

Guidelines for Blending Core EiE and Summer Activities

Amidst the ongoing war in Gaza, summer education activities are not a luxury; they are a critical lifeline for children. With over 88.8% of schools damaged or destroyed, and widespread displacement disrupting every aspect of daily life, children have been denied consistent access to learning opportunities for more than 20 months. The prolonged absence from learning not only threatens their academic and cognitive development but also deepens psychological distress, erodes routines, and increases the risk of child labour, exploitation, and early marriage, among other protection concerns.

Summer education activities serve multiple urgent purposes in this context. They help children regain a sense of routine, normalcy, structure, and emotional stability by engaging them in safe, protective learning activities in suitable environments. These activities blend foundational learning with psychosocial support, life skills, and recreational components, addressing both the cognitive and emotional needs of children affected by war.

Moreover, summer learning programs are helping to mitigate long-term learning loss, particularly for children in Gaza, who have faced repeated displacement and prolonged school closures. These programs offer a critical opportunity to re-engage learners who have missed months of education, helping to restore learning routines. They also support informal learning pathways and play a key role in maintaining educational continuity, laying the groundwork for a smoother transition back to formal schooling once conditions permit. At a time when childhood itself is under siege, summer education activities are projected to represent hope, healing, and protection. They are a vital part of the humanitarian response and a crucial investment in Gaza's future.

Purpose of these guidelines

- These guidelines are designed to support Education Cluster partners in Gaza in delivering flexible, inclusive, and protective learning activities throughout the summer. In light of ongoing displacement and insecurity, the approach blends core Education in Emergencies (EiE) components with engaging summer activities that foster continuity in learning, emotional well-being, and positive social interaction for affected children.
- They are intended to complement existing Education Cluster resources, particularly the Temporary Learning Spaces (TLS) Guidelines, to ensure a coherent and well-aligned response.

Guiding Principles

- **Child-centered & Protective:** Ensure all activities prioritize children's safety, emotional well-being, and dignity, with trauma-sensitive approaches and clear safeguarding measures.
- **Equity & Inclusion:** Promote equal access for all children, with targeted support for girls and children with disabilities.
- **Integrated Services:** Coordinate with other sectors, including Health, Nutrition, Protection, and AoRs, as well as WASH, to provide comprehensive support that addresses children's broader needs.
- **Flexibility:** Adapt learning schedules, methods, and content to fit the evolving context, space limitations, and available resources.

Core EiE Activities

- Foundational Literacy & Numeracy: Engage learners through games, storytelling, group work, and visual aids.
- Remedial Learning: Short, focused sessions to help learners catch up on missed content.
- Life Skills: Teach communication, hygiene, emotional regulation, and teamwork through role-play and discussion.

Summer & Well-being Activities

- MHPSS¹: When MHPSS is integrated, students are more engaged, resilient, and able to retain academic skills outside the traditional school year.
- Social-emotional learning (SEL): SEL creates a strong foundation for academic success during summer learning. Integrating SEL in summer programs boosts student engagement, motivation, and readiness to learn.
- Sports & Movement: Simple team games, physical exercises, and dance.
- Creative Arts: Drawing, music, theatre, and crafts using recycled materials.
- Peer-Led Activities: Older learners support facilitation and act as role models.

Safety and Protection Measures

- Maximum of 40 learners per classroom; stagger sessions if needed to reach more children.
- Ensure secure and clean WASH facilities and access to water.
- Monitor children for signs of stress and refer to MHPSS services when needed.
- Record attendance and follow up on prolonged absences to the extent possible.

Monitoring and Feedback

- Use simple, age-appropriate feedback tools such as smiley-face charts, short reflections, or drawings to gather children's feedback on the activities.
- Engage children in planning and reviewing activities to strengthen their sense of ownership and ensure relevance to their needs and interests.
- Cluster partners will be provided slots to regularly share lessons learned, good practices, and challenges, supporting collective learning and adaptive programming.

Additional Resources

This guideline is intended to be complemented by other materials developed by various working groups and specialised partners to strengthen the quality of the response. Refer to the links below for additional resources.

1. [MHPSS message bank for those caring for children and adolescents](#)
2. [Recreational Activities weekly Tracker - Gaza](#)
3. [School-based Psychosocial support for students in Gaza](#)

¹ This guideline should be read alongside the March 2024 briefing note on Children's Education and MHPSS Needs in oPt. Access the document [here](#)