What is Sphere?

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The Sphere Project and its Handbook are well known for introducing considerations of quality and accountability to humanitarian response. But what are the origins of the Sphere Project? What are its philosophy and approach? How and why was this Handbook conceived? What is its place in the wider realm of humanitarian action? And who should use it and when? This chapter strives to provide some answers to these key questions. Furthermore, it details the Handbook structure and explains how to use it and how you or your organisation can conform to the Sphere minimum standards.

The Sphere Project philosophy: The right to life with dignity

The Sphere Project – or 'Sphere' – was initiated in 1997 by a group of humanitarian non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. Their aim was to improve the quality of their actions during disaster response and to be held accountable for them. They based Sphere's philosophy on **two core beliefs**: first, that those affected by disaster or conflict have a right to life with dignity and, therefore, a right to assistance; and second, that all possible steps should be taken to alleviate human suffering arising out of disaster or conflict.

Striving to support these two core beliefs, the Sphere Project framed a Humanitarian Charter and identified a set of **minimum standards** in key life-saving sectors which are now reflected in the Handbook's four technical chapters: water supply, sanitation and hygiene promotion; food security and nutrition; shelter, settlement and non-food items; and health action. The **Core Standards** are process standards and apply to all technical chapters.

The minimum standards are evidence-based and represent sector-wide consensus on best practice in humanitarian response. Key actions, key indicators and guidance notes (described in the 'How to use the standards' section below) accompany each standard, providing guidance on how to attain the standard.

The minimum standards describe conditions that must be achieved in any humanitarian response in order for disaster-affected populations to survive and recover in stable conditions and with dignity. The **inclusion of affected populations** in the consultative process lies at the heart of Sphere's philosophy. The Sphere Project, consequently, was one of the first of what are now known as the **quality and accountability** (Q&A) initiatives.

The Humanitarian Charter and the minimum standards are published together as a **Handbook**, the latest edition of which you are reading now. The Sphere Handbook is designed for planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation during humanitarian response. It is also an effective advocacy tool when negotiating for humanitarian space and for the provision of resources with authorities. Furthermore, it is useful for disaster preparedness activities and contingency planning, with donors increasingly including the standards in their reporting requirements.

Because it is not owned by any one organisation, the Handbook enjoys broad acceptance by the humanitarian sector as a whole. It has become one of the most widely known and internationally recognised sets of standards for humanitarian response and is used as an inter-agency communication and coordination tool.

First published in 2000, the Handbook was revised in 2003 and again in 2009–2010. During each revision process, sector-wide consultations were conducted, involving a wide range of agencies, organisations and individuals, including governments and United Nations (UN) agencies.

The principal users of the Sphere Handbook are practitioners involved in planning, managing or implementing a humanitarian response. This includes staff and volunteers of local, national and international humanitarian agencies. In the context of fund-raising and project proposals, the minimum standards are also frequently referred to.

Other actors, such as government and local authorities, the military or the private sector, are also encouraged to use the Sphere Handbook. It may be useful in guiding their own actions, but also in helping them to understand the standards used by the humanitarian agencies with whom they may interact.

The Handbook: A reflection of Sphere's values

The Handbook structure reflects Sphere's aim to firmly anchor humanitarian response in a rights-based and participatory approach.

Humanitarian Charter, Protection Principles and Core Standards

The Humanitarian Charter, the Protection Principles and the Core Standards articulate Sphere's rights-based and people-centred approach to humanitarian response. They focus on the importance of including the affected population and local and national authorities at all stages of the response. The Protection Principles and Core Standards are grouped together at the beginning of the Handbook so as to avoid repeating them in each technical chapter. Sphere users, including specialists in one particular technical area, must consider them as an integral part of these chapters.

The cornerstone of the Handbook is the **Humanitarian Charter** (accompanied by a descriptive list of key legal and policy documents in Annex 1 on page 356). It provides the ethical and legal backdrop to the Protection Principles, as well as to the Core Standards and minimum standards, thereby setting the stage for their correct interpretation and implementation. It is a statement of established legal rights and obligations and of shared beliefs and commitments of humanitarian agencies, all collected in a set of **common principles, rights and duties**. Founded on the principle of humanity and the humanitarian imperative, these include the right to life with dignity, the right to receive humanitarian assistance and the right to protection and security. The Charter also emphasises the importance of agency **accountability to affected communities**. The Core Standards and minimum standards are an articulation of what these principles and obligations mean in practice.

The Humanitarian Charter explains why both assistance and protection are critical pillars of humanitarian action. To further develop this protection aspect, the Handbook includes a set of **Protection Principles**, which translates several of the legal principles and rights outlined in the Charter into strategies and actions that should inform humanitarian practice from a protection perspective. Protection is a core part of humanitarian action and the Protection Principles point to the responsibility of all humanitarian agencies to ensure that their activities are concerned with the more severe threats that affected people commonly face in times of conflict or disaster.

All humanitarian agencies should ensure that their actions do not bring further harm to affected people (Protection Principle 1), that their activities benefit in particular those who are most affected and vulnerable (Protection Principle 2), that they contribute to protecting affected people from violence and other human rights abuses (Protection Principle 3) and that they help affected people recover from abuses (Protection Principle 4). The roles and responsibilities of humanitarian agencies in protection are, generally, secondary to the legal responsibility of the state or other relevant authorities. Protection often involves reminding these authorities of their responsibilities.

The **Core Standards** are the first set of minimum standards and inform all others. They describe how the processes and approaches taken during a humanitarian response are fundamental to an effective response. A focus on the capacity and active participation of those affected by disaster or conflict, a comprehensive analysis and understanding of needs and context, effective coordination among agencies, a commitment to continually improving performance, and appropriately skilled and supported aid workers are all essential in order to attain the technical standards.

The Protection Principles and Core Standards are grouped together at the beginning of the Handbook so as to avoid repeating them in each technical chapter. They underpin all humanitarian activity and **must be used in conjunction with the technical chapters**. They are critical to achieving the technical standards in a spirit of quality and accountability to the affected populations.

The Core Standards and the minimum standards in four technical chapters

The Core Standards and minimum standards cover approaches to programming and four sets of life-saving activities: water supply, sanitation and hygiene promotion; food security and nutrition; shelter, settlement and non-food items; and health action.

How to use the standards

The Core Standards and minimum standards follow a specific format. They begin with a general and universal statement – the minimum standard – followed by a series of key actions, key indicators and guidance notes.

First, the **minimum standard** is stated. Each standard is derived from the principle that disaster-affected populations have the right to life with dignity. They are qualitative in nature and specify the minimum levels to be attained in humanitarian response. Their scope is universal and applicable in any disaster situation. They are, therefore, formulated in general terms.

Next, practical **key actions** are suggested, to attain the minimum standard. Some actions may not be applicable in all contexts, and it is up to the practitioner to select the relevant actions and devise alternative actions that will result in the standard being met.

Then, a set of **key indicators** serves as 'signals' that show whether a standard has been attained. They provide a way of measuring and communicating the processes and results of key actions. The key indicators relate to the minimum standard, not to the key action.

Finally, **guidance notes** include context-specific points to consider when aiming at reaching the key actions and key indicators. They provide guidance on tackling practical difficulties, benchmarks or advice on priority and cross-cutting themes. They may also include critical issues relating to the standards, actions or indicators and describe dilemmas, controversies or gaps in current knowledge. They do **not** provide guidance as to **how to** implement a specific activity.

Brief **introductions to each chapter** set out the major relevant issues. The technical minimum standards chapters further contain appendices including, for example, assessment checklists, formulas, tables and examples of report forms. Each chapter ends with references and suggestions for further reading. A detailed glossary for each of the Handbook chapters is available on the Sphere website (www.sphereproject.org).

All the chapters are interconnected. Frequently, standards described in one sector need to be addressed in conjunction with standards described in others. As a result, the Handbook contains numerous cross-references.

Conforming with the Sphere minimum standards

The Sphere Handbook is a voluntary code and a self-regulatory tool for quality and accountability, and the Sphere Project does not operate any compliance mechanism. There is no such thing as 'signing up' to Sphere, a Sphere membership or any process of accreditation. The Sphere Project has consciously opted for the Handbook not to be prescriptive or compliance-oriented, in order to encourage the broadest possible ownership of the Handbook.

The Handbook does not offer practical guidance on how to provide certain services (the key actions suggest activities to reach a standard without specifying how to do that). Rather, it explains **what needs to be in place** in order to ensure a life with dignity for the affected population. It is, therefore, up to each implementing agency to choose a system to ensure conformance with the Sphere minimum standards. Some agencies have used purely internal mechanisms, while others have opted for peer review. Some agency networks have used Sphere to evaluate their collective response in particular emergencies.

Conforming with Sphere does not mean meeting all the standards and indicators. The degree to which agencies can meet standards will depend on a range of factors, some of which are outside their control. Sometimes difficulties of access to the affected population, lack of cooperation from the authorities or severe insecurity make standards impossible to meet.

If the general living conditions of an affected population were already significantly below the minimum standards before the disaster, agencies may have insufficient resources to meet the standards. In such situations, providing basic facilities for the entire affected population may be more important than reaching the minimum standards for only a proportion.

Sometimes the minimum standards may exceed everyday living conditions for the surrounding population. Adhering to the standards for disaster-affected populations remains essential. But such situations may also indicate the need for action in support of the surrounding population and for dialogue with community leaders. What is appropriate and feasible will depend on the context.

In cases where the standards cannot be met, humanitarian agencies should:

- describe in their reports (assessment, evaluation, etc.) the gap between the relevant Sphere indicators and the ones reached in practice
- explain the reasons for this and what needs to be changed
- assess the negative implications for the affected population
- take appropriate mitigating actions to minimise the harm caused by these implications.

By committing to the above steps, agencies demonstrate that they are conforming with Sphere's philosophy and its minimum standards even if they are unable to meet them as set out in the Handbook.

The place of Sphere within humanitarian action

The Sphere Handbook is designed for use during humanitarian response in a range of situations including natural disasters, conflict, slow- and rapid-onset events, rural and urban environments, and complex political emergencies in all countries. The term 'disaster' encompasses these situations, and where appropriate, the term 'conflict' is used. 'Population' refers to individuals, families, communities and broader groups. Consequently, we commonly use 'disaster-affected population' throughout the Handbook.

When to use this Handbook

Focusing on the period of **humanitarian response**, the Sphere minimum standards cover activities which meet the urgent survival needs of disaster-affected populations. This phase can range from a few days or weeks to many months and even years, particularly in contexts involving protracted insecurity and displacement. It is, therefore, impossible to assign a particular timeframe to the usefulness of the Sphere standards.

The Handbook does, however, have a specific place within the broader realm of **humanitarian action**, which goes beyond providing immediate relief and covers a spectrum of activities that starts with disaster preparedness, then includes humanitarian response, and finally extends into early recovery. As a reference tool, the Handbook is useful in both the disaster preparedness and the early recovery phases which conceptually 'frame' humanitarian response but in reality need to be considered simultaneously.

Disaster preparedness requires that actors – governments, humanitarian agencies, local civil society organisations, communities and individuals – have the capacities, relationships and knowledge to prepare for and respond effectively to disaster or conflict. Before and during a response, they should start taking actions that will improve preparedness and reduce risk for the future. They should be prepared, at least, to meet the Sphere minimum standards during a future disaster.

Early recovery is the process following relief and leading into long-term recovery and is most effective if anticipated and facilitated from the very outset of a humanitarian response. Recognising the importance of early recovery, the Handbook makes reference to it throughout and as appropriate.

Developments in the humanitarian sector and their implications for Sphere

A number of developments in the humanitarian sector and other relevant areas have arisen over the past few years, encompassing changes in the nature of disasters and conflicts, as well as of humanitarian work. The developments considered during the Handbook revision process include:

- a growing conceptual and operational focus on local and national responses with the awareness that affected populations must be consulted and the response capacities of the crisis-affected state and national agencies and institutions must be reinforced
- more proactive accountability of humanitarian action, in particular accountability to affected populations, but also more proactive coordination, including within the humanitarian reform process (cluster approach), under the auspices of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC)
- an increased focus on protection issues and responses
- increasing awareness of potentially large-scale forced migration due to climate change-induced disasters and an awareness that environmental degradation increases vulnerability
- the recognition that poor urban populations are growing rapidly and that they have specific vulnerabilities, in particular related to the money economy, social cohesion and physical space

- new approaches to aid, such as cash and voucher transfers and local purchases replacing in-kind shipments of humanitarian assistance
- an increased recognition of disaster risk reduction as both a sector and an approach
- an increased involvement of the military in humanitarian response, a set of actors not primarily driven by the humanitarian imperative, requiring the development of specific guidelines and coordination strategies for humanitarian civil–military dialogue
- an increased involvement of the private sector in humanitarian response requiring similar guidelines and strategies as the civil–military dialogue.

The Sphere Project includes these developments in the Handbook as appropriate – in particular the **emerging issues** of cash transfers, early recovery and civil–military relations.

Understanding the context during humanitarian response

Effective humanitarian response must be based on a comprehensive, contextualised diagnosis (assessment, monitoring and evaluation), in order to **analyse people's needs, vulnerabilities and capacities in each context.**

The Handbook is essentially designed as a tool to recognise different contexts and to adapt response programmes accordingly: it guides practitioners in their reflections around reaching a universally applicable standard in a concrete situation or context, with particular focus on specific vulnerabilities and capacities.

Not all individuals within a disaster-affected population have equal control of resources and power. People are, therefore, impacted differently on the basis of their ethnic origin, religious or political affiliation. Displacement may make vulnerable certain people who in normal situations would not have been at risk. Women, children, older people, persons with disabilities or people living with HIV may be denied vital assistance or the opportunity to be heard due to physical, cultural and/or social barriers. Experience has shown that treating these people as a long list of 'vulnerable groups' can lead to fragmented and ineffective interventions, which ignore overlapping vulnerabilities and the changing nature of vulnerabilities over time, even during one specific crisis.

Relief and recovery efforts must also consider future hazards and vulnerabilities in order to build communities back safer and promote stronger resilience. In many parts of the world, climate change is already beginning to have an impact on patterns of risk; traditional knowledge of hazards, vulnerabilities and capacities needs to be combined with assessments of future climate risks.

In order to do justice to each unique disaster situation and the particular vulnerabilities and capabilities of the affected population, the Handbook addresses a number of **cross-cutting themes**. The themes relating to **children, gender, older people, HIV and AIDS, persons with disabilities,** and **psychosocial support** deal with individual and subgroup vulnerabilities. **Disaster risk reduction** (including **climate change**) and **environment** address vulnerability issues affecting the entire affected population. At the end of this introduction, each theme is described in more detail.

Links with other humanitarian standards

In order to maintain the Sphere Handbook as a single volume of manageable size, the focus remains on the four primary sectors of humanitarian response. Many related sectors which are part of an effective humanitarian response have developed their own standards. A number of them are included in a series of **Sphere companion standards**, published as separate volumes but developed with the same rigor and process of consultation as Sphere – the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) Minimum Standards for Education: Preparedness, Response, Recovery; the Small Enterprise Education and Promotion (SEEP) Network's Minimum Standards for Economic Recovery after Crisis; and the Livestock Emergency Guidelines and Standards (LEGS).

Education in emergencies can be both life-sustaining and life-saving. Provided in safe spaces, it offers a sense of normalcy, psychosocial support and protection against exploitation and harm. It can also be used to communicate messages about safety, life skills and vital health and hygiene information. The INEE Minimum Standards for Education: Preparedness, Response, Recovery were first published in 2004 and updated in 2010, becoming companion standards to Sphere in 2008. They present a framework to ensure critical linkages between education and health, water, sanitation and hygiene, nutrition, shelter and protection and to enhance the safety, quality and accountability of educational preparedness and response.

Small enterprise development and livestock are covered by the SEEP Network's Minimum Standards for Economic Recovery after Crisis and the Livestock Emergency Guidelines and Standards respectively. It is anticipated that these two sets of minimum standards will become Sphere companion standards in 2011.

Used together with this Handbook, the companion standards will improve the quality of assistance provided to people affected by disaster or conflict. Relevant guidance from the INEE, SEEP and LEGS standards has been integrated and is cross-referenced throughout this Handbook.

Agencies, coalitions and networks have established other standards and codes to meet particular operational needs, such as specific agencies' mandates, technical expertise or a perceived gap in guidance. Where relevant, these other standards are referenced in the technical chapters of this Handbook.

The Sphere Project is part of a group of **quality and accountability initiatives** within the sector, having a close working relationship with the Emergency Capacity Building (ECB) Project, which has developed the Good Enough Guide, and the Humanitarian Accountability Partnership (HAP), which deals with compliance issues through its Humanitarian Accountability and Quality Management Standard. Other Q&A initiatives with which Sphere regularly engages are People In Aid, Groupe URD (Urgence, Réhabilitation, Développement), Coordination Sud and the Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Action (ALNAP).

Beyond the Handbook

The Sphere Project's primary and most used tool is this Handbook. It is also available in electronic format on the Sphere website (www.sphereproject.org), where you can get the latest news and updates about the available versions and other resources.

The Handbook exists in numerous languages and is accompanied by various training and promotional materials. These are often adapted to local contexts on the basis of the experience of practitioners. This illustrates the vibrancy of the Sphere community of practice, a sometimes informal, loosely connected and ever-expanding network of practitioners that keep the spirit of Sphere alive. The Sphere Project is founded on the need to help improve the humanitarian response to meet the rights and needs of disaster- or conflict-affected people and to be accountable to them. The Sphere Project has made great progress since its inception, but no Handbook alone can achieve this – only you can.

Outline of the cross-cutting themes

The cross-cutting themes in this Handbook focus on particular areas of concern in disaster response and address individual, group or general vulnerability issues. In this section, each theme is described in some detail.

Children: Special measures must be taken to ensure all children are protected from harm and given equitable access to basic services. As children often form the larger part of an affected population, it is crucial that their views and experiences are not only elicited during emergency assessments and planning but that they also influence humanitarian service delivery and its monitoring and evaluation. Children and young people are prone to the harmful impact of vulnerability in certain situations, such as malnutrition, exploitation, abduction and recruitment into armed groups and fighting forces, sexual violence and lack of opportunity to participate in decision-making. The Convention on the Rights of the Child states that a child is considered to be an individual below the age of 18 years. This definition can differ depending on cultural and social contexts. A thorough analysis of how an affected population defines children must be undertaken, to ensure that no child or young person is excluded from humanitarian assistance.

Disaster risk reduction: This is defined as the concept and practice of reducing disaster risks through systematic efforts to analyse and manage the causal factors of disasters, including through reduced exposure to hazards, lessened vulnerability of people and property, wise management of land and the environment, and improved preparedness for adverse events. Such adverse events include natural disasters like storms, floods, droughts and sea-level rise. As they appear to become increasingly variable and severe, these phenomena are increasingly attributed to global **climate change**.

Environment: The environment is understood as the physical, chemical and biological elements and processes that affect disaster-affected and local populations' lives and livelihoods. It provides the natural resources that sustain individuals and contributes to quality of life. It needs protection and management if essential functions are to be maintained. The minimum standards address the need to prevent over-exploitation, pollution and degradation of environmental conditions and aim to secure the life-supporting functions of the environment, reduce risk and vulnerability and seek to introduce mechanisms that foster adaptability of natural systems for self-recovery.

Gender: Gender refers to the fact that people experience a situation differently according to their gender. **Sex** refers to biological attributes of women and men. It is natural, determined by birth and, therefore, generally unchanging and universal.

The equal rights of women and men are explicit in the human rights documents that form the basis of the Humanitarian Charter. Women and men have the same entitlement to humanitarian assistance and protection, to respect for their human dignity, to acknowledgement of their equal human capacities including the capacity to make choices, to the same opportunities to act on those choices and to the same level of power to shape the outcome of their actions. Humanitarian responses are more effective when they are based on an understanding of the different needs, vulnerabilities, interests, capacities and coping strategies of women and men, girls and boys of all ages and the differing impacts of disaster or conflict upon them. The understanding of these differences, as well as inequalities in women's and men's roles and workloads, access to and control over resources, decision-making power and opportunities for skills development, is achieved through gender analysis. Gender cuts across other cross-cutting themes. The humanitarian aims of proportionality and impartiality mean that attention must be paid to achieving fairness between women and men and ensuring equality of outcome. Historically, attention to gender relations has been driven by the need to address women's and girls' needs and circumstances, as women and girls are typically more disadvantaged than men and boys. However, increasingly, the humanitarian community recognises the need to understand what men and boys face in crisis situations.

HIV and AIDS: Knowing the HIV prevalence in a specific humanitarian context is important to understand vulnerabilities and risks and to plan an effective response. In addition to the most at-risk populations (i.e. men who have sex with men, intravenous drug users and sex workers), who often need to receive specific measures to protect themselves against neglect, discrimination and violence, some contexts may have other vulnerable groups such as refugees, migrants, youth and single mothers. Mass displacement may lead to increased HIV vulnerabilities and risks due to separation of family members and breakdown of community cohesion and of social and sexual norms regulating behaviour. Women and children may be exploited by armed groups and be particularly vulnerable to HIV due to sexual violence and exploitation. During humanitarian emergencies, people may no longer have access to HIV interventions such as prevention programmes and the disruption of anti-retroviral

therapy (ART), tuberculosis (TB) treatment and prevention and treatment for other opportunistic infections may occur.

People living with HIV (PLHIV) often suffer from discrimination and stigma and, therefore, confidentiality must be strictly adhered to and protection made available when needed. The sector activities in this Handbook should provide appropriate HIV interventions according to prevalence and context, and not increase people's vulnerabilities and risks to HIV.

Older people: Older men and women are those aged over 60 years, according to the UN, but a definition of 'older' can vary in different contexts. Older people are often among the poorest in developing countries and comprise a large and growing proportion of the most vulnerable in disaster- or conflict-affected populations (for example, the over-80s are the fastest-growing age group in the world) and yet they are often neglected in disaster or conflict management. Isolation and physical weakness are significant factors exacerbating vulnerability in older people in disasters or conflict, along with disruption to livelihood strategies and to family and community support structures, chronic health and mobility problems, and declining mental health. Special efforts must be made to identify and reach housebound older people and households headed by older people. Older people also have key contributions to make in survival and rehabilitation. They play vital roles as carers of children, resource managers and income generators, have knowledge and experience of community coping strategies and help to preserve cultural and social identities.

Persons with disabilities: The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that between 7 and 10 per cent of the world's population – including children and older people – live with disabilities. Disasters and conflict can cause increased incidence of impairment and subsequent disability. The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) defines disability as an evolving concept that results from the interaction between persons with impairments (which may be physical, sensory, intellectual or psychosocial) and the attitudinal and environmental barriers that hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others. It is, therefore, the presence of these barriers that prevent persons with disabilities from fully and meaningfully participating in, or benefiting from, mainstream humanitarian assistance programmes. The new CRPD makes specific reference to the safety and protection of persons with disabilities in conflict and emergency situations (Article 11).

Persons with disabilities face disproportionate risks in disaster situations and are often excluded from relief and rehabilitation processes. Such exclusion makes it more difficult to effectively use and participate in standard disaster support services. Importantly, persons with disabilities are a diverse population including children and older people, whose needs cannot be addressed in a 'one size fits all' approach. Humanitarian responses, therefore, must take into consideration the particular abilities, skills, resources and knowledge of individuals with different types and degrees of impairments. It is also important to remember that persons with disabilities have the same basic needs as everyone else in their communities. In addition, some may also have specific needs, such as replacement of aids or appliances, and access to rehabilitation services. Furthermore, any measures targeting persons with disabilities must not lead to their separation from their family and community networks. Finally, if the rights of persons with disabilities are not taken into consideration in humanitarian responses, a huge opportunity is lost to rebuild communities for all people. It is essential, therefore, to include persons with disabilities in all aspects of relief and recovery. This requires both mainstreamed and targeted responses.

Psychosocial support: Some of the greatest sources of vulnerability and suffering in disasters arise from the complex emotional, social, physical and spiritual effects of disasters. Many of these reactions are normal and can be overcome with time. It is essential to organise locally appropriate mental health and psychosocial supports that promote self-help, coping and resilience among affected people. Humanitarian action is strengthened if at the earliest appropriate moment, affected people are engaged in guiding and implementing the disaster response. In each humanitarian sector, the manner in which aid is administered has a psychosocial impact that may either support or cause harm to affected people. Aid should be delivered in a compassionate manner that promotes dignity, enables self-efficacy through meaningful participation, respects the importance of religious and cultural practices and strengthens the ability of affected people to support holistic well-being.

References

UN Convention on the Rights of the Child: www2.ohchr.org/english/law/crc.htm

UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities: www.un.org/disabilities/

WHO on disabilities: www.who.int/disabilities/en/