Pelastakaa Lapset - Rädda Barnen
Save the Children

CHILDREN IN CRISES

-A REPORT ON THE VULNERABILITIES OF CHILDREN AND THEIR POSITION IN PREPAREDNESS AND CRISIS SITUATIONS IN FINLAND

CHILDREN IN CRISES - A REPORT ON THE VULNERABILITIES OF CHILDREN AND THEIR POSITION IN PREPAREDNESS AND CRISIS SITUATIONS IN FINLAND

ABSTRACT

Children are often one the most vulnerable groups in crisis situations. Children's needs differ from those of adults, and children understand their surroundings and ongoing events differently from adults. Children also have limited possibilities to participate in decision-making even when the decisions affect the children themselves. Additionally, because of their ongoing development, children are particularly vulnerable to changes in their environment. It is important to consider children in crisis preparation because not all crises can be prevented, and the disruptions they cause will in most cases affect children. Additionally, special consideration and support should be given to a child's social network, including the child's family.

This report examines the ways in which children and families are taken into account in crisis situations and crisis preparedness in Finland. The report looks at both Finnish children and children and families who have migrated to Finland. It aims to support the development of Save the Children Finland's crisis preparedness and offers readers an account of the ways in which children have been considered in Finland's emergency preparedness plans and past crisis situations, as well as the various ways in which crises can affect children. The report also examines vulnerable groups more generally and considers the ways in which acknowledging these groups can affect the resilience of society. Although local and international examples are included, this report focuses mainly on the Finnish national perspective.

More specifically, this report focuses not only on how children have been taken into account in preparedness plans, but also on their common reactions to crises and how to work with and support children in crises. It also considers the role and significance of children's social networks in crisis situations. Additionally, the report presents the concept of comprehensive security and different preparedness structures in Finland, as well as various crises that Finland prepares for. Lastly the report examines the different structures for co-operation between governmental and non-governmental organizations and suggestions from actors in the field on how this co-operation could be improved in the future.

The report is based on interviews, a survey, and a literature review. Additional sources include the publications of different government agencies in Finland, academic research and the materials of organizations focusing on children. Much has been written on children and crises, but both in Finnish and international sources there is little written from the perspectives of crisis preparedness and children with immigrant backgrounds. It appears there has not yet been large-scale research on preparedness in Finland with a specific focus on children. The survey and interviews conducted for this report focused on their views and experiences of preparedness planning and how children are considered in crisis situations. The survey was completed by four Finnish government officials and five specialists from Finnish non-governmental organizations. Additionally, twelve professionals from Finland and other European countries were interviewed for this report.

Crisis preparedness is well-established in Finland, although there are clear gaps when it comes to including children and vulnerable groups in preparedness planning and crisis response. The findings of this report clearly indicate that children and families are often left out of preparedness plans or are only included as part of a wider category of vulnerable groups. This gap has been recognized, but the broader conversation on including vulnerable groups in crisis preparedness has remained minimal. Indeed, highlighting children's safety in crises is often left to governmental and non-governmental organizations and individuals who specialize in children's issues. According to our research, this lack of attention towards children in crisis preparedness is equally common in other European countries. Indeed, the experts who participated in the survey and interviews appeared to be unanimous in stating that there is much to be improved when it comes to considering the special needs of children and immigrant children in crisis preparedness. Crisis responses mirror the priorities of societies under normal times.

Recognizing the vulnerabilities of different kinds of children and families requires social discourse and active dialogue between different actors in the field of crisis preparedness. Taking advantage of the joint knowledge found in various networks of co-operation was emphasized by the experts as a way to raise awareness among all actors on children's needs and how to respond to them. Co-operation was seen as mutually beneficial to all parties involved. Recognizing and taking into account the capabilities and perspectives of different actors in the field is also a key feature of developing comprehensive security, and the key to building comprehensive crisis tolerance.

In the future it would also be beneficial to examine the ways in which children are considered in regional preparedness planning. In addition, it would be important to hear from children themselves on their thoughts and experiences of preparedness and security as no children were interviewed for this report. Further research should also be conducted on the ways in which particularly vulnerable groups of children other than immigrant children could be better considered and supported in crisis situations.

CONTENTS

Pelastakaa Lapset

FOREWORD

The goal of Save the Children is that children all over the world would have an equal opportunity to enjoy their rights and live in a society which supports children's rights. In Finland, Save the Children Finland supports children and families through child protection services and different forms of preventive support. Additionally, Save the Children Finland does development and advocacy work to promote the rights of children. We aim especially to help the most vulnerable children. Our work is guided by the shared goals of the international Save the Children organization and through our humanitarian work we help children and their families affected by disasters all over the world.

For several years we have also been developing our preparedness for crises and disruptions that affect children and families in Finland. When necessary, we are ready to help the authorities, for example in situations of disasters or violence affecting children and families. This can include setting up a Child Friendly Space with the help of our staff and volunteers or offering young people online support. In 2015, a large-scale influx of migrants to Finland spurred further action, as Save the Children Finland supported authorities by setting up reception units for unaccompanied minors and organizing activities for families with children in reception centers. Since then, we have strengthened our work and expertise in working with children with a refugee background, and we now have extensive experience, understanding and know-how in working with immigrant children and families with diverse backgrounds and situations.

Children are often one the most vulnerable groups in crisis situations. The principles found in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child of children's interests and non-discrimination, as well as children's rights to development and participation apply to all children. Following these principles is essential in crisis preparedness, preparedness planning and in crisis situations themselves.

This report examines the ways in which children and families with children are taken into consideration in different kinds of crisis situations and disruptions in Finland. The report focuses on both children and families from Finland and children and families with an immigrant background. The report has been conducted as part of the "Working Together to Support Children in Crises" project of Save the Children Finland, funded by the Funding Centre for Social Welfare and Health Organisations (STEA). This report is the first publication of Save the Children Finland on crisis preparedness in Finland and further research in this area is needed. The original version of this report was published in Finnish in August of 2021.

I would like to extend warm thanks to the project's steering group, all of our collaborators, and the people who graciously agreed to be interviewed and answer our survey. Special thanks to our interns Lea Absetz (University of Tampere) and Juho Pitkänen (University of Turku) for their enthusiasm and excellent work. I would also like to thank Eveliina Viitanen (Senior Specialist in Refugee Matters) and Anna Mikkonen (Preparedness Specialist) for highlighting children, families, and children with language barriers in crisis preparedness.

We will continue our work to include the needs of all children and families with children in the preparation for different kinds of crisis situations. We will also continue to help our staff and local Save the Children volunteers to be better prepared to support children and families in crisis situations, in co-operation with other non-governmental and governmental actors.

Hanna Markkula-Kivisilta
Secretary General
Save the Children Finland

1 INTRODUCTION

Children are often one the most vulnerable groups in crisis situations. Children's physical needs often differ from those of adults and children understand their surroundings and ongoing events differently from adults.
As a key humanitarian actor working with children, Save the Children International recognizes the special needs of children in crisis situations and aims to respond to these needs with its work around the world. The organization also offers a wide variety of support to children and families fleeing catastrophe and it has extensive knowledge in taking into consideration the special needs of migrant children and children with a refugee background. Save the Children International supports children not only through international humanitarian aid and development co-operation, but also through the national work of its national member organizations. Save the Children Finland is one of these 30 national members.

Save the Children Finland is working to develop the organization's preparedness to support children and families in Finland during crisis situations. This includes supporting refugee children and families, and ensuring that the special needs of immigrant and refugee children are taken into account during crisis situations in Finland.
This report explores the ways in which children and families with children are considered in different kinds of crises and disruptions, with a focus on the perspective of crisis preparedness and preparedness planning. In doing so, the report pays attention both to Finnish and immigrant children and their families. This report is part of the "Working Together to Support Children in Crises" project, a continuation of Save the Children Finland's 2017-2019 project "Working Together to Support Children – From Reception to Integration." The work has been funded by the Funding Centre for Social Welfare and Health Organisations (STEA).

This report aims to support the development of Save the Children Finland's crisis preparedness and to offer readers an account of the ways in which children have been considered in Finland's emergency preparedness plans and past crisis situations, as well as the various ways in which crises can affect children. The report also

examines the ways in which children and families with an immigrant background are taken into consideration in crisis preparedness in Finland. The role of non-governmental organizations, such as Save the Children Finland, in supporting children in crises and disruptions is also explored from the perspective of crisis preparedness. We include recommendations on how the consideration of children and families in crisis situations could be developed in the work of different professionals. Finally, we consider how taking into account different vulnerable groups affects the resilience of society. Crisis tolerance as a whole is made up of many small parts and requires diverse co-operation.

The Covid-19 pandemic, which arrived in Finland in the spring of 2020, naturally made its way into the material and data compiled for this report. The pandemic has pushed us to develop crisis preparedness, served as an example of a crisis and accompanying state of emergency, and to some extent strengthened co-operation between different actors in the field. It has also highlighted the need for preparedness on a national scale, and increased public discourse on the topic. Questions around refugees in crises were also highlighted by the professionals consulted for this research, no doubt in part due to the recent memory of the unprecedented influx of refugees to Finland in 2015. That situation led to an increase in experience and know-how in the field of crisis preparedness and particularly in working with refugees. In recent years, the resilience of different groups of people, including the position of children in crises and how to better take them into account, have also become a larger part of the conversation around crisis preparedness.

The report is divided into six chapters. The first chapter describes the methods of the study and defines the key concepts used when talking about children in crises. The second chapter explains the field of crisis preparedness in Finland and lists the specific types of crises that Finland prepares for. The third chapter examines the position and vulnerabilities of children in crisis situations; this chapter also discusses the specific vulnerabilities of immigrant children, the importance of children's participation in preparedness planning, and the need for appropriate information and how to provide this information to children. The fourth chapter moves on to describe common reactions children have to crises as well as important things to keep in mind when facing and supporting children in crisis. It also looks at the specific requirements needed for working with children with an immigrant background during crises. The fifth chapter examines the importance and impact of children's social circles, and families in particular, in coping with crises and disruptions. Chapter six describes the co-operation between governmental and non-governmental organizations and specifically the role of organizations with a focus on children in this co-operation. Finally, the conclusion summarizes the key findings of the study and provides recommendations on how to better prepare for crises in the future.

1.1 KEY CONCEPTS

Crisis & disruption

In its "Vocabulary of Comprehensive Security," the Finnish Terminology Centre (2017) defines "crisis" as follows: "A situation that requires enhanced action, is dangerous, difficult, disorderly, or exceptional. A crisis can be, for example, an economic, political, or military crisis. Crises can be international, national, regional or local. "Crisis," "catastrophe" and "disaster" are commonly used to describe this type of situation. However, in many instances it would be more appropriate to refer to a "disruption" or "emergency"(62).

In "The Security Strategy for Society" (2017), a "disruption" is a "threat or event that endangers the vital functions or strategic tasks of a society and requires the wider or more close-knit co-operation and communication of government and other actors. Disruptions can include severe natural disasters, such as storm devastation and a sudden rise in water level. There can also be disruptions caused by people, such as riots and terrorism. Disruptions can occur both in normal and emergency conditions. A disruption can be nation-wide, regional, or local. It may also focus on a specific function of society, such as money supply". (The Security Committee 2017, 97)

In her dissertation on social work in disaster management, Merja Rapeli writes: "Disaster, crisis, disruption and emergency are terms that describe unexpected, unusual, unmanageable and adverse situations" (2017, 19).

Child

According to the UN's Convention on the Rights of the Child a child means every human being below the age of eighteen years. The Convention on the Rights of the Child was ratified in Finland in 1991.

Immigrant & Refugee

"Immigrant" typically refers to someone who was born abroad and has moved to Finland for reasons such as work, education, family or international protection. There is additionally a word in Finnish for a "person with a foreign background" (ulkomaalaistaustainen), which is often used synonymously with "immigrant." A "person with a foreign background," however, can refer both to someone born abroad and to someone whose parents or only known parent was born abroad. An "asylum seeker" is a person who seeks international protection and residence in a foreign country, whereas a "refugee" is someone who has been granted this protection. However, the term "refugee" is often used to refer to all those who have been forced to flee their homes either within their home country or to other countries. (Finnish Refugee Council 2021; Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare 2021)

Preparedness

"Preparedness" refers to "all action, with the aim of ensuring the continuity of normal functioning with as few disturbances as possible, as well as being prepared for potential measures that differ from the ordinary during crisis situations or large-scale disruptions. Preparedness can include preparedness planning, continuity management, advance preparations, training and emergency drills." (The Security Committee 2017, 94) It is worth noting that there are two terms in Finnish that translate to "preparedness" in English. The first of these is varautuminen, which refers to "preparing for" something and the second is valmius, which means "being prepared for" something. In Finnish these terms can sometimes be used interchangeably or together to emphasize both the actions of preparation and the goal of being fully prepared for something. Valmius is also commonly used in conjunction with the Finnish word for planning, and in these instances refers to preparedness planning, often with the goal of completing a written preparedness plan. As this is a relatively minute difference, the word "preparedness" will be used in this translation, unless this distinction is contextually relevant.

1.2 METHODS

This report is based on interviews, survey-responses, and a literature review. Additional sources include the publications of different government agencies in Finland, academic research and other publications found in the databases of the Universities of Tampere and Turku, as well as online materials of different organizations. For the first part of the research process, sources on the general themes of the study were sought. This was done, for example, by using search words such as "children" and "crisis."

Much has been written on children and crises in both Finnish and international sources, but almost never from the perspective of crisis preparedness planning. Preparedness planning in general and the status of children within it has also rarely been studied in Finland. An exception is the dissertation of Merja Rapeli (2017), which examines the position of vulnerable groups in preparedness planning in the context of Finnish social services.

This report leaves out Finnish government publications or other national and international research on children in crisis deemed less relevant for this study, e.g. research on very specific phenomena, for example in the field of psychology. Other sources use the word "crisis" in the context of disruptions to one's personal life. Here we focus on broader, societal crises. International research has been utilized where the content appears relevant or comparable to the Finnish context, it focuses on the general discourse around preparedness, or it provides international solutions and recommendations for preparedness. We were unable to find publications or research on how children are considered in crisis preparedness in Finland. The government materials referenced in this report focus on the national perspective, and well-known government publications on Finland's comprehensive security, such as the Security Committee's Security Strategy for Society, have been included in the source material of this study. Additionally, the materials of organizations and other actors working with children and vulnerable groups have been heavily referenced.

Very few sources on the position of immigrant children in crises were found, and even then immigrant children were often mentioned merely as an example of a particularly vulnerable group. This is a clear sign of a serious intellectual gap in this area. Due to this lack, studies dealing with immigrant children and their position in other contexts were included to the extent that the findings from these adjacent contexts could be useful to working with and considering immigrant children in crisis scenarios. A few sources on immigrant and refugee children in international humanitarian work and in the crisis preparedness and response of other countries were also included in this study.

Survey and interview data were also collected for this report from members of Save the Children Finland's co-operation networks as well as other actors working with these questions. The survey conducted for this report consisted mostly of broad, open-ended questions (see Appendix 1). The survey was sent to members of the "Working Together to Support Children in Crises" Steering Group and several other partner organizations and agencies. The survey asked questions on crisis preparedness, preparedness planning and any experience of including children, families, and immigrant children in the crisis response of the various actors. The survey was completed by nine respondents, all from Finland, of whom four represent different government agencies and five work in non-governmental organizations. The survey was completed by experts from the City of Vantaa, the Suomen kylät organization, The National Defence Training Association of Finland (MPK), the Finnish Immigration Service, and the Finnish Red Cross. The experts' responses were based on personal experience as well as that of the organization they represent. This led to differences in the length and focus of responses.

The study also includes interview data. The interviews contained the same basic structure with questions around the core themes, but additional questions were added based on the expertise of the interviewee (see Appendix 2). Eight interviews were conducted with a total of twelve interviewees both from Finland and other European countries, and included experts on immigration and preparedness from different European Save the Children country offices: Giulia Sensini (Spain, Refugee Program Director); Niccolò Gargaglia (Italy, Head of the Protection of Migrant Children Unit); and Federico Cellini (Italy, Head of the Domestic Emergencies & Psychosocial Unit), as well as Operations Director Mizreta Trnka, Catastrophe Preparedness Specialist Dragan Licanin, and Catastrophe Aid Specialist Dubravka Vranjanac from Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Ira Kinnunen, Civic Activity Coordinator at Save the Children Finland. In addition to the experts from

Save the Children, interviews were conducted Tove Ruokoja, Senior Specialist at The Finnish Ministry of Social Affairs and Health and Merja Rapeli, Senior Specialist at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland. Heidi Parviainen, doctoral student from the University of Turku as well as crisis and family worker Kaisa Kantola and employee Nanna Mäkelä from the Oulu Reception Center were also interviewed for this study. The aim of the interviews was to include the views and experiences of actors in the field, as well as to learn from the models and best practices of crisis preparedness and response in other European countries. Finally, the report was reviewed by Pirjo Niemi-Järvinen, the couples and family therapist of Save the Children Finland.

2 DISRUPTIONS AND PREPAREDNESS IN FINLAND

"Finland is the safest country in the world. . . . a strong feeling of safety and security also protects society from new types of security threats."
(Government Report on Internal Security, 2021)

According to the Government Report on Internal Security, Finland ranks among the top five countries in the world in measures of every-day security and level of peacefulness (Finnish Government 2021, 10). In Finland everyday life is safer than ever. According to the Finnish Government, internal security is based on human rights, the rule of law, democracy and freedom, stability, well-being, and the advancement of equality in all action. (Finnish Government 2021, 8)

Human rights are an essential element of internal security according to the Government Report on Internal Security (2021). Promoting children's rights should also be central to this work, along with evaluating policies and actions targeting children.

Certain developments can pose a threat to an individual's sense of security, such as violence and disruption connected to inequality (Finnish Government 2021, 11). Finland also prepares for rare and particularly serious events that endanger the functions of society. These can include major accidents and wide-spreading infectious diseases. (Emergency Powers Act 29.12.2011/1552 1§; 2§; 3§). The COVID pandemic and resultant national and international crisis is the latest example of a realized threat that was known or expected to happen.

In addition to the pandemic, other global threats that affect Finland include global warming, migration, and polarization, which may lead to "serious, large-scale disruptions" (Finnish Government 2021; 29–31, 34–35). National risk scenarios in Finland include wide disruptions in the production of electricity and network connections, crises related to security policy, and potential nuclear disasters (Rapeli 2017, 28).

Pelastakaa Lapset

Crises have immediate consequences on well-being both in richer and poorer countries. Preparedness has a significant role in managing and preventing the negative effects of these crises. In her dissertation The Role of Social Work in Disaster Management in Finland (2017, 12), Merja Rapeli notes that even many unexpected disasters could have been prevented by being more careful and following safety guidelines. However, not all disasters and crises can be prevented, which is why wide-ranging preparedness is important.

In Finland large-scale disruptions are prepared for through co-operation between state and local government, and non-governmental organizations.

2.1 THE IMPORTANCE AND GOALS OF PREPAREDNESS IN FINLAND

"The aim of preparedness is to prevent accidents and disruptions, to prepare for the measures required during an accident or disruption and plan the recovery process"
(Ministry of the Interior 2019, 9)

The Finnish Ministry of the Interior's "National Risk Assessment" defines the goals of preparedness as preventing, preparing for and recovering from disruptions (Ministry of the Interior 2019, 3, 9). The Security Strategy for Society (2017) defines preparedness as action that ensures the continuity of the essential functions of society with as few disturbances as possible, as well as carrying out alternative action both during states of emergency and in cases of disruptions during normal times (The Security Committee 2017, 9).

In Finland certain aspects of preparedness have been dictated by law. Preparedness and who is responsible for preparedness are outlined in the Emergency Powers Act (1552/2011), the Rescue Act (379/2011) and in other specialized legislation (The Security Committee 2017, 9). The purpose of the Emergency Powers Act is to protect the population during states of emergency; securing livelihoods; maintaining the economy, judicial system, and basic and human rights; as well as ensuring territorial integrity. The legislation regulates the powers of authorities during emergency conditions and their responsibilities when it comes to preparedness. Here emergency conditions include "*an armed attack or a comparable act of aggression targeting Finland and their immediate aftermath*" as well as "*an especially serious event or threat affecting the population's wellbeing or the foundations of the country's economy, the consequences of which would markedly endanger the essential functionings of the society.*" These can include disasters or instances where infectious diseases spread to an extent that is comparable to the effects of a disaster or major accident. (Emergency Powers Act 29.12.2011/1552 1§; 2§; 3§)

The societal principles of preparedness in Finland are presented in a government resolution called "The Security Strategy for Society." The aim of this strategy is to standardize the national principles of preparedness and guide preparedness in different administrative branches. Implementing the strategy will require widespread co-operation between different actors and the inclusion of different points of view. (The Security Committee 2017, 1)

Planning and preparing are thus used to prevent the emergence of crises and threatening situations, as well as to enhance the ability of society to act in the face of such events. All levels of society have their own roles and significance in this work. Preparedness is also a requirement of certain actors and services. Planning, educating, and training are used to ensure the functioning of society even in surprising situations, and at the same time develop both individual and community resilience.

Catastrophes have the greatest effects on those who are the most vulnerable to begin with, such as poor people, the elderly, and others with special needs such as children. Vulnerability is a significant factor of risk reduction, particularly from the points of view of resilience and personal resources. The less resilience communities, families, and individuals have, the more vulnerable they are. The ability to respond to and handle a crisis differs between groups and individuals in a society. Particular attention should be paid to identifying vulnerable groups and developing resilience, as not all crisis situations can be avoided (Rapeli 2017, 30–31). Children are a particularly vulnerable group, as children have limited opportunities and capabilities to affect events, make decisions, act, and safeguard their own well-being.

THE CHALLENGES OF PREDICTING RARE OR UNLIKELY CRISES

"Preparedness plans can sometimes be tricky because you go into many details for some crises but then there are some crises which just happen and your previous work can help, but it's not really tailor-made for the situation."
- Dubravka Vranjanac

After the exceptionally devastating floods that hit Bosnia and Herzegovina and surrounding areas in 2014, the regional Save the Children office began to try to anticipate and prepare for similar events as well as other potential crises. Soon after Europe faced an unforeseen migrant crisis, followed by the COVID pandemic. Natural disasters such as devastating earthquakes or floods occur relatively sporadically, and there can be long times in between, which is why they can be challenging to predict. (Interview with Save the Children North West Balkans (NWB) 27.4.2021, Dubravka Vranjanac, Dragan Licanin)

Overall, predicting crises is challenging. A key aspect of preparedness is understanding, observing, and anticipating different threats and risks. This presents its own challenges to preparedness in all countries. During normal times, not all risks are taken into account, and sufficient attention might not be paid to preparedness by all the relevant actors in the field. It should also be noted that different governmental authorities focus on different sectors, and it is possible that groups with special needs may be left out entirely. Finding resources for preparedness and preparedness planning may also be challenging during normal times.

Strong preparedness can, however, lessen the need for action both during and after crises (Migrants in Countries in Crisis (MICIC) Initiative 2016, 23). Diverse co-operation, preparedness planning and acknowledging special needs could help in developing both preparedness work and crisis tolerance. Preparedness planners should be familiar with the country and region, as well as recognize the most serious risks and the most vulnerable groups. Several of the interviewees also noted that preparedness can be developed through co-operation and open dialogue between different actors in the field.

Particularly vulnerable groups such as children, including children and families from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds, can benefit from preparedness. Preparedness can help to strengthen the abilities of individuals and communities to respond to crises and to process events after the fact.

In Finland, for example, governmental authorities and organizations have developed joint preparedness recommendations for households on how to prepare at home. These guidelines aim to ensure that heads of households can take care of the basic needs of themselves and their dependents. The publication 72 tuntia [The First 72 hours: A Home Emergency Preparedness Plan] notes that household preparedness is a great help both to the society and to people themselves. (The Finnish National Rescue Association SPEK & National Emergency Supply Agency Organisation 2019).

Pelastakaa Lapset

THE 72 HOURS PREPAREDNESS RECOMMENDATIONS FOR HOUSEHOLDS

Disruptions affecting everyday life can include a refrigerator and freezer melting, a toilet not functioning normally, water being contaminated or network connections malfunctioning or shutting down completely. Additionally, there may be problems with the availability of medication.

The "72 hours" guidelines are a set of preparedness recommendations created by the Finnish authorities and non-governmental organizations for households. They suggest that households should be prepared to manage by themselves in the case of a disruption or crisis. Households should stock up on enough food and medicine to get them through at least three days. Each household should also have things such as bottled water, a supply of food that is easy to prepare, and other necessary equipment. Families with children should also consider the specific needs of their family, the ages and potential dietary restrictions of their children, as well as any pets.

The guidelines also emphasize the importance of knowing where to find accurate information, and for example how to cope if your apartment loses heat, etc. It is also important to help those around you. Neighbors in need of assistance may include the elderly or single parents with young children.

Source: 72tuntia - Varautuminen kotona. Ohjeita häiriötilanteiden varalle –leaflet, SPEK & Huoltovarmuusorganisaatio 2019.

2.2 RISKS AND THREATS THAT FINLAND PREPARES FOR

"In the interdependent world, global trends are part of Finland's operating environment, and they involve risks and threats."
(National risk assessment 2018, Publications of the Ministry of the Interior)

Our world is interdependent, and the security environment is in a constant state of flux. Potential risks, threats and related questions are increasingly complicated and multidimensional. Modern threats can include pandemics, climate change, migration, conflicts, and poverty. Predicting crises has become more challenging and crises occur with less notice. Global developments and events outside of Finland can also affect or lead to crises in Finland. (Ministry of the Interior 2019, 14, 23)

In Finland a new national risk assessment is created every three years. The aim of the assessment is to assess the risks and threats that affect people, the environment, essential services and systems, as well as property. The scenarios identified guide the preparedness of the Finnish authorities. (Ministry of the Interior 2021a)

PHOTO: ANNA MIKKONEN / SAVE THE CHILDREN

The national risk assessment is guided by the decision of the European Union on the Union Civil Protection Mechanism, which encompasses "… the protection of people, the environment and property against all kinds of natural and man-made disasters…". On this basis the Finnish national risk assessment examines the expected changes in trends of risks and threats that are experienced to be relevant to Finland. (Ministry of the Interior 2019, 3, 9)

Since 2017, the risk assessment has been expanded to better serve preparedness planning by noting every threat scenario raised in the Security Strategy for Society. In creating the national risk assessment, regional risk assessments note typical regional or local risks, thus contributing to the national picture. (Ministry of the Interior 2021a)

Disturbances can affect children either directly or indirectly.

Environmental threats and extreme weather conditions

Environmental threats, weather and climate risks can cause large-scale destruction to property and the environment, and have a significant effect on the lives of individuals and communities (The Security Committee 2017, 70). Although extreme weather conditions are often local by nature, they can create a national crisis situation if they occur simultaneously. Environmental threats include storms, floods, and wide-spreading forest fires. In Finland the most prominent damage caused by extreme weather has included forest damage and long-lasting power cuts. The risk of these types of threats grows with climate change. (Ministry of the Interior 2019, 18–20; Finnish Government 2021, 34) It is estimated that climate change will both directly and indirectly have an increasing effect on people in the future (Ministry of the Interior 2019, 18–20). For example, increases in drought and prolonged heatwaves as well as storms and heavy snow loads have been linked to the changing climate.

Droughts can cause risks to water distribution. Water distribution can also be affected by other natural phenomenon such as floods, storms, and heavy rain, as well as man-made disruptions. Disruptions to water distribution and problems with the quality of domestic water (also used as drinking water in Finland) can have significant impacts on different functions of society. In Finland a wide-spread water distribution failure that lasts for more than half a day is defined as serious. (Ministry of the Interior 2019, 60–61)

Pelastakaa Lapset

Heat waves can be dangerous to elderly people and small children. The effects of heat, however, depend on the possibilities risk groups have to access cool and air-conditioned spaces or other shelter. (Rapeli 2017, 33)

The vulnerability of persons is linked to social structures, such as the division of resources. Access to safe spaces and sufficient resources are not necessarily available to everyone. **(Rapeli 2017, 33.)**

Heavy snowfall and storms have recently resulted in widespread power cuts in Finland. Finnish society relies heavily on electricity and at its worst a protracted power cut can paralyze basic functions of society. One of the worst risk scenarios in Finland involves a storm passing over the country that would create multiple widespread power outages. It can also take several days or weeks to restore the power grid. If this were to happen in the winter, buildings would also have problems with heating. Power outages can also be very challenging from the perspective of individuals. (Ministry of the Interior 2019, 43–44 and see e.g. SPEK & Huoltovarmuuskeskus 2019) For example, storms in Finland in the summer of 2010 caused significant damage to buildings. Serious winter storms also occurred in 2011 and 2013, which led to power outages and problems with telephone networks and internet connections in wide regions of the country (Rapeli 2017, 28).

Major Accidents

Major accidents refer to a serious ecological or psychosocial disruption that greatly exceeds the survival capacity of a community. Major accidents are also defined as a serious accident in which many people die and are injured or there is significant damage to property or the environment. These types of accidents often affect a large number of families. They destabilize day-to-day life and invoke stress reactions in nearly everyone involved. Major accidents have been roughly divided into natural disasters and man-made disasters. Man-made disasters can include for example traffic or marine-traffic accidents, nuclear accidents, fires, crime and acts of violence as well as disruptions resulting from human error or purposeful action. (Poijula 2016; The Finnish Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, 30–32)

In Finland over the past twenty years major accidents have included a bomb explosion at the Myyrmanni shopping center, a bus accident in Konginkangas and the 2004 tsunami on Boxing Day. Though the tsunami did not take place in Finland, it led to the deaths of 178 Finns with more than 200 injured. In addition, disruptions that take place during normal times such as disease epidemics, can also turn into a major accident or societal disaster (The Finnish Ministry of Social Affairs and Health 2006, 30–32). The Finnish Ministry of Social Affairs and Health has designated that the Social Emergency and Crisis Center of the City of Vantaa provide nation-wide psychosocial support services after major accidents (Vantaa 2021).

Nuclear accidents and biological and chemical threats

In Finland, preparation for radiation hazards as well as biological and chemical threats is done in cooperation by the private sector, government authorities and non-governmental organizations. Chemical accidents and oil spills are examples of environmental damage. Prevention focuses on oil spills both on land and on water as well as on emissions of other harmful substances. Large-scale radiation hazards can be caused in Finland by an accident either at a Finnish or nearby nuclear power plant or through an explosion caused by a nuclear weapon. (The Security Committee 2017, 20, 50, 53)

The risk of a nuclear power plant accident is that a great amount of radioactive matter is released into the environment. This can require substantial action to reduce radiation risk, and the necessary measures can affect a wide region that extends relatively far from the place of the accident. In its entirety recovery can last for decades. However, nuclear reactors are well protected and since the disaster in Fukushima, preparing for natural phenomena has also been taken into account within the EU. (Ministry of the Interior 2019, 67–68)

Disasters at sea

Disasters that take place at sea can be wide-ranging and complex. The probability of such disasters has been predicted to increase in the near future due to an increase in maritime transport and higher storm winds caused

by climate change. (Finnish Government 2021, 35) Both the environment and people are threatened by these types of disasters. Threats to people include potential marine traffic accidents, such as fires on ships, shipwrecks, touching ground, colliding with other ships, as well as the ship capsizing or sinking. These disasters are a threat to human life and can leave people with serious injuries or disabilities. Large passenger ships can have thousands of people to evacuate. (Ministry of the Interior 2019, 65)

In Finland, the most recent disasters at sea that could have had major repercussions happened in the fall of 2020. First the cruise ship Amorella ran aground in the Åland Islands and was then followed a few months later by the cruise ship Viking Grace. The ships had the capacity to carry up to 2400-2800 passengers, but the actual number of passengers was luckily small in both cases. The Coast Guard, rescue units and evacuation center were quickly mobilized and in the case of the Amorella, passengers ended up being evacuated. (Harjumaa et al. 2020; Forsberg et al. 2020)

Sudden and widespread acts of violence

Terrorist acts and violent attacks are a possibility in Finland. These attacks can have wide-ranging effects including changes to people's sense of security and an increase in security action. A majority of recent terrorist attacks have been conducted using "easy" methods such as knives. These types of acts can be implemented quickly and do not require special skills or long preparation. More "traditional" explosive attacks and the use of firearms are also seen to be threats in Finland. (Ministry of the Interior 2019, 35–36)

The national risk assessment of 2018 states that the Finnish Security and Intelligence Service had "become aware of terrorism-linked plans and projects in Finland which have been more serious than before" (Ministry of the Interior 2019, 35). However, according to the most recent Government Report on Internal Security (2021) the threat of terrorism has not changed since 2017, when the risk was classified as having increased. The report states that both radical Islamist terrorism and the far-right movement have the capabilities for grave violence. (Finnish Government 2021, 36)

Over the past few years Finland, as many other countries, has faced the phenomenon of Finns who have left the country to be foreign fighters and are now in part returning to Finland. The issue has sparked societal debate and is seen as a timely question of security, the threat of violence and fear. Very young children have also been known to travel with the Finnish foreign fighters.

Another possible threat of violence is the violent movement of large masses. These masses can include people who are trying to start a violent riot. Prolonged unrest can potentially exceed the resources of the police in Finland, for example if it takes place simultaneously in many regions across the country. Political unrest can stem from societal inequality or disruptions to the functions of society, such as power cuts. Unrest has also been found to stem from issues such as increasing marginalization, extremist movements, social media and the strained international climate. "Action on social media, hate speech and fake news feed the sense of dissatisfaction among people and may lower the threshold of taking part in violent disturbances." (Ministry of the Interior 2019, 37–38)

Acts of violence that have widely affected children and young people in Finland include school shootings in 2007 and 2008. A knife attack in the city of Kuopio in 2019 also took place inside an educational establishment. According to researchers the threat of new school shootings still exists in Finland, and it should continue to be considered (Turunen & Punamäki 2014).

Municipalities in Finland should have an updated preparedness plan as well as a plan for psychosocial support, along with the capabilities to offer sufficient security and support to people after serious and traumatic events such as school shootings. This emphasizes the importance of planning preparedness and psychosocial support in schools, municipalities, and health centers. Drills should also be held to practice for these types of situations.
(Turunen & Punamäki 2014, 488)

Pelastakaa Lapset

Disease and health threats

Microbes and other biological material can cause outbreaks of illness, epidemics and pandemics, which threaten the stability of the health care system. International Health Regulations mandate the prevention and monitoring of threats to health. In 2017 the Finnish Security Strategy for Society stated that influenza pandemics occur every 10-40 years and that the spreading of diseases can only be partially prevented. (The Security Committee 2017, 51–52) Pandemics are seen to threaten nearly all essential functions of society, and vaccination is one of the most effective ways to prevent them. In addition to diseases that affect people, diseases affecting animals and plants are also listed as national threats. (Ministry of the Interior 2019, 57–59)

The most recent example of a health threat materializing is the COVID-pandemic.

Migration

The Finnish Government Report on Internal Security states that immigration to Finland is not a question of internal security as such, but that unregulated migration can cause instability both within and between states (Finnish Government 2021, 22).

The national risk assessment by the Finnish Ministry of the Interior lists a large-scale influx of migrants as a potential risk to Finland. In these instances, the capacity for accommodation is exceeded, the country is constantly receiving more people and the number of incoming migrants surpasses the number of people leaving the country. A large-scale influx of migrants can create economic challenges and can involve political pressure. Additionally, large-scale migration can awaken strong emotions among the native population towards the migrants. Migrants can face threats in their countries of origin, on route, and in Finland. (Ministry of the Interior 2019, 32–34)

In the fall of 2015, "the number of migrants arriving in Finland rose rapidly and became an emergency qualifying as a large-scale influx of migrants." The migrants were first registered in a new registration center set up in the city of Tornio, and from there they were sent to different reception centers around Finland. (Ministry of the Interior 2021b) By the end of 2015, the number of people who sought protection arriving in Finland was nearly ten times what it had been in previous years. Nearly one quarter of asylum seekers were children, of whom more than a third arrived in Finland unaccompanied. (Finnish Immigration Service 2021)

Other threats

Though the world is getting increasingly complicated, more traditional threats are still apparent. Political, economic, and military pressure as well as other action with the aim of affecting the conditions or decision-making of states are still threats to societies. When these kinds of actions are used simultaneously or in close succession, they are referred to as hybrid threats. Hybrid threats are defined as the means that state or non-state actors use with malicious intent. These means can include for example affecting political decision-making and the opinions of citizens, or the economy and infrastructure, including military threats. (The Security Committee 2016, 5) The main objective of maintaining defense forces is to deter military attacks and secure territorial integrity. Finland could also be drawn into an armed conflict indirectly in the case of an armed conflict nearby. Societal infrastructure can also become the target of military force "… such as information networks, power and energy distribution networks, information resources, traffic nodes, communications systems, logistics and all connections abroad". (Ministry of the Interior 2019, 27, 30)

Finnish international relations also include consideration of the prevention of global risks. For example, uncontrollable migration, pandemics, and international crime are seen as global threats. Work to advance democracy, solutions for sustainable development, and slowing down the effects of climate change are central to preventing these types of threats. (The Security Committee 2017, 8–9)

2.3 COMPREHENSIVE SECURITY IN SOCIETY

In Finland, different sectors of society have aimed to prepare for threats and risks in a multitude of ways, based on the concept of comprehensive security. In the model of comprehensive security, security actors include all those who participate in the work, such as government authorities, academia, non-governmental organizations, and other groups. Individual citizens can participate for example through independent preparedness. (The Security Committee 2017, 1) Wide-ranging preparedness and understanding the importance of preparedness develop resilience at the societal level. Several of the participants of this study also emphasized the need for developing co-operation and co-ordination between different security and preparedness actors.

Dialogue between relevant actors, as well as more widely in society, would be beneficial to everyone involved with preparedness. New points of view could be added to the discourse around security and actors could learn to consider different situations and questions. Such dialogue could also add to further consideration of different groups of people, such as children and families, and those who come from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

The Security Strategy for Society describes comprehensive security in preparedness as a collaborative model in which the essential functions of society are ensured through co-operation between Finnish authorities, businesses, non-governmental organizations, and citizens. It was noted in 2017 that despite the fact that the Finnish preparedness model has received international praise, it still needs to be further developed at the national level. Particularly the general public's awareness of comprehensive security needs to be improved. Knowledge of the term and its practical implementation has been seen to affect preparedness, but also to improve one's sense of security. The aim is that Finnish society will be well prepared for threats to its essential functions. (The Security Committee 2017, 5, 7, 93)

The Security Committee behind the security strategy is a state organ that supports the ministries and government in questions relating to comprehensive security. It follows developments in society and the security environment, integrates preventative preparedness, and co-ordinates the development of co-operation between different actors and the ministries. The committee has twenty members and four experts from different authorities, administrative branches, and the private sector. The committee issues statements and recommendations to do with comprehensive security and aims to start conversations and collect information on questions related to security with different collaborating partners. (The Security Committee 2021)

Comprehensive security as a concept has also been emphasized in the field of international crisis management. Comprehensive security is described as a challenging but significant part of advancing stability and peace. People working in crisis management have woken up to the fact that state-level action alone is not sufficient to deal with modern challenges. Crisis management requires additional civil and military knowledge, skilled peacekeepers, and humanitarian workers, as well as development co-operation. In this work, non-governmental organizations have just as significant a role as actors representing the government. (Yli-Vakkuri & Kotilainen 2018, 7–8)

Non-governmental organizations play a significant role in preparing for accidents and disasters. Organizations provide services, co-ordinate the work of volunteers supporting the authorities, and maintain expertise around preparedness.
(The Security Committee 2017, 8)

Organizations also help to channel and co-ordinate non-members, so-called spontaneous volunteers, enabling them to help in different kinds of activities. Individuals may wish to affect their own surroundings, as can be seen in different social media networks. (The Security Committee 2017, 8) Local assistance can also be very concrete.

In the Security Strategy for Society, coordinating volunteer work refers to promoting co-operation between the Finnish administration, authorities, and non-governmental organizations. In practice, this takes the form of co-operative agreements, training, and drills. Authorities will come to an agreement with relevant actors in the field on training, communication and how different actions are to be carried out. The flexibility of organizations as well as their capabilities to extend their work to fill the gaps left over by the work of the authorities is also

seen as important. Organizations also have a significant role in training citizens in the area of independent preparedness. (The Security Committee 2017, 8–9)

The role of non-governmental organizations and volunteers is recognized as important and helpful to the work of Finnish authorities within the realm of comprehensive security. Government representatives who took part in the survey or interviews of this study also recognized the great importance of non-governmental organizations in their answers. At the same time both members of the authorities and non-governmental organizations expressed a wish for further development of co-operation. Many hoped for tighter joint development of preparedness and preparedness planning as well as a more clear-cut division of roles. Organizations have had an important role in crisis situations in Finland, but unified planning would be beneficial, as in an acute crisis situation there is no time to ponder over roles and responsibilities.

LOCAL CRISES REQUIRE LOCAL ACTION

Locality has been experienced as a significant factor both in evaluating risks and providing aid. Federico Cellini, Head of the Domestic Emergencies & Psychosocial Unit at Save the Children Italy, sees regional risk analysis as central for example in countries such as Italy, where risks can differ greatly based on where one lives. For example in the region of Naples, the volcanoes pose risks whereas in other regions flooding should be taken into consideration. It is important that local actors are aware of these risks and maintain the preparedness of residents to face them. (Interview with Save the Children Italy 29.4.2021, Federico Cellini)

"As a population you have to be aware of the risks and how to act, and as a duty bearer, or an [adult close to children], you also have to know how to act" **- Federico Cellini**

The same applies to a country like Finland, in which the weather and other natural phenomenon and related risks differ for coastal and inland areas, or the North and the South.

According to a survey respondent from a Finnish organization, local networks and communities have organized assistance in local disruptions, for instance during power outages caused by storms or heavy snowfall. During the COVID-pandemic helping one's neighbors and community support of the elderly has been clearly visible. This type of community spirit has been particularly prevalent in sparsely populated areas. According to the respondent, communities have played a significant role in maintaining ordinary day-to-day life.

Local Save the Children associations in Finland are motivated by their members' wish to help children and families in the area. Ira Kinnunen, Civic Activity Coordinator at Save the Children Finland, believes that whole communities may be ready to act in a local crisis: "… I believe that whether or not you belong to a local association, local people will want to help and support others". For example, one Finnish local association had organized supply donations after a large fire. (Interview with Ira Kinnunen 28.4.2021)

PHOTO: EVELIINA VIITANEN / PSAVE THE CHILDREN

3 CHILDREN IN PREPAREDNESS PLANNING AND CRISIS RESPONSE

The aim of preparedness is to strengthen the crisis tolerance of society, communities and individuals. Coping and crisis tolerance are affected by both the vulnerabilities of the society and individuals, as well their readiness to face adversities.

Internationally children and other vulnerable groups have long been recognized as groups requiring special attention for example in managing natural disasters, predicting disruptions, and providing humanitarian aid. However, this study found that when it comes to Finland there are still gaps in preparedness and the ways in which children and other vulnerable groups are taken into consideration in crises.

For example, the United Nations (UN) Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction notes that risk reduction should always be multidimensional and that due to their coordinating role governments should consider all vulnerable communities and interest groups including women, children and youth, people with disabilities, poor people, immigrants, and indigenous people (UN 2015, 10). Finland is also committed to advancing global disaster risk reduction and implementing the UN Sendai Framework in its international action (Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland 2018).

Every year, Finland finances international disaster relief through UN organizations, the International Red Cross, and Finnish advocacy organizations such as Save the Children Finland. Finland also recognizes the specific need to protect children in catastrophes such as conflicts and natural disasters in other countries. (Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland 2021) Considering the needs of vulnerable minorities, groups and individuals should, however, also be an important focus of national risk reduction in Finland.

Pelastakaa Lapset

3.1 THE SPECIAL NEEDS OF VULNERABLE GROUPS IN CRISES

"-- in every crisis the most vulnerable people are the most exposed, and they are always at the biggest risk, especially if they are in rural areas and different slums, as in this case the Roma population [during floods across the Balkans]. This poor population and their houses may not have the opportunity to recover fast from these disasters, unlike others who are more educated, connected and informed." **- Dragan Licanin**

Crises have the greatest effects on the most vulnerable people. These groups often include children, the elderly, people with disabilities and different kinds of minorities. Gender may also affect a person's vulnerability in crises. Women are more likely than men to provide emotional support to family members and they may not get timely information in crisis situations. Elderly people living in poor and remote areas also need to be taken into consideration, for example in evacuation plans. (Rapeli 2017, 13–14, 31–32) Special attention should also be paid to families with children. For example, single-parent households with small children and ethnic minorities can be in a particularly vulnerable position. Families may have limited resources and possibilities to follow communication channels providing information on crises. Language barriers might result in communication and information not reaching everyone.
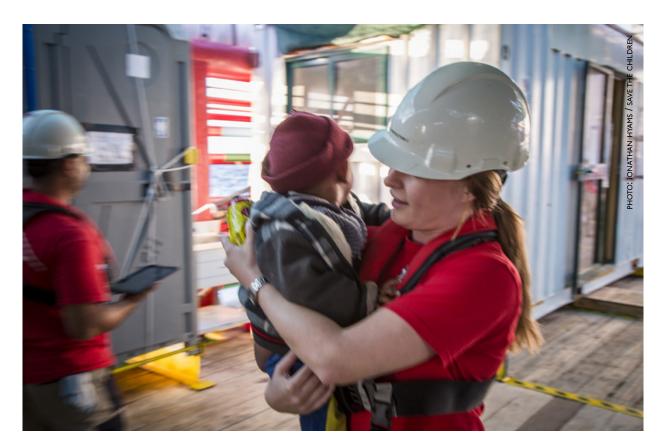
When it comes to working with vulnerable groups in disaster risk reduction, the role of social services is key, as many people who belong to vulnerable groups may already be clients of social services. Despite this, vulnerable groups are not always considered or mentioned in municipal preparedness plans in Finland. Only around half of the preparedness plans Merja Rapeli studied for her dissertation noted that one of the tasks of social services in emergency situations is looking out for especially vulnerable groups. Where mentioned, vulnerable groups often included children, the elderly, and immigrants. Rapeli writes that social services should be better prepared to assist and support vulnerable groups in crises and disruptions. In order to do so, it is important to recognize vulnerable groups and take care of those in the most in need, work towards inclusion and empowerment, and advocate for the groups' right to receive support. The basic premises of social services, such as helping people cope, fostering change and taking an ecological approach, serve as a good base for this. (Rapeli 2017, 55–57, 74, 248–249)

At the governmental level, the special needs of different groups can be of low priority or ignored, as preparedness planning often focuses on broader issues.

It has been found that in general more attention should be paid to the effects of crises on different groups. In the summer of 2020, the European Anti-Poverty Network (EAPN) reported on the effects of the COVID-pandemic on vulnerable groups. It found that the crisis had unveiled social inequality and deficiencies in social services. The crisis particularly affected vulnerable groups, such as the poor. Immigrants were also more prone to suffer from the virus and lockdown due to root social causes, such as marginalization or poverty. The crisis has also had "disproportionate" effects on poor families and children, for whom school lunches have been a significant help in day-to-day life. Efforts were made to address these inequities, for example through providing food aid to replace missing school lunches, and by distributing computers and internet access for remote learning. Non-governmental organizations and civil society are seen as important actors during the crisis, even though they have also suffered financially during the pandemic. (Saarinen 2020)

The experts interviewed for this study agreed that there are things to be improved when it comes to considering different groups such as children and immigrants in preparedness planning. This is partly due to the fact that these groups are not given sufficient consideration in normal times either.

Preparedness plans are created during normal conditions, which is why it is also important to develop services and the ways in which different groups are taken into consideration under normal conditions.

3.2 THE POSITION OF CHILDREN IN CRISES

"Children's needs are different from the needs of adults in very concrete ways as well."

-Tove Ruokoja

International treaties on children, and the principles of protecting their interests, are based on the particular vulnerability of children. Children have limited possibilities to make known their own points of view and influence decisions affecting them. This is due to things such as their level of development, dependence on adults, and lack of a right to vote.

Finland has committed to implementing the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. According to the convention, the interests of children and their rights to express their views on matters concerning themselves should be taken into account in decisions and legislation that concern them. Most decisions will affect children, even if the decision or legislation does not directly concern them. Despite this, little effort is made to ascertain a child's perspective. (on Finnish legislation and Aliens act, see. e.g. Pirjatanniemi et al. 2021, 191, 199) The realization of children's rights can be examined by evaluating the effects of policies and actions on children. (For more information, see e.g. LAVA - Lapsivaikutusten arviointi –ohjeistuksessa, Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare, Ministry of Education and Culture & Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare 2018)

It would be useful to evaluate the effects of preparedness plans and post-crisis recovery on children.

The position of children should be considered from the earliest stages of preparedness planning, because the starting point and needs of children are very different from those of adults. According to Tove Ruokoja, for example, the material side of preparedness should take into account the material needs of children, such as the availability of car-seats, sufficient food and supplies for small children, and the appropriateness of these material items for children. Physical spaces such as evacuation centers should also have spaces fit for children. Indeed, children's needs should be considered in all aspects of preparedness planning. (Interview with Tove Ruokoja, 5.5.2021)

At the same time, children may be insufficiently included in policies and guidelines, and their needs may not be sufficiently recognized. Indeed, children are often merely mentioned as part of the broader category of vulnerable groups. Highlighting the safety of children is often left to child advocacy organizations and a few government authorities.

According to our interviews, insufficient consideration of children and families in preparedness planning and action is not uncommon in other European countries either. According to one interviewee from a European Save the Children office, there may not be a "culture" for considering children at the institutional level, even if crisis response is in other ways fast and effective in the country. Overall, gaps in preparedness were found in terms of communication and in the lack of children's presence in preparedness or evacuation plans. For example, local evacuation plans were not presented sufficiently in schools or other places that reach children and families.

The COVID pandemic has raised awareness on the position of children in crises around Europe as well as in Finland. One European Save the Children interviewee noted that in their country children had not necessarily been specifically included in preparedness at the national level before the pandemic. However, during the pandemic new networks began to form which discussed the position of children. At the local level, for example, co-operation between organizations and the authorities had often been limited before the crisis.

In Finland, children may be more visible in local and regional plans than in more general policies. In some Finnish municipalities vulnerable groups such as children are considered specifically in preparedness planning, and crisis groups in some municipalities have know-how on how to work with children. Municipalities are also required to consider for example schools and the continuity of education in their preparedness plans (see e.g. Ministry of Education and Culture 2021). Finnish legislation has also aimed to ensure that students and teachers have a safe learning environment. For example, the Basic Education Act states that: "A pupil participating in education shall be entitled to a safe learning environment." This could be achieved for example through regulations and trying to prevent all kinds of harassment and violence. (Basic Education Act 29 § 30.12.2013/1267)

A safe learning environment is also affected by a school's ability to react to sudden and shocking crisis situations (Finnish National Agency for Education 2021a). Schools in Finland are required to set up a core group responsible for questions connected to crises at the school. It might be called a "crisis group," or perhaps a "student welfare group." Members of the groups must be given sufficient time to familiarize themselves with different issues connected to crisis situations. For example, the crisis group might write a crisis preparedness plan, map out important co-operating partners and procedures in case of crisis situations, train staff and organize joint action during potential crises. The group is also responsible for providing immediate emotional support during a crisis situation. Schools have had different ways of organizing these groups in practice. (Finnish National Agency for Education 2021b)

"It is not nice to think about the different kinds of disasters that could happen in your country, especially those that could affect your own school. Indeed, preparedness cannot mean trying to predict every potential tragic situation as precisely as possible. The basic nature of sudden disasters is that they are unexpected. It is, however, beneficial to prepare appropriately as it helps everyone work more efficiently in case of a crisis"
(Finnish National Agency for Education 2021a, translated from original).

The municipal education system is indeed one of the only sectors in Finland which has clearly considered preparedness from the point of view of children and young people. In general, the education sector is seen as having an important role in the mental and emotional crisis tolerance of society, because education strengthens knowledge and supports a sense of community and participation. (The Security Committee 2017, 23–22) In 2001, the Finnish Academy of Science and Letters stressed that education should increasingly take into consideration the diversity of the population. Different minorities should be equally involved in workplaces and the school system because equality is a basis on which to build a resilient society. (Mauranen et al. 2021, 26–27)

In Finland the resilience and well-being of society is protected through keeping up essential services in crisis situations. The aim is to promote independent survival in all situations, which requires sufficient social security

as well as health and social services that are able to carry out their functions in crisis situations. These services must also be ensured both regionally and in the municipalities. (The Security Committee 2017, 22–23) The COVID pandemic in Finland has further highlighted that the need for services usually increases during crises.

According to Merja Rapeli, how children are considered in preparedness and crises directly mirrors the values and priorities that societies have in normal times. A society which recognizes children needs in normal times is more likely to include them in preparedness planning and crisis response. (Interview with Merja Rapeli 5.5.2021)

One Finnish government official noted that nearly all the disruptions they had faced at work had affected children. The day-to-day life of families can be momentarily shaken, and parents can get injured, be unable to work or for some reason be incapable of caring for children as before. It should also be noted that crises and other traumatic events that affect children are more likely to cause grief and distress to society more broadly.

The position of children should be recognized in all crisis situations, because crises nearly always affect children in one way or another.

There can however be differences in the views and work cultures of different authorities when it comes to considering children and other vulnerable groups in crisis preparedness and response. Different authorities also prioritize different approaches to action and policies. One Finnish government official noted that for example security officials may approach their work in a task-oriented way through searching for the quickest and most effective solution. However, this way of operating may not prioritize considering which solution would be the best from the point of view of individuals or different groups.

According to this respondent, it is important to continuously keep in mind basic human rights and consider them in relation to decisions made during a crisis response. The respondent mentioned the right to family integrity and children's rights as examples of basic rights which should be considered in the work of security officials when planning action and the necessity of said action. This conversation around basic rights in preparedness is, however, relatively recent and was not necessarily undertaken prior to the experiences of the past few years. Indeed, the respondent suggests that it would be beneficial to include basic human rights and the rights of children into preparedness planning and post-evaluation of response, especially where the response affects the realization of rights.

Merja Rapeli finds that these issues are considered to a varying degree by Finnish officials. This can also be seen at the EU level. For example, the EU humanitarian aid includes relatively many guidelines and practices that consider children, but children are often still omitted when it comes to the mechanisms of rescue services. Rapeli stresses that in the long term these sectors should be linked more closely together instead of being completely separate entities. This would also help rescue services better consider the special needs of different groups of people. (Interview with Merja Rapeli 5.5.2021) In her dissertation, Rapeli also noted that for example social work should have stronger links to other security actors and government officials (Rapeli 2017, 74).

Promoting social welfare and the protection of vulnerable groups at the national level can improve the possibilities of children to cope with future crises as well.

In an interview, a Finnish government official noted that the COVID pandemic has shown how a crisis can affect different groups of people in very different ways. In Finland the pandemic raised concerns about the education of children and young people as well as the realization of children's rights in such areas as foster care. The pandemic has also brought to light the need to improve the ways children with an immigrant background are considered in crisis situations (see 3.3).

Pelastakaa Lapset

PROTECTING CHILDREN IN HUMANITARIAN WORK

In the field of international humanitarian aid, structures have been set in place to aid children in crises. These have helped to raise awareness of the position of children in crises as a particularly vulnerable group both in the work of international organizations and the various actors that research and fund this work. Behind these structures is The Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action, a network of over one hundred international actors which aims to ensure that children are protected from violence, abuse and neglect in all humanitarian crises and disasters as well as their aftermath around the world. The network promotes co-operation between prominent actors in the field during humanitarian crises and has set the Minimum Standards for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action (2012), as well as guidelines on how to implement them. The twenty-eight minimum standards give concrete directions to those working with children in disasters and aim to uphold four central pillars:

1. Ensuring a quality child protection response

2. Recognizing and combating risks that children face in crises

3. Developing adequate strategies that consider the risks in order to protect children

4. Promoting co-operation between different sectors to better protect children and ensure their well-being in crises and catastrophes

The network is led by UNICEF and Plan International. Save the Children International is a part of the core group of the network. For more see: The Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action

(https://alliancecpha.org/en)

DEVELOPING CRISIS TOLERANCE THROUGH YOUTH WORK

The Finnish Security Strategy for Society specifically brings up the role of youth work. Youth work has its own role in developing mental and emotional crisis tolerance, and the strategy proposes that this know-how should be utilized during disruptions. An aim of the strategy is to maintain the normal functions of society as well as possible during crises in co-operation with government authorities, volunteers, and non-governmental organizations. Youth work is described as an important resource in situations that particularly affect young people and their well-being. Civic activity, organizations and spiritual communities create a sense of belonging and participation, and maintain different networks. In addition, combating marginalization and inequality decrease societal divides and maintain the functioning of society. (The Security Committee 2017, 88)

3.3 THE POSITION OF CHILDREN WITH AN IMMIGRANT BACKGROUND IN CRISES

"As far as I am aware, it has been found during the pandemic that immigrants are also more vulnerable in this situation. In Sweden elderly people with a Finnish background have been much more likely to die from the virus. I think this is very interesting seeing as our cultures are relatively similar."
- **Merja Rapeli**

The COVID pandemic has shown that children with an immigrant background are particularly vulnerable in crises both in Finland and globally. During the pandemic, domestic abuse has increased among immigrant families around the world, and immigrants have faced a higher risk of dying from the virus (Prime Minister's Office Finland 2020, 13, 21–22). Immigrants often work in fields that are directly affected by the pandemic. Racist connotations have also been linked to the virus, which have in turn increased negative attitudes towards immigrants. All of these phenomena affect immigrant children either directly or indirectly. Additionally, the closing of schools and remote education has been especially hard on immigrant children particularly in countries that have a relatively large population of children who do not speak the local language. Finland is considered to be one of these countries. (Prime Minister's Office Finland 2020, 24; OECD 2020)

In addition to this accumulation of negative effects, immigrant children can face particular challenges in receiving aid. Language and cultural barriers can be enough to make receiving aid more difficult for children in crises and disruptions, but these are not the only challenges immigrant children face. The social networks of immigrant families and children can be limited in their new country: some might choose to voluntarily isolate themselves, or experiences of discrimination can lead to people being left outside the reach of information and assistance. (MICIC Initiative 2016, 29–33) Additionally, the lack of personal identity documents or an unclear status in the country are challenges to immigrants even under normal times, and in crises these challenges are exacerbated.

For example, due to unclear status, immigrants may not want to be recognized by service providers, which leads them to avoid sharing any personal information with the authorities or seeking assistance from available services during crises. (MICIC Initiative 2016, 12, 24) There can also be confusion around the availability of different services.

In large-scale crisis situations immigrant populations may be more likely to move than the rest of the population as many may decide to go back to their home country or move to another country that they perceive to be safer. There can however be specific challenges to moving during crises and disruptions as was seen during the pandemic, as borders were closed, and consul and other migration services were momentarily reduced or closed. The movement of immigrants can also occasionally be restricted. This was seen in Finland when immigrants were held in detention in order to manage immigration to Finland. (MICIC Initiative 2016, 29–33)

Immigrants have also been found to be a particularly vulnerable group during hurricanes in the United States. It can be difficult or impossible for immigrants to get updated information on their legal rights as well as their possibilities to receive support from different public and private sector actors. The information provided by the authorities may also be inconsistent, and the anti-immigration climate of society as well as the fears immigrants have towards the authorities can stop them from seeking out assistance in disasters. As a result of hurricanes family members may lose their identification papers or the documentation needed to prove their legal residence. Hurricanes can also lead to people losing their jobs or places of study, which can lead to them losing the grounds for their residence. (GCIR 2017, 2)

Immigrant children also have specific needs that should be taken into account in the practical arrangements of the response to crisis situations. According to the Finnish professionals consulted for this study, the needs of immigrant children in crisis situations can vary in very concrete ways, for example due to different religious backgrounds. This is why specific issues such as the clothing needs of Muslim girls and the dietary restrictions of different immigrant groups should be considered in crisis response. According to one Finnish official, specific food restrictions have been considered in Finland for some time and can be seen for example in the quarantine packages and bags of food provided by municipalities during the COVID pandemic.

The specialists also noted that when discussing immigrant children and families it is important to consider communication and information in different native languages, but also other risk factors such as existing mental health issues or the past traumatic experiences of family members.

"We have research globally that shows that immigrants and people who represent different language groups should be better taken into consideration in crisis situations. And not only in that we provide information in different languages, but that approaching these people would be adapted to the needs of and more cognizant of the group in question."
-Merja Rapeli

CHILDREN WITH AN IMMIGRANT BACKGROUND IN FINLAND

In 2019, there were a total of 423,000 people with an immigrant background living in Finland, or about eight percent of the total population. The majority of immigrants move to Finland for work, education or family ties and most people with an immigrant background in Finland are of working age, 15-64 years old. Only around ten percent of immigrants are receiving international protection, or in other words have a refugee background. There are proportionately more children among people with a refugee background compared to other groups of immigrants in Finland. All in all, around twenty percent of people with an immigrant background in Finland are between the ages of zero to fourteen. (Statistics Finland 2021)

In the 1990s the percentage of children among the immigrant population began to rise, as Finland took in refugee families. Family reunification has also raised the percentage of children within different groups of asylum seekers. The percentage of children is the highest among the group of countries that Finland receives the most asylum seekers from such as Syria, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Sudan, and Somalia. Although the vast majority of people with an immigrant background in Finland were born abroad (83%), over half of the children with an immigrant background living in Finland were born in Finland (65%). The number of people with an immigrant background varies greatly between regions, and in 2019 over half of them lived in the region of Uusimaa, which includes the capital city of Helsinki. However, as refugees are assigned to different municipalities and migration to Finland increases, a larger percentage of people with an immigrant background are now living in other regions. (Statistics Finland 2021)

Immigration can lead to situations in which both the status of adults and children in relation to the state can be unclear or uncertain. These situations can include the beginning of the asylum-seeking process, and situations in which a person has not been granted legal residence in the country but has nevertheless chosen to stay in the country as an undocumented migrant. These situations can have various effects on people including whether or not they can access services and what kinds of services, and how they are reached and considered in crises and disruptions. Despite these challenges, children should be able to access social and healthcare services and have the possibility to go to school no matter their status in the society. (Castaneda et al. 2018)

Even though the special needs of people with immigrant backgrounds are already recognized, children with an immigrant background are rarely recognized as a separate group in preparedness work in Finland. The preparedness specialists who took part in our survey noted that immigrant children rarely came up as their own group, even though the perspective of immigration and work with immigrants were often mentioned as part of the organizations' preparedness work. One respondent emphasized that their workplace noted the particular reactions and needs of all individual children and families, instead of focusing on immigrant backgrounds specifically.

How immigrants are considered in preparedness and crises in Finland also varies based on the responsibilities of different authorities and non-governmental organizations. According to one Finnish official, immigrants are often considered in the preparedness planning of social work, but less than other groups. At the very least the need for language interpretation has been recognized in preparedness. Immigrant children have also been considered better and more comprehensively in the contexts of refugees and the large-scale influx of migrants to Finland (especially between 2015-2016) than in other sectors of preparedness.

On average immigrant children are considered better in the contexts of refugees and the large-scale influx of migrants to Finland than in other sectors of preparedness.

Pelastakaa Lapset

A special focus on immigrants in crises is also rarely visible in Finnish national preparedness or the preparedness plans that are publicly available. As with children, there is much more information available on how to take into account immigrants in crises in the international humanitarian field. In humanitarian crises, refugees, migration and internal displacement are often sizable phenomena that have to be taken into account in catastrophe work (see. e.g. The New Humanitarian 2021). However, attention is often directed towards those who are fleeing the catastrophe. This can lead to issues of migration and the special needs of those who have previously immigrated to the country being left to the sidelines even in international crisis response. However, this has begun to change in recent years, and for example the UN has created guidelines for how to consider migrants in large-scale crises and disruptions (MICIC Initiative 2016).

Considering immigrant children and families as their own particular group has also been lacking in preparedness planning in the Balkans, Italy, and Spain. Similarly to Finland, in these countries considering immigrant children is often limited to the context of refugees and the reception centers for asylum seekers.

There is no planning or procedures specifically in place for [immigrant children]. They are invisible, let's say that." **- Federico Cellini**

In the Balkans, actors in preparedness and crisis help make different preparedness plans for refugee children depending on the seasons and temperatures as well as whether the majority of children live in refugee camps or outside of them, for example in buildings that have been abandoned or taken over. Inside refugee camps preparedness and security are advanced through means such as active communication and drills on what to do in case of fires and floods. However, the benefits of these drills can be limited as both the staff of the camps as well as the families living in them are in constant flux. The main emphasis of the camps is to answer the basic human needs of people, which can lead to less attention being paid to more general strategy and the planning of larger scale action. (Interview with Save the Children NWB, 27.4.2021, Dubravka Vranjanac)

The same challenge of staff turnover has also been found in Spain, where the local Save the Children has supported the work of the authorities with immigrant and refugee children in a variety of ways. These have included training police on how to work with children and particularly children with special needs. However, police officers may change weekly near the borders where there would be a demand for the training, for example in Melilla. (Interview with Save the Children Spain, 5.5.2021, Giulia Sensini)

PROTECTING MIGRANTS IN CONFLICTS AND NATURAL DISASTERS

At the initiative of the UN, guidelines were drawn up in 2016 on how to protect migrants in crisis situations. The initiative was exceptional as it not only focuses on refugees but also on other groups with immigrant backgrounds and on how these groups should also be taken into account in national crises that fall outside the scope of the international humanitarian field. The guidelines aim to cover crises both in developing countries and in higher income countries.

The Migrants in Countries in Crisis Initiative (MICIC) has been led by the United States and the Philippines in co-operation with international organizations. The aim of the initiative is to support states, civic society, the private sector, and international organizations in considering the migrant population in their area of work, and in guaranteeing that their human rights are realized and that they are protected particularly during natural disasters and armed conflicts. The initiative led to the creation of the MICIC Initiative Principles, Guidelines, and Practices, which emphasize the responsibility of states to not only take care of their own citizens living abroad, but also of foreign citizens living and residing in the country during crisis situations. The guidelines also recognize the challenges of these tasks and emphasize the necessity for co-operation between different actors.

The guidelines raise the need to develop crisis preparedness and action both during and after crises. The guidelines and their practical examples emphasize the participation and agency of migrants, targeted communication, non-discriminatory assistance, and co-operation with actors that are important to different communities. Immigrant and refugee children are extensively considered in both the guidelines and their practical examples. The guidelines have been published in the official languages of the UN.

Source: Guidelines to Protect Migrants in Countries Experiencing Conflict or Natural Disaster, Migrants in Countries in Crisis (MICIC) Initiative, 2016.

THE POSITION OF CHILDREN IN THE LARGE-SCALE INFLUX OF MIGRANTS TO FINLAND

In 2015, an unprecedented number of asylum seekers came to Europe. Relative to the rest of Europe, Finland experienced one of the greatest changes to its immigration, as in a very short timespan the number of asylum seekers grew to more than ten times what it had been in previous years. Accommodation and reception spaces had to be found quickly for more than 32,000 people, of whom nearly a quarter were children. Out of these children over 3000 or around 40 percent arrived in Finland unaccompanied. (Finnish Immigration Service 2021)

In addition to the reception capacity of Finland being stretched to its limit in 2015, societal discontent at the refugee situation also grew quickly. Molotov cocktail attacks directed at reception centers were one unfortunate example of how the situation escalated and affected social stability and security. These attacks also targeted reception centers which housed children (Nironen 2016). In the recent Government Report on Internal Security a large-scale influx of migrants to Finland is not seen as a threat in and of itself, but it is considered to potentially lead to widespread confusion and danger not only to migrants but also to the social balance of the recipient society (Finnish Government 2021). The situation in 2015 showed signs of this kind of progression.

According to the officials who participated in this study, in 2015 the number of child migrants appeared small in comparison to the number of unaccompanied adults, and especially children migrating with their parents were likely to receive little attention. The accommodation did however aim to consider the needs of families with children, and the professionals consulted for this study described housing as one of the most important factors for the well-being of families in exceptional circumstances.

In the best-case scenario, the environment of a reception center can bring families the feeling of security they need:

"Even though we provide an institutional place of residence, families get a sense of security from there being help available and we are able to observe the situation. Even though our staff are not babysitters, parents know that the staff is still watching and observing the children and it brings a sense of security to the environment." **– Nanna Mäkelä, Oulu Reception Center**

"Every one of us observes and takes notes. The children here are definitely monitored. We quickly get to know where a child has been and whether the parents are taking care of the child." **-Kaisa Kantola, Oulu Reception Center**

Pelastakaa Lapset

PHOTO'S SAVE THE CHILDREN

Another important aspect of children's well-being is determined by the possibilities reception centers have to answer the special needs of children and families. For example, in Finland the medical needs of children are relatively well seen to already during their time in reception centers. Finland also has specific reception units for unaccompanied minor asylum seekers, in which it is possible to consider the special needs of these children. However, since there are few centers specifically for families with children, families are placed in the regular reception centers for adults. This brings its own challenges to offering families with children equal services in all reception centers, including recreational activities for children. School-aged children are often able to go to school during their time in reception centers, but younger children are only rarely able to participate in early childhood education. Reception centers themselves are also rarely able to provide regular activities for children who cannot yet go to school. According to Kaisa Kantola, crisis and family worker at the reception center in Oulu, the situation was different during the previous large-scale influx of migrants to Finland in the beginning of the 1990s:

"During the war in the Balkans many children migrated to Finland. In 1992 I began working as a refugee assistant organizing activities for children and we had a non-stop club for children, with many groups every day. We had wide-ranging co-operation with educational institutions and the apartment buildings [of the reception center] were all occupied by families with children. At the time we were so lucky that some of the children were even able to go to day-care"
-Kaisa Kantola, Oulu Reception Center

During the large-scale influx of migrants to Finland in 2015, non-governmental organizations, churches and volunteers had an important role in supporting the authorities. For example, non-governmental organizations and other actors helped to set up reception units and support arriving migrants. Amidst the situation in 2015 Oulun vastaanottokeskuksen tukiyhdistys ry, an association to support the reception center was set up which with the help of its volunteers offered assistance such as food and clothing. The association is still continuing its work and close co-operation between the authorities and the organization have guaranteed that operations have run smoothly.

"The association has clear ground rules for what they take care of and what we take care of. Their volunteer work has been especially helpful when we have been busy. They organize free-time activities while we take care of our official duties".
-Nanna Mäkelä, Oulu Reception Center

In the fall of 2015, Save the Children Finland began supporting the Finnish authorities by setting up reception units for unaccompanied minors in the cities of Oulu and Espoo. That fall during the acute stage, the organization also set up a tent in the yard of the Pasila police station in Helsinki which offered a place to rest, activities, baby food and clothes for children who had migrated either alone or with their families and were waiting for registration. In December of 2015, the organization set up their first Child Friendly Space in the reception center in the city of Lahti, Finland (see 6.3). During 2015-2019, a total of five Child Friendly Spaces were set up and they operated in seven reception units that housed children with families.

"The Child Friendly Space was highly beneficial as our own resources were so limited. The Space has been missed after it closed."
-Nanna Mäkelä, Oulu Reception Center

According to our study respondents, the large-scale migration of 2015 led to positive developments in considering children in the field of refugee reception. An example of this is utilizing the Let's Talk About Children approach in reception settings (Valiola et al. 2020). This approach has helped to solidify the systematic consideration of children as part of the basic every-day activities of an increasing number of reception centers.

"Introducing the Let's Talk About Children approach to the field has been a step in the right direction. It is offered to all families with children. Usually families have only received help once

there has been a problem in the family, but now they receive support earlier. This is facilitated by systematically hearing out all parties, which enables us take appropriate measures sooner."
-Nanna Mäkelä, Oulu Reception Center

Additionally, since the events of 2015, the number of crisis and family workers in different reception centers has gone up to a total of thirteen. Prior to this, only one such professional was employed, at the refugee reception center in Oulu. (Interview with Kaisa Kantola and Nanna Mäkelä 21.6.2021.)

According to the survey respondents from the Finnish Immigration Service, consideration of children and families can be seen in many ways in the preparedness planning of the whole agency. Respondents highlighted the need to increase housing capacity for minors as well as the preparedness to set up new units. Children and families have also been considered for example in social and health care services as well as in the education and volunteer support for asylum seekers. During the COVID pandemic reception centers have also aimed to consider the needs of families with children in regards to quarantining and isolation spaces. In some centers the special needs of families with children and support for parents have been provided to some extent through regular remote meetings with professionals.

Pelastakaa Lapset

3.4 CHILD PARTICIPATION IN CRISIS PREPAREDNESS AND AFTERCARE

"… older children from pupils' councils' within schools are giving their propositions or suggestions on what could be some of the main risks within schools regarding safety, security or preparedness actions. When we work on that risk assessment and preparedness plan, they are giving different inputs… In this case we have had ground root level of participation of children."

- Dragan Licanin

The right of children to participate in and affect the planning, implementation, and assessment of matters that affect them is based both on Finnish national legislation as well as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. According to experts on child participation, development work that invites children to participate is beneficial when the matter is important to children, taking part is pleasant, and the views of children are actually taken into consideration. At best, working together with children on development can lead to ethically sustainable and better services and decisions. Participation can also give children experiences of feeling capable and a wish to affect change in the future. (Kalliomeri et al. 2021, 208–209)

During the time of this study, there was much discussion on the participation of children in decision-making and action in Finland. Inviting children to participate was also seen as important from the points of view of security and preparedness. Inviting children to participate and hearing their voices is important so that decision-makers and authorities know what needs to be considered when it comes to children and would be better equipped to recognize their needs. In the field of security in Finland this need has already been recognized when it comes to youth.

In 2015, the UN Security Council approved a resolution on youth, peace, and security (2250). Until this point young people had primarily been seen as either the cause or victims of conflicts, but it was felt that this view needed to be expanded. The resolution admitted that "young people play an important and positive role in the maintenance and promotion of international peace and security." (2250 Nuoret, rauha & turvallisuus 2021)

THE 9 PRINCIPLES OF CHILD PARTICIPATION

The quality of child participation is guided by the following nine principles that have been developed in co-operation between the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child and international organizations. All action that children participate in should be:

1. **Transparent and informative:** children should be given understandable information of their right to express their views and have them be considered.

2. **Voluntary:** children should not be forced to express their views.

3. **Respectful:** the views of children should be treated with respect.

4. **Relevant:** topics of conversation should be relevant to the lives of children and children should be able to utilize their knowledge, skills and abilities.

5. **Facilitated with child-friendly environments and working methods:** environments and working methods should be adapted to the abilities and interests of children.

6. **Inclusive:** everyone should be offered an equal opportunity for participation, and children that face the risk of marginalization should be particularly encouraged to participate.

7. **Supported by trained adults:** the action of leaders should be knowledgeable and reliable.

8. **Safe and sensitive to risk:** child protection must always be a priority as participation can also include risks.

9. **Accountable:** children must be informed of how their views have been interpreted and utilized.

See e.g. Save the Children, The Nine Basic Requirements for Meaningful and Ethical Children's Participation. https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/node/19385/pdf/basic_requirements-english-final.pdf; Save the Children Finland, Lasten osallisuus. https://www.pelastakaalapset.fi/lapsen-oikeudet/lasten-osallisuus/

Finland is also preparing its own national program in order to carry out the 2250 resolution. Steps towards this have been taken for example through consulting young people and organizing surveys for young people between the ages of 15-29. From the point of view of preparedness and crisis tolerance the resolution is important as it aims to involve and consider young people as actors in decision making around security and peace. Adding possibilities for children to participate and improving their position can also decrease marginalization and the spread of extremism, as well as strengthen security. Finland already has a network implementing the resolution which includes a number of Finnish organizations such as Allianssi Youth Exchange, the Finnish Scouts, The UN Association of Finland, and the Finnish YMCA. (2250 Nuoret, rauha & turvallisuus 2021)

Supporting the participation of children of all ages and from all backgrounds is both possible and important. Despite this, children do not always have equal possibilities to participate. Adults are more likely to listen to the views of those children with whom it easy from the adult point of view to communicate with. (Kalliomeri et al. 2021, 210) There are more and more tools that different actors can use in planning for and helping different kinds of children to participate (see Pelastakaa Lapset 2021a). For example, Save the Children Finland has strong know-how on how to advance the participation of all children. The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child has also developed guidelines on child participation.

Among organizations, particularly child advocacy organizations, there are starting to be examples of child participation in preparedness planning and action. Save the Children North West Balkans has worked together with the Ministry of Security of Bosnia and Herzegovina to develop the participation of children and young people around questions of security for example in the school environment. Slightly older children and young people have founded councils in schools, in which they consider and give recommendations from their own points of view. This allows children to talk about what they perceive to be the greatest risks and threats to schools, and what should be considered in preparedness work and discussions around security. The suggestions of the young students are then used as one source of information in the development of preparedness plans. This is a way to include young people at the grass-roots level of discourse around preparedness. This participatory work of the Balkans office has also been used to some extent in local refugee work. (Interview with Save the Children NWB, 27.4.2021, Dragan Licanin)

Pelastakaa Lapset

TOOLS FOR PARTICIPATORY DISASTER MANAGEMENT IN SCHOOLS

Schools can face different kinds of sudden crises, but these crises can be prepared for. The international Save the Children has created the Participatory School Disaster Management Toolkit (2015), which guides schools on how to develop their own crisis preparedness plans. The aim of the schools' crisis preparedness is to protect children, staff, and education itself from potential crisis situations. It includes the assessment and planning for physical safety, general crisis preparedness and securing the continuity of education.

The Toolkit includes five stages for schools to follow when planning their preparedness. Each school should have a working group with the main responsibility of preparedness planning, organizing drills and sharing information with the rest of the school community. It would be beneficial for the group to include staff, students, parents, and other people who belong to the everyday life or environment of the school. After the working group has been established, it is recommended that preparedness planning follows the following stages:

1. **Know Your Dangers:** In this stage it is key to assess and plan. Working groups can consider potential risk factors and crisis situations as well as assess the safety and preparedness of their school to respond to different situations. The group should also prepare for risk management and the continuity of education in crisis situations and think about potential co-operation with other actors.

2. **Reduce Your Dangers:** In this stage it is crucial to ensure the safety of the school environment by addressing physical and environmental risks both inside the school and in its immediate environment. This can include for example structural maintenance, ensuring fire safety, and addressing local infrastructure and environmental threats.

3. **Prepare to Respond:** This is the stage for the working group to stockpile response provisions and practice. The group can also improve their early warning systems, develop detailed operating procedures, and organize drills for the whole school such as fire drills and other evacuation drills, which can be used to further develop the school's preparedness plan.

4. **Plan for Educational Continuity:** This is the stage to plan for potential alternative school environments and modes of instruction, such as the possibility and practical implementation of remote learning. In addition to teaching in exceptional circumstances, the group can think about utilizing different methods for providing psychosocial support, consider the use of the school building as a potential emergency shelter and plan for how to return to school after a crisis.

5. **Monitor, Share and Reach Out:** In this stage the working group assesses its own work up until this point and how to continue this work. It also shares its plan with the school community and other relevant actors.

6. **Implement Your Plan:** In the case of a crisis the school implements its plan ensuring the immediate safety of children as well as their safe family reunification. After the crisis the school reports the damage it has suffered and if necessary relies on the alternative school environments or modes of instruction, until the school is safe to return to.

Source: Petal Marla et Al. (2015). Participatory School Disaster Management Toolkit. Save the Children.

3.5 ACCURATE AND SAFE INFORMATION FOR CHILDREN IN CRISES

"It is difficult. Sometimes I feel like the authorities don't know how to word things clearly for adults either on what is going on and why." **- Tove Ruokoja**

Communication is an important aspect of crisis preparedness and response. The coping and preparedness of parents, children and families is facilitated by real-time and appropriate information. Receiving quality information has a protective quality on both individuals and society. It is important to consider correctly targeting information and making sure it is easily comprehensible. Information should be provided in a sufficient number of languages and through multiple platforms while also keeping children in mind.

In crisis situations it is important that authorities consider interaction and proper targeting of their messages. Communication should also consider the children involved in the crisis, and describe the situation in a way they can understand. Though this is seen as the responsibility of parents, it cannot be left solely to them. (Interview with Tove Ruokoja 5.5.2021) Recognizing children as recipients creates its own challenges for crisis communication.

Other survey respondents also noted the significance of communication. One Finnish official emphasized the importance of accurate information. They also noted that nowadays it would be beneficial to consider hybrid threats and the spreading of disinformation. It would be important to provide accurate information in different languages and to spread it efficiently through different channels and platforms. By accurate information the participant refers to information that aims to protect society and its values, such as human dignity and human rights. The participant believes that different authorities and organizations should work closely together in areas such as communication and preparedness for phenomena such as hybrid threats. It is clear that through social media and communication networks the threat of disinformation and hybrid threats also affects Finnish young people and children. It is important to be able to receive and find accurate and trustworthy information. The importance of communication is accentuated in crisis situations, and due to the potential for disinformation and harmful influencing, it is important to be able to recognize false information and offer channels for reliable information.

Pelastakaa Lapset

Schools, daycares, and families have an important role in sharing information with children. Even young children pick out information from conversations and the news, but they cannot always understand that this imagery may be coming from abroad. News can feed into children's fears for their safety and for their loved ones. Children are also susceptible to their social environments and can sense the feelings of adults and the atmosphere of conversations taking place around them. Adults can help children process things that are frightening or difficult to understand by explaining what is happening on the news. Confusing or difficult topics should not be pushed aside because they are not thought to be suitable for children. Adults should indeed talk with children about their own views on matters, because children also search for information independently. This way adults can address potential misunderstandings and misinformation. (Poijula 2016)

Through social media, children and young people face an increasing amount of content of different kinds and quality in their everyday life. This is important to keep in mind. The Finnish "72 hours" website considers the safety of children on the internet. Adults who are close to children should show interest in the websites that children visit and the different forms of social media they use. It is important to make time for safe conversations about the internet and social media so children have the opportunity to tell adults if something they have seen or experienced online has concerned them. (72 tuntia 2021)

Parents can help their children process things through information and education. Difficult or polarizing topics such as immigration can be challenging for children to understand. It is helpful to explain the backgrounds of issues to children and discuss them together. Parents should also provide their children with information on and models of aid work going on both nationally and internationally in order to develop their children's empathy and trust in the future. (Poijula 2016) In Finland child advocacy organizations have given guidance to both adults and children on how to face different kinds of crisis situations (see e.g. The Mannerheim League for Child Welfare 2020; Save the Children Finland 2021b).

Communication and education are seen as an important part of developing resilience and reducing the effects of risks. Good communication can affect how people cope after a traumatic experience (Turunen & Punamäki 2014, 477–478). Before a crisis one of the most important tasks of communication is to strengthen the crisis preparedness of communities and society by providing people with information and skills. Communication can also help to create connections, strengthen networks, and maintain dialogue on security. Schools can offer children information on different kinds of crisis situations and tell them about common psychological reactions to crises. In addition to schools, the capabilities and skills of parents to talk to their children about risks and preparedness can be developed. Social media campaigns can also have a significant role in educating children and young people. Despite this, there has thus far been almost no empirical research on the effects of communication on the behavior of children. (Midtbust et al. 2018, 1–3, 8)

ENSURING ACCESS TO INFORMATION IN CRISIS SITUATIONS

An important part of the preparedness of households to disruptions is ensuring the possibilities for people to receive information. According to the Finnish "72 hours" guidelines, households should have spare batteries or a portable phone charger as well as a battery-operated radio. The primary source of information is the internet, provided that communication links are functioning. The Finnish Broadcasting Company YLE, the communication channels of municipalities, as well as electricity and water companies are seen as reliable sources of information. However nowadays long power outages can quickly become a challenge to receiving information, as they disrupt network connections. In these instances, a radio can work as a means to receive timely information. (SPEK & Huoltovarmuusorganisaatio 2019; 72tuntia 2021) It may also be possible to receive information from regional preparedness centers.

4 UNDERSTANDING CHILDREN'S REACTIONS AND WORKING WITH CHILDREN IN CRISES

"Children often get lost behind the problems of adults. It is important to always remember that children are children. When working with children, providing accommodation to children, in considering their physical needs and all other situations, one must remember that one is working with children and that children see the world differently from adults."

-Kaisa Kantola, Oulu Reception Center

4.1 CHILDREN'S ABILITIES TO HANDLE CRISES AND COPE WITH DISRUPTIONS

How children react to disasters or crises depends on exposure, individual and familial protective factors, and the community.

Children are often one the most vulnerable groups in crisis situations. During their formative years, high levels of stress and learning to cope with that stress can be a difficult process. Therefore it is especially important to quickly identify crises and help children through them. However, children's needs are not often fully understood by adults and children's symptoms may be overlooked as less severe than the child actually feels or is able to describe. How children react to disasters or crises depends on exposure, individual and familial protective factors, and the community. In a difficult or traumatic situation, children react according to their age and developmental level, which affect their ability to face frightening experiences. In crisis scenarios children are especially vulnerable because their abilities to process the situation are still limited. Children's dependence on their parents, as well as feelings of separation anxiety, can also increase during a crisis. (Poijula 2016)

In addition to children's limited autonomy and ongoing development, the developmental tasks of different age groups add to the vulnerability of children in a crisis, because the completion of these tasks can be compromised in a crisis situation. This can have notable effects on later development, life course, as well as the development of one's identity. (Lundberg & Wuermli 2012, 17–18)

Crises are especially challenging for children who have experienced previous traumatic crises or other losses, have a history of symptoms related to anxiety or depression, or who face other challenges, such as trouble at school. **(Davidhizar & Shearer 2002, 28).**

These specific vulnerabilities of children have also been found in a study done in Finland after the school shootings at Jokela and Kauhajoki (Haravuori et al. 2010, 2661). According to child psychiatrist Heidi Parviainen, around half of psychiatric symptoms in adults start before the age of fourteen, which is why even relatively modest investments by the society in the well-being of children and youth would be worthwhile. In addition to being beneficial to the children themselves, through potentially reducing mental health problems in adulthood, these small measures can have long-term effects on the economy. (Interview with Heidi Parviainen 26.4.2021)

In the materials reviewed for this report, the vulnerability of children in crises appears most often as an increase in psychological symptoms. Traumatic events such as crises can lead to symptoms of traumatic stress in children, especially if the event has been life-threatening or included the risk of serious injury (Murtonen et al. 2012, 23). There are a few distinct features of the traumatization of children and youth. Traumatization can lead to disturbances in a young person's development. This can present itself as challenges in gaining independence, forming one's identity and developing one's personality, which in turn can have long-lasting effects on the child's life. There are often similar factors behind a child displaying psychological symptoms and being particularly vulnerable in crisis scenarios. Indeed, the risk of children showing signs of psychological symptoms are the highest for children who have prior traumatic experiences or have faced other adversities. The risk of psychological symptoms after a crisis is also higher among children who have previously suffered from psychological symptoms, or do not get enough support from their loved-ones or wider social circles after a crisis. Displaying symptoms is also slightly more common among girls than boys. (Haravuori et al. 2010, 2661) The effects of previous traumatic experiences on the ways in which children react to crises is emphasized in the research material especially in relation to refugee children.

After a crisis, the number of children who get severe psychological symptoms depends on how traumatic the crisis was, and the type of support children received after the crisis (Davidhizar & Shearer 2002, 32). It is especially important to identify the children and youth at highest risk for psychological symptoms after a potentially traumatic crisis, so as to support their mental health and ability to function as much as possible (Turunen & Punamäki 2014, 484). This can, however, be challenging as some of those who need help may not know how to or may not want to take full advantage of the support offered to them (Murtonen et al. 2012, 28). It is also worth noting that the crisis can lead to the loss of a feeling of security and trust in life even for those children who have never faced similar challenges before. In these instances, the child must find new ways to feel happy and safe, which can prove to be difficult, especially amidst a prolonged crisis. (Davidhizar & Shearer 2002, 31)

Certain reactions are common in children of all ages when faced with a crisis. These reactions can include a fear that the crisis will happen again, worrying about loved ones and changes in sleep-patterns. (Dybdal & Melin 2013, 43) Despite these similarities, children go through different stages of development, and in crises or other kinds of stressful events, children will react in ways that are characteristic to their stage of development (Poijula 2016). Additionally, among children and adults alike, a person's previous experiences will affect the ways in which they react in crisis situations. After a crisis, children should be supported in finding age-appropriate ways to express their emotions (Davidhizar & Shearer 2002, 30)

Even though children and youth may react in different ways to stress and traumatic experiences (Pace 2000, 654), several studies have shown that certain reactions are more common to specific age-groups after a traumatic experience.

FROM ZERO TO EIGHTEEN: UNDERSTANDING DIFFERENCES

The following examples are largely based on the age-groups described in Save the Children's Psychological First Aid Manual for Child Practitioners (2013). Different authors draw the lines between these age-groups slightly differently. Children may also move from one developmental stage to the next at different ages, and it is common for older children to react to crises in ways that are most typical for younger children (Pace 2000, 654). Despite these individual differences, dividing children into general age-groups helps us to understand what kinds of reactions are typical to children. This also makes it easier to recognize children whose behavior differs notably from that of other children of the same age.

0–6-YEAR-OLDS

When small children are faced with a traumatic situation, it is common for them to fear that they will be separated from their parents or guardians, which can result in more clingy behavior than normal. This is why safe and comforting physical proximity can help a child to calm down after a crisis. Small children may also cry more, or be more irritable, fearful, or demanding. There can also be changes to children's eating or sleep patterns, and children may have trouble concentrating. Additionally, it is common for small children to regress to younger behavior, such as sucking their thumb or bed-wetting. A child may also react to the traumatic event by playing less, more aggressively or through repetitive play focusing on the event. (Pace 2000, 654; Poijula 2016; Dybdal & Melin 2013, 43–44)

Because of their limited language skills, 0–3-year-olds often communicate through body language. These children have limited understanding of the event, which is why physical closeness is particularly important in making the child feel safe. Even slightly older children will have a limited understanding of events and will not be able to fully understand the consequences of the event or other related matters, such as the finality of death. The child is, however, aware of his or her immediate surroundings and will closely monitor the reactions of their parents and others nearby to the situation at hand. (Dybdal & Melin 2013, 43–45)

7–12-YEAR-OLDS

In addition to the aforementioned reactions, it is common for school-aged children (in Finland 7-12-year-olds go to elementary school) to behave more poorly at school or at home, and to be more likely to fight and get angry. Children may also withdraw from others, become numb or experience depression, anxiety, or guilt having to do with the event. Children of this age may gain new and irrational fears or fixate on the thought of saving and protecting others. (Pace 2000, 654; Poijula 2016) The experience can also negatively impact the child's memory and concentration, and children may be more likely to complain about physical symptoms commonly associated with stress. It is also common for children to feel or act in a confused way, experience a decline in fitness and feel reluctant to go to school. Children in this age-group have some understanding of cause and effect, risks and vulnerabilities, but they typically still see the world through dichotomies such as good-bad and some will still have a very vivid imagination. Children in this age-group are likely interested in facts and as with other children, it is recommended to speak with them about the traumatic events. It is also important to note that the children may blame themselves for the events due to their limited understanding of what happened. (Dybdal & Melin 2013, 45–46)

13–18-YEAR-OLDS

Teenagers are able to examine the crisis from both their own point of view as well as that of others. Because of this, they often feel deep sadness and concern for others after the event. It is still common for teenagers to have a self-centered outlook on the world, which can lead to feelings of guilt for not being able to help others during the crisis. On the flip side, young people may become more self-centered in ways that negatively affect their relationships with others. Risk behavior may also increase in young people as a result of the crisis. Risk behavior can manifest itself in many ways, including self-destructive thoughts and action, aggressive behavior, and alcohol abuse. Teenagers can also suffer from flashbacks and are likely to avoid situations and things that remind them of the traumatic event. The traumatic event can also have a dramatic effect on a teenager's worldview and lead to feelings of hopelessness around thoughts of the future. These changes can lead to teenagers being more likely to openly question their parents and the authorities, and to rely on their friends and peers for support. (Pace 2000, 654; Dybdal & Melin 2013, 46)

4.2 PSYCHOLOGICAL FIRST AID AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SUPPORT

"When a person overcomes a difficult setback, they become more mentally flexible and capable of overcoming future challenges. It is not a matter of simply going back to the way things were before the crisis, because a crisis changes everything, including a person's sense of self and future prospects. Society also plays a great part in how people overcome a crisis. Individuals are not solely responsible for their own mental flexibility, but instead much depends on the ways in which the person's surroundings create space for them to experience recovery."

-Pirjo Niemi-Järvinen, Save the Children Finland

Support provided immediately after a crisis can significantly decrease, or even prevent, long-term negative effects on mental health. This is why it is vital that after a crisis, professionals actively seek out children and families affected by the crisis, instead of expecting them to proactively seek out support services. Professionals and other adults working with children after crises should be cognizant of the ways in which their own expressions of emotion affect the children around them. For example, the visible fear or anger of adults can amplify the negative effects of crises on children. After a crisis children may also fixate on the thought that they should have known how to act differently during the event. Because of this, it is especially important to emphasize to children that they are not responsible for the crisis no matter what they thought, said or did before, or during the event. (Davidhizar & Shearer 2002, 28–31)

Psychological first aid is an internationally recognized, simple and effective way to offer support to both children and adults in crisis situations. It helps to prevent both short- and long-term symptoms, and aids in the recovery from the crisis. (Dybdal & Melin 2013, 10.) In psychological first aid, people are given non-intrusive support, and their needs and worries are assessed. Its primary objective is to ensure the basic needs of victims, which include food, water and information, as well as the feeling of being heard and comforted. (Poijula 2016) Psychological first aid also includes guiding the person in need to available assistance and protecting them from any further harm that may occur from the crisis or while being assisted (Dybdal & Melin 2013, 40).

"Psychosocial support" is another key term in the field and serves as an umbrella term for all action aimed at

minimizing the negative effects of disruptions and other exceptional situations on people. These negative effects can include psychological and social strain, as well as health issues. (The Finnish Ministry of Social Affairs and Health 2009, 12) The IFRC Psychosocial Centre defines psychosocial support as community-oriented action which can include psychological first aid, support groups and Child Friendly Spaces, as well as providing information on topics such as common reactions to crises. Psychosocial support can be provided by both volunteers and professionals. (IFRC Psychosocial Centre 2018.)

Finnish authorities have also recognized the importance of psychosocial support. For example, in 2019 a ministerial working group recommended that all people should be able to receive psychosocial support in case of a sudden, traumatic event. Support should be provided close to home and for a long enough period of time. When well organized, psychosocial support can help both communities and individuals to cope with the potentially traumatic event. (The Finnish Ministry of Social Affairs and Health 2019) In Finland, there is a law on the provision of psychosocial support and services in the municipalities which dictates that necessary support and services must be provided to victims of disasters, as well as their families and rescuers. Schools are required to make their own crisis preparedness plans with the assistance of mental health professionals specializing in children and young people. Additionally, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland as well as the Finnish Red Cross offer psychosocial support services after crises and disruptions. (Castaneda et al. 2018, 274; RedNet 2021)

There are many ways to offer children psychosocial support in practice. For example, according to our interview with experts from the office of Save the Children in the North West Balkans, the organization, with the help of their partners, used various methods of providing psychosocial support to children after widespread floods in 2014-2015. These methods included Child Friendly Spaces and HEART, in which psychosocial support is offered through different kinds of art activities.

Peer support and participation can be a key feature of psychosocial support for child victims of crises. Finland has adapted the Norwegian model of crisis psychology, in which meetings and gatherings are organized for the victims of disasters. For example, in 2004, the Red Cross organized peer support groups led by psychologists for the child victims of the tragic bus accident in Konginkangas, Finland, and Finnish victims of the tsunami in Thailand. In these support groups children were able to process the traumatic events. The same collective model was also used after the school shootings in Finland in 2007-2008. (Poijula 2016)

Child participation can help children process and overcome difficult experiences. The positive effects of participation have been particularly visible amongst unaccompanied minors. Allowing young people more opportunities to interact with their social environment and letting them participate in everyday tasks has been found to be the best way to enhance their well-being in the long run. (Garoff et al. 2019, 14)

According to Heidi Parviainen, the psychosocial development of children can be supported in crises especially through ensuring the continuity of everyday life in a way that is "as similar as possible" to normal. It is equally important for children that their family-life functions as usual. This is accentuated in crises where families are forced to leave their homes. It should be ensured that during and after a crisis as many aspects of children's daily life as possible would remain the same, and new aspects should be turned into new routines. Parviainen stresses that routines provide children with a feeling of safety and belonging. This also partially applies to parents. In addition, the feeling of belonging to a certain place also has a notable effect on the psychosocial well-being and development of both children and adults. (Interview with Heidi Parviainen, 26.4.2021)

4.3 THE IMPACTS OF AN IMMIGRANT BACKGROUND ON CHILDREN'S REACTIONS TO CRISES

"All in all, this group of children and parents with a refugee background needs to be recognized and paid special attention to, because they have completely different risk factors"

- Heidi Parviainen

According to international research, immigrants, and refugees in particular, often have more mental health problems than the rest of society (Castaneda et al. 2018, 26). Child psychiatrist Heidi Parviainen believes that this is why children with a refugee background are in many ways at a distinct disadvantage when a crisis occurs (Interview with Heidi Parviainen 26.4.2021).

Around half of refugee children arriving in Finland experience psychological symptoms, and this is more common among younger children (Castaneda et al. 2018, 193). A notable proportion of children with a refugee background have experienced tragic events such as war, torture, the loss of loved ones or extreme violence, which can lead to psychological symptoms. Additionally, leaving one's home country and the losses that come with it can be a risk to one's mental health in and of itself. It has also been found that discrimination, deprivation and the difficulty of finding necessary services in Finland negatively affects the mental health of immigrants in Finland. (Castaneda et al. 2018, 27, 50)

Unaccompanied minors are a particularly vulnerable group. Traumatic events children face before, during and after their journey add to the children's risk of symptoms related to post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, and anxiety. According to a study done in the United States, symptoms caused by these kinds of traumatic experiences are already typical in unaccompanied minors upon arrival to the country. They are also significantly more common among unaccompanied minors than among children who move to the United States with a guardian. (Dash 2020, 84–85) Recognizing psychological symptoms in children should be prioritized particularly in crisis situations (Interview with Heidi Parviainen 26.4.2021).

"It should be highlighted that disruptions can be particularly challenging to children with a refugee background due to their past experiences, which can lead to their having stronger reactions or withdrawing into themselves. Complete withdrawal from the situation can also be a way of reacting. I think children with a refugee background are a group whose mental health should be observed by professionals to assess how they react to the crisis. Perhaps they also have a greater need for safety and security." **-Tove Ruokoja**

Perceptions of mental health differ from one culture to another. In many cultures mental health problems are stigmatized, shameful and not talked about. In some cultures, the concept of mental health can appear completely foreign. Somatic symptoms can, however, be seen as acceptable ways to show that one's bad feelings and psychological symptoms. (Castaneda et al. 2018, 69, 275)

Thus far there has not been any research showing that immigration itself necessarily has a negative effect on the mental health of immigrant children and young people. For example, merely studying the psychiatric symptoms of children is not a sufficient way to prove a causality between immigration and mental health. This is because immigrant children are often compared to the children in the country they arrive in, instead of children that have remained in the country of origin. Indeed, it would be far more telling to compare immigrant children with those who have stayed behind, for these two groups share the same point of departure when it comes to their mental health. In fact, immigration can be beneficial to a child's mental health, even if their mental health still differs from that of the receiving country's children after they have settled into the new country. Indeed, studies show that immigrant children and native Finnish children share the same typical causes for mental health problems, including the socioeconomic situation of the family, and that these shared causes affect immigrant children's mental health more than immigrations itself. (Kerkkänen & Säävälä 2015, 26–27) It is also important to note that native Finish children can also have previous traumatic experiences that come up in a new crisis situation.

"It is important to remember that our non-immigrant population also has children with traumatic experiences. Traumatic experiences should not be associated with a single group, but instead we should direct our attention more generally to the ways that people react in crises, and whether they have any previous experiences that could be triggered during a new crisis." **-Tove Ruokoja**

4.4 SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS IN WORKING WITH AND SUPPORTING CHILDREN WITH AN IMMIGRANT BACKGROUND

In cases of sudden crises and disturbances, it is important to find the necessary resources and know-how to ensure psychosocial and other care for children with immigrant backgrounds. Assisting these children can, however, cause uncertainty if there is a lack of culturally sensitive know-how among the people helping children.

In general, both the general public and for example social work professionals in Finland have rather limited experience of immigrants and their cultures. There are, however, clear regional differences. (Poikonen, 2018 1–2) A study done among Finnish social workers in child protection services found that knowledge on how to work with immigrant clients was limited compared to the need for such know-how. In fact, only one in four of the interviewed social workers had received specialized training in working with immigrant clients. Additionally, around two thirds of the interviewed social workers said they felt less competent to work with immigrant clients than Finnish clients, and the same amount found work with immigrant clients to be more challenging than other work. (Pösö 2015, 28–29) However, since the large-scale influx of migrants to Finland in 2015, more and more of those working in the field have gained experience in receiving and supporting asylum seekers and people with a refugee background.

Cultural differences themselves are seldom an obstacle for interaction. Instead, the most significant obstacles between professionals and people with an immigrant background are language, time and the lack of the professional's openness and courage. (Castaneda et al. 2018, 275) For instance, psychologists have long been discussing the effects their own values and prejudices have on their interactions with immigrant clients. In the United States, as in Finland (see Hiitola, Anis & Turtiainen 2018, 6), the polarizing conversations around immigrants are bound to affect the interaction between professionals and immigrant clients in both directions. Therefore, it is important that those working with immigrants regularly question their own prejudices and attitudes towards immigrants, and the ways in which these affect their encounters with clients (see also Hiitola, Anis & Turtiainen 2018, 18). This questioning is especially important when working with immigrant children. For example, unaccompanied minors are often particularly vulnerable due to strong prejudices. (Dash, 2020

86–85; see also Poikonen 2 ,2018.) The American Psychological Association suggests that culturally sensitive psychology should include knowledge of different cultures, culturally sensitive practices and a positive attitude towards clients from different cultures (Dash 86 ,2020).

There are many courses and materials available on cultural sensitivity and cultural competence for professionals working with immigrants. It has been found, however, that some of these courses and materials are based on the otherness of the different cultures and present these cultures in a negative light. (Poikonen 2–1 ,2018) Recurring experiences of otherness can lead immigrants to distrust the authorities. Immigrants, and particularly refugees, may also have previous negative experiences with authorities, which is why it is especially important to work on building trust between the authorities and people with an immigrant background. (Poikonen 49 ,2018; see also Pösö 32 ,2015) Immigrant children or their parents may additionally have a negative view of mental health work, which can lead them to deny their need of specialized support (Garoff et al. 8 ,2019). In her interview, Parviainen emphasized that social support and the feeling of belonging are especially important when it comes to children with an immigrant background. Feeling heard or feeling like someone wants to engage with and them and help them are just a few examples of how this can be achieved in practice. (Interview with Heidi Parviainen 26.4.2021)

As with all children, challenges with communication can arise while working with immigrant children in crises (Davidhizar & Shearer 30 ,2002). Children often understand and take in information differently from adults. As a result, communication with children should not only be in the native language, but also put in a way that is easy for children to understand. Children's developmental stage, as well as the ways in which children and their families are used to searching for and taking in information, influence how information is conveyed to children. (MICIC Initiative 33–29 ,2016) As children are still developing their reading skills, it is particularly important to share information verbally. In immigrant families the same can also apply to adults. For example, in many refugees' countries of origin, such as Iraq and Afghanistan, on average up to half the population is illiterate (UNESCO Institute for Statistics 2017). This is also reflected in Finland, where immigrants are statistically more likely to be illiterate than members of the native population.

The importance of being able to receive information in one's native language was also stressed in our interview and survey data. For example, child psychiatrist Heidi Parviainen stated that, "To begin with, it is important that there is information in children's mother tongues on what is happening and what to do." Similarly, one of the respondents representing a non-governmental organization stressed that in addition to information in one's own language, multilingualism should be present in the form of multilingual helpers in crises.

The COVID pandemic has given rise to discussions in Finland on whether the necessary information has been accessible enough and provided in a sufficient number of languages. In the area of mental health, immigrants and their different native languages have been taken into account to some extent. For example, the Helsinki University Hospital (HUS) works in collaboration with Mieli Mental Health Finland and Finland's Slot Machine Association (RAY). Together they have collected information on the effects of immigration on emotional well-being and mental health on their Mental Hub website (Mielenterveystalo). The website has information in multiple languages including Finnish, English, Arabic, Kurdish, Somali, Russian and Dari. (Mental Hub 2021) Mieli Mental Health Finland also offers information and services in multiple languages, including a crisis helpline in Arabic.

When there is no information available in one's native language, people often use interpreters. For example, one of the survey respondents working with immigrants at a Finnish government agency stated that at the agency, information is always provided in the clients' own language, but conversations are carried out with the help of an interpreter. Many professionals working with immigrant children have however described the various challenges in overcoming language barriers and working with interpreters. Understanding a client's language can also be an ethical question, such as in the case of psychologists. When bilingual therapists are not available, using an interpreter is often a necessity. In these instances, it is important to monitor both the competence of the interpreter and one's own skills as a mental health professional to seamlessly integrate the interpreter into the meeting with the client. (Dash 88–87 ,2020) Similarly, Finnish social workers in child protection services have stated that working with interpreters requires some getting used to and that it can be challenging to find interpreters, particularly on short notice or when working with rare languages. (Poikonen 35 ,2018)

Ensuring the professional skills of an interpreter can be especially difficult, as interpreters have different backgrounds and levels of education. The Finnish social workers in child protection services mentioned in their interview responses that they do not always trust the interpreters to correctly translate all of the professional terminology or sections of law. They were also occasionally worried that the interpreters simplified things causing misunderstandings for both the social workers and the clients. Some of the social workers tried to consciously prevent these misunderstandings by being as clear as possible and simplifying where necessary. The social workers also feared that the interpreters did not fully comprehend their obligation of confidentiality, for example due to their lack of professional training. An additional problem was that some of the clients did not trust the interpreters' confidentiality and feared that aspects of their personal life would spread to their acquaintances through the interpreter. Some of the social workers saw this fear as founded and general distrust towards the interpreters' confidentiality affected the formation of a trusting and confidential client relationship. (Poikonen 2018, 35–36, 56–57)

In addition to the availability of interpreters, our interview and survey data also clearly expressed a need for further knowledge on how to take cultures into account in crisis response. In practice, this has been achieved particularly through the use of cultural interpreters or mediators. Different European Save the Children country offices have made good use of cultural mediators in their refugee work. For example, our interviewees from Save the Children Italy and North West Balkans stressed that there should be as many cultural mediators as possible in crisis response, and that they should also continue to be involved in crisis preparedness planning in the future.

"Language interpreters are important, but cultural mediators are the ones who can not only translate but be aware of how our behavior and what we said and so on really impacts the person we talk to. Sometimes we perceive each other's actions differently if we are coming from different backgrounds. So cultural mediators and these kinds of community facilitators are key in not only overcoming language barriers but also other barriers."
- Dubravka Vranjanac

"It is not possible to imagine a child protection intervention for unaccompanied children, or children with their families with an immigrant background, without a cultural mediator. The cultural mediator is an added value to our child protection intervention. They are crucial at the beginning of the intervention, but also in the medium to long-term. . . . According to our experience, it is crucial to ensure the presence of a cultural mediator and a legal expert in the basic composition of a child protection mobile team operating in an emergency or in a refugee or migrant crisis."
– Niccoló Gargaglia

In addition to considering different languages and cultures of immigrant children and parents, it is also important to consider the different ways and avenues for sharing information that will be the most accessible to these groups. For example, social media in one's native language, local spiritual communities and immigrant organizations can be more effective avenues for disseminating information than the national mainstream media or other information channels that are popular among Finns. Effective communication may also require seeking groups of immigrants that are commonly the hardest to reach, such as undocumented migrants, immigrants living in remote or secluded areas, and those migrants who have been left out of social networks. (MICIC Initiative 2016, 29, 32)

5 THE ROLE OF CHILDREN'S SUPPORT NET-WORKS, INCLUDING FAMILIES, IN CRISES

Children and youth have their own special support networks that they rely on both during crises and after them. During a crisis children look to their support networks for protection, feelings of continuity and a sense of solidarity. Therefore, professionals should learn to take advantage of children's familiar support networks during crisis situations (Turunen & Punamäki 2014, 479, 483).

Children's families are an important part of their support networks. According to one of the governmental professionals surveyed for this study, it is particularly important that families are kept together in crises and that the nuclear family and familial relationships are safeguarded. All crisis response services should aim to ensure family connections, and Finland should have common principles that dictate the minimal requirements of how families with children should be considered in preparedness planning.

Children's friends and familiar adults, such as teachers, are also a key part of children's support networks. Additionally, support can be received from daycare, school, youth workers, the church, and hobbies (Murtonen et al. 2012, 28; Poijula 2016). It is worth noting, however, that all of the above can influence the coping of children either positively or negatively. Providing support through multiple channels to children, families, the community and their support networks all positively affect the child. (Poijula 2016) For example, after hurricane Katrina, social capital was seen to be beneficial to the coping of families and individuals. Communities provided protection and support, gaps were bridged between social classes, and help, information and food were distributed through shared connections. (Rapeli 2017, 38–39)

Both the child's environment and individual traits affect how the child copes with crises. Research shows that children's resilience can be developed by strengthening their support networks and external resources, but also through supporting their different individual strengths (Esquivel et al. 2010, 17). The adults caring for children are a particularly important part of this support, as they affect the development of children's resilience. It is important for children to feel that they can open up to adults about their feelings. It is, however, the adults' responsibility to start the conversation and continue it on the child's terms. Children should not be forced to talk, and they should be protected from the "horror stories" of adults. (Poijula 2016) It is important to not distort the facts while talking to children.

"It is important to always tell children the truth, and to do so in an age-appropriate way."
- Pirjo Niemi-Järvinen

Support from friends and classmates is also important to many children. For example, in a study done after the school shooting in Jokela, Finland, the majority of children surveyed said that support from friends had been helpful to their coping. Older students were more likely to receive support from friends. (Murtonen et al. 2012, 27)

In the event of a crisis, it is also important to note that groups such as immigrant organizations can reach out to and support children. A review of the activities of immigrant organizations in Finland found that the main focus of many of the organizations was supporting children and young people. The organizations support children in many ways, including their own after-school clubs, hobbies, and mother-child activities. (Ekholm 2015, 28–29)

In addition to organizations, churches and spiritual communities play a significant role in supporting children and families both during and after crises. For example mosques in Finland function in many roles, offering not only guidance and a space to practice religion, but also mediation in family conflicts. In difficult circumstances people who do not consider themselves to be in the least religious may also turn to mosques for support. Religion and personal belief thus do not solely define what kinds of services people use or what kinds of people seek help from mosques. Despite the role mosques play in supporting people, co-ordination between mosques and the Finnish authorities has proven to be challenging to all parties and there are currently no permanent or structured communication or support mechanisms between them. Though creating such mechanisms would not be unproblematic, Finnish mosques wish for increased co-operation in order to increase the well-being of Muslims in Finland and strengthen their integration with the rest of society. (Al-Sharmani et al. 2018, 68–69, 71)

5.1 SCHOOLS SUPPORTING CHILDREN

School staff can have an important role in supporting children, especially in situations such as school shootings in which the traumatic event has taken place within the school. For example, after the school shooting in Jokela, Finland, two-thirds of surveyed students said they had received support from school staff and that they had found this support to be helpful. (Murtonen et al.2012, 27) The role of teachers and other staff is often particularly important to children after a crisis because they serve as familiar and trustworthy adults. School staff can also help to stop rumors from spreading after a crisis. (Turunen & Punamäki 2014, 483)

Schools and daycares also play an important role in monitoring the behavior of children after disasters. Staff can actively help children to cope, identify children in need of additional assistance and direct children to available follow-up treatment. Schools can also function as an avenue for parents to get information on how to help their children cope with crises. (Poijula 2016) School staff, however, should not act as therapists for children, and staff should also be given professional psychosocial support as well as time and space to work through the traumatic experiences caused by the crisis (Turunen & Punamäki 2014, 483).

After a crisis, schools can also provide "educational first aid" as was the case in Norway after the attacks in Oslo and Utøya. Both attacks had indirect effects on children and young people, for example through the media. Soon after the incidents, teachers were given directions on how to approach students at the beginning of the school year after summer holidays, how to facilitate return to school routines as well as different ways to process and understand the events. For example, the directions advised teachers to speak of the event as a terrorist attack instead of a mass killing. It was also recognized as a strength that teachers at schools had the know-how on how to shape discussions around the tragedies based on the children's age and level of development. Educational first aid was seen as necessary for helping students understand the context and proportions of what had happened. Through memorial services schools aimed to help students look to the future as well as focus on the positive, such as a sense of community and the success of the crisis response. The availability of information was seen as a significant part of processing and moving forward from the events. Indeed, processing facts can be seen as a part of emergency aid. Talking about the events at school is important for coping with crises, and children should also be reassured that their reactions to the situation are natural and will pass. (Poijula 2016)

SUPPORT GIVEN AFTER SCHOOL SHOOTINGS IN FINLAND

Immediate psychosocial support was provided to students after the school shootings in Jokela and Kauhajoki, Finland. In Jokela, crisis workers were available at the Jokela church and elementary school, and additional support was given by youth workers. Most of the support was given on an individual basis and Finnish Red Cross psychologists offered help and coaching to students as well as their families and school staff. Students were also supported through peer support groups that were organized the week after the incident. Support was given to over half of the students at Jokela. Most of the students accepted assistance and felt it was helpful. Support was offered to slightly more female than male students, and most often to those who had been most affected by the event. (Murtonen et al.2012, 24–25)

At Kauhajoki support was given in several stages: immediately after the event, during the following weeks and finally through a five-month period focusing on empowerment and normalization. The aim during the stage of immediate support was to offer the victims of the traumatic event a safe space to talk about their experience. Another aim of this immediate stage was to recognize those in need of more individual support. The police and other authorities also set up a centralized location which offered guidance and real-time information. (Turunen & Punamäki 2014, 477–478)

The crisis showed that it is necessary to have easily accessible support and clear, reliable information about the situation. Communication with family should also be arranged as soon as possible. After the shooting at Kauhajoki, the most traumatized students were directed to the local health center for evaluation. Right from the start the Kauhajoki crisis response included volunteers from the Finnish Red Cross, church employees and local youth workers. (Turunen & Punamäki 2014, 477–478)

For the two weeks following the shooting at Kauhajoki, all students participated in a joint program which aimed to gradually ease them back into their normal curriculum. A joint event was also organized for parents and family members of the students, in which school staff and the police talked about what had happened and crisis psychologists presented the most common symptoms of trauma and different ways to get help. This so called "psychoeducation" was also given through the local media. (Turunen & Punamäki 2014, 482)

The psychological follow-up at Kauhajoki was designed around the national recommendations of the time. Municipalities were required to organize crisis aid and psychosocial support, based on the conception of stages that follow a traumatic event. These were based on recommendations and guidelines by the WHO, scientific consensus and the experience and knowledge of trauma psychologists. Early intervention was guided by the five essential elements of trauma intervention identified by Hofboll (et al. 2007). These elements are: 1) restoring and maintaining a sense of safety; 2) calming and offering support; 3) a sense of self- and community efficacy; 4) connectedness and the feeling of connectedness as a part of natural networks of healing; and 5) awakening hope for the possibility of recovery. (Turunen & Punamäki 2014, 477)

Key aspects of the acute aid and support in Kauhajoki included strengthening natural social networks, providing information, normalizing the situation and common symptoms and restoring a sense of security. The survivors' understanding of their behavior, reactions and experience of the event was strengthened by providing psychoeducation on common psychological reactions. Group activities and voluntary meetings organized slightly later showed that the victims of the shooting had a natural need to share their feelings, discuss the events and create a joint narrative for the shared experience. (Turunen & Punamäki 2014, 479, 483)

ONLINE YOUTH WORK SUPPORTS CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN THEIR EVERYDAY LIFE AS WELL AS IN CRISES

Netari is an online club for children and young people maintained by Save the Children Finland. Netari's work is based on a variety of services and a platform for confidential discussions. The services offer young people both one-on-one conversational support and group activities with other children and young people. Services are safe and reliable, and they are only open to users under supervision of the Netari staff. All volunteers, hourly workers and youth workers of Netari's municipal partners have been specially trained for the work. Currently the services are only available in Finnish.

Netari services include a one-on-one support chat, a group chat on the Discord-server, Netari-evenings in the online Momio game, Netari's personal Minecraft-server as well as a Twitch stream channel. Children and young people can talk about their issues and feelings on all of these platforms. The services are mostly aimed at young people between the ages of thirteen to eighteen. In practice, young adults and younger children can also join the services, but older adults are directed to other services.

If necessary, Netari services can focus on discussing previously agreed-upon topics, but usually the most important topics come from the children themselves. Especially the one-on-one chats tend to focus on personal crises and changes in the children's lives. These topics can include crises related to body image and gender, the health of the young person or their loved ones, loneliness, anxiety, depression, self-harm and suicidality, being a victim of a crime, bullying or other violence, online or in-person harassment, and issues relating to school and studying. In addition to different problems and personal crises, many young people want to discuss normal teenage issues such as crushes, homework, music, anime, and makeup. It is important to young people that they can also use the services without having to talk about a specific personal crisis.

Netari can also open an additional CrisisChat if a sudden local, national or global event makes children and young people feel anxious or shocked. CrisisChat is a part of Save the Children Finland's crisis preparedness work aimed at preparing for crises that would affect children and young people in Finland. CrisisChat was last opened in 2019, after a knife attack at a vocational school in Kuopio, Finland. Netari's services were expanded during the COVID pandemic

(For more information, see Save the Children Finland, Netari -online youth club.
https://www.pelastakaalapset.fi/en/our-work-in-finland/youth-activity/netari-online-youth-club/)

Pelastakaa Lapset

5.2 DIFFERENT KINDS OF FAMILIES IN CRISIS SITUATIONS

Modern families take many different forms, and their differences should also be considered in crisis situations.

Families can include step-parents, other caregivers, and step-siblings. Divorced families have become more common, and children may move between more than one home. Gender distribution within families has become more diverse as well, and gender roles have changed. Families are increasingly from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds, which adds to the diversity of family structures. Not all families are regularly in contact with service providers or in the sphere of healthcare, and these families may be difficult to reach in crises. Actors in the medical field may also have an inadequate view of the diversity among families and their cultural backgrounds. This can lead to a situation in which services favor traditional family structures. For example, ethnic minorities may be proactively reached later than others or left outside the scope of assistance. This is also partially the result of a lack of multilingual professionals and problems in finding interpreters. (Haga et al. 2015, 2)

During large scale disruptions, children's dependence on their parents increases. Families and parents also have an important role in their children's coping and adapting after a crisis. Families often feel the need to stay together and protect their members during a crisis. If family members are separated, there is a great need to find them and reunite the family. "In the immediate aftermath of a disaster, families will look out for themselves and only after that offer help to others." Therefore, it is particularly important to connect children to their family members in instances such as a large-scale disaster. In this reunification process the youngest and most vulnerable children should be prioritized. (Poijula 2016) For example, after an earthquake in Italy in 1980, people whose family members had survived were located and saved faster than those who lived alone. This was explained by the fact that family members were able to locate their relatives from the ruins of buildings. (Rapeli 2017, 38–39)

Crises with their complicated causes and effects can have a wide impact on the well-being and coping of children and families, as well as on family dynamics.

For example, in terrorist attacks and other acts of violence, victims include not only those directly targeted, but also the people who are close to them, such as family and eyewitnesses. After the attack in Utøya, Norway in

2011, the majority of the victims' families received early and proactive crisis help. Families with divorced parents as well as other families that differed from conventional norms were overrepresented among the parents and families who were not reached after the attack. Those who later studied the crisis response at Utøya suggest that in the future more focus should be put on the variety and complexity of families, so that all families could be better reached during a crisis response. (Haga et al. 2015, 1–2, 5)

In crisis situations, immigrant families and children face many of the same challenges as Finnish families. They can however face additional challenges that often have to do with language barriers, cultural differences, or their immigration history. Immigrant families often come from collective cultures, in which the family unit is seen as wider and more important than in Finnish homes. The values and conditions for raising children of immigrant families can also differ from those of Finnish families. Potential examples of this include differences in the gender roles within families and between siblings. It is of course important to note that as a group, immigrant families are extremely varied, which is why making generalizations is difficult. (Poikonen 2018, 7, 40)

Several studies have shown that children of immigrant families often learn the new local language and culture faster than their parents because of exposure at school. Therefore, children may have to take on more responsibility and work as an interpreter for their parents in crisis situations, especially if their parents have weak language skills. (Esquivel et al. 2010, 10) Children working as unofficial interpreters between their families and professionals can, however, change the position and roles between parents and their children. This in turn can cause problems within the family. (Poikonen 2018; 42, 46) In crises, children may also end up translating difficult and personal adult matters that they would normally be shielded from (Castaneda et al. 2018, 129).
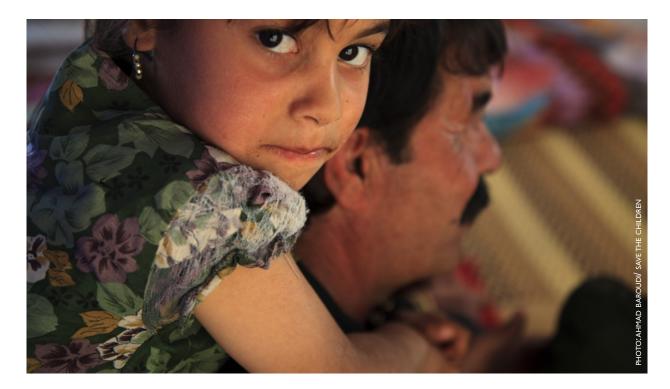
"I do think it is important to note that immigrant children may often be used by their families as interpreters. And in other ways too they may have to take on more responsibility in crises than children from families that speak the language as their mother tongue." **–Merja Rapeli**

The position of different kinds of families both in crisis situations and normal times is affected by how others react to them. For example, professionals working with families in places such as maternity and children's clinics, pre-schools and schools can have different stereotypes of immigrant parents which affect their work together. These stereotypes can include immigrant parents being problematic, not knowing how to adequately support their children, strict parenting, and even physical abuse of the children. According to various studies, these negative expectations of professionals can make immigrant parents feel insecure in meetings with professionals and lead immigrant parents to question their parenting. Negative stereotypes also lead to a lack of trust and communication issues for both the professionals and the parents. Additionally, due to recurring feelings of being categorized, the fear alone of this categorization can lead to a sense of powerlessness and a lack of trust among immigrant parents, even if the professional in question does not have any negative stereotypes going into the meeting. (Hiitola & Peltolta 2018, 135–137)

"When only what are considered Finnish ways are defined as correct, there is a clear case of othering based on culture. Rejecting other ways of being thus questions not only the clients' skills and capabilities as members of society in general, but also in the context of raising children, especially as parents" **(Hiitola & Peltola 2018, 131).**

On the other hand, positive experiences between immigrant parents and professionals can have a positive effect on parents and bring them new confidence and information. According to one study, immigrant parents do not expect professionals working with families to know their culture, and instead wish to be met in a way that acknowledges their individuality. Additionally, parents and families feel better when they feel respected and sense that their special circumstances are taken into consideration. Professionals being sensitive to the differences between parents was also highlighted as a prerequisite for an equal and respectful meeting. (Hiitola & Peltolta 2018, 135, 140) These conditions should also be highlighted in crisis situations to ensure that children and families of all kinds are treated equally and with respect.

It is worth noting, however, that not all children have the support of a family in crisis situations. For example, unaccompanied minors do not have the support of their families. Children can also feel particularly anxious if their family members have died or have stayed in the country of origin and continue to live in a dangerous environment. (Poijula 2016)

5.3 PARENTS AS A SUPPORT AND MODEL IN CRISES

From a child's perspective, parents act as models for coping in crisis, and the ways in which they react and adjust to the situation effect children (Poijula 2016).

[Especially in crisis situations] Most children take their emotional cues from their parents. A parent may be a significant source of comfort, support, and reassurance—or conversely, of anxiety and fear."
(Davidhizar & Shearer 2002, 28.)

In the midst of a crisis, children are often especially comforted by the physical closeness of their parents, gentle touch and talking warmly. Children can also find familiar objects such as stuffed animals or a security blanket comforting. When talking to children, parents should avoid unrealistic statements or lies, as well as making promises that they have no control over. Instead, parents can calm children down by using phrases such as "You do not need to be afraid," "I will take care of you" or "Everyone is doing the best they can to help us." (Davidhizar & Shearer 2002, 30)

After a crisis, children can be supported in many different ways. Parents should explain and talk about the traumatic event with their child and make sure that the child has the space to ask any questions about the event. It is important that the child can talk about their feelings around the event openly and without fear of judgement. Children should not feel expectations of "strength," and instead it should be emphasized to children that they are loved and supported. Parents should also remember that it is normal for children to act in abnormal ways and display regressive behavior after a traumatic event. In these instances, parents can support their children for example by letting them use a nightlight or sleep in the same room as the parents or an older sibling until the child feels comfortable sleeping alone again. If, however, the child's symptoms continue long after the crisis, the child may need professional help. (Pace 2000, 654)

After a crisis it is important that children trust that their everyday life will go on. Families should do their best to continue doing the nice things they did before the crisis, such as family dinners or outings, even in situations where one of the parents is gone or has died, or family dynamics have in other ways changed due to the crisis. Doing nice and familiar activities brings children not only routines, but also the feelings of stability and safety.

(Davidhizar & Shearer 2002, 31; Pace 2000, 654) In her interview Heidi Parviainen also emphasized that after life-altering and potentially traumatic events such as leaving one's home or home country, families should be able to continue to have a private family life that is as similar as possible to how they lived before the event. This also supports the coping and development of children. (Interview with Heidi Parviainen 26.4.2021)

Several Finnish and international studies have shown the importance of a family's support to children and young people who have faced traumatic events. This support is important both during and after a crisis. (Murtonen et al. 2012, 24) For example, in follow-up studies done after the school shootings at Jokela and Kauhajoki, students brought up that support from family and friends had been an especially beneficial and comprehensive form of support for them after the events (Haravuori et al. 2010, 2667; Murtonen et al. 2012, 27). There were, however, differences in the amount of support received from family and how helpful this support had felt to young victims. Though most of the young people had received support from their family, those who lived with both of their biological parents had received the most. Surprisingly, those who were the most traumatized or symptomatic got less support from their family than others, though some of them had received additional support from their extended family. (Murtonen et al. 2012, 27–28) Children and young people who do not receive support from their family after a crisis are among the most vulnerable to suffer from psychological symptoms after a crisis (Haravuori et al. 2010, 2661). This is why we cannot draw a one-way cause and effect between a lack of support from parents and the psychological symptoms of their children (Murtonen et al. 2012, 28).

It is important that in addition to support from their parents, children and young people are offered enough professional help and support from outside their families.

Pelastakaa Lapset

5.4 SUPPORTING PARENTS AND PARENTING IN CRISIS SITUATIONS

"Children are members of families, and of course every event will affect them. If children's parents are affected, the children do not need to be direct victims themselves, but can still be indirect victims who suffer from the effects of the crisis." **- Tove Ruokoja**

In large-scale crises a child's family members or even their whole family can be injured or die. At the same time their home or belongings may be destroyed, or their parents may wholly or partially lose their ability to function due to injury or disabilities. Psychological reactions can also negatively impact parents' functioning. (Poijula 2016) Additionally, an economic crisis or economic problems resulting from other crises can have direct impacts on the atmosphere or functioning within families. Economic stress can also weaken the capabilities of parents to take care of their children, and the pressures put on parents add to the risk of parents developing emotional or behavioral issues. (Lundberg & Wuermli 2012, 16)

Crises affect not only the health of parents, but also their ability to provide their children care and safety. This is why early help can decrease after-effects and support families' abilities to cope on their own. Paying attention to the well-being of parents is an important part of crisis help, because parents can better take care of their children when they have the energy to take care of themselves. (see. e.g. Poijula 2016) In fact, it is crucial to the well-being of children that parents get professional guidance on how to support their children after a crisis. If children's parents are too traumatized after a crisis to support their children, other family members or familiar adults can be encouraged to offer the children support. (Davidhizar & Shearer 2002, 28, 31) This is especially important because it is typical for the needs of children to not be recognized if their parents are not able to recognize or face their own distress (Poijula 2016).

 Even the indirect effects of difficult situations can be very challenging to parents and guardians and can be a threat to their well-being. Crisis help, however, often only concentrates on the victims of crises, paying little to no attention to indirect victims such as families (see. e.g. Poijula 2016). For example child psychiatrist Heidi Parviainen stresses that it is important to remember the importance of supporting parents when discussing children in crises (Interview with Heidi Parviainen 26.4.2021).

"I have noticed that in many situations perhaps even too much attention is paid only to children. I think that the younger the child, the more important parenting, the well-being of parents and even the existence of parents are to the recovery of children. This is often overlooked in these discussions. . . . I think that if we forget about parenting in these situations, we are really forgetting about the foundation of the family and trying to cover it with something else. Supporting parents is absolutely crucial."

-Heidi Parviainen

Parviainen emphasizes that in crisis situations parents worry the most about how their children will cope and how the crisis will affect their children's growth and development. She finds it contradictory if the state organizes different kinds of services in a way which reduces the possibilities of parents to support their children. These situations can be particularly stressful and even marginalizing for parents. Parents should be supported so they can support their children, which in turn increases the wellbeing of both parents and children in challenging circumstances. Parviainen suggests that one of the ways this could be facilitated in practice is through the implementation of Child Friendly Spaces, which offer parents help, support and space to be with their children. (Interview with Heidi Parviainen 26.4.2021; see 6.3.) One of our survey respondents highlighted that that there should be professionals or sufficiently-trained volunteers to help support parents and their parenting in crisis situations.

In Finland, there has also been talk about the fact that there are parents whose parenting skills are insufficient. This can lead to polarization in crisis situations. For example, according to Parviainen, the exceptional circumstances caused by the COVID pandemic may have led to added strain on parents and intensifying problems inside families. Naturally this affects the position of children in crises. Some social services might also be exclusionary, which can be particularly taxing for certain groups such as immigrant parents, who will have to spend time and energy every day to "figure out and fight" the system. For example, reception centers might be located far outside of cities, with poor amenities and limited public transportation. (Interview with Heidi Parviainen 26.4.2021) It is also worth noting the challenges caused by parents' previous experiences. For example, families with a refugee background may have lived in uncertain and unsafe circumstances for a long time. This can lead to parents being stressed and overwhelmed, which in turn can weaken their parenting skills or their ability to observe their children's need and the situation around them. (Poijula 2016)

The abilities of society, communities and individuals to respond to crises are, indeed, affected by things such as social capital and societal fairness. Social capital refers to the abilities of individuals, families, and communities to reach their goals in their everyday lives. Social capital builds trust and enables the collection of information and resources which are crucial in crisis situations. (Rapeli 2017, 38) In Finland, efforts are being made to support social capital and the opportunities of families. For example, during the COVID pandemic support from different organizations to families has provided an economic buffer, allowing them to focus on other things at least for the short term knowing their basic needs can be met.

As noted above, not all families are reached equally and introduced to available services. For example, after the terrorist attack in Utøya, divorced and immigrant parents were more likely to be left outside of the scope of available help and services. Medical workers may also not be accustomed to working with or know how to appropriately consider the diversity of modern family structures. In Norway, however, relatively many families were helped, due in part to Norway's system of municipal crisis help. Norwegian municipalities also have their own crisis workers for families in instances of smaller crises, such as a sudden death. Other actors can also help the authorities in reaching families and children who may otherwise be left outside the scope of care and assistance, ensuring the best possible and most comprehensive care. (Haga et al. 2015, 5–7) In Finland, crisis support is offered in a variety of ways including opening channels for conversation such as crisis help lines.

6 CO-OPERATION BETWEEN FINNISH AUTHORITIES AND OTHER ACTORS, AND THE ROLE OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

6.1 CO-OPERATION BETWEEN ACTORS

According to many of the interviewees and survey respondents both from governmental and non-governmental organizations in Finland, developing co-operation further could lead to better recognition of the strengths and knowledge of different actors in crisis preparedness. For example, a representative of the Finnish Red Cross noted that co-operation between actors in the field has improved, but that "expertise could be utilized more widely." Preparedness planning ideally includes different voices, viewpoints and observations from multiple areas of expertise. According to a Finnish government official, the importance of co-operation among different actors stands out especially in crisis situations affecting children. In these crises, services for children and young people such as schools, daycare, and youth services should be seen as part of the larger picture of services as a whole. The same respondent also emphasized that a good starting point for those working in preparedness would be to understand that crisis situations affect different kinds of groups in different ways. Actors organizing a crisis response should consider whom the crisis will affect and in what ways, and then tailor their response accordingly.

The interview and survey data also included concrete examples of co-operation between different actors in the field of preparedness. For example, a representative from the Finnish Immigration Services noted that their preparedness includes co-operation and practical training and drills with other governmental actors and interest groups. Depending on the situation, this co-operation has included joint projects, preparedness related to the COVID pandemic and information security, and different kinds of threat assessments. The importance of co-operation was also highlighted in our interviews with specialists from the different European country offices of Save the Children. For example, Save the Children Italy aims to increase co-operation through meetings with local authorities and by working at the national level with the Ministry of Education.

In Finland, non-governmental organizations can help to fill gaps in official government services. NGOs can also develop and innovate activities and models that statutory services may not be able to provide.

One of the representatives of a Finnish governmental organization stated that collaborative structures in Finland are quite good compared to other countries. Overall, representatives of governmental agencies found that non-governmental organizations complemented or supplemented their work. Tove Ruokoja noted that in Finland organizations and the authorities have always worked together during emergencies, and she sees the role of non-governmental organizations as extremely important in this regard (Interview with Tove Ruokoja 5.5.2021).

"We would not be able to manage without NGOs, as they provide important additional support, also at the national level…" **-Tove Ruokoja**

Similarly, a respondent from the Finnish Immigration Service stated that organizations often complement the authorities well. In addition, the respondent brought up co-operation with adult education centers as being particularly important. Overall, the respondents highlighted the importance of respecting the professional skills and work of others. In co-operation it is equally important to maintain confidentiality and make sure that professional values and principles carry on into the practical work of collaborators. Highly skilled and trained volunteers were also seen as a significant part of co-operation and crisis response.

Merja Rapeli also thinks it is important that NGOs be considered in the preparedness work of the Finnish authorities and that co-operation would be beneficial to preparedness planning. She believes that improving co-operation would require structural reforms, whereby government officials would be better briefed by organizations about the situation in the field. For example the Finnish Ministry of Social Affairs and Health has asked organizations for their views on a situation and taken this information to the Government. Rapeli finds it to be a positive development that different organizations and the government share situational awareness, and says the existence of an NGO representative on the Security Committee is a great step in the right direction. Further developing co-operation between organizations and the authorities would, however, require considering new co-operation structures. One example of this is the proposed Health and Social Services Reform, where instead of services being organized by local municipalities they would be organized at a wider regional level. "I believe that in a crisis we [Finnish authorities] need better structures for how to get situational awareness, and therefore we need to improve our ways of co-operating with different organizations. I think that even at the level of the Finnish Government we could have more active interaction with non-governmental organizations." (Interview with Merja Rapeli 5.5.2021; See Health and Social Services Reform 2021.)

Structures also came up in the comments of some of the other interviewees and survey respondents working for the Finnish authorities. According to one of the respondents, there has not been much long-term, systematic co-operation between organizations and the authorities: "I don't know if there has been any co-operation based on shared plans of how these situations should be faced together. It is not clearly in our structures. Perhaps it has been more ad-hoc co-operation, in which everyone has been able to say 'that went well,' but when the situation has passed, no-one has had the time to stop and think about how this co-operation could be developed in the future."

Other challenges to co-operation can include confusion around the roles of different actors and insufficient knowledge about what others do or can do. The field of non-governmental organizations is wide, and many actors offer different kinds of services. It is also worth noting that not all organizations have their own preparedness plans. For example, educational organizations, such as The National Defence Training Association of Finland (MPK), do not have official preparedness plans. However, preparedness is an integral part of MPK's work in the areas of defense, security skills and preparedness training. MPK also develops the activities of the Finnish military reserve and the preparedness of the national defense districts.

Many representatives of both governmental and non-governmental organizations stated that for co-operation to be successful, everyone should know their role. These roles should be planned ahead of time so that they do not have to be divided once a crisis has started.

According to a representative of the Finnish Red Cross, there should be a clear time and place where both gov-

ernmental and non-governmental organizations discuss how to divide their roles and responsibilities in national crisis response. Another representative of a Finnish organization stated that co-operation becomes easier as actors get to know each other and their roles in different kinds of crisis response. The respondent also noted that trust is built through openness. Agreeing on and developing this co-operation has been somewhat slow and difficult due to limited resources, but also because the field of non-governmental organizations in Finland is wide and fragmented. Additionally, Finnish authorities often have their own distinct channels and structures of co-operation.

For example, Rapeli notes that preparedness co-operation between Finnish organizations and authorities may have been partially impacted by the need to share confidential information and regulations around confidentiality. A government official also emphasized that principles of confidentiality need to be understood and followed in practice. According to Rapeli, however, these rules and regulations should not be allowed to become a barrier to working together. Organizations also have the responsibility to work towards co-operation both with the authorities and within their own networks and structures. (Interview with Merja Rapeli 5.5.2021)

"Another thing is that because there are many non-governmental organizations, we have certain organizations and structures of organizations that we work with so as to include the field of organizations more widely. This way we are including more than just one or two organizations. I also think it's important that organizations co-ordinate with each other, share situational awareness and co-operate in preparedness. But of course the authorities can also help by supporting organizations in defining the terms of their co-operation."
-Merja Rapeli

Another key challenge to co-operation has to do with changes in leadership and the political climate. Some European interviewees noted that changes in local government or the political climate can have a negative effect on whether organizations are included in preparedness planning and channels of communication. One interviewee brought up, that getting into wider preparedness planning is not always easy. The local Save the Children country office made its way into the national emergency response system, but their relationship with authorities or individual policymakers can change relatively quickly. Co-operation runs smoothly when there is open dialogue, and the organization is offered the chance to organize training and drills. However, both policymakers and those in charge of preparedness may change, and the position of organizations can vary depending on these changes. Nevertheless, the official goal is to continue co-operation between organizations and the authorities. The interviewee emphasized that it is important to try to be at the right place at the right time. Co-operation can also be made more difficult by conflicts of interest between different actors in the field.

"Frankly speaking, an emergency is a stage. It's a stage because it moves a lot of money and a lot of visibility. From the politician's commercial [perspective], when an emergency occurs, there is a [spot] light straight there. And in that scenario, everybody thinks about their own interests and their focus on saving lives and providing the most immediate support, because this is what is going to be seen by the rest of the population.." **- Federico Cellini**

There can also be great regional differences within countries. This was emphasized especially by the European Save the Children interviewees. According to one of the interviewees, crisis response in general has seen positive developments, but co-operation between the local Save the Children office and the authorities differs greatly depending on the municipality. In some cities co-operation works relatively well and non-governmental organizations are listened to, but in some cities experiences have been less positive. According to our research, these kinds of regional differences have not yet been studied in Finland.

REGIONAL PREPAREDNESS CENTERS

The tasks of regional preparedness centers (AVAK – *alueellinen valmiuskeskus*) are often based on the preparedness plans of municipalities, providing essential services and serving the needs of society and the authorities (Koulutusverkostohanke 2019, AVAK-kuvitus). AVAK is an action plan which has been adapted or is currently being launched in many municipalities and counties around Finland. There can be local or regional differences in the operation and implementation of AVAK, which can include differences in available services and actors involved in the work. Often the AVAK action plan aims to centralize the services of authorities and organizations in potential disruptions, so that services are available to local residents as quickly as possible from a single, central location. For example, a wide and long-lasting power outage could be a potential situation in which AVAK could be implemented. Everyday challenges to wellbeing, such as apartments losing their heating, can also cause a variety of problems for which residents may need outside help. The AVAK action plan has been considered to work well, because residents's lives are made easier when services are centralized, and assistance is more accessible. (Pelastustieto 2019)

The authorities can set up a regional preparedness center in a variety of circumstances, for example during prolonged water and power shortages caused by winter storms. In the preparedness centers people can receive information and directions on how to act in the situation, as well as practical help such as clean water, first aid, and food supplies. Preparedness centers can also be a place to get emotional support amidst the disruption, or simply be a place to charge one's phone.

A preparedness center is often set up in a space appointed by the municipality before a crisis or disruption occurs. These spaces can include municipal sports facilities, libraries or schools which provide sufficient space, possibilities for distributing food supplies, and preferably emergency electrical power reserves. When using schools, it should be noted, however, that schools are usually only free during weekends and school holidays. A preparedness center based in a school building should not cause any disruptions to teaching if the school is open, and students should not be exposed to the work of the preparedness center. According to the guidelines for setting up an evacuation center (Evakuiointikeskuksen perustamisohje

2015), considerations for choosing a suitable space can include making sure there are peaceful and separate spaces for resting and psychosocial support, first-aid, situational command, staff, as well as children and youth.

The AVAK action plan has been piloted in the region of Uusimaa, Finland, for example in Nurmijärvi, and South Karelia. Since 2018, South Karelia Social and Health Care District (Eksote) and the fire and rescue department of South Karelia have developed the work of their regional preparedness centers together with the municipalities, organizations, churches and residents of the region. Eksote's AVAK action plan includes various actors who support the local authorities such as Spiritual Care of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, the Voluntary Rescue Service Vapepa, the Finnish Red Cross, the Martha Organization, and Save the Children Finland. These actors carry out services based on their own basic tasks and demographics in the preparedness centers. (For more information, see Huhtamella & Sipilä 2021, 15-21)

Eksote's AVAK trainings and drills have shown that it is important to plan and practice for preparedness in ways that are as concrete and realistic as possible with authorities, organizations, churches, volunteers, and local residents. Each training session also teaches the participants something new about preparing for crises and disruptions. Practicing also guarantees that an appropriate response can be launched quickly and seamlessly when necessary. The purpose and location of the AVAK centers can also become familiar to local residents before potential disruptions occur if the residents - including children and families - are invited to participate in the planning and drilling of the response action.

A recent master's thesis on the activities of the South Karelia regional preparedness center found that the AVAK action plan was necessary and functioned well in responding to disruptions. The assessment was based on experiences from joint trainings and drills organized by the regional preparedness center. Such drills enable it to develop co-operation between the various actors, being sure to take into account the needs of clients. In actual disruptions there will be situations that cannot be fully anticipated even through comprehensive practice and planning. Nevertheless, the research showed that disruptions can be better predicted by ensuring that actors in the field know each other, have a shared understanding of key concepts and a joint action plan that has been practiced ahead of time. (Huhtamella & Sipilä 2021, 2)

Pelastakaa Lapset

PHOTO: ANNA LANKINEN / SAVE THE CHILDREN

At the South Karelia regional preparedness center, psychosocial support is offered by Spiritual Care of the Evangelical Lutheran Church and Vapepa volunteers. Psychosocial support includes taking care of the basic needs of residents, active listening, being present and building a sense of security. The need for support is evaluated individually and the wellbeing of residents is monitored. If necessary, acute crisis help can also be offered by the Eksote staff. (Huhtamella & Sipilä 2021, 35)

CHILD AND YOUTH FRIENDLY SPACES IN PREPAREDNESS CENTERS

Like adults, children and young people may have to spend several hours in preparedness centers for example in situations where their home has lost heating and they cannot get water, or roads are blocked. In some instances, children and families may also need temporary accommodation. Therefore preparedness centers should organize safe spaces for children and young people that have activities suitable for different age groups. These spaces should have space for play

and games as well as for resting, calming down and talking with safe adults.

In the AVAK plan used by Eksote, Save the Children Finland staff and volunteers build Child Friendly Spaces in preparedness centers for children and families. These are safe spaces for children that offer them a place to play and talk about the crisis or disruption, aiding their recovery. Child Friendly Spaces have received positive feedback from collaborators and families who have used them. (For more on Child Friendly Spaces, see 6.3.)

Pelastakaa Lapset

6.2 CHILD AND YOUTH FRIENDLY SPACES IN PREPAREDNESS CENTERS

Non-governmental organizations, such as Save the Children Finland, have to a growing extent developed their preparedness-focused activities. Child advocacy organizations can recognize the specific needs of children in crises and guide other actors and families on how to work with children in crisis situations. For example, in Italy Save the Children aims to be involved in decision-making and risk assessments in areas such as school safety. The organization acknowledges regional and local threats such as earthquakes, which can have significant effects on children if they occur during the school day. Save the Children Italy also aims to co-operate with local authorities and advocate for children at the government level. The success of their work, however, depends on the current political atmosphere. (Interview with Save the Children Italy, 29.4.2021, Federico Cellini) Other members of Save the Children interviewed for this study also mentioned their advocacy of children and co-operation with the authorities.

Preparedness at Save the Children North West Balkans concentrates on advocating for the position and prioritization of children in preparedness and risk management, building regional co-operation networks and building children's resilience and preparedness in case of catastrophe (Save the Children NWB). Preparedness planning and risk assessments are part of the regular tasks of the office. Plans are adapted annually based on current information and recent threat analyses. The office also has a working group that meets once a month to discuss, identify and evaluate risks and how to control them. These preparedness plans are naturally focused around children and children's needs in crisis preparedness. For example, evaluating potential effects on children and recognizing children's vulnerabilities are a part of preparedness planning. (Interview with Save the Children NWB, 27.4.2021, Dragan Licanin, Mirzeta Trnka)

In Finland, the COVID pandemic has further emphasized the importance of communication both in preparedness and crises themselves. Even so, the general population often has limited knowledge on how to act in crises. Part of the preparedness work of European Save the Children offices includes lobbying and educating, as well as making children and communities more aware of potential risks and how to prepare for them. For example, in the Balkans leaflets and posters have been translated into several languages, especially when they are targeting refugee children and parents. (Interview with Save the Children NWB, 27.4.2021, Mirzeta Trnka) In Italy, Save the Children has also aimed to raise general awareness of considering children in crises as well as the importance of children's rights and involving children in preparedness. Preparedness planning also tries to take into account the situation before the crisis and immediate aftermath of the event. (Interview with Save the Children Italy, 29.4.2021, Federico Cellini)

"We basically act on both sides to [educate] the population and at the same time to train the institutions to fill this gap. For example, we published a document that is a guideline for the inclusion of a child-centered-approach in the structure of emergency plan documents." **–Federico Cellini**

In Italy Save the Children distributes information on topics such as the psychological effects of crises on children. The organization also aims to direct the attention of authorities to other perceived gaps in taking children into consideration in preparedness and crises. Part of their national work also includes organizing training and courses, as well as developing the knowledge of authorities and other actors on issues relating to children. It has also been found in more local crises that taking children into consideration has been partially lacking, and the work of Save the Children in schools and communities has been happily welcomed. Save the Children Italy works with local networks in ways that are adjusted to local circumstances. (Interview with Save the Children Italy, 29.4.2021, Federico Cellini)

In Finland non-governmental organizations are a notable part of the comprehensive security of society, and they are seen as important partners to the authorities. Many of our survey respondents also saw a clear role for child advocacy organizations in national crisis response and the consideration of children in preparedness related questions. Many of the respondents found it positive and necessary that in recent years child advocacy

Pelastakaa Lapset

organizations had brought their expertise on specific issues around children in crises to the wider field of crisis preparedness and response. According to one respondent, an example of a practical role of child advocacy organizations in crises could be to support children and families during evacuation and offering psychosocial support. Preventive work and supporting those in vulnerable positions were also seen as a part of the role of these organizations.

Save the Children Finland organizes trainings such as the "Supporting Children in Crises" training modules. The active participation of child advocacy organizations in security sector training has also been seen as beneficial. Survey respondents from The National Defence Training Association of Finland (MPK) emphasizes the importance of Save the Children Finland's courses at regional preparedness centers (AVAK, see 6.1). One of the MPK respondents also said that the COVID pandemic had increased crisis preparedness and further strengthened their co-operation with organizations. This co-operation could be further developed through integrating different needs and possibilities in co-operation networks.

"Taking advantage of the knowledge [of child advocacy organizations] is important in different kinds of crisis situations, so as to offer targeted assistance to the target demographic and to guide other actors on how to work with this demographic."
- Satu Virtanen, MPK

The survey responses paint a picture of the networking between organizations and the importance of this network. The expertise of organizations was also recognized in many of the responses. From a child advocacy perspective, co-operation in preparedness between different actors was seen to be strong and motivating. According to some of the respondents, expertise around children has been an extremely important part of preparedness as a whole. For example, one Finnish official said child advocacy organizations are able to work in a fast and targeted way, filling possible gaps left by the public sector.

Preparedness is also a central part of the work of the Finnish Red Cross. Their work is guided by principles including recognizing those in the most vulnerable positions and lessening distress and suffering. This also includes children and families, as well as immigrant children and families, and the aim to keep families together. The Finnish Red Cross, for example, plans

THE FINNISH VOLUNTARY RESCUE SERVICE (VAPEPA) SUPPORTING FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN

Arsi Veikkolainen, Coordinator of the Finnish Voluntary Rescue Service (Vapepa), gave an example of a large fire in an apartment building in Finland, which led to large-scale evacuation. Many of the residents had multicultural backgrounds, spoke different languages and were vulnerable in various ways. Evacuees also included families with children.

In an evacuation, it is important to be aware of the needs of children and keep families together. A call was put out for people with different cultural and language skills, answered by volunteers and staff of the Finnish Red Cross (e.g. from reception centres), as well as those from the different organizations of the Vapepa network. After the fire a new Vapepa rapid response group was set up in the area that includes expertise on how to support and work with people with different cultural backgrounds. This work will also be expanded to other regions in Finland.

The Finnish Voluntary Rescue Service is a network of more than 50 organizations and other collaborators, and its main goal is to support the authorities in disruptions and crises. Most of the time Vapepa is alerted to find missing persons, but also to provide emotional support and assistance during evacuations. Vapepa volunteers work on land, on water and in the air. The work of the Vapepa network is organized and trained civic activity, which is voluntary and supports the authorities. Vapepa organizations work together to ensure that the know-how of each organization can be utilized in emergencies to help people in distress. In emergency situations Vapepa members manage their own activities. (Voluntary Rescue Service Vapepa 2021) Save the Children Finland joined Vapepa in 2019.

One of the findings of this study is the need for co-operation and coordination, and Vapepa can be seen as answering this need, for it enables the authorities to reach several organizations through Vapepa instead of having to contact them each individually.

on how to support children and families during evacuations. According to the Red Cross' Arsi Veikkolainen, Coordinator of the Finnish Voluntary Rescue Service (Vapepa), child advocacy organizations can broaden the knowledge and know-how of the Finnish Red Cross. Veikkolainen also believes that recognizing the perspectives of children is integral to the work of Vapepa.

In the survey and interview data, considering children was also mentioned in relation to evacuation centers. Children were not mentioned as their own group in the plans, but they were seen as part of the wider group needing assistance. Similarly, immigrant children did not have their own section in preparedness planning, but the needs of immigrant children were recognized. The development of communication as well as improving language skills and cultural knowledge were given as examples for how immigrant children had been considered in the work of evacuation centers. Child advocacy organizations could also support these activities.

Some of the respondents emphasized that child advocacy organizations should actively encourage discussion of important themes. One respondent said they had not seen the necessity of considering children in crisis planning and management until Save the Children Finland brought it up. Later the respondent's place of work had relied heavily on this expertise. Another respondent said that Save the Children Finland plays an important role in security work in the organizational sector, particularly from the perspective of supporting children. Save the Children Finland was also seen to have improved its communication around preparedness which had raised awareness of its work.

Expanding and solidifying the national preparedness of Save the Children Finland and other new organizations to the local level requires time and resources. Bringing together local elected representatives and existing volunteers requires well-led and active communication, group planning, networking, coordination, guidance, and training. For volunteers working with children and families, preparedness can be an unfamiliar concept, and it is not always a simple matter to get involved in preparedness or become aware of all the other actors involved. Local and regional differences should also be taken into consideration when determining the roles and responsibilities of volunteers in preparedness. It is also important to remember that volunteers working with children need professional guidance, training, and support during their work.

The need to further develop preparedness was recognized repeatedly both in the interview and survey responses. One survey respondent noted that there is a long way to go, and that the development of preparedness is a slow, ongoing process which must be done with limited resources. The respondent felt that the role of organizations and need for emotional support has grown, and that actors in the field were increasingly aware of them. Indeed, in the non-governmental sector in Finland, an increasing number of actors has begun to think about their own role and place in the chain of assistance.

Child advocacy organizations were seen as having an important role in the bigger picture of preparedness in Finland. Save the Children Finland has raised awareness of the needs of children in crises through their active advocacy and co-operation. This new-found awareness has been highly appreciated. This can be linked to the wider notion that different actors in the field of preparedness can complement each other and focus their work in areas where the know-how of other actors may be lacking. The work of Save the Children Finland has clear and concrete effects, but is also important in raising awareness and spreading information. Local associations have also asked for more concrete measures and better communication, which helps in clarifying opportunities and roles in the chains of assistance.

Some organizations also offer children and young people opportunities to get involved in preparedness planning and developing their own skills. For example, voluntary fire brigades have a program for young people which offers them opportunities to practice putting out fires and first aid. The Finnish Scouts offer children a wide variety of opportunities to practice different kinds of practical skills that can also be useful in crises and disruptions. The National Defence Training Association of Finland (MPK) offers young people over the age of sixteen introductory training in which youth get the possibility to attend open courses and learn different safety, security and preparedness skills. MPK also works in co-operation with schools and has added a focus on children to its work through co-operation with child advocacy organizations.

6.3 CHILD FRIENDLY SPACES IN FINLAND AND AROUND THE WORLD

"Child-friendly spaces should be like a safe haven for children during and after a crisis situation."

-Dragan Licanin

Child Friendly Spaces are an approach used by Save the Children Finland and other international humanitarian actors to support children in disruptions and crises. The approach aims to protect children, restore a sense of normalcy, predictability and routines both during and after crises and catastrophes. Child Friendly Spaces offer children a safe environment, in which children can meet other children, play, relax, express themselves and get the support they need. At the same time the approach can help to provide activities that support children's development and psychosocial well-being in a variety of ways, such as games and exercises that support the cognitive, linguistic, motor skills and social skills of children.

Child Friendly Spaces can offer children age-appropriate information on the crisis, services available to the child during the crisis, as well as resources on how the child can support their own well-being or the well-being of their families. This is a way to strengthen children's capabilities to cope with the exceptional situation around them. Another task of the space and adult staff is to react quickly if the child appears to need protection or other forms of support, and to refer the child to further support if needed. The success of Child Friendly Spaces relies on their participatory nature, in which the surrounding community, parents and children are included in the planning and implementation of the spaces. (See. World Vision & IFRC 2018; Save the Children 2008)

Child Friendly Spaces are based on the guidelines set by the Child Protection Working Group (CPWG), as well as international human rights legislation, humanitarian law, and refugee law which act as the basis for the guidelines. According to the guidelines every child and young person within the realm of the effects of a humanitarian crisis must have the possibility to go to a Child Friendly Space set up by the community, in which

the child is offered structured activities in a safe, child friendly, collaborative, and stimulating environment. Child Friendly Spaces can function as this type of a space if there are no other comparable spaces available for children and young people, and the space is considered to be able to answer their current needs. When creating Child Friendly Spaces, special attention should be paid to reaching the most vulnerable children, and for example the effects of gender, disability, or ethnic background on the accessibility of the spaces must be considered for each child. (CPWG 2012, 14, 149–154)

Child Friendly Spaces were first seen in Finland amidst the large-scale influx of migrants to Finland in the fall of 2015. At the time, refugees included many small children and Save the Children Finland started a Child Friendly Space with the help of its local associations and other volunteers trained in the approach. The space was set up in a reception center run by the Finnish Red Cross in Hennala, Lahti in December of 2015. In the early spring of 2016, Save the Children Finland also set up Child Friendly Spaces in two other reception centers run by the Finnish Red Cross in Kide and Kemijärvi, as well as in a government-run center in Oulu. Child Friendly Spaces were set up in spaces found within the reception centers, which Save the Children renovated and equipped to be suitable for children with the help of their volunteers and collaborators. (Häikiö et al. 2017)

These spaces in reception centers targeted children who were not yet school-aged, and as such could not attend Finnish early childhood education and care, or other activities that assist the growth and development of children. The Child Friendly Spaces approach offered children a space and opportunity for social interaction and at the same time helped to support the development, knowledge and skills of children. Even though the work was focused on children, it was soon found that it was also significant for supporting parenting. The space offered parents a moment to breathe, where the child could be left with safe adults. Some of the parents also participated in the activities of the space either as a parent or as a trained volunteer. Several of these parents later mentioned that following the work of the Finnish volunteers had taught them new ways of acting with their children, such as good and safe ways to guide and set limits for their children. By the end of 2019, staff and volunteers from Save the Children Finland were keeping up seven Child Friendly Spaces in reception centers around Finland. Depending on the number of volunteers and children, activities in the spaces were organized 2-3 times a week for two hours at a time. After the work ended, the Child Friendly Spaces and supplies were left to the staff and clients of the remaining reception centers in Oulu and Helsinki.

Heidi Parviainen has researched Child Friendly Spaces as well as immigrant children and their families in Finland. In her interview for this study, Parviainen noted that parents of children who had participated in the Child Friendly Spaces had found the activities to be generally beneficial to the development of their children. Parents emphasized in particular their children's learning, and the possibility for them to participate in and practice social situations. Parents had also noticed positive changes in their children. Moreover, Parviainen emphasized the emotional significance of the spaces for children. The Child Friendly Spaces also gave children the opportunity to build relationships with the adult volunteers and to get their minds off difficult events. Though some parents wished there would have been more activities and time in the spaces, they still greatly appreciated them: "The thing that became the most clear was that parents were well aware of the importance of early education for the psychosocial development of their children and many of the parents were worried or even alarmed at the thought that there would not be any possibilities for it…" (Interview with Heidi Parviainen 26.4.2021)

Save the Children has set up Child Friendly Spaces globally not only in instances of forced migration, but also amidst natural disasters, such as the floods in the Balkans, earthquakes in Italy, and tropical storms in the United States (see Save the Children US 2021; Ballona et al. 2017). During the floods in Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Croatia in 2014, Save the Children North West Balkans opened about a dozen Child Friendly Spaces especially in the flooded areas, where the disaster affected a large number of children. The organization also trained collaborators working in the field on how to work with children and to lead child-focused work especially from the point of view of psychosocial support. (Interview with Save the Children NWB, 27.4.2021, Dragan Licanin)

There, too, the crisis response was also evaluated after the fact. Child Friendly Spaces had provided children with a sense of security and parents rest and time to take care of other matters. The spaces had also been beneficial in situations where the majority of schools in an area had had to be closed due to the floods. After the floods many schools were still recovering and required repair work. In these instances, volunteers were able to

Pelastakaa Lapset

support children's learning, and children and volunteers had the possibility to work in co-operation with schools. The Child Friendly Spaces were also able to help with the homework of those children who were able to go back to school. (Interview with Save the Children NWB, 27.4.2021, Dragan Licanin)

The Child Friendly Spaces set up in the Balkans after the floods received high praise, and their benefits and need were recognized by families and communities. When the intervention came to a close, participants wished that the Child Friendly Spaces would continue. The supplies of the spaces were donated to local organizations and other actors, so that they could potentially continue offering the service to children. The work was especially important because many of the families in the regions affected by the flood were very poor, and the children did not have the possibility to go to school. For the children, the activities in the spaces were something new and "something they don't usually get and aren't used to," and the children were happy to participate in the activities. (Interview with Save the Children NWB, 27.4.2021, Dragan Licanin)

The need for the spaces in which help and support was given to children during crises to be and feel safe, was recognized as an important part of taking children into consideration in crises by the interview and survey respondents. One respondent noted that children must be ensured a space which creates a sense of security. The importance of physical spaces was also emphasized in the Child Friendly Spaces set up for refugee children in Finland. Heidi Parviainen noted that parents sometimes criticized very concrete aspects of reception centers, such as physical spaces. Due to limited resources reception centers in Finland can be located in places lacking good or suitable space. According to Parviainen, their work could be improved by ensuring large enough spaces and a sufficient number of volunteers and staff. Child Friendly Spaces could also be implemented in a variety of crises, because they support children's development and sense of continuity in sudden disruptions:

"— The concept of space came up in a variety of ways in my study. If you think of a crisis in which the spaces children and families use change, then I think it is crucial to offer children a safe space which provides opportunities for age-appropriate activities and playing. . . . If the family's environment is damaged in some way, then it is important that parents are supported, so that they can rest and start patching up the damaged structures that support their children."
- Heidi Parviainen

In Parviainen's research the importance of space was highlighted in the comments of children and their parents, whereas staff often spoke of different kinds of services. Parviainen thinks that one reason for this disconnect could be that staff members approach the subject through the lens of their organization and available resources and possibilities. Many of these are things that they cannot control. On the other hand, families emphasize their daily life and their needs in specific situations. Parviainen finds the hopes and worries of parents to be understandable. In Finland, the Child Welfare Act and other legislation also state that children should have sufficient conditions for development, starting from their physical spaces. (Interview with Heidi Parviainen, 26.4.2021)

7 CONCLUSIONS

In Finland a lot of attention has been paid to preparedness and security in general. Finland is perceived as a safe country, and every-day life has been measured to be safer now than ever before. However, not all crises can be predicted or prevented in advance. This is why multifaceted preparedness is important. Preparedness helps to prevent disruptions, to act in case of one, as well as to aid in and plan for recovery. Every level of society and actor involved has its own place in preparedness. Through co-operation, planning, training, and practicing we can safeguard the continuity of society even in the most surprising of circumstances.

It is important to pay special attention to children in preparedness planning because vulnerable groups, such as children and people with different linguistic and cultural backgrounds, suffer the most in crisis situations. The opportunities for children to influence decisions and action that affect them are very limited. Children are also vulnerable because of psychological factors related to their stage of development and dependence on adults. The position of children in crises should be considered from the very beginning, because their starting points and needs are very different to those of adults. Supporting children also includes supporting their social structures, including their families and other important adults in their lives.

Immigrants and immigrant children can be particularly vulnerable in crisis situations. This can be due to a number of reasons, such as previous traumatic experiences, and societal issues, such as poverty. Finding and receiving assistance may also be more difficult due to cultural and linguistic differences. It is important that these factors are recognized more widely in the field of crisis preparedness, and not only among actors already working with people with an immigrant background.

Disruptions nearly always affect children, which is why the position of children and families should be recognized in all crisis situations. Internationally, children and other vulnerable groups have long been recognized as needing special attention for example in mediating the risks of catastrophes. There are, however, still gaps in preparing for and responding to crises in Finland when it comes to considering children and other vulnerable groups. Indeed, doing so should be seen as an important part of disaster risk reduction in Finland at the national level.

This study found that children and families are often left out of preparedness plans, or they are merged into a wider category of vulnerable groups. Preparedness planning should include more concrete advice on how to work with children and families in crises. Though the need to consider children in preparedness planning has been recognized, wider discussion around children and other vulnerable groups remains limited. Indeed, emphasizing the safety of children is often left to child advocacy organizations and the few authorities who have familiarized themselves with the issue. According to our research, insufficient consideration of children and families in preparedness planning and crisis response is common not only in Finland, but around Europe.

The professionals who participated in this study agreed that improvements are needed when it comes to considering children and children with an immigrant background in crisis preparedness and response. This need reflects the values of society under normal conditions, as the issues that are paid attention to and seen as worth protecting are also often emphasized in crisis response. Groups of people can become particularly vulnerable through the growth of inequality and other societal problems or challenges.

Immigrants as well as other children and families with language barriers are often only considered in crisis preparedness in the contexts of reception centers or the so-called "refugee crisis" (often referring to the large-scale migration to Finland in 2015-2016). In light of our research, it appears that these children and families are only rarely considered in crisis preparedness and response in Finland. Children with an immigrant background, however, are present in all kinds of crisis situations, and they should be recognized as their own group due to their particularly vulnerable position. Information and support in native languages, as well as cultural mediators whenever possible, should be available in order to support immigrant children and other children with language barriers in crises. These forms of support were emphasized particularly by our European interviewees.

Recognizing the vulnerabilities of different kinds of children and families requires public discussion, as well as

active dialogue between non-governmental organizations and the authorities. Crisis preparedness and response can be challenging, but by now there is already a wide range of expertise, and developing and making use of this expertise is clearly valued. The point of comprehensive security is to bring together different actors to build a safer and more resilient society. Through dialogue and co-operation, we can raise awareness on the needs of children and other vulnerable groups, and how different actors can consider these needs. Co-operation can be beneficial to all parties, and it should be more widespread and systematic. This way discourse around security could gain new perspectives and actors could begin to consider new questions. Actors recognizing the needs of different groups and integrating the assessment of effects and the consideration of groups into their work are needed. Non-governmental organizations have an important role in comprehensive security, as for example, child advocacy organizations can significantly improve general awareness of the needs of children.

According to our research, many actors are happy to work with child advocacy organizations. But at the same time, around Europe there have been challenges to co-operation as elected officials and the political climate have changed. Co-operation has worked well when there has been open dialogue between collaborators, and organizations have been offered the chance to organize training and drills for other actors. Interview and survey responses also highlighted the importance of networks of non-governmental organizations, and the specialized expertise of organizations was seen as a significant source of strength in these networks. Co-operation between different actors in the field of preparedness was viewed as encouraging, and the need for its development was recognized.

The study has also highlighted several best practices which could be implemented in Finland in future crisis preparedness and response efforts. In crises, it is important to recognize the vulnerability of children and to let children participate in response efforts where possible. Through participation, children's own voices can be heard in discussions around security and preparedness. During the acute stages of crises children should be offered psychosocial support as soon as possible as it can have a significant impact on their recovery. In addition to children, special attention should be given to supporting families and particularly parents, as they are an important part of their children's support networks. Concrete examples of best practices include Child Friendly Spaces and the Participatory School Disaster Management Toolkit for schools, which could be implemented more widely in preparedness planning and future crises in Finland.

Comprehensive security can best be developed by taking advantage of the skills and expertise of different actors who bring their unique point of view. The same is also true of developing crisis tolerance. Finland has recognized this, but for example the COVID pandemic showed that vulnerable groups may suffer disproportionately in crises. This study shows that actors working to develop comprehensive security are interested in taking into account the voices of children, and this could be done more easily by becoming more open to new points of view, recognizing know-how, integrating different approaches, and sharing information. Children are often overshadowed by adults in society, but it does not have to be this way. Children deserve to be safe too.

In the future it would be beneficial to explore how children are considered in regional and municipal preparedness planning in Finland. This report focuses on the national perspective in Finland and to some extent around Europe, as well as on the work of close collaborators of Save the Children Finland. It would also be important to listen to children's own thoughts and experiences around preparedness and security, as we were not able to interview children for this study. It would also be beneficial to bring attention not only to children with an immigrant background, but to other vulnerable groups of children, and to research the perspectives of professionals of the security sector on the position and consideration of children in crises.

10 RECOMMENDATIONS BASED ON THE FINDINGS OF THE REPORT

Elected officials, decision-makers, officeholders, authorities, and non-governmental organizations should work together to:

1. **Evaluate the effects on children of decisions made during preparedness planning.**
   While making decisions and planning preparedness action it is important to remember to evaluate the effects of decisions and actions on children. Different actors must implement preliminary and post-evaluation assessments of the effects of their work on children and utilize their findings in future preparedness planning.

2. **Highlight the position of children in preparedness planning.**
   It is important to consider the position of children in the preparedness plans of authorities and non-governmental organizations and to include concrete directions on how to consider children in crisis situations and disruptions in the plans.

3. **Involve children of different ages and groups in preparedness planning.**
   It is important to include children in conversations surrounding preparedness and security. The consideration of children can be developed by getting them involved for example through schools. It would also be beneficial to talk with children about preparedness and security in schools and consider ways to improve security together.

4. **Advance the participation of cultural mediators and professionals from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds.**
   When considering immigrant children and other children with different linguistic backgrounds in crises, it is important to invest in the availability of people with the necessary language skills and high-quality interpretation, as well as ensure culturally sensitive encounters. This can be achieved with the help of professionals and volunteers from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds, who should also be increasingly present in security and aid organizations. Cultural mediators can also be utilized in situations where an official interpreter is not necessary. In addition to linguistic and cultural knowledge, actors should have knowledge on how to work with children of different ages and groups.

5. **Work towards open, interested, and respectful encounters with different kinds of families.**
   Parents and other adults that support children also need encouragement and validation of their capabilities to support their children in the right ways, particularly during crisis situations. This is also true for non-traditional families, whose structures or practices differ from the norm.

6. **Strengthen co-operation.**
   Co-operation and collaborative structures between authorities and non-governmental organizations should be further developed, with the aim of recognizing the special expertise of different actors. Actors should regularly exchange information and engage in dialogue that is as open as possible.

Pelastakaa Lapset

7. **Educate more actors on how to work with children.**
How children are considered can also be improved by educating actors on how to consider different groups of people and their special needs.

8. **Develop communication strategies specifically for children.** In crisis situations children need meaningful information that is suitable for their age and level of development. Communication should also consider children with different linguistic and cultural backgrounds as well as illiterate children and their families. Preparedness plans should mention how to communicate to children during crises.

9. **Comprehensively consider families.**
Supporting parents and caregivers helps children. During crisis and evacuation situations it is important to ensure that children are not separated from their caregivers. If they end up separated, there must be a plan for how to take care of the children until they can be reunified with their families.

10. **More widely and proactively implement best-practices that consider children.**
Best practices such as the Child Friendly Spaces model should be utilized more widely both in preparedness planning and future crises. Standard practice in normal times is reflected in the work done during crises and disruptions. Best practices should be implemented prior to threats being realized. To ensure the consideration of children and children with immigrant backgrounds in crises, sufficient attention should be paid to these groups before a crisis occurs.

PHOTO: SONJA SOINI | SAVE THE CHILDREN

REFERENCES

The Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action. (2021). Webpages. **https://alliancecpha.org/en**

Al-Sharmani, Mulki, Sanna Mustasaari & Abdirashid A. Ismail. (2018). "Uskonnollinen perheriitojen sovittelu suomalaisissa moskeijoissa: Kehittyviä rooleja ja muovautuvia käytäntöjä". (in Finnish), Hiitola, Anis & Turtiainen (eds.), Maahanmuutto, Palvelut ja Hyvinvointi - Kohtaamisissa kehittyviä käytäntöjä. Vastapaino.

Ballona, Elena S., Lucia Ghebreghiorges, Federico Cellini, Flaminia Cordani, Anna Grisi, Antonella Inverno, Maura Socciarelli & Silvia Taviani. (2017). Terremoto in Italia Centrale: L'intervento di Save the Children. (in Italian), Save the Children Italia Onlus. **https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/node/16181/pdf/terremoto-italia-centrale-il-nostro-intervento_0.pdf**

Basic Education Act (Perusopetuslaki). 21.8.1998/628. (available in English), **https://www.finlex.fi/fi/laki/ajantasa/1998/19980628#L7P29**

Castaneda, Anu E., Johanna Mäki-Opas, Satu Jokela, Nina Kivi, Minna Lähteenmäki, Tanja Miettinen, Satu Nieminen, Päivi Santalahti & PALOMA expert group. (2018). Supporting refugees' mental health in Finland. (abstract in English), PALOMA handbook. Publications of the National Institute for Health and Welfare (THL)

Child Protection Working Group (CPWG). (2012). Minimum standards for child protection in humanitarian action. Global Protection Cluster, CPWG. **https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/node/6819/pdf/cp_minimum_standards_english_2013_v2.pdf**

Dash, Genevieve F. (2020). "Ethical Considerations in Providing Psychological Services to Unaccompanied Immigrant Children". Ethics & Behavior 30.2: 83–96. **https://doi.org/10.1080/10508422.2019.1623031**

Davidhizar, Ruth & Ruth Shearer. (2002). "Helping Children Cope with Public Disasters: Support Given Immediately after a Traumatic Event Can Counteract or Even Negate Long-Term Adverse Effects". The American Journal of Nursing 102.3: 26–33. **http://www.jstor.org/stable/3522813**

Dybdal, Anne-Sophie & Mie Melin (eds.), (2013). Psychological First Aid Manual for Child Practitioners. Save the Children. **https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/node/7838/pdf/final_pfa.pdf**

Ekholm, Elina. (2015). Työtä yhteisön ja yhteiskunnan hyväksi: Maahanmuuttajajärjestöt palveluiden tuottajina. (in Finnish), Ministry of Employment and the Economy (MEE) Publications 53/2015. **http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-327-036-7**

Emergency Powers Act (Valmiuslaki). 29.12.2011/1552. (in Finnish), **https://finlex.fi/fi/laki/ajantasa/2011/20111552**

Esquivel, Giselle B., Geraldine V. Oades-Sese & Marguerite L. Jarvis. (2010). Culturally Sensitive Narrative Interventions for Immigrant Children and Adolescents. University Press of America.

Evakuointikeskuksen perustaminen (2015). Ohje sosiaali- ja terveydenhuollon toimijoille. "Setting up an Evacuation Centre: Guidelines for actors in the social welfare and healthcare sector".

(abstract in English), Eds. Anne Hujala. Sosiaali- ja terveysministeriön julkaisuja 2015:1. Helsinki.

Finnish Government (Valtioneuvosto). (2021). Valtioneuvoston selonteko sisäisestä turvallisuudesta. "Government Report on Internal Security". (abstract in English), Valtioneuvoston julkaisuja 2021:48. Valtioneuvoston kanslia. **http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-383-769-0**

Pelastakaa Lapset

Finnish Immigration Service (Maahanmuuttovirasto). (2021). Turvapaikkahakemukset. "Asylum Applications" 1/2015–12/2015. Statistics. **https://tilastot.migri.fi/#applications/23330/49?start=540&end=551**

Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare (Terveyden- ja hyvinvoinnin laitos (THL)). (2021). Maahanmuutto ja kulttuurinen moninaisuus. Käsitteet. "Migration and Cultural Diversity: Concepts". (available in English), Web-page. **https://thl.fi/fi/web/maahanmuutto-ja-kulttuurinen-moninaisuus/tyon-tueksi/kasitteet**

Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare, Ministry of Education and Culture & Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare (Sosiaali- ja terveysministeriö, Opetus- ja kulttuuriministeriö & Terveyden ja hyvinvoinnin-laitos). (2018.) LAVA: Lapsivaikutusten arviointi. (in Finnish), Lapsi- ja perhepalveluiden muutosohjelma. **https://www.julkari.fi/handle/10024/136377**

Finnish National Agency for Education (Opetushallitus). (2021a). Kriiseihin varautuminen. (in Finnish), Webpage. **https://www.oph.fi/fi/koulutus-ja-tutkinnot/kriiseihin-varautuminen**

Finnish National Agency for Education (Opetushallitus). (2021b). Psykososiaalisen tuen järjestäminen. (in Finnish), Webpage. **https://www.oph.fi/fi/koulutus-ja-tutkinnot/psykososiaalisen-tuen-jarjestaminen**

The Finnish National Rescue Association SPEK & National Emergency Supply Agency Organisation (Suomen Pelastusalan Keskusjärjestö SPEK & Huoltovarmuusorganisaatio). (2019). 72 tuntia – Varautuminen kotona. Ohjeita häiriötilanteiden varalle. (in Finnish), **https://72tuntia.fi/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Varautuminen-kotona-esite.pdf**

Finnish Refugee Council (Suomen Pakolaisapu). (2021). Sanasto. (in Finnish), Webpage. **https://pakolaisapu.fi/sanasto/**

The Finnish Terminology Centre (Sanastokeskus TSK). (2017). Kokonaisturvallisuuden sanasto. "Vocabulary of Comprehensive Security". (in Finnish), TSK 50. Sanastokeskus TSK ry. **http://www.tsk.fi/tiedostot/pdf/Kokonaisturvallisuuden_sanasto_2.pdf**

Forsberg, Tiina, Jari Strömberg, Saara Hirvonen & Marika Harjumaa. (2020). "Amorellan matkustajat evakuoitu – Viking Linen toimitusjohtaja: Onnettomuuden syynä joko tekninen vika tai inhimillinen erehdys". (in Finnish), YLE online news 20.9.2020. **https://yle.fi/uutiset/3-11554310**

Garoff, Ferdinand, Samuli Kangaslampi & Kirsi Peltonen. (2019). "Development and Implementation of a Group Based Mental Health Intervention for Unaccompanied Minors". Scandinavian journal of psychology 60.1: 7–15. **https://doi.org/10.1111/sjop.12497**

GCIR. (2017). Grantmakers Concerned With Immigrants And Refugees. The Impact of Natural Disasters on Immigrants and Refugees in the United States: What Funders Need to Know in the Immediate Term. 25.09.2017

Haga, Jon M, Lise E Stene, Tore Wentzel-Larsen, Siri Thoresen & Grete Dyb. (2015). "Early postdisaster health outreach to modern families: a cross sectional study". BMJ Open. **https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjopen-2015-009402**

Häikiö, Jenni, Eveliina Viitanen, Kaisa Tervonen-Arnkill. (2017). Child Friendly Spaces in Reception Centers: Supporting asylum seeking children and their families in Finland. Pelastakaa Lapset ry. **https://pelastakaalapset.s3.eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/main/2016/04/14154104/LYT_report_2017.pdf**

Haravuori, Henna, Laura Suomalainen & Mauri Marttunen. (2010). "Psychological Well-Being of the Young of Jokela and Kauhajoki-How Are the Young Doing Today?" Duodecim 126.22 (2010): 2661–2668.

Harjumaa, Marika, Janne Toivonen & STT. (2020). "Matkustajat yöpyvät karille ajaneella Viking Gracella – laivaa ei siirretä ennen maihinnousua". (in Finnish), YLE online news 21.11.2020. **https://yle.fi/uutiset/3-11659877**

Health and social services reform (Sote-uudistus). (2021). Mikä on hyvinvointialue? (in Finnish), Webpage. **https://soteuudistus.fi/mika-on-hyvinvointialue**

Hiitola, Johanna & Marja Peltola. (2018). "Tuotettu ja koettu toiseus viranomaisten ja maahanmuuttotaustaisen vanhempien kohtaamisissa". (in Finnish), Hiitola, Anis & Turtiainen (eds.) Maahanmuutto, palvelut ja hyvinvointi: kohtaamisissa kehittyviä käytäntöjä. Vastapaino.

Hiitola, Johanna, Merja Anis & Kati Turtiainen. (2018). "Johdanto." (in Finnish), Hiitola, Anis, & Turtiainen (eds.) Maahanmuutto, palvelut ja hyvinvointi: kohtaamisissa kehittyviä käytäntöjä. Vastapaino.

Huhtamella, Minna & Sanna Sipilä. (2021). Etelä-Karjalan alueellisen valmiuskeskuksen toiminta. "Activities of the South Karelia regional preparedness center". (abstract in English), LAB University of Applied Sciences. Faculty of Health Care and Social Services, Lappeenranta. Master's Thesis 2021. **http://urn.fi/URN:NBN:fi:amk-202105128538**

IFRC Psychosocial Centre. (2018). Talking and writing about psychosocial support in emergencies - advice and suggestions for communicators, media and emergency response personnel. International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. **https://pscentre.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Talking-about-PSS-in-emergencies.pdf**

Kalliomeri, Reetta, Katja Mettinen & Hanna Tulensalo. (2021). "Lapsen näköistä kehittämistä ja vaikuttamista". (in Finnish), Tulensalo, Kalliomeri & Laimio (eds.) Kohti lapsen näköistä osallisuutta. Pelastakaa Lapset ry. **https://pelastakaalapset.s3.eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/main/2021/05/20140644/kohti-lapsen-na-koista-osallisuutta-kirja.pdf**

Koulutusverkostohanke. (2019). AVAK-illustrations.

Kerkkänen, Heikki & Minna Säävälä. (2015). Maahanmuuttajien psyykkistä hyvinvointia ja mielenterveyttä edistävät tekijät ja palvelut. (in Finnish), Ministry of Employment and the Economy 40/2015. TEM. **http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-327-008-4**

Lundberg, Mattias & Alice Wuermli. (2012). "Introduction". Lundberg & Wuermli (eds.) Children and Youth in Crisis: Protecting and Promoting Human Development in Times of Economic Shocks. The World Bank.

The Mannerheim League for Child Welfare (Mannerheimin Lastensuojeluliitto). (2020). Tukea perheen huoliin ja kriiseihin. (in Finnish) Webpage. **https://www.mll.fi/vanhemmille/tukea-perheen-huoliin-ja-kriiseihin/**

Mauranen, Anna, Eva-Mari Aro, Riitta Hari, Sirpa Jalkanen, Markku Kulmala, Arto Mustajoki, Risto Nieminen, Ilkka Niiniluoto, Kari Raivio, Jorma Sipilä, Kirsi Tirri, Pekka Aula, Jaakko Kuosmanen & Rosa Rantanen. Suomalaisen Tiedeakatemian covid-19-asiantuntijaryhmä ja sihteeristö. (2021). Taipuu vaan ei taitu – Koronapandemiasta Suomen kriisinkestävyyden vahvistamiseen. Suomalaisen Tiedeakatemian koolle kutsuman itsenäisen asiantuntijaryhmän kannanotto. "Bending, but not Breaking: From the coronavirus pandemic to strengthening Finland's crisis resilience". (available in English), Suomalainen Tiedeakatemia. **https://www.acadsci.fi/kannanotto2021.pdf**

Mental Hub (Mielenterveystalo). (2021). Tietoa maahanmuuttajille. (in Finnish), Webpage. **https://www.mielenterveystalo.fi/aikuiset/itsehoito-ja-oppaat/oppaat/maahanmuuttajat/Pages/default.aspx**

Midtbust, Liv Gunvor Hove, Atle Dyregrov & Heidi Wittrup Djup. (2018). "Communicating with children and adolescents about the risk of natural disasters". European Journal of Psychotraumatology, 9:2 (2018) 1-8. **https://doi.org/10.1080/20008198.2018.1429771**

Pelastakaa Lapset

Migrants in Countries in Crisis (MICIC) Initiative. (2016). Guidelines To Protect Migrants In Countries Experiencing Conflict Or Natural Disaster. MICIC Initiative. **https://micicinitiative.iom.int/sites/micicinitiative/files/document/micic_guidelines_english_web_13_09_2016.pdf**

Ministry of Education and Culture (Opetus- ja kulttuuriministeriö). (2021). Valmiusasiat opetus- ja kulttuuriministeriön toimialalla. (in Finnish), Webpage. **https://minedu.fi/valmiusasiat**

Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland (Ulkoministeriö). (2018). Suomi tukee kansainvälistä yhteistyötä katastrofiriskien vähentämiseksi. "Finland supports international cooperation to reduce disaster risks". (available in English),

Online news 8.5.2018. **https://um.fi/uutiset/-/asset_publisher/GRSnUwaHDPv5/content/suomi-tukee-kansainvalista-yhteistyota-katastrofiriskien-vahentamiseksi**

Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland (Ulkoministeriö). (2021). Humanitaarinen apu: Humanitaarinen apu tuo lievitystä hädän keskelle. "Humanitarian aid brings relief in times of need". (avaialble in English), Webpage. https://um.fi/humanitaarinen-apu

Ministry of the Interior (Sisäministeriö). (2021a). Kansallinen riskiarvio. "National Risk Assessment". (available in English), Webpage. **https://intermin.fi/pelastustoimi/varautuminen/kansallinen-riskiarvio**

Ministry of the Interior (Sisäministeriö). (2021b). Laajamittainen maahantulo ja varautuminen: Sisäministeriö johtaa laajamittaiseen maahantuloon varautumista. "The Ministry of the Interior directs preparations for large-scale influxes of migrants". (available in English), Webpage. **https://intermin.fi/maahanmuutto/toimijat-ja-avastuut/laajamittainen-maahantulo-ja-varautuminen**

Ministry of the Interior (Sisäministeriö). (2019). Kansallinen riskiarvio 2018. "National risk assessment 2018". (available in English), Sisäministeriön julkaisuja 2019:5. Sisäministeriö. **http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-324-245-6**

Ministry of Social Affairs and Health (Sosiaali- ja terveysministeriö). (2006). Psykososiaalinen tuki ja palvelut suuronnettomuudessa. Asiantuntijaryhmän muistio. "Psychosocial support and services in situations of disaster. Memorandum of the Expert Working Group". (abstract in English), Sosiaali- ja terveysministeriön selvityksiä 2006:81. STM. **http://urn.fi/URN:NBN:fi-fe201504227184**

Ministry of Social Affairs and Health (Sosiaali- ja terveysministeriö). (2009). Traumaattisten tilanteiden psykososiaalinen tuki ja palvelut. Opas kunnille ja kuntayhtymille. "Psychosocial supporT and services for TraumaTic siTuaTions.Handbook for municipalities and joint municipal boards". (abstract in English), STM julkaisuja 2009:16. STM. **http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-00-2910-4**

Ministry of Social Affairs and Health (Sosiaali- ja terveysministeriö). (2019). Äkillisten traumaattisten tilanteiden psykososiaalisen tuen kehittämisen työryhmän loppuraportti. "Final report of the working group on the development of psychosocial support for sudden traumatic events". (abstract in English), Sosiaali- ja terveysministeriön raportteja ja muistioita 2019:46. STM. **http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-00-4090-1**

Murtonen, Kalle, Laura Suomalainen, Henna Haravuori & Mauri Marttunen. (2012). "Adolescents' experiences of psychosocial support after traumatisation in a school shooting". Child and Adolescent Mental Health. 17(1), 23–30. **https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1475-3588.2011.00612.x**

The New Humanitarian. (2021). Migration. Webpage. **https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/migration**

Nironen, Saija. (2016). "Tuli on roihunnut useissa vastaanottokeskuksissa - Yle koosti syksyn tapaukset yhteen". (in Finnish), Yle online news 21.6.2016. **https://yle.fi/uutiset/3-8517586**

OECD. (2020). What is the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on immigrants and their children. OECD Policy Responses to Coronavirus. OECD. **https://www.oecd.org/coronavirus/policy-responses/what-is-the-impact-of-the-covid-19-pandemic-on-immigrants-and-their-children-e7cbb7de/**

Pace, Brian. (2000). "Helping Children Cope With Violence". JAMA : the Journal of the American Medical Association, vol. 284, no. 5, 654–654. doi:10.1001/jama.284.5.654.

Pelastustieto. (2019). "Jos sähköt ovat pitkään poikki, alueellinen valmiuskeskus auttaa – uusi malli käyttöön Etelä-Karjalassa". (in Finnish), 28.1.2019. **https://pelastustieto.fi/pelastustoiminta/varautuminen/jos-sahkot-ovat-pitkaan-poikki-alueellinen-valmiuskeskus-auttaa-uusi-malli-kayttoon-etela-karjalassa/#a61d0d26**

Petal, Marla, Nick Ireland, Danielle Wade, Geoff Robinson, Michael Garaelulu, Tim Nelson, Lydia Baker, Zeynep Turkmen, Lou Pambid & Sae Kani. (2015). Participatory School Disaster Management Toolkit. Save the Children. **https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/sites/default/files/documents/309._sc_participatory_school_disaster_management_toolkit_2016_06_ltr.pdf**

Pirjatanniemi, Elina, Inka Lilja, Maija Helminen, Kristiina Vainio, Outi Lepola & Anne Alvesalo-Kuusi. (2021). Ulkomaalaislain ja sen soveltamiskäytännön muutosten yhteisvaikutukset kansainvälistä suojelua hakeneiden ja saaneiden asemaan. "The combined effects of the amendments to the Aliens Act and the practice of applying the Act with regard to the status of those requesting and receiving international protection". (abstract in English), Valtioneuvoston kanslia (Prime Minister's Office). **http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-383-009-7**

Poijula, Soili. (2016). Lapsi ja kriisi - Selviytymisen tukeminen. (in Finnish), Kirjapaja. E-book without page numbers.

Poijula, Soili. (2018). Resilienssi - muutosten kohtaamisen taito. (in Finnish), Kirjapaja.

Poikonen, Marjo. (2018). Maahanmuuttaja lastensuojelun asiakkaana – kulttuuristen arvojen kohtaaminen. "Immigrant as a Child Protection Client: Encountering Cultural Values". (abstract in English), Master's Thesis. University of Tampere. **https://trepo.tuni.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/103554/1527670873.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y**

Prime Minister's Office Finland (Valtioneuvoston kanslia). (2020). COVID-19 tutkimuskatsaus 6/2020. (in Finnish), Valtioneuvoston kanslia. **https://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/162511/COVID19_Tutkimuskatsaus_6-2020.pdf**

Pösö, Tarja. (2015). "How the Finnish Child Protection System Meets the Needs of Immigrant Families and Children". Skivenes, Marit, and Ravinder Barn (eds.) Child Welfare Systems and Migrant Children: A Cross Country Study of Policies and Practice. Oxford University Press.

Rapeli, Merja. (2017). The Role of Social Work in Disaster Management in Finland. Dissertation. University of Jyväskylä. **http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-951-39-7227-1**

RedNet. (2021). Henkisen tuen ryhmät. (in Finnish), Punaisen Ristin sivusto vapaaehtoisille. **https://rednet.punainenristi.fi/node/5547**

Saarinen, Erja. (2020). "EAPN:n koronakriisiraportti: tilannekuva kriisin vaikutuksista haavoittuvassa asemassa oleviin". (in Finnish), 7.8.2020. **http://www.eapn.fi/eapnn-koronakriisiraportti-tilannekuva-kriisin-vaikutuksista-haavoittuvassa-asemassa-oleviin/**

Save the Children. (2008). Child Friendly Spaces in Emergencies: A Handbook for Save the Children Staff. Save the Children. **https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/node/2923/pdf/2923.pdf**

Pelastakaa Lapset

Save the Children. (2021). The Nine Basic Requirements For Meaningful and Ethical Children's Participation. Save the Children. **https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/node/19385/pdf/basic_requirements-english-final.pdf**

Save the Children Finland (Pelastakaa Lapset). (2021). Lasten osallisuus. "Child participation". (available in English), Webpage. **https://www.pelastakaalapset.fi/lapsen-oikeudet/lasten-osallisuus/**

Save the Children Finland (Pelastakaa Lapset). (2021a). Lapsilta opittua. (in Finnish), Webpage. **https://www.pelastakaalapset.fi/lapsilta-opittua/**

Save the Children Finland (Pelastakaa Lapset). (2021b). Kriisitilanteen kohtaaminen. (in Finnish), Webpage. **https://www.pelastakaalapset.fi/ajankohtaista/kriisitilanteen-kohtaaminen/**

Save the Children Finland (Pelastakaa Lapset). (2021c). Tukea lapsille ja perheille. (in Finnish), Netari. Webpage. **netari.fi** Available in English at **https://www.pelastakaalapset.fi/en/our-work-in-finland/youth-activity/netari-online-youth-club/**

Save the Children US. (2021). Historical Emergencies. Webpage. **https://www.savethechildren.org/us/what-we-do/emergency-response/historical-emergencies**

The Security Committee (Turvallisuuskomitea). (2016). Katsaus hybridiuhkiin ja niiden vaikutuksiin. (in Finnish), Seminar publication. **https://turvallisuuskomitea.fi/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Katsaus_hybridiuhkiin_TK2016.pdf**

The Security Committee (Turvallisuuskomitea). (2017). Yhteiskunnan turvallisuusstrategia. Valtioneuvoston Periaatepäätös 2.11.2017. "The Security Strategy for Society. Resolution 2.11.2017". (abstract in English). Turvallisuuskomitea. **https://turvallisuuskomitea.fi/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/YTS_2017_suomi.pdf**

The Security Committee (Turvallisuuskomitea). (2021). Mikä on turvallisuuskomitea? (in Finnish), Webpage. https://turvallisuuskomitea.fi/turvallisuuskomitea/

72tuntia. (2021). Oikea tieto ja tietoturva. "Reliable information and online safety". (available in English), Webpage. **https://72tuntia.fi/oikea-tieto-ja-tietoturva/**

Statistics Finland (Tilastokeskus). (2021). Maahanmuuttajat väestössä. "Immigrants in the Population". (available in English), Tilanne 8.6.2021. **https://www.stat.fi/tup/maahanmuutto/maahanmuuttajat-vaestossa.html**

Turunen, Tuija & Raija-Leena Punamäki. (2014). "Psychosocial Support for Trauma-Affected Students After School Shootings in Finland". Violence and victims 29.3: 476–491. **https://doi.org/10.1891/0886-6708.vv-d-12-00059**

2250 Nuoret, rauha & turvallisuus. (2021). (available in English), Webpage. **https://www.2250finland.fi/**

UNESCO Institute for Statistics. (2017). Literacy rates continue to rise from one generation to the next. UNESCOstat. **http://uis.unesco.org/sites/default/files/documents/fs45-literacy-rates-continue-rise-generation-to-next-en-2017_0.pdf**

UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (YK yleissopimus lapsen oikeuksista). 20.11.1989. **https://unicef.studio.crasman.fi/pub/public/pdf/LOS_A5fi.pdf**

United Nations (UN). (2015). The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030. United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction. **https://www.preventionweb.net/files/43291_sendaiframeworkfordrren.pdf**

Valiola, Virpi, Tytti Solantaus & Bitta Söderblom (2020). Lapset puheeksi vastaanottopalveluissa –hankkeen loppuraportti. 1.8.2017-31.7.2020 (AMIF). (in Finnish), Finnish Immigration Service & Mieli Mental Health Finland (Maahanmuuttovirasto & MIELI Suomen Mielenterveys ry). **https://mieli.fi/sites/default/files/inline/Hankkeet/TLP/lapset_puheeksi_loppuraportti_final_1.0.pdf**

Vantaa (2021). Sosiaali- ja kriisipäivystys. "Social Emergency and Crisis Center". (available in English), Webpage. **https://www.vantaa.fi/sosiaali-_ja_kriisipaivystys**

Voluntary Rescue Service Vapepa (Vapaaehtoinen pelastuspalvelu (Vapepa)). (2021). Tämä on Vapepa. "A network that saves human lives". (available in English), Webpage. **https://vapepa.fi/tama-on-vapepa/**

World Vision & IFRC. (2018). Operational Guidance for Child Friendly Spaces in Humanitarian Settings. World Vision International and IFRC Reference Centre for Psychosocial Support. **https://reliefweb.int/report/world/operational-guidance-child-friendly-spaces-humanitarian-settings-enar**

Yli-Vakkuri, Laura & Vesa Kotilainen. (2018). "Tavoitteena turvallinen yhteiskunta globaalisti." Siirtola Roope & Anne Palm (eds.) Yhdessä enemmän - Kriisien hallintaa kokonaisvaltaisesti. (in Finnish), Laajan turvallisuuden verkosto WISE ry. **https://www.widersecurity.fi/uploads/1/3/3/8/13383775/wise-yhdess%C3%A4enemm%C3%A4n%E2%80%93kriisienhallintaakokonaisvaltaisesti_2.pdf**

Pelastakaa Lapset

APPENDIX 1

SURVEY ON TAKING CHILDREN INTO ACCOUNT IN CRISIS SITUATIONS

Save the Children Finland

As a respondent you represent your organization, and your name will only be visible to those conducting the survey. The final publication will not include the names of respondents or direct quotations without the permission of the respondent.

OBJECTIVE OF THE SURVEY: Children are often one the most vulnerable groups in crisis situations. The objective of this survey is to collect information for a report that is being published as a part of the "Working Together to Support Children in Crises" project of Save the Children Finland. The aim of the report is to provide an account of the ways that children and families are taken into account in the crisis preparedness and planning of the authorities and society as a whole. Special attention will also be given to immigrant children and other children with language barriers. Additionally, the report will aim to highlight perceived flaws and gaps in crisis planning and preparedness, to which non-governmental organizations, such as Save the Children Finland, could respond to, or alternatively, help provide recommendations to other actors in the field. The report will support the efforts of Save the Children Finland, as well as other actors where possible, to advance their crisis preparedness in order to better assist both Finnish and immigrant children in different crisis situations. The report will also aim to provide examples of ways in which other countries have successfully provided support to children in crisis situations similar to those that can be expected to be faced in Finland.

DEFINITIONS: The survey focuses on crisis preparedness and preparedness planning as well as crisis response. Here, a preparedness plan refers to an official crisis preparedness plan of your workplace.

CRISIS: The survey generally refers to crises and crisis situations.

The Security Committee defines "crisis" in its Vocabulary of Comprehensive Security (The Finnish Terminology Centre 2017) as follows: "A situation that requires enhanced action, is dangerous, difficult, disorderly, or exceptional. A crisis can be, for example, an economic, political, or military crisis. Crises can be international, national, regional or local. 'Crisis,' 'catastrophe' and 'disaster' are commonly used to describe this type of situation. However, in many instances it would be more appropriate to refer to a 'disruption' or 'emergency'."

DISRUPTION: The Security Strategy for Society (2017): A "disruption" is a "threat or event, that endangers the vital functions or strategic tasks of a society and requires the wider or more close-knit co-operation and communication of government and other actors. Disruptions can include severe natural disasters, such as storm devastation and a sudden rise in water level. There can also be disruptions caused by people, such as riots and terrorism. Disruptions can occur both in normal and emergency conditions. A disruption can be nation-wide, regional, or local. It may also focus on a specific function of society, such as the money supply."

CHILD: According to the UN's Convention on the Rights of the Child: "a child means every human being below the age of eighteen years unless under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier." As such, in this survey a child refers to all children and youth below the age of eighteen.

1. Save the Children Finland may use my name in the final publication (yes/no)

2. Save the Children Finland may use direct quotations from my answers in the name of the organization I represent (yes/no)

Respondent information

3. Name

4. E-mail address

5. Do you represent a public authority / an organization / other (if so, what)?

Crisis preparedness in the workplace

6. Does your place of work have a preparedness plan? (yes/no)

Experience of crisis situations

7. Do you have experience of a crisis situation in practice or an example of a situation in which the crisis preparedness or response of your workplace has been carried out or in other ways visible? You may include more than one such instance.

Development

8. How do you think crisis preparedness and response have been developed in your workplace?

The role of non-governmental organizations in crisis response

9. What do you think is the role of NGOs focusing on children in crisis preparedness and response? What should it be?

10. How do you perceive the co-operation between different actors in crisis preparedness and response regarding children? What do you wish this co-operation was like?

Other things to consider

11. Can you think of anything else worth considering when it comes to preparedness and children?

Pelastakaa Lapset

APPENDIX 2
INTERVIEW FRAME

Save the Children Finland "Children in Crises" report, spring 2021

Crises & preparedness

- What do you think of the way children and families are taken into account in crisis preparedness in Finland (or in your country)?

- In your experience (through your work or research), how are vulnerable groups and children taken into account in crisis preparedness? Are they paid enough attention and have there been any changes to this in the past few years?

- What kinds of crises have you faced in your work? How do you think children were accounted for in these situations? Was it successful?

- How have you experienced the co-operation between governmental and non-governmental actors in crisis situations and preparedness planning? How could this co-operation be improved?

Immigrant children and other children with language barriers

- This report will also focus on immigrant children. Do you know what kinds of special needs immigrant children have in crisis situations?

- How about children with language barriers in general?

- How should immigrant children and other children with language barriers be taken into account in crisis situations?

Pelastakaa Lapset - Rädda Barnen
Save the Children

Save the Children Finland is a politically and religiously independent non-governmental organization founded in 1922, which fights for children's rights in order to immediately and permanently improve children's lives in Finland and all over the world.

savethechildren.fi