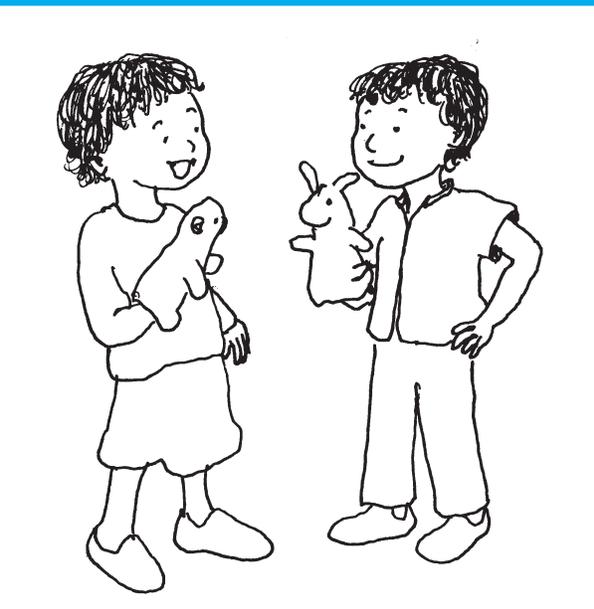


# Early Childhood Development Kit:

A Treasure Box of Activities



## Coordinator's Guide

unite for children



## **Acknowledgements**

This document was prepared with the invaluable guidance and contributions of a number of individuals, both inside and outside of UNICEF. Special thanks go to Nurper Ulkuer, Vijaya Singh, Arnaud Conchon, Chris Capobianco and Tami Farber.

In addition, we would like to express our appreciation to Patricia Engle and Yoshiko Oi for initiating the process and to Cassie Landers for her feedback and technical inputs. We also would like to give special thanks to the Regional and Country Offices for their support and cooperation.

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## Section I – The Early Childhood Development (ECD) Emergency Kit

### I. Introduction

Today, global crises including war and natural disasters have displaced an estimated 42 million people – 40% of whom are children. 1.5 billion children, over two-thirds of the world’s child population, have faced some type of emergency situation. Worldwide, experts predict that at least 200 million children under five will fail to reach their full potential in cognitive and socio-emotional development due to malnutrition, iodine and iron deficiencies and inadequate stimulation during the first five years of their lives.

Research has shown that early childhood is the most critical period for brain development and that experiences in the early years lay the foundation for lifelong learning and productivity. When a child’s need for basic care and nurturing is neglected during the first years of life, the capacity needed for healthy development in later years is severely compromised. Children who experience extreme stress in their earliest years are at a greater risk for developing cognitive behavioural and emotional difficulties. Those who are exposed to the stresses of emergency situations are particularly vulnerable and at increased risk of separation from primary caregivers, sexual and gender-based violence, physical harm and long-term negative emotional and psychological effects.

Young children are highly dependent on their parents and communities to protect them and provide them with adequate nutrition, health care and a loving environment that will help them develop into healthy and productive adults. However, during emergency situations, caregiv-

ers also experience extreme levels of stress and depression which may inhibit their ability to provide their young children with the positive and emotionally nurturing environment that they desperately need during times of instability and uncertainty.

An important factor in mitigating the emotional effects of such crises is the establishment of a safe environment where young children can feel secure, interact freely with responsive adults and other children, and participate in stimulating early learning activities. Opportunities to express feelings, and establish social relationships are highly important for young children and can help to restore a sense of normalcy and stability. ECD interventions can play a key role in helping to address the risk of developmental damage for these young children whose lives have been brutally disrupted by conflict and disaster.

The purpose of the Coordinator’s Guide is to provide instruction and guidance on designing and implementing ECD activities in emergency situations. It is intended to equip coordinators with the knowledge and skills to effectively oversee the coordination and implementation of the ECD Emergency Kit. This includes instruction on the following: 1) conducting a situation analysis; 2) designing an ECD Kit intervention; 3) designing effective implementation strategies; 4) procurement of the Kit; and 5) monitoring and evaluating the deployment and utilisation of the Kit. Guidance on how to participate in and contribute to trainings for facilitators and caregivers will also be provided.

## II. Background and Rationale

In July 2004, UNICEF's Integrated Early Childhood Development (IECD) Unit conducted a needs assessment survey in countries that were facing emergency and/or unstable situations. The results revealed that 83% of the countries surveyed lacked playing and learning materials for children ages 0-6 years old.

In order to support efforts to bring recovery and healing to young children in crisis, UNICEF's ECD Unit, in collaboration with the Education Unit, the Emergency Task Force in NYHQ and the Emergency Operations Unit (EMOPS) developed an ECD Kit and Facilitators' Guide which targeted children ages 0-6 living in conflict and emergencies around the world. These Kits were designed to help caregivers – including parents and service providers – to meet the special needs of young children during humanitarian

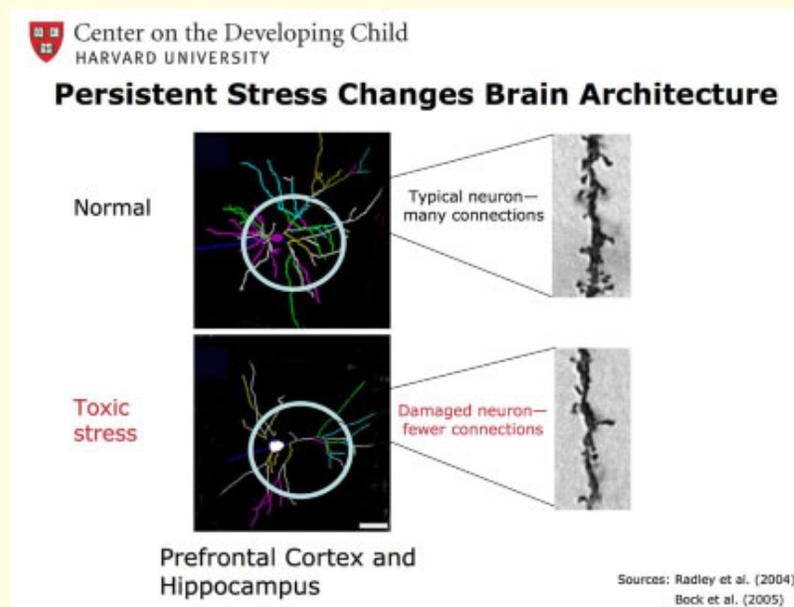
and conflict-related emergencies. Using these tools, caregivers were not only able to re-focus their attention on young children and their development, but also to provide them with materials for learning and play as well as hope, in an extremely difficult environment.

During emergencies learning materials are often lost or destroyed. Particularly, in conflict situations looting and burning of all play and other educational materials are common. Families are not likely to be able to replace such materials and investing in playthings and educational materials for young children is rarely prioritized by governments. Therefore, the provision of basic equipment and materials such as those provided in the ECD Kit, can be a powerful catalyst to the re-establishment of early learning and stimulation activities.

### Early childhood is a critical period for brain development

- Young children experience the most rapid period of growth and change during the human lifespan. Timing of experience is critical as these years lay the foundation for a child's future.
- During the early years of life, most of the growth of brain cells occurs, accompanied by the structuring of neural connections in the brain and physical growth. The first years of a child's life are important for the child's physical and psychological development, as well as for his or her cognitive development, personality and social behaviour.

- There is evidence of the negative impact of toxic stress during the early years on brain function and affects brain architecture as shown in the picture here.



## Increased number of natural disasters

- In the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the world witnessed an average of 12 disasters per year. By the second half of the century, the number had risen to 163 because of population growth, urbanization, deforestation and climate change.
- Certain regions (i.e. TACRO, EAPRO, ROSA), which are more prone to natural disasters due to geography and harsh weather patterns, have been greatly destabilized. An inability to cope with these disasters due to a lack of resources and poor infrastructure has resulted in increased regional disparities.
- Children are less likely to survive natural disasters and those who do survive are subsequently at high risk of succumbing to malnutrition, injuries or communicable diseases. Their development is also jeopardized by the psychosocial and economic consequences of the resulting trauma.



### III. The ECD Kit: A Treasure Box of Activities

**Purpose:** To strengthen the response for children ages 0-6 in emergency situations and to provide them with stimulation and learning materials to help restore a sense of stability and safety for young children.

The ECD Emergency Kit can help build the bridge from 'emergency to normalcy' helping young children to reconcile with a new environment and provide an opportunity to create or expand on existing ECD programmes within the community. The Kit is complementary to "School in a Box" and other kits in addressing the learning and developmental needs of young children in emergency situations. Minimal contributions from caregivers and providers are required and young children are empowered to set their own pace of learning and recovery.

#### Specific Objectives:

- Establish positive and supportive adult-child interactions;
- Create a safe and secure play and learning environment;
- Foster self-esteem and confidence;
- Develop critical early learning and development skills;
- Promote interaction between young children of the same or different ages;
- Create opportunities to develop curiosity, creativity, and self-expression;
- Create a sense of normalcy for young children whose lives have been severely disrupted by conflict and/or disaster.

#### Quick Facts:

- Contains 37 durable play and learning materials for caregivers and young children from birth to age six;
- Serves groups of up to 50 young children and costs 230 USD;
- Creates opportunities for young children to interact with other children and adults in safe and stimulating environments;
- Provides a minimum package for an emergency situation -other relevant materials should and may be added as necessary;

- Items in the Kit can be replaced by local supplies and homemade playthings;
- Kits are prepared to be as gender and culturally neutral as possible to serve boys and girls all around the world;
- Complements UNICEF's "School in a Box" and the "Recreation Kit".

### Exploring the ECD Kit – What's Inside?

#### Learning and Play Materials for Young Children

The Kit contains enough materials to help caregivers create a safe learning environment for up to 50 young children. It consists of 37 items including brightly coloured paper and pencils, dominoes, construction blocks, puzzle blocks and memory games to stimulate cognitive learning, social and emotional competency, creativity and problem-solving skills. Each item was carefully selected to help develop young children's skills for physical development, curiosity and exploration, speaking, feeling, and interacting with others. Counting games, beads to string, boxes to stack and sort, and puppets for telling and listening to stories are just some of the treasures found inside the Kit listed in the Table on the next page.

#### Resources for Caregivers

Included in the Kit is an easy to use **Activity Guide** filled with suggestions on how to use each item based on the children's age and interest along with supportive teaching items to help caregivers implement the activities. These items include adhesive tape, pen, pencils, plastic storage bags, exercise book markers and flip-charts. **Record books** are also provided to enable caregivers to monitor children's attendance, responsiveness to activities and play materials and a child's individual progress. The Kit also contains a bar of soap and a collapsible water container to help keep the materials and children clean as well as UNICEF T-shirts and decal stickers to ensure the identification and recognition of UNICEF-supported caregivers and materials.

## ECD Kit: Games and Activities

Activities With Materials			
	Babies	1–3 Years	4–6 Years
1. Board Puzzle	*	*	
2. Chain Puzzle	*	*	
3. Board Book	*	*	*
4. Sponge Balls	*	*	*
5. Shape Sorter	*	*	*
6. Paper and Crayons	*	*	*
7. Stringing Beads	*	*	*
8. Puppets	*	*	*
9. Stacking and Sorting Kit	*	*	*
10. Dominoes	*	*	*
11. Construction Blocks	*	*	*
12. Modelling Clay		*	*
13. Puzzle Blocks		*	*
14. Memory Game		*	*
15. Counting Circle			*
16. Jigsaw Puzzle			*

Activities Without Materials			
	Babies	1–3 Years	4–6 Years
1. We Are Going to...	*	*	
2. We Can Move	*	*	
3. Familiar Sounds	*	*	
4. Can You Copy Me?	*	*	
5. We Can Make Music	*	*	
6. I Am Here. Who Is Here?	*	*	
7. I See Something	*	*	
8. Quiet Talking Time	*	*	
9. We Can Move/Hide and Seek			*
10. Follow the Leader			*
11. Friends Together			*
12. One Toy, Two Children			*
13. Helping Partners			*

## Resources for Facilitators

This Guide provides facilitators with ideas for training early childhood care providers to understand how to use the Kit when working with groups of young children in situations of armed conflict and natural disasters. It includes a range of interactive activities that provide hands on experience and is meant to build on participants' own knowledge and experience. Additional sessions provide basic background in child development, the impact of trauma on young children and the healing role of play. Participants also explore ideas for enriching the Kit with locally available and homemade toys and learning materials. The design and structure is completely flexible. Facilitators are encouraged to adapt the session to meet participants' specific learning needs and expectations. A Training Guide is also available online.

## Resources for Coordinators

The purpose of the Coordinator's Guide is to provide instruction and guidance on designing and implementing ECD activities in emergency situations. It is intended to equip coordinators with the knowledge and skills to effectively oversee the coordination and implementation of the ECD Emergency Kit. This includes instruction on the following: 1) conducting a situation analysis; 2) designing an ECD Kit intervention; 3) designing effective implementation strategies; 4) procurement of the Kit; and 5) monitoring and evaluating the deployment and utilisation of the Kit. Guidance on how to participate in and contribute to trainings for facilitators and caregivers will also be provided.

The following is a list of identified advantages and constraints that should be considered during the preparation for procurement and the implementation and monitoring of the Kit. Please note that they may vary based on the local context.

### Advantages:

- Increases capacity for preparation and unit costing.
- Stockpiling makes Kits easier to deploy thereby enabling a rapid comprehensive response.
- Saves time spent on the design, contract, manufacturing, and assembly of the items.
- Prepackaged items are often better protected against rain and transport damage, as well as being suited for storage.
- Focuses attention on children's needs when Kits are deployed along with shelter, food and other key items.

### Constraints:

- Some items may not be replaceable in the local context.
- Items may not be culturally relevant.
- Kits often rely on assumptions of class size and therefore, may not reflect reality.
- Kits may be heavy and difficult to transport which could potentially impact the willingness or ability of partners to assist in transportation.
- The cost for Kits may be higher than local assembly costs.
- Prepackaged Kits do not support the local economy.

## Lessons Learned & Recommendations Prepackaged Kits

### Deployment and Delivery:

- Prompt deployment of Kits (within 6-8 weeks) and a rapid resumption of ECD activities if they were already in place.
- Use a “two-phase” approach: 1) Initial and essential learning Kits or items should be deployed within the first 6-8 weeks. 2) Second distribution of materials (most likely not through prepackaged kits) should be made after an expanded assessment (4-6 months after the emergency onset).
- Set clear deadlines for the end of distribution of prepackaged Kits and prepare sustainability plan to continue support.
- Staff should ensure that caregivers receive Kits and/or confirm that Kits reach (and are signed for) their designated location.

### Contents:

- Some items are used more rapidly than others. Specific items should be inventoried and sent accordingly to avoid oversupply and underuse.

- Kits should be complete. There are many items that could possibly be procured locally which should be identified before ordering.
- Take into account the context of the emergency situation to ensure the Kit can be properly used and kept safe.
- The Kit is designed to be inclusive for *all* young children. Materials can be adapted for young children with disabilities.
- Carefully consider the ratio of Kit items to the number of young children served in order to avoid insufficient materials and limited effectiveness.
- Ensure the cultural appropriateness and relevancy of the items.

### Caregiver Training:

- Training improves the use and effectiveness of the Kits.
- Simple caregiver/teacher guidelines explaining the purpose and content of the Kit as well as ideas on how to use the individual items are essential.
- Guidelines need to be translated into the local language.





## Section II – Implementing the ECD Kit During Emergency Situations

### Needs Assessment and Programme Design

Emergency situations threaten the lives and well-being of countless young children around the world and require extraordinary action to ensure their survival, care and protection. Both formal (implementation of the Kit) and informal (assistance from community and caregivers) support should be available to young children as soon as possible during an emergency situation. To ensure a rapid response towards the procurement and implementation of the Kit, a set of guidelines has been established to enable the coordinator to assess the situation prior to, during and after an emergency and to design an appropriate ECD kit intervention based on the needs of the affected young children.

#### Situation Analysis

To establish an accurate account of the scope and severity of the crisis situation and ensure that all young children are reached, the following guidelines will assist in conducting an analysis of the current impact and needs. An accurate understanding of existing ECD infrastructures and potential partners will serve as possible entry points to a rapid response.

##### Analysis of Young Children and Families

- What is the number of children between 0-8? ( age and gender)
- What percentage of young children is living without parents?
- What local knowledge exists in relation to ECD?
- What are customary local care practices for young children?

##### Analysis of Existing ECD Activities

- Are any ECD activities currently taking place?

If so what are they?

- Is the available space sufficient for both indoor and outdoor play?
- What early-learning, play, recreational, stimulation and other ECD type materials are available?
- Are the teachers/facilitators/volunteers trained?
- Are older children/other caregivers involved in organizing and helping with the activities for young children?
- Is there a system of referral in place for psychologically distressed young children or young children with special protection needs?
  - » If yes, where are they referred?
  - » How are parents involved in the activities?
- How could the ECD Kit be integrated within existing ECD programmes and activities?

##### Analysis of Potential Partners:

- Who are the key ECD players?
- Has an emergency plan including ECD been drafted for the country?
- Have local staff been trained? Are they capable of contributing to the viability of ECD interventions in the plan (is it culturally appropriate)?
- Are international and local staff in place and able to co-ordinate ECD in the emergency plan?
- Are management structures and lines of accountability in place?
- Are international emergency staff fully briefed and on stand-by?
- Are there local partners engaged in ECD activities?
- What are their approaches and what specific activities have been planned?

## Designing an ECD Kit Intervention

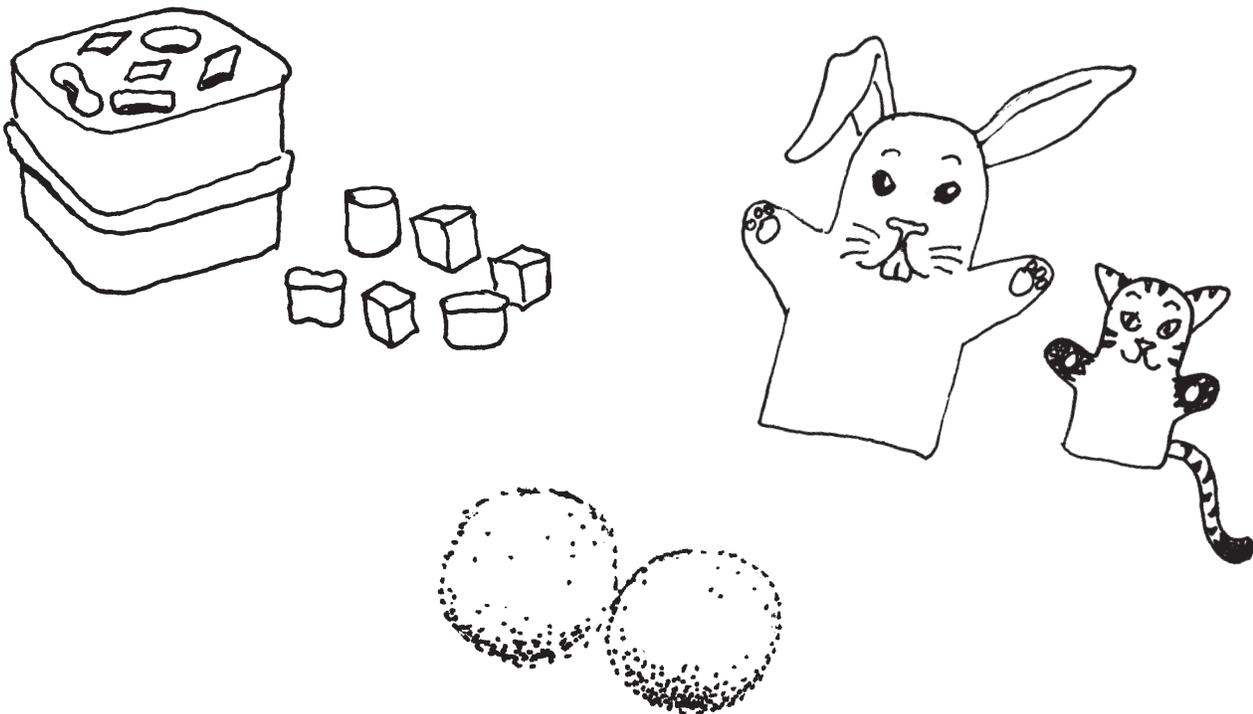
There is not a “one size fits all” model to respond to emergency situations. The ECD Kit may be implemented in a variety of settings and the use and monitoring of the Kit may also vary. The following questions should be used to guide the development of an action plan to roll out the Kit.

### 1. Who will implement the programme?

- Who in the community would be willing to implement the programme?
  - » Teacher, educator, animator, social worker, trainer available in the community?
- What training needs are required?
- How could the community be encouraged to participate in both designing and implementing the programme?

### 2. Where will the Kit be implemented?

- What environments are available and used by young children (ECD/preschool setting, kindergarten, non-formal space for young children)?
  - » What activities are taking place there?
  - » Who is responsible for that place?
  - » Is the environment secure and safe?
- What other settings for young children could be identified?
- What health facilities are available and accessible?
- Could the ECD Kit support and/or be linked to existing health and nutrition programmes?



## Implementation

### Who should implement the programme?

UNICEF intends to use the Kit in emergency situations and beyond (when the emergency phase is over, and throughout the transition and the recovery phase). Ideally, implementation should take place through partners and counterparts (Institutions, Governments, NGOs, International Organisations, UN Agencies, etc.). Bearing in mind funding sources, donor requirements, programmatic priorities, and conditions in the field, the ECD coordinators (who might be assigned to the Education, Child Protection or Health cluster; or have a more general role in coordinating the emergency response) should ensure that: (i) the Kits are deployed in an effective manner, (ii) that the service providers/care-givers are adequately informed about the effective use of the Kits, and (iii) that the Kits are actually utilised according to best practices. Coordinators must then orient and arrange for a Training of Trainers (ToT), to support the training of caregivers. Coordinators should therefore continuously contribute to the ECD Kit implementation through its different stages (deployment, utilization, monitoring, evaluations/assessments).

### Where can the ECD Kit be used?

The ECD Kit is designed to be flexible and used in a wide range of community-based settings. In selecting the site, ensuring the safety and security

of the environment for young children is critical. Suggested implementation sites include:

***Child Friendly Space (CFS):*** CFS provides a range of health, primary education, childcare and psychosocial development services within a single protected environment. They are family focused and community-based. A pre-school space is often designed making CFS an ideal setting for implementing the ECD Kit.

***Tents:*** If erected securely, tents can provide a safe space for young children. In IDP/Refugee camps, these locations are easily identifiable and surrounded by a secured parameter.

***Health/Feeding Centres.*** Integrating the ECD Kit materials within ongoing health and feeding activities can be an ideal way to reach children in the first three years of life. Informal play sessions can be organized for families and young children while waiting to receive services.

***Community Centres:*** Usually after a natural disaster has occurred, community centres can be a temporary setting where the ECD Kit can be used. Security is necessary here, especially where mixed populations are gathered. When using the ECD Kit in a community centre, it is recommended to build landmarks in order to specify safe places for young children.



## Section III – Coordinator Responsibilities

### Training

#### Effective Training for Caregivers

It is the responsibility of the coordinators to oversee the training of the facilitators who will in turn train the designated caregivers. Distribution of the Kits to young children under the supervision of untrained caregivers could result in the underutilization of ways to use the play materials and wastage. Therefore, training is essential in order to ensure effective implementation of the activities. To address this need, a complete Training Guide for facilitators to train caregivers has been developed.

The Training Guide provides facilitators with ideas for training early childcare providers on how to use the Kit with groups of young children in situations of armed conflict and natural disasters. It includes a range of interactive activities that provide hands on ideas and suggestions on how to most effectively use the materials and build on participants' previous knowledge and experience.

Additional sessions on the impact of trauma on young children and the healing power of play are included to provide basic background in child development. Participants also explore ideas for enriching the Kit with locally available and homemade toys and learning materials. The design and structure is completely flexible and facilitators are encouraged to adapt the session to meet participants' specific learning needs and expectations.

#### Points to Consider:

- Training should be carried out by a team of national facilitators identified by the government or relevant authorities.
- Training should include an orientation of the Activity Guide accompanying the Kits as well

as using the contents of the Kit.

- A minimum of two day training should be planned:
  - » Day 1: Basic information on ECD, the impacts on young children in emergency and conflict situations and a demonstration of the methods to use when working with the materials in the Kit.
  - » Day 2: Practical teaching skills for using each component of the Kit with young children of different age groups.
- Strict accountability of the materials should be maintained. The administration and safe-keeping of the Kit's contents should be assigned jointly to the caregiver and to those implementing the activities.
- Training on how to use the Kit is not meant to be exhaustive. Rather it is meant to help teachers become familiar with the contents and the Activity Guide.
- Creativity and imagination are key components of the training process.

The following questions should be addressed when planning the training components of the ECD Kit:

- What is the overall structure of the training system required to implement the proposed training programme?
- Who is responsible for training the caregivers at the local level?
- How will caregivers be identified?
- Where and when will the training take place?
- Is there a system for follow-up and supervision?
- What are the costs required to implement the proposed training programme? How will they be covered?
- Are facilitators/caregivers paid or volunteers?

## Training Evaluation Form for Caregivers

On a scale of 1-5 with 5 meaning Strongly Agree, and 1 meaning Strongly Disagree, please rate the following statements by checking the appropriate box.

As a result of the workshop	1	2	3	4	5
1. I understand and can easily teach young children how to use the resources/activities in the ECD Kit.					
2. I understand and can use the Activity Sheets provided with the ECD Kit.					
3. I can develop session plans for working with young children.					
4. I understand how I will be supervised in using the Kit and who will follow up with me once I begin using the Kit.					
5. I know who to contact if I need to order additional materials and supplies					
6. The length of time to be trained in each session was enough.					
7. The most useful session was					
8. The least useful session was					
9. What would you add or change about the workshop?					
10. What additional training do you feel you need?					

## Monitoring

Coordinators will also be responsible for the monitoring of the ECD Kit interventions. Monitoring is a process of tracking or measuring the extent to which planned ECD Kit interventions are being effectively conducted and objectives achieved. Therefore, coordinators should track and report progress on the implementation plan and monitor, to the extent possible, the added value and benefits of the Kit’s implementation on young children and families. Questions will reflect both a quantitative and qualitative analysis.

The purpose of monitoring is to:

- Provide accountability in terms of the implementation plan and targeting results
- Provide information for decision-making to improve programme performance
- Adapt the intervention to meet the changing situation
- Serve as an input to evaluation

The main components to monitor the ECD Kit include:

- Location of the ECD Kit site and physical settings
- Number and location of young children in need of services
- Distribution, receipt and use of the ECD Kit
- Satisfaction of caregivers and parents with the materials and programme

Some of the indicators for monitoring the ECD kit

include:

- Number of young children benefitting
- Ratio of young children to caregivers
- Number and characteristics of caregivers and parents/adolescents providing care
- Appropriateness of the ECD Kit materials
- Availability of water and sanitary conditions at the site
- Integration of the ECD Kit with existing infrastructures in health and nutrition
- Factors limiting participation
- Caregiver’s background and training

It is important to obtain feedback from all participants on the material, content and conditions of the programme. This can be measured through formal feedback forms or through less formal feedback session with young children, caregivers and parents.

A set of simple monitoring and evaluation guidelines/forms have been developed to help coordinators assess the overall function and quality of the programme listed below. In an effort to ensure that monitoring and evaluation data is collected and analyzed, it is important to consider the following questions:

How will the forms be distributed?

- How will issues raised by caregivers and facilitators be addressed?
- Who will be responsible for collecting the data at the field level?
- Who is responsible for analyzing the data collected?

## Sample ECD Kit Monitoring Tool

Location	# Kits Ordered	# Kits Received	Program Site/Hrs. Operation	# Young Children Benefitting	# Teachers Trained	Supervision/ Follow-up	Other

## ECD Kit Checklist:

- Identify numbers and types of ECD Kits needed for affected location.
- With Local Ministry and partners, localize, adapt and translate emergency education teacher’s guides and curriculum materials to be used in conjunction with each ECD Kit into appropriate local languages.
- Develop a localized version of the ECD Kit if it was not completed during the preparedness phase.
- Deploy stockpiled ECD Kits if available along with translated activity guides and instructions for reception, distribution and safeguarding of materials.
- Activate supply agreement with local suppliers.
- Order Kits from UNICEF Supply Division in Copenhagen if necessary.
- Move from imported or pre-assembled kits to local production and acquisition of learning materials and training guides wherever possible.

## Sample ECD Kit Preparedness Plan

Preparedness Activity	Action Steps	Responsible Party	Time Frame	Other Needs
Coordination and Partnership Preparedness				
Learning Spaces/ Programme Linkages				
ECD Kit <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guides Translated</li> <li>• Supplies Prepositioned</li> <li>• Stockpile Supplies</li> </ul>				
Local Procurement Strategy				
Caregiver Trainings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Train the Facilitators</li> <li>• Caregiver Training Strategy</li> </ul>				
Resource Mobilization Preparedness				
Other				

## Monitoring ECD Kit Interventions: Key Information to be Collated by Coordinators

### *Preparedness*

#### Logistics with Copenhagen

- How many ECD Kits were ordered?
- Were there any difficulties in ordering the Kits?
- Were there any difficulties in finding the information on the ECD Kit?
- How long between the order was posted on PRoMS and when the Kits were received in country?
- What are the main reasons for the delays?

#### Implementation

- Was training needed for the implementation of the ECD Kit?
- Who was trained on what?
  - » UNICEF Staff, ECD Coordinator, Programme Officers, Sections involved
  - » Trainers, institutions, community-based workers, caregivers, government officials
  - » Partners
- Were UNICEF sections aware of the ECD Kit implementation?
- Were UNICEF sections contributing to the ECD Kit implementation?
- Were partners aware of the ECD Kit?
- What partners contributed in the implementation of the ECD Kit?

- UN, International Organizations, INGOs
- Governments, sub-regions, local institutions
- Civil societies, local NGOs
- Communities
- Families
- Were coordinated efforts made to integrate the ECD Kit into existing infrastructures in education, health and nutrition?

#### Post- implementation

- How many ECD Kits were received?
- How many ECD Kits were pre-positioned in contingency plan?
- How many ECD Kits were distributed for immediate use?
- Where were the ECD Kits used?
  - » Camp
  - » Community-based centre
  - » Health/Nutrition centre
  - » Pre-primary type setting
  - » Kindergarten
  - » Primary school
- How many Kits are still stored?
- How many young children are benefitting from the ECD Kit?
- How many caregivers are assigned the responsibility of using the ECD Kit?
- Did the ECD Kit trigger local production/ local procurement initiatives?
- Did the ECD Kit contribute to raising awareness on ECD in emergencies?
- Did the ECD Kit generate new activities or innovative ECD projects?



## Evaluation

Evaluation is a way to determine the value and effectiveness of the ECD Kit in an emergency situation. Once the Kit has been used for a six month period, there is an opportunity to learn from caregivers, parents and young children what materials were easiest to use and what activities seem to be the most effective and enjoyed the most by young children. The purpose of the evaluation is to:

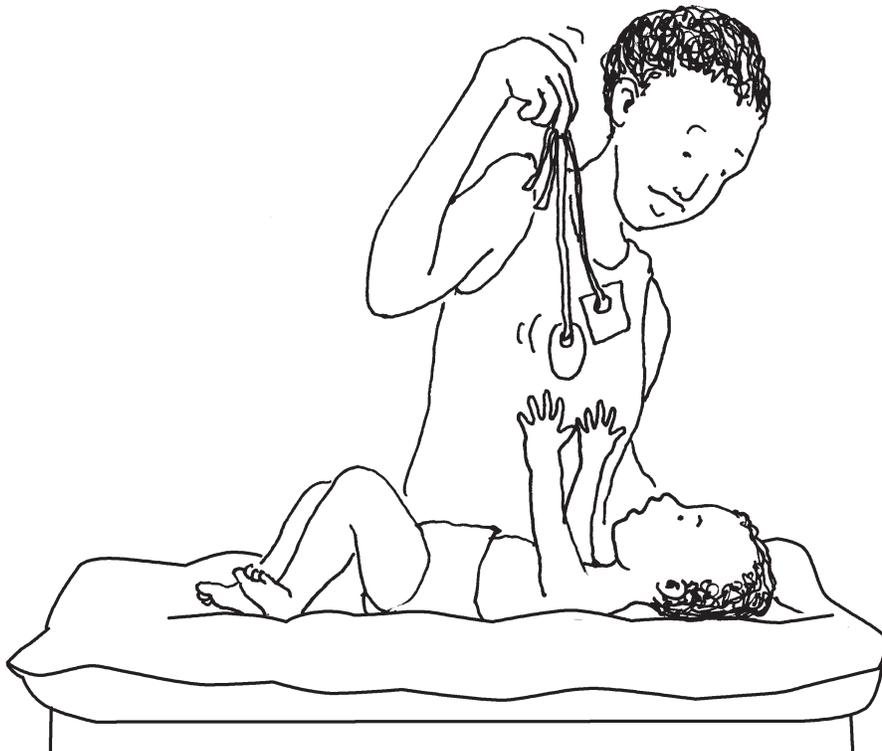
- Improve the design and/or continued use of the Kit;
- Improve caregivers capacity;
- Provide inputs for further planning and implementation;
- Generate knowledge and lessons learned both for UNICEF and the broader ECD international community.

Points to Consider:

- **Relevance:** What is the value of the ECD Kit in relation to other needs?
- **Effectiveness:** How effective is the Kit in providing a safe and stimulating environment for young children?
- **Efficiency:** Is it less costly to use locally produced materials? Are they of sufficient quality?
- **Impact:** What is the impact of the ECD Kit on young children?

**Coherence/coordination:** Are all partners/stakeholders involved with design, procurement and implementation of the ECD Kit working together to collect, analyze and use the data?

**Sustainability:** Will the ECD Kit be used when external support is withdrawn? Can it be replicated and adapted?



## Sample Evaluation Tool

On a scale of 1-5 with 5 meaning Strongly Agree, and 1 meaning Strongly Disagree, please rate the following statements by checking the appropriate box.

Post-Implementation of ECD Kit	1	2	3	4	5
1. The Kit provided a safe and stimulating environment for young children.					
2. Caregivers demonstrated high levels of competency in how to use the activities and toys in the Kit.					
3. Young children appeared happy when playing with toys and participating in activities.					
4. Parents and family members were playing with young children and using the toys together.					
5. The Kit was always kept clean and stored in a safe place when not being used					
6. The activities and toys have been used in coordination with nutrition centres.					
7. The most useful activities are					
8. The least useful activities are					
9. The toys used the most					
10. The toys used the least					

## Supplies and Operations

To ensure a rapid and effective response, the following section provides a description of the various roles and responsibilities to ensure the effective design, procurement, implementation and monitoring of the ECD Kit.

### Specific Roles and Responsibilities

The roles and responsibilities of the key players in the design, implementation and monitoring of the ECD Kit are outlined below. Additional responsibilities will likely be required to address specific country circumstances.

#### A. UNICEF ECD Coordinator:

Coordinators are responsible for the overall design, implementation and evaluation of ECD Kit activities.

- Oversee and coordinate the implementation of ECD activities at the country level
- Supervise facilitators
- Establish ToT team in collaboration with national training institutes and international trainers
- Identify implementing partners at the community level
- Ensure procurement and replenishment of materials
- Kit storage and transport
- Periodic analysis of ECD programme outputs and outcomes at country level
- Periodic reporting on ECD programme outputs and outcomes to RO and HQ

#### B. Master Trainers of Facilitators:

- Develop and adapt training materials
- Identify and train facilitators
- Organize and coordinate facilitators to train caregivers
- Coordinate follow-up supervision and monitoring

#### C. Facilitators:

- Prepare and adapt local training materials
- Identify and train local caregivers

- Ongoing mentoring and supervision
- Ensure safety of environment and materials
- Coordinate monitoring and feedback forms

#### D. Caregivers:

- Implement daily programme activities
- Report any concerns to programme facilitators
- Identify materials for procurement
- Prepare local homemade materials
- Complete monitoring and evaluation forms

### Procurement of ECD Kit

Based on the situation analysis, determine the number of Kits to purchase. Each Kit costs \$230.00 USD. Additional costs to cover training, storage, distribution, and maintenance must also be taken into account. The high cost of the Kit is more suited to well-funded emergency operations and is less appropriate in ongoing crises. In many contexts the materials can be procured locally. Local production and procurement will reduce costs considerably.

Main Factors of Supply Process:

1. Supply planning—identifying needs (what to order, how much to order)
2. Supply procurement—budgets, bidding, contracts, local, offshore procurement
3. Ordering and shipment for offshore procurement (determining transportation choices, customs clearance and receipt)
4. In-country logistics (storage and handling/ warehousing)
5. In-country distribution (network transportation choices and monitoring delivery)

#### 1. Supply Planning

- Based on the situation analysis, how many Kits are needed?
- How much time will it take to receive the Kits once they have been ordered?

## **2. Supply Procurement**

- Is there sufficient funding available for the Kit including freight, warehousing and delivery costs?
- What is the cost of shipping?

An estimate should be obtained from the supply division to determine the budget and shipping information.

## **3. Ordering and Shipment**

Liaise with the Supply Division to determine the best method of transportation and delivery for off shore procurement.

Transmit the supply requisition (PGM) to supply Division. Indicate the urgency of need based on the situation. If the online version of the Supply Catalogue cannot be accessed, item numbers are available in the hard copy. If a hard copy is not available detailed item descriptions must be provided.

- How will the goods ordered from Copenhagen be shipped (air, water, and road)?

## **4. In-country logistics**

How will the ECD Kits be maintained and replenished?

In order to protect the Kit and increase its sustainability, it is important to identify and train caregivers for handling it responsibly. Some of the contents will have to be replaced (i.e. modeling clay, crayons, glue, construction paper, paper pads, adhesive tape, soaps, notebook, T-shirts). It will be important to develop a system to replace and refill materials as needed. The following questions should be considered:

- How will you monitor the quality of the materials used by caregivers?
- How will you ensure that materials are properly maintained?
- How will caregivers inform you that additional materials are needed?

- Where will you purchase additional materials as needed?
- What resources will be needed to replenish materials?
- Have mechanisms to ensure efficient requisitioning and logistics been established?
- Have local/regional outlets for supplies been identified?

## **4. How will the Kits be stored?**

Storage of Kits should take into consideration the different types of conflict and disasters and when they occur. **It is recommended to look into existing facilities and integrate the ECD Kit storage into an Emergency Preparedness Plan.**

- How will the Kits be stored before being transported to the field?

## **5. In-country Distribution**

How will the kits be transported? The ECD Emergency Kit weighs approximately 34 kgs. Therefore, pick-up or 4x4 vehicles are necessary for the transportation of the Kit.

- How will the kits be distributed to the communities?
- Who will receive the kits upon delivery?

### **Local Procurement of ECD Kit Materials**

If possible, local production of the ECD Kit components is encouraged. If materials are replaced locally, it is important to make sure that they meet universal standards for safe use (e.g. the glue stick and the modeling clay should be non toxic and labeled; the size of blocks should be 2 inches minimum). Check the ECD Kit companion materials at least every three months to determine their safety. Make any repairs immediately or throw away damaged play/stimulation materials. Play materials must be properly maintained to ensure safe play as well as long use. Do not refill the Kit with culturally inappropriate materials. If materials are replaced locally, make sure they meet universal standards for safe use.

Points to Consider:

Check the following when deciding on a local supplier vs. offshore procurement:

- How long has the supplier been in business?
- What are the suppliers' credentials?
- Location of the supplier (this may impact transportation costs)
- Pricing and quality of supplier's good compared with other suppliers
- Check the budget and pricing of locally procured supplies
- Local procurement may be problematic due to long production time or quality control issues.

### **Local Procurement: ECD Kit Materials**

When possible, local production of the ECD Kit components is encouraged and could have great impact on local employment, social activities and youth involvement. For purposes of sustainability, it is important to promote durable and high quality materials, as well as the ability to replenish consumable materials.

Play materials are labeled based on four criteria:

- safety aspects of the material;
- physical capabilities of the child (ability to manipulate the material);
- cognitive abilities of the child (understanding how to use the material); and
- child's interest.

The most common safety label warns against choking hazards. Any material or game manufactured for children ages 3-6 is required to carry such a warning if the toy contains small parts, small balls, marbles or a balloon. Such materials are not intended for children under three or any child who is still placing objects in their mouths. Other common labels to look for include "flame retardant/flame resistant" on fabric products, "surface or machine washable" on stuffed dolls and "UL Listed" (for Underwriters Laboratories) on electrically operated toys. Other safety warnings can also be added to some materials requir-

ing special care. Those might include: science material sets with toxic chemicals, craft kits with sharp or breakable items, etc.

Be especially careful when selecting materials for children under three:

- Avoid materials with small parts that could be swallowed, aspirated into the child's airway or inserted into the nose or ears;
- Check that the eyes and noses of stuffed animals and dolls are securely fastened and well sewn;
- Choose rattles, teething rings and squeeze toys that are large enough, even in their most compressed state, so that they cannot become lodged in a baby's throat;
- Avoid latex balloons, which present a choking and suffocation hazard;
- Select unbreakable toys that are lightweight, washable and free of sharp corners, rough edges or strings.

Points to Consider When Procuring Materials:

- Consider the child's age, interests and abilities;
- Read material or packaging labels for age ranges and safety warnings;
- Be especially careful when choosing materials for children under three. Select materials that are free of small pieces (or pieces that separate or can be broken off, are lightweight, have no sharp edges or points and are non-toxic);
- Remove and discard all packaging from a material;
- Consider the home environment in which a child will play and younger children who may be there. Play/stimulation materials intended for an older child may be dangerous in the hands of a younger one;
- Supervise young children when they play and set good examples of safe play;
- Remind parents and caregivers of play-related safety concerns.

## Section IV – Annex

### Case Studies Responding to Children in Emergencies

#### **Use of ECD Kits in Flood Affected Districts of Southern Punjab in Pakistan (Southern Punjab, Pakistan, March, 2011).**

In August 2010, devastating floods hit the Punjab province in Pakistan leaving over 2,000 schools damaged or destroyed and thousands of students and teachers displaced. In response to this emergency, UNICEF provided immediate educational support and established Temporary Learning Centres (TLCs) in various relief camps in the affected areas to provide students with some sense of normalcy by continuing school activities in the camps.

The “Welcome to School Initiative” was launched by UNICEF as soon as returnees were able to return home, many discovering that their houses has either been washed away or heavily damaged by flood water. Not only were homes lost, schools had also been destroyed and were unable to accommodate local children, placing previously enrolled students at risk of not being able to continue their education and also lessening any opportunity for new entrants.

Through the “Welcome to School Initiative”, UNICEF established 626 TLCs for previously enrolled students at sites where schools had been completely devastated. One hundred and fifty ECE classes were introduced in selected TLCs complete with ECD kits and ECE caregivers and attendants who received intensive training prior to residing over each class. The TLCs provided a “unique learning opportunity” for new entrants and the use of ECD kits in these centres also proved to be a “great motivational factor” for new students.

“In the ECE class, multi-coloured tools of learning (toys) attract the children’s attention the most. They learn basic principles of socialising, sharing and patience when they play and learn in the form of groups. Their learning is quick through the use of the ECD kit”, says Asiya Bibi, an ECE caregiver at Government Primary School Qadirabad, District Rajanpur.

Field observations revealed that the introduction of ECE classes has proven to be a very successful intervention especially in terms of female enrolment, as most of the new entrants in the ECE classes are girls. ECE caregiver, Saira Gul at Government Elementary School Asifabad, District Rajan Pur, states, “There was no school for girls in the near vicinity. With the introduction of ECE classes, girls have especially benefitted. There are 65 girls and 20 boys in my class, who had never gone to school before. Some girls are of the age of class two even. I make full use of the ECD kit to manage these children at one time. The children take interest in doing activities, making use of their cognitive, imaginative skills and creativity, thus learning the concepts of matching, building, relating very easily.”

The ECD Kit has also helped caregivers to clarify some difficult concepts for new entrants. Project Coordinator of the Hayat Foundation, Shahzad Mughal, observes, “Ideas the children generate on their own, after manipulating the kit, are quite amazing. The ECE classes are attracting students in such great numbers, that we are finding difficulty in accommodating them in one class.”

“I love to come to school and play with the toys given to us from the ECD Kit. I have learned the names and colours of shapes. We makes shapes with mud at school and the teacher gives us paints. At home I make the same shapes and my mother feels happy. We enjoy it. We love our teacher also, “ says Khalida Habib, ECE Student at GPS Qadirabad, Rajanpur, Pakistan.

“The ECD kit is a very fine learning tool, which encompasses all the concepts advocated in the National Curriculum for Early Childhood Education. They should be provided to all the schools irrespective of the fact that they are flood affected or not,” says Malik Irshar Ahmad Shad, District Education Officer, Rajanpur.

## **UNICEF ECD Kits Reintroduce Normalcy into the Lives of Young Haitian Children (PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti, March 2011)**

In Haiti, ECD interventions were integrated with health and nutrition, child protection and education initiatives. UNICEF's Early Childhood Development (ECD) Kits are playing an important role in helping to restore normalcy and stability into the lives of Haitian children still coming to terms with the devastating effects of the January 2010 earthquake. Students at St. Benedict and Paradis des Petits schools who have received these kits are clear examples of the beneficial impact that ECD materials and learning can have on children who have suffered through the trauma of an emergency situation.

Since March 2010, over 1,495 kits have been distributed by UNICEF throughout the country to support the efforts of the Haitian Ministry of Education and NGO partners. The goal is to maintain childhood development programs for children living in camps for internally displaced people (IDPs) and earthquake affected areas. To date, more than 60,000 children have benefited from these interventions.

At St. Benedict School, children ages 2-6 gather under a large UNICEF tent and engage in playful activities. Guided by several school instructors, the children use crayons, modeling clay, building blocks, and other materials to build houses, cars, dolls, and other common childhood toys and playthings. In addition to helping develop physical and mental skills, the kit also encourages sharing and socializing skills with other children.

"With 1,500 user guides to be distributed in Haitian schools, the ECD kits can be expected to play a large role in the recovery of Haitian children." - Galia Ngamy, UNICEF Education Specialist.

### **ALLEVIATING ANXIETIES AND STRESS FOR YOUNG CHILDREN**

All of the children at St. Benedict School live in a nearby IDP camp, where living conditions are precarious and security and a nurturing environment are often wanting. "The ECD kit gives children a sense of security and fun that they often do not find at home," says Emanuela Itacy, the head instructor of the kindergarten. She adds, "Sometimes the children are so engaged that they do not want to go home late in the day. They find certain affection for the school that is not always mirrored in their homes."

Luckson John lost his father and mother during the earthquake. Frailty and anxiety accompany his trembling voice as he talks of now living with an aunt who cannot afford to meet his needs. At the same time, there is hope as he describes the positive impact that the materials provided in the ECD kits have on his life. "When I play with toys it removes the sadness inside me and I forget the sorrow and I feel better," he says.

Fleurant Miguelson, Director of the school and one of the leaders of the Organization of Youth for the Future and Reforestation (OJA), says that even children above six years of age benefit from playing with the ECD kit.

"The kits were so popular that we had to book a party for other children," he says. With support from UNICEF, OJA members have transformed the school's classroom into a child-friendly space in order to meet demands of parents in the camp who cannot afford to send their children to school. As many as 300 children come to the centre each day, and at least one-third attend the centre's kindergarten classes.

UNICEF has also distributed ECD kits to rural area schools such as Paradis des Petits at Gressier, a small city south of the nation's capital. Evelyne Mercure, the school's Director, warmly welcomes this initiative and the assistance provided by UNICEF.

"We lost everything after the earthquake. But with the arrival of the kits, life has returned to the children," says Mercure. "This initiative should be carried out every year. For without such equipment, there is no pre-school."

## ECD Kits in Afghanistan Crisis

- In 2002, UNICEF Iran distributed some 1400 packages of toys to young children in a refugee camp in Afghanistan, 15 km from the border with Iran. In partnership with the Red Crescent Society and the Ministry of Interior, the toys were provided in order to create a stimulating environment for young children 0 - 6 years old and to give them a therapeutic play experience with their peers and families.
- The toys were purchased in Tehran, and then transported to Zabol. There they were appropriately arranged for two different age groups: 0-3 years old (stuffed animals, rattles, cloth cubes, cloth tactile books, and cloth balls), and 0-6 years old (cars in different shapes and sizes, pastel colours and notebooks, puzzles, large legos, and balls). A team of five members of Donya Children's Research Institute met with camp authorities to distribute the packs. They identified eight teachers, and quickly realized that the number of children was much greater than expected. Although they had been informed that there were 800 children, a total of 2500 children under age six were in the camp. In addition, each family had more than two children and in many cases, in both age groups. In order to handle the unexpected numbers, the toys were rearranged and four types of packs with toys for mixed age groups were prepared so that each family would receive one pack suited to the children of different ages. Guidance for the teachers was provided during meetings, and parents were encouraged to play with the children.
- As soon as the toys were received, the children were engaged and exhibiting joy and excitement. This was the first time that the children had ever received playthings and their reaction was inspiring and indicative of the need for such stimulation in a stressful and difficult situation. The team visited the camp the following day to observe the children's behaviour and reaction to the toys and found that the legos and balls were extremely popular and the girls played enthusiastically with the stuffed animals.
- Being able to play with toys provided the children with immediate happiness and effectively reduced their stress levels. By receiving at least one toy in such a difficult and complex situation the children experienced a feeling of ownership- a critical piece of their development. The fact that the Kits contained a combination of toys allowed the children to experience sharing their toys with their peers and also playing in groups.

