CORE COMMITMENTS FOR CHILDREN IN HUMANITARIAN ACTION

Factsheet

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unicef
for every child

What are the CCCs?

The Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action (CCCs) are the **core UNICEF policy and framework for humanitarian action**. They set commitments and benchmarks against which UNICEF holds itself accountable for the coverage, quality and equity of its humanitarian action and advocacy.

The CCCs:

- Are guided by international humanitarian and human rights law, particularly the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and its Optional Protocols

- Apply in all countries and territories, in all contexts, and to all children, based on rights and needs

- Provide a menu of minimum commitments, activities, benchmarks and standards that UNICEF commits to achieve with its partners

- Are grounded in the Sphere standards, including the Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability

(CHS), the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) Minimum Standards, Minimum Standards for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action (CPMS); and reflect UNICEF's Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) commitments

- Contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and include explicit strategies to link humanitarian and development action, strengthen local capacity and systems

- Contribute to social cohesion and peace, whenever relevant and feasible

THEY ARE PUBLISHED WITH THE FOLLOWING COMPANION

- The References comprise links to the international legal framework, norms and standards (📖 See Chapter 1) and to UNICEF and interagency guidance and handbooks on Programmes (📖 See Chapter 2) and Operations (📖 See Chapter 3).

- The CCCs Indicator Guidance aligns UNICEF Programme Commitments (📖 See Chapter 2) with UNICEF planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting systems through a compendium of indicators.

- The CCCs Monitoring Framework for Operational Commitments provides the means and accountabilities for monitoring all UNICEF Operational Commitments (📖 See Chapter 3).

WHO CAN USE THE CCCs?

The CCCs can be used by:

- **UNICEF personnel** to understand UNICEF's mandate and implement the CCCs;

- **Governments** to bear their primary responsibility for responding to a crisis and promoting the realization of children's rights;

- **All UNICEF partners** (i.e. governments, UN system, civil society organizations, private sector, donors), as well as media and academia to understand UNICEF's mandate and advocate for children's rights;

- **Affected populations**, to hold UNICEF accountable.

HOW TO USE THE CCCs

The CCCs can be used as:

- A **mandatory policy** for all UNICEF personnel

- A **communication and advocacy** instrument to engage with all stakeholders

- A **fundraising tool** to explain UNICEF mandate and raise funds

- A **reference framework** for **planning, monitoring and reporting** for every UNICEF Country Office (CO)

- A **partnership tool** for UNICEF and its partners to discuss mutual accountabilities

- A **one-stop shop** on the most up-to-date humanitarian policies handbooks and guidance

INTENDED USE	TARGETED AUDIENCE
Mandatory policy	🔵
Reference framework for planning, monitoring and reporting	🔵
One-stop shop on the most up-to-date policies and guidance	🔵 🟢 🟡 🟠
Programming reference to design programmes and partnership agreements	🔵 🟢 🟡
Partnership tool for UNICEF and its partners to discuss mutual accountabilities	🔵 🟢 🟡
Communication and advocacy instrument	🔵 🟢 🟡 🟠 🔴

Key: Targeted audience

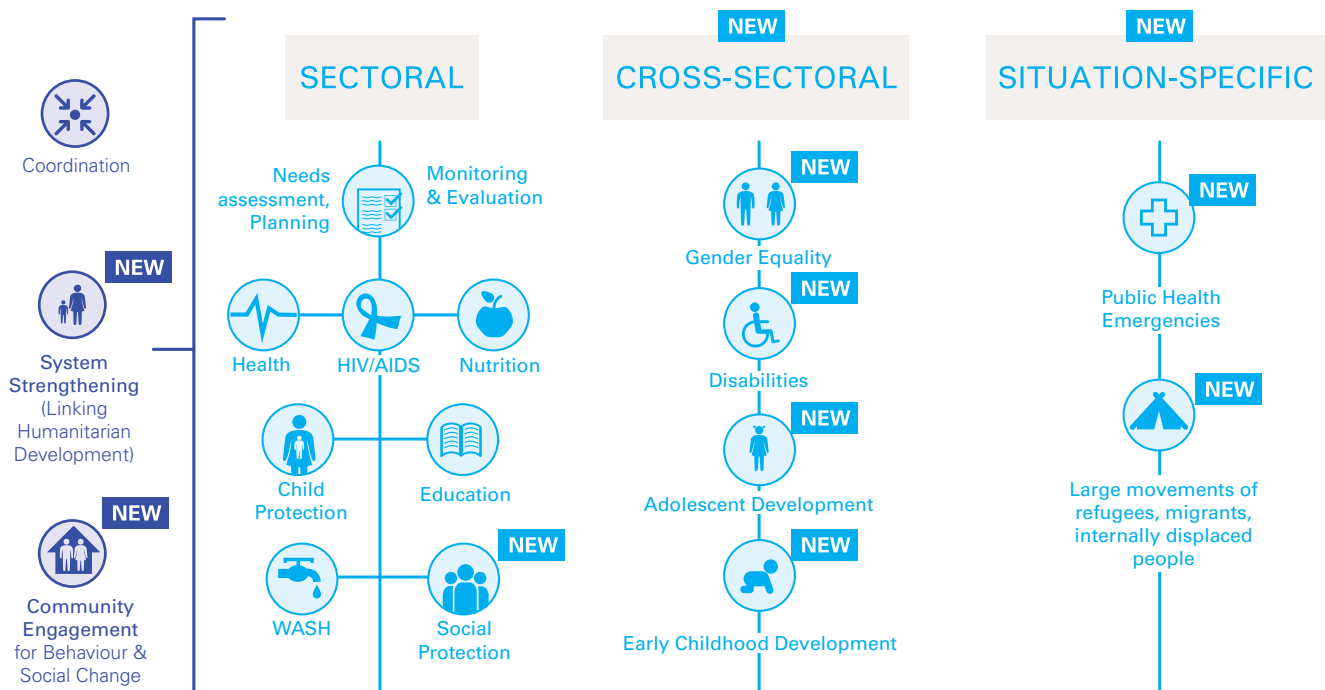| 🔵 All UNICEF personnel and Offices	🟢 Governments	🟡 UNICEF partners: governments, UN, CSOs, private sector, donors	🟠 All stakeholders, including UNICEF partners, media and academia	🔴 Affected population

What's new?

FUNCTION	WHAT IS NEW?
UNICEF core Policy and Framework for Humanitarian Action	• **The CCCs are to be used by every UNICEF Country Office** as a framework to monitor the situation of women and children and take preparedness and response measures. They describe UNICEF commitments to the most disadvantaged children and their families, regardless of the kind of crisis, and irrespective of the income level of the country.
Planning Reference for every UNICEF Country Office	• **The CCC commitments and benchmarks are aligned with and supported by existing Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation systems.** Tools are provided to help the Country Offices to embed the CCCs in the design their Annual Workplans (AWP), Country Programme Documents (CPD), Emergency Response Plans, Humanitarian appeals (HAC) and Partnerships.
Mandatory policy for all UNICEF personnel	• **Organizational and Managerial Commitments are established for all UNICEF personnel and managers,** and the performance of every office and staff member can be assessed against them. The CCCs describe the role and responsibilities of CO/RO/HQ and NatComs (organizational commitments) and the obligations of all staff to deliver on the CCCs (managerial commitments). Tools are provided to facilitate the inclusion of the CCCs in the work plans and PERs of team members.
Accountability to results	• **Operational commitments are strengthened with the establishment of measurable benchmarks, aligned with Emergency Procedures and monitored in in the UNICEF internal monitoring system (VISION),** allowing to track UNICEF performance.
Tool for UNICEF partners and for the design of partnership agreements	• The CCCs describe UNICEF **accountabilities to its operational partners**. The rollout will proactively target UNICEF operational partners to ensure they know and use the CCCs to discuss mutual accountabilities with UNICEF at country level. The rollout will target governments, CSOs and all partners. A new website corecommitments.unicef.org will be launched and accessible to all, with resources and tools for the implementation of the CCCs. • **The CCCs provide a one-stop shop on the most up-to-date humanitarian policies and guidance on programmes and operations** – through hyperlinks that will be regularly updated. Standards and results frameworks can be used by UNICEF personnel and partners to design Programme Cooperation Agreement (PCA) and associated Programme Documents signed at country level.

Quality of UNICEF humanitarian response	• New commitments **focus on the quality of the programmes** and reflect UNICEF engagement on key issues like linking humanitarian and development, national systems' strengthening, community engagement, and accountability to affected populations. Multi and cross- sectoral programme commitments are established with benchmarks applicable to all Country Offices, and reflect:
	
	  • The progress made in the last decade: on preparedness, coordination, humanitarian cash transfers;
	
	  • The focus on the quality of the response: inclusion of gender, disabilities and considerations for early childhood development and adolescents, community engagement, accountability to affected populations, localization;
	
	  • The evolution of UNICEF scope of action: in public health emergencies, and in the response to large movements of refugees, migrants, internally displaced people;
	
	  • The new challenges: Protection from sexual abuse & exploitation (PSEA), humanitarian access, climate change and environment.
	
	• Policies are updated and aligned with new global humanitarian standards (including Sphere, Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies Minimum Standards, Minimum Standards for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action), Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP), Child Safeguarding, Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA), Data Protection. Guidance is provided on the application of humanitarian principles in UNICEF operations, engagement with Non-State Actors etc.

What are UNICEF Programme Commitments?

- **Programme commitments describe the scope of activities and advocacy** undertaken by UNICEF and its partners in humanitarian settings. They form UNICEF's contribution to a collective response and are designed to support interagency coordination and response.

- They apply in all contexts at all times. UNICEF's role in realizing the commitments varies by context. **Benchmarks describe the performance levels expected** against the commitments. They set expected standards of programme coverage, quality and equity.

- They are drawn from global humanitarian standards, including Sphere Standards, the Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability (CHS), the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) Minimum Standards and the Minimum Standards for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action (CPMS).

- They are all supported by specific and measurable benchmarks monitored by Country Offices.

PROGRAMME COMMITMENTS

Coordination

System Strengthening
(Linking Humanitarian Development) **NEW**

Community Engagement for Behaviour & Social Change **NEW**

SECTORAL

Needs assessment, Planning

Monitoring & Evaluation

Health

HIV/AIDS

Nutrition

Child Protection

Education

WASH

Social Protection **NEW**

CROSS-SECTORAL **NEW**

Gender Equality **NEW**

Disabilities **NEW**

Adolescent Development **NEW**

Early Childhood Development **NEW**

SITUATION-SPECIFIC **NEW**

Public Health Emergencies **NEW**

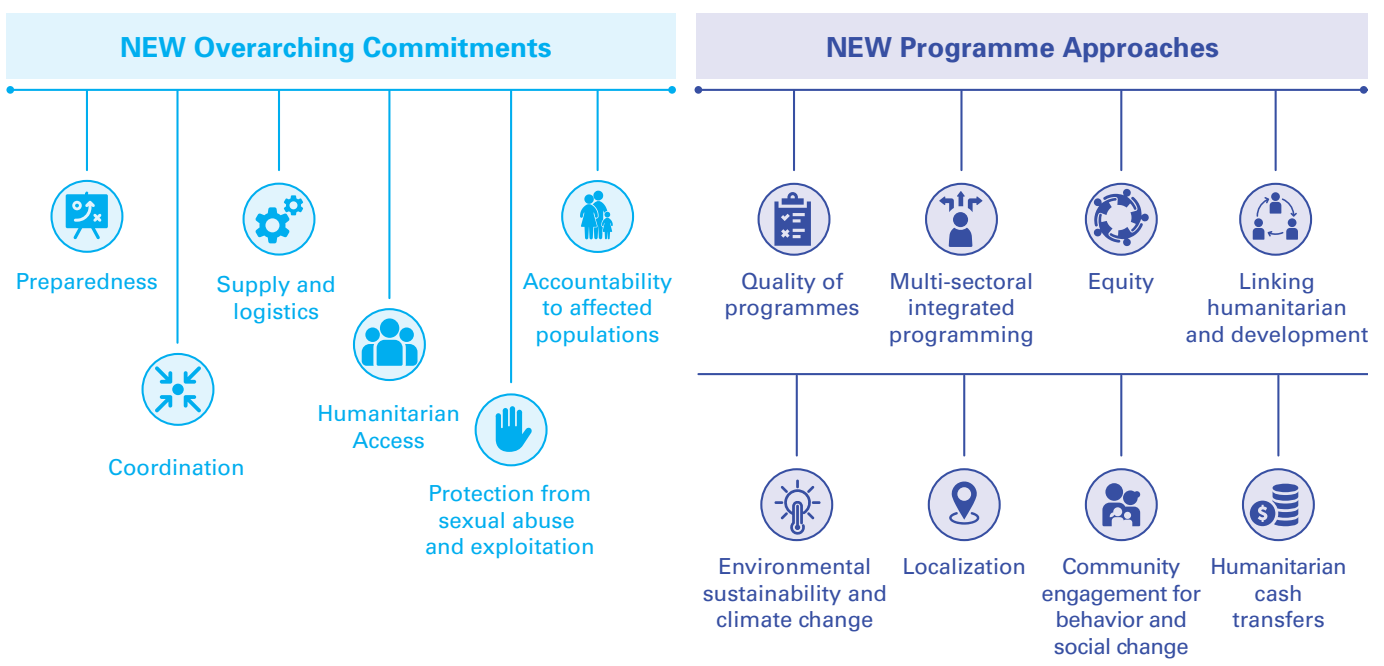Large movements of refugees, migrants, internally displaced people **NEW**

Overarching Programme commitments reflect:

- The progress made in the last decade: on preparedness, coordination, humanitarian cash transfers;
- The focus on the quality of the response: inclusion of gender, disabilities and considerations for early childhood development and adolescents, community engagement, accountability to affected populations, localization;
- The evolution of UNICEF scope of action: in public health emergencies, and in the response to large movements of refugees, migrants, internally displaced people;
- The new challenges: Protection from sexual abuse & exploitation (PSEA), humanitarian access, climate change and environment.

UNICEF thus commits to:

- Invest in **preparedness** with a focus on enabling effective and timely response, reducing costs and reaching the most vulnerable
- Ensure that **sectors/clusters under its leadership are adequately staffed and skilled**
- Ensure the **timely delivery and distribution of supplies** and essential household items to affected populations, partners and/or point-of-use
- **Establish and maintain humanitarian access including by seeking engagement with all parties to conflict**, and other stakeholders
- Ensure that **affected children and families participate in the decisions that affect their lives**
- Deliver on **PSEA**
- Design and implement **results-based humanitarian responses that are informed by humanitarian principles and human rights, meet global norms and standards**, and contribute to strengthening local capacity and systems
- Foster multisectoral/integrated programming and **geographic convergence** at all phases of the programme cycle
- Target and **reach the most disadvantaged children** and their communities with humanitarian assistance, protection and services
- **Build and strengthen national and local capacities** and systems from the start of humanitarian action to reduce needs, vulnerabilities of and risks to affected populations; and contribute to social cohesion and peace, where relevant and feasible
- Invest in **strengthening institutional and technical capacity of local actors** to deliver principled humanitarian response
- Design humanitarian programmes that integrate **environmental and climate risk**, prioritize approaches that minimize harm to the environment and contribute to building resilience, whenever relevant and feasible
- Implement **community engagement for behavior and social change** in collaboration with national and local actors
- Promote the use of **humanitarian cash transfers** whenever relevant and feasible

OVERARCHING PROGRAMME COMMITMENTS

NEW Overarching Commitments

- Preparedness
- Supply and logistics
- Coordination
- Humanitarian Access
- Protection from sexual abuse and exploitation
- Accountability to affected populations

NEW Programme Approaches

- Quality of programmes
- Multi-sectoral integrated programming
- Equity
- Linking humanitarian and development
- Environmental sustainability and climate change
- Localization
- Community engagement for behavior and social change
- Humanitarian cash transfers

What are UNICEF Operational Commitments?

Operational commitments describe the actions and standards UNICEF commits to, to enable programme implementation through effective use of resources and adequate operational support.
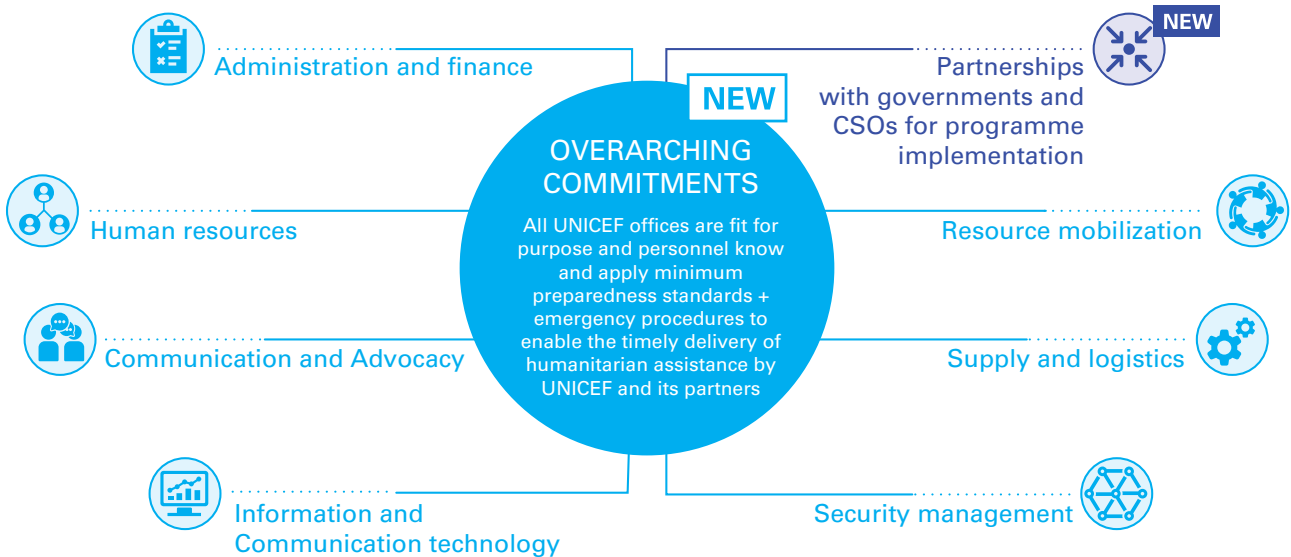
Benchmarks describe the performance levels expected against the commitments. They are drawn from global humanitarian standards, including Sphere Standards and the Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability (CHS).

They are aligned with UNICEF's Emergency Procedures and monitored in VISION and through the CCCs Operational Monitoring Framework.

OVERARCHING COMMITMENT:

All UNICEF offices are fit for purpose and personnel know and contribute to the application of the minimum preparedness standards and emergency procedures, to enable the timely delivery of humanitarian assistance by UNICEF and its partners.

OPERATIONAL COMMITMENTS

Administration and finance

Human resources

Communication and Advocacy

Information and Communication technology

NEW
OVERARCHING COMMITMENTS
All UNICEF offices are fit for purpose and personnel know and apply minimum preparedness standards + emergency procedures to enable the timely delivery of humanitarian assistance by UNICEF and its partners

NEW
Partnerships with governments and CSOs for programme implementation

Resource mobilization

Supply and logistics

Security management

Example of Programme Commitment: WASH

STRATEGIC RESULT

Children and their communities have equitable access to, and use, safe water and sanitation services, and adopt hygiene practices

COMMITMENTS	BENCHMARKS
1. Leadership and coordination **Programme Sectoral Commitments** describe the scope of activities undertaken by UNICEF and its partners in their humanitarian action and advocacy in a particular sector 📖 **See 2.1.2** Coordination	• Programme Sectoral Benchmarks describe the performance levels expected against the commitments. They set expected standards to be applied across all programming in that sector • WASH sector/cluster coordination and leadership functions are adequately staffed and skilled at national and sub-national levels • Core leadership and coordination accountabilities are delivered
2. Water supply Affected populations have safe and equitable access to, and use a sufficient quantity and quality of water to meet their drinking and domestic needs	• Quantity of water meets an initial minimum survival level of 7.5 litres, to at least 15 litres per person per day (Sphere) • Drinking water supply services meet at least "basic" level, as per Joint Monitoring Programme (JMP) standards • Quality of water meets WHO or national standards
3. Sanitation Affected populations have safe access to, and use appropriate sanitation facilities; and excreta is safely managed	• No-one is practicing open defecation • A maximum ratio of 20 people per functioning shared toilet, separated for men and women, with locks, child-friendly features and hand washing facilities, is ensured76 and adapted to people with disabilities • Sanitation service meets at least "limited" level, as per JMP standards • Excreta is safely contained, collected, transported, treated and disposed of in a way that safeguards public health
4. WASH in health care facilities and learning environments Affected populations have safe access to, and use, appropriate WASH services in health care and learning facilities for children	• Health care and nutrition treatment facilities meet at least "basic" JMP service levels for water, sanitation and hygiene services • Learning facilities/schools for children, child-friendly spaces and protection-transit centres have at least "basic" JMP service levels for water, sanitation and hygiene services • Affected populations benefit from hygiene awareness-raising activities and have access to hygiene and menstrual health information
5. WASH system strengthening WASH national and local systems are equipped to assess, prevent and address risks and hazards at service delivery and user level 📖 **See 2.2.4** Linking Humanitarian and Development	• Periodic risk assessments are conducted and inform sector policies and preparedness plans • Capacity development and technical support are provided to all stakeholders at national and sub-national levels on linking humanitarian, development and peacebuilding

6. Hygiene promotion and community engagement for behaviour and social change

At-risk and affected populations have timely access to culturally appropriate, gender- and age-sensitive information, services and interventions related to hygiene promotion, and adopt safe hygiene practices

📖 **See 2.2.7** Community engagement for behaviour and social change

- Children, their caregivers and communities are aware of available WASH services and how and where to access them

- Children, their caregivers and communities are engaged through participatory behaviour change interventions

- Affected people receive key hygiene communication in a timely manner

- At least 70% of target population is aware of key public health risks related to water, sanitation and hygiene and can adopt measures to reduce them

- Handwashing facilities are available as per the SPHERE standards

- Affected populations have access to necessary hygiene items to adequately undertake essential daily personal and household hygiene activities

- Affected populations benefit from hygiene awareness- raising activities and have access to hygiene and menstrual health information. Women and girls have access to menstrual supplies and facilities in the community

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

- Advocacy
- Coordination & partnerships
- Quality programming and standards
- Linking humanitarian and development

References

To the most up to date policies, guidance and handbooks are provided in Annexes

Glossary of Terms

Is provided in the Annexes

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Example of Operational commitment: Partnerships

COMMITMENTS	BENCHMARKS
1. Preparedness Humanitarian programmes and partnerships are identified in advance through contingency planning and preparedness measures	• An up-to-date mapping of current and prospective government and civil society partners is maintained at country, regional and global levels • Contingency planning and partnerships are established with governments and CSOs in higher-risk countries, with simple activation protocols for rapid operationalization
2. Simplified procedures Simplified procedures are used to establish timely partnership agreements	• Humanitarian partnerships undergo fast-track review and approval procedures • Humanitarian partnerships with CSOs are signed no more than 15 working days after submission of required documents
3. Timely disbursement of funds Disbursement of funds to partners is timely	• Funds are disbursed to governments and CSOs no more than 10 working days after request of funds
4. Technical assistance for quality and results-based programming Technical assistance and capacity-building are provided to partners to foster quality programming	• Appropriate capacity-building, tools and training are provided to partners to ensure results-based and quality programming 📖 **See Chapter 2** Programme commitments • Opportunities for knowledge exchange are established to leverage the expertise and capacity of partners
5. Monitoring Continuous improvement in programme quality, coverage and equity is driven by partner dialogue, feedback mechanisms, field monitoring and corrective actions	• Humanitarian partnerships include a monitoring framework, with a special focus on quality programming 📖 **See 2.2.1** Quality of programmes • Field monitoring missions are conducted to support programme implementation quality and identify areas for programme and partnership improvement in line with the UNICEF Field Monitoring Guidance 📖 **See 2.3.1** Needs assessment, planning, monitoring and evaluation

🔑 KEY CONSIDERATIONS

• **Use all available simplifications to reduce bottlenecks** in the discussion and signature of partnership agreements and disbursement of funds.
• Use the CCC-aligned activities, standards and indicators to **co-design programmes and partnership agreements with partners.**
• **Maintain an open dialogue throughout programme design and implementation**, in the spirit of partnership and mutual accountability for the operationalization of the CCCs.
• **Ensure that UNICEF fulfils its partnership responsibilities** as described in the Programme Cooperation Agreement. Ensure that appropriate feedback mechanisms, including pathways for redress, are available to partners locally, at CO and field office level.
• **Partner with organizations and entities committed to the core** values of UNICEF and the UN, as well as humanitarian principles, the Principles of Partnership, and the principles of good governance.
• [….]

Resources

UNICEF personnel can find translations of the CCCs in French, Spanish, Arabic and other resources including the **CCC Toolkit** on the **E-resources on the CCCs.** UNICEF personnel can also take the E-learning interactive course on AGORA.

THE CCC TOOLKIT INCLUDES

- **Briefing tools:** Factsheet, Q&A, Guidance on the CCCs, recorded webinar, Power Point Presentation for UNICEF personnel, for Governments and for operational partners.

- **Training Tools:** Power Point Presentations and recorded webinars, Training of Trainers Toolkit

- **Guidance to engage with governments** and Presentations for Governments and partners

- **Monitoring and Evaluation Tools:** CCC Indicator Guidance for Programme Commitments, CCCs Monitoring Framework for Operational Commitments, Results Framework for Humanitarian Response Plans and PCAs

- **Management Tools:** What the Representatives and their deputies need to know on the CCCs? How to include the CCCs in teams 'workplans and PERs?

UNICEF partners (governments, CSOs, donors, media…) can visit corecommitments.unicef.org to find the CCCs, their translations, and learning resources. The website can be navigated from smartphones as a mobile application.

Websites

- Visit E-resources on the CCCs accessible to all UNICEF personnel
- Visit corecommitments.unicef.org accessible to all partners

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