



Introduction

This advocacy note seeks to raise awareness about the key child protection issues and concerns affecting the children impacted by the conflict in Tigray. The brief advocates for undeniable access to humanitarian assistance for unaccompanied and separated children (UASC) and other children at risks as well as increase in funding for child protection services

Key messages

- Child protection actors continue to face extreme funding shortages and inconsistencies, leading to insufficient and disrupted services.
- The number of children separating from their families is increasing. On average 31 children separate from their families every day.
- Over 10,000 unaccompanied and separated children (UASC) in Tigray require urgent family tracing and reunification
- UASC face the worst forms of child exploitation, including child labour, abuse, neglect, and violence which must be prevented and responded to.
- The crisis in Tigray has exposed children to traumatic events, death of loved ones, or separation from family members, which often causes immediate and long-term psychological suffering, impeded development, and social struggles among children.
- Multiple adolescent boys and girls reporting thoughts of suicide, and suicide attempts and self-harm in IDP sites among UASC
- Child protection actors have low internal technical capacity which must be built to better provide quality and appropriate child protection services
- Children born out of conflict-related sexual violence are abandoned at hospital premises and support is required for family based alternative care.

Key Asks

To the humanitarian leadership in Ethiopia, in particular the Humanitarian Coordinator

- Continue advocating for cessation of hostilities between parties to the conflict, opening of the humanitarian corridor and improved humanitarian access to the Tigray region

- Ensure increased humanitarian access to hard-to-reach areas to provide life- saving support to unaccompanied and separated children and other children in need.
- Advocate to the donor community to prioritise consistent and multi-year funding for child protection interventions that focus on
 - (i) Ensuring unaccompanied and separated children recover their right to family-based care and have unhindered access to humanitarian assistance within their communities.
 - (ii) Prevent and respond to child protection concerns among children affected by violence, abuse, exploitation, and neglect
 - (iii) Strengthening family's protection and care giving responsibilities as well as family based alternative care system in the region
 - (iv) Capacity-strengthening of child protection practitioners, including local actors

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