivors of Sexual Abuse: Guidelines for health and psychosocial service**
International Rescue Committee, 2012.

**The Psychosocial Care and Protection of Children in Emergencies: Teacher training manual**
Guidance for teachers on providing psychosocial support within education programmes in emergencies
http://toolkit.ineesite.org/toolkit/INEEcms/uploads/1064/Psychosocial_Care_and_Protection.PDF

**Inter-Agency Guide to the Evaluation of Psychosocial Programming in Humanitarian Crises**
UNICEF, 2011.

**Psychological First Aid: A guide for fieldworkers**

**Psychological First Aid Training Manual for Child Practitioners**
Save the Children, 2013.
A training manual for providing Psychological First Aid to children in crisis situations

**ARC Foundation Module 7: Psychosocial Support**
Practical information and guidance on providing psychosocial support to children in humanitarian contexts
http://www.unhcr.org/4c98a5169.pdf

**Programme Manager’s Handbook: Psychosocial support in and out of schools**
International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies Reference Centre for Psychosocial Support, 2014.
Guidance for programme managers on how to plan, implement and evaluation resilience and psychosocial initiatives for children

**Working with children and their environment: Manual of psychosocial skills**
Training manual for running psychosocial activities with children in humanitarian situations

**Sexual and reproductive health**

**Inter-agency Field Manual on Reproductive Health in Humanitarian Settings**
Inter-agency Working Group on Reproductive Health in Crises, 2010.
Provides guidance on implementing a minimum set of services in reproductive health in humanitarian settings http://www.who.int/reproductivehealth/publications/emergencies/field_manual_rh_humanitarian_settings.pdf?ua=1

**Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health Toolkit for Humanitarian Settings: A companion to the Inter-Agency Field Manual on Reproductive Health in Humanitarian Settings**
UNFPA and Save the Children, 2009.
Addresses the reproductive health needs of adolescents in humanitarian settings, and serves as a companion to the Inter-agency Field Manual on Reproductive Health in Humanitarian Settings

**ARC Critical Issue Module 4: Sexual and Reproductive Health**
Provides guidance and tools for supporting children’s sexual and reproductive health
It's All One Curriculum: Guidelines and activities for a unified approach to sexuality, gender, HIV, and human rights education

A practical resource for teaching young people about gender, sexual health and sexuality
Volume 1: Guidelines:
Volume 2: Activities:

Sports and recreation

UNICEF Recreation Kit: UNICEF Education Kit Handbook
Guidance and supplies for engaging children and adolescents in structured games, sports and recreation activities in humanitarian situations www.unicef.org/supply/files/ Education_Kits_User_Manuals_Module_2.pdf

Sport, Recreation and Play Guide
Provides an overview of children’s right to play, and examples of sport, recreation and play programmes around the world http://www.unicef.org/publications/files/5571_SPORT_EN.pdf

Moving Together: Promoting psychosocial well-being through sport and physical activity
International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies Reference Centre for Psychosocial Support, 2014.
Guidance on combining sport and physical activities with psychosocial support https://www.icsspe.org/sites/default/files/Moving%20Together.pdf
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