



Stability for Children in Displacement Operational Guidance

Photo by Ricardo Azcarate

ChildFund
International

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Introduction

Stability for Children in Displacement (CiD) is a programmatic package within ChildFund's Children in Crisis sector, designed to address the protection and resilience needs of children and families affected by migration. It aligns with ChildFund's mission and proven strengths, positioning the organization to achieve two core impact results:

- Stabilizing lives in the Americas and Africa through locally led, lifesaving support.
- Reducing violence, improving mental health, and expanding economic opportunities for children and youth across all stages of the migration cycle—pre-migration, transit, integration, and return.

The package delivers targeted interventions, including:

- **Preventing Irregular Migration of Children and Youth** by fostering safe, inclusive, and protective environments, strengthening community protection systems, and expanding dignified livelihood opportunities so children and youth can remain in their communities by choice.
- **Lifesaving Support and Protection During Displacement** through psychosocial support, legal aid, case management, and family reunification.
- **Reintegration of Populations After Displacement or Return** by ensuring access to education, livelihoods, and protection services through skills training, job placement, and financial inclusion to address the economic drivers of migration.

Through this integrated approach, CiD not only responds to immediate needs but also supports long-term system strengthening to achieve stability, protection, and opportunity for children and youth in displacement.

Purpose of Guidance

This document equips **ChildFund country offices, senior management, the business development and resource mobilization team, and technical specialists**, as well as partners and donors, with a roadmap to design, implement, and measure programs that protect and strengthen children and youth affected by migration and displacement. It translates ChildFund's strategic vision into actionable, locally owned, youth-centered programming tailored to the migration cycle: pre-migration, transit, settlement, and return.

How to Use This Document

- **Program Design:** Country offices are encouraged to adopt and adapt the proposed language, tools, and activities when developing their own projects. The Theory of Change (ToC), pathways, and activities should be contextualized to reflect the specific realities, needs, and priorities of the country and target communities.
- **Donor Engagement:** Communicate ChildFund's niche and evidence of impact effectively to align with

donor priorities.

- **Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E):** Build M&E frameworks using suggested indicators and pathways.
- **Localization and Partnerships:** Plan for strengthening and transferring leadership to local and youth-led actors.

Approach

ChildFund specializes in facilitating child-centered, **locally led protection and livelihood solutions** for children and youth in displacement—across the full migration cycle: pre-migration, displacement, return, and reintegration. Our approach bridges humanitarian response and development through practical, scalable interventions that shift power, build systems, and create lasting change.

- **Strengthening protection systems:** ChildFund supports formal and community-based actors to deliver coordinated, accountable, and inclusive services. We invest in local service workers, local authorities, and protection networks so they function effectively in both crisis and recovery settings.
- **Locally led systems:** ChildFund defines this as ensuring that decision-making, implementation, and resources are driven by local actors—including civil society, community groups, and refugee- and migrant-led organizations. We assist local institutions to build their institutional and technical capabilities, so they can lead protection and livelihood responses that are context-driven and sustainable.
- **Youth agency in system building:** We recognize youth not only as program participants, but as catalysts for system change. We help them take up the tools to co-design solutions, support peers, and engage with local authorities—ensuring that protection systems reflect their realities and are more responsive to their needs.
- **Safe spaces and specialized child protection services:** We deliver services where they are most needed, focusing on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS), case management, and referrals. These services are designed with and for the most marginalized, including girls, children with disabilities, and unaccompanied minors—and are delivered in partnership with existing local structures whenever possible.

Impact and Evidence

ChildFund's programs have demonstrated measurable impact in multiple contexts. Over the past seven years (2017-2024), our programs have reached thousands of individuals across 85+ communities in Mexico, Ecuador, Honduras, and Guatemala, leading to:

- ✓ 24% increase in youth civic engagement
- ✓ 35% decrease in children reporting mental distress
- ✓ 37% increase in women and girl violence survivors of violence accessing support
- ✓ 16% improvement in community safety perceptions
- ✓ 40% of supported youth gaining employment

Theory of Change and Impact

Impact Statement

Children and youth in displacement are protected from violence, supported by strengthened local systems and mental health and psychosocial care, and empowered with expanded skills and economic opportunities — leading to safer journeys and more resilient futures.

Theory of Change Across the Migration Cycle

ChildFund's overarching Theory of Change for Children in Displacement addresses the full migration cycle — prevention (pre-migration), displacement, and reintegration. Each phase has a specific theory of change that responds to the unique risks, capabilities, and opportunities relevant to that stage, while all are grounded in one unifying vision: ensuring that children and youth are protected, empowered, and resilient — wherever they are on their journey.

At the core of this approach lies a commitment to locally led, child-centered, and age-responsive programming that builds protective ecosystems, strengthens systems, and enhances agency. This enables children and youth to make informed decisions, remain safely in their communities when possible, and reintegrate with dignity when returning or settling in a new place.

Definition: Migration Cycle

Migration cycle refers to the various stages and processes involved in the displacement of people from one place to another. It encompasses the entire journey — **from the decision to migrate through the journey itself, to integration and settlement** in a new location. This process is **not linear**. Migration is often **complex and dynamic**, meaning a person may experience multiple stages more than once, skip stages, or move between them in different sequences.

Diagram of the cycle of migration. *The different contexts associated with each stage of the cycle*

Pre-migration

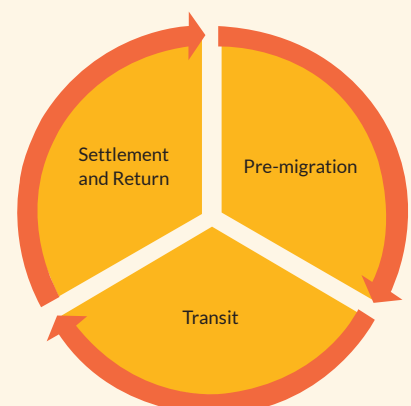
- i) Urban and rural environments where young people are 'at risk of migration'

Transit

- i) Transit shelters along informal migration routes
- ii) Cross-border refugee arrival and transit centers

Settlement and Return

- i) Refugee and Internal Displacement settlements
- ii) Informal settlement in urban settings (including border towns)
- iii) Voluntary return to places of origin
- iv) Return as a result of deportation



CiD Overall Theory of Change

If ChildFund collaborates with youth, communities, and local systems to build protective ecosystems around children in displacement—through immediate, responsive protection services, youth-led action, locally owned solutions, access to essential services like health and education, and pathways to dignified livelihoods—then children and youth will experience greater safety, agency, and resilience, make informed decisions about migration, and reintegrate with dignity. This will lead to reduced irregular migration, stronger community systems, and improved well-being across migration-affected settings.

Stage-Specific Theories of Change

1. Preventing Irregular Migration of Children and Youth ToC – Addressing Root Causes

If ChildFund collaborates with youth, communities, and local systems to build protective and inclusive environments — through stronger protection systems, youth-led action, locally owned solutions, and dignified livelihoods — then children and youth will feel safe, confident, and self-reliant, and choose to remain in their communities. This will lead to reduced irregular migration, stronger resilience, and improved well-being.

2. Lifesaving Support and Protection During Displacement

If ChildFund collaborates with communities, humanitarian partners, and national systems to deliver safe, inclusive, and accountable protection services — including safe spaces, case management, psychosocial support, and lifesaving assistance — then children and youth in displacement will be supported, and less vulnerable to harm, exploitation, and abuse during displacement.

3. Reintegration of Populations After Displacement or Return

If ChildFund ensures protective and empowering environments for returning and displaced youth — by expanding inclusive protection services, strengthening youth agency, and fostering economic inclusion — then youth will become more resilient, less vulnerable to re-migration, and more likely to lead positive change in their communities.

Pathways of Change According to Migration Context

Programmatic Sectors

ChildFund's Theory of Change is anchored in two sectors — **Child Protection** and **Youth Agency** — reflecting a strategic commitment to a systems-building approach that promotes safety, agency, and long-term resilience for children and youth in displacement. **Health and Education** are integrated into programming as critical enablers of protection and well-being, particularly in fragile or disrupted contexts. Access to essential health care, psychosocial support, and safe, quality learning opportunities strengthens protective environments, reduces vulnerabilities, and supports the holistic development of children and youth.

ChildFund defines lifesaving interventions as urgent services that prevent death, disease, or disability when people have little or no access to care. In protection, this means safeguarding children and youth by reducing risks such as trafficking, irregular migration of unaccompanied children, and unsafe family displacement.

System strengthening, as defined by ChildFund, entails enhancing the capacity, coordination, and accountability of formal institutions — such as national social welfare and child protection systems—and informal community-based structures. **ChildFund focuses on immediate lifesaving support in crises (such as MHPSS, safe spaces, and case management) and sustainable system development by building the capabilities of service staff and volunteers, local partners, and national coordination bodies.** This dual approach ensures that urgent needs are met while laying the foundation for locally owned, durable protection systems. ChildFund works across all levels—community, sub-national, and national—to ensure that protection mechanisms are responsive, inclusive, and locally led.

This systems-based approach defines ChildFund's unique niche as a protection-focused organization that bridges humanitarian response with durable development outcomes. Rather than establishing parallel services, ChildFund strengthens and embeds its programming within existing structures, supporting government coordination mechanisms, training service providers, helping local civil society and migrant-led organizations build their capacity, and reinforcing referral networks to promote continuity of care and access to services.

Youth agency is a core driver of system strengthening. ChildFund helps youth build their capabilities as leaders, peer supporters, and co-creators of solutions. Through life skills, vocational training, and civic engagement, adolescents and young people are equipped not only to reduce their own vulnerabilities but also to influence and reinforce systems from within. Their active participation fosters accountability, enhances social cohesion, and ensures that protection systems reflect the lived realities of youth who are displaced and marginalized.

Measurement Framework

The measurement framework presented in Annex 2 outlines the vision of the Theory of Change and core sectors into actionable progress. The Outputs in the Measurement Framework represent a targeted and measurable set of actions and interventions that serve as building blocks toward long-term outcomes, including strengthened protection systems, enhanced youth agency, and improved access to health and education services. Collectively, these contribute to the broader goals of reducing violence, improving safety, and expanding economic opportunities for children and youth in displacement. By ensuring alignment among activities, outputs, outcomes and the overall goals, ChildFund ensures a results-driven, coherent approach that is adaptable and scalable across diverse migration contexts.

Children in Displacement Measurement Framework			
Impact Statement: Children and youth in displacement are protected from violence, supported by strengthened local systems and mental health and psychosocial care, and empowered with expanded skills and economic opportunities — leading to safer journeys and more resilient futures.			
Protection	Youth Agency	Health	Education
Outcome P1 – Formal and non-formal protection systems are strengthened	Outcome YA1 – Young people are empowered to make informed decisions about migration and lead community-driven actions	Outcome H1- Young people in displacement have increased access to lifesaving inclusive comprehensive primary health services	Outcome E1 – Children and youth in displacement access inclusive, flexible, and quality education — both formal and non-formal
Outcome P2 – Children, youth, and their families experience improved access to safe spaces and quality mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) services	Outcome YA2 – Young people develop soft skills, entrepreneurial mindsets, and access to livelihood opportunities	Outcome H2 – Survivors of violence against women and girls have timely access to quality, survivor-centered, and specialized health services	Outcome E2 – Children and youth in displacement strengthen their social and emotional skills to enhance well-being, resilience, and positive relationships
Outcome P3 – Children in displacement safely access timely and appropriate lifesaving and responsive child protection specialized services			

Key Elements of Children in Displacement Programming

This section provides standardized, high-impact programmatic descriptions (or boilerplates) for the three programmatic interventions of ChildFund's CiD strategy:

- Preventing Irregular Migration of Children and Youth
- Lifesaving Support and Protection During Displacement
- Reintegration of Populations After Displacement or Return

These programmatic descriptions are designed to support proposal development by providing evidence-based, ready-to-use content that can be adapted to national and local contexts. They are drawn from [ChildFund's 2024 Children in Displacement Evidence Review](#), which demonstrated that integrated protection, youth agency, and cross-sectoral interventions contribute to significant improvements in child safety, resilience, and well-being.

- Practitioners and proposal writers are encouraged to tailor the content to their operational realities while maintaining fidelity to ChildFund's core models. This ensures contextual relevance and consistency with ChildFund's global frameworks.
- A full logframe for each program component is included in the Measurement Framework Annex 2 of this guidance and hosted on ChildFund's Monitoring, Evaluation, Research, and Learning platform, known as the CAMEL system.

Prevention of Irregular Migration – Key Program Elements

Goal: To reduce irregular migration of children and youth by addressing root causes — violence, exclusion, and lack of opportunity — making staying home safer, more dignified, and viable.

Purpose: To prevent irregular migration by fostering protective and inclusive environments where children and youth feel safe, access dignified livelihoods, and lead community-driven solutions — supported by robust protection systems and youth-led initiatives.

***Tip for Proposal Writers:** Use the **goal** to describe the long-term, aspirational change aligned with broader priorities (align with donor's objectives). Use the **purpose** to define ChildFund's specific, measurable contribution within the program period. In logframes, the goal appears at the impact level, and the purpose at the outcome level.*

ToC

If ChildFund collaborates with youth, communities, and local systems to build protective and inclusive environments – through stronger protection systems, youth-led action, locally owned solutions, and dignified livelihoods – then children and youth will feel safe, confident, and self-reliant, and choose to remain in their communities. This leads to reduced irregular migration, stronger resilience, and improved well-being.

Protection Sector

Outcome P1 – Formal and non-formal protection systems are strengthened to prevent and respond to the specific risks faced by children in displacement. ChildFund’s approach to child protection in migration settings centers on building the long-term capacity of national and local governments as well as supporting community-based structures to deliver sustainable, child-friendly protection services. Rather than operating parallel systems or direct case management, ChildFund invests in training duty-bearers, strengthening formal service delivery, and facilitating trust and collaboration between communities and government actors. This includes creating and reinforcing referral pathways, improving accountability, and ensuring that protection systems are responsive to the unique risks children and youth face throughout the migration cycle. Community-based protection ensures the inclusion and leadership of refugee and displaced populations to capture their concerns and practical solutions, and to support smooth integration with host communities.

Recommendations for Proposal Writers:

- **Review** whether your country has a national Standard Operational Procedure (SOP) or policy on child protection and note the date of its last update.
 - **Ensure** that the SOP references or mandates community-based protection mechanisms and integrate these into your proposal where relevant.
 - **Map and assess** active protection structures in your target area (e.g., committees, case workers, referral pathways) to understand current capacity and gaps.
 - **Engage** local authorities and community leaders early to secure their support and participation.
 - **Design** your intervention to complement and strengthen existing protection structures, avoiding duplication and enhancing sustainability.
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Key Outputs

- **CA271 Government stakeholders (formal child protection and migration structures) are engaged and supported to provide quality child protection services to CiD (P1.1).** This output focuses on strengthening national and local government systems responsible for child protection and migration to deliver and sustain quality, rights-based services for children. Support will be grounded in existing laws, policies, and national standards, and will include targeted technical assistance and capacity-building through training, mentoring, and coaching, as well as the development and adaptation of

Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and referral pathways. The activity will also provide practical tools such as referral pathways, case management forms, and assessment frameworks, and offer policy guidance to align national frameworks with child protection priorities. Additionally, efforts will facilitate coordination among relevant government actors and strengthen leadership and accountability within government systems to ensure long-term effectiveness and sustainability of child protection responses.

- **CA272 Local service providers, police, and border officials are trained and supported to apply standardized protocols for the safe identification, referral, and response to protection needs of Children in Displacement (P1.2).** Frontline workers (Social workers, teachers, health service providers, border guards, etc.) are critical to safeguarding children in displacement. This output focuses on activating or developing referral pathways by training and coaching these workers to safely identify and refer child protection cases using inter-agency tools and procedures. This includes monthly training sessions focused on child protection case management and covering core themes such as active listening, managing stress in case management, addressing violence against children, identifying risk factors, creating protective environments, and *referring to lifesaving medical services*. ChildFund will also use its ***Gender-Based Violence Against Children and Youth with Disabilities Toolkit***, which guides service providers to identify and respond to violence risks among children and youth, including those with disabilities. This is delivered through two four-day inclusive workshops featuring case studies, checklists, and improvement plans.
- **CA273 Support community-led structures, including refugee-led groups, to design and drive their own protection initiatives to support children and families (P1.3).** This output will be achieved by addressing the protection needs and realities of adolescents and youth through the support of locally led initiatives managed by communities. ChildFund's own **Community-Based Child Protection (CBCP) mapping exercises and action planning tools and guidance** will help communities identify gaps in existing protection systems and connect them to formal mechanisms. These activities are conducted through two three-day participatory workshops following two to three weeks of fieldwork and include focus group discussions and the development of collective action plans. For refugee-led organizations, ChildFund employs its **Self-Reliance Tool** – an internal capacity-building framework addressing six key areas to support organizations in developing action plans aimed at achieving self-sustainability and strengthening governance systems.



Candalaria (38) stands with her son, **Salvador** (22 months) in front of a mural she helped paint in Sierra Norte de Puebla, Mexico. The mural reads, “End violence against children, adolescents and youth.” Candalaria is a member of the local child protection committee.

Photo by Jake Lyell

For this project design, consider adding Outcomes P2 and P3 when specialized child protection services and well-being outputs are limited, to ensure a more comprehensive results framework.

Outcome P2 – Children, youth, and their families experience improved access to inclusive, age-appropriate safe spaces and quality mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) services. Safe spaces and psychosocial support are critical for restoring stability and resilience in the face of adversity. Safe Spaces can be physical or/and outreach teams reaching hard to reach populations. Safe Spaces staff assist other program staff in safely identifying and referring children to specialized child protection services.

Outcome P3 – Children in displacement safely access timely and appropriate life-saving and responsive child protection specialized services that address their specific risks and needs. This outcome emphasizes the importance of specialized child protection services, such as case management and family reunification. ChildFund ensures that these services are available, coordinated, and accessible to the most vulnerable children, including those who are unaccompanied or separated.

For detailed outputs for Outcome P2 and P3 refer to pages 15 and 17.

Youth Agency Sector

Outcome YA1 – Young people are empowered to make informed decisions about migration and lead community-driven actions that reduce risks, strengthen protection, and support reintegration in safe and inclusive environments. Youth play a pivotal role in shaping safer communities. When they have accurate information and leadership opportunities, they create protective environments and reduce drivers of irregular migration through locally owned, sustainable solutions.

Key Outputs

- **CA241 Support youth-led initiatives to create safe, supportive environments that reduce drivers of irregular migration and support reintegration of returnees through community-based solutions and opportunities (focuses on external environment and structural/local responses) (YA1.1).**
The project will support youth-driven initiatives that create safe, inclusive, and enabling spaces by addressing structural barriers and amplifying youth leadership. It will leverage ChildFund Alliance's **Child-Friendly Accountability** methodology to enhance the child protection system at local, regional, and national levels. This approach ensures that children and youth can monitor and improve interventions, including Community Action Plans (output 1.3). Youth will be supported in identifying protection gaps and taking direct action or advocating with their communities to address these issues. The **Child-Friendly Accountability (CFA) Toolbox** will be delivered through two four-day workshops, with optional virtual follow-up, where youth learn to conduct audits, create scorecards, and lead advocacy efforts. Additionally, the **Women's Safety Audit** will guide youth, particularly young women, in assessing public safety risks and developing recommendations through two three-day mapping and advocacy exercises.
- **CA242 Youth are supported with life skills, leadership opportunities, and peer support to make informed decisions around migration and lead community-based actions that reduce risk and promote positive alternatives (Individual Behavior Change Focus) (YA1.2).** Using ChildFund's Youth Advocacy & Regional Action Plan approach, young people receive training in leadership, public speaking, and policy engagement. They identify key social issues affecting their communities, formulate proposals, and advocate for policy and practice changes that improve protection and resilience for children and youth in displacement. High-level activities: **Deliver workshops on**

advocacy, leadership, and public policy engagement for youth, with a focus on migration-related risks and solutions. **Facilitate structured engagement events or consultations** where youth present their action plans to local, regional, or national stakeholders and follow up on agreed actions.

Recommendations for Proposal Writers:

- **Assess** whether youth are already organized into structures such as clubs or councils within your target area and explore opportunities to collaborate with them.
 - **Map** how young people currently participate in local decision-making processes to identify strengths and gaps.
 - **Ensure** that youth have access to accurate, relevant, and timely information about migration risks.
 - **Design** interventions that strengthen youth-led solutions while aligning with and respecting local priorities.
-

Outcome YA2 – Young people develop soft skills, entrepreneurial mindsets, and access to livelihood opportunities that enable them to pursue dignified work, avoid unsafe migration, and contribute meaningfully to their communities. Economic insecurity drives irregular migration. By helping youth build relevant skills, fostering their entrepreneurship, and connecting them to livelihood networks, they can achieve self-reliance, resist risky migration, and contribute to their communities.

Key Outputs

- **CA421 Youth are supported to learn relevant vocational and life skills for the local labor market (YA2.1).** Many youth who are at risk of irregular migration or those recently returned from displacement face significant barriers to accessing meaningful employment or viable economic alternatives. This intervention provides them with market-relevant training, entrepreneurial support, and foundational life skills to empower informed livelihood choices and reduce vulnerability to exploitation or re-migration. Key activities include: (1) delivering technical and vocational education and training (TVET) and apprenticeships aligned with market demand (e.g., clean energy, agri-tech, digital services); (2) providing start-up kits or seed funding for youth-led income-generating initiatives; and (3) offering education on environmental adaptation techniques, particularly in agricultural settings.
- **CA422 Provide youth access to livelihood support services and networks. (YA2.2).** Many youth—especially those in displacement or returning from migration—face persistent barriers to accessing income-generating opportunities, even when they possess relevant skills. This intervention addresses those gaps by strengthening youth access to financial services, peer networks, and market systems that support inclusive economic participation. By promoting savings groups, facilitating mentorship with local businesses, and ensuring access to youth-friendly financial services, the intervention enhances economic resilience, reduces isolation, and fosters self-reliance. These efforts are particularly critical in reintegration settings where trusted, accessible support systems can significantly influence long-term economic outcomes. High-level activities: (1) Conduct market

and skills mapping exercises to align youth capabilities with local employment opportunities. (2) Facilitate interaction with local businesses for mentorship, job shadowing, and apprenticeship placements. (3) Promote youth savings groups and link them to accessible, youth-friendly financial services. **ChildFund's Youth Entrepreneurship and Seed Funding curriculum** supports youth aged 15–29, particularly young women and returnees, to launch sustainable income-generating activities. Delivered in-person or through a hybrid model, the program includes five days of training followed by six months of ongoing mentorship. The curriculum blends vocational skills, business development support, and seed funding competitions to promote both employment and self-employment, with a strong focus on business formalization, sustainability, and economic resilience.

Lifesaving Support and Protection During Displacement – Key Program Elements

Goal: Ensure that children and youth in displacement are protected and supported during displacement through inclusive, accountable, and lifesaving interventions.

Purpose: To strengthen community, national, and humanitarian systems to deliver coordinated protection services — including safe spaces, case management, psychosocial support, and emergency assistance — that reduce risks and uphold the dignity and rights of displaced children and youth.

*Tip for Proposal Writers: Use the **goal** to describe the long-term, aspirational change aligned with broader priorities (align with donor's objectives). Use the **purpose** to define ChildFund's specific, measurable contribution within the program period. In logframes, the goal appears at the impact level, and the purpose at the outcome level.*

ToC

If ChildFund collaborates with communities, humanitarian partners, and national systems to deliver safe, inclusive, and accountable protection services — including safe spaces, case management, psychosocial support, and lifesaving assistance — then children and youth in displacement will be supported, and less vulnerable to harm, exploitation, and abuse during displacement.

Outcome P2 – Children, youth, and their families experience improved access to inclusive, age-appropriate safe spaces and quality mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) services. Safe spaces and psychosocial support are critical for restoring stability and resilience during adversity. Safe Spaces can be physical or/and outreach teams reaching hard-to-reach populations. Safe Spaces staff assist other program staff in safely identifying and referring children to specialized child protection services.

Key Outputs

- CA281 Inclusive and age-responsive safe spaces are established or strengthened to provide

protective and supportive environments for children, youth, and caregivers (P2.1). This activity supports the participatory design, infrastructure development, and training necessary to establish trusted spaces where children and youth can safely recover, connect, and express themselves. High-level activities include: (1) Conduct participatory consultations with children and youth to capture their views for establishing/enhancing safe spaces. (2) Establish protective spaces with security measures. (3) Provide training to safe spaces staff on child protection, inclusion, and participatory methods. **ChildFund’s Child-Friendly Spaces (CFS)** will serve as a platform for mobilizing and engaging community members and youth. The **CFS Toolkit** guides the creation of protective environments for children aged 3–17, delivered through three-day facilitator training sessions focused on structured routines, play, learning, and emotional support. For older youth, **the Youth Safe Spaces Toolkit** empowers individuals aged 15–24 to co-design inclusive, youth-led spaces through two-day workshops and mentorship sessions that foster dignity, participation, and social connection.

Recommendations for Proposal Writers:

- **Identify and assess** existing safe spaces in your area (e.g., schools, community centers, child-friendly spaces) to determine their capacity and suitability.
 - **Analyze and address** barriers that prevent children and caregivers from accessing mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) services.
 - **Engage and support** trained staff or local providers who can deliver culturally appropriate MHPSS.
 - **Leverage** existing facilities and partnerships to establish or enhance safe spaces for children and families.
 - **Ensure** that safe spaces and services include provisions for girls, children with disabilities, and other marginalized groups to promote inclusivity and accessibility.
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- **CA281 Mobile outreach services are deployed to reach hard-to-reach communities with lifesaving protection and psychosocial support.** This activity ensures that vulnerable populations in remote, displaced, or conflict-affected areas are not excluded from protection services. The mobile outreach approach brings services closer to children, youth, and families who cannot access static facilities due to distance, insecurity, or mobility restrictions. High-level activities include: (1) Conduct participatory consultations with community leaders, caregivers, and youth to identify barriers to accessing services and preferred modalities for outreach. (2) Deploy mobile teams of trained protection and psychosocial support staff equipped with referral tools, first-aid kits, and safeguarding protocols. (3) Deliver mobile sessions focused on child protection, MHPSS, and referral pathways for urgent cases, adapted to the cultural and linguistic context of each community. (4) Strengthen local capacity by training community volunteers and focal points to support continuity of services between visits. ChildFund’s Mobile Outreach Tool (adapted from the CFS’ chapter 7) provides structured guidance for protection-sensitive service delivery in transit settings, informal settlements, and remote rural areas. Modules include participatory assessments, mobile-friendly psychosocial activities, referral standards, and safeguarding measures tailored for high-risk environments.



A doctor provides care to two young girls during a medical brigade in a local community in Mexico, providing primary healthcare and psychosocial support to reduce the service gap for people in displacement and those in vulnerable situations.

Photo by Ricardo Azcárate

- **CA301 Children, youth, and their caregivers access structured and unstructured mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) services tailored to their specific needs and contexts (P2.2).** MHPSS programming is delivered inside CFS or/and youth safe spaces. Where appropriate, services are delivered through outreach mobile services to reach people in high-risk or hard-to-access areas. Four main activities will be implemented to achieve this output: (1) an outreach program to raise awareness and identify distressed children and youth for MHPSS services; (2) building community capacity to create a cadre of Psychological First Aid (PFA) helpers who can identify signs of distress and connect individuals to basic and MHPSS services; (3) providing structured PSS services to children in ChildFund's **Child-Friendly Spaces (CFS)** and to adolescents and youth showing high levels of distress; and (4) referring participants in need of specialized MHPSS services. Tools to be used include **WarChild's Care System Package**, **ChildFund's My Body and Me program** (which builds self-esteem and healthy relationship awareness in youth and caregivers through four interactive weekly sessions), and **ChildFund's Psychological First Aid training**, which prepares local actors to offer immediate support and referrals through two-day in-person or virtual workshops featuring role-play and simulated scenarios.

**** Activities numbered 1–4 may vary in wording but should be recorded in CAMEL under the following codes: CA301-01, CA301-02, and CA301-03—selecting the code that is the best fit.**

Outcome P3 – Children in displacement safely access timely and appropriate lifesaving and responsive child protection specialized services that address their specific risks and needs. This outcome emphasizes the importance of specialized child protection services, such as case management and family reunification. ChildFund ensures that these services are available, coordinated, and accessible to the most vulnerable children, including those who are unaccompanied or separated. This outcome refers primarily to the provision of direct specialized child protection services, particularly when national or local systems are disrupted or unable to meet needs. While this outcome focuses on direct service provision, it should be implemented in tandem (when possible and resources are available) with **Outcome P1** to support long-term protection system strengthening and sustainability beyond the crisis phase.

Key Outputs

- **CA302 Case management systems are established or strengthened to ensure timely identification, assessment, referral, and follow-up for at-risk children in displacement (P3.1).** ChildFund ensures that vulnerable children are systematically identified and connected to appropriate services through robust case management systems. By training case workers and strengthening referral pathways, we promote individualized care and protection throughout the migration journey. High-level activities: (1) Conduct training for frontline workers on child protection case management standards and procedures. (2) Establish referral pathways and service mapping with local actors across sectors. (3) Screen and refer protection cases (including FTR). (4) Provide regular supervision and coaching for case workers to ensure quality and accountability.
- **CA303 Provide family tracing, reunification, and alternative care services/interventions to support unaccompanied and separated children (P3.2).** To protect children separated from caregivers, ChildFund strengthens safe family tracing and reunification processes. Where reunification is not possible, we support the identification and monitoring of alternative care options, ensuring that every child has a safe and nurturing environment. High-level activities: (1) Train local service staff on safe Family Tracing and Reunification (FTR) protocols and alternative care standards. (2) Establish or support coordination mechanisms with national tracing and reunification systems (e.g., ICRC, child protection authorities). (3) Identify and assess context-appropriate alternative care options. (4) Support safe placement and monitoring of UASC in appropriate alternative care options.

Health Sector (Service Provision)

Outcome H1 – Young people in displacement have increased access to lifesaving inclusive and gender-sensitive comprehensive primary health services. ChildFund recognizes that access to health care is essential to survival and well-being. In situations where no other actor provides essential health services, ChildFund provides mobile services and supports inclusive health systems to ensure that children and youth can access immediate and lifesaving care regardless of their legal status or location.

Key Outputs

- **CA111 Mobile health units deployed and operational in target communities to reach young people in displacement (H1.1).** ChildFund delivers lifesaving medical and mental health services to vulnerable children, youth, and families across different points of the migration cycle, including in origin, transit, and return contexts, when no other provider is available to meet urgent health needs. Where appropriate, services are delivered through mobile outreach services to reach people in high-risk or hard-to-access areas. The focus is on acute, life-threatening conditions that require immediate attention to prevent death, disease, or long-term harm. Services are provided by trained multidisciplinary teams and coordinated with humanitarian and public health systems for follow-up and referral. High level activities include: (1) Deliver emergency medical services in underserved migration settings. Provide immediate care for acute health conditions (e.g., dehydration, injuries, infections) through community-based service points or mobile clinics, focusing on areas where public or NGO health providers are not operational. (2) Deploy mobile Pop-Up Service Points (PUSPs) in transit and high-risk locations. Mobilize multidisciplinary health teams to offer lifesaving care in shelters, informal settlements, and other transit locations where access is limited or absent. (3) Build local health and referral capacity in the absence of existing services. Train local health workers, CBOs, and local actors to identify and manage life-threatening health and mental health conditions, and to strengthen emergency referral networks in underserved areas.

**** Activities numbered 1–3 may vary in wording but should be recorded in CAMEL under the following codes, selecting the code that is the best fit: CA111-01, CA111-02, CA111-03, CA111-04.**

- **CA112 Community outreach and information campaigns conducted to increase awareness of health services and youth health rights among mobile populations (H1.2).** Access to health services begins with awareness. Children, youth, and families in displacement often navigate unfamiliar environments where accurate, accessible information is limited or unavailable. ChildFund addresses this gap by designing and delivering inclusive, contextually appropriate outreach campaigns that inform mobile populations—particularly adolescents—of their health rights and available services. High-level activities: (1) Design and disseminate inclusive and culturally IEC materials (flyers, posters, radio messages) in local languages on available health services. (2) Organize community dialogue sessions and info sessions, engaging youth leaders, caregivers, and local service providers. (3) Coordinate and share up-to-date service mapping and referral pathways with communities and partners.

**** Activities numbered 1–3 may vary in wording but should be recorded in CAMEL under the following code: CA112-02.**

- **CA113 Health facility staff are trained and systems strengthened to deliver youth-friendly and inclusive services (H1.3).** Health facility staff and systems deliver inclusive, youth-friendly services. ChildFund works with health providers to improve service quality and inclusivity through training and facility physical infrastructure adaptation. This ensures that children and youth can access health care in a safe and supportive environment. High-level activities: (1) Train health staff on adolescent- and child-friendly service delivery, including communication skills, confidentiality, and safeguarding protocols. (2) Improve physical infrastructure to create safe, inclusive, and welcoming health facility environments for youth and children. (3) Strengthen coordination with health facility leadership to improve service quality and referral pathways.

**** Activities numbered 1–3 may vary in wording but should be recorded in CAMEL under the following codes, selecting the code that is the best fit: CA112-02, CA113-01.**

Outcome H2 – Survivors of violence against women and girls have timely access to quality, survivor-centered, and specialized health services. This outcome prioritizes survivors of violence—particularly girls and young women. ChildFund strengthens violence response systems so that survivors can access safe, confidential, and comprehensive care.

Key Outputs

- **CA541 Health service providers are trained and supported to deliver high-quality, survivor-centered, and trauma-informed care in line with global standards (H2.1).** ChildFund helps health providers strengthen their capacity to deliver safe, confidential, and competent care for survivors of violence, especially girls and young women in displacement. Through targeted training and systems support, health service providers learn trauma-informed, survivor-centered practices aligned with global standards. These efforts enhance the quality of violence response services, build trust in local health systems, and ensure that survivors can access the care they need. ***ChildFund will also use its Violence Against Children and Youth with Disabilities Toolkit***, which teaches service providers to identify and respond to violence risks among children and youth, including those with disabilities. This is delivered through a four-day inclusive workshops featuring case studies, checklists, and improvement plans.
- **CA542 Health facilities are equipped and prepared to deliver specialized violence response**

services. (H2.2). ChildFund ensures that health facilities have the infrastructure, supplies, and SOPs needed to deliver comprehensive care, with a focus on safety, confidentiality, and accessibility. These activities follow SOPs and training curriculum provided by WHO and other UN agencies active in this context where the activities are implemented.

Reintegration of Populations After Displacement or Return – Key Program Elements

Goal: Returning and displaced youth experience safe, supportive, and resilient reintegration in their communities through access to inclusive protection, meaningful participation, and sustainable livelihoods.

Purpose: To establish protective and empowering environments for youth upon return or relocation by delivering integrated protection services, fostering youth agency, and enabling economic inclusion. This contributes to long-term resilience, reduces vulnerability to re-migration, and supports youth to actively engage in community development and recovery.

***Tip for Proposal Writers:** Use the **goal** to describe the long-term, aspirational change aligned with broader priorities (align with donor's objectives). Use the **purpose** to define ChildFund's specific, measurable contribution within the program period. In logframes, the goal appears at the impact level, and the purpose at the outcome level.*

ToC

If ChildFund ensures protective and empowering environments for returning and displaced youth – by expanding inclusive protection services, strengthening youth agency, and fostering economic inclusion – then youth will become more resilient, less vulnerable to re-migration, and more likely to lead positive changes in their communities.

Key Outputs

According to [ChildFund's 2024 Children in Displacement Evidence Review](#), program interventions proposed under the Prevention of Irregular Migration initiative, particularly those within the protection and youth agency sectors, demonstrated significant promise in reducing drivers of unsafe migration, as well as supporting the reintegration of returnees and resettlement of displaced populations. These interventions, which focused on strengthening child protection systems, creating inclusive safe spaces, and fostering youth leadership and peer support networks, are detailed in this guidance under the sections titled “Outcome P1” (page 11) and “Outcome YA1” (page 13). Practitioners are encouraged to refer directly to these sections when designing or adapting programs for similar contexts.

The review further emphasized that integrating the education sector with emphasis on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) into returnee-focused programming enhances impact. Specifically,

initiatives that supported teachers and educational staff in reintegration and return settings resulted in improved psychosocial well-being. Notably, 97 percent of participating teachers reported reduced levels of distress following program interventions.

Education (Service Provision)

Outcome E1 – Children and youth in displacement access inclusive, flexible, and quality education—both formal and non-formal—across different stages of migration, enhancing their learning continuity, well-being, and future opportunities. This outcome reflects ChildFund’s commitment to ensuring that migration does not interrupt learning. We provide adaptive education opportunities that protect children’s right to learn and contribute to their long-term development.

Key Outputs

- **CA161 Children and youth in displacement access context-appropriate, transitional education services in transit and marginal settings (E1.1).** ChildFund provides non-formal and mobile education services that maintain learning continuity for children in displacement. These are designed to be flexible, protective, and accessible in emergency and transitional settings.



Sponsored child **Juliana (9)** attends a ChildFund-supported school in Imbabura Province, Ecuador, where she participates in the Safe and Protected Children program and plays on an improved outdoor play equipment provided by our organization.

Photo by Jake Lyell

- **CA162 Inclusive education programs are implemented to facilitate the enrollment, retention, and meaningful participation of children and youth in displacement in formal schooling (E1.2).** Inclusive education programs support enrollment, retention, and meaningful participation in formal schooling. By addressing documentation, stigma, and academic gaps, ChildFund supports the integration of migrant and returnee children into formal education systems. This fosters inclusion, learning, and long-term development.

Outcome E2 – Children and youth in displacement strengthen their social and emotional skills to enhance well-being, resilience, and positive relationships. Social-emotional skills are critical to resilience in crisis. This outcome captures our work to integrate SEL into education and psychosocial programming, enabling young people to navigate stress, rebuild relationships, and develop healthy identities.

Key Outputs

- **CA191 Social and emotional learning opportunities are integrated into education programming to strengthen the emotional well-being, resilience, and interpersonal skills of children in displacement (E2.1).** ChildFund embeds SEL into learning environments to promote emotional well-being, resilience, and peer connection among children and youth experiencing migration-related stress.
- **CA192 Local workers and facilitators are equipped to deliver social and emotional learning in supportive and inclusive ways (E2.2).** ChildFund trains educators and facilitators to implement SEL approaches that are culturally appropriate and responsive to the needs of children in displacement, ensuring that emotional support is available alongside academic learning.

Annexes

Annex 1: Definition Paper for Children in Displacement

Annex 2: Measurement Framework

Annex 3: ChildFund's Tools

Annex 4: Global Overview and Regional Context Snapshots

