



Sudan © Tdh / A. Spatailiovitch

Child Protection in Humanitarian Crises.

Thematic Policy



Terre des hommes

Helping children worldwide. tdh.ch



Terre des hommes

Helping children worldwide. tdh.ch

Founded in 1960, Terre des hommes (Tdh) is the leading Swiss organisation for child relief. Tdh helps to build a better future for disadvantaged children and their communities, with an innovative approach and practical, sustainable solutions. Active in 30 countries, Tdh develops and implements field projects to allow a better daily life for over two millions children and their close relatives, particularly in the domains of health care and protection. This engagement is financed by individual and institutional support, of which 87% flows directly into the projects of Tdh.

Table of Contents.

Preface	5
Introduction	7
Section 1. Child protection in humanitarian crises	9
1. Child protection needs related to humanitarian crises	10
2. A recognised evolving inter-agency response	11
Section 2. Terre des hommes intervention framework in humanitarian crises	13
1. Aim	14
2. Terre des hommes Child protection intervention	14
2.1 Emergency measures	15
2.2 A programmatic response	16
3. Key approaches	18
3.1 Geographic approach	18
3.2 Emergency – Development continuum	18
4. Four axes of intervention	19
4.1 Axis I: Collective protection	19
4.2 Axe II: Individual protection	25
4.3 Axis III: Protection system	28
4.4 Axis IV: Advocacy	31
5. Principles of Action	33
Section 3. Expected results and types of action	37
Bibliography	41

Preface.

In 2006, Terre des hommes published a manual on interventions in emergencies to capitalise on its experience and to formalise its approach to child protection during humanitarian crises.^[1]

In order to take into account developments and lessons learned by Terre des hommes and other child protection organisations, Terre des hommes decides to update its intervention policy and broaden its scope of action for protecting children in humanitarian crises.

This document attempts to define and institutionalise Terre des hommes' fields of intervention, approach, framework and limitations. The document is meant for use by Terre des hommes employees, in order to share a clear and harmonised vision of the organisation's mandate and provide orientation for protecting children in humanitarian crises, while taking into account different contexts and response phases. It also provides partners and donors^[2] with a clear understanding of Terre des hommes' mandate for the sake of coordination and transparency.

This child protection thematic policy in humanitarian crises serves as a reference document for all interventions carried out by Terre des hommes emergency unit or country delegations. It is intended to integrate with and be used in combination with other documents describing Terre des hommes emergency responses^[3] and the geographic zones's strategic orientation plans.

In addition, two methodological handbooks support the implementation of this policy. The Programme Guidance details the responses to the various priority protection issues in the context of a humanitarian crisis. The Operational Methodological Manual focuses on the different phases of setting up and implementing child protection projects in the context of a humanitarian crisis.

This document adheres to an holistic programming vision with other Terre des hommes thematic policies. It is also based on the inter-agency standards and best practices to which Terre des hommes adheres.

The electronic version of this document is interactive. In order to facilitate the reading and access the different annexes, the reader can click on the referral number attached to the name of the annex. Some documents are referred several times but a same number is attributed to them.

Regarding the links between the different chapters of the document, click on the link "See section..." in the text and in return, do: Alt + left arrow.

^[1] Child protection – Manual for intervention in humanitarian crisis – Tdh 2008 – [Annex 01](#)

^[2] Tdh Child Protection in Humanitarian Crises – Document for communicating with donors and other partners – Tdh 2013 (under development) – [Annex 02](#)

^[3] Tdh thematic policies regarding "distribution of NFI and emergency shelters", "health and nutrition", "water, hygiene and sanitation" – Tdh 2013 (under development) – [Annex 03](#)

Introduction.

Over several years, Terre des hommes has developed a rapid response capacity to respond to the protection needs of children and their families suffering from natural disasters, sudden social crises or armed conflicts.

Terre des hommes inter sectoral approach allows for an initial response to the most urgent needs by organising non-food items distribution, while simultaneously evaluating the children and their families specific needs.

Child protection responses cannot effectively meet all of the children's needs in humanitarian crises. However, they provide essential contributions to meeting the crucial needs for safety and survival, physical, psychological, emotional and social development and resilience capacity.

Terre des hommes intervenes during the first weeks after a crisis situation or during the post-emergency phase, depending on its competencies and its mobilisation capacities. Regardless of the phase of intervention, Terre des hommes' approach remains **holistic**, addressing the child's needs as a whole, **inclusive** by integrating and mobilising all actors including the child and his family in the response and the changes, and **integrated** by providing an inter sectoral response to the children's needs.

Terre des hommes works through inter-agency coordination mechanisms, bringing up the capacities and skills Terre des hommes has acquired in child protection. Emergency responses seek from the outset not only to prevent and respond to priority needs, but to support a medium and long term perspective (according to the country and emergency), such as developing mechanisms for the participation of children, mobilising families, communities and other actors around the protection of children, and strengthening child protection systems at the community, local and/or national level.

In this document, Section 1 briefly explains the child protection issues during a humanitarian crisis and presents the evolution of the inter-agency responses.

Section 2 concentrates on Terre des hommes' positions and particularities. It defines the aim and different response phases, as well as the four axes of intervention: (1) collective protection, (2) individual protection, (3) protection systems and (4) advocacy. This section also presents the key principles that guide Terre des hommes actions.

Section 3 introduces the targeted results and types of action supported by Terre des hommes, according to these four axes of intervention and the protection issues Terre des hommes is committed to address. This includes: (1) abuse, neglect and physical violence in the families and care environment, (2) family separation, (3) sexual violence, (4) children associated with armed forces or armed groups, (5), worst forms of child labour and exploitation, and (6), psychosocial distress.





Section 1. Child protection in humanitarian crises.

This section introduces specific child protection needs in humanitarian crises. it describes the response of the various agencies within the context of international coordination in which Terre des hommes actively participates.

A humanitarian crisis is defined as a situation of armed conflict, international or internal, or as a natural disaster, affecting a country, a region, or a community, exposing the population to human, material, economic or environmental losses that exceed the capacity of the state system and the community to protect themselves and to respond to the situation.

1. Child protection needs related to humanitarian crises.

The Child Protection Working Group (CPWG) defines child protection interventions during humanitarian crises as **“the prevention of and response to abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence against children”**.^[4]

Whether originating from an armed conflict or a natural disaster, humanitarian crises expose children to specific violence: harsh and prolonged deprivation of basic needs, displacement and refuge, family separation, physical violence, sexual violence, armed violence and recruitment, torture, trafficking, etc.

When they don't lead to death, these situations have devastating effects on children, most notably injury or disability; psychological distress; physical, moral and sexual abuses; malnutrition and health problems; violence and/or exclusion from families or communities; resort to dangerous activities in order to survive; physical, sexual or labour exploitation; arbitrary detention, etc.

Pre-existing child protection needs are exacerbated by the social and environmental chaos created by emergencies. The protection risks and needs during a humanitarian crisis also vary according to factors, such as the number of affected children, problems pre-existent to the emergency, the country's ability to respond and the nature of the emergency itself. A child is “resilient” or “vulnerable” at different moments during the crisis depending upon gender, age and the personal, family and social protection context.

The programmatic objective of child protection actors in a humanitarian crisis is to consolidate the protective factors that strengthen the children's resilience and to combat vulnerability factors that expose children to risks and violence. Child protection programmes restore the capacities of the child, his family and his community and strengthen their relationship.

^[4] CPWG web site: <http://cpwg.net>

Since October 2012, the Minimum Standards for Child Protection in humanitarian action, developed by the global inter-agency Child Protection Working Group, establish priority needs and minimum responses for child protection in humanitarian crises. They cover: ^[5]

- Dangers and injuries
- Physical violence and other harmful practices
- Sexual violence
- Psychosocial distress and mental disorders
- Children associated with armed forces or armed groups
- Child labour
- Unaccompanied and separated children
- Justice for children

2. A recognised evolving inter-agency response.

As a result of inter-agency advocacy carried out for several years, child protection is now fully recognised as a “life-saving” action complementing other humanitarian sectors.

- Prevention support allows to reduce risks for children and reinforce the capacities of children, families, and communities to protect children and reduce the exposure to and impact of violence arising from a humanitarian crisis.
- A rapid response protects the children most affected and/or in danger of survival through the distribution of emergency non-food items and immediate care mechanisms for children separated or victims of armed violence or sexual violence.
- In the medium term, child protection interventions support the reestablishment of protection mechanisms with all actors involved, including children, their families and their communities, to cope and rebuild, mitigate changes and enhance the resilience and develop competencies to better protect children.

For several years, the inter-agency CPWG, of which Terre des hommes is an active member, has defined intervention policies and minimum standards in order to harmonise and ensure protective actions in countries or regions affected by a crisis ^[6]. These policies and standards guide the protection responses of different agencies in the field that coordinate and develop partnerships. Government bodies are involved in these coordination mechanisms, except when inexistent or party to the conflict.

Emergency responses should be holistic and community-based as they strive to strengthen or re-establish and stabilise the essential protective elements of a child’s environment.

Child protection interventions and funding are based on a geographic distribution rather than on target population, allowing each organisation to strengthen child protection mechanisms and structures within a community and not dissipate and duplicate each actor’s interventions.

^[5] Minimum standards for child protection in humanitarian action – CPWG 2012 – [Annex 04](#)

^[6] CPWG web site: <http://cpwg.net>





Section 2. Terre des hommes intervention framework in humanitarian crises.

This section defines the priorities of Terre des hommes in terms of child protection interventions. It identifies the approaches and key principles that characterise Terre des hommes actions to protect children. The section describes the four axes of intervention that contribute to a holistic response to different protection issues.

1. Aim.

Terre des hommes has developed a rapid intervention capacity in response to protection needs of children and their families suffering from natural disasters, acute social crises or armed conflicts.^[7]

Terre des hommes intervention for child protection in humanitarian crises is defined by the following aim:

Within the context of natural disasters, armed conflicts or acute socio-economic crises, girls and boys most at risk or victims of abuse, neglect exploitation, separation, or/and violence, are protected sustainably within their families and communities.

2. Terre des hommes Child protection intervention.

Terre des hommes determines its priorities in response to different protection needs depending on the impact of the humanitarian crisis. As a first step, it seeks to protect the children directly affected by the emergency. Terre des hommes then expands its "target group" progressively based on identified priority needs. Based on internal knowledge and collaboration with external experts and other child protection actors, Terre des hommes has defined its scope of action in protection as the following^[8]:

- Violence in the family and care environment
- Family separation
- Sexual violence
- Children associated with armed forces or armed groups
- Worst forms of child labour and exploitation
- Psychosocial distress^[9]

Terre des hommes is part of an inter-agency dynamic that promotes multi sectoral interventions within the same communities or populations and that focuses on the needs and priorities of the most vulnerable groups as identified and evaluated in the first weeks of a response.

^[7] Terre des hommes policy on emergencies and rehabilitation – Tdh 2011 – [Annex 05](#)

^[8] Child Protection in Humanitarian Crises – Programme Guidance – Tdh 2013 – [Annex 06](#)

^[9] Since this issue is transversal to all the child protection problems, the responses to psychosocial distress is integrated in individual and collective interventions for each of them.

Depending on the context and its prior presence (or not) in the country or the area affected by a humanitarian crisis, Terre des hommes will intervene at different phases and different levels of the emergency response:

- Through prevention and preparedness measures to reduce and mitigate protection risks for children and their families.
- Through emergency measures to respond to immediate dangers faced by the children whilst a community intervention strategy is put in place.
- Through medium-term responses to the impacts of the emergency according to the priorities identified, target groups, available resources and expertise.
- Through supporting recovery capacities of families and communities to protect children and/or to mitigate the consequences of a chronic crisis.



2.1 Emergency measures

Emergency measures are implemented during the first weeks. They respond to the children's most urgent needs and establish the foundation for Terre des hommes intervention. While offering solutions to deal with the initial shocks, these actions allow Terre des hommes to better understand the relevant issues and needs and to identify priorities. They also provide insights to be able to analyse community dynamics.

Emergency measures are limited in time, up to three months. The measures follow the principles of working **with** beneficiaries and **not replacing** actions of beneficiaries, communities and local authorities. Terre des hommes therefore aims to consult and involve them at all stages of its intervention.^[11]

Terre des hommes emergency measures can consist of a range of actions. The choice for one or/and another depends on the needs and the context of the intervention:

Distribution of "emergency non-food items" to the most vulnerable families

This action responds to their immediate survival problem and also facilitates the start of a rapid evaluation of child protection specific needs. It is conducted in coordination with other Terre des hommes sectors.

Rapid implementation of collective activities

If the crisis has caused large displacements or extensive destruction, Terre des hommes supports the implementation of protective spaces for children activities and resilience (see [section 2 § 4.1](#), p.19). They facilitate access to children and their parents as well as the rapid identification of the most vulnerable children for whom individual protection activities can be initiated (see [section 2 § 4.2](#), p.25). These actions mobilise members of the beneficiary or host community, whether or not they are organised in groups or local associations.

^[10] Child Protection in Humanitarian Crises – Operational Methodological Manual – Tdh 2013 – [Annex 07](#)

^[11] Participation by crisis affected population in humanitarian action – ANALP – 2003 – [Annex 08](#) or www.alnap.org/pool/files/gs_handbook.pdf

Rapid identification of separated or unaccompanied children

This action enables to quickly initiate temporary protection measures by placing or keeping separated/unaccompanied children in foster/host families with community support. This keeps children safe whilst finding care alternatives such as family reunification or long-term placement. This immediate response phase is soon followed by a more structured response within inter-agency child protection mechanisms for separated or unaccompanied children.^[12]

Implementation of rapid measures for the care and referral of victims of physical, psychological, sexual, and armed violence

Local authorities and community focal points are informed and identify cases of child victims of violence. Terre des hommes organises temporary protection if needed, as well as referrals to the services in charge of emergency medical and psychological care. Terre des hommes supports communities and authorities in implementing simple prevention measures, establishing warning systems, and identifying key persons who can refer child victims to Terre des hommes.^[13]

2.2 A programmatic response

While implementing emergency measures, Terre des hommes develops a longer term project (up to 24 months) built around the four axes of intervention as defined by Terre des hommes: **Axis 1 – collective protection, Axis 2 – individual protection, Axis 3 – protection systems, Axis 4 – advocacy.**

Depending on the context and priority needs, Terre des hommes protection projects target one or more protection issues: (1) abuse, neglect and physical violence in the family and care environment; (2) family separation; (3) sexual violence; (4) children associated with armed forces or armed groups; (5) worst forms of child labour and exploitation; and (6) psychosocial distress. (see [section 3](#), p.38)

The above actions are not all implemented in every context. Terre des hommes chooses to respond to certain issues in a geographic area based upon:

- Analysis of priority needs
- Coordination with other actors
- Phase of the crisis

Field experience and work on child protection systems have led Tdh to reinforce its inter sectoral programme approach.^[14] This requires synergies and collaboration between the two main sectors of intervention of Terre des hommes: Health (including water, sanitation and hygiene/WASH) and Protection.

The inter sectoral approach aims to provide a more holistic response to the multiple needs of children. Each element is important to child protection. It is therefore necessary to intervene by building the capacity of the actors part of the child's protective environment (health, nutrition, hygiene and family support).

^[12] Child Protection in Humanitarian Crises – Programme Guidance – part 3 – Tdh 2013 – [Annex 06](#)

^[13] Child Protection in Humanitarian Crises – Programme Guidance – part 1, 3 and 4 – Tdh 2013 – [Annex 06](#)

^[14] Project synthesis and typology Health and Protection – Draft – Tdh 2013 – [Annex 09](#)

At a minimum, an inter sectoral approach should be taken in the following areas:^[15]

- Situation and needs analysis: either joint sector analysis or one sector analysis that includes elements of the other sector.
- Selection of a zone of intervention: act in the same priority zones of intervention for both sectors to the extent possible. Otherwise, each sector should have sufficient flexibility to integrate complementary activities from the other sector.
- Strategy development: synergies between the two sectors should be identified, planned and implemented from the beginning of the projects.
- Coordinated human resources: multidisciplinary teams informed of their respective projects and joint trainings promote their mutual collaboration. Some positions can be integrated into the other sector (with appropriate technical supervision and support from his own sector).
- Daily coordination of activities to assist beneficiaries.
- Partnerships and referral mechanisms to guarantee systemic care.
- Inter sectoral monitoring and evaluation systems.
- Inter sectoral advocacy for one population.

Terre des hommes does not advocate that all its projects be “integrated”^[16]. However, in situations where the two sectors (Health and Protection) are present, a synergy should promote coordinated, complementary interventions and training in order to optimise the quality of the intervention and increase the impact.

In line with the Foundation’s strategic orientation plan, Terre des hommes interventions in countries where it does not have prior country delegation are limited in duration, generally up to 24 months^[17]. Depending on whether or not it will plan to maintain a long term administrative presence, Terre des hommes may decide to either end a project or adapt its intervention strategy, according to the evolution of the child protection situation:

- In chronic crises such as prolonged conflicts, situations involving permanent displaced people or refugees or countries facing recurring natural disasters.
- Through a development perspective and therefore long-term intervention.

^[15] Child Protection in Humanitarian Crises – Operational Methodological Manual – Part 3 § 2.4 – Tdh 2013 – [Annex 07](#)

^[16] This refers to projects with a single objective, the same target audience for both domains and cross-sectoral collaboration to achieve results with mechanisms that are characterised as multidisciplinary

^[17] Terre des hommes policy on emergencies and rehabilitation – Tdh 2011 – [Annex 05](#)

3. Key approaches.

3.1 Geographic approach

For many years, protection organisations such as Terre des hommes have responded to protection needs by focusing either on types of care or on target groups, such as “psychosocial care of refugee/displaced children” or “reunification and reintegration of separated/unaccompanied children”, etc. Although the technical efficiency and focus of these interventions are guaranteed, this approach multiplies the number of actors within the same community or around a target group. Proper coordination is crucial to be able to respond to the different levels of child’s care. If solicited by too many actors at the same time, the mobilisation and participation of the child, his family and his community are made more difficult. Multiple assistance opportunities create a counterproductive situation that does not encourage a child, his family or his community to contribute to the changes and take ownership.

Today, child protection partners and donors generally seek to coordinate their actions on a geographic basis. A single child protection organisation intervenes in a community/region, identifies risks as well as priority protection needs, responds to different situations by mobilising local actors and services and developing local competencies. Technical and operational coordination at a regional or national level with other protection organisations ensures harmonised responses across different communities and allows for the transfer of children from one actor/community to another, as needed (reunification of separated children, return of demobilised children, etc.). This approach allows for more holistic community-based care; however, it also requires the actors involved to have broader competencies in addressing the various protection issues.

3.2 Emergency – Development continuum

With its primary mandate to “protect the most vulnerable children”, an emergency protection action targets the most affected children. In the early weeks of an emergency, it is therefore a matter of quickly identifying children facing life-threatening risks and providing them with secure conditions and temporary protection (described in [section 2 §2.1](#), p.15).

As the conditions for intervention gradually become more secure and stable and/or the protection actors’ capacities are developed, they can respond to the needs of children in unstable environments, those unable to restore minimum protective environments and/or those who are exposed to new risks or violence. Emergencies often highlight chronic or silent types of violence which are exacerbated by the humanitarian crisis within families and/or communities.

Terre des hommes distinguishes itself from “emergency-focused” NGOs by developing a longer-term vision from the early days of its intervention. Using its expertise in development contexts, Terre des hommes approach and actions are aimed at restoring a long term protective environment for the children, that can be progressively assured by the family, the community and the State. Even during humanitarian crises, as protection mechanisms are developed or restored and more durable changes are initiated, beneficiaries learn to protect themselves, and governmental and local entities prepare to take over.

Measures implemented during the emergency can be considered as starting points or channels for longer term development programs, whether conducted by Terre des hommes or by other actors or governmental entities.

4. Four axes of intervention.

Following this geographic approach, Terre des hommes child protection strategy is structured around four axes of intervention:

1. **Collective protection**
2. **Individual protection**

3. **Protection systems**
4. **Advocacy**

This holistic, systematic and progressive approach allows to:

- Respond to the children's **collective protection** needs within communities while at the same time offering preventive conditions and responding to the **individual** protection needs of the most affected children.
- Develop **partnerships** with various governmental, community, and local actors in the protection sector as well as other sectors, to reinforce local and national **competencies** and capacities.
- Strengthen **protection mechanisms** at the family, community, and national level in order to improve the children's protective environment.
- Sustain these actions through national **policies** and care mechanisms.

Depending on the contexts, the actions will be conducted simultaneously and progressively. The intervention according to these four axes is therefore **not sequential**, and evolves as:

- Primary needs are met, insecurity decreases and operational management measures are in place for the most affected children.
- Community networks are reactivated, governmental entities resume operations, and government officers are present and active.
- Political measures and decisions can be taken at the national level and reflected at the local level.

For certain issues, advocacy should precede the individual or collective protection intervention (for example, children associated with armed groups). For other issues, individual protection should be emphasised to allow confidential access to victims (for example, victims of sexual violence) while, in contexts of mass displacements, collective protection will provide quicker access to a greater number of children.

4.1 Axis I: Collective protection

Emergencies often lead to social chaos and/or important displacements of population that expose children to new risks in an unfamiliar environment (e.g. displaced or refugee children) or in an environment in which they are marginalised or isolated (e.g. demobilised children, separated children, child workers, etc.). Affected communities and families have to focus on survival and security and are weakened in their capacities to protect children.

For Terre des hommes, collective protection has two possible complementary directions:

1. **Spaces for collective activities offer the children and their parents the opportunity for personal development and social interaction. They aim to improve the children's psychosocial well-being in terms of physical, cognitive, social and emotional development and capacities of the parents to provide psychosocial support.**

2. **Mobilisation and training actions reinforce the capacities and competencies of the parents and communities through social changes and concrete actions to better protect the children.**

This collective approach also serves as an entry point into the community that allows for an understanding of the endogenous protection mechanisms and an identification of children requiring individual protection.

Terre des hommes does not seek to duplicate initiatives or activities already existing within communities, but rather to reinforce them through training or temporary support.

This can occur through a range of possible actions within the community at various times and for various durations:

Collective activities for children and their parents

In the first days following a crisis, it may be important to establish or re-establish spaces for collective activities where a child can find a stable and protective environment known and shared with other children and where parents receive psychosocial and educational support. This allows the child to better understand and cope with the dramatic changes occurring around him and to find his own place, role, and social network. It allows parents to better understand and cope with their child's difficulties and support him during this period of uncertainty and upheaval.

Setting up these activities at the community level responds to:

- The temporary absence of support structures (parents searching for means of survival, displacement and precarious shelter, etc.).
- The temporary absence of educational structures within the community (schools and training centres destroyed or closed).
- The temporary inability of families undergoing significant degrees of stress to comfort, secure and listen to their children.
- Community integration difficulties (reintegration into the community of demobilised children from armed groups, child workers, displaced and refugee children, etc.).

These activities contribute to the development and protection of children by allowing them to resume a daily routine as well as to continue to play, learn and grow. Children strengthen their social skills through active interaction with other children in their community during activities led by community and association members trained and reinforced by Terre des hommes.

Above all, it is important to build on existing initiatives and support and enrich them as they progress, and thereby to (re)mobilise community networks and initiatives.

- In order not to demobilise or compete with community initiatives, the first solution is to support and strengthen clubs (youth, women, sports), groups or local associations that are already active (before or just after the emergency). They can expand their target groups and initiate new activities for children based on age groups. Relying on these networks facilitates rapid mobilisation and organisation of collective activities. It contributes to the strengthening of local competencies with the objective of making them more autonomous.
- When these community structures do not exist, Terre des hommes can set up collective activities by establishing "child-friendly spaces"^[18] or "community social centres"^[19] or support activities within educational structures. These spaces are managed by community groups/associations members trained and supported by Terre des hommes.

^[18] Reference documents for setting up "child-friendly spaces" – [Annex 10](#)

^[19] Haiti project technical document – Community social centers – Tdh 2011 – [Annex 11](#)

At first, these activities are focused on age groups considered most at risk – which can vary depending on the context. As the capacities of the organisation develop over time, the target groups can be broadened to respond to the particular needs of other age groups.

- During the first weeks, it is not recommended to organise collective activities for children below the age of three years. It is more important to convince parents to find care solutions within the family rather than relying on external care.
- Choices must be made taking into account the risks for children left alone during the day in a community still unknown to them. Children aged six to twelve years are generally more exposed since they are quite mobile, until they can start again to go to school.
- The inclusion of marginalised children (separated, victims of violence, disabled, street or domestic, demobilised, workers, etc.) is a priority.
- In some situations, these collective activities can be a disqualifying factor for the most vulnerable categories of children (girls in some cultures, street children, child workers, exploited children, etc.) who lack the time or permission to participate. Flexible arrangements regarding the schedule, the access and the activities must be put in place to encourage the participation of all.

These types of collective activities can vary:

- Initially, it is easier to rely on local knowledge and use trainings to strengthen the quality and depth of the supervision of activities.
- Activities such as games, sports, and arts and crafts often can be started up quickly. Terre des hommes has developed a training manual for animators leading these activities.^[20]
- More formal activities such as vocational training and literacy classes help to integrate marginalised children (demobilised children, victims of sexual violence, street children, child workers, children in cultures that are reluctant to allow girl's participation in collective activities, etc.). More appreciated by parents, these activities promote the participation of marginalised children as well as their involvement in social networks.
- Life skills trainings give the opportunity to children of different ages to interact and discuss. A better understanding of the risks and protective behaviours enables them to better protect themselves.^[21]
- Parental education activities and group discussions are proposed to the parents to open up a dialogue on the needs as well as social and cultural conditions relating to the children protection and education. They aim to initiate change, seek solutions, manage their own stress, and acquire educational and psychosocial skills to protect and support their children.

These activities are themselves “a psychosocial intervention made up of one or more planned activities that aim to develop coping skills of children, their families and communities as well as to reinforce their integration into society. Psychosocial interventions are targeted responses that seek to improve the well-being of the child and parent. It is not a “treatment” for a victim, but rather a way to accompany all the people who play a role in child’s well-being. The integration of children with difficulties, small group discussions with children or their parents, play/sport/creative activities, and creative expression workshops are all ways to support children’s resilience capacities.”^[22]

These collective activities complement individual protection actions. They allow for the identification of children in difficulty. The animators are trained by Terre des hommes to observe and identify children demonstrating difficulty in integrating, exhibiting stress behaviours or expressing personal difficulties within their family, community, etc. These children are then referred to Terre des hommes social worker teams for individual follow-up. Similarly, social workers will refer children followed up individually to integrate them into a social dynamic and collective activities.

^[20] Laugh, run and move to develop together – Games with PSS aims – Tdh 2007 – [Annex 12](#)

^[21] “Manual of psychosocial skills” – Tdh 2011 – [Annex 13](#)

“I deal” – War child 2011 – [Annex 13bis](#)

^[22] Working with children and their environment – Tdh 2010 – [Annex 14](#)

Collective activities are not designed as long-term commitments. They respond to an immediate protection need for protection following the chaos caused by the emergency. After an interval of six or twelve months at most, the continuation of these programs should no longer depend on Terre des hommes.

- They evolve and adapt according to needs as the community strengthens and develops its child's care capacities (parents' psychosocial skills, reopening of schools and training centres, association initiatives, etc.) and protection (reestablishment of security, mobilisation and community initiatives, etc.).
- They are supervised from the beginning by local associations or community organisations, which progressively assume greater responsibility over time. Terre des hommes can continue to provide support through training activities. These community structures become partners of collaboration for longer term efforts towards social transformation to protect children.
- If there are no handover possibilities, Terre des hommes terminates these activities.

Mobilisation and strengthening of community capacities

Along all the stages of its intervention – evaluation, planning and response – Terre des hommes cooperates with and accompanies communities through a process of change so that children benefit from a protective environment that promotes their development. Terre des hommes seeks to have communities reinforce and/or create their own protection mechanisms through a process reflecting a collective sense of belonging and promoting empowerment. This step must be based on the following action's principles:

- Respect for cultural diversity within the communities.
- Recognition of the community as a social actor and agent of social change.
- Joint participation in making decisions between communities, NGOs and government structures.
- Participation of both genders.

Humanitarian crises weaken communities, causing social chaos and rupturing social networks and bonds. Yet we know that, besides families, communities serve as a safety net for children. So after an emergency, it is crucial to revive these social networks and mechanisms, even during temporary population displacements.

Following an emergency, these mechanisms allow for immediate action at the population level. Mobilising and supporting community networks and mechanisms promotes the long-term sustainability of child protection actions, beyond the post-emergency recovery period. Community mechanisms are also essential means to facilitate social transformation, to change the norms, beliefs, attitudes and social practices to better protect the children.

The process of community work is neither linear nor homogeneous. It involves different steps and actions focusing on different aspects, but all are oriented on: strengthening leadership, creating networks, management support, and promoting the self-sufficiency of community protection activities. Terre des hommes involvement and support is temporary. Terre des hommes seeks to transfer child protection activities and accountability over to the children's own community.

As for collective activities for children and parents, Terre des hommes seeks above all to support existing community structures, even if their initial role is not focused on child protection (village committees, women's groups, youth clubs, etc.). Putting new structures in places runs the risk of bypassing or delegitimising existing initiatives. By engaging with traditional or informal leaders that are intrinsically recognised by the community, even if they are not yet efficient in protecting children, Terre des hommes seeks to improve the integration and sustainability of its interventions. It is important to strengthen their capacities and to improve their commitment and efficiency in protecting children.

Depending on the context, the level of community participation can be defined as: ^[23]

- **Category 1 direct implementation:** Tdh is a service provider and members of the community are beneficiaries.
- **Category 2 community involvement:** Tdh is the promoter of its own initiative, a planner and trainer, and community members are volunteer facilitators and beneficiaries.
- **Category 3 activities belong to and are managed by the community with the help of an external organisation:** Tdh catalyses and reinforces the capacities of the community, acts as a facilitator once a sense of ownership has been developed by the community. Community members are analysts, planners, operators and evaluators as well as beneficiaries.
- **Category 4 the project belongs to the community and is set up and managed within the community:** Tdh assists in strengthening capacities and funding. Community members serve as analysts, planners, operators and evaluators as well as being beneficiaries.

From the first weeks of an emergency, Terre des hommes considers the community to be a partner and not merely a beneficiary (category 2). From the first days, the community must be closely involved in needs analysis and decisions regarding the intervention. The community plays a key role by contributing with its local knowledge to better define the form of intervention, facilitate access to the most vulnerable and mobilise various actors. As the community mobilises and takes on efforts to protect children, its interaction with Terre des hommes progressively advances towards increased responsibility (category 3) and self-sufficiency (category 4) in managing activities and initiatives. This evolution must be adapted to the field situation, especially when insecurity exposes community members who participate in protection initiatives to possible threats.

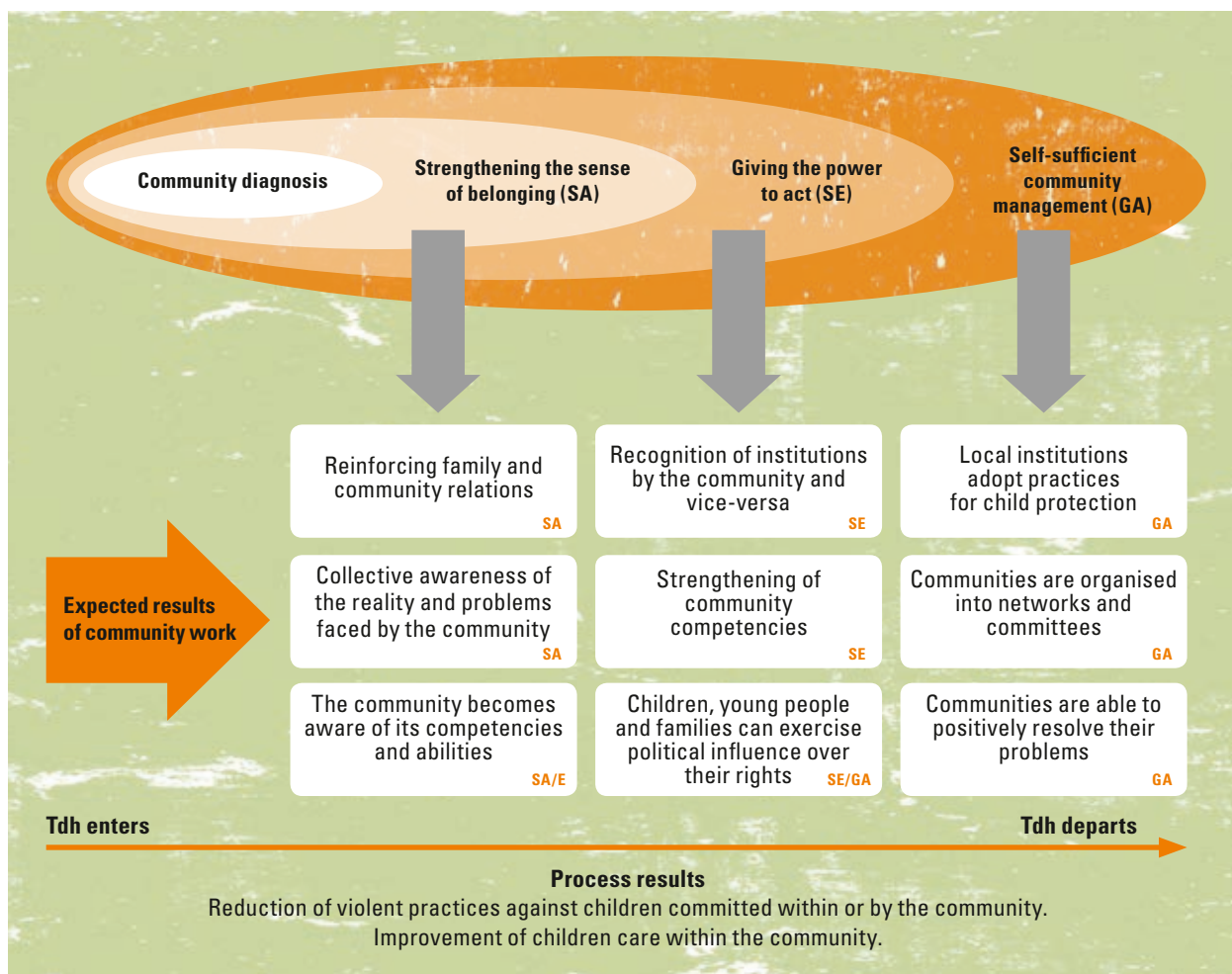
Terre des hommes involvement and withdrawal is a progressive process.



Voluntary spirit is recommended to guaranty the sustainability of these community networks. Nevertheless, it is not always possible to mobilise a community through volunteer means in insecure or impoverished contexts. In this case, it is recommended to limit financial support in terms of amount and duration. Material support or socio-economic support are some possible alternatives.

In addition, it is important for these mechanisms and networks to be legitimised and recognised by government authorities, since they play a key role in developing and strengthening the protection system.

^[23] What we are learning about community-based child protection – Mike Wessels 2009 – [Annex 15](#)



These networks allow to quickly sensitise the community on the protection risks which children face and for some of these risks to be avoided or mitigated. They also participate in identifying and referring children to the appropriate care services or to an individual protection mechanism.

- “Child Protection Committees” (CPC): to date this approach undertaken by many child protection actors has not shown much potential for sustainability. Since it is typically not an endogenous way of operating, it disappears quickly after the organisation that initiated it withdraws. However, if no other pre-existing network is in place, CPCs are a possible tool for working in isolated rural community where Terre des hommes is unable to have regular access. They allow the development of regular awareness and training programs as well as the establishment of systems to more systematically identify and refer children to Terre des hommes social workers or existing services. Nevertheless, it is important to be aware of this structure’s limitations.
- The inter sectoral approach facilitates the use of a community awareness/mobilisation model that borrow from successful practices in the health sector: the “positive deviance” approach.^[24] The principle is to identify individuals within communities recognised as positive roles models and promoting endogenous child protection practices. Identified and accompanied by Terre des hommes, they become focal persons within their community to raise awareness and help families improve child care or resolve difficulties.
- In order to solicit the community in a coordinated way and not disperse information, different sectors within Terre des hommes work with the same community networks. This inter sectoral involvement in communities ensures that complementary messages and interventions are all aimed at an overall improvement in the children’s living conditions.

^[24] Resource manual on positive deviance – CORE 2003 – [Annex 16](#)

Collective awareness-raising programs conducted in the first weeks seek to inform the children, their parents and the communities on immediate risks and dangers as well as access to services. As stabilising factors are put into place (the reopening of schools, families returning to their homes, children's return to their families, etc.), Terre des hommes develops more training activities to improve community understanding on child protection needs so that the community can take the initiative for changes, find solutions itself, and cope in the event of new emergencies.

4.2 Axe II: Individual protection

An individual approach allows Terre des hommes to respond to the needs of the most vulnerable children. Whether they are separated, with their families or placed in residential centres, some children do not have easy access to community-based collective actions for prevention and protection. An individual social protection seeks to re-establish family or appropriate alternative care, and promote children's return or stability within their families, or when this is not possible, set up a temporary or permanent alternative care.

Therefore, setting up a system to manage individual cases is one of the key axis of intervention for Terre des hommes from the very beginning of its intervention. At the same time, access for children and families receiving individual follow-up to collective protection activities allows them to be integrated socially and acquire skills.

There is a reciprocal relationship between child protection and psychosocial support. A lack of protection can lead to psychosocial distress for the child and vice versa. For example, a child victim of sexual or physical abuse may be isolated or aggressive. Similarly, a neglected adolescent in his family may decide to run away from home where he will encounter other protection problems (in an armed group, street, brothel, another town, etc.). In the individual protection follow-up *"a psychosocial intervention may include support related to self-confidence, relationships, grief and the development of life projects for affected children. Private discussions conducted by social workers with individual families are another activity the children's resilience capacity."* ^[25]

Case management system

With its long experience in various countries and projects, Terre des hommes has developed a standard system for case management. "This system facilitates a step-by-step approach" to the children's individual assistance: from the identification of the child to the assessment of his protection needs, to the planning and implementation of the actions, to the review and final closure of the case.

"All decisions and actions are recorded and justified, thus ensuring transparency and accountability throughout the intervention." ^[26]

This system is implemented in all protection projects and adapted according to the the child's needs assessment within the social and cultural context. After an analysis of the individual situation of the child and his family or guardian, the case management system supports the development and follow up of an action plan, in collaboration with other services and actors present in the community. All these actions aim at restoring a supportive and caring environment for the child that will guarantee their well-being and promote their development.

In essence, Terre des hommes establishes a "contract" to collaborate with the child, his family and other actors in his community. This participatory approach involves the child, his family, his community, the authorities and/or institutional representatives in a process of change. Everyone is held accountable depending on their roles and responsibilities in terms of child protection and their capacities and competencies strengthened accordingly.

^[25] Working with children and their environment – Tdh 2010 – [Annex 14](#)

^[26] Tdh and the CMS inter agency working group have developed a reference manual to be used by child protection officers – (draft in progress for Tdh; the CPWG should edit its manual in 2013)

CURRENTLY Tdh teams refer to the existing Tdh document: Case management, system and responsibilities – Tdh 2009 – [Annex 17](#)

This case management system can be broken down into several actions:

- Children are identified according to different criteria of vulnerability: (1) violence, ill-treatment and abuse, (2) family, (3) social, (4) health and/or psychological ^[27]. The criteria of vulnerability identified will depend on the context, on the evaluation of the priority protection issues and on the decision to focus or not on specific issues (abuses, neglects and physical violence in the family and care environment; family separation; sexual violence; association with armed forces or armed groups; worst forms of child labour and exploitation; or, psychosocial distress). The criteria can be revised after a couple of months when a better understanding of the context and protection risks is developed, taking into account the level of functioning of the community network.
- The identification of children is conducted through community networks, existing services, authorities/leaders, and other groups active within the communities; during collective child protection activities in the community; in residential centres where Terre des hommes has conducted an assessment; or directly by a social worker.
- Each child's case is assessed and multi sectoral support is proposed based on the needs. Terre des hommes teams usually include social workers and protection officers. A psychologist, nurse and a socio-economic officer can complete the team to analyse specific needs, provide referrals to specialised services, and support social workers in their follow-up plan.
- Inter sectoral collaborations in a community allows identified children to be referred to existing government and community services as well as to other Terre des hommes sectors (i.e. Health, WASH, Distribution, Shelter) or other humanitarian actors for specialised care (health, education, shelter, material support, mental health, disability etc.).
- In some cases, the family, community or institution may become too dangerous for the child. In this case, a temporary or permanent removal is organised in collaboration with the social services in charge in order to provide alternative care, preferably within a family (extended, foster or adoptive family). (See [section 2 § 5](#), p.33)

Referral system

Terre des hommes identifies and collaborates with stakeholders, services and partners that offer specialised care in the areas of health, education, shelter, material support, mental health, disability, etc. to complement its own intervention. This mapping facilitates the development of a referral system and reinforces coordination and the capacity of partners to provide children and their families with holistic services. Being aware that not all needed services are always provided by other actors, in some cases, according to needs and funding, Terre des hommes itself implements health/nutrition, NFI distribution, shelter or WASH interventions through an inter sectoral approach. ^[28]

Collaboration with state structures

Terre des hommes strives to develop individual protection work in close collaboration with the state's child welfare services and is careful not to substitute for the State's responsibilities. This sustainable approach endeavours to strengthen local capacities and to promote legalized and State endorsed actions, such as children's removal or placement in foster care, that can be replicated by other communities or at national level (inter-agency mechanisms). ^[29] In some contexts, Terre des hommes can offer his expertise and technical support to strengthen the governmental social protection system already in place.

Terre des hommes ensures thus that its individual protection actions, or part of it, are taken over by the child welfare authorities when it withdraws from the community. In case the local government services are not in place or unable to assume this work, Terre des hommes supports local organisations with which it collaborates in planning beforehand the necessary trainings.

^[27] Vulnerability criteria grid – Tdh Haiti 2010-2012 – [Annex 18](#)

^[28] Tdh thematic policy on “distributing NFI and emergency shelters”, “health and nutrition”, “water, hygiene and sanitation” – Tdh 2013 (under development) – [Annex 03](#)

^[29] Child Protection in Humanitarian Crises – Programme Guidance – Tdh 2013 – [Annex 06](#)

Team training

Given that there are often few professional social workers in countries affected by humanitarian crises where Terre des hommes intervenes, it is essential to provide training, coaching and supervision to teams recruited for social work. Initial intensive trainings followed by continuous refreshers sessions allow, from the onset of the humanitarian crises, for an individual follow up of good quality. In emergencies, Terre des hommes does not provide therapy; however teams are trained in active listening skills to better understand relations dynamics and support the protection process within families.

In order to strengthen its psychosocial approach, Tdh has developed a manual of psychosocial skills based on necessary personal and social skills (i.e. teamwork, empathy, managing emotions). A manual ^[30] and a strategy for reinforcing skills have been developed to support not only the animators, social workers and psychologists, but also nurses, doctors, etc. part of the referral network.

Tools

Tools for this individual follow-up system (vulnerability criteria grid, documentation sheets, database) are adapted to each particular intervention. Terre des hommes has developed its own information management tool for individual follow-up ("Pilango" system) which covers all sectors both in development and emergency contexts. When dealing with specific target groups including separated or non-accompanied children, children associated with armed forces or armed groups, or children victims of sexual violence, inter-agency information management tools exist that enable coordination and collaboration between child protection agencies. Terre des hommes participates in and contributes to these systems. This may lead to the management of multiple information management systems in parallel. A database manager should work to maintain electronic records and data as well as make regular analysis reports.

Socio-economic support for vulnerable families and adolescents

Extreme, chronic poverty may be exacerbated by a humanitarian crisis. As a result, the economic capacity of families are severely weakened or perhaps even non-existent. These difficulties are one cause of many protection problems, for example:

- Many families lose their livelihoods and are involved with their children in survival activities that expose them to physical danger or exploitation.
- Mothers and adolescents may become the sole providers for their family and are no longer able to meet the children's needs.
- Adolescents already marginalised (victims of sexual violence, recruited in armed groups, etc.) and without opportunities for social reintegration may become involved in dangerous activities in order to survive (prostitution, working in mines, etc.).
- Child abandonment, children being placed as domestic workers or in residential centres and the recruitment of children into armed groups are caused partially by financial or material poverty. Poverty also hinders the return and reintegration of these children.
- The loss or lack of income traps parents or adolescents into a culture of dependency or assistance and can prevent them from taking responsibility for their children's protection or their reintegration.

With regard to the families' economic vulnerability and the marginalisation of adolescents, Terre des hommes's individual protection intervention deals with the material limits affecting their protection and reintegration capacities. It becomes essential to support families and adolescents in resuming or engaging in an economic activity to ensure minimum conditions for child protection and/or return in his family.

^[30] Manual of psychosocial skills – Tdh 2011 – [Annex 13](#)

This socio-economic support provision is a planned action that is carried out as part of an individual protection follow-up. It reinforces and complements socio-educational activities and referrals. The need for support to some families and/or adolescents is based upon vulnerability and risk criteria (abandonment and separation, child labour and exploitation, mother or adolescent as sole family provider, demobilisation from armed groups, etc.).

It can be done in different ways depending on the situation^[31]

- Terre des hommes implements socio-economic activities to help the families and/or adolescents cover their most urgent needs (health, education and food), minimizing thereby child protection risks. Through this support, the families and/or the adolescent can develop their capacities in protecting and reintegrating the children. Terre des hommes collaborates with international or national technical experts as appropriate and offers socio-economic support that is adapted to the beneficiary's situation, skills, and experience.
- Terre des hommes collaborates with socio-economic actors present in the area: families and adolescents are referred to these actors through agreed criteria (flexible and rapid). Terre des hommes also proposes to train the socio-economic actors in basic child protection principles, so that they can ensure sufficiently protective conditions for the children.

Mothers and adolescents are regularly targeted within the family. Attention needs to be paid in order not to increase child protection risks (i.e. child worker being removed from school, exploiting employers or inappropriate childcare arrangements for mothers or adolescent mothers working or participating in training, etc.). Actors must develop flexible, responsive strategies such as adolescents working part time in order to attend school, work-place close to home for mothers with several children or childcare rotating systems among adolescent mothers in training, etc.

In some insecure contexts, during the first months of a project or for families with particular vulnerabilities such as those unable to work (elderly grandparents caring for children or disabled parents), cash transfers may be put in place over a period of two to six months as an emergency social measure while more specific and sustainable responses are established^[32].

However, in order not to trap families in a cycle of debt and insolvency, Terre des hommes believes that micro-credit is not an appropriate solution in emergency.

In all cases, in order to reduce the risk of stigmatisation, theft or jealousy, local authorities and leaders must be sensitised and trained regarding the selection criteria and process for receiving economic support.

4.3 Axis III: Protection system

In recent years, child protection programs, focused on a single problem or a particular vulnerable group, have evolved towards consolidating local and national child protection systems.^[33] In order to be able to respond to violence, exploitation, neglect and abuse, Terre des hommes strengthens the protection mechanisms and the skills of all local and national actors who are responsible for the protection of children.

^[31] Socio-economic support mechanism in emergency protection projects – Tdh 2013 – [Annex 19](#)

^[32] Cash and child protection – Save the children 2012 – [Annex 20](#)

^[33] Strengthening protection systems through community mechanisms – Save the Children 2011 – [Annex 22](#)

Protection systems strengthening

In its thematic policy, Terre des hommes defines the protection system as “*coherent set of actions and actors, in which the child is the starting point and which aims to guarantee the rights and well being of the child by constructing synergies within and between protective environments.*” ^[34]

Work on protection systems strives to strengthen the existence and quality of services as well as to link different interventions and actions around the child between different levels (country, region, community), frameworks (legal, political, etc.) and operational components (capacity building, referral systems, coordination, etc.).

During emergencies, “*Terre des hommes’ major concerns are not just about the immediate effects of the crisis on children’s rights and well-being, but also on their survival and development conditions in their new environment.*” ^[35]

This holistic approach in child protection activities seeks to avoid creating parallel structures to those of the community or government, to avoid working in sector silos, and to engage in partnerships and ownership support with all relevant actors. An investment from the very beginning in strengthening protection mechanisms and systems is a critical part of developing sustainable protection activities. If during a conflict or more complex emergencies, it is impossible or inappropriate to collaborate with the government, a “system” approach still allows for working with more informal system elements, such as family and community protection mechanisms.

Any emergency protection response must participate as soon as possible in the reconstruction and reinforcement of part of this system at the local and/or national level, keeping in mind that:

- Humanitarian crises affect, weaken, and challenge the existing structures and mechanisms (social, community, administrative, economic, or governmental) for child protection.
- Responses that are poorly planned or act as substitutes do not promote the reintroduction or strengthening of existing protection mechanisms.
- Emergencies offer new opportunities (financial, technical capacities, human resources, political mobilisation).
- In many countries, protection systems are unstructured or exist through informal mechanisms.

“Protection systems and/or protection mechanisms are built on both formal and informal components. In an emergency, it is important to identify and re-mobilise key or potential elements that are already in place, such as formal community mechanisms for support, informal or traditional judicial mechanisms, as well as interventions by government social workers, teachers, and police in a coordinated manner regarding child protection issues. It is important to invest in local and national child protection resources as well as to develop the necessary additional resources that are needed in such way that they are locally integrated, linked with, and strengthening other elements of the system.” ^[36]

Working on systems is a progressive approach. After an analysis of the child protection systems ^[37], Terre des hommes will, at various points during an intervention, work in one or more areas that support the strengthening of the protection systems.

^[34] Enhancing child protection systems - Tdh 2011 – [Annex 21](#)

^[35] Enhancing child protection systems - Tdh 2011 – [Annex 21](#)

^[36] Minimum standards for child protection in humanitarian action – CPWG 2012 – [Annex 04](#)

^[37] SPE mapping toolkit – UNICEF – [Annex 23](#)

Strengthening the capacities of formal and informal actors and synergies

a. Strengthening capacities

While recognising and supporting existing endogenous practices, Terre des hommes contributes to a progressive transfer of knowledge and know-how in child protection with its partners in order to legitimise, empower and increase their responsibility and autonomy in their protection duties and functions.

Child protection trainings and educational activities organised for parents and other community actors are also forums for exchanging social and cultural values and norms that, with regard to universally recognised rights, contribute to social change and re-establish a community network around the child.

b. Partnership and synergies among actors

Strengthening protection systems remains a coordinated and shared activity among different protection actors. Even if national actors are weakened during the initial period of the crisis, they still have a key role to play in the long term recovery and reconstruction strategy of these systems. This approach allows for the on-going reestablishment and implementation of collaborations between the different mechanisms and response services needed for child protection, thereby making it an inter sectoral approach.

- **Partnership with government child welfare structures:** These collaborations at national and local levels give a more sustainable dimension to emergency responses. Even if the authorities have insufficient resources, a progressive collaboration that is well thought out from the beginning, can allow for the consultation and for the involvement of the authorities in child protection activities. This day-to-day partnership improves their competencies and capacities, and provides them with the means to take ownership of and institutionalise these protection activities within the communities.
- **Partnership with all the community stakeholders:** Civil leaders, religious leaders, women's groups, youth groups, refugee leaders, other association leaders, basic service providers, etc. are mobilised and progressively given greater responsibility for actions. They participate in and contribute to prevention, alert, and response activities needed for child protection.
- **Partnership with the child and his family:** The child and his family participate in the aid/support process from the very beginning through a perspective of sustainability and self-sufficiency (autonomous approach and rights' based principle). Terre des hommes does not limit itself to responding just to the child's immediate needs. Terre des hommes also strengthen the capacities of the child and his family, in a way that promotes and empowers them in the long term.
- **Partnership with local and community organisations:** This consists in mobilising the communities and for them to take ownership of the new protection practices. This mobilisation involves the progressive handover of activities led by Terre des hommes to local organisations and groups. These partnerships ensure the sustainability of the intervention once emergency funds decrease and international organisations begin to withdraw.
- **Inter-agency partnership** ^[38]: Terre des hommes is an active member of the Child Protection Working Group (CPWG) at the international level and works on the ground in coordination with all the child protection organisations represented at national and local levels. Working in partnership allows for the coordination of approaches and interventions with the goal of complementing each other, avoiding duplication, as well as promoting cooperation, coherence, and the promotion of best practice. Coordinating with other sectors as well helps fostering the protection of vulnerable children and their families.

^[38] Minimum standards for child protection in humanitarian action – Standard 1 – CPWG 2012 – [Annex 04](#)

4.4 Axis IV: Advocacy

What is advocacy?

For Terre des hommes, “advocacy is a planned set of actions designed to influence a target group or decision makers in favour of changes in the interest of children at local, regional, national and international levels”.^[39]

Advocacy may aim to influence decisions to put an end to unacceptable situations of children rights violations. It is also an activity aimed at changing institution’s policies, positions or programs. To do so, advocacy relies on arguments and recommendations to be defended in front of these parties in order to negotiate and guide decision makers towards a positive solution.

Advocacy is also about highlighting the problem, offering a solution, and putting into place the support to act, both at the level of the problem and the solution. Therefore, advocacy can come after or precede Terre des hommes programmatic response.

Why conduct advocacy?

“Terre des hommes wishes to ensure that children’s rights are respected in accordance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and that this continues over the long term. Tdh encourages and assists in the drafting and implementation of institutional policies that safeguard child development and call into question systems and policies that lead to violations of these rights. Tdh emphasises children’s potential and supports the efforts of those around them to strive for development and a better future.”^[40]

Advocacy is not a goal in itself but rather a strategy for the promotion of child protection. For this reason, Terre des hommes analyses and advocates against unjust practices, systems, and rules at local, national, regional and international levels. Terre des hommes opposes policies that undermine the development of children. Terre des hommes proposes viable alternatives and mobilises others to take action.

It remains important to monitor whether advocacy helps Terre des hommes presence and intervention or puts them at risk. In some insecure or overly politicised situations, Terre des hommes prioritises direct actions in favour of beneficiaries and communities, instead of advocacy. Nevertheless, advocacy efforts led by other human rights organisations can still be supported by testimony conveyed in strict confidentiality.

Advocacy must reflect the various conditions and situations faced by the children and their communities and will therefore vary based upon the situation. In emergencies, the need for advocacy is often related to grave children’s rights violations (children’s recruitment by armed groups, sexual violence committed against children, illegal international adoptions^[41], etc.).

How to conduct advocacy?

“Terre des hommes conducts advocacy with others: community groups, social movements, national associations and international alliances. Within Terre des hommes, different sections (working groups, national and international programs, media relations, communications services, marketing, etc.) can work together to understand how policies and practices affect children and then to take action. Terre des hommes participates in setting up coalitions to support changes, by putting crucial points concerning children onto the agenda.”^[42]

^[39] Tdh Strategic plan 2011-2015 – advocacy section – Tdh 2010 – [Annex 24](#)

^[40] Tdh Strategic plan 2011-2015 – advocacy section – Tdh 2010 – [Annex 24](#)

^[41] Tdh opposes international adoptions in situations of emergency, exposing children to involuntary and illegal family separations, often expeditious and traumatizing for the children.

^[42] Tdh Strategic plan 2011-2015 – advocacy section – Tdh 2010 – [Annex 24](#)

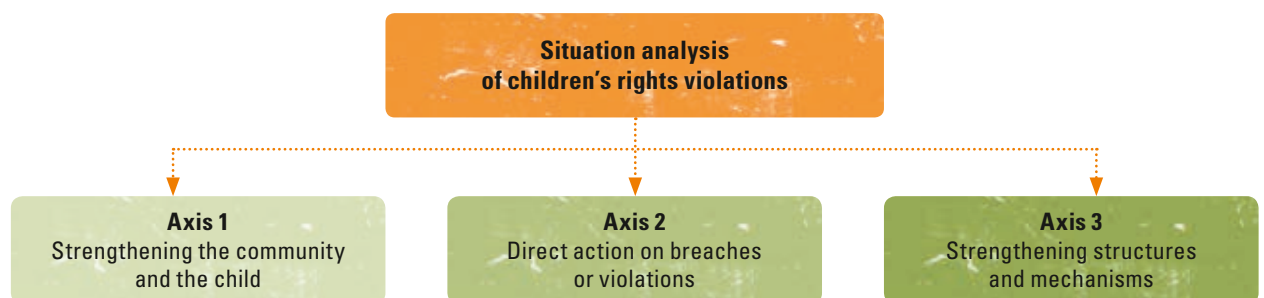
The primary advocacy activities are conducted at the local level, global level, or in a combined manner. Terre des hommes conducts direct discussions with influential people or actors (governments, donors, legislators, forums of agencies/organisations/foundations, international bodies, etc.), or attempts to persuade influential people through the media or other campaigning (publicity, mobilisation).

Advocacy often involves the creation of platforms (networks and alliances) and support to the development of the civil society in order for them to advocate for change and hold authorities or others accountable. Terre des hommes also builds the capacity of those who implement policies and actions. Looking for alternative solutions, Terre des hommes seeks to make the most out of the available resources.

By publishing the results of its research, analysis, and policy recommendations, Terre des hommes promotes debate with governments, other institutions, the general public, and more specific target audiences. In order to support the voices of those affected by a situation and to demand action, Terre des hommes involves beneficiaries, including children, whenever possible.

Terre des hommes participates in conferences, summits, and other forums, using the media and other techniques to ensure that the key topics regarding children are discussed and to propose viable alternatives, most often those piloted by Terre des hommes in the field.

Advocacy can consolidate a large number of specific activities in the short term to achieve a vision of change in the long term. Advocacy is an integral part of its actions and is an important lever for sustainability or positive change. It is inclusive in the three other axes of its intervention:



In certain situations, advocacy precedes the implementation of activities, for example when negotiating with the government or armed groups on the demobilisation of children in order to organize reintegration activities. In other situations, advocacy is conducted simultaneously and based on practical data and analysis. For example, when trying to advocate for the reunification and reintegration of children with their families or in foster care, instead of institutional care. In other cases, advocacy comes after field work through institutional, organisational and capacity building (government structures and mechanisms) to bring changes at the policy level and to ensure that the policies respects the children's rights.

Terre des hommes projects balance direct actions with advocacy. Children's direct or indirect participation in defending and promoting their rights is central at the community level. They advocate themselves for changes and holds accountable their community, the authorities and all other actors.

5. Principles of Action.

The principles presented below are in line with the general values and principles set forth in Terre des hommes Foundation strategic plan 2011 - 2015^[43], thematic strategies, and inter-agency standards.^[44]

During humanitarian crises, Terre des hommes respects in particular the following principles:

Do no harm – not exposing children to further violence/risks

Through an analysis and understanding of the context and the existing social, cultural, religious, and security factors, Terre des hommes seeks to guarantee a response that does not exclude, affect, or put children at risk.

Therefore, Terre des hommes is vigilant about:

- Understanding existing family, community, and government protection mechanisms and the reasons for their failure or malfunction before introducing alternative protection measures into a community or society.
- Analysing existing relationships established between children and adults and not creating conflicts of interest or resistance through a differentiated approach.
- Understanding the cultural and social norms according to gender and age, to ensure access by all groups of children to proposed interventions and prevent resistance from children, families and communities.
- Promoting children voluntary and safe participation, taking into account the opinions of children, their interests and the community social and security realities.
- Not limiting access to activities and services to a single category of children in order to avoid stigmatisation or implicitly encouraging children/families to expose themselves to new protection risks.
- Guaranteeing confidentiality to protect privacy and identity, and to prevent stigmatisation or security risks.

Non-Discrimination – promoting fair and impartial access to protection measures

The most vulnerable children may be, voluntarily or not, excluded from an activity due to their ethnicity, their geographic isolation, their family situation/responsibilities, their economic activities, disability, a lack of freedom, etc. Terre des hommes is committed to developing adapted local services to reach the greatest number of children, particularly the most vulnerable.

The risks and consequences arising from conflicts and natural disasters are different for boys and girls and vary according to their age.^[45] Understanding these differences allows to better respond to the protection needs of each child and ensures an adequately tailored response. Terre des hommes seeks to protect the children against exclusions as well as guarantee and restore their dignity, regardless of their gender or age, based on their specific needs. When these differences are accentuated by the prevailing culture, a differentiated approach ensures participation and access for all children, especially girls.

This gender/age approach applies to all levels and stages of the intervention:

- By including girls and boys of different ages in the needs assessment and project development as well as conducting targeted assessments by gender and age.
- By fighting against any form of discrimination based upon gender or age that would affect access to programs, educational practices, rights to protection, participation in programs, etc.
- By conducting advocacy with other sectors to ensure a gender/age approach in their responses.

^[43] Tdh Strategic plan 2011-2015 – advocacy section – Tdh 2010 – [Annex 24](#)

^[44] Minimum standards for child protection in humanitarian action – CPWG 2012 – [Annex 04](#)

^[45] Sex and age matter – OCHA 2011 – [Annex 26](#)

- By strengthening girls and boys life and protection skills in specific ways depending on their age.
- By making communities aware about harmful traditional practices that affect either gender, depending on their age.
- By implementing follow up tools including data on sex and age.

Supporting the participation of children

Terre des hommes favours a participatory approach in which children and their parents are involved and can influence the decisions that affect their lives. Girls and boys, according to their age and capacities, can be key actors in all emergency stages. They must be allowed to express their points of view and opinions and be consulted and involved in decisions, including disabled children. Their involvement allows for a concerted decision on the best way to respond.

Child participation always strives to ensure their best interest in all decisions and actions. This implies that in certain situations, the children's opinions will not necessarily be followed if their security is threatened.

This approach commits children as actors of their own protection. It requires a change in the way most adults perceive children, including their power relationship with them.

Care alternatives

Emergencies often cause family separation, whether voluntary or involuntary, primary or secondary (placements), often accentuating pre-existing phenomena of fostering or placement within extended families, among individuals, employers, or institutions, etc.

Given that children have the universal right to live and develop within their families, Terre des hommes works to keep children with their families, return them to their families, or, failing that, to find other appropriate and permanent solutions as a replacement.

In many countries, placing children into institutions (transit centres, orphanages, residential centres, etc.) is a solution considered by the state, organisations, and by many families facing difficulties. However, it is universally recognised that family care is the far preferred solution. Institutional care does not respond to individual development needs and traps children in cycle of separation from their family and community. Furthermore, the risk of abuse and exploitation are often multiplied in this kind of collective care.

When children encounter precarious situations within their families (death, illness or disability of one or both parents, economic difficulties, loss of shelter, etc.), the first measure to take is to support the parents or guardians' educational and socio-economic capacities so that they can continue to carry out their care functions. If the parent himself is a risk factor for the child, alternative care options such as placement in the child's extended family, a foster care family within the community, or adoption within the child's country are possible. Terre des hommes believes that international adoption can be considered as an option if it is impossible to find an adequate national solution, but only after the emergency period has passed. Placing a child in an institution must remain the choice of last resort and only be considered if it is appropriate for the child concerned and responds to his best interest.

In line with the United Nations resolution of February 2010^[46], Terre des hommes seeks to offer children in needs care and placement alternatives within a family structure.^[47]

^[46] UN Resolution 16/142- Guidelines on alternative care for children – [Annex 25](#)

^[47] Foster Family care Placement system – Tdh Haiti 2013 – [Annex 27](#)

Institutional child protection policy (cpp) ^[48]

At Terre des hommes, the institutional policy of preventing risky behaviours towards children applies from the very beginning of its field intervention. It is based on a code of conduct, awareness raising and training for workers, partners, and beneficiaries (including children) as well as by audits and annual action plans. Terre des hommes has established procedures for reporting abuse and managing such situations.

During emergencies, implementation of this policy is crucial because the chaotic situation can create additional risks of child abuse. Furthermore, as the size of the teams and number of partners increases, so does the need for increased supervision and monitoring. The institutional Child Protection Policy allows Terre des hommes to quickly set up a framework and principles to work with and relate to children, its teams, partners and visitors of the project.

^[48] Child protection policy – Tdh 2010 – [Annex 28](#)





Section 3. Expected results and types of action.

This section contains a summary of the results targeted by Terre des hommes projects and the types of actions that can be implemented according to the context and needs that have been assessed.

As part of its intervention in humanitarian crises, Terre des hommes expands its field of action. Depending on the situation and the analysis of priority needs and in coordination with other actors, Terre des hommes identifies and chooses to respond to certain protection issues within its geographic zones of intervention.

Through coordination with other child protection partners, Terre des hommes can respond in a holistic manner to the children's priority needs: abuses, neglects and physical violence in the family and care environment, family separation, sexual violence, children associated with armed forces or armed groups, worst forms of child labour and exploitation, or psychosocial distress.^[49]

A number of expected results are elaborated according to the four axes of intervention described in this document that respond to the protection needs, both primary (those caused by the emergency impact) and secondary (those related to the child's new living conditions). Once these emergency measures are taken to ensure the children's survival, Terre des hommes adopts a medium to long term perspective of empowering state actors, both national and local, and gradually handing over responsibilities to them in order to prepare for a progressive withdrawal.

The various expected results and types of action defined in the table that follows are described in a more detailed manner in Tdh Programme Guidance.^[50] Their implementation within the project cycle management stages, from needs assessment to the process of monitoring results, are also described in details in the Operational Methodological Manual.^[51]

The four axes of intervention described in the preceding sections can involve different types of action depending upon the issues children encounter. These actions are listed in the following table.

^[49] Since this issue is transversal to all the problems, the responses developed by Tdh is integrated in individual and collective interventions for each of them

^[50] Child Protection in Humanitarian Crises – Programme Guidance – Tdh 2013 – [Annex 06](#)

^[51] Child Protection in Humanitarian Crises – Operational Methodological Manual – Tdh 2013 – [Annex 07](#)

Expected results

Types of Action

1. Collective Protection

Collective activities contribute to the strengthening of the children's personal and social skills and resilience after the emergency.

- Strengthen community groups' capacities and field of actions
- Implement or strengthen intergenerational collective psychosocial activities in protected spaces
- Promote support groups, psychosocial training for parents

Communities are mobilised and trained to prevent separation, violence, exploitation and abuse against children and to promote the reintegration of marginalised children.

- Implement community awareness-raising regarding the risks and consequences to children of family separation, violence, exploitation and abuse
- Mobilise and train community networks
- Train leaders and community actors on referral mechanisms
- Implement parental education activities on child protection
- Support community initiatives on protection and social cohesion

Community prevention strategies against violence and support for social and family integration of marginalised children are developed.

- Life and protection skills training for girls and boys,
- Adolescents' integration into community networks
- Vocational training or orientations for adolescents within community structures

2. Individual Protection

Children **victims of abuses, neglects and physical violence in the families and care environment** regain a protective environments for their development.

- Individual follow up as well as psychosocial, educational, multi-sectoral and socio-economic support for families
- Referral system for basic services: health, sanitation, nutrition, education, shelter, mental health, disability, economic, etc.
- Removal and alternative care placement in foster families
- Specific care for pregnant girls and young mothers
- Parents' education and psychosocial skills capacity building

Family separation is prevented and **separated or unaccompanied** children are protected, reunited, or cared for by alternative placement mechanisms.

- Identification, documentation, tracing and family reunification mechanisms implemented in coordination with other child protection actors
- Individual reintegration follow up as well as psychosocial, educational, multi sectoral and socio-economic support for families
- Referral system for basic services: health, sanitation, nutrition, education, shelter, mental health, disability, economic, etc.
- Removal and alternative placement in foster care families
- Monitoring, evaluation and risk mitigation for children placed in institutions

Children **victims of sexual violence** are protected, accompanied, and integrated into families and communities.

- Individual follow up as well as psychosocial, educational, multi sectoral and socio-economic support for families
- Referral system for basic services: health, sanitation, nutrition, education, shelter, mental health, disability, economic, professional training, etc.
- Alternative care mechanisms
- Support in vocational training and socio-economic reintegration for girls pregnant or young mothers

Children **associated with armed forces or armed groups or illegally detained** during conflicts are reintegrated into their families and communities.*

- Temporary care, reunification or alternative care for demobilised children and those released from detention
- Individual follow up as well as psychosocial, educational, multi sectoral and socio-economic support for families or adolescents
- Referral system for basic services: health, sanitation, nutrition, education, shelter, mental health, disability, economic, professional training, etc.
- Support in vocational training and socio-economic reintegration for adolescents

* This is a new field of intervention for Tdh and is not yet a validated field of intervention in the Foundation's strategic plan. It may be implemented as a pilot intervention in the field and will be evaluated and capitalised in order to review interest in adding it as a field for intervention.

Expected results

Types of Action

2. Individual Protection

Children are **protected against the worst forms of labour and exploitation and reintegrated** in communities.

- Awareness-raising and training for employers of child workers
- Family and/or community reintegration
- Individual follow up as well as psychosocial, educational, multi sectoral and socio-economic support for families
- Referral system for basic services: health, sanitation, nutrition, education, shelter, mental health, disability, economic, etc.
- Support in vocational training and socio-economic reintegration for adolescents

3. Protection systems / Partnership / competencies' strengthening

Civil society and state actors are strengthened in their capacity to participate in and take responsibility for child protection.

- Collaboration and strengthening of state child welfare authorities competencies and capacities
- Collaboration and strengthening of national/local partner associations competencies and capacities
- Collaboration and strengthening of community groups and organisations competencies and capacities

Child protection mechanisms are strengthened in Tdh zones of intervention.

- An emergency plan for prevention and intervention that covers the main child protection risks is in place and known by communities
- Multi sectoral mechanisms/systems are strengthened to protect the most vulnerable children at the community level

Tdh participates actively in **various child protection coordination forums**.

- Participation and/or co-lead (at the local level) in coordination meetings and initiatives: child protection sub-cluster, GBV sub-cluster, thematic working groups, etc.
- Participation in the development of inter-agency plans for the prevention of and care for children victims of abuses, neglects and physical violence in the family and care environment, separated children, children associated with armed forces or armed groups, children victims of sexual violence, children working in the worst form of child labour and children suffering from psychosocial distress

National policies and the legal framework for child protection are strengthened, especially those related to targeted issues.

- Contribution to the revision of national laws in line with international Minimum Standards for Child Protection
- Contribution to the development or strengthening of national protection policies and mechanisms for the care of the most vulnerable and marginalised children

4. Advocacy

Local and national authorities, communities, humanitarian actors, international bodies, donors and media are **challenged regarding the protection needs of children and groups at risk or marginalised during emergencies**.

- Advocacy to support and undertake actions to protect the most exposed children based upon priority protection issues: children's institutionalisation, illegal adoptions during emergencies, negotiations to release children from armed groups, illegal and arbitrary detention of children during an armed conflict, sexual violence, risks of child trafficking, etc.
- Advocacy for the ratification of international protection norms and/or the enforcement of national laws

Bibliography.

Agency	Web sites
Active Learning Network	www.alnap.org
CERF	www.unocha.org/cerf
Child Protection Working Group	www.cpwg.net
Mental Health & Psychosocial Support Network	www.mhpss.net
Global Protection Cluster	www.globalprotectioncluster.org

n°. Title of annex	Agency	Language
01. Child protection – Manual for intervention during humanitarian crises	Tdh 2008 edition	Fr/En
02. Child Protection in Humanitarian Crises – Document for communicating with donors and other partners (under development)	Tdh 2013	Fr/En
03. Tdh thematic policies regarding “distribution of NFI and emergency shelters”, “health and nutrition”, “water, hygiene and sanitation” (under development)	Tdh 2013	Fr/En
04. Minimum standards for child protection in humanitarian action	CPWG 2012	Fr/En
05. Tdh policy regarding emergencies and rehabilitation	Tdh 2011	Fr/En
06. Child Protection in Humanitarian Crises – Programme Guidance	Tdh 2013	Fr/En
07. Child Protection in Humanitarian Crises – Operational Methodological Manual	Tdh 2013	Fr/En
08. Participation by crisis affected population in humanitarian action	ANALP 2003	En
09. Health and Protection project synthesis and typology – Draft in development	Tdh 2013	Fr/En
10. Guidelines for CFS in emergencies	UNICEF – CPWG 2011	En
11. Haiti project technical document – Community social centers	Tdh Haiti 2011	Fr
12. Laugh, run, move to better grow together – Games promoting psychosocial development	Tdh 2007	Fr/En
13. Manual of psychosocial skills	Tdh 2011	Fr/En
13 ^{bis} . “I deal”	War child 2011	Fr/En
14. Working with children and their environment – Psychosocial reference document	Tdh 2010	Fr/En
15. What we are learning about community – based child protection	Mike Wessels 2009	Fr/En
16. Positive deviance	CORE 2003	Fr/En
17. Case management, system and responsibilities	Tdh 2009	Fr/En
18. Vulnerability criteria grid	Tdh Haiti 2010-2012	Fr/En
19. Socio-economic support mechanism in emergency protection projects	Tdh 2013	Fr/En
20. Cash and Child Protection	SC 2012	En
21. Enhancing child protection systems	Tdh 2011	Fr/En
22. Strengthening protection systems through community - based mechanisms	Save the children 2011	Fr/En
23. SPE mapping toolkit	UNICEF	En
24. Tdh Strategic plan 2011-2015 – advocacy section	Tdh 2010	Fr/En
25. Guidelines for alternative care of children	UN 2010	Fr/En
26. Sex and age matter	OCHA 2011	En
27. Foster Family care Placement system	Tdh Haiti 2013	Fr/En
28. Child Protection Policy	Tdh 2010	Fr/En



Impressum.

Responsible for editing: Steven Fricaud

Auhor: Sabine Himbert

Editors: Pierre Philippe, Sabine Rakotomalala, David Dandrès, Maria Bray, Mirela Shuteriqi, Asmodel Bankole, Vincent Tournecuillert, Marlène Hofstetter.

Layout: Angel-Grafik

Coordination: Laure Silacci

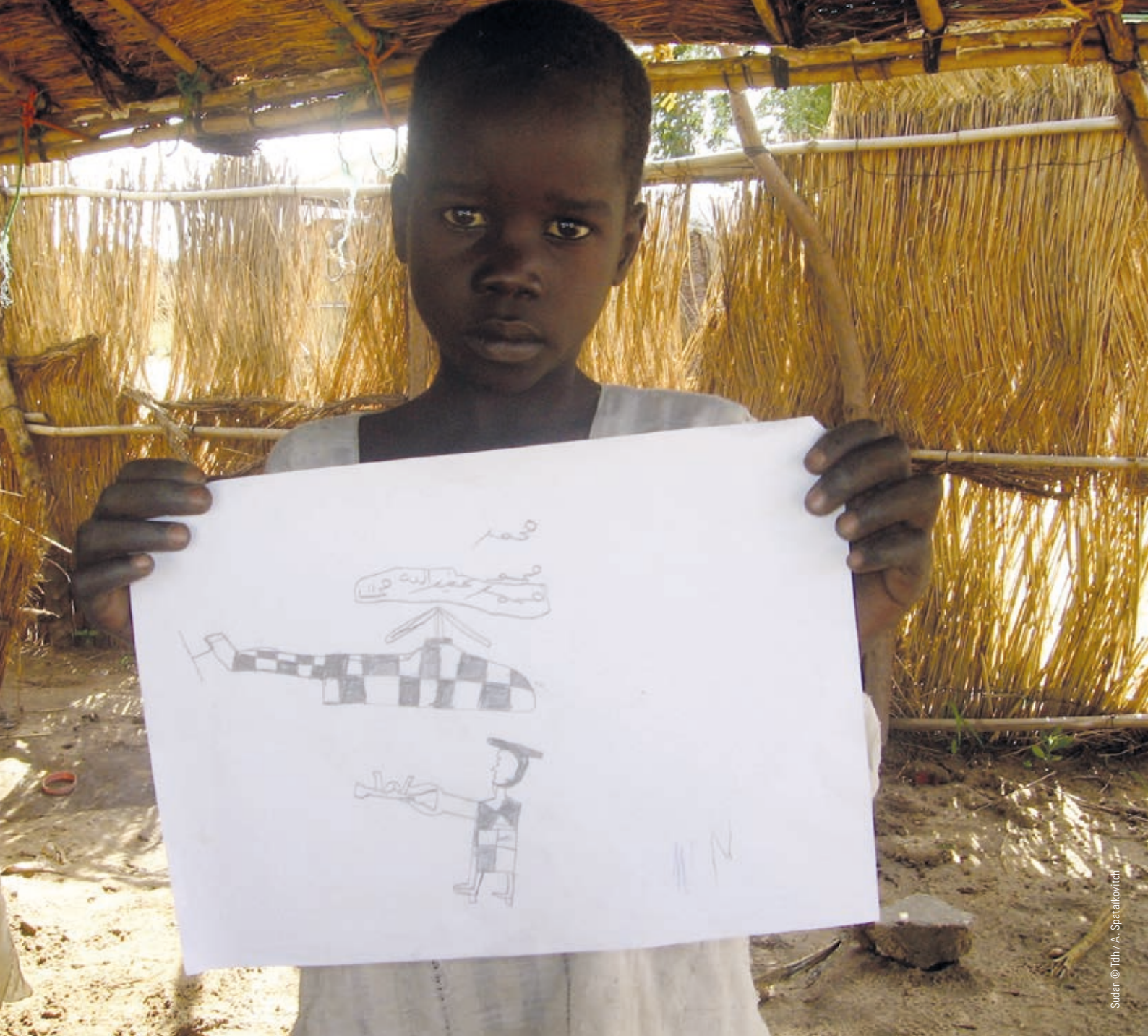
Pictures: The pictures published in this volume have been made available by professional photographers working for Terre des hommes: Florian Cella, Jean-Marie Jolidon, Bernard Marks, Odile Meylan, Alexandre Spataïkovitch. Thanks!

Printing : BestPrint SA, Lausanne.
Printed on chlorine-free paper.

Version: Brochure in French and English.

A description of the principles, approach, and fields of actions for Terre des hommes' intervention in response to child protection needs in humanitarian crises.

© 2014, Terre des hommes – helping children worldwide



Sudan © Tdh / A. Spatakovič



Siège | Hauptsitz | Sede | Headquarters
Avenue de Montchoisi 15, CH-1006 Lausanne
T +41 58 611 06 11, F +41 58 611 06 77
info@tdh.ch, CCP: 10-11504-8



Terre des hommes
Helping children worldwide. tdh.ch