Guidance on the Humanitarian Programme Cycle for Protection Clusters

This document provides guidance to Protection Clusters with regards to the Humanitarian Planning Cylce for 2015, in particular the Humanitarian Needs Overview ("HNO"), the Strategic Response Plan ("SRP") and the Periodic Monitoring Report ("PMR"). For any questions on this guidance, please contact the Global Protection Cluster Support Cell (GPC Support Cell), gpc@unhcr.org.

Key messages

- Ensure a **comprehensive analysis** of the protection situation (national and sub-national levels); avoid any silo-effect and highlight linkages between thematic topics (child protection and documentation, GBV and health, land conflicts and displacement patterns, etc.);
- The humanitarian **objectives are strategic** in that they prioritize critical protection concerns that characterize the humanitarian crisis;
- The cluster response plans are framed as part of one multi-sectoral plan of core responses yielding **protection outcomes.**

Be prepared

To give enough time to engage in an in-depth analysis and strategic planning (including consultations with the sub-national level coordination structures and all partners) it is strongly recommended to have, at a minimum, the following information ready for all existing protection coordination structures in your specific operation <u>before</u> the planning for the next year's program cycle starts:

- Information (priorities, needs etc.) from your **Protection Cluster Strategy**;
- Updated and comprehensive **3W** (who is doing what where and when; ideally including main areas of activities by thematic topic)[1];
- Updated and comprehensive **contact list** of all cluster members[2];
- **Assessment registry** (updated summary of relevant participatory assessments, evaluations, analysis done by cluster members throughout the year)[3]

Background documents

Detailed guidance on the overall process to be followed by all clusters can be found:

- **Humanitarian Needs Overview Guidance (HNO) 2015**: click here
- **Strategic Response Plan Guidance (SRP) 2015**: click here
- **Periodic Monitoring Guidance (PMR) 2015**: click here

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[1] If the Protection Cluster does not have a 3W established yet, contact the gpc@unhcr.org to ask for assistance in establishing a template.

[2] If the Protection Cluster has a member list which changes often, has national and sub-national coordination structures and/or is doing regular mailouts with a standard format, you could use Mailchimp (http://mailchimp.com/) to organize your emails.

[3] You should use the pre-defined assessment registry at the Humanitarian Response Info (HR Info) Website for your respective cluster country ; for those members who do not have access to the HR Info website or difficulties with internet access, the Protection Cluster Lead should compile the respective information in a separate registry; you can find a template here

Overview of process and steps

The **overall timeline** for the planning cycle will be decided by the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT); they will communicate <u>at the beginning</u> of the planning cycle the expected deadlines and products to be delivered by clusters.

Humanitarian Needs Overview		
Section	**Comments**	**References/tools**
Key humanitarian issues	<u>**Ensure that the inter-sectoral joint needs analysis is anchored in a comprehensive protection analysis:**</u> • Be, as a member of the Protection Cluster, an active actor within the analysis team and highlight the importance to include age, gender and diversity in the analysis for each cluster. • Ensure that representatives from affected populations based on an age, gender, diversity selection are fully involved in the overall process. • Avoid siloing themes or sub-clusters; in particular, ensure close coordination with the existing sub-clusters (child protection, GBV, HLP, Mine Action) to deliver a comprehensive needs analysis for the Protection Cluster. • For the analysis of key humanitarian issues, use existing strategy documents such as the Protection Cluster Strategy to analyze if and how the situation might have changed with regards to the priorities established in the past. • The "protection analysis" is not a separate chapter in the HNO, but should be fully integrated throughout all chapters of the document. • It is recommended to use a methodology for vulnerability and severity ranking to condense large amounts of humanitarian needs information into a format that assists comparison, ranking and discussion. Such a methodology can be supported by tools. However, the use of such tools is optional and requires specific expertise in statistics and information management in order to adapt it to a specific country context. Please contact the GPC Support Cell for advice.	**IASC Centrality of Protection Statement**, 17 December 2013 (click here) "ANNEX III: **Tips for developing a gender, age and diversity sensitive needs overview**", see HNO Guidance 2015

Impact of the crisis	**Ensure that the Protection Cluster plays a key role in highlighting and analyzing existing, new and exacerbated vulnerabilities:** • Older persons, minority groups, LGBTI, persons living with HIV/AIDS, etc. are often overlooked; use the expertise of specialized protection actors to better understand and prominently represent their needs. • Other clusters might have relevant protection information which could be useful for the protection analysis (e.g. the Food Security Cluster on land conflicts between pastoralists and farmers); encourage them to share such information. • Accountability to affected population requires the meaningful participation of populations in the assessment phase; highlight in your analysis especially priority needs as identified by internally displaced persons and other affected populations and differences in needs, including from age, gender and diversity perspectives. It might be necessary to conduct regular participatory assessments throughout the programme cycle and to reflect these in programming and prioritization.	**HNO template 2015**, see the various "annotation" boxes with key questions for an overall protection analysis (click here) Examples of guidance on vulnerable groups: Helpage, "**Practical guidelines**" (click here) UNHCR, "**Need to know guidance(s)**" (click here) IASC, "**Guidelines for HIV/Aids interventions in Emergency settings**" (click here)
Information gaps	**Look at information gaps in a holistic way and with a protection lens:** • Information gaps exist not only due to geographic locations not being accessible, but also due to a lack of information about specific population groups (in particular, minorities, socially marginalized groups, etc.); such gaps should be clearly highlighted by the Protection Cluster. • If the Protection Cluster does not have sufficient information on specific geographical locations or topics, it might want to plan a joint multi-sectoral assessment with other clusters or a specific protection assessment for later in the programme cycle. • Keep an assessment registry updated throughout the year including all sub-clusters and the national and sub-national level.	For needs assessments: Ways to **mainstream age, gender, diversity into needs assessments** (click here) **Rapid Protection Cluster Assessment Toolkit** (click here); **Child Protection Rapid Assessment Toolkit** (click here) Info on mobile data collection for needs assessments: **KoBo** (click here) Template for an **Assessment Registry** (click here)

| Annex: Operational environment | **Ensure that coping mechanisms, capacities of communities and protection partners to address risks and threats are fully reflected:**
• Through the field work with communities Protection Cluster members will be a rich source of information on coping mechanisms; analyze overall patterns from one community to the other and from an age, gender and diversity perspective, and include this analysis in the "response capacity" section in the HNO.
• Highlight limitations with regards to expertise/capacities of protection partners and government counterparts (language barriers, technical expertise, capacity building needs, etc.). | |

Strategic Response Plan		
Section	**Comments**	**References/tools**
Strategic objectives	**Achieving protection outcomes is a joint responsibility of all humanitarian actors:** • Ensure that protection is not singled out as a stand-alone strategic objective(s) for which only the Protection Cluster is responsible; discuss with all clusters and reflect in objectives and response plans how each cluster, singly and jointly, contribute to addressing protection issues.	Examples of **outcome level objectives** are listed in the **SRP Guidance 2015**, Annex III For examples of last year's SRPs: click here
Cluster Response Plan	**Strategic objectives are realized through a coherent cluster response plan:** • Make sure that there is a clear link between the Protection Cluster's Response Plan, in particular the cluster objectives and the overall strategic objectives, and that the cluster objectives, indicators and targets are linked in a logical results chain. • Clearly outline, (i) how the cluster is ensuring that the Operational Framework of Accountability to Affected Populations is operationalized, (ii) how members of the Protection Cluster are capacitated to ensure adherence to international protection standards when carrying out their work and how you will support other clusters and government counterparts in their protection mainstreaming efforts, and (iii) how you	Global Protection Cluster, **Protection Mainstreaming Training Package** (click here) **Accountability to Affected Population** Website (click here)

	will ensure efficient advocacy on addressing protection concerns and human rights violations. • Be smart when choosing indicators, the Protection Cluster will have to report on each indicator and reporting on indicators requires data collection efforts and thus, additional resources (staff, financial). Don't choose too many indicators. If possible, link your monitoring to your 3W information. • The Protection cluster response plan indicators should accurately reflect what you want to achieve with the plan and include output and outcome indicators.	
Coordinated project planning	**Project submissions are aligned with strategic and Protection Cluster objectives while addressing existing needs and avoiding duplication:** • The review panel should be composed of at least Protection Cluster Coordinator, the Co-facilitator(s), Sub-Cluster Coordinators and INGOs and NGO representatives. • Establish clear project evaluation criteria at the beginning of the project submission process so that all cluster members know on which basis the review panel will evaluate project submissions. • All Protection Cluster projects should reach a 2a/b in the Gender Marker coding.	IASC 2006, "**Women, Girls, Boys and Men Different Needs – Equal Opportunities**" (click here) For questions on the **gender marker**, please contact: April Pham (pham@unhcr.org), GenCap
Periodic Monitoring		
Section	**Comments**	**References/tools**
Monitoring framework	**Monitoring will allow the Protection Cluster to assess to which extent they are achieving the objectives as set out in the cluster response plan; for the SRP to be "realistic" ensure the following:** • The HCT will decide the frequency of the Periodic Monitoring Report. Take this into consideration when developing the Protection Cluster indicators and assess in particular whether the Protection Cluster has	**Humanitarian Indicator Registry** (click here)

	the capacity to provide information on each indicator with the required frequency.	
	• Monitoring is a joint responsibility of all cluster members; each member, according to its capacities, should contribute to data collection efforts.	Information on **response monitoring** (click here)
	• Monitoring of the SRP indicators will not replace monitoring put in place by each cluster member when implementing its project(s).	
	• An Information Management Officer will be able to assist with setting up a monitoring framework and a systematized way on how to regularly update information needed for the Periodic Monitoring Report.	