



## Guidance note: How to Assist with School Access, Mobility and Transport PART 1: PURPOSE AND PRINCIPLES

### Purpose and scope

The purpose of this note is to provide guidance:

- To humanitarian agencies who aim to assist children in refugee camps in Jordan to attend school.
- On the planning, implementation and monitoring phases of any projects relating to school access, mobility and transport, in and outside of camps.

The guidance in this note was developed in consultation with partners engaged in the Syrian refugee response in Jordan.<sup>1</sup> It draws upon the [INEE Minimum Standards for Education: Preparedness, Response, Recovery](#) and the [INEE Pocket Guide to Supporting Learners with Disabilities](#).

The note is organized in five parts:

- **Part 1** introduces the **purpose and principles** of the document
- **Part 2** contains a **checklist**
- **Part 3** provides **guidance to the checklist**
- **Part 4** presents detailed **guidance on solutions**
- **Part 5** provides **guidance on beneficiary selection** in camps and in non-camp settings

### General principles

Inclusive education:

- Acknowledges that all boys and girls can learn
- Acknowledges and respects difference in children: age, gender, ethnicity, language, disability, health condition etc.;
- Enables education structures, systems and methodologies to meet the needs of all boys and girls;
- Is part of a wider strategy to promote an inclusive society;
- Is a dynamic process that is constantly evolving.

Addressing school access, mobility and transport, especially for learners with disabilities, is an important component of inclusive education. Any school access, mobility and transport solutions consequently should be accompanied by outreach and activities that build the capacity of relevant schools to meet the requirements of inclusive education.

More in general, any school access, mobility and transport activities should be guided by the following principles:

- Community participation
- Inclusive education and equal access to appropriate education opportunities
- Sustainable planning
- Joint service provision

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<sup>1</sup> The Jordan Education Sector Working Group through War Child UK, Handicap International, Mercy Corps and in consultation with the Jordan Child Protection Working Group, Youth Task Force, Age and Disability Task Force and Za'atari Camp Security Working Group. Consultations took place between October 2013 and January 2014. For suggestions or amendments, please contact [mparadies@unicef.org](mailto:mparadies@unicef.org) and [jennifer.gulbrandson@drc-jordan.org](mailto:jennifer.gulbrandson@drc-jordan.org)



### **School access, mobility and transport planning and implementation**

The planning of all activities related to school access, mobility and transport should take the following steps:

- Review existing data on reasons for non-attendance of boys and girls to guide identification of appropriate solutions
- Assess access, mobility and transport needs in a transparent, coordinated/joint and participatory way, taking into consideration the specific circumstances of girls and boys (including if they have disabilities).<sup>2</sup>
- Involve students, caregivers, community leaders and teachers in the design of a range of school access, mobility and transport activities, with the support of humanitarian actors
- Considering a range of solutions in order of preference (based on sustainability, cost, community participation)
- Support schools to have the capacity through their teachers and other personnel to meet the needs of all enrolled girls and boys, including those with disabilities.
- Ensure effective referral systems for schools to assist enrolled girls and boys (including those with disabilities) to access services appropriate to address learning barriers.
- Support participatory monitoring and evaluation processes

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<sup>2</sup> For further guidance on mapping, see INEE Pocket Guide to Supporting Learners with Disabilities, page 20



## Guidance note: How to assist with School Access, Mobility and Transport PART 2: THE CHECKLIST

All boys and girls have the right to equal access to appropriate education opportunities. Inclusive education ensures the presence, participation and achievement of all students in schooling. When boys or girls (adolescent or pre-pubescent) are not able or willing to attend school, activities that improve access through transport or improve mobility options may be appropriate.

### Step 1: Consult with the community and analyse existing strategies

Review existing data and speak to children and youth (girls and boys, separately), parents, teachers and the community leaders about:

- 1) What are the barriers for boys attending school? What are the barriers for girls attending school?
- 2) What makes attendance at school possible?
- 3) How is the community making it easier for girls and boys to attend?

Encourage activities that support the safe inclusion of boys and girls in educational activities. Look to where the activity can be strengthened if desired. If the identified barriers limit the inclusion of boys and girls in educational activities, move to Step 2.

### Step 2: Consider solutions according to the reasons for non-attendance

Reasons for non-attendance	Solution (in this order)
School is too far from home	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Check that the student is placed in the closest school or a school within the minimum distance from home</li> <li>2) Move to a closer school (if the benefit of moving is greater than the disruption caused by moving)</li> </ol>
Fear of danger or violence (including physical, verbal or sexual and gender-based violence) on the way to or from school	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Install safety measures on designated school routes, such as lighting, adjustment to school routes etc.</li> <li>2) Encourage adult accompaniment from the family or buddy systems</li> <li>3) Walking groups</li> </ol>
Mobility difficulties preventing boys and/or girls from making the journey to school	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Secure mobility aids</li> <li>2) Assess feasibility of bus transport</li> <li>3) Home-school and conduct outreach</li> </ol>
Limitations to mobility limit involvement in school activities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Ensure pathways have alternatives to steps</li> <li>2) Physical activities are modified so that people of various mobility can participate without being excluded</li> <li>3) Teachers lead classrooms in making girls and boys with disabilities safe and welcome</li> </ol>
Violence towards boys and/or girls at school	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Code of Conduct for teachers</li> <li>2) Strategies for teachers to address bullying and encourage supportive behaviour</li> </ol>



### Step 3: Mobilise resources and plan sustainably

Where an intervention is necessary (that is, when none of the other options are viable), seek funding for a sustainable service. Resources (monetary and human) may be sought from the community to contribute to the sustainability of any interventions.

It is vital that service users understand the planned duration of the service. Implementing agencies must incorporate an exit strategy for the end of the project:

- Be clear to students and families about the duration of the service
- Plan part of the project to assist and build capacity of families and community members in:
  - Mobilising resources to continue the same or a reduced service; and/or
  - Developing local strategies to fill the gaps with available resources (human and financial) before the end of the project

### Step 4: Ensure schools, teachers and other students are prepared for the arrival of new learners, including those with disabilities

- Build the capacity of schools to receive additional students, increasing teaching staff to maintain appropriate teacher: student ratios
- Build the capacity of teachers to meet psychosocial and protection needs of refugee boys and girls, including those with disabilities. This will mean designing different activities with girls and boys depending on their age. Children with disabilities should be included in the groups depending on their gender. Campaigns against bullying should be implemented and involve girls and boys.
- Engage in community mobilisation and sensitisation of host community and refugee students to reduce risk of hostility and violence
- Make the school premises accessible to students with disabilities (e.g. install ramps, proper gravelling)
- Ensure classes are held in accessible locations (for example on the ground floor)
- Make school WASH facilities accessible to girls and boys with disabilities
- Ensure the Code of Conduct includes procedures to address SGBV and other violence, including handling of reports, investigation and consequences for staff. Ensure that staff are regularly updated and that students are aware of procedures to make complaints.

### Step 5: Train personnel

If people outside the family are involved in getting students to school, train them on:

- Child protection and referral systems
- Safety and security
- Emergency procedures
- How to deal with bullying
- Codes of Conduct

Train students on how to make complaints.

Train school staff on the Code of Conduct, how to deal with bullying and how to encourage psychosocial support.



### **Step 6: Seek consent of parents or guardians**

Where a boy or girl's parents or guardians are not involved in the journey to and from school – for example through walking groups, buddy systems or bus transport – they must give written consent.

Agencies providing services that require consent must ensure that students and parents or guardians understand the duration of the service. This is important for bus transport and home schooling. Consider insurance for bus transport.

### **Step 7: Monitor attendance**

- Actual school attendance of boys and girls who use bus transport should be monitored by bus monitors and schools
- Analyse the school attendance before and after bullying campaigns, school modifications etc.

### **Step 8: Implement equitably**

- Access to services should only be based on genuine need, and should acknowledge the particular needs of girls and boys
- Where possible, use solutions that are appropriate for all students within a family

### **Step 9: Review with users**

- Discuss with boys and girls (including those with disabilities) about their level of satisfaction with the strategies and whether they have further suggestions
- Discuss with caregivers their levels of satisfaction and if they have further suggestions
- Discuss with teachers their levels of satisfaction and if they have further suggestions

### **Step 10: Exit gracefully**

In instances where assistance has been provided through funded transport, discuss with the caregivers, teachers and children alternative options for access before the funding period ends.

If no-one is able to provide viable options for safe transport after the completion of funded vehicle-assisted transport it may be worth reconsidering strategies rather than building expectations of an ongoing transport service.

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### Guidance note: How to assist with School Access, Mobility and Transport PART 3: GUIDANCE NOTES

#### Review data on non-attendance

- Use existing data on reasons for non-attendance to guide the identification of appropriate solutions. Consult the [Coordinated Needs Assessment Registry](#)
- Information on how many children are not or irregularly attending school should guide the types of activities considered (see Checklist table for suggested solutions to specific challenges).

#### Assess the needs

- **Transparent assessments:** The purpose of assessments should be clear to humanitarians (aided by coordination) and to participants (aided by inclusive assessment design).
- **Coordinated/joint assessments:** Present a concept note for the proposed assessment to the Education Sector Working Group for peer review, aimed at avoiding duplication and unnecessary data collection. It may be more effective to join assessments with those conducted by other agencies. Case lists may be shared, as long as confidentiality is respected. Consult the [Coordinated Needs Assessment Registry](#) and enter proposed assessments.
- **Participatory assessments:** Learners, families, community members and teachers should be involved in identifying and assessing school access, mobility and transport challenges, supported by humanitarian actors. This also allows for the identification of outreach and capacity building needs.
- **Age and gender sensitive assessments,** considering the specific needs of persons with disabilities.

#### Involve the community in designing school access, mobility and transport solutions

- **Community participation in design:** Learners, families and teachers should lead the identification of appropriate solutions, with assistance from humanitarian actors.
- **Community resources (human and monetary)** may be mobilized to enhance sustainability of projects and local ownership
- **Minimum distance from home to school:** Before looking into other solutions, ensure that a learner is placed in the school closest, or as close as possible, to his or her home. The maximum distance should be in line with local and national standards. When the school is too far from the learner's home, efforts should be made to move him/her closer.
- **Preference for community-based solutions:** Access, mobility and transport solutions which are community-driven and community-based are preferable to external interventions, as they are more sustainable and encourage a sense of ownership. Examples are adult accompaniment, buddy systems, walking groups (see Checklist table).

#### Consider a range of solutions, responsive to reasons for non-attendance and specific needs

When presenting solutions to learners, families, communities and teachers, start with the most preferred solutions (see above). The solutions below are listed in order of preference.

- **Mapping of problem areas and accessible transport routes,** based on information provided by learners and their families. This should allow learners to avoid these areas on their routes to school. This may include, for example, poorly lit routes, or areas where construction is taking place.
- **Adult accompaniment** from within the family for learners to and from school. This should be culturally sensitive (i.e. is it acceptable for mothers to accompany children and return alone, or to leave other children at home? Is it preferable for older siblings to accompany younger learners?)
- **Walking groups** organized by the community, with adult accompaniment. Accompanying adults should be provided with basic training on child protection.
- **Bus transport**



- **Home schooling** may be a viable option when the school is too far or when a learner is not able to attend school because of ill health or severe disability. It is preferable for children to attend school, so home schooling should be considered a last resort.

### Accompany access, mobility and transport solutions with capacity building and outreach activities

#### General or refugee-specific:

- **Capacity of schools to receive additional pupils:** By engaging schools and teachers in the assessment and design phases, they are made aware of an increase in the number of learners, which will allow them to plan accordingly. Ensure to incorporate assistance to schools and teachers to meet increased demands on time and resources *alongside* access, mobility and transport activities.
- **Capacity of teachers to meet the psycho-social and protection needs of refugee children:** Refugee boys and girls may have specific needs for psycho-social services. When learners who benefit from access, mobility and transport solutions are the first refugee learners to join a school, ensure that teachers receive 1) Basic training on identifying psycho-social needs of learners, and 2) Information on child protection and psycho-social services for referral purposes, including contact details.
- **Community mobilization and sensitization of other learners** can reduce the risk of hostility and violence between refugee and host communities. Activities inclusive for all learners are preferable. This is especially important where refugee learners are entering schools for the first time.

#### Learners with disabilities:

- **Accessibility of school WASH facilities:** Ensure that WASH facilities are accessible to learners with disabilities. Seek advice from specialised organisations like UNICEF and Handicap International.
- **Accessibility of school premises:** When access, mobility and transport activities target learners with disabilities, they must be accompanied by an assessment of the school premises and adjustment if necessary (i.e. installation of ramps). If school buildings are spread across several floors, negotiate for classes with learners with disabilities to be held on the ground (or most accessible) floor.
- **Outreach and sensitization.** To help encourage inclusive education, all learners and education personnel should be involved in outreach activities to increase awareness about how to engage with learners with disabilities and how the school environment can be made welcoming and safe.

### Effective referral systems

- **CP/GBV training for teachers and access, mobility or transport personnel:** Include training on the identification of child protection and gender based violence issues in any access, mobility and transport project. Ensure awareness of relevant services and contact details to refer or ask for help.
- **Information on services and assistance available for learners with disabilities:** Teachers and humanitarian personnel should be aware of the range of assistance available to learners with disabilities, and Handicap International and War Child UK consulted with questions.

### Monitoring and evaluation

- **Community involvement in evaluation processes:** The participation of learners, teachers, families and communities in the design of activities should be reflected in evaluations. Useful tools are:
  - Complaints mechanisms connected to referrals mechanisms for child protection and gender based violence. This is especially relevant to bus transport and home schooling.
  - Focus group discussions (only when necessary, to preventing assessment fatigue)
- **Action-oriented evaluation:** Feedback received through evaluation processes should lead to action, where appropriate. Where action is not feasible, the reasons should be explained. Where there are competing demands, priority should be given to child protection or gender-based violence-related issues, and to the learner's right to appropriate education opportunities.



### Guidance note: How to Assist with School Access, Mobility and Transport PART 4: DETAILED GUIDANCE ON SOLUTIONS<sup>3</sup>

#### A. Mapping of problem areas and accessible transport routes

- **Who to involve:** Ensure that learners, teachers, family and community members are involved in the mapping of problem areas on routes to and from school, particular times (such as before sunrise and after sunset) and routes for public transport, with the assistance of humanitarian agencies.
- **What to include in mapping:** Where buses are not available, affordable or accessible; where roads/paths are not useable or too rough/dangerous; where learners feel unsafe.
- **How to use the map:** Teachers may use the map to advise learners and their families on the safest routes to school, and to encourage them to identify alternative solutions (see below); and the map may assist humanitarian agencies and local authorities to take action on infrastructure, road and personal safety on the way to and from school.

#### B. Adult escorts/buddy system

Learners and their families should jointly decide who should accompany learners to and from school. Adult escorts should ideally be within the learners' family, the buddy systems should follow a similar process.

#### C. Walking groups

- Community walking groups are recommended for learners who live within 30 minutes walking distance from school. They are best suited for urban areas, where learners live close together. Groups should be led by 1-2 trained monitors, and maintain a ratio of no more than 10 learners for every monitor, so they can maintain order and safety. It is recommended that children are walked to and from the designated pick-up/drop-off point.
- It is recommended to include both refugee and host community learners in walking groups, as that may strengthen social cohesion and protection efforts. Walking groups can also be linked to other social activities aimed at bringing together Jordanian and Syrian children and parents.
- The monitors should lead walking groups along pre-defined routes, avoiding any heavy-traffic or high-risk areas. The map of problem areas and routes should be used (see above Part 4. A)

#### D. Bus transport

##### Bus monitors

- Two Bus Monitors (one male and one female) should accompany the children to and from school to assist in boarding and alighting, ensure that the registered children are the only passengers, monitor and follow up on school attendance rates, provide referrals where needed, and ensure the overall protection and safety of the children on the vehicle.
- It is highly recommended that the Bus Monitors come from the families of the children with disabilities to ensure familiarity in assisting special needs children.
- Encourage families to have an adult/youth/community volunteer escort children to and from pick-up/drop-off points, to increase protection. Identify this person during the initial registration process.

##### Type of vehicle

- Consider factors like the type of bus, condition of roads, and specific types of disability of passengers when selecting the vehicle of transportation for children with disabilities.
- In light of the narrow and busy streets in camp settings, the minibuses used need to be designed specifically for transporting children with disabilities. They are typically 9 meters long, hold about 16 seats (including two seats at the front for the Bus Monitors and 3 wheelchair securement areas), and have two doors. The bus should be equipped with ramps, seat belts, space for equipment storage,

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<sup>3</sup> The detailed guidance offered in this annex is drawn or adapted from the [INEE Pocket Guide to Supporting Learners with Disabilities](#)





wheelchair securement areas, etc. to meet the special needs of the passengers. Also a first aid kit, a fire extinguisher and basic vehicle repair equipment like spare tires has to be available on the bus.

- Buses should remain near the school after drop-off in case of emergencies that require transport. Outside school hours, buses should be parked in a safe and secure area outside the camp.
- Buses should travel at a maximum speed of 15 km/h inside the camp and 50 km/h on the ring road.

### **Pick-up /Drop-Off Point**

- Children will be picked up at designated, clearly marked points identified based on distance from the passengers' tents, safety of the location, traffic in the area and visibility for pedestrians and driver.
- Buses should never travel off the main roads as unpaved paths are often bumpy, narrow and dangerous for both passengers and pedestrians. For children with severe disabilities, Bus Monitors can provide on-foot assistance to help the child move from its tent to the collection point.

### **Personnel (Monitors and Drivers)**

- Both the Bus Monitors and drivers must be notified of the full implications and range of duties expected of them before selection to avoid problems later on and ensure high retention.
- Handicap International will provide training for Bus Monitor and drivers on pick-up points, route planning, accessibility of vehicles, risk assessment and management, possible complications and emergency procedures, safe lifting/handling, first aid training, encouraging independence, etc.
- War Child UK will provide training on the Interagency Emergency SOPS on GBV and CP, and ensure drivers and bus monitors sign a CP Policy/Code of Conduct/Child safe guarding policy.
- Bus personnel should also be trained on the UNHCR relocation and evacuation plan used in camp settings.

### **Emergency Contingency Plan**

- All children should always carry an emergency medical information card including their parents' mobile phone numbers. These cards will be completed at the time of registration and a copy should be kept on the bus. Transport personnel should keep all learner information confidential.
- Insurance for the passengers and the bus, and periodic bus evacuation drills are recommended.

### **Access Routes**

- In order to ensure safe and secure access routes, road threats including dangerous road sections, high traffic areas, changing weather conditions, blocked roads and protests should be identified early on and constantly monitored. Drivers should be aware of alternative routes in the case of an emergency. If threats arise, transportation should be postponed until the danger subsides.
- Drivers and Bus Monitors should receive updated information from camp security personnel via the existing mass text message system. As an extra precaution, the bus drivers and monitors are recommended to be trained in using handheld radios in case of a mobile phone network failure.

## **E. Home schooling:**

- MoE's regulations allow students - *any child who attends school regularly and confronts a crucial condition (health, medical, social and are evidenced by accredited report or documents)- to convert to the home-schooling program until the circumstances are over.*
- The needs assessment should identify learners who are unable to attend school, even with the access, mobility and transport solutions discussed above. Reasons may include recent injury and long recovery periods and long-term illness preventing movement. Care should be taken, in collecting this information, not to endanger those providing information or causing tensions, particularly when the reasons for being home-bound are gender-related. Reference to recent assessments and strategies on home-bound women and girls is important.
- Teachers should prepare work to be completed at home, and taken by other learners living close to the home-bound learner.
- Encourage teachers and school principals to plan when and how to bring learners who are at home into school. Especially when children or young people have been injured. In the short term, this will mean being flexible about enrolment dates, and deciding which class is most appropriate. Reference should also be made to the Ministry of Education non-formal education programme.



## Guidance note: How to Assist with School Access, Mobility and Transport PART 5: BENEFICIARY SELECTION

### Camp settings

Criteria for the selection of children with disabilities to benefit from assistance should be based on vulnerability. Handicap International, Mercy Corps, and War Child UK select vulnerability criteria according to the type and severity of disability, in addition to other vulnerability factors such as age, disease, gender, children without appropriate care, children working on the streets, female-headed households, etc.

While the children with the greatest need for transportation assistance will be considered, it is equally important to assess whether the buses and staff are adequately equipped to transport the child without putting the child and/or other passengers at further risk. The following questions should be considered:

- Can the child be safely transported given the context where he/she lives in and length of the ride with undue risk to him/herself or others?
- Does the child have medical, physical or mental concerns that would expose him/her to unreasonable risk given the anticipated transportation environment?
- Can the child be adequately accommodated during the transportation given resources available (monitors, bus, equipment, etc.)?

### Selection Criteria:

Priority	Mercy Corps	Handicap International
1	All children with disabilities under 12 years old	Girl who has physical disability
2	Children with severe disabilities (if there is a running program for them)	Boy who has physical disability
3	A girl with physical disability above 12 years	Blind or low vision girl
4	A boy with physical disability above 12 years	Blind or low vision boy
5	Blind or low vision girl above 12 years	Girl and boy with hearing impairment
6	Blind or low vision boy above 12 years	Girl and boy who has mental disability (mild to moderate)
7	A girl with mental retardation above 12 years	Severe cases
8	A boy with mental retardation above 12 years	
9	A girl with hearing impairment above 12 years	
10	A boy with hearing impairment above 12 years	

### Non-camp settings

Before determining household/individual vulnerability and eligibility, it may be advisable for project staff to select an appropriate geographic area to target. “Appropriateness” may be determined as follows:

- A neighbourhood that has an assessed number of school-age children in need of school transportation in line with the number of beneficiaries that a service provider can support.
- A neighbourhood where both Syrian and Jordanian children have been admitted into schools that are too far from their homes.<sup>4</sup>

Service providers must avoid creating or exacerbating conflict within neighbourhoods. For example, if one household’s school-age children are assisted with school transportation, then a neighbouring household’s

<sup>4</sup> It is highly recommended to coordinate with other NGOs and UN agencies specialised in education and children’s services, as well as the Ministry of Education, when exploring suitable target areas for school transport interventions. This will also help avoid overlap and assistance gaps.



school-age children (with similar vulnerabilities/eligibility) should also receive assistance. This is one more reason why the determination of the best target area and criteria for beneficiary selection is crucial.

Beneficiary selection should focus on the children of extremely vulnerable households. Service providers are suggested to use the vulnerability criteria used by the Cash Assistance Working Group to evaluate household vulnerability. Vulnerability will focus on the following criteria:

- Female-headed households
- Low to no-income households
- Elderly or disabled-headed households
- Households where one member (or more) has a severe health condition
- Households facing significant protection risks

Individual child vulnerability can be further refined to focus on:

- Gender
- Disability or other special needs
- At risk for child labour<sup>5</sup>, exploitation, or other protection risks

Please note that while individual child vulnerability criteria is included above, it is not recommended for some school age children in a household to receive school transportation assistance while other school age children in the same household do not. Rather, individual vulnerability will increase the eligibility of all school age children in that household to access school transportation assistance.

While children with disabilities should be considered for inclusion in school transportation assistance projects, participation in non-camp settings must be balanced with a realistic assessment of whether or not schools will be physically accessible to children with disabilities once they arrive as well as prepared to provide dignified educational services to those with special needs. The principle of "do no harm" must also be applied to the safety, security and dignity of CWDs during and after transport.

With regard to the care of children while in transit, buses and personnel must be adequately equipped to transport the children to and from school every day without putting the children and/or other passengers at further risk. In order to ensure this, the following questions should be considered:

- Can the child be safely transported given the transportation environment and length of the ride without undue risk to itself or others?
- Does the child have medical, physical or mental concerns that would expose it to unreasonable risks given the anticipated transportation environment?
- Can the child be adequately accommodated during the transportation given the limited resources available (monitors, chaperones, bus, equipment, etc.)?

Criteria will be shared with those assessed and general surveys will be conducted during the pre-registration phase for the school bus service. A selection list will be developed on the basis of the above mentioned criteria. Children meeting one or more criteria will have priority to access the service.

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<sup>5</sup> The use of "child labour" as a criteria for vulnerability must be handled with a high degree of discretion, in part to avoid unintentionally creating incentives for children (or households) to engage in (or encourage) child labour activities, that is, moving children into the labour market in an attempt to become eligible for assistance.