Key considerations for protection of refugee children in COVID-19 context
Child Protection risks and issues

- Refugee children and families less able to access services (eg education) and access information
- Family separation: restrictions on movement
- Disruption of daily routines impacts child wellbeing
- Confinement at home may expose to risk of violence and abuse
Family separation

• Work with authorities to ensure that measures to restrict movement allow for reunification of parents/caregivers and children, and help families remain together.

• Provide family-based alternative care for children who become separated from parents/caregivers or whose parents become ill, or health care workers

• Example: In Tanzania Plan are expanding the pool of caregivers to be on standby to provide alternative care to more children.
Access to core child protection services

- Child protection service providers should put contingency plans in place to maintain access to critical child protection services, either remotely or in person, including case management and safe shelters.

- Establish or scale up child helplines and online assistance and ensure staff are trained in child protection. Strengthen identification and referral from health services.

- Where in persons services are required, ensure staff follow advise to minimise risk, and wherever possible have access to protective equipment.

Example:
In Lebanon, the Child Protection Sub-Sector produced guidance on adapting case management and putting in place strict protocols around home visits. All cases are dealt with by phone except high-risk cases, where visits are conducted in areas where there have been confirmed COVID-19 cases only after the family has been cleared by a health actor.
Impact on education

• Explore and support other innovative ways to continue education

• Support logistics to allow remote learning for refugee children

• Provide schools with information to help them prepare for and support remote learning and resources to inform children and staff of how to protect themselves

• **Example:** In refugee camps in Jordan, electricity supply has been extended to allow children to study through Ministry of Education remote learning at the allocated times.
Adapting recreation opportunities and community engagement

- Limit recreational activities as needed according to national guidelines.
- Where activities are held, ensure guidance to limit risk of transmitting the disease is followed, and adapt activities accordingly.
- Provide alternative methods for adolescents and young people to contribute
- **Example**: UNHCR refugee youth network developing adapting videos illustrating key messages in different settings and languages
Access to accurate information

Disseminate online resources for children and families with accurate information accessible to refugees

Adapt existing guidance to the realities of living in overcrowded settings and settings with limited access to WASH
• **Example**: UNHCR Lebanon supports a refugee-managed Facebook group with hundreds of thousands of users. The network flags rumors and scams to UNHCR and raises awareness on COVID fake news in Arabic and English. UNHCR communicates with 9,000 refugees and partner’s communication focal points through a WhatsApp communication tree, which reaches 100,000 families.

• **Example**: UNHCR Italy and partners created an online portal where PoC can access information in 15 different languages on health advisories, regulations, movement restrictions, new administrative procedures and services available.