

Facilitator Guide



**Infant and Young Child Feeding in Emergencies Counseling
Training Package for Frontline Workers**

2025

INTRODUCING THE IYCF-E SESSIONS:

ADDRESSING STRESS AND SUPPORTING CAREGIVERS AFFECTED BY GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

About these sessions

These two sessions are drawn from the *Infant and Young Child Feeding in Emergencies (IYCF-E) Counseling Training Package for Frontline Workers*. The full package aims to strengthen the capacity of frontline workers to deliver effective, inclusive, and context-appropriate IYCF counseling in humanitarian contexts. It complements the *UNICEF Community IYCF Counseling Package* by building on its foundational skills and applying them to emergency settings, where caregivers and infants face additional risks, disruptions, and stressors.

This combined section includes two sessions, **Addressing Stress in Emergencies** and **Supporting GBV Survivors in IYCF-E**, which have been selected for integration into the *Disability-Inclusive Nutrition Services* training. Each session explores advanced counseling skills relevant in both emergency contexts and in situations where caregivers or their children are living with a disability, highlighting how stress, trauma, and violence can affect IYCF practices and caregiver well-being.

Relevance to Disability-Inclusive Nutrition Services

Caregivers of children with disabilities often face heightened stress, stigma, and barriers to accessing support, and these challenges also overlap with those encountered in humanitarian or GBV-related situations. These two sessions help participants recognize and respond to emotional distress, trauma, and protection concerns that may arise during IYCF counseling, including among caregivers of children with disabilities. By developing trauma-informed and survivor-centered approaches, participants will also strengthen their ability to create inclusive, safe, and empathetic counseling environments for all caregivers.

Structure and learning approach

Each session follows the same five-step structure as the full IYCF-E package:

STEP	1	Set the scene	Begin with a realistic scenario that connects the topic to an emergency setting. Use short discussions to help participants relate the situation to their work.
STEP	2	Strengthen key knowledge, concepts, and skills	Present the technical content and counseling considerations linked to the session objectives. Use visuals, short inputs, and examples to keep it interactive.
STEP	3	Demonstrate	Model key skills in a short role play between two facilitators. Highlight effective communication, empathy, and adaptation to an emergency context.
STEP	4	Participant role-play	Guide participants to practice in small groups of three (counselor, caregiver, observer). Circulate to observe, support, and give feedback.
STEP	5	Self-reflection	Close with individual reflection and/or group discussion. Encourage participants to identify strengths, areas to improve, and actions to apply learning in their daily work.

Each session lasts approximately two to two and a half hours and includes opportunities for practice, reflection, and feedback. The sessions assume that participants already have basic IYCF counseling skills, ideally gained through the *UNICEF Community IYCF Counseling Package*. Short refreshers on key skills are integrated throughout the activities rather than delivered as a separate component.

To keep practice focused and manageable, three core counseling skills are emphasized per session. This allows participants to concentrate on specific communication behaviors and integrate new, advanced skills more effectively. However, in real-life counseling, all foundational skills should be applied together to ensure high-quality, responsive support to caregivers.

Refer to the Participant handbook for a summary of the *basic counseling skills* and the *three-step counseling process* (the 3A: Assess–Analyze–Act), which provide the foundation for all role plays and discussions in this training.

It is important to remind participants that using calm, respectful, and non-judgmental language takes practice. Encourage them to experiment with tone, phrasing, and empathy during role plays, and to reflect on what feels natural or challenging. Supportive communication helps caregivers feel safe, respected, and open to guidance.

Trauma-Informed Care

Across all sessions, a Trauma-Informed Care (TIC) approach is emphasized. TIC supports safe, respectful, and supportive interactions with caregivers, recognizing the impact of distressing experiences. For the full definition and principles of TIC, refer to the Participant handbook.

Using this material

This section includes:

- A **Facilitator Guide** leading the trainer step by step. It contains detailed instructions, scripts, and facilitation tips.
- A **Participant Handbook** containing key messages, definitions, and activity materials for learners.

Trainers should use both files together. It is recommended to print both in color for clarity and engagement. There are no slides for these sessions; facilitators may project pages from the Participant Handbook on a wall or screen as visual support during activities.

Regulation Practice

Because the topics in these sessions can be emotionally intense, short stress regulation techniques are included to support participants' self-care and focus. Trainers are encouraged to incorporate 2–3 minute micro-practices throughout the training, for example:

- At the start of a session to set a calm tone
- After heavy discussions to process emotions
- After lunch to refresh energy and refocus
- Before role-play exercises to center participants
- At the end of the day to help consolidate learning

For the full set of techniques, see *Annex 1: Emotional regulation practices* (Participant handbook).

Contextualization

Facilitators are encouraged to contextualize examples, terminology, and referral pathways to reflect local systems and available services. Editable Word versions of the files are available upon request at:

iycfe@savethechildren.org