

## TOOL 3.3.0 SAFE SPACE AND DAPS CENTRE GUIDANCE



This section is meant for PGI focal points who are working to set up a community house which will be referred to throughout as a 'dignity, access, participation and safety (DAPS) centre' (**but which should be renamed by the community during an inauguration ceremony to something appropriate and contextualised**) during an emergency context. A DAPS Centre represents a community centre in which integrated PGI, CEA, PSS and (at times with agreement from ICRC and the National Societies) RFL services are offered. It is not the same as a PSS space, it is more akin to a multi-purpose community centre, in which flexible programs that offer protection, inclusion and community engagement can be offered.

This document contains the following guidance and accompanying tools:

1. What a dignity, access, participation and safety (DAPS) centre is (definition and principles)
2. What a child friendly and female-friendly space is and how these are complementary to DAPS centres
3. What needs to be set up before the centre starts functioning, including recruitment and staffing of a team to run the centre and guidance on sustainability of the centre after the emergency time period
4. The role of the PGI delegate during set up, implementation and monitoring of activities
5. Exit or transition to recovery

## WHAT IS A DAPS CENTRE?

A DAPS Centre is a physical space within the community, that is open to community members, and in which programmes and activities that will strengthen knowledge, dignity, access, participation, safety and resilience are implemented.

## WHAT ARE THE PRINCIPLES A DAPS CENTRE SHOULD BE RUN WITH?<sup>1</sup>

### 1. The DAPS Centre should be used a means to mobilise the community and build resilience

Starting a DAPS Centre, after consulting with the affected community as part of CEA and PGI activities, is a primary step to strengthen community-based protection mechanisms. As much as possible a DAPS Centre should be designed, set up and implemented through:

- The community's own network, people and resources
- Coordination and partnerships with local government units or local organisations, including local branches of the National Society. This is key for continuity and sustainability of the DAPS Centre.

While the National Society is a well-recognized and respected local actor, it may also be necessary to partner with other local actors for specialised protection services, such as child protection and sexual and gender-based violence prevention and response.

### 2. The DAPS Centre should be inclusive, non-discriminatory, provide physical access, be affordable and ensure that community feedback mechanisms and information services are accessible for all

As the DAPS Centre is fundamentally a reflection of the IFRC Minimum Standards for Protection, Gender and Inclusion in Emergencies, it is crucial for dignity, access,

participation and safety to be implemented in the following ways:

- Ensure the DAPS Centre is free of violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect. This also means that DAPS Centre staff and volunteers have to be recruited and trained in such a manner that they do not inflict humiliating, degrading or harmful behaviour towards anyone who participates in DAPS Centre activities
- Adopt a code of conduct for the DAPS Centre, and ensure all staff and volunteers are briefed about, trained in and signatories to it
- Ensure the DAPS Centre locations and surroundings are safe from all types of danger, including by consulting with women, men, girls and boys and people of all genders to ensure their differentiated safety needs are met
- Involve women and men and people of all genders, adolescents, individuals from marginalised groups and persons with disabilities in the planning, implementation and monitoring of the DAPS Centre (ensuring a gender balance and equitable representation in line with identified issues that need to be addressed. E.g. if sexual and reproductive health is a key issue, then more adolescent girls than boys could be included in implementation, in response to the identified needs)
- Use the DAPS Centre as a safe place to identify vulnerable and at-risk individuals from the affected population. Facilitate the referral and appropriate response for such individuals
- Ensure that DAPS Centre activities help the affected population to build and strengthen their community-based protection mechanisms
- Use the DAPS Centre as an entry point to identify priority protection risks among the affected population and to share awareness raising messages in the community and camp setting

<sup>1</sup> Based on "Minimum Standards for Protection, Gender and Inclusion in Emergencies" and "Philippine National Implementation Guidelines for Child Friendly Spaces in Emergencies" (p.5-6)

### 3. The DAPS Centre should aim to have an interactive, participatory and supportive environment

The DAPS Centres are to be established in emergency or crisis settings, and therefore participants will have experienced stressful environments. Given that a primary aim of the Centre is to engage with members of the affected population that may require psychosocial support or may require privacy, the centre should be interactive, participatory and supportive. In short, it should be a safe space to learn new skills but also to connect and support each other. It is important that the DAPS Centre:

- Organises diverse activities that are appropriate to gender, age, needs and contexts. An important step to encourage full participation may be for individuals or groups to create their own associations that will co-lead the community's responses to emergencies
- Ensures that activities are culturally appropriate, stimulate creativity and build skills such as problem solving, critical thinking, communication and cooperation
- Is accessible to people with physical disabilities and impairments
- Treats individuals with respect and encourage the participation of each individual, including persons who identify themselves as part of gender and sexual minorities and persons with disabilities

### WHAT IS A SAFE SPACE AND HOW IS IT DIFFERENT FROM A DAPS CENTRE?

In some contexts, only be a child friendly space, in other contexts only a female-friendly space or a combination of both may be required. With the expansion of the PGI in Emergencies programming, safe spaces within DAPS Centres, which address needs of community members and

provide a physical space to run activities, may be increasingly implemented in emergency contexts. Before delving into how each of these safe spaces and centre models can complement each other or be combined, it is important to define them.

**Child friendly space (CFS)<sup>2</sup>:** A CFS is a safe place where children can meet other children to play, learn, to deal with risks they face, be involved in some educational activities, and relax. CFS seek to support all children, without discrimination and to promote inclusion and equality. They encourage social cohesion by aiming to be inclusive of all children. This includes girls and boys of different ages, ethnic and religious backgrounds, living situations and abilities.

CFS are often part of integrated programming in emergencies, including health and hygiene activities, registering separated children and doing family tracing. Some CFS may enable children to re-engage in formal education and/or focus on early child development. They may also sometimes provide a space for other target groups. Being part of a joint response can be helpful to avoid stigmatizing CP and SGBV services in the community, such as using 'health' as an entry point to child protection services (including CFS).

CFS may be located in a variety of settings, including schools, community centres, tents or in open spaces in a camp or community.

**"Female-friendly" or "women and girls safe spaces"<sup>3</sup>:** A safe space is a formal or informal place where women and girls feel physically and emotionally safe. The term "safe" in the present context, refers to the absence of trauma, excessive stress, violence (or fear of violence), or abuse. It is a space where women and girls, being the intended clients, feel comfortable and enjoy the freedom to express themselves without the fear of judgement or harm.

<sup>2</sup> From IFRC/World Vision "Operational Guidance for Child Friendly Spaces in Humanitarian Settings" (p.11)

<sup>3</sup> From "Women and girls safe spaces" A guidance note based on lessons learned from the Syrian crisis, UNFPA, p.5.



The key objectives of a safe space are to provide an area where women and girls can:

- Socialize and re-build their social networks
- Receive social support
- Acquire contextually relevant skills
- Access safe and non-stigmatizing multi-sectorial SGBV response services (psychosocial, legal, medical)
- Receive information on issues relating to women's rights, health and services

They are also intended as locations where organisations can collect information from women as part of CEA activities, especially where patriarchal community arrangements limit women's equal participation in the public sphere and in community-wide decision making.

These spaces may take different names such as women centres, women community centres, or listening and counselling centres, to name a few. Women safe spaces are not the same as shelters or safe spaces at reception centres or one-stop centres.

For principles on setting up child friendly spaces, please see the IFRC/World Vision "[Operational Guidance for Child Friendly Spaces in Humanitarian Settings](#)" (p.49).

## WHAT ARE THE NECESSARY STEPS A PGI FOCAL POINT HAS TO IMPLEMENT BEFORE THE DAPS CENTRE STARTS FUNCTIONING?

### 1. Conducting a needs assessment

Before deciding to set up a DAPS Centre, it is important to discuss with CEA and PSS colleagues the relevance of such a Centre. In collaboration with those colleagues: conduct a short assessment with the affected population. This can be implemented through a series of focus group discussions (FGDs) which are conducted separately with adult women, adult men, adolescent girls and adolescent boys (for example), and which should link to CEA approaches or be co-facilitated with the CEA teams.

Within these FGDs, it is important to have a cross-section of the population, including vulnerable and marginalised populations, persons with disabilities, and religious and ethnic minorities if applicable.

The assessment gives affected community members the chance to express:

- Where the location(s) of the DAPS Centre(s) should be
- What types of activities and services should be offered at the DAPS Centre, within limitation. It is important for the PGI focal point, as the assessment lead, to share resource, staff and time limitations in order to set expectations of community members.

The FGDs will also be an opportunity to identify protection risks and vulnerabilities within the given context. Holding FGDs separately with adult women, adult men, adolescent girls and adolescent boys will also ensure that differential needs information and perspectives on DAPS Centre activities are collected.

After the initial focus group discussions, you will need to continue your engagement with the community, to ensure their input on the design, orientation and access avenues to the DAPS centre, and the languages and presentation of audio-visual information that will be given at the DAPS Centre.

- Tool 2.4 PGI in Emergencies Assessment Compendium
- Tool 2.6 PGI Focus Group Discussion planning guide

### 2. Select a site for the DAPS Centre

Conduct a participatory mapping with a cross-section of community members to determine a site for the DAPS Centre. Most importantly, it should be a site where community members, and especially children, feel safe. Since shelter teams have great experience in this type of engagement, you may wish to collaborate with the Shelter team on the engagement, design and budgeting for the DAPS Centre.

- Please see under “Planning and Site Location” in Tool 3.2.2 for ideal DAPS Centre site requirements, aligned to SPHERE and IFRC Minimum Standards for PGI in Emergencies.

### 3. Equip the space

Once the space and programming have been planned, you can procure items for the space. These will include locks, lighting, floor mats and any materials for activities such as speakers, play kits, printed materials/posters or other items. Such items will need to be costed and reflected in operational budgets.

### 4. Plan and design activities

Simultaneously and based on the needs assessment, the team will need to develop activities and programming to be delivered within the Centre based on local context, language and needs. Activities from CEA, PSS and PGI programming can be used to guide these activities. Registration and Attendance Records (Please see Tool 3.3.7) should be kept as part of monitoring and accountability, noting that such records should be kept according to privacy principles.

For setting up a feedback and complaints system at the DAPS Centre, please refer:

- A feedback starter kit in the IFRC CEA Toolkit.

### 5. Take steps for: staff recruitment, screening, selection, training and well-being

Please see:

- Tools 3.3.4 – 3.3.8.

### 6. Monitoring and evaluation

Please see Chapter 4: Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting.

### 7. Considerations for exit or transition to recovery

Please see:

- Tool 3.3.9: Transition of DAPS Centre

