



## BUILDING CAPACITY IN SYRIA TO ADDRESS INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT

**"GIVE A MAN A FISH, HE WILL EAT FOR A DAY.  
TEACH A MAN TO FISH, HE WILL EAT FOR LIFE."**

### Guiding principle 27:

1. International humanitarian organizations and other appropriate actors when providing assistance should give due regard to the protection needs and human rights of internally displaced persons and take appropriate measures in this regard. In so doing, these organizations and actors should respect relevant international standards and codes of conduct.

## Introduction

During displacement, existing traditional support mechanisms within a community, such as families, friends, neighbors or other social networks often breakdown, leading to Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) being exposed to greater protection risks during conflict. In many humanitarian crises, with Syria being no exception, affected people are not aware of their rights and often do not receive the necessary protection support for many reasons, including the inadequate capacity of stakeholders in fulfilling their protection duties. There are many reasons for this such as lack of expertise, inadequate planning and preparedness, the flight of qualified people abroad during conflict (brain drain) as well as lack of training. Many international humanitarian agencies therefore invest in the capacity building of responders in order to ensure that appropriate assistance and protection is given to IDPs and ultimately that displaced communities will be empowered and become capable of identifying and finding solution for their own problems, exercising their rights as well as facing their current or future vulnerability.

**Capacity building is an ongoing process, and is often intangible. The success of nonprofit and NGOs is usually shown through tangible results, leading organizations toward engaging in service delivery more than capacity building despite its importance.**

**Capacity building is a process by which individuals, institutions and societies develop abilities, individually and collectively, to perform functions, solve problems and set and achieve their goals. It is essential for an effective response to, and recovery from humanitarian crises.**

There is often a misperception in relation to the necessity of capacity building in relief situations, unstable environments and emergencies. However, it has been proven that capacity building is an investment in the present as it helps communities and responders to design local coping strategies to deal with crises, as well as in the future, because it adds great value and expertise after a situation has been stabilized and displaced populations have returned home. When capacity building is not included in the response of humanitarian agencies, there will be always a risk of implementing inadequate response plans during the crisis and an inadequate exit strategy when immediate relief needs have been met.

## The international legal framework

The 1993 World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna paved the way to the linkage between human rights and development. Since then, the human rights-based approach has been promoted by many agencies and non-governmental organizations around the world to empower people to claim their rights and increase the ability and accountability of individuals and institutions that are responsible for respecting, protecting and fulfilling their rights. This approach is about ensuring that both the standards and the principles of human rights are integrated into policymaking as well as the day to day running of organizations. Most organizations adopting human rights-based approaches have highlighted the necessity of fostering empowerment of rights-holders and capacity building of duty-bearers.



Moreover, The United Nations Millennium Declaration explicitly places both human rights commitments and development goals at the center of the international agenda for the new millennium. While Member States renewed commitments to promote and protect human rights, they also agreed on eight quantified and time-bound development goals—the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) which provide a focus for efforts to reduce poverty and a common basis for measuring progress.

The Millennium Development Goals and human rights both aim to monitor the progressive realization of certain human rights by year 2015. There are periodic reporting processes for each at both national and international levels. When breaking down plans for achieving the MDGs, many governments and international organizations have highlighted capacity building as an important tool to reach these goals.



**The role of international humanitarian actors is to build or rebuild and strengthen the community's capacity to respond to its own concerns and to take decisions as to how best to address these concerns given the temporary nature of their presence, their role as facilitators, and their limitations in capacities, resources and local knowledge.**

Furthermore, the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, created in 1998, restate and compile the international human rights and humanitarian law relevant to the internal displacement and also attempt to clarify gaps in these instruments. These Guiding Principles note that once persons have been displaced, they retain a broad range of economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights, including the right to basic humanitarian assistance, the right to be protected from physical violence, the right to education, freedom of movement and residence, political rights and the right to participate in economic activities. The primary responsibility for providing protection and assistance to IDPs according to the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement lies with national authorities (guiding principle 3). However, in situations of armed conflict, IDPs may find themselves in territories over which State authority is absent or difficult to enforce. Consequently the prevention of displacement and the protection of IDPs are also the responsibility of non-State actors such as civil society organizations including NGOs and CBOs. In such situations, a critical protection role falls to the international community which should support in the provision of appropriate capacity building to non-state actors so that they fill in the gaps.



**When the government is a party to a conflict, building capacities of additional actors such as civil society organizations such as NGOs and CBOs is important to contribute to comprehensive national responses to internal displacement.**

In addition, the humanitarian community's understanding of the responsibility to ensure effective protection for people at risk has evolved over the past three decades. While the primary responsibility of national and local authorities to protect remains fundamental, the imperative to identify and respond to protection risks is now widely accepted as being central to humanitarian action, including by mainstreaming protection throughout all humanitarian interventions. The imperative for the United Nations and humanitarian actors to protect people has now been emphasized and further defined in the UN "Rights Up Front" Plan of Action and the Statement on the Centrality of Protection in Humanitarian Action is adopted by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Principals (2013).



## The Syrian context

Since the year 2012, humanitarian actors, i.e. United Nations (UN) agencies and international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) registered in Syria have been working with the Government of Syria on preparing on a yearly basis The Syrian Humanitarian Assistance Response Plan (SHARP) complementing the Syrian government led humanitarian response and other appeal frameworks in accordance with UN General Assembly Resolution 46/182.



The SHARP recognizes the state's responsibility for enhancing the protection of all affected people, in accordance with the UN Charter, relevant norms and principles of international law, international human rights law and international humanitarian law. Moreover, the fourth objective of the 2014 SHARP put emphasis on enhancing the operational capacity of national and international humanitarian responders and supporting existing local and community coping mechanisms. In addition the fifth objective focuses on ensuring adequate levels of preparedness to respond to further emerging humanitarian needs.



**Capacity building activities in situations of internal displacement should aim at promoting and supporting an effective national protection response to internal displacement. At a minimum, this means a response that conforms to international standards and addresses the risks faced by IDPs.**

## The Protection sector response

The Protection Sector in Syria promotes a sustainable response that addresses risks faced by IDPs within the prolonged humanitarian crisis. The capacity building provided by the Protection Sector helps IDPs become self-sufficient as its activities are geared towards strengthening service providers such as national authorities, humanitarian agencies, local and international NGOs working in the country, humanitarian workers and outreach volunteers to respond to the emerging needs of IDPs and supporting existing local community mechanisms.

Since the beginning of the year, the response of the Sector in the field of capacity building has been mainly through the provision of training courses according to international human rights standards on issues that promotes Protection mainstreaming in Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (GBV), Legal Awareness, Child Protection, Community Mobilization, Counter Trafficking, Psychosocial Support (PSS), Code of Conduct as well as professional skills needed by humanitarian workers. Some of these include:

### Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (GBV)

- “Basics of SGBV” for 621 humanitarian workers and volunteers from 12 local and international NGOs and community leaders on SGBV.
- “Clinical management of rape” for 27 gynecologists and mid-wives.
- Training of Trainers (ToT) on GBV for 20 humanitarian workers in Syria to enable them to utilize SGBV awareness materials and have a standardized way of delivering awareness.
- 407 awareness raising sessions on SGBV provided directly to 6,127 IDPs in different governorates.
- 75 legal awareness sessions on GBV related issues.
- 80 sessions within three awareness raising campaigns on GBV implemented in coordination with governmental organizations.



### Legal Awareness

- Awareness sessions for 7,048 individuals on legal issues such as personal status documentation, the issuing of personal documents, and Syrian law
- Two training sessions for NGOs and governmental departments on Protection, basic principles of humanitarian response and ethics
- Training on Protection, Basic Principles of Humanitarian work and Guiding Interviewing Principles for lawyers, managers and social workers and a ‘Code of Conduct’ training for outreach volunteers.
- A Shelter management workshop for 30 participants from the Department of Social Affairs employees and Shelter managers
- Workshop on “Humanitarian needs assessment and shelter’s management” for 31 participants from the Social Affairs Directorate shelters and some NGOs in Sweida.
- Workshop on “Basic Principles of International Protection” for 32 Participants from UN staff and humanitarian workers.



## Child Protection

- Capacity building sessions on Basic Child Protection and PSS in emergencies for 411 beneficiaries from national NGOs.
- Orientation workshop for 90 NGO management staff, focused non-specialized PSS for children activities for 45 individuals, Child Protection PSS considerations in recreational and social activities addressing 93 individuals, the inclusion of children with disabilities into community based services and programmes for 82 individuals.
- Five-month training on “Portage programme” for the rehabilitation of 50 children with developmental disabilities along with the capacity building of their 50 caregivers supported and provided with empowerment tools.
- Specialized capacity building activities for children with special needs in different field locations to enhance their integration into society, schools and learning programmes.
- Tools and materials for learning and interacting such as amplifiers, wheels chairs, crutches, medical shoes, etc. provided for 250 persons.
- Sessions on livelihoods and self-empowerment for 800 children, adolescents and caregivers living in collective shelters or by a host community.



## PsychoSocial Support (PSS)

- A series of psychosocial trainings focusing on capacity building for NGOs including “Executive Professional Masters in Psychosocial Support and Dialogue” for Crisis Affected, Displaced and Migrant Youth and Their Families in Syria and Neighboring Countries addressing 44 Syrian professionals.
- 70 technical supervision sessions supporting 48 caregivers at the SOS children’s home focusing on understanding and responding to the crisis-driven emotional vulnerabilities of children and adolescents in the absence of their parents.
- Training courses for 100 community leaders, volunteers and workers in NGOs on the subject of Non-Violent Communication and Community-Based Mediation, out of whom 15 trainees were selected as trainers of volunteers and staff within their governorates.
- Training on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) Considerations for 216 Shelter Managers on how to protect and promote the psychosocial well-being of the residents of the shelters.
- Four training rounds on art-based interventions (Puppetry for Social Dialogue, Social Theater and Complex Circle and Drama Therapy) conducted for 27 specialists from different NGOs in Syria.
- Training of Trainers for 14 professionals working with sport and disabilities in emergencies and for 15 NGO front-line workers on how to deliver supportive communication, active listening and self-care workshops. In their turn, trainers trained 919 NGO front-line workers on supportive communication and psychological first aid within their governorates.
- Training courses on PSS, psychological first aid and counseling for 239 junior staff and volunteers.
- Advanced PSS training for 85 medical and relief social service providers in Syria.



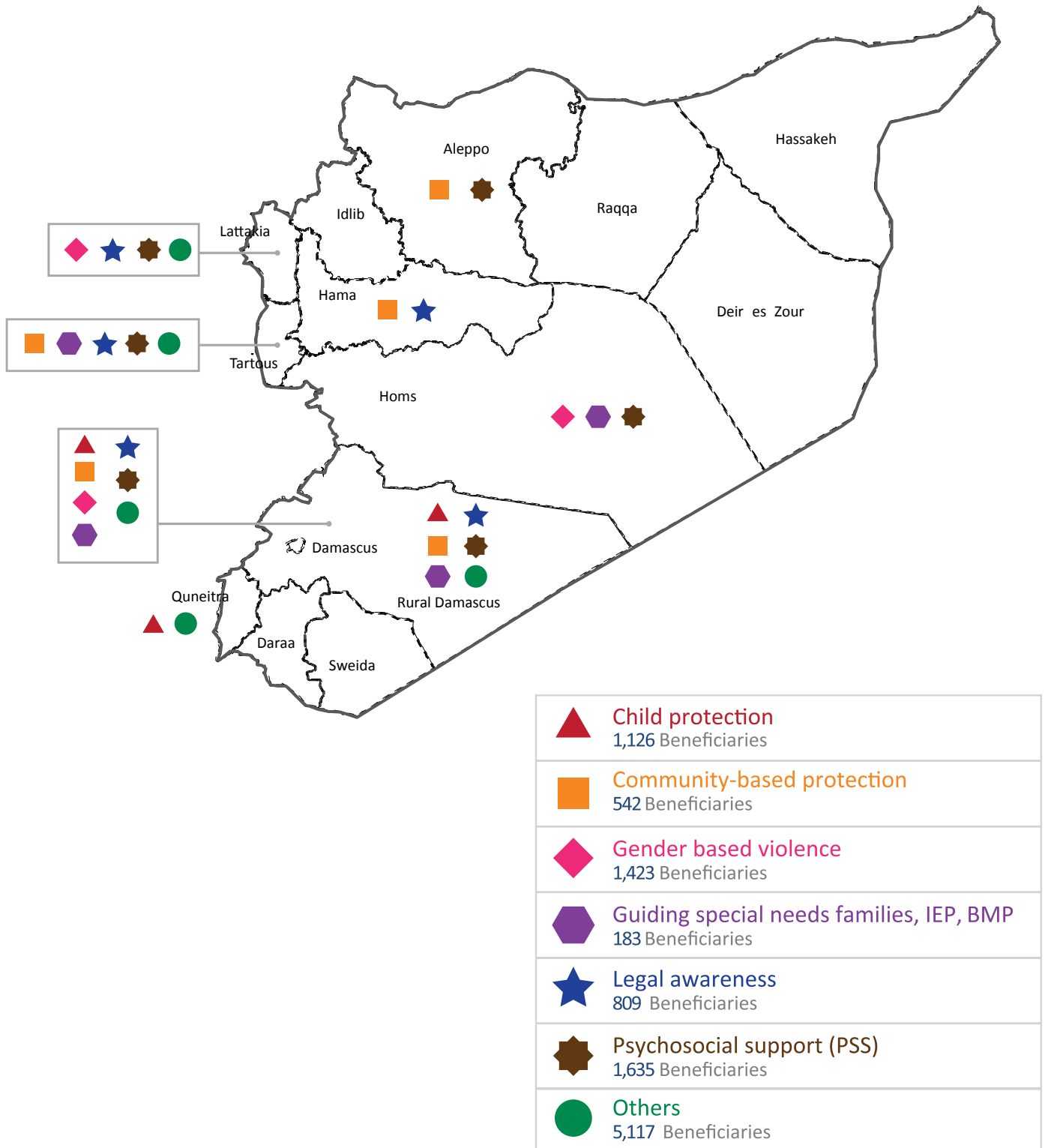


## Others

- Two training courses on basic principles of international protection and its core concepts for 52 humanitarian workers including the Code of Conduct.
- First round of “Protection Induction Training” addressing field staff and outreach volunteers including introduction to core protection subjects such as Child Protection, SGBV basic level for non-professionals, community mobilization programmes, MHPSS and code of conduct for 30 outreach volunteers.
- Two training courses for 67 local authorities, UN agencies, INGOs and NGOs/CBOs on Protection mainstreaming which includes four key elements (prioritizing safety and dignity and doing no harm, promoting meaningful access, ensuring accountability to affected populations and strengthening participation and empowerment).
- Six-day training for 107 workers (staff and volunteers) on SGBV, child protection, children’s interviewing techniques for better identification of protection concerns and response on the ground.
- 4 capacity building courses in the field of Reporting, Information Management, Photography/Graphic Design and Public Information/ Communications for 43 humanitarian workers from national and international humanitarian NGOs to improve the standard of reporting and public information material coming from the field.

These capacity building training courses helped to design new activities added for children, plan according to the protection principles/standards and increase the number of beneficiaries reached by humanitarian actors. Monitoring of trainees has demonstrated better quality protection services provided to beneficiaries, yet the need for more advanced level trainings.

## Protection Sector Response 01.01.2014 - 30.11.2014



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