

Guiding Principles

Safeguarding the rights and well-being of children moving in the context of climate change



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Guiding Principles

Safeguarding the rights and well-being of children moving in the context of climate change

These Principles represent the first global policy framework for addressing the needs and rights of children moving in the context of climate change.

The Guiding Principles are intended to be used by national and local governments, international organizations and civil society groups that work with children on the move. They are based on existing international law as well as operational guidelines or frameworks which have been developed by a variety of stakeholders. The Principles are derived from the Convention on the Rights of the Child and do not create new international legal obligations.

These Principles apply to all children who move in the context of climate change, whether they move within their country of origin or to international destinations, whether they move temporarily or permanently, whether they move on their own or with caretakers, and whether they move through regular or irregular channels.

The Guiding Principles also apply to children who cannot or choose not to move, including children 'left behind' by migrating parents, and whose enjoyment of rights may be negatively impacted by climate change.



PRINCIPLE 1

Rights-based approach

Children who move in the context of climate change maintain all rights of children as enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child.



PRINCIPLE 2

Best interests of the child

In all decisions and actions affecting children on the move in the context of climate change, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration.



PRINCIPLE 3

Accountability

Governments and other actors are accountable for their decisions and actions that contribute to children's mobility in the context of climate change.



PRINCIPLE 4

Awareness and participation in decision-making

Children have the right to be informed, consulted and to participate in making decisions to move or stay in the context of climate change, in line with their 'age and maturity', recognizing the rights of the parents (or of caregivers in the case of unaccompanied or separated children) to provide appropriate guidance to the child in exercising these rights.



PRINCIPLE 5

Family unity

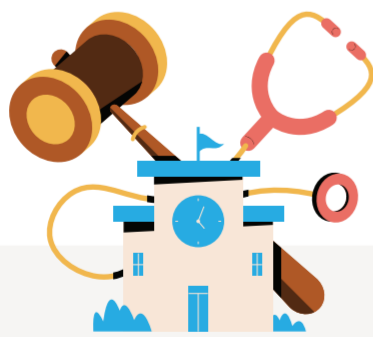
Children who move in the context of climate change have the right to be cared for by their parents or caregivers and to not be separated from them. If separation does occur, children have the right to special protection and assistance by the State, which should ensure their temporary alternative care and take all measures necessary to reunite them with their parents or other relatives.



PRINCIPLE 6

Protection, safety and security

Children on the move in the context of climate change have the right to be safe during all stages of movement. This includes protection from physical and emotional harm, gender-based violence, exploitation, smuggling, trafficking and extortion, as well as facilitating access to asylum and/or refugee status.



PRINCIPLE 7

Access to education, health care and social services

Children who move in the context of climate change have the right to access education, health care and other social services, at all stages of their journeys.



PRINCIPLE 8

Non-discrimination

Children on the move in the context of climate change have the right to non-discriminatory treatment and to provisions necessary to enable them to exercise their rights, irrespective of their or their parents' migratory status.



PRINCIPLE 9

Nationality

When stateless children move in the context of climate change, or when children become stateless as a result of moving away from their country of nationality, States have an obligation to ensure that these children have a nationality including, where necessary, granting them the nationality of the receiving State.

